German Alliance Mission

Christ for the world
allianzmission
In the Federation of Free Evangelical Churches of Germany

The German Alliance Mission (GAM; Deutsche China-Allianz-Mission) was started by the Swedish–American evangelist Fredrik Franson, who also founded TEAM and many other missions. In 1890, the first GAM missionaries left to work in China. They worked in association with the China Inland Mission, which was founded by Hudson Taylor.

GAM started to focus on Japan in the middle of the 20th century after being forced out of China by the revolution.

In 1953, a 47-year-old single lady, Maria Hardenberg, came to Japan as the first GAM missionary to Japan. Despite poor living conditions, she faithfully started her work, distributing tracts and sharing the gospel. Other missionaries followed her, and in 1956 the first church was started in the town of Hashima, Gifu prefecture.

More new churches were founded, and they formed an association called Dōmei Fukuin Kirisuto Kyōkai, which is a member of the Japan Evangelical Association (JEA) and the Federation of Free Evangelical Churches. The association also has close ties with Tōkai Theological Seminary, an interdenominational seminary in the Nagoya area that teaches and trains new church staff and pastors; some GAM missionaries help with the teaching at the seminary.

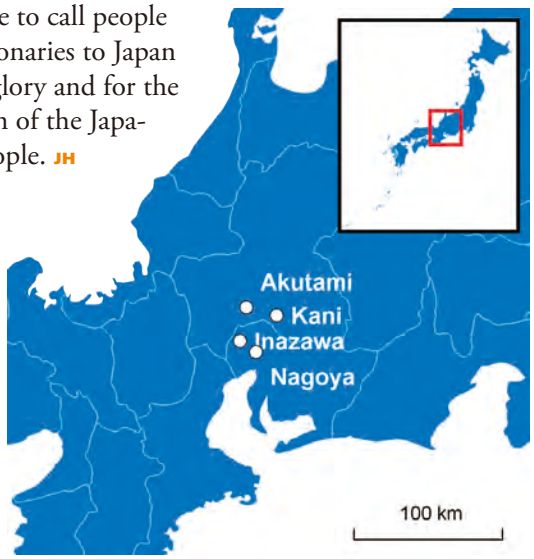
GAM's goal has always been to establish Japanese churches through evangelism, counseling, and education so that ultimately the churches could stand on their own and be handed over to Japanese pastors. We also have two retreat-and-learning centers, which offer a variety of programs, including retreats and camps for young people and educational programs.

Currently, GAM has nine long-term and four short-term missionaries in Japan. Our missionaries work in teams with Japanese pastors, have teaching ministries, or plant new churches. Our young church workers teach language classes and support the local churches in many practical ways. Over the past few years, quite a number of these young people have become career missionaries, which is a wonderful blessing for our organization.

Since we are almost all located in the greater Nagoya area, it is easy for us to come together as a team. We value our times together and hold day-long meetings, usually five or six times a year. In addition to the necessary business talks, we reserve time for God's word, fellowship, and prayer.

GAM missionaries tend to have shorter, but more frequent home assignments than in the early days. This can be a big challenge to the working situation, but we see the need on the supporters' side. We are deeply convinced that the prayers of our brothers and sisters in Germany are vital for our mission work here. In order to deepen our relationships with our supporters and involve them in our mission work, we travel back to Germany more often than we used to do.

This practice of constantly involving our support base with our ministry in Japan has led to some wonderful blessings. One outstanding example is the help we received for people in the disaster area after the great earthquake in March 2011. Money raised by our supporting churches allowed us to send a missionary family to join an international team in Tohoku. Other wonderful examples of the close relationships between our missionaries and their supporters include volunteer teams who come to help build or renovate church buildings or support us in our evangelism efforts in the local churches.

In autumn 2015, we launched a new project and invited a prayer team to Japan. For ten days, the team stayed in different churches and spent their time praying for and with Japanese Christians.

We feel deeply blessed having such a strong support base. May God continue to call people as missionaries to Japan for his glory and for the salvation of the Japanese people. JH