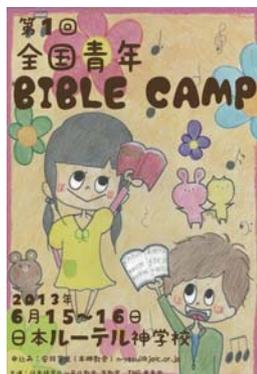


Start of a New Era --- Faith Succession (TNG) Report

Thanks to the cooperation by the seminary, the first youth bible camp took place at the seminary dormitory last June. Witnessing the start of a new era, I could not help but feel joy and responsibility.



There were 19 campers from all across Japan, whose average age was 24 years old. They have served as staff for Sunday schools and/or teens camps and have known the pleasure and difficulties of organizing a camp. Out of such experiences, they called for a bible study, and they were heard.

The first day began with vivid talk about the reason why they wanted to join the camp. Everyone kept talking eloquently in spite of the moderator/reporter's original intention to make the self-introduction short. Their speech was filled with eagerness to spread the Word of God. I was surprised and excited to know how motivated they were: they wanted to learn not just for themselves but to evangelize and declare the faith.

Intensive lessons started on the second day forward. They were instructed first to read the Bible text as it is, then to find out what Jesus had done (evangelism), and finally to decide their response by writing a message on their own. Normally, during a camp, people sit up late into the night to have fun. But, this time, they sat up as late as dawn with their head buried in the Bible in order to listen to its message and tell that to others.

Of course, it was not an easy job for them and their messages were unrefined. Yet I was so heartened by hearing their messages in each unique tone.

During the Sunday service at Mitaka Church, which is attached to the seminary, we read the same passages as we highlighted in the camp. The camp ended by the devotion dedicated to their common friend: accidentally we heard that the person was dying. All the participants, including the staff, inscribed the Word of God as the source of life.



Please pray that this program may continue as long as possible.

(Nobuo Yasui, TNG Chaplain, JELC)

