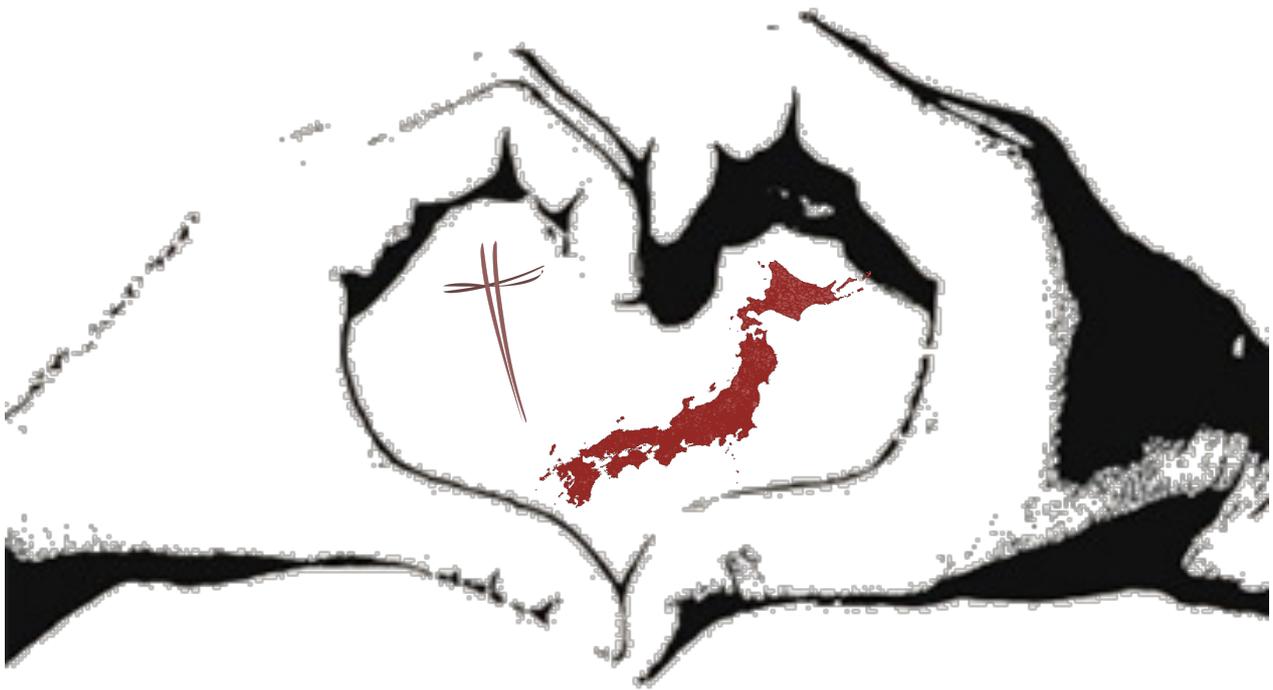


# Imperial Palace PrayerWalk



# Prefectures of Japan



## Welcome & Prayer

### *Why the Imperial Palace?*

- The Imperial Palace grounds are basically holy ground for many Japanese.
- This is the home of Emperor, who is the Shinto high priest of the nation.
- Located in this surrounding area is the seat of Japanese government, various government ministries, the Supreme Court, the National Theater, telecommunications centers as well as commerce, banking and media empires. In many ways, this general area is the CPU of all of Japan.
- In addition, this is not just the residence of the Emperor, but embedded in the sidewalks that encircle the Imperial Place are images of each of Japan's 47 prefectures. So, we have an opportunity to touch the face of all of Japan!

## Orientation to the Imperial Palace Prayer Guide

- It was specially designed for this location. From *Operation Japan*.
- Proceed in groups of 2 or 3 together, rotating turns to lead prayer. Let's change prayer partners every 15 minutes so you can have the joy of "working out" with other team members.
- I'd like to suggest that we pray out loud if you don't already do that normally. (Why would we ask this?)
- Please don't leave the course and strike out on your own.
- Please stay hydrated!
- Please be sensitive to joggers/runners/cyclists: We share the sidewalks! We want to leave the fragrance of Christ, not the stench of arrogant Christians.
- A few pictures are fine. Just make sure we don't get carried away!

## What makes Prayerwalking in Japan so Strategic/Different/Unique?

Let us just begin by stating the obvious. Our number one need in Japan is prayer. You see, when we rely on education, you have a wider range of thoughts. When you rely on organization, things are generally a little more orderly, if things go well! When you rely on strategy, you have better informed plans. But, when you rely on prayer, you have everything God wants to give you!!!

Without a prayer undergirding, without a prayer covering, our best attempts to share the Gospel will be meager at best. Not only that, but our desire to live as a Christ follower will lack authenticity. Simply put, we will lack the Divine power source we need to walk the walk, talk the talk and to live the life.

Prayer and worship are the only eternal activities we can begin on this side. Like a message on the Internet, a prayer set in motion will forever be alive. God is still responding to prayers in Japan that were voiced generations ago. Ask 100 missionaries what their number one need is and close to 100% will not blink an eye and say, "Prayer!"

You see, prayer is the one thing you can't stop! A person can refuse a witness. They can turn down a tract or a Bible. They can decide not to come to the door when you knock. People can put you off in a million and one ways. But, a prayer is like an incoming intercontinental ballistic missile. It is calibrated to strike its target!

Prayer from a distance is wonderful, but prayer on site with insight is awesome. Why is that? It is because when you see, when you hear, when you sense, you truly understand! What we truly need in the land of the Rising Son is an army of intercessors, to be on the scene without creating a scene who return home with a genuine conception of who the Japanese are and the utter necessity to pray for them.

So, what makes prayerwalking different or unique in Japan? Two words, **OVERWHELMING LOSTNESS!** You will see lostness everywhere you look. Only 1 out of every 200 people you will meet will be Christians. Many people have never held a Bible. Most have never had a Christian friend. Very few have ever had the Gospel explained to them in a way that makes sense to them. Few have ever had a prayer prayed over them that didn't cost them something!

What makes prayerwalking in the mega-cities of Japan different and unique? Why does it often feel like more of a challenge than going to other parts of Japan or other countries? Why will it feel different even compared to big cities in other countries?

### **1. As we said earlier, the sheer numbers!**

The sheer number of Japanese and other internationals living in these mega-cities, crowded into areas in small homes or apartments can feel overwhelming. Walking through the streets, or the stations, or

"danchis" — i.e. apartment cities you can get the impression that it is impossible to reach that many people with the Gospel. How can we possibly reach them all?

## 2. Each area of the city has a unique identity.

As many mega-cities are laid out with specific areas designated for various industries or work, one would need to know something of the complexion of an area before prayerwalking. For example, one area might be for factories, another area for entertainment, one for IT companies, another for governmental agencies, yet another for high-end shopping areas, etc.

Prayerwalking in these kinds of settings can be distracting, noisy, and make it difficult to really focus on lifting up the people you see and their needs. Going to temples, not just small shrines, can feel oppressive to those who are here to prayerwalk and thoughts can turn to frustration and confusion when you see Japanese praying to stone images and offering incense, or paying a Buddhist priest for a blessing.

## 3. The city revolves around transportation centers.

In mega-cities, the train stations and the subway stations are the starting point from which many people get where they are going on a daily basis. People simply don't use their cars to commute to work in the numbers or the percentage that is normal for the States.

First of all, the streets would be far too crowded if they did and secondly, it would take far too long on the weekdays to commute, so the many train stations can be a starting place for prayer walking. Going from station to station can be somewhat a little daunting, if you can't read Japanese or come from a small town yourself. And, sometimes there's the "everything looks the same" kind of feeling that can discourage praying until you feel a little more at home.

Sitting on the trains and looking at the faces of those checking mail on their cell phones, listening to music on their electronic devices, reading books, or sleeping until their stop, can give you a lot of prayer clues, but then people get off and new faces appear. Learning how to see prayer needs in a crowded train, with people standing three deep, can be a lifetime study. As you walk the streets and see the places where Japanese spend their time and their money, your heart begins to cry out to the Father for these loved of God lost ones. As you see the young students gathering in groups, trying to make a statement by dress, or hair color, or something they are doing, prayers begin to bubble up from within.

When you see how bound these precious Japanese are to their traditions and customs, even in the mega-cities and you watch the crowds streaming all around you, God will put the words in your mouth. Looking out over the city from the 45th floor of a high rise, seeing the never-ending ribbons of highways and train tracks, the Father will give you a vision of how He sees the city and the people.

Is it easy to prayerwalk in a mega-city? Not really, but it is so needed! Do people notice you "talking" as you walk past them, asking the Creator of all you see to bless and show mercy? No, and probably no one will stop you and ask you what you are doing either.

## 4. BUT, there are places of rest and relaxation!

Mega-cities have planned places of rest and re-creation in the midst of the crowds. Finding a large park in the midst office buildings, coming upon a small commons area between large corporations where employees eat lunch and just relax during the day; these can become special places for prayer. Mega-cities designed to provide something for everyone. Coffee shops and small cafe's on the streets offer a place to pause and watch as people pass by. From this vantage point, one can pray for those who seem lonely, tired, rushed and just wandering through life without a purpose.

Prayerwalking in the mega-cities, regardless of which part of the main island you go to, remains a strategic need. Learning to see these cities and its people with God's eyes and His heart will change your life. Many volunteers have said that after they spent time prayerwalking in Tokyo or Osaka, they took that city home with them in their hearts. They felt a connection to the people and their way of life. They better understood the difference between Japan on the surface and Japan deep down as it really is. They saw emptiness on faces and looked lostness in the eye. And many of these have become some of our strongest prayer partners.

# The Prayer Guide

祈りのガイド

Is it a Challenge or a Frustration? Prayerwalking in the mega-city will cause you to feel one or the other. We pray that you see it as a challenge! Thank you again for touching the heart of Japan at the point of her greatest need - crying out in prayer to a merciful Father who would have each to be saved.

## 1<sup>st</sup> – 熊本 – Kumamoto (Bear + Beginning)



- 1.) The people of Kumamoto are known to be even more conservative than the rest of the country and tend to be religiously oriented. Most people identify themselves as Buddhists.
- 2.) Ask God's blessings on camps and Christian bookstores.
- 3.) Pray for the Christian schools in Kumamoto: Kyushu Gakuin with 1,300 students, and Kyushu Lutheran Gakuin with 1,600 students. There are 9 Protestant kindergartens and 13 day-care centers with 2,000 children.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> – 大分 – Oita (Big + Part)



- 1.) Oita always tended to be different from the rest of Kyushu. The Kansai and Shikoku influence has been strong, giving the people an emphasis on individualism and rationalism.
- 2.) The Usa Shrine is one of the most famous ancient worship locations. In this area, magic and divination are evident.
- 3.) There are 39 towns and villages without churches. Most of these are very small with a 1,000 – 3,000 population. It would be very difficult to begin and maintain churches in these places, so pray that Bible studies, or some other Christ-centered groups will be started.

## 3<sup>rd</sup> – 宮崎 – Miyazaki (Temple + Slope)



- 1.) The number of agricultural workers is decreasing, but they still make up over half of the labor force.
- 2.) Many ancient burial mounds, and many ancient relics have been unearthed in Miyazaki prefecture. The people of Miyazaki place high value on tradition and a sense of belonging to the community.
- 3.) There are no TV ministries, Christian schools, camping or retreat facilities, or medical facilities here.

## 4<sup>th</sup> – 鹿児島 – Kagoshima



- 1.) The people show an average interest in religion, but a fairly high percentage of people indicate a preference for Buddhism or Shintoism.
- 2.) Francis Xavier landed in Kagoshima in 1549 marking the beginning of Catholicism in Japan. Many became "Kirishitan."
- 3.) There seem to be no Protestant schools in Kagoshima.

## 5<sup>th</sup> – 沖縄 – Okinawa (Offshore + Rope)



- 1.) Only 1.7% of the population are Buddhist and 0.3% Shinto. Popular folklore beliefs based on ancestor worship are integral parts of the Okinawans' lives.
- 2.) The ratio of church members and worship attendees to the population are three times higher than the national average.
- 3.) In Okinawa only about 46% of the towns and villages are unchurched, yet Okinawa prefecture is full of islands with unchurched communities not large enough to be registered as villages. Pray that creative ways will be found to bring the Gospel to these people.

## 6<sup>th</sup> – 北海道 – Hokkaido (North + Sea + Road)



- 1.) Hokkaido is the largest of all the prefectures. In many ways Hokkaido is a fertile receptor for the Gospel. In contrast to the rest of Japan, the culture is not tied to a long conservative history.
- 2.) On the other hand, the strong influence of past nationalistic Shintoism is felt through the Hokkaido Shrine. Revival of Shinto festivals can be seen throughout the island.
- 3.) Pray for the churches without pastors, and for those facing hardships because of the severe winters, the population decline and economic difficulties.

## 7<sup>th</sup> – 青森 – Aomori (Blue + Forest) □



- 1.) The traditions and customs still have a powerful hold here. Even in a city like Misawa, with many American military bases and Japanese self-defense forces, very little has changed.
- 2.) Mount Osore is famous for the many spiritual mediums. Mount Iwaki is also an important Shinto site for worship, and the folklore known as Oshirasama has deep roots in the people's faith.
- 3.) Pray for God's blessings on each of the 75 churches.

## 8<sup>th</sup> – 岩手 – Iwate (Rock + Hand) □



- 1.) Iwate is second in size to Hokkaido, and is the least densely populated prefecture, a prime example of a declining population area. The middle of the prefecture is called Japan's Tibet. The jagged coastline of the Pacific Ocean, along with the mountains leaves little room for population.
- 2.) Pray for the one missionary serving in Iwate—that she will be encouraged and effective in her ministry.
- 3.) Pray that God's love will be seen through the ministries to the handicapped.

## 9<sup>th</sup> – 宮城 – Miyagi (Temple + Castle)



- 1.) The people of Miyagi have weaker feelings toward religion than the other areas of Tohoku, and consequently Buddhist and Shinto influence is not quite as strong.
- 2.) The influence of the many mission schools, especially in Sendai, has helped people to be more open to the Gospel.
- 3.) There are 36 towns and villages with no churches.

## 10<sup>th</sup> – 秋田 – Akita (Fall + Field)



- 1.) Until recent years, Akita enjoyed a solid economy with forestry, rice farming, mining, crude oil and natural gas industries. Now there is a decline in these industries.
- 2.) Families and relative are closely knit. Loyalty to their prefecture is surpassed only by that in Okinawa.
- 3.) Old traditions and customs are also important in this conservative area. These often interfere with becoming a Christian.

## 11<sup>th</sup> – 山形 – Yamagata (Mountain + Shape)



- 1.) People here are conservative and strong in endurance. They also possess deep compassion and a firm sense of obligation. The deep-rooted village culture with its powerful personal relationship base makes a strong pressure against the Christian.
- 2.) Buddhism and Shintoism play an important part in people's lives. Traditional Buddhism is considered the family religion and controls the community daily life. Folk religion with mediums, spells & curses is also part of community life.
- 3.) There are several ministries for the mentally disabled & one 50-bed facility for the elderly.

## 12<sup>th</sup> – 福島 – Fukushima (Blessed + Island)



- 1.) It is an agricultural prefecture, with a wide variety of produce. Forests cover 70% of the area, making the prefecture the fourth largest forest region.
- 2.) Pray that the Lord will give the 139 churches a great vision to reach the whole prefecture with the Gospel.
- 3.) The average attendance for the churches here is the lowest in Japan, only 19. Pray for encouragement.

## 13<sup>th</sup> – 茨城 – Ibaraki (Thorn + Castle)



- 1.) The rule of Mito, one of three major Tokugawa clans, greatly influenced the cultural foundations of Ibaraki. This philosophy has molded the spiritual life of the people, with an emphasis on Confucian morals, and the importance of education.
- 2.) The area from Tsuchiura south serves as a commuter town for Tokyo, and rapid population growth is creating a very different atmosphere from the north.
- 3.) Ibaraki has the fewest people who claim religious beliefs. There are fewer Buddhists than in any other prefecture.

## 14<sup>th</sup> – 栃木 – Tochigi (Chestnut + Tree)



- 1.) The people are known to be conservative, modest, non-confrontational, and have a relatively strict ethical code.
- 2.) After the Toshogu Shrine was transferred near Nikko, the whole area became a sacred religious area. Because of this historical background the people of Tochigi possess strong religious convictions, often tied to material blessing.
- 3.) The Missionary Training Center here has up to 40 Japanese missionaries preparing for cross-cultural ministries around the world. They train missionaries here for rural areas.

## 15<sup>th</sup> – 群馬 – Gumma (Group + Horse)



- 1.) The many mountains limit rice production, but it is ideal for raising silkworms, making Gumma the nation's highest producer of silk thread.
- 2.) Many Christian leaders were born in Gumma, such as Kanzo Uchimura who founded the Non-Church movement and Jo Nijima who founded Doshisha University.
- 3.) More than five camping and retreat centers are ministering here.

## 16<sup>th</sup> – 埼玉 – Saitama (Ahead + Bead)



- 1.) Saitama's percent of cultivated area is one of the highest in the nation, even though the percent of full-time farmers is relatively low.
- 2.) The flat lands occupying much of the prefecture are being urbanized, creating the feeling that it is simply an extension of Tokyo. There is a noticeable cultural difference between the highly urbanized east and the west.
- 3.) The planting of new churches is scarcely keeping up with the rapid population growth. Pray Saitama churches will catch the vision for aggressive church planting.

## 17<sup>th</sup> – 千葉 – Chiba (1,000 + Leaves)



- 1.) The percent of farmland in Chiba ranks third in the nation. The Keiyo Industrial Zone stretches along the shoreline with landfill projects, making it a major hub.
- 2.) Tokyo Christian Gakuen at Inzai is making a significant contribution to the evangelical movement by training believers for ministry.
- 3.) Sanbu (20,176) is the largest of 29 towns and villages in Chiba with no churches. Since the population will continue its rapid increase, aggressive church planting is needed.

## 18<sup>th</sup> – 東京 – Tokyo (East + Capital)



- 1.) There are approximately 651 churches located in the wards of Tokyo, but many of their members live in the suburbs, or have moved away, with only their name still on the membership lists. Pray these churches have an effective ministry for the Gospel.
- 2.) The total number of members is decreasing, but worship attendance has been rising.
- 3.) Pray for more than 25 Christian schools with about 105,000 students—that they will always focus on the Gospel truth.

## 19<sup>th</sup> – 神奈川 – Kanagawa (God + Help + River)



- 1.) Kanagawa is the birthplace of Japan's cultural reform. Because of its international seaport and foreign exposure, many progressive influences can be seen. There is a strong local mentality rooted in desire to be different from Tokyo.
- 2.) This is where the Protestant Church began, with that spiritual impact reaching throughout Japan. In 1859 the first Protestant missionaries arrived, even though Christianity was still officially banned.
- 3.) There are a number of churches in the Yokohama and Shonan areas, where there is less resistance to the Gospel.

## 20<sup>th</sup> – 新潟 – Niigata (New + Settle) □



- 1.) Niigata is second only to Hokkaido in the amount of rice it produces. Heavy snowfall limits the possibility of outdoor work; so many people seek work in bigger cities in winter.
- 2.) The people received spiritual support from the Buddhism, which came to Japan over 700 years ago.
- 3.) There are at least 18 Protestant kindergartens and six day-care centers with 2,300 children in the prefecture.
- 4.) There are 77 towns and villages without churches.

## 21<sup>st</sup> – 富山 – Toyama (Wealth + Mountain)



- 1.) The percent of Buddhist followers is the highest in the nation. In contrast to other places, they do not practice Buddhism so much for material gain, but for deeper spiritual reasons, seeking to escape the corruption of this world.
- 2.) Toyama's church attendance and membership statistics are among the lowest in the country.
- 3.) There are no Christian book stores, training/camping facilities, Christian schools or medical services in the prefecture.

## 22<sup>nd</sup> – 石川 – Ishikawa (Rock + River)



- 1.) Ishikawa is called the “Kingdom of Buddhism,” and it is very common to see people attending weekly Buddhist sermons and Sunday schools. Their belief is blended with ancient Shintoist and primitive folklore beliefs, with the various regional religious festivities reflecting this syncretism.
- 2.) Hokuriku Gakuin with 1,400 students was founded in 1885; it remains the only Christian school in Hokuriku. Pray that they will be faithful and continue to prosper.
- 3.) Pray for the 16 church-affiliated kindergartens and seven day-care centers with

2,000 children.

## 23<sup>rd</sup> – 福井 – Fukui (Blessed + Well)



- 1.) Despite its small size, Fukui ranks among the highest in rice production. The textile industry is also strong.
- 2.) Possibly because of being so close to the Kansai area, Fukui is more open to cultural changes than the other two Hokuriku prefectures.
- 3.) There are more Buddhist temples per population here than any other prefecture in Japan. Traditional Buddhist influence is so great that even Soka Gakkai has few believers.

## 24<sup>th</sup> – 山梨 – Yamanashi (Mountain + Pear)



- 1.) Mountains, which surround most of the prefecture, have forced people to have a strong sense of community. This sense of intimacy between family and friends is the nation's strongest.
- 2.) While completing his Buddhist training, Nichiren himself remained secluded in Ninobu in the south. The Nichiren Buddhist headquarters was later established here.
- 3.) There are 32 towns and villages without churches, Kawaguchiko (24,000) being the largest.

## 25<sup>th</sup> – 長野 – Nagano (Long + Field)



4.) There are 74 unchurched towns and villages.

- 1.) Nagano prefecture is the fourth largest prefecture. The prefecture is centered on agriculture, with the highest percent of the population engaged in agriculture in the Kanto and Kinki areas.
- 2.) Despite the fact that the Zenkoji Temple is seen as the symbol of Nagano, fewer people believe in life after death than any other prefecture.
- 3.) There are a number of Christian camps and pensions here, such as the Megumi Chalet

## 26<sup>th</sup> – 岐阜 – Gifu (Pass + Hill) □



prefectures.

- 1.) Although Gifu is the nation's seventh largest prefecture, it ranks second as most uninhabitable. The north and east are mountainous, while the south has broad plains. Due to its vast forest and mountains, there is a thriving forestry industry.
- 2.) Despite its colorful history, the people of Gifu are conservative and very content with their way of life. They are also very independent and hard working.
- 3.) Gifu ranks fourth for fewest people who believe in life after death, but it also ranks fourth for the number of Buddhist believers, following the three Hokuriku

## 27<sup>th</sup> – 静岡 – Shizuoka (Quiet + Hill) □



- 1.) Shizuoka is the nation's top producer of tea, and the fishing industry has the largest catch of tuna in the nation.
- 2.) Religious awareness among the people of Shizuoka is slightly below average. They show an interest in materialism, and do not strongly rely on the gods or Buddha.
- 3.) Shizuoka and Mishima cities were main areas of missionary activity during the early years of the Meiji era, and Izu was an important target for the Alliance Mission.

## 28<sup>th</sup> – 愛知 – Aichi (Love + Know)



that the pastors might be one in heart and spirit.

- 1.) Aichi has the fourth largest population in the nation. With Nagoya midway between Tokyo and Osaka, it has become an economic and cultural force in Japan. Agriculture is a leading industry with a gross product that ranks sixth in the nation.
- 2.) Many people of Aichi have feelings of uncertainty about life, possibly because of their bent towards realism. There are a few traditional large-scale festivals in spite of the large number of Buddhists.
- 3.) There are at least six pastors' fellowship groups that meet in the prefecture. Ask

## 29<sup>th</sup> – 三重 – Mie (Three + Weight)



decreased.

- 4.) Pray for Christian facilities for the elderly located here.

- 1.) A sound fishing industry and Mie's world-famous cultured pearls are sustained by excellent seaports.
- 2.) The Ise Shrine has long been one of the most famous in Japan. It is here that the imperial ancestors are enshrined, making it the central place of worship. Mie and Shiga prefecture have the highest percentage of Shinto believers in western Japan.
- 3.) Pray for the pastors and leaders in the 83 churches—that they may lead their churches well. The number of baptisms and Sunday School attendance has

## 30<sup>th</sup> – 滋賀 – Shiga (Bloom + Carry)



- 1.) Even though it is close to the ancient capital of Kyoto, surprisingly, old traditions and customs are valued less in Shiga than in any other prefecture.
- 2.) Shiga has the third largest Buddhist population in the nation and many temples.
- 3.) Ritto city (57,000) is especially needy with only one church. There are 25 towns and villages with no churches, of which Hino with 23,000 people is the largest.

### 31<sup>st</sup> – 京都 – Kyoto (Capital + Divide)



- 1.) Of the Buddhist groups whose activities cover more than one prefecture, nearly 40 are headquartered in Kyoto. However, the percentage of Buddhists is about half that of Toyama & Ishikawa.
- 2.) In the late 1500s Catholic Christianity spread here, and at its peak, it was even stronger in Kyoto than in Kyushu.
- 3.) Pray that each of the 201 churches will be filled with God's love. Doshisha University has 35,000 students and an excellent reputation throughout Japan. Pray that God would do a mighty work on campus and raise up new workers.

### 32<sup>nd</sup> – 大阪 – Osaka (Big + Slope)



- 1.) Osaka and Tokyo have contrasting cultures. Tokyo was based on the “samurai” culture, whereas Osaka had a “merchant” mentality. The latter culture has resulted in a way of life that emphasizes present benefits and realism.
- 2.) The percentage of Buddhist believers is higher here than in either Kyoto or Hyogo, but the number of people who say they depend on religion for spiritual support is the 2<sup>nd</sup> lowest in Japan.
- 3.) Pray for over 20,000 students attending six different Christian Schools. 99% of the students are not Christians.

### 33<sup>rd</sup> – 兵庫 – Hyogo (Soldier + Warehouse)



- 1.) Due to the large population of Kobe, both the gross agricultural product and those involved in farming amount to only 3%. Hyogo has thriving steel and shipbuilding industries.
- 2.) Kobe, along with Yokohama, has a long history as an international port, allowing many foreign influences to be assimilated into the culture. Despite this, rural Hyogo is filled with communities still bound by old traditions and folklore beliefs.

### 34<sup>th</sup> – 奈良 – Nara (Help + Good)



- 1.) Nara has the least amount of habitable land in the nation. Forests occupy 80% of the land.
- 2.) Nara served as the nation's capital twice. This highly developed culture is a source of pride for the prefecture. There are numerous historic temples and shrines in Nara whose festivals can be traced back to ancient times.
- 3.) An awareness survey does not indicate a strong interest in religion, but the percentage of people who believe in life after death is the second highest in the nation.
- 4.) Pray for churches to be started in the 24 towns and villages, which do not yet have churches.

### 35<sup>th</sup> – 和歌山 – Wakayama (Announcement + Song + Mountain)



- 1.) The people here still practice the traditional community system called danka, wherein families are closely tied to local temples.
- 2.) The people in south Wakayama appear relatively open-minded, but this has not led to openness to Christianity.
- 3.) The Wakayama Zion Church not only houses the only Christian bookstore in the prefecture, but it reaches out to the community with a variety of ministries. Pray that each church in the prefecture would creatively minister to their communities with love and the Gospel.

### 36<sup>th</sup> – 鳥取 – Tottori (Bird+Take)



- 1.) Tottori is the nation's least populated prefecture.
- 2.) Tottori prefecture has a higher percentage of Buddhist followers than any other prefecture in the Chugoku region except Hiroshima, and the least percent of Christians.
- 3.) Since there are no Christian bookstores, pray that ways may be found to meet the need for good literature for Christians and seekers.

### 37<sup>th</sup> – 島根 – Shimane (Island + Root)



- 1.) Shimane is one of the least populated prefectures as well.
- 2.) The people of Shimane have stronger feelings towards ancestors than any other prefecture. They also have a strong sense of obligation toward family and neighbors, which coupled with traditional beliefs, has hampered people's responsiveness to the Christian faith.
- 3.) The average worship attendance is only 17, the lowest in Japan. Thank God for each Believer and pray for spiritual and numerical growth.

### 38<sup>th</sup> – 岡山 – Okayama (Hill + Mountain)



- 1.) Okayama has successfully shifted from agriculture to a manufacturing base, but is still a healthy agricultural producer, the best in the Chugoku region.
- 2.) An awareness survey indicates that more people here enjoy work and feel spiritually and mentally fulfilled than in any other prefecture in the nation.
- 3.) There are 46 unchurched towns and villages here. Pray that there would be a Christian presence firmly established.

### 39<sup>th</sup> – 広島 – Hiroshima (Wide + Island)



- 1.) From the Meiji Era to the end of World War II, the city of Hiroshima prospered as the center of Japan's military industry. The great devastation caused by the atomic bombing pushed Hiroshima to become a force for world peace with its motto, "No More Hiroshima."
- 2.) Hiroshima has the highest percentage of Buddhist believers in the Chugoku district.
- 3.) There are 51 unchurched towns and villages that lie mostly in the mountainous regions.

### 40<sup>th</sup> – 山口 – Yamaguchi (Mountain + Mouth)



- 1.) A recent survey showed that 70% of Yamaguchi believes that the emperor should be given the utmost respect. This is the highest in the nation. An equal percent believe that the old customs and traditions should be valued. Yet they only show an average interest in religion. These, coupled with strong group ties, make individual Gospel decisions difficult.
- 2.) Christian work in Yamaguchi was initiated by St. Francis Xavier himself. He was given an open door by Lord Ouchi, which led to many conversions.
- 3.) There are no Christian medical clinics and hospitals.
- 4.) Pray for the 30 unchurched towns and villages.

#### 41<sup>st</sup> – 徳島 – Tokushima (Virtue + Island)



- 1.) The people of Tokushima value family name and status more than any other prefecture, and feel spiritually connected to their ancestors.
- 2.) There are not many traditional Buddhist followers here. This is due in part to the influence of Soka Gakkai and sectarian Shintoism, with their emphasis on material blessings.
- 3.) This is the only prefecture on Shikoku that has no Christian schools.
- 4.) The majority of Tokushima's 31 unchurched towns and villages are located among the Shikoku and Tsurugi Mountains where the population is declining.

#### 42<sup>nd</sup> – 香川 – Kagawa (Fragrant + River)



- 1.) The people here tend to be mellow, modest, hard-working, optimistic, and fun-loving in leisure.
- 2.) The people of Kagawa show an interest in religion, especially in Buddhism. Of the 88 temples on the Shikoku pilgrimage route, 22 are located here.
- 3.) Kagawa has churches in 50% of its towns and villages.

#### 43<sup>rd</sup> – 愛媛 – Ehime (Love + Princess) □



- 1.) The climate of Ehime is consistently mild and natural disasters are few. As a result the people of Ehime are said to be mild natured. They are submissive to authority and tradition, emphatic on community issues, and yet shy toward strangers.
- 2.) Although Ehime is experiencing a population decrease, 7 out of 12 cities in the prefecture are growing.
- 3.) Ehime has one of the highest percentages of church attendance per population, two for every 1,000 people.
- 4.) Ehime has less unchurched areas than most prefectures.

#### 44<sup>th</sup> – 高知 – Kochi (High + Know) □



- 1.) Kochi enjoys an average of only 70 sunny days a year, and also receives considerable damage from seasonal typhoons.
- 2.) The people are known to be extremely stubborn, anti-authority prone, and have less respect for the government, the emperor and elders than average. Even though there is a low level of interest in religion here, it is surprising that Kochi has the third highest number of Shinto believers.
- 3.) Most of the 34 unchurched towns and villages have small declining populations of one to four thousand people.

#### 45<sup>th</sup> – 福岡 – Fukuoka (Blessed + Hill)



- 1.) The people of Fukuoka are sophisticated, openhearted, and less discriminatory against outsiders than most Japanese.
- 2.) Fukuoka and Kumamoto have two of the poorest ratios of church membership to attendance. Protestant churches here have an average membership of 79, but average attendance is only 31. Pray for those who have confessed Jesus, but do not participate in church fellowship.
- 3.) The prefecture has four Christian schools (among these our own Seinan Gakuen) with an enrollment of 18,000 students. Pray that many will turn and follow Jesus.

## 46<sup>th</sup> – 佐賀 – Saga (Help + Celebrate)



- 1.) Foreign influences have shaped this culture. Korea, China, and Christianity have all been felt throughout Kyushu.
- 2.) Pray for a spirit of cooperation among the pastors and believers of Saga's 30 Protestant churches. Only 650 people out of a population of 900,000 attend a Protestant church here. By God's power, Gideon and 300 soldiers defeated the Midianites. Pray for boldness for these people.
- 3.) Saga has the negative distinction of having 37 or 88% of its towns and villages without churches, the highest percent in the nation.

## 47<sup>th</sup> – 長崎 – Nagasaki (Long + Slope)



- 1.) The prefecture is itself a peninsula, but also has numerous peninsulas. Agriculture and fisheries are considered the leading industries of Nagasaki prefecture.
- 2.) During the Edo era of isolation, Nagasaki was the only port open to international ships. This prefecture produced early *Christians*, many of whom died as martyrs during the oppression. When the country opened during the Meiji era, many hidden *Christians* were identified and churches reestablished.
- 3.) The number of Catholics is highest in the nation but Protestants are still few.

## Additional Prayer Prompts for Japan

- 1. Pray that God would do a mighty work here.**
  - a. Pray that the Gospel will be communicated clearly and power fully in this place.
  - b. Pray that God would bring the Light of the World into this place.
  - c. Pray that the resurrection power will transform this community.
  - d. Pray that evil powers would be frustrated and that many would taste the freedom of being right with God.
  - e. Pray a blessing on this place.
- 2. Praying for unbelievers:**
  - a. Pray for receptive and repentant hearts (Luke 8:5-12).
  - b. Pray for them to have God's attitude toward sin (John 16:8).
  - c. Pray for the person to be released to believe (2 Corinthians 10:3-4; 2 Timothy 2:25-26).
  - d. Pray for transformed lives (Romans 12:1-2).
- 3. Praying for Believers:**
  - a. Pray for Christ to send believers into His harvest fields (Matthew 9:38).
  - b. Pray for Christians to have Christ's joy made full in themselves (John 17:13).
  - c. Pray for Christ to guard and protect believers from the evil one (John 17:15).
  - d. Pray for Christians to be unified in one mission, purpose, and spirit even as the Father and Son are one (John 17:21-22).
  - e. Pray for Christians to be where Christ is and join in His work (John 17:24).
  - f. Pray for Christians to be filled with spiritual wisdom; pleasing in all ways to Christ; strengthened spiritually, mentally, physically and emotionally; and bearing fruit in every good work (Colossians 1:10-11).
- 4. Specific prayer:**
  - a. Pray for God to make a way for us to share the Gospel (Colossians 4:3).
  - b. Pray for fearlessness and bravery to witness no matter where we are (Ephesians 6:19).
  - c. Pray for (kings) those in power (and with influence) to be saved (1 Timothy 2:2-4).
  - d. Pray for confession of sin (1 John 1:9).
  - e. Pray for spiritual awakening (2 Chronicles 7:14).

## Fast Facts about the Imperial Palace

- The Imperial Palace is the private residence of the Imperial family, an archive, museum and administrative offices.
- The Imperial Palace is built on the site of the old Edo Castle.
- The total area including the gardens is 3.41 square kilometers (1.32 square miles).
- During the height of the 1980s Japanese property bubble, the palace grounds were valued by some as more than the value of all the real estate in the state of California.
- In the Meiji era, most structures from Edo Castle disappeared. Some were cleared to make way for other buildings while others were destroyed by earthquakes and fire. For example, the wooden double bridges over the moat were replaced with stone and iron bridges.
- The buildings of the Imperial Palace constructed in the Meiji era were constructed of wood. Their design employed traditional Japanese architecture in their exterior appearance while the interiors were an eclectic mixture of Japanese and European elements fashionable in the 19th century.
- The ceilings of the grand chambers were coffered with Japanese elements; however, Western chairs, tables, and heavy curtains furnished the spaces. The floors of the public rooms had parquets or carpets while the residential spaces used the traditional tatami mats.
- The main audience hall was the central part of the palace. It was the largest building in the compound and was where guests were received for public events. The floor space was more than 7,935.7 square feet.
- In the interior, the coffered ceiling was traditional Japanese-style, while the floor was parquetry. The roof was styled similarly to the Kyoto Imperial Palace, but was covered with copper plates (to make it fireproof) rather than Japanese cypress shingles.
- On the night of 25 May 1945 most structures of the Imperial Palace were destroyed in the Allied firebombing raid. It was from the basement of the concrete library that Emperor Showa (Hirohito) declared the capitulation of Japan on August 15, 1945, ending World War II.
- Due to the large-scale destruction of the Meiji-era palace, a new main palace hall and residences were constructed on the western portion of the site in the 1960s. The area was renamed Imperial Residence in 1948 while the eastern part was renamed East Garden and became a public park in 1968.
- Except for Imperial Household Agency and the East Gardens, the palace is generally closed to the public. Each New Year (January 2) and Emperor's Birthday, the public is permitted to enter through the Nakamon (inner gate) where they gather in the Kyuden Totei Plaza in front of the Chowaden Hall. The imperial family appears on the balcony before the jubilant crowd and the emperor normally gives a short speech greeting and thanking the visitors and wishing them good health and blessings.
- The Palace has changed little between 1945 and 2005 - as especially shown by the double-bridge Nijubashi, which leads to the main gate.
- The East Garden is where most of the administrative buildings for the palace are located and encompasses the former Honmaru and Ninomaru areas of Edo Castle, 2,300,000 square feet. Located on the grounds of the East Garden is the Imperial Tokagakudo Music Hall, the Music Department of the Board of Ceremonies of the Imperial Household, the Archives and Mausolea Department Imperial Household Agency, structures for the guards such as the Saineikan dojo, and the Museum of the Imperial Collections.

It is the privilege of each new ambassador arriving at the palace to hand in his accreditation to the emperor to be picked up from Tokyo Station either in a limousine or the carriage. Although the carriage is not as comfortable as the modern limousine, most choose the carriage.