



# 2017 Fall Newsletter

~Making A Difference through Discipling~



**Walking Together as Imitators of God and Children of Light**  
**"For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.**  
**Live as children of light" (Ephesians 5:8)**

It was a great opportunity for people who were aware of the needs of discipling and spiritual growth to get together. The whole program is designed as training to be an effective discipler/mentor for Japanese. We were able to learn some practical skills as mentors, in addition to receiving a powerful message by Pastor Ken Milhous. All the speakers gave us a lot of insights. We are thankful for Lord's blessing in every way. We pray that all the attendees are able to serve with full hearts as they make disciples of Christ at different places. (See some testimonies on the next page.)



Main Speaker  
**Rev. Ken Milhous**  
Boston Japanese Christian Church  
(Boston, Massachusetts)

Some workshops and testimonies are posted at:  
<http://mentorshipconference.org>

## Seminar Speakers



Mr. Michael Reynolds  
(Second Level Chairman)



Ms. Izumi Araki  
(ISMC Missionary in Canada)



Mr. Keita Onuma  
(Music Therapist/Counselor)



Mr. Jose Medina  
(Missionary)

We offer training and provide a network for people involved in discipleship. Next year, we're planning the Mentorship Conference in Osaka, Japan! June 15-16, 2018. Please contact us if there is a need in your area.

## TESTIMONIES about the Mentorship Conference



by **Sarah Bell**

I thoroughly enjoyed the 2017 Mentorship Conference; which I was able to learn more about how the Bible emphasizes in mentoring new believers, as well as meeting like-minded Christians who want to learn the best way to care for their new brothers and sisters in Christ. At this conference I was able to understand better how to present Christ to my Japanese friends who are seeking, or have recently accepted Christ in a context they can understand better. I believe everyone at this conference had something incredible to bring to the table, and were able to learn from each other because of our different backgrounds, cultures, and experiences that the Lord has given us.

This conference encouraged me to reach out and not be afraid to disciple others. I was always afraid I would say the wrong thing; but now I know that if I turn to God, He will show me exactly what I need at the right time. It isn't about relying on myself. To mentor we must be careful to listen, slow to speak, and be prayerful through every step. During this time I was able to get a clearer understanding of the Japanese culture and how to relate the Bible with their worldview. I now have more confidence as I go into ministry over-seas to encourage and help guide my brothers and sisters to grow deeper in God's love!



*Chizuko with Pastor Ken at the conference  
- She used to attend his church in Boston  
for 18 months from 2003-2004.*

My Experience at  
2017 Mentorship Conference

by **Chizuko Imado**

It was my first time to attend this conference, and I was able to see firsthand the importance of this ministry. The conference center was located in a beautiful natural area, and I was able to relax, leaving my busy routine behind.

Our main speaker, Pastor Ken Milhous, gave us powerful messages. On the first day, he talked about the importance of encouraging each other and helping others to come closer to God as priests (1 Peter 2:9). We were also convicted about loving one another, taking a look at the biblical references to the phrase, 'each other'. Because of this message, we were prepared to learn about discipleship and mentorship in the following programs. In another session, the pastor clearly explained the ministry for building up others' spiritual growth through the great example of Barnabas in Acts. In our Christian life, we have a lot of opportunities for fellowship and prayer with others, but it was very important to understand what the Scriptures says about the role that we are supposed to have as a Christian.

Both workshops about active listening by Izumi Araki and utilizing counseling aspects by Keita Onuma were insightful. We learned how to put ourselves into others' shoes and how we need to try understanding others. Also, we were reassured that mentors also learn from mentees, and God desires for us all to grow together. During the role play sessions, I was nervous at first. However, as we experienced the roles of mentor, mentee, and observer, our sharing became deeply valuable for sharing about our testimony and spiritual life. God gave us some very meaningful time to pray for each other as well.

It was a very important opportunity for me to evaluate how I spend time with other believers and how I need to be ready to serve others. Currently, I serve around general needs at my church, but I hope to be equipped to serve the Lord by relating other people's spiritual growth. Thank you for the staff of Second Level Ministry and others who made it happen, as well as speakers. I pray that many people can attend this kind of training opportunity and be equipped for God's ministry.

**Three Baptisms  
this  
summer!**



The Lord is so good!  
Each believer is growing spiritually in their own way. All the baptisms were blessings and an opportunity to reconfirm their faith and commitment to live for Christ!

Thank you, RJC (Reaching Japanese for Christ) for the partnership and hosting the webinar this summer!



RJC Webinar is up online!  
**"Using Mentoring to Impact Lives"**  
by **Mayumi Pohl**  
<https://vimeo.com/223853202>





*Anne Crescini is a writer, blogger, and teacher based in Munakata City, Fukuoka Prefecture. She is active in her local church, helping with various interpreting duties, as well as teaching a discipleship class on strong Biblical foundations. She has written a total of 12 books including two memoirs, several books on Japanese culture, two English language textbooks, and a guidebook for foreigners living in Japan. She also directs a class for the Reaching the Japanese for Christ (RJC) Academy, and gives seminars every year at the annual RJC International Conference. Although she is proud to have been born and raised in Virginia, Anne has been in Japan for 16 years, and currently teaches at a university in the city of Kitakyushu. She loves doing ministry with her husband, Riz, who is an international-award winning photographer. She has three daughters, Mia (11); Abby (9); and*

**Her weekly bilingual blog on Japanese culture can be found at [ameblo.jp/annechan521](http://ameblo.jp/annechan521)**

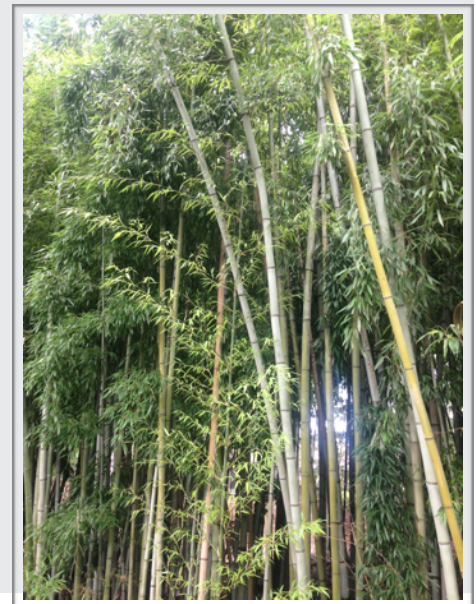


by **Anne Crescini**

Although we don't have a lot of bamboo trees in the U.S, they are famous as one of the symbols of Asia. In March, I went to one of the most famous bamboo forests in the world in Kyoto. It was so beautiful and so majestic, and there God's hand in nature could be clearly seen. After we returned, my husband and I did a discipleship class at church, and there we talked about the miracle growth process of bamboo.

Did you know that bamboo shoots, for the first five years after they are planted, grow less than an inch out of the ground? The growth that can be seen by the naked eye is minimal. Then, suddenly, in the first three months of the 6th year it grows to amazing heights of 90 feet in the blink of an eye. So my question is, when did all this growth take place? Did it all of a sudden grow from a small one inch shoot? Although you may think so, it was actually the growth that happened under the ground during those first five years that made the explosive growth possible. For you see, it was during those five years that the expansive root system necessary to support the height that the bamboo would grow to was developed. Although it couldn't be seen with the eye, if those roots were not there, the giant bamboo would wilt to the ground.

Discipleship is the same. Although we may not see too much growth at the beginning of one's walk with Jesus, the roots necessary to support the maturing Christian are being developed in the hidden places of a new believer's heart. We may not think much is happening, but in reality those roots of faith and knowledge are growing, and that growth is made possible by us feeding the new believers on the Word and prayer faithfully and on a regular basis. So let's be faithful, let's water the soil of a young Christian's heart, believing together that their faith will mature-- just like that little bamboo shoot.



**"Barefoot Gaijin : Loving Japan Without Losing Myself " and "Social Issues Facing Modern Japan" by Anne are available at our Second Level Store**  
[http://secondlevel.org/?page\\_id=1198](http://secondlevel.org/?page_id=1198)

(Please click an American flag to view the website in English.)

## NEW STAFF

~ Making Differences in Discipling Together~

Welcome Brookses to Second Level!



**Jeremy and Lizzie Brooks** began their ministry in Athens, Georgia at the University of Georgia. There they caught vision to see all people groups reached with the gospel of Jesus Christ. Their burden developed specifically to see **more Japanese disciples of Jesus**. While their ministry was not limited to Japanese students, God continued to bring Japanese people into their lives. Jeremy has spent one summer in Fukuoka as a disciple making team.

Jeremy and Lizzie's ministry has focused on the teaching of Jesus in **Matthew 28:19-20 and Paul in 2 Timothy 2:2, to make disciples** who will also make disciples of Jesus. Their passion is to encourage and support Japanese believers in their ability through Christ to lead and make disciples of Jesus among their own people.

Also, we are thankful that the Lord has provided 2 new interns to help with our administrative work. They have been serving with us since this spring.



Kaori Noda



Sanbi Wood

They are excited to serve with Second Level Ministry to **grow God's kingdom among Japanese** in the Atlanta area and in Japan through fruitful disciple-making. Jeremy is serving as a Discipleship Coach and a church planting team. Lizzie is serving as a Coordinator of Communications and Relations. They are expecting their first child in the end of January. Please pray for their transition and God's blessings!

**NEW  
Option**

We now accept **Zelle**!

It's an easy way to electrically transfer funds in minutes directly between U.S. bank accounts. Please visit your online banking. To contribute to Second Level, all you need is our e-mail address: [dainidankai@secondlevel.org](mailto:dainidankai@secondlevel.org)

**zelle**

~ We appreciate your partnership! ~  
(Thank you very much for being a partner to make disciples and expand the kingdom of God! )

### ① Within Japan

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