



# 2016 Spring Newsletter

~Making A Difference in Discipling ~

## **Mentorship Conference 2016**

**Second Level conducted a four-day conference in January at Amicalola Falls State Park to teach mentoring as a part of our discipleship training.** It was a place of rare solitude, grace, and great times. This conference lasted for four days, but the results will be felt for a lifetime. Attendees came from different nations and states to learn how to become effective mentors and disciple makers for new Japanese Christians. Japan, Canada, California, and most of the southeast states were represented by Christians united in serving the spiritual needs of Japan. In a concerted arrangement of lectures and scheduled events, the attendees forged bonds and expanded their mentoring skills. Mentorship is a key element of discipleship, so the focus on mentorship was emphasized as a means to enhance the quality of discipleship. In addition to lectures, attendees were provided subjective and objective activities to simulate the perspectives of mentor and mentee.

We are planning the 2017 Mentorship Conference and look forward to an even better conference! More details will come soon!



Mentorship Conference video: [http://youtu.be/\\_t7rxS9nFwQ](http://youtu.be/_t7rxS9nFwQ)

Our Website: [www.secondlevel.org](http://www.secondlevel.org)

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## The Mentorship Conference Speakers

Rev. Tak Oue - Main Speaker, retired missionary

Mrs. Setsu Shimizu (middle) - Workshop Speaker, JCFN U.S Director

Ms. Izumi Araki (right)- Workshop Speaker, ISMC(International Students Ministry Canada) Missionary in Vancouver



Keiko Hirai

## Testimonies:

I didn't want to go home after this conference. But, at the same time, I would like to go back and share many blessings on what I learned at this conference. I believe that it was God's divine opportunity to learn and meet great disciples of Christ. I would like to show others by actions and by words what a blessing to be in discipleship and mentoring. I have a long way to go as a believer to grow closer with God and learn about who I am in Christ. All the participants in the conference showed me how to become Christ-like, and I would like to be that way one day. I was feeling joyous. I also received a challenge with clear understanding throughout the messages and workshops. God used the entire conference to prepare me. I would like to share what I learned, and I want God to use me in Hawaii to help others grow spiritually. Thank you God for this wonderful time of learning. Hallelujah.

I am so grateful to attend this conference. I was able to meet a lot of amazing people who have same spirit and values. During the last few years, God has been convicting my family and me to give up everything and follow Jesus in the capacity of the Great Commission. In God's grace we have been doing that, but at the same time, sadly since this life style is not a common way for a lot of Christians, we have felt alone in many occasions because a lot of people didn't understand us. At the conference, the speakers and attendees were sharing their challenges and struggles along with their testimonies. I was so encouraged. Also the conference definitely has helped our family to see God's hand to lead us in strong conviction.

I was also stuck by the fact that there are still so much needs in the area of discipleship and mentorship in Japanese Christian community both domestic and international. I've got a sense that God is going to use this ministry and conference to awaken the needs of discipleship in Japan and also raise people who do the works for the Great Commission.

After the conference I was able to dream to host this kind of conference in the future in Japan. I think there will be a lot of people who may be interested in joining this movement.



Kuni Onishi



Junpei Narasaki

I was baptized last Christmas, and I am truly thankful to be able to participate in the Conference. I learned many things and found valuable experiences in the speakers' teaching and small group fellowship. During this conference, I prayed God's guidance about evangelizing exchange students. I realized that even while I'm continuing to grow spiritually I'm able to convey the Gospel. I'm participating in a Bible study at my church, and serving as a leader in the Intersarsity Fellowship group. As God uses me, I believe that many exchange students will be able to know about God. After the conference, I invited many people to church and Intersarsity events. Although not many have been saved, I came to a renewed realization of the difficulties of evangelism. As it says in Matthew 10:34, "Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword." I believe that evangelizing exchange students is one task I've been given by God, so I will continue in prayer and not give up.

## Seeking Excellence

by Mayumi Pohl - President of Second Level Ministry

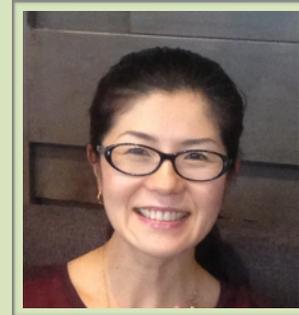
At Second Level Ministry, we always pray for more workers, since "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few." (Matthew 9:37). I have been inspired and challenged to 'seek excellence' these past few years. Not only about new staff, but in everything we do as a ministry. Ministry is God's work and certainly not for our self-satisfaction or seeking our own benefits. When God calls, we offer ourselves by trusting in the one who does immeasurably amazing things in us and through us.

What we can do is limited, but the Lord works in our weakness (I Corinthians 4:7). He gave each of us a unique path, personality, talent, and spiritual gifts. And we will be held accountable for all things He has entrusted to our care and stewardship (Luke 12:48, Matthew 25:14-30). It is up to us to use what's given. Seeking excellence does NOT mean that we need to do a 'perfect' job. However, the Lord sees our hearts of giving the best to Him. Just as God didn't accept Cain's sacrifice, but Abel's, which was the best thing he could offer, we need to be reminded of the quality of offering and what is pleasing to Him.

The work of Second Level Ministry is based on our commitment to follow God's command (Matthew 28:19-20). As I have sought 'excellence' in the future staff, He has answered the prayers and brought two faithful workers recently- *One is confirmed, Ayako Beger (left), and another one in preparation.* They love the Lord and listen to where He calls them. Their priority of seeking the Lord brings the great fruit in what they do. Of course, that's because God is the one who brings the fruit, so remaining in Him would naturally produce the fruit (John 15:1-8).

When you compromise in what we offer, it does have consequences. Not only that it is not an acceptable offering, but it hurts others. It hurts the ministry. It hurts the opportunity to be witness for Him. We are so thankful for the 'excellent' staff into our ministry, so that we can serve Him in 'excellent' way. Please pray with me that Ayako and all the other staff will be used in His way and bring the glory to Him through Second Level Ministry.

### NEW STAFF



**Ayako Berger - Associate Staff**

A native of Tokyo, Ayako followed His example in baptism in the U.S. However, she had a fruitless spiritual life for the first few years of her Christian life. She began to participate in ministry at a church, and through the calling of the Holy Spirit, she came to faith in Christ.

As a new Christian, she began to join in the ministry of Second Level. Ayako has been actively involved with mentorship, small groups, and other ministries at her church.

A closer walk with God slowly increased her burden for the lost. Ayako's specific burden is that lost souls come to Christ, who provides the peace and joy, that she has experienced since becoming a Christian. In pursuing her burden for ministry, Ayako has engaged in discipleship with others utilizing the 15 Step Lessons of Second Level. Her engagement and her burden are steadily increasing. Ayako feels God's conviction to serve as a staff member of Second Level Ministry.



Yoshiko Murata (left)  
An Associate Staff

### FNBD 「Friday Night Bible Dinner」 (Kobe, Japan)

There is a woman's group meeting using the publication from Second Level, "[Living as Disciples of Christ](#)". They meet to deepen their relationship with God through fellowship, intensive study of the Bible, and discussions. Each have different jobs and go to different churches, but they are experiencing the one same God working abundantly in each of their lives. You can also get this book at our Second Level store or Amazon.



## Wakako's Adventures

Our dear Wakako Minamoto, an associate staff, is preparing for a mission trip to Okinawa this summer (May 23 - June 25). Her trip is a Second Level sponsored trip to help the discipleship opportunities. You can follow her journey through this letter and find ways to help financially and prayerfully.

**June 19th (Sunday) 1pm~**

Jyujika Fukuin Church  
(Yomitan, Okinawa)

"Let's Become More Christ-like!"

Read about it here:

**June 25th (Saturday) 4pm~**

Shinagawa, Tokyo

"Let's Make a Difference in Discipling!"

Please contact us for more details, if you are interested.

<http://www.secondlevel.org/wp-content/uploads/Wakako-2015-winter->



## Improvement

**CHRISTIAN TODAY**

During this spring season, Second Level has been working to become a 'leaner' organization. We have been working to make our communication more efficient and our goals more concise. As the U.S. Navy Seal motto goes, "the easiest day was yesterday." Second Level works more diligently each day to ensure we are prepared for the discipleship mission ahead.

*Second Level Ministry was covered on "Christian Today"!*

*Read about it here.*

<http://www.christiantoday.co.jp/articles/19560/20160302/mari-paxton-japanese-ministry-8.htm>

## ~ We appreciate your partnership! ~

(Thank you very much for being a partner to make disciples and expand the kingdom of God!)

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