

Vision of Praise



From the editor

For this issue, we would like to share the impact of our mission trip to West America, "The Long Awaited Cosmic Worship" by Yuki Shibuta, a headquarters staff, together with the "Finally! Finally! The Time Has Come!!" by Michael Fujii, a house church leader in San Jose, California.

The Long Awaited Cosmic Worship

-West America Mission Trip-

Yuki Shibuta

On the day of our departure (August 30), a huge typhoon was predicted to land in the Kansai region. But amidst our worries, the typhoon miraculously disappeared because of everyone's prayers in the body of Christ! Fortunately, Yumi and I were able to depart from the Kansai International Airport in calm, clear skies.

As the plane bound for San Francisco finally left the Narita Airport, my heart was filled with deep gratitude to the Lord. At first, I had been praying that even the typhoon would become a praise — but through this incident, I witnessed the power of prayer given in the name of the Body of Christ. Although there were some casualties, the storm dissipated without causing a catastrophe and united us one as the body of Christ. I became assured that God's love would heal also the wounded people and the land.

I don't remember exactly, but it's been 15 to 20 years since I visited the West Coast on a mission trip. My last visit to California was not for a mission but for the editing of the book "The White Dove" at Michael Fujii's house. This time's trip was also Yumi's first visit to the West Coast, and it was an unfamiliar place for both of us. But ever since I was assigned to work with the West Coast house church leaders, an unimaginable change happened inside me. The idea of holding an English ministry began to form within me.

The burning desire to share the vision with the church leaders in the West Coast welled up in me. And I was reminded of the early days of the Kohitsuji no Mure. At that time, Christ's love exploded at house worships by a group of housewives called Torinashi (intercessory) sisters. This was before the Ashiya Church was founded. I hope that the English ministry might come to fruition and flourish as the West Coast house church leaders and we began to work together in joy of praise. I had high hopes. I don't know any details yet, but I believe God's desire will reveal itself as we resound with one another as one body of Christ. I thank the Lord from the bottom of my heart for preparing this mission trip and guiding us through it all.

Although the experience with Dez was the most unforgettable, there were many other incredible experiences from this mission trip. The first is about Minako (Mimi's sister). Over lunch after the joint worship, I told Minako about my excitement for the English ministry. Minako said that she'd become a leader some day again.

She also confessed, “I want to learn the new worship songs, but I am overwhelmed by the vast number of new praise songs.” I said, “It’s the same for Japanese people or even the church staff. You don’t need to memorize everything. But I think that’s how much the Lord is entrusting us with His desire.” Minako seemed to take comfort in my words. The new praise songs are published exclusively on the leader’s website. If Minako wants to learn the new praises, it also reflects her wish to stand as a house church leader.

In this mission, we didn’t find a place to hold a joint worship service, so we asked Minako if we could have a worship at her house. The outcome was ideal as the room was comfortable and bright, and accommodated about 30 people. The praise resounded nicely, and the message could be heard without a microphone. I truly appreciate that we held the worship in such a lovely setting.

Minako and their family stayed at the House of Life a year ago, and I believe the experience had a great impact on them. They seem to be different people than when we last met at the NY retreat (8 years ago). Minako told me that she is suffering from insomnia now, and she listens to the Spain Praise Concert album every night to help her fall asleep.

Minako also told me a story from roughly 2 years ago, when her sister, Mimi, returned to the States for Christmas. Minako held a Christmas party for about 40 people, and everyone took turns singing Christmas songs like “Jingle Bells.” Mimi suddenly raised her hand wanting to sing. She then sang “Jesus.” Claire (Minako’s daughter) was giggling

at first, but when she listened to the praise song, “Jesus,” she suddenly started to cry with big tears. When Minako came to the Kohitsuji no Mure for the first time, she was touched by the Lord and burst into tears, but she now witnessed the power of praise descend upon her family. I thought that this experience inspired her to bring her whole family to the House of Life and the Church of the Wind.

Minako said she could not find certain praise songs on the Kohitsuji no Mure English Website. We discovered that only English praise songs were published on the English site. She told me she’d also like to see Hawaiian and Latin Praise songs. (Now we are working on it.)

I remember on the night we arrived in California, I felt a strong urge from the Lord and the people in heaven. When my body began to tingle, the praise of “Alleluia of I Have Been Waiting (Kari 103 Watashi wa Matteita no Alleluia)” started to echo in my mind. I began to weep because I became convinced that this was the moment the Lord had been waiting for.

I worried and prayed that our spiritual vision would reach the hearts of English-speaking people, but through Minako and Dez, I became convinced that our Sanbi Praise was the answer, and Sanbi Praise was the Cosmic Worship itself. I am filled with excitement and give thanks to all the Saints who have been waiting for this very moment.

September 4, 2024

Finally! Finally! The Time Has Come!!

- Northern California Mission Trip-

Michael Fujii

The same scripture has been given to us before, but I believe the Lord reminding us again to stand on this promise after the ground-breaking ceremony of the Church of the Wind held on December 3 last year.

The day of the Northern California Regional worship, honestly, I didn't know what to expect but one thing was for sure it was a new beginning.... and I was filled with excitement and anticipation.

Yuki started the praise practice by sharing a little about Heavenly Praise. She mentioned that we are praising together with heaven and those in heaven are here amongst us at this very moment. As we started singing the praises, the presence of the Lord filled the room. As she described the core of Heavenly Praising by saying “‘Ten no Sanbi’ has no form nor structure, there is no right nor wrong. The words of Heavenly Praise are simple, the same words are repeated over and over so we just come together and praise the Lord,” she asked everyone, “Don't focus on the music notes but listen and follow the flow and you'll know when to join in.” At our church we often talk about the “multi-dimensional praise,” which harmonizes with the heavenly angels, those who have passed away and all of us on earth, coming in and out in one body. She added, “there is life in

the Heavenly Praise which is experienced by everyone who worships the Lord.”

Although I myself have heard these spiritual words many times before at the Church of the Wind in Ashiya, it was refreshing. It resonated deep in my soul. Just at that moment, I took a quick glance to see everyone’s faces. Their faces were without expression, probably because they have never heard of such a thing. I believe for many of them this was their first introduction to the world of true worship, their faces look intrigued. It was as if their soul yearned for such truth but didn’t even know themselves what they were yearning for. I felt when they heard these words they knew instantly that this is true worship. I believe many of them for years were conflicted within themselves because the world of absolute and the unconditional love of God had never been described nor experienced in such a way.

It was like they finally ate a delicious meal that completely satisfied their appetite and perhaps their taste buds beyond their expectations. Certainly, my own soul was elated.... . repeated screaming, “Yes, this is it!!”

With the praise practice so full of faith and spirituality, I couldn’t wait to hear Yumi’s message for the main service. Yumi shared a testimony about a major pivoting point in her life that shook the dimension of her faith. She talked about her close friend who suddenly passed away from an illness while in her high school years. Yumi, who was raised in a Christian family, had always been bothered with her friend’s salvation and for many years this haunted her.

She had always understood the vastness of Jesus' perfect love. And yet she also understood that anyone who didn't receive Christ while on earth won't enter Heaven's gates.

I believe Yumi and many other American Christians are conflicted by some of these beliefs, questioning if God is so absolute, fair and claims to have perfect love, why isn't every single person given a chance to be saved? Didn't He die on the cross for all of His people?

One day after returning to Japan from studying at the university in the States Yumi is invited to the Kohitsuji no Mure Church. She decides to join the Sunday worship in Ashiya. After the worship she is compelled to ask about her friend's salvation and decides to inquire to one of the church staff. To Yumi's astonishment she is told, "We believe if you pray by faith, Jesus will surely save your friend." I, myself, was elated as I heard the words uttered from Yumi's mouth. I could see the attendees in the worship also experience true worship as Yumi testified, Jesus' undeniable Love. I believe they were waiting to hear such truth which released them from the bondage man's interpretation to God's spiritual world of truth and eternal love. Without a doubt this one truth, I believe, cracked their heart to want to hear more. The room was overwhelmingly effervescing with the Holy Spirit.

At that very moment I specifically looked for Dez, my former coworker and looking at her facial reaction I knew this message was what she wanted to hear. Not only her but I believe everyone there had been waiting to hear the word of faith. I just wanted to say, "Finally!! Finally!! The

time has come!!”

I realized I also had been limiting the Lord’s power and ability with my own thoughts and values. However, I go back to the vision of “Everything is completed in praise.” Praising with the Heavenly Praise, where Jesus resides, is the only deterrent from man’s limiting gospel and belief. Jesus resides with us in the Heavenly Praise therefore we are protected with “Heavenly Praise armor” and can remain in the true spiritual worship. ‘Ten no Sanbi’ (Heavenly Praise) is the answer and key that unlocks all of our doors of doubt and question.

After the worship we all went out to lunch and fellowshiped. I was flabbergasted to find out the effects of the worship, when Dez announced that she decided to be a leader. Later I also found out that Minako, who had taken a break, wanted to be a leader once more. This message and this mission trip was something the world had been waiting for.... !! Perhaps the people who joined the worship had been crying in prayer, seeking and yearning to receive the word of God. This mission trip was nothing short of a divine intervention of God. It is hard to put into words because no words seem to describe the greatestness of this time. Seems like a spiritual flood gate has opened and it’s rushing in new starts and new beginnings nonstop....

I have been praying for a revival for many years to occur with the young Americans. The time has come when the peoples’ hearts are ready to receive Jesus. There has been much suffering and pain. I believe this is the time when the vision of true worship can be conveyed. There is

no doubt that Heaven and earth, the entire world and all creation has been waiting. I do believe we have finally witnessed just the start of it. And therefore it is exciting times!!! I believe we will see enormous healing overflowing from Heaven to earth. Still there is much work (praising and worshiping) to be done.

My only effort or work with the Lord is to worship and praise Him!!

It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. (Galatian 2:20 RSV)

Although I have known this scripture for many years, perhaps I'm just starting to understand the true meaning of, "It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me." Wow!! OMG!!!

I thank God, all angels in Heaven and West-America madoguchi who are in charge of this section for their endless prayers and faith.

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