



Steps in the Vineyard



Second Level
セカンドレベル

2025~2026 Winter

Making a Difference Through Discipling

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," (Matthew 28:19, ESV)

REVISED 15 Step Lessons Textbook (7th Edition)!

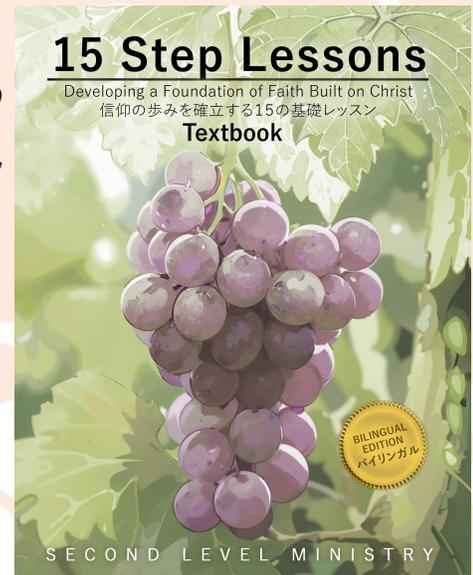
"I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing." (John 15:5)

15 Step Lessons ~ Developing a Foundation of Faith

Built on Christ~ is a basic discipleship book for Japanese believers. This resource has been the most widely used since the beginning of Second Level Ministry. There are 15 steps in this book that will lead us deeper into a relationship and understanding God. The 7th edition features a new section, "**Steps in the Vineyard**", in each chapter. As we walk through the lessons, we can also reflect on being in the "vineyard" of our new life in Christ. The imagery of vineyards is used throughout the Bible to represent life, purpose, and productivity. As we hope for a fruitful garden in our spiritual lives, we can practice walking with Christ, who is the Vine.

The grapes on the cover of this book are meant to represent the good harvest that comes when we walk with Jesus and tend the vineyard of our lives according to His gentle and wise instructions. Much like how a vineyard is cared for in season, and certain aspects of tending are

repeated daily, weekly, monthly and annually, the steps in this book are not meant to be done once and never returned to but are meant to be incorporated into our lives naturally and regularly. We know that everyone's life and experience is different, just as one vineyard may be different from another, but the steps in this book are principles and practices that are based on Biblical truths that apply to each of us and present us with a path on which to walk out our faith in Christ. This discipleship resource is effective in establishing the foundation of Christian living and reproduce more disciples of Christ! Let's take our first step together.



ぶどう園でのあゆみ

信仰の歩みを確立する
15の基礎レッスン

Step 1新しい人生ークリスチャンとは

Second Level
セカンドレベル

"Steps in the Vineyard" Social Media Campaign

Our 2025 "social media campaign" is going on! Search for "Second Level Ministry" and join the group!



To order in the US:

- Second Level Store (<https://secondlevel.org/store>)
- Amazon (<https://tinyurl.com/amazon15steps>)

To order in Japan:

- Gospel Light Store (<https://gospel-light.info>)
- Amazon (<https://tinyurl.com/15steplessonsJapan>)

From other countries, please visit Amazon in your country.

2025 Soul Care Retreat



This year, the **Soul Care Retreat** was held in Atlanta, Georgia! We welcomed Mrs. Sachi Nakamura who is a spiritual director and published author as a retreat guide to lead us under the theme, “**Grace Upon Grace~Living from the Abundance of God's Grace**” Together, we reflected on God's grace and on ourselves, who “have received grace upon grace” (John 1:16).

On the first day, we had an opportunity to examine whether we were acting impulsively out of impatience or a sense of lack. Rather than being controlled by busyness driven by anxiety and haste every day, might we not live in gratitude and peace by taking time to slowly savor the richness and grace



of Jesus? During the retreat, we set aside time for silence and solitude, slowing our pace to create space within our hearts.

This became an opportunity to be filled with God's grace. Experiencing “slowing down” as a community—something seemingly simple yet often difficult—was a rich step leading to a deeper relationship with the Lord, despite its simplicity.



Below are reflections shared by participants.

“Stepping away from the busy, noisy daily grind of work, housework, and electronics, I was able to have a truly meaningful experience: a luxurious time where I could use 100% of my own time to feel God's presence, give thanks for the blessings received, and have my prayers heard.”

“Throughout the sessions and the worship, everything was centered on the Lord. I was given time to quietly commune with Him and with brothers and sisters in peace, and I am truly grateful.”

“The retreat was such a rejuvenating and significant moment. My heart was profoundly renewed by being in the middle of nature, having a place to rest, and spending time with the Lord. It helped me to return to my ministry life with strength and encouragement. I am grateful for this blessing.

“This retreat renewed my commitment to protect my times of abiding and delighting in the Lord.”

“The retreat was wonderful. It gave me time to pause and spend intimate time with God. It was a time to pour my heart out to the Lord as well as reflect on so many things. Because of this precious experience, I felt that I am ready to keep laboring for the Kingdom work.”

We plan to have the next retreat in September, 2026.

Soul Care Podcast

ソウルケア・ミニストリー PODCAST



The Soul Care team started Podcast! It is aiming to share and encourage Japanese Christians' faith from the perspectives of pastoral counseling and spiritual formation. Please utilize this as a resource!



In our soul care ministry, we have a pastoral care program and a spiritual formation program. Please use these opportunities for yourself and introduce them to those who need them.

Please check our website!
<https://soulcare.secondlevel.org>

Mentoring Seminars in Chiba and Okinawa

We give special thanks to the local churches (Naha Baptist Church in Okinawa and Oyumino Christ Church in Chiba) that partnered with us to host the Mentoring Seminars in June. We had 30 attendees in each location. The focus this year was to encourage seeking spiritual growth, trying mentoring opportunities, and practice active listening. God is always at work and brings growth. We have been actively working on matching mentoring pairs since then.



Participants' Reflections

"After attending this seminar, I felt motivated to take a step forward in my life. I am now determined to become a mentor and provide mentoring, but before that, I want to receive mentoring myself as a mentee and get myself in order. I am grateful to everyone who provided this opportunity, and I pray that God's blessings and grace will continue to increase upon you all."

"I am confident that God is giving me glory and transforming me into His image. I felt as though I was being urged to move forward, realizing that I cannot remain in a state of complacency, content to stay by Jesus' side forever."

"The teaching of active listening was very clear and well-explained, with content designed to be easily understood by anyone."

"Even when I thought I was listening carefully to the other person, I realized that I sometimes responded without thinking. Practicing listening thoroughly was a valuable learning experience."



Summer Mission Team

Second Level sent another mission team to Tokyo and Chiba in June! The purpose of the trip included reconnecting with the Japanese friends to host 3 reunions and connect them to local believers. It was a fruitful time not only to connect friends, but support the work of the local churches and share the love of Christ.

Please see the full report!
<https://tinyurl.com/2025summermission>

The next mission team will be serving in Tokyo and Yokohama from February 16 - March 2, 2026.



Staff Team—New Faces, Transition, and Internship

Meet our new staff!

We welcomed four new faces to our staff team this year. Each of them offers a meaningful presence and blessings for the kingdom work!



Yuma Nakagawa (Soul Care Coordinator)

Yuma was born in Tokyo and raised in Chiba. In 2008, at the age of 18, Yuma accepted Jesus Christ as his Savior at Honolulu Christian Church when he was in college. He has a great passion for serving Christians who desire to grow in their faith and relationship with Jesus Christ by providing pastoral counseling. He is also living to fulfill the calling from God to build the church as the body of Christ as a pastor in Japan since 2017. He graduated with a Master of Divinity from Tokyo Biblical Seminary. He completed the Master of Arts in Pastoral Counseling at Asbury Theological Seminary. He has been serving as a member of Soul Care team.



Aya Akaiishi (Community Care Coordinator)

When she began singing in a Gospel choir, she experienced a joy unlike anything she had ever felt before and came to believe in Christ. She received God's immeasurable grace and mercy, and was given a strong desire to share the Gospel with those who are suffering. She believes a safe and healthy community is essential for people's return to God, healing, and restoration. Her vision is to build a community within the Gospel choir where members can freely express themselves, sing in unity, and grow together. She serves as a director of a local Gospel choir, leading worship, and creating her own music.



Peggy Williams (Prayer and Retreat Coordinator)

Peggy is married with two children, four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. She is an experienced ESL teacher, and has always loved teaching English to internationals as well as building relationships with them. Her loving desire for others to know God is ongoing. She also has experience in discipling, coaching and mentoring. As the Prayer and Retreat Coordinator, she looks forward to encouraging others to pray, as well as developing opportunities for praying together for one another and the work of the ministry, inspired by the Holy Spirit.



Paul Lim (Discippler and Mobilizer)

Paul became a disciple of Jesus Christ at the age of 20 in South Korea. After his conversion, he dedicated himself to teaching and discipling college students. Led by the Holy Spirit, his family moved to the United States to serve in this calling. Together, they are fully devoted to the mission work and minister Japanese through their church and as a staff member with Second Level. His journey of faith continues as he follows the Lord until His return.

Staff Transition

Two of our directors relocated this year! They are still adjusting and continue to serve faithfully in the new locations !



Yumi Morse Ikeda (Soul Care Director) moved to Hiratsuka in Kanagawa, where her husband will run J-Lodge Coffee House. Yumi continues to serve in Soul Care Ministry with Second Level to provide pastoral care.



Matthew Barany (Director of Mobilization) relocated to New Jersey in September, where he continues to serve with Second Level remotely. In his current role, he focuses on connecting with local Japanese communities across the Northeast, managing social media communication, and preparing to bring the Second Level Winter Mission Team to Japan in February, 2026.

Contact Matt for the 2026 Internship opportunity:
mattbarany@secondlevel.org



Staff and Interns together for Spring New Staff Orientation

Our staff profile page was updated!

Please check it out!

<https://secondlevel.org/en/about/staff>

Please Consider Becoming a Financial Partner With Us!

We are excited to see what the Lord has planned for ministries in the coming years!

1. Within Japan

Yuucho Bank

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Second Level Ministry

Mitsui Sumitomo Bank

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2. Within U.S.

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2841 Greystone Lane

Atlanta, GA 30341

3. Anywhere in the World

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