

MBMission (Mennonite Brethren Mission)

MB Mission is the global mission organization of the Mennonite Brethren Church of North America. The work of the mission in Japan began in 1950 when MB missionary Ruth Wiens was sent to Osaka. Other missionaries soon followed, and several churches were planted in the Osaka area over the next few years. In 1958, the Japan Mennonite Brethren Conference (JMBC) was formed. Today, the JMBC has 29 churches with 26 full-time pastors and an active membership of about 1,500 people. Most of the churches are in the greater Osaka area, but some are in areas around Hiroshima, Nagoya, and Yokohama. In addition, the JMBC has established a seminary (Evangelical Biblical Seminary) and a Christian camp (Nosegawa Bible Camp) in the Osaka area.

The initial focus of MB Mission in Japan was evangelism and church planting, but it has shifted to building up churches in recent years.

MB missionaries currently serve alongside local MB churches in outreach initiatives and discipleship. A primary ministry is conversational English classes, as they serve as an effective bridge between local MB churches and their communities. In addition to teaching English classes, MB missionaries are involved in various other ministries in the church according to their gifts and abilities.

In daily life and ministry, each missionary strives to live out the five core values of MB Mission:

- dependency on Jesus,
- risk-taking obedience,
- relational integrity,
- transforming community, and
- celebration.

Although MB Mission had a strong missionary force in Japan in the early years, the number has gradually declined. There are currently four long-term missionaries serving with MB Mission in Japan — Doris Goertz, Wendy Eros, and Cory and Masami Giesbrecht. In addition, many short-term missionaries teach English for one or two years or serve in MB churches on summer ACTION teams.

The current MB missionaries are grateful to the missionaries who have gone before them and have trained leaders in the church. Building on the strong foundation that has been laid, they now have the privilege of working with Japanese leaders and church members to help further the kingdom of God. Through the ministry of English conversation classes, God has allowed our missionaries to see fruit, for which they are thankful. Their prayer is that gospel seeds will be planted in the heart of each person who comes to the classes. Their desire is to see many Japanese people come to know Jesus as their personal Savior and to walk in faithful discipleship with him. **JH**

