

Edmonton Japanese Christian Church

Who we are...

We are a family in **Christ**,
loved by **the living God**.
We glorify God
by loving Him,
each other,
and all people,
by the **Holy Spirit**.

(EJCC Mission Statement, adopted 2005)



Celebrating the 30th year since its founding, **Edmonton Japanese Christian Church** seeks to fulfill this vision within the communities we participate. What began as a predominantly Nikkei church years ago, Edmonton Japanese Christian Church continues to evolve as a **family** of believers and seekers with diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds, reflecting the development of the city of Edmonton itself. As most of the congregation are originally from outside Edmonton and even Canada, the church does indeed serve as an extended family for many of us. Most importantly, however, we believe we are a family because we are loved by God and we seek to glorify Him.

What we value...

Our core values that support our Mission statement are:

- 1: Putting God first
- 2: Discipleship
- 3: Evangelism
- 4: Servant heart
- 5: Fellowship

Where we will go...

Our areas of priority in the coming 2-3 years are:

- 1. Small groups:** to ensure that every person belongs to a regular cell group/ small group for the main purpose of fellowship and discipleship. All small groups should be exploratory in nature, with the room and freedom to explore, question, challenge, be challenged, and convicted.
- 2. Children's ministry:** to nurture a sense of worship and encourage involvement within the church family for those children who are already attending the church, while providing points of contact for those who are not yet attending.
- 3. Missions:** to provide opportunities for involvement in God's call to reach the world, and to nurture this call as an integral part of personal and corporate faith.
- 4. Prayer ministry:** to renew our attitude towards prayer as a cornerstone of the church and our personal journeys, and instill prayer as a discipline.
- 5. Discipleship:** to create opportunities for mentoring as well as being mentored, as we each seek to move forward in our journeys and "be" the body of Christ.

What we do...

Weekly meetings/yearly events:

Worship service: Worship is at the core of the church's existence. As an "ethnic" church, we make an effort to meet the evolving needs of both Japanese and English speakers within the congregation as we appreciate the desire to worship in one's own mother tongue. The praise team is also an important ministry led primarily by younger adults. Communion is celebrated monthly.

Sunday School:

Lower elementary children; Upper elementary children; Adult English group;
Women's English group; Japanese Adults group

Small groups (Bible Study/Prayer):

Wednesday Night: Very active Bible study group attracting high-school and university aged youth and young adults of very diverse cultural backgrounds. Many are seekers from outside the church, while others take on a more discipling role within the group.

Thursday Night: Bible study group in Japanese.

Saturday Morning: Prayer Group in Japanese.

Saturday Night: An English-language Bible study group of young adults.

Joy-kai: A small but growing group of young mothers who meet regularly.

Typical yearly activities:

- Various potluck celebrations: Baptism celebrations, New Year's, Easter Sunday, Summer picnic, Thanksgiving, Christmas, etc.
- Pulpit exchange with Calgary Japanese Gospel Church
- Habitat for Humanity lunch volunteering
- Church garage sale
- Sunnyside Camp
- Gospel Cup softball game and fellowship with Calgary Japanese Gospel Church
- World Vision 30 hr Famine
- World Leprosy Day
- Annual General Meeting

Recent major events:

- "Summit" meetings: During the past 2 years, the church has organized a series of meetings in which the congregation has met to discuss the church's vision and priorities.
- Japan mission trip: a group of five spent 2 weeks visiting, fellowshiping, and praying with various churches in the Kansai region.
- Baptisms: The church was blessed with 2 people being baptised in 2007.

Missions: In addition to the financial support of several long-term missionaries abroad, EJCC has sent people on both short and long-term missions regularly. EJCC also supports and participates in Missionsfest Alberta, a yearly missions conference.

Governance:

EJCC is governed by an elected board that meets on a monthly basis or as required. The board currently consists of 5 members representing diverse needs throughout the congregation.

Affiliation:

EJCC is associated with the North American Baptist Association (www.nabconference.org/). Among the 60 NAB churches in Alberta, 19 are in Edmonton, offering local cross-church resources for the church leadership such as "cluster" prayer meetings and pulpit supply.

EJCC also benefits from the presence of Canadian Japanese Ministries (CJM), a Canada-wide organization that assists and links the many Nikkei churches across Canada. CJM runs Sunnyside Camp, an annual, well-attended summer Bible camp in Sylvan Lake, Alberta.



The community we serve...

Edmonton (and its surrounding area) is a cosmopolitan, multi-cultural city of one million people. With the booming Alberta economy, Edmonton has shown rapid growth as it attracts more people both from within Canada as well as from abroad.

As a local church, EJCC feels a particular burden to serve the changing spiritual needs of the ethnically Japanese segment of the population, of which there are about 2000. There are several Japanese-related community groups that have been avenues to reach out into this community. These include the Edmonton Japanese Community Association, the University of Alberta, and the Metro Edmonton Japanese Community School.

Increasingly, many Japanese moving to Edmonton are younger families with mixed ethnicity/culture (“mixed marriages”). Many students from Japan (in ESL or college/university degree programs) have also come to church for the first time in their lives at EJCC. Our church seeks to respond to these needs and opportunities.

As the only church catering to Japanese-speakers in Edmonton, we have an important and crucial ministry especially to those whose mother-tongue is Japanese.



The challenges we face...

As a church, we face unique challenges that we believe will continue to clarify and develop our role in the Kingdom of God:

- Responding to the changing nature of “ethnic” churches: language differences, generational differences, cultural differences, diversifying family makeup and demographics.
- Meeting the needs of families rooted in Edmonton while at the same time reaching those who are more transient (e.g. foreign students, temporary workers).
- Reaching out in a period of economic growth, when many are feeling more and more self-sufficient.