

SPEND YOURSELF

The Assemblies of God work in Japan actually started before the Assemblies of God came into existence! During the Azusa street revival in Los Angeles, which began in 1906 and eventually birthed the Assemblies of God, a German immigrant named Carl Juergensen felt a strong missions call to Japan. Carl was shocked when he sensed God leading him to Japan. He had planned to return to his native Germany to do mission work. "I am 50 years old," he told the Lord. "How can I learn Japanese and be used of God to reach Japanese people?" But the call was clear. In 1913, Carl traveled to Japan with his wife and three children. Although Carl never learned the Japanese language well, his children, especially Marie, quickly became fluent and interpreted for their father as he preached the gospel on the streets.

Carl joined the (U.S.) Assemblies of God after it was formed in 1914. In 1920, an Assemblies of God District of Japan was formed under the direction of missionaries. After World War II, the Japan Assemblies of God was formed in 1949 as a self-governing body.

The Assemblies of God Missionary Fellowship (AGMF) in Japan is part of the Assemblies of God World Missions (AGWM), which in turn is part of the U.S. General Council of the Assemblies of God. Currently there are 23 missionary units in Japan, with an additional four units in the U.S. on deputation or home assignment.

AGMF missionary units are spread across Japan from Tohoku in the north to Okinawa in the south. In previous years, there was also a missionary presence in Hokkaido until self-sustaining churches were established.

The Assemblies of God believes in the leading of the Holy Spirit for direction for ministry and the power of the Holy Spirit to accomplish ministry. In keeping with this emphasis, the AGWM allows their missionaries to follow the direction they feel individually led towards for the location

and type of ministry they will be involved in.

As a result, AGMF missionaries are involved in diversified ministries in Japan, including church planting, campus outreach, outreach literature ministry, Bible school teaching, and pastoring international churches. Some churches emphasize reaching out to all international people in a community, as well as to Japanese; and some, located near U.S. military bases, reach out to U.S. military personnel, as well as to the international community and Japanese people.

A strategic thrust of the Asia Pacific Region of AGWM (AP Region) is Spend Yourself. Spending ourselves, our time, energy, and finances to reach the unreached people groups across the Asia Pacific region is the commitment behind this major effort. Unreached people groups include remote ethnic peoples and victims of human trafficking. The entire nation of Japan, being less than 1% Christian, can be considered an unreached people group.

A strong emphasis in AGWM worldwide is the establishment of a strong national church. In keeping with this, the Japan Assemblies of God (JAG) was established in 1949. This group has national leadership; it is self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating. The AGMF works alongside the JAG in a cooperative and supportive role.

An important emphasis in keeping with developing a strong national church is developing Bible schools, to train national pastors and leaders. Because of this, Central Bible College (CBC), in Komagome, Tokyo, was established in 1950 to train young Japanese men and women called into the ministry. Since its inception, six hundred and forty students have graduated with plans to enter the ministry.

The AGMF has informal fellowship with missionaries from other national Assembly of God General Councils, such as Peru, Brazil, Great Britain, Australia, and Singapore. All missionaries from other national General Councils relate directly to the Japan Assemblies of God. **JH**



AGMF
 (Assemblies of God Missionary Fellowship)