

# WGM

(The World Gospel Mission)

The World Gospel Mission (WGM) website states, “World Gospel Mission partners with individuals and churches worldwide to make disciples of Christ and encourage believers to become missions-active through ministries that reach the whole person—physically and spiritually—transforming communities.” This describes what WGM as an organization is doing as a whole, and in Japan through the years. In Japan, WGM has worked in two ways to make disciples: university student ministry and the Immanuel Church.

The first WGM missionaries arrived in Japan in 1952. David and Edna Kuba were Japanese-Americans with a deep desire to reach the people of Japan with the gospel of Jesus Christ. As they began to make contacts with people and churches, they discovered the Immanuel Church denomination. The Kubas felt it was not necessary to begin another denomination and that working with the Immanuel Church would be a good way to serve. In 1952 the Immanuel Church and the Wesleyan Church of America joined in a partnership called the Immanuel Wesleyan Federation (IWF). In 1954 WGM was invited to join IWF. Since that time, WGM has worked with the Immanuel Church in many different ways.

A few years after their arrival in Japan, the Kubas felt the Lord leading them into a ministry with university students. They began Bible studies and the Lord brought many university students to them. Through the Kubas’ ministry, student groups were established at Rikkyo University and Keio University; and a campus Bible study was held at Tokyo University. Many students from this ministry went into full-time Christian work as pastors or missionaries. After the Kubas retired, the student ministry continued with Kevin Zirkle and Dennis Probst working on these campuses.

WGM missionary Zach Motts describes the ministry to university students, “We come alongside Christian students, and create open spaces for them to walk alongside non-Christian students. We open these spaces through Bible studies, hosting events, and being available to hang out.”

WGM’s work with the Immanuel Church has included a variety of ministries over the years. English Bible classes held at churches, preaching for evangelistic meetings and other special meetings, teaching at the Immanuel Bible College in

Yokohama, and serving as the English secretary to the President of the Bible College are some of the ways WGM missionaries have worked to build God’s kingdom in Japan.

Another way we work together is in outreach outside of Japan. The Immanuel Church has sent missionaries to work with WGM in Kenya, India, and Bolivia.

In the past few years, the Immanuel Church has emphasized youth ministry, particularly camps and youth activities. WGM has four young missionaries who are working with youth, both in the church and on university campuses.

Zach Motts came in 2007. He met Esther Ueki, a Japanese MK from Jamaica, and two years later they were married. Zach and Esther are currently in the States on an educational leave. When they return in 2016, they will be working with university students and young people in Immanuel Churches.

Holly Muehleisen arrived in 2010. She is in her second term and works with children and youth in three Immanuel Churches as well as with university students.

Brandon Kuba is the grandson of David and Edna Kuba. He arrived in the fall of 2014 and is currently in language study. He will be working with university students.

We are thankful for the new missionaries WGM has in Japan. We are excited to see how the Lord will develop the ministry of each one, working with university students as well as with children and youth in Immanuel Churches. **JH**

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