

Profile in Mission

MINISTRY

Christian Education

LOCATION

Ebetsu, Hokkaido, Japan

PARTNER

United Church of Christ in Japan, Hokkai District, Nopporo Christian School

What Need Is God Showing Us?

The United Church of Christ in Japan (UCCJ) has 64 churches and evangelical church starts in the Hokkai District of Japan, but youth and Sunday school programs are struggling or nonexistent. The church is connected with thirty-one preschools and nine schools where thousands of students are enrolled, but there are very few Christian teachers. Most of the schools are struggling financially, as the number of school-age children is decreasing.



CORNELIA ROGHAIR



Cornelia and children from Nopporo Christian School

What Is God Telling Us to Do?

The RCA is called to help support Christian education preschools, Sunday schools, and youth programs connected with the United Church of Christ in Japan in the Hokkai District, which includes the entire northern island of Hokkaido, Japan. By 2007 all Japanese elementary school children will be required to study English, and a good English program can be a major help in attracting new students. The required English education also creates an opportunity to reach young children with Bible stories in the classroom. In addition, it opens doors with parents, who are very concerned about their children's education and future.

How Are We Doing What God Is Asking?

RCA missionary Cornelia Roghair works with preschools, Sunday schools, and youth groups in the Hokkai District of Japan. She teaches at a preschool affiliated with Nopporo

Church and works through Nopporo Christian School to develop ministries throughout the island of Hokkaido, putting her considerable teaching experience to use in the classroom and in helping to rebuild the Sunday school and youth programs that are so critical for the future of the church. Cornelia also serves Nopporo Church as a "cooperating missionary," teaching preschool through second-grade Sunday school, coordinating the youth program, and helping with various special programs.

Who Is Our Partner?

During World War II the Japanese imperial government mandated that all Christian groups join together, making it easier to monitor and control Christian activity in the country. After the war several denominations chose to remain united, forming the United Church of Christ in Japan. In addition to churches, the UCCJ works with 47 Christian school complexes that serve as a witness to thousands of Japanese youth. They also work with retirement homes, institutions for people with handicaps, and shelters for abused women and children. Nopporo Christian School, founded in 1953, has an enrollment of 163 children. It hosts an after school program for young children, including an extended preschool program for children with working parents. The school is part of Nopporo Church, which was founded in 1948.

Up Close and Personal

Cornelia has taught Sunday school and Bible school since she was in high school. She earned a degree in elementary education at Black Hills State University in South Dakota and a master's degree in education from Azusa Pacific University in California. She has worked in two schools in South Dakota and four schools in Japan, where she has ministered since 1975. Cornelia enjoys hiking, sewing, knitting, and having people over for meals. She also likes to visit farms, which remind her of her rural South Dakota upbringing.

