

NSKK NEWSLETTER

日本聖公会管区事務所だより

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Trip to attend APJN (Anglican Peace and Justice Network) Conference

The Rt. Rev. Nathaniel Makoto Uematsu

Conference of Anglican Peace and Justice Network was held in St. George's College and its vicinity in Jerusalem between September 14 and 22, 2004. There were 32 attendees; representatives from 23 provinces of Anglican Communion, Anglican Communion UN observers, and local advisors. From Japan Revd Samuel Koshiishi, Committee member of APJN, and I attended.

It was the first time for me to attend conference of APJN. The reason to attend this conference was two folded. Firstly with my own eyes I wanted to see current situation in Israel/Palestine where I made pilgrimage a few times in the past. Secondly I wanted to meet with Palestinians of living stones, particularly Anglican Palestinians living in the area. The Bishop of Jerusalem then, Bishop Samir Kafity, said over 10 years ago, " You must come to visit Holy Land to meet with living stones rather than visiting dead stones such as historical churches and other places." I would like to briefly describe what I observed and how I felt during this trip.

APJN held conference several times in the past, and at each conference issue of Peace and Justice in global level was discussed. These issues were driven by globalization and they have become a real problem in many locations in the world. At this meeting specific issues relevant to Peace and Justice such as war and local conflict, trade and poverty, environment, HIV/AIDS, theological training, Human Sexuality, women and children were addressed by the members at subgroup discussion as well as group discussion. Recommendations were made by each subgroup to bring to attention of ACC (Anglican Consultative Council). Those, who came from the regions where peoples are dying every day because of AIDS and violence, reported us to share their experiences. This kind of information is rarely available to Japanese and it is beyond our comprehension.

APJN always pays attention to issues specific to the location of the meeting held and it is an important purposes of the meeting to enhance cooperation with those who actively participate locally for peace and justice cause. This time APJN held a meeting in Israel and Palestine which indicates that churches all over the world are closely connected with

Palestinians. From the very beginning of the meeting we challenged issue of Israel and Palestine by taking and participating in lectures and local field trips, and we came across all kinds of means for oppression, maltreatment, and exploitation towards Palestinians by Israeli Government and Military Forces. These acts were as if they were total denial of Palestinians' existence. Their action was claimed to be justifiable to fight against terrorists of 9/11 and alike. Palestinians are confined within the occupied territory which is surrounded by 8 meter high concrete wall. They have almost no freedom in the confinement, and are threatened by tanks and guns of Israeli Military. It is almost like confinement in prison. All of us were very angry and saddened beyond our capability to express in words.

When I visited St. Paul's Church near Nazareth, one elderly lady approached me to ask if people of NSKK in Japan know that Anglicans are here and do live in this land. I hope and pray that everyone of NSKK member will become aware of issues Palestinians are facing now.

Poverty and Peace

The Rev. Laurence Yutaka Minabe
General Secretary,
The Provincial Office of Nippon Sei Ko Kai

I took a long trip this summer which I have not done for a while. You may imagine that climate in Iran and Uganda is rather hot, but in reality it was very comfortable because of its high altitude. South Africa was still chilly since it was the end of winter. If I were younger I would have really looked forward to the trip, but at my age three week long trip was very hard.

Scene in the city of Bam, which is located in south-western part of Iran, was devastating. Although it has been already 8 months since the big quake at the end of year 2003, there are lots of rubbles. Contrast with the scene in Teheran was evident. I was relieved to observe a typical community of Islamic world there to help each other. Since Iran is surrounded by Afghanistan and Iraq she is very cautious against behavior of USA. I heard from many people there that they will fight until they all die if USA starts an attack by reason of violation against inspection of nuclear weapons. Understanding the situation they are in I felt that they have better things to do than a going war with USA. Same will apply to the government of USA and people of USA.

In Uganda Dr. Kitagawa and her doctor husband, who have been sent by JOCS (Japan Overseas Christian Medical Cooperative Service), made my visit to Kiwoko Hospital in Luwero possible. We went there to observe a home-based care project to take care of children of HIV/AIDS.

Nurse does the work which requires medical professional care, and a family member takes care of the child. Most cases either mother has passed way or be sick in bed, so grandparents become care giver for the child. Since they have multiple children to look

after home-based care becomes a very crucial issue. Anti-virus medicine called ARVs is not commonly available to average people because of its high cost. Since taking a good nutrition through eating proper food makes immunity stronger, advise of a good eating practice becomes very important. In other words they are lacking good nutrition because they are very poor. I wondered why this was the case in spite of plentiful catch of fish in lake Victoria and good weather which is fit for good agriculture production. It has been said that this land is a pearl of Africa. This country might be a different place if there were fair share of wealth which is not limited to money only but it could be employment and work environment, and education. This country had experienced a long internal conflict which has left many scars. There has broken another internal conflict in northern Uganda. I felt there should be better things to do than continuing to engage in a long internal conflict.

In South Africa there is a tremendous gap between rich and poor which has been caused by an aftereffect of Apartheid. HIV/AIDS problem is believed to be the worst here and in some local communities over 50 % of population is infected.

It is very difficult to buy high price medicine and most of them die after the latent period of about 10 years. There is no hope for future of children although the country itself is rich by producing gold and other minerals. Church can not afford medicine. It seems what church can do is limited to education for prevention, patient care, and most of all education to minimize prejudice and discrimination so that at least dignity may be maintained until the end of their life. There will be another long fight after gaining equality through a long and fearful fight. There I observe lack of equality in former neighborhood for black people.

I do not believe equality alone will be a solution for all problems. But what I have encountered during this trip is to realize how big a gap is between poor and rich and it was not easy to comprehend. When we address issue of peace in the world we could not avoid this issue of the poverty which is caused by gap between rich and poor.

Concluding the 20th anniversary convention of NSKK-ACK* Mission Collaboration

(* NSKK:Nippon Sei Kou Kai / ACK:Anglican Church of Korea)

Rev Stephen Sigyung Yoo
Chaplain, Rikkyo University / Missionary from Seoul
Diocese, ACK

The 20th anniversary convention of NSKK-ACK Mission Collaboration was held from October 18 to the 21st in Fukuoka. It was a meeting with the meaning of looking back upon the time of the collaboration and the formal exchange in work of Mission of both Churches that started in 1984, and of groping for views of the future. It is worth a special mention that it was on a much larger scale than before. When at least the participant in both Churches were counted, all members totaled 120 or more persons and with the Mothers Union Choir of Seoul Diocese which took charge of the service for a

commemorative concert and closing worship, the number exceeded 150 persons.

The convention mainly consisted of a presentation on the past 20 years which was titled “gratitude and hope”, and a group discussion by six groups based on the special lecture on <Peace in East Asia and relations of South & North Korea toward reunification> by Professor J Lee of Rikkyo University, including the urgency and importance of collaboration in social activities or many ministries were discussed actively, with members discussing the role of the citizens/Christians of both countries/Churches.

In the joint statement adopted on the final day of the convention, it was declared that we should continue collaborative relations and continue to step toward a newer pace. This emphasized the necessity for broader collaboration, seeking a new ground level of peace and mission collaboration which supports more concretely and suits from overall exchange in making the range of collaboration prudent, and the same field, same spot, and position to a grass-roots level so to speak, in the East Asia area. In twenty years we have come around, from elementary mutual understanding to collaboration, from exchange to solidarity, and as we worked toward expansion and enhancement of the part of the collaboration to East Asia from Japan and South Korea, future directivity has been shown.

Especially, the new organization which replaces the NSKK-ACK cooperation committee affiliated with a general meeting whose substance of was lost was called for as a result of reorganization of NSKK for several of these years. As for determining whether it will be developed from now on, and the agreement and the promise in a convention go, the new system will become a conclusive factor. On the character of the convention, although we do not have the authority to decide on it until it is detailed, we cannot overemphasize that it was an important convention. Probably, the new collaboration organization organized by deliberations of both Anglican Church from now on should be observed in order to make these things significant. The convention closed carrying out both the confessions of faith “the one body”, remembering one Korean priest suffering from cancer, expressing the decision to collaborate in the future.

There is Korean proverb that “after mountain, there is mountain again”. By the collaboration for 20 years, both churches crossed just a small peak. We are going to climb the next peak and a steeper mountain. Next year corresponds to the year celebrating the 40th anniversary of Japan-South Korea normalization of diplomatic relations. Exchange of Japan-South Korea Anglican Church also begins from goodwill on an individual level, and we will celebrate the 40th anniversary by the end of next year. The Bible has given special meaning to the number 40. The people of Israel from Egypt came into Canaan at last, after wandering about for 40 years in the wilderness. Jesus was also able to bear the trial for 40 days. I wish to consider 40 years the pace of Japan-South Korea Anglican Church from the meaning of this number of 40 that the Bible shows. Can we stand for 40 years of trial which begins to follow a new history, and go into Canaan as surely as the pioneer Joshua Δ or will we finish with Canaan being seen only from the boundary? We have started the prayer and efforts of both Anglican Churches for moving beyond the boundary. *

Obituary

Dear Readers of the NSKK Newsletter

We greatly regret to inform you of an untimely death of Rev. Timothy K. Fujii on 5th November 2004. Rev. Fujii was one of the active editors of the NSKK Newsletter and enthusiastically engaged in making NSKK Newsletters.

We would ask you to remember in your prayers that his soul rest in peace in heaven.

Sincerely yours,
Hajime Suzuki
Editor-in-Chief of NSKK Newsletter

From Editor's Room:

Wishing you a Happy Christmas and Peaceful New Year!

Suzuki	Egidio	Hajime
Takeda	Grace	Kazuko
Date	Elizabeth	Yasuko
Yoshimura	Mary	Toshiko