### Last Week's Sermon Summary

" What is the foundation of the temple?" Pastor Takaaki Inoue Ezra 3:10~13, John 2:13~21

# • [The foundation of religious life is to build altars and offer offerings]

The nation of Israel was destroyed by Babylon, but the nation of Persia destroyed Babylon. God moved the heart of King Cyrus of Persia and ordered the temple in Jerusalem to be rebuilt, allowing the people who wished to return home. In fact, it will be the first time in about 70 years that he has returned. They came back and each lived in their own city, but eventually they gathered in Jerusalem to build altars and make offerings. It means that we have started worshiping. I'm sure you've all heard the term "Reform." The word "renovation" gives the impression of starting something new, but its original meaning is "returning to the original." The Reformation is called "the Reformation" in English. When I was in seminary, I was taught, "Go back to tradition." Tradition refers to the true nature of the church. The medieval Catholic Church had fallen out of that tradition, and Luther wanted to undo it. Ureslev also sought to return to the tradition of the Fathers of the ancient church, reading prayer books and partaking of the sacrament daily. The Reformation is the restoration of the church to its original form. What I'm doing may seem strange to people in the Protestant church, but I'm just back to tradition. The foundation of religious life is the construction of altars and the offering of offerings. It consists in

offering prayers and, ultimately, giving ourselves.

2 (I can shed tears because I know my sins They began rebuilding the temple in February of the following year. That's what I read today. Many old priests, Levites, and patriarchs, who had seen the temple of old, wept aloud when they saw the foundation of the temple laid, and many cried with joy. The people could not distinguish between the cry of joy and the cry of the people. for the cry of the people was so loud that it resounded far and wide." (Ezra 3:11~13) It is written that when the foundation stone of the temple was laid, those who had seen the temple in old wept. They remembered the temple when it was beautiful and glorious. But now in front of you are rubble and ruins. People don't realize their sins unless they lose something. Without sacrifice, one cannot understand sin. I think that when they saw the temple in ruins, they clearly understood their sin. In spite of our sinful nature, God had mercy on us and gave us a chance to live again. I understood God's mercy and patience. That's why we cry. These tears are "tears of repentance." Simeon, the 11th-century neotheologian, said, "He who celebrates worship without tears, and receives the Eucharist without tears, is not qualified to celebrate worship or receive the Eucharist."

**③** [If there is no repentant and broken soul] This temple was completed in 517~518 BC and is called the "Second Temple". Five hundred years later, in 19 BC, Herod the Great carried out a large-scale expansion of the temple, which was completed in 70 AD. However, the year after its completion, the Roman army besieged ↑

# Weekly Report

## The United Church of Christ in Japan Miyakojima Church

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⟨Ezra the Priest⟩⟩

### Miyakojima Church's 2024 Mission Policy

Motto: "Let's prepare for the construction of the church"

 $\mbox{\bf Scripture}: "No one can lay any other foundation, ignoring the foundation that has already been laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11)$ 

#### Goals for FY2024

- 1 Observe worship services every week and aim for an average of 27 people to attend services.
- 2 We invite one person to worship in one year.
- 3 Make concrete preparations for the construction of the church.
- 4 Cultivate the consciousness of building a church together.