

From the editor

For this issue, we would like to share an impressive testimony of encounter with the love of Jesus Christ, "The Most Amazing Experience," by Mihoko, a leader of house church leader in Michigan with her husband Craig.

The Most Amazing Experience

Mihoko & Craig

In May, we attended the healing service at the Kohitsuji no Mure in Japan with our daughter. We would like to share our testimony of a touching incident that happened that day.

Craig: During our visit to Japan this year, we traveled to Kanazawa and Osaka. On the last day of our trip, we took a taxi from Osaka to Ashiya to attend the healing service at the Church of the Wind. In Japan, we use a taxi app called GO through Miho's phone to arrange for a taxi pick-ups. As soon as we left our hotel in Osaka, we arranged for a ride to Ashiya through GO app. After we checked out the hotel and stepped outside, a taxi driver who waited at the taxi stand rolled his window down, and yelled to us, "Do you need a taxi?"

Since we had already made arrangements with GO, we told him that we already have a reservation and declined his offer. Normally when we order a taxi through Go, it takes about a minute to come, however, the taxi we arranged through GO wasn't showing up. Miho checked the location of the taxi on her phone, but for some reason, it was detouring in circles in Osaka and a message popped up saying that it would take 15 minutes to arrive at the hotel. It was a very strange situation that we had never experienced before.

Fearing that we would be late to make it in time for the praise practice before the worship in Ashiya, we asked our

daughter to cancel the taxi we had arranged through GO. So she did. The taxi driver who yelled out to us when we left the hotel was still there, so we called him over and asked him to take us to Ashiya. The taxi driver opened the door and greeted us cheerfully. We gave the driver the address of our destination and he entered the address into the car's navigation system. He asked us, "Is your destination Kohitsuji no Mure?" so Miho simply answered, "Yes." The taxi driver was very friendly and we talked about various things until we arrived at Ashiya, making it a fun drive. Just before when we arrived at the Church of the Wind, the driver said to us in Japanese, "Are you going to pray here?" I thought it was a little bit strange that he understood what we were doing, and at that moment, I felt that he seemed to be interested in praying.

Mihoko: I replied, "Yes." Then the driver asked me, "Where are you going after the service?" I said, "We are going to take a taxi to Itami Airport and return to Tokyo." Then he said, "In that case, I'll wait until the service is over, so please let me drive you to Itami Airport." I replied, "Are you sure?" and he said "Yes!" We then exchanged our numbers so I can contact him when the service is over.

We safely arrived in time for the praise practice, and as we were singing the praises, I remembered that we had planned to have lunch at a restaurant in Ashiya before heading to Itami Airport, so I contacted the driver and told him that he didn't need to wait for us as we were grabbing lunch in Ashiya before heading to Itami Airport. Then he replied, "It's ok. I'll take you to Ashiya station after the service, and will take you to Itami Airport after that."

Craig: Very very kind person! At that point, I turned to Miho and said, "I think we should ask the taxi driver if he wants to join us for the service."

Mihoko: Agreeing with Craig's suggestion and finally realizing that it is God's will to invite the taxi driver to the service, I quickly sent a text and asked if he would like to join us for the service. He immediately responded, "Thank you for inviting me. I am not familiar with Christian songs, but I would love to attend the service." My heart pounded with excitement.



Craig: We were so surprised. We didn't think he would join us.

Mihoko: I left the praise practice with excitement and hurried to the reception. I quickly explained the situation to a staff member who happened to be at the reception area. The staff immediately understood the situation and directed the driver to the church's parking lot.

The driver was welcomed into the Church of the Wind, and the staff member at the reception desk greeted him with a smile. I told the driver, "Please sit wherever you like." He followed me and sat next to Craig. Craig was telling the driver about his encounter with Kohitsuji no Mure in Japanese. The driver who had no connection to Christianity, was listening quietly to Craig's story. Craig then whispered in my ear, "We brought a sheep to the church." He was absolutely right! It was not a coincidence that the taxi I had arranged through GO never arrived to the hotel and we ended up taking the taxi who happened to be there. My heart was filled with joy as I realized that this was all God's plan.

Craig: I was very excited and felt this feeling even inside the taxi when the driver asked us, "Are you going to pray here?" I felt that God has touched us and brought us together.

On the day of the service, Ms. Yumiko Tokuhara was the minister who led the service. Her message was about the Lord being the shepherd. How Pastor Peter formed the church, and

how Pastor Peter saw the vision of these wounded lamb outside the fence. And how he heard God's message to go outside of the fence. This is how the church was formed. I felt the same message from God that day, and felt as Jesus used us as a vessel to bring in the lamb, "the taxi driver," to the church. I felt we were fulfilling God's will to bring him into the church. This made us extremely happy, enlightened and blessed.

Mihoko: Surprise from God did not end there.

After the service ended, I was supposed to tell the taxi driver to stay seated and wait for the staff to pray for him, but the healing service was so long that I had to rush to the restroom.

While I was in the restroom, I felt so irresponsible for not asking him to stay and kept blaming myself. I hurried back to the church and surprisingly saw the driver in front of the church being prayed by the staff and getting baptized! I couldn't believe what I was witnessing. Craig later told me that the driver was about to leave the church so he can turn on the air conditioner in his car for us but the staff at the reception noticed and stopped him. Without the support of Kohitsuji no Mure staff, the driver would not have been baptized.

I was truly touched by how everyone at the church worked together to fulfill God's will. At Kohitsuji no Mure, people often talk about "working together in the body of Christ." I didn't really understand what that meant but I was able to experience it during my visit at the church. I was so moved to experience how God uses each one of us as His vessel. It was God's will to guide the taxi driver to the church so he can be baptized.

Every time I hear or read other people's miracle testimonies at Kohitsuji no Mure, I used to think those miracles only happen to people who pray more and who are

spiritually closer to Jesus than I am. I always thought that I would never experience those kind of miracles because I'm not serious enough as a leader. However, despite these feelings, God showed Himself to me. My simple plan to stop by the Church of the Wind before heading back to Tokyo, turned out to be a miracle event that I would never forget. Through this experience, I came to confirm that God loves me the way I am and uses me as His vessel despite how little I pray or read the bible.

Thinking back on that day, the minute we left the hotel in Osaka, it felt like I was floating in God's hand and being carried away by the power that was beyond my will and emotions. Witnessing God's presence and power was truly a moving and miracle event for our family. At Itami Airport, we kept talking about how touched we were with the incident. We couldn't believe what happened. Everything happened so organically and it was so obvious that God was working through every moment. Craig said that the message about Psalm chapter 23 the minister gave at the service was so timely for us and for the driver. Craig was so moved by this miracle and volunteered to lead today's zoom service with me. This was a big surprise to me as I realized that Craig understands the vision of Kohitsuji no Mure church. Craig never attends the sanbi (praise) service I hold at home and I don't really talk about my faith to him. Without him knowing, I believe that he was touched by the Holy Spirit through the heavenly praises. Also, our 18-year-old daughter was so moved by this incident that she was FaceTiming her boyfriend in America at Itami Airport to share the story. Lately, she has been difficult about believing in God so I was surprised to know that we were feeling the same way. You can't make someone believe in God. It was the Holy Spirit that touched her spirit.

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside quiet waters. He restores my soul; He guides me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

(Psalm 23:1-3 NAS)

Through this incident, I was reminded once again that just as the Bible says, the Lord is my shepherd and I will never lack, so all I need to do is just be myself and have faith in God. And I learned that when I praise the Lord, God will lead and protect my husband and my daughter without my effort. God even lead the taxi driver to the Church of the Wind. I truly believe that the Church of the Wind is a place for “Ikoi no Migiwa” which means “peace and rest” in Japanese. God indeed showered my family and the taxi driver with His peace and joy. You don’t have to try hard to be close to God or try to be a good Christian. God uses me as His vessel just by worshiping the Lord from my heart. All we need to do is to believe in Jesus Christ, and that He died on the cross for us. Jesus’s love is sufficient to us. Everything will be completed through the heavenly praises.

Through this divine experience, I learned that God’s love is given equally to all people at the same time. He doesn’t take sides. Human love is conditional and one-sided, but God’s love is immeasurable that embraces all things.

Lastly, after returning to Michigan, I sent a text to the driver to thank him for all the help and he thanked me saying that it was truly a happy day for him. His words reminded me that true happiness is encountering Jesus Christ and knowing that you are loved. I sincerely thank Jesus for giving my family the most amazing experience.