

## Our Activities: **Kyushu District**

### **Onigiri Volunteers**

After hearing a lecture by Mr. Katsuhiro Shimamoto, chairman of the board for Kumamoto Support, NPO, delivered at our fall district meeting and on Diakonia Sunday, (the service to remember facilities associated with Ken-Gun Church), we women in Kumamoto have begun participating in “onigiri volunteer”—Kuwamizu Church, as a church activity, and Oe and Ken-Gun Churches as social service activity of the CW’s.

Once a year, this volunteer activity takes place, and about 240 onigiri (rice balls) are made.



“We all go at it with both palms of our hands bright red from the hot rice we grip into onigiri,” says sister Okada (Kuwamizu). “We want to expand this volunteer activity to include other church women’s groups in Kumamoto.” It is a realization of active service coming from faith in Jesus.

Kumamoto Support, NPO, started on Christmas, 2003, when 5 volunteers made and delivered onigiri to 18 homeless who were camping on the bank of Shirakawa river. Presently there are 60 regular volunteers, with an additional 300 who donate or support in other ways, to a cause aimed at furthering independence of the homeless.

### **Churches in Transition**

**Note:** Beppu Church is 60 years old this year, and has always been closely associated with Beppu Heiwa-En. Presently the pastor comes to Heiwa-En to hold church school on Saturday; on Christmas, Easter, and special Children’s Service days the children attend service at the church. Years ago when the church was first established, it was located within grounds of Heiwa-En. Later it was relocated to its present site at Sho-En. Heiwa-En also relocated to Myoban area. All things considered, we pray that the two may again be located in closer proximity.

### **—Beppu Church—**

It was when I began working as a day-care teacher of Beppu Heiwa-En more than 30 years ago that I first attended a service at Beppu Church. My family was Buddhist, and I had no way of knowing about the Christian Church.

Children of Heiwa-En attended church school regularly with me escorting and I recall what a fun 10-minute walk to church it was, as we held hands, singing and talking. The church school would divide into classes, and it was me, even more than the children, who listened intently to the lessons. Because of the connection Beppu Heiwa-En had with Beppu Church, I came to know and believe in the Lord. After a while, Heiwa En moved, and we no longer walked to church, but then the pastor and his wife came out to Heiwa-En and to this day the children are able to have church school.

To each child, with his or her particular needs and background, the Lord is always there.



Every day I pray that these children will notice they are not alone but are loved. Daily I give thanks that with my Lord close by, I am blessed to be given my life work at Beppu Heiwa-En, and to belong to Beppu Church.

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