

SERVING THE LORD IN

JAPAN

NEWS FROM THE JASTRAMS



July/August 2017

<https://jastrams.me/newsletters/>

Food for Mind, Body, and Soul



Sumo champions (Ryogoku Station)

WRESTLING FOR THE GODS?

I saw these fellows when exiting the train station near a sumo sporting arena. “Why are those zig-zag streamers hanging from their aprons?” I wondered. I had only seen them dangling from straw ropes at the entrances of Shinto shrines until then.

Come to find out that sumo wrestling is steeped in Shinto ritual and customs. In fact, many Japanese activities and traditions incorporate Shinto practices, and many Japanese follow them diligently. They are seen as part of their identity that connects them as a people.

As a theological education facilitator Dan helps the Japan Lutheran Church connect fellow Japanese to the most important community of all, the community of Christ. We are brothers and sisters in Christ.



To be added to or removed from this mailing list, send an email message to daniel.jastram@lcmsintl.org with the word ADD or REMOVE in the subject line.



Dan explains differences between the American and Japanese educational system and society. Rice and curry with all the trimmings afterwards. (Totsuka, Japan)

It was the 12th Annual Cultural Enrichment Day at Totsuka Lutheran Church this July for junior and senior high students. The topic: *The Educational Situation in America*. No matter the topic, however, the church uses this day as an outreach opportunity; this year Dan was their guest speaker.

Church members joined students from area “mission” schools for the day’s program. These mission schools encourage their students to attend such activities, even though they are not church schools, per se. As a result, students are exposed to the Gospel, perhaps for the first time.

Besides Dan’s presentation, the schedule included an opening and closing devotion, as well as a mini-concert of church music by the church organist,

during which she introduced Lutheran hymns to the students, giving the background of the composer and their message, while gently introducing the message of the Bible.

At the end of the day, church members served a scrumptious evening meal of Japanese curry with many delicious side dishes, including sauerkraut and sausage. What a surprise!

Following the meal, we listened to a closing devotion that a congregation member had carefully prepared. (Since I do not understand Japanese, I depend on my “simultaneous” interpreter, Dan, sitting next to me.) The Gospel shone brightly as she explained a parable to the students.

Plenty of food for the mind, body and soul this day.



Time to Reconnect



PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- Dan as he continues his Japanese language studies.
- energetic financial support for LCMS missionaries world-wide

GIVE THANKS FOR:

- Harmony and unity among the Asia Leadership Team.
- The leaders and staff in St Louis who guide and support us.

PRAISE GOD FOR:

- YOU!—the many congregations and individuals who pray for us, encourage and support us

Yes, we are heading back for a visit! This December we return to the U.S. for two months to see family, connect with our supporters, and meet new ones. We look forward to family time (God-willing, we will greet two new grandchildren that are due in December and January), but just as importantly, to visit the congregations and people who have made all our work here in Japan possible—that’s you, dear reader!

PICK A DATE, ANY DATE...

We are planning to be home from December 20th until February 20th. Would you like us to visit your congregation? Send Dan an email today at daniel.jastram@lcmsintl.org. He will start scheduling these visits *this month*.

NOT JUST FOR SUNDAYS

We would love to visit even if it isn’t a Sunday—that day is in short supply. If you need some ideas, how about these?

- Week-day Bible study class
- Ladies’ Aid or LWML meeting
- Church council meeting
- Evening service/presentation
- A meal with a few church members
- Lutefisk dinner (OK, just kidding)

BROUGHT TO YOU BY...

Our work here is only possible because God has used people like you to support us. If you support us financially, please know what a *blessing* you have been to the mission work in Japan. We pray that we can continue that partnership. If you aren’t currently supporting our work financially, but are interested in doing so, visit this secure site:

<https://www.lcms.org/givenow/jastram>

Look forward to seeing you this winter!

Our prayer, for the church at home, the church abroad, and the Church Universal: “What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus.”

2 Timothy 1:13

- Daniel and Joan Jastram



There are many opportunities to serve as short-term or GEO missionaries. Check out the current list and download an application at lcms.org/service. Click on “Service Opportunities.”

To support the LCMS through the work of Daniel Jastram, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
P.O. Box 66861
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Mark checks “Support of Jastram—Asia.”

Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS website, on Daniel Jastram’s online giving page at lcms.org/jastram.