

Multi-Language Productions (MLP)

# MLP Japan News



Tochigi Prefecture, Nikko City, Kirifuri Highlands

## Greetings

### Comfort After an Intense Summer in Japan

This summer was very hot, reaching what could be called "disaster-level" temperatures. Even in September, Tokyo recorded a high of 35.1°C, marking the second-highest temperature ever.

**Staying joyful isn't easy,** especially when faced with natural disasters, the illness and loss of loved ones. **Yet God continues to comfort and strengthen us through His Word, even when life feels overwhelming.** He extends the promise of heaven—a hope-filled gift made possible through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross.

Kaori Egawa  
Editor of MLP Japan

## Report

### Memorial

We have shared a post by the family of **Dr. Steven Witte (66), leader of the Asia One Team**, who passed away in a vacation home fire in Wisconsin, USA, on June 30. Dr. Witte previously served as President of Asia Lutheran Seminary in Hong Kong from 2009 to 2021. For more details in Japanese, please visit the LECC website via the [link](#).



Dr. Steven Witte

## Outreach & Events

### September Activities

**On Sunday, September 8th, my husband and I attended the LECC worship service in Utsunomiya, in Tochigi** and enjoyed a wonderful visit. We especially enjoyed seeing Maria Akagami, a longtime member, and her family including Kisui (20 months), who has received infant baptism last year and has become our goddaughter.

**On Sunday, September 13th, I enjoyed going to MICCA - The Library with Words & Pictures for Children in Katsushika, Tokyo** as an outing with Joy Club family members. This unique library allowed the children to explore books in an interactive way, which made our visit fun and fruitful.



## SCRIPTURE OF THE MONTH

I will strengthen you. I will help you.

I will support you with my victorious right hand.

Isaiah 41:10

## Christian Magazine Summery-From *Forward in Christ* September Issue God's People Grow

For pastors and teachers, continuing education is crucial. **Institutions like Martin Luther College (MLC) in Minnesota and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS) support them in refining their skills and adapting to changing ministry needs.** For example, Pastor David Putz has earned four master's degrees while continuing his ministry, and Pastor Ben Kratz completed a chaplain certification to expand his service in the community. Educators like Brian Haack and Anne Zeitler have strengthened their leadership and special education skills through MLC's graduate programs.



Pastor David Putz

Zeitler thinks that continuing education greatly benefits students and the church community. Kratz echoes this sentiment thinking that improving his knowledge and skills in and outside church helps his congregation see better examples of faith. **Pastor Bradley Wordell, the director of *Grow in Grace*, the institute for continuing education at WLS, states, "At WLS, we want to instill in our students the attitude that they must always be growing."\***

Continuing education relies on support from churches and families. Putz and Kratz both express gratitude for their wives' encouragement and their churches' financial assistance, which make lifelong learning possible. Churches offer support because they understand that the growth of their called workers helps everyone. "They recognize that if we as teachers are getting better, the whole ministry will benefit," says Zeitler. This is the power of the Lord, who is responsible for the growth of his church. **"He makes the whole body fit together and unites it through the support of every joint. As each and every part does its job, he makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love."** (Ephesians 4:1)

James Pope | Forward in Christ Editor

※MLP Japan Note: **Pastor Wordell served as a missionary in Japan until 2015 and worked as the coordinator of MLP Asia.** He led a translation course at Asia Lutheran Seminary (ALS) in Hong Kong, in which the current MLP Japan editor, Egawa, also participated. Egawa gives thanks to God for the opportunity to earn a degree in "Translation and Theology" at ALS in 2017 which is helping her in all areas of her life.

### Kaori Egawa's Talk on Christian Music

#### Enjoying and Savoring Handel's *Messiah*

A sing-in concert is a unique event where the audience participates by singing along during the performance. I had the opportunity to experience my first full sing-in concert of Handel's *Messiah* on September 13th at Symphony Hills in Katsushika Ward, Tokyo. **The combination of solo performances, instrumental pieces, and the powerful chorus—where attendees stood up with their own sheet music to sing along—was truly thrilling.** The three-part composition seemed to fly by, and the encore performance of the "Hallelujah Chorus" was the highlight of this participatory concert.



**Handel was born in Germany several centuries after Martin Luther's Reformation in 1517 and remained a Lutheran even after moving to England.** One notable Lutheran tradition from Handel's time was the spread of congregational hymn singing in the local language, thanks to Luther's translation of the Bible into German and the creation of new hymns. Famous hymns like *Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott* (*A Mighty Fortress Is Our God*) were part of this tradition, which Johann Sebastian Bach later continued with works like *Jesus bleibet meine Freude* (*Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring*). Although this sing-in concert was not a worship service, it was a unique way to remember and appreciate public singing of God's Word.

**The Japanese edition of *Messiah*—*The Greatest Sermon Ever Sung*, translated and published in 2017, helped deepen my appreciation of this incredible piece of music.** The text is available for free on the LECC website. You can also find [the full YouTube video](#), allowing you to experience God's Word through Handel's masterpiece.



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