

GRUßWORT DER VEREINIGTEN KIRCHE CHRISTI IN JAPAN



September 8, 2009

Lutz Drescher
Secretary of East Asia Liaison Desk
Evangelisches Missionswerk in Südwestdeutschland
Vogelsangstr. 62, 70197 Stuttgart, Germany

Dear Mr. Drescher,

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

2009 has become the year of remembrance: the 125th anniversary of DOAM (Deutsche Ostasienmission), which started Japan Mission by disseminating the small seeds of evangelism in 1885. The United Church of Christ in Japan (Kyodan) would like to express its sincere gratitude to DOAM for the everlasting evangelism efforts to save Japan.

The 125 years as a single word might sound short, however, it is indeed a long space of time. When it comes to the church evangelism, it is not the physical time length that reveals its preciousness. Rather the preciousness comes from the fact that the living Christ, being the Lord of the church and the Lord of the world and the history, has always walked with the missionaries and the lay-members.

Now if I look back to the history of DOAM's Japan Mission, started by missionary Wilfried Spinner

I believe DOAM started its evangelical mission in Japan in a wider sense of the word: i.e. rather with the focus on making known the thought and culture of Christianity, than with the emphasis on building churches related to the denomination. Such mission orientation must have resulted in opening the "Protestantische Theologische Accademie" in 1887, shortly after the establishment of a German church in Tsukiji, Tokyo. Although the seminary did not last so long, the mission orientation remained intact and its ministry was succeeded in the form of Christianity education, and in particular the infant education. Time went by, but soon DOAM established "Koishikawa Allgemeinen Evangelischen Kirche" (later, Kamitomisaka Church) and continued its ministries based on this church. Then it formed another strongpoint in Kyoto, suffered the bitter times during the WWII, and it reaches to the present stage after turns and twists.

Of late DOAM is a constituent member of EMS, devoting itself to train the youth who leads the next generation. I find its efforts on youth activities and fellowship wonderful. Let us cooperate in the youth leadership training now when we await for the 125th anniversary.

I pray for our Lord's abundant blessings on EMS and DOAM.

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General Secretary

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