



Half-way To the Finish Line

Good news! Our Japanese Lutheran resource project has just completed the halfway mark in our translation of Walther’s Law and Gospel. We are grateful for our supporters, for the guidance of our LCMS Asia region administration, and the International Development Grant provided by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod that have been instrumental in getting us to this point. Thank you!

This also means that planning is already underway for utilizing these favorable circumstances for our *next* translation opportunity (John 9:4). We are considering what might be the most advantageous for the current and future context of Japanese congregations, pastors, and seminarians.



Meanwhile, the theological text of Walther’s Law and Gospel continues to inspire our translation work. In his eleventh lecture, Walther explains “the collative power” of God’s Word (that is, the power to confer, bestow, or give) “by which gifts like justification are not only described, but at the same time conferred and communicated” and that “by these Words God Himself imparts forgiveness of

sin” by grace through faith, even as proclaimed and administered by the pastor, and that “whoever believes the Scriptures receives what they say; for they do not merely tell about gifts of grace, but also offer and confer them. The Word is a distributing and appropriating instrument of grace” (1929, pp. 149, 150).

Sacred Rice Cakes?

When I review the translation work being accomplished, I also run into



interesting challenges. Here’s a recent illustration: how do you translate, in an understandable way, the word “wafers” used in Holy Communion? Do you translate “wafers” into something that sounds close in Japanese letters, “ueha-su,” with a preceding explanatory descriptor “sacred mochi—i.e., ueha-su” (because in Japanese the closest equivalent is the round ceremonial rice cakes used with ritual connotations)? This is one of the items on my discussion list with the translator for more consideration in the near future.

*Rev. Dr. Jastram is the Asia Lutheran Resource Coordinator:
Making Lutheran resources of theology and worship available in Asia.*

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

- *Our partners in mission, for your generous April support, and for the sustaining contributions of individuals, congregations, districts, and LWML groups that make this mission work possible.*

WE PRAISE GOD FOR:

- *The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, which is the source of the International Development Grant that makes possible our translation project of Walther's Law and Gospel text into the Japanese language.*
- *Finishing the half-way point in Walther's Law and Gospel translation project.*

PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- *God's wisdom in selecting and arranging our next translation project.*
- *Ongoing Lutheran resource projects throughout Asia, numbering well over one hundred, in Hong Kong, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Papua New Guinea, and Taiwan.*
- *Japan, as it manages its pandemic precautionary measures, organizes its national vaccination program and sets up its safety protocols for the summer Olympics.*

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The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
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Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS website, on my online giving page at lcms.org/givenow/jastram.

Military Chaplaincy: Take Two



It seems to be the season for meeting with LCMS military chaplains in Japan! And this month it was time to meet LCMS Chaplain Christensen and his wife Liesl for the first time. Chaplain Christensen had just returned from a time at sea and now had been interested in getting off base and seeing Tokyo with us. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity" (Psalms 133:1). This was certainly our thought when we met with them here in Tokyo. As we talked about the unique aspects of our work in Japan, we rejoiced that we both serve under the LCMS Office of International Mission as missionaries in a context distinct from the congregational context of our homeland. We are very grateful for the wonderful time with these fellow LCMS Lutheran friends as they fulfill the time of their military posting here. We were happy to show them around a bit.

We thank God that you remember us in your prayers and in your support.

In the words of St Paul, our prayer for you, for the church at home, for the church abroad, and for 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

*With love,
- Daniel and Joan Jastram*

