

## Tribal Messiahship in East Shizuoka District, Japan

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*Tribal Messiahship centered on our neighborhood; Shizuoka Church*

Unification Movement – Japan: In order to achieve our goal of tribal messiahship, Mr. Cheonbe Lee, the District Director of East Shizuoka District, laid out the policy of “First, love the area where we reside”. Based on this policy, the Shizuoka Church decided to hold seminars for newcomers, such as the “True Family Seminar” and the “Autobiography Seminar”, in local venues, such as Suruga, Aoi, and Shimizu, instead of the church, and invested in local activities.

In September 2012, leaders were assigned to each ward, and they started inviting their families, relatives, guests, and people who accepted the autobiographies to these seminars. In 10 months, 5 seminars were held in each of these wards. Many people, mainly families and relatives of church members attended.

At each seminar, the purpose and value of the Blessing centered on the Divine Principle were conveyed, emphasizing the building of a “three- generation family”. After a while, a few families consisting of three generations began attending in each of these venues.

The next step was establishing local gatherings centered on each family. Based on Mr. Lee’s guidance to “Love the people who reside in our own neighborhood, by coming together as a community”, the three areas made a goal to establish a foundation of a total of 43 family gatherings. It was a challenge for the members, but little by little, some families started to hold these gatherings.

In 2014, a total of nine families, three families from each ward, were chosen as the base of each ward, and set the goal of becoming family churches, a base for tribal messiah activities.

They held 10 to 20 regular night gatherings consisting of members, and daytime family calligraphy meetings that included relatives and other participants. In July of the same year, they invited Mr. Masao Kitatani, the HQ Director of Senior Members, and held a 1 day seminar for tribal messiahs, reconfirming the value of the providence.

The Shizuoka Church set the goal to establish 12 trinities per ward with 3 families in each trinity so that they can work together to love their neighbors. Their goal is to 1) invite relatives and neighbors to services and events in their ward once a month, and 2) each trinity bring 43 people within 6 months even to a church ritual.

As a starter, each ward held their own services on January 18th for the first time. The sermon for Aoi Ward was given by Mr. Kunio Sano, Director of Family Education Department, and for Suruga Ward, Mr. Cheonbe Lee, Parish Director, and for Shimizu Ward, Mr. Haruyoshi Yano, Director of General Affairs Department. There were many families and people who could attend simply because the venues were near.

The attendees brought their own lunches for the New Year’s Party, enjoying the family-like atmosphere. They plan to continue monthly local services and gatherings, investing in local activities in order to restore their tribal environment and establish a familial culture.