Flood Recovery and the Future of Gospel Ministry at Masago Baptist Church

Second Update — October 31, 2026

With Heartfelt Gratitude

More than two months have passed since the heavy rainfall of August 13–14 caused devastating flooding at Masago Baptist Church in Chiba, Japan. Water rose approximately 60 centimeters (about 24 inches) above the floor of our semi-basement sanctuary.

Since then, churches, Christian organizations, friends, and individuals in Japan and around the world have surrounded us with prayer, encouragement, and generous support. Many also helped with the cleanup or provided essential supplies. On behalf of our entire congregation, we offer our heartfelt thanks. Through your love and care, we have experienced the Lord's gracious provision in a time of great difficulty.

Recovery Progress and Continuing Ministry

Immediately after the flood, we pumped out the water using a generator lent by a nearby church. With the help of many volunteers, we removed damaged furniture and equipment, pressure-washed the sanctuary, and completed the initial cleanup. Water was later found beneath the floor, and drainage and drying have continued.

Professional inspections confirmed extensive damage to the flooring, walls, platform, and electrical systems. Nearly all sanctuary furniture, including the chairs and pulpit, had to be discarded. Our sound equipment, organ, and piano also suffered serious damage. We are pursuing our insurance claim while carrying out essential repairs.

By God's grace, we have gathered for worship every Sunday since the disaster, using the unaffected ground-floor space and borrowed folding chairs. Some gatherings for local parents and young children have also resumed.

We are preparing to resume worship in the sanctuary in November. These limited repairs prioritize safety and keep costs down while we consider the future of our facilities. Although the sanctuary will not be fully restored, gathering there again will be a great joy. We are deeply thankful that the Lord has sustained our worship, fellowship, and witness throughout this time.

Considering the Future of Our Church Building

The inspections have shown that restoring the sanctuary to its former condition would require substantial work and expense. They have also brought the building's underlying limitations into sharper focus.

This is our second flood. In 2010, water reached approximately 15 centimeters above the floor; this time it rose to approximately 60 centimeters. Our semi-basement sanctuary remains vulnerable, and the drainage pumps depend on electricity. A power outage during heavy rainfall could therefore lead to another serious flood. September's typhoon and prolonged rain again brought anxiety and the need for constant vigilance.

Built in 1991, the building also presents concerns about aging facilities, dampness, possible mold-related health effects, accessibility, and safe evacuation. Some members have reported health problems, although their causes have not been established. Stairs make access to the sanctuary difficult for some people. Restoring the interior alone would leave many of these challenges unresolved and pass continuing maintenance burdens to the next generation.

No final decision has been made about our future facilities. We are prayerfully considering major renovation, rebuilding on our present site, acquiring adjoining land, or relocating. Each option raises questions about land, regulations, costs, and long-term sustainability. We will listen to one another, seek professional advice, and discern the way forward together.

Faithful to God's Mission in Mihama

Masago Baptist Church began in 1977 through missionaries sent by BGC, now Converge. As we approach our fiftieth anniversary, we remember with gratitude those whose prayers, gifts, and service helped establish and sustain gospel ministry here.

Our vision remains **"Worship for Everyone, Worship with Everyone."** We long to welcome people of every generation and background, including children, older people, people with disabilities, and international residents.

Mihama Ward has approximately 157,000 residents, yet relatively few evangelical churches. We hope to deepen the relationships formed through worship, children's programs, gatherings for local families, and community activities. Our concern is how to provide a safe, welcoming place where this ministry can continue and be passed on to future generations.

Your Support and the Financial Challenge Ahead

As of October 2026, we have received approximately **11 million Japanese yen in donations** from supporters in Japan and around the world. We are deeply humbled and grateful for this generosity and partnership.

These gifts will be used carefully for immediate flood recovery and future facility needs, including renovation, rebuilding, or relocation. Insurance compensation has not been finalized, and the cost of our future plans remains unknown, so we have not yet set a final fundraising goal.

Providing safe and suitable facilities will be a major financial challenge for our congregation. We will develop realistic plans, consider our own contribution, and seek the Lord's provision through the wider body of Christ. We will share further updates as our plans and needs become clearer.

Please Continue to Walk with Us

Please pray for wisdom, unity, strength, and the people and resources needed for the road ahead. Above all, pray that we will remain faithful in proclaiming Jesus Christ and welcoming and serving our neighbors in Mihama.

Throughout this experience, we have held closely to Micah 7:8:

"Though I have fallen, I will rise.
Though I sit in darkness, the LORD will be my light."
— Micah 7:8

Much remains uncertain, but we trust that the Lord will guide us, one step at a time. We would be deeply grateful for your continued partnership in prayer, encouragement, and the work of the gospel. Thank you for walking with us.

With heartfelt gratitude in Christ,

The Congregation of Masago Baptist Church

Arata Kurashima — Pastor
Noriko Arakawa — Associate Pastor
Sosei Nagai — Home Missionary

Financial Support

Online giving by credit card is available to support our recovery and future gospel ministry.

Donate in U.S. Dollars (Credit Card)

https://rengo.ne.jp/en-2026-heavy-rain-disaster-masago-church-support/

Scan to give online

For questions about donations or receipts:
mbc.zaimu@gmail.com
Masago Baptist Church Finance Office

Removal of Flood-Damaged Items





Inspection of the Sanctuary




Worship on the Ground Floor




Community Outreach Activities



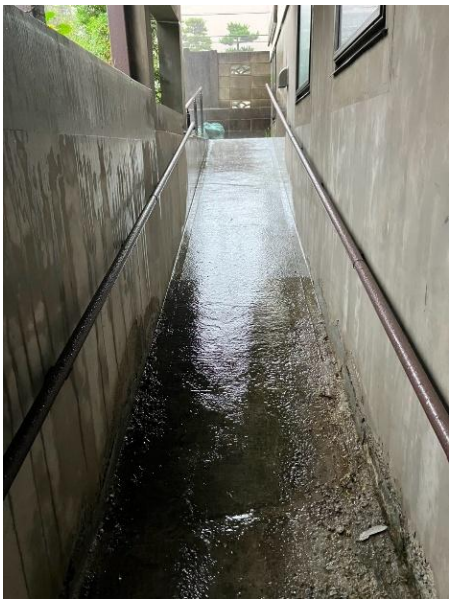
Summer Fun for Children



Typhoon No. 25 — September 21







The Church Did Not Stop!

