

Last Week's Sermon Summary

『The Little Christ I Met』

Pastor Marie Tone

1 Corinthians 12:14–26, Mark 9:33–37

©Everyone Wants to Be Great: On Being “Great” and “Small”

Jesus asked His disciples, “What were you arguing about on the way?” No one could answer right away. Just as Jesus was about to set out on His final journey toward death, the disciples were debating who among them was the greatest. They all wanted to be great. Everyone harbors a desire to be great. The original word for “great” in the Bible means “big.” Wanting to be great means wanting to become a significant presence. We want to be recognized by those around us, to be thought of as amazing, to be respected, and to avoid being spoken ill of. I believe all human beings have these feelings. Conversely, the word “small” also implies “not great.” It means being small in existence—worthless, weak, and unvalued. Jesus Christ’s teaching here is one of reversal: “Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all” (9:35). He is saying that if you want to be great, become a servant; if you want to be great, become small.

©Christ Lifting a Child: Children as “Little” Beings

Then, as an example of a “little one,” Jesus brought a child forward. “Little” here means someone who is small in stature or insignificant. He took the child by the hand, set him in the center, lifted him up, and said, “Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.” (9:36–37) Taking the child’s hand, standing the child in the center, lifting the child up—in all these actions, Jesus is the one doing the work. The child is doing nothing. The child simply let things happen and surrendered to Jesus’ care. This

is precisely what it means to receive Jesus. And it means receiving God, who sent Jesus. Doing nothing on one’s own, refusing nothing. Does accepting God not mean surrendering one’s own initiative to Jesus? Rather than struggling to manage or figure things out on one’s own strength, one entrusts everything, letting things happen as they will, just like the child lifted up by Jesus. In Jewish society at that time, children were not considered a labor force; they were seen as useless and without value. Jesus lifted up such a “worthless” being, such a “little one”—a child. Although a child is a very weak being who can do nothing on their own—lacking even the strength to resist—it is precisely because of this that they can do nothing but accept what Jesus gives them; indeed, they can accept everything. In reality, they are also a very strong being. It is precisely the weak and small child who is, in fact, the greatest. This is the very essence of Christ’s teaching of reversal. To “lift up” means to bring someone up to Jesus’ eye level. This child saw the same view that Jesus was seeing. This is a deeply symbolic event. Human beings cannot stand in God’s perspective. However, only by being lifted up by Jesus—and only at that moment—can we see the same world as Jesus Christ. In Christianity, separation from God is called sin, and union with God is called salvation. This means that salvation is possible only through Jesus Christ.

©The Little Christ

I had an experience like this at the church I used to attend. There was someone who started coming to church because they knew a member—it was around the time their job wasn’t going well and they had quit. I think they must have been suffering from depression around the time they quit their job.↗

Weekly Report

The United Church of Christ in Japan
Miyakojima Church

Mission Established December 1, 1957

Church Established December 2, 2001

2-6-17Miyuki-cho, Miyakojima-ku, Osaka 534-0012

TEL06-6922-1120 FAX06-6922-1120

E-mail address:

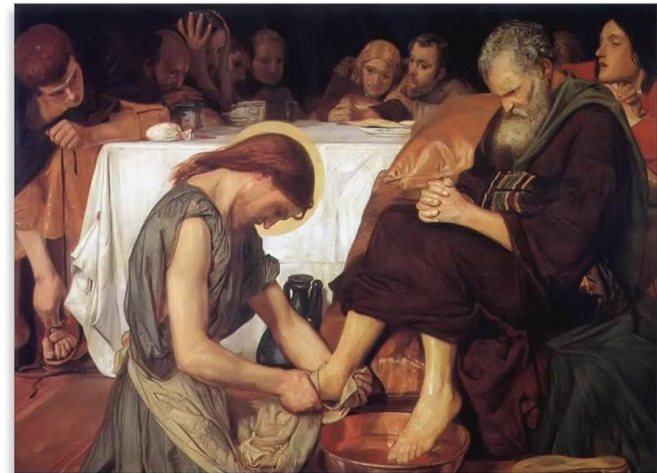
HomepageAddress: <https://miyakojima-church1.com>

Postal transfer 00920-4-1442 Japan Miyakojima

Mission Senior

Pastor Takaaki Inoue

August 2, 2026, No. 1884



《Jesus Washing Peter's Feet》

Miyakojima Church's 2026 Mission Policy

Motto : " Let us become faithful servants of the Lord Jesus Christ "

Scripture : " Stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord will return." (Matthew 24:42)

Goals for FY2024

- 1 Observe worship services every week and aim for an average of 28 people to attend services.
- 2 I will make good use of my time to invite the people I meet to worship.
- 3 We don't just listen to the Word; we put it into practice.
- 4 Make concrete preparations for the construction of the church.