

# **Flood Disaster, Recovery, and the Future of Gospel Ministry at Masago Baptist Church**

## **An Appeal for Prayer and Support**

August 18, 2026

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

From August 13 to 14, 2026, Chiba Prefecture experienced record-breaking heavy rainfall, causing severe flooding in many areas of Chiba City. Masago Baptist Church was among the places in Mihama Ward that suffered particularly severe flood damage.

Our sanctuary is located on a semi-basement level, and floodwater rose to approximately 60 centimeters (about 24 inches) above the floor. Nearly all of the chairs, the pulpit, tables, and other furnishings had to be discarded. Our sound equipment and organ were also submerged and are currently unusable, and we still do not know whether our piano can be restored.

The initial pumping and cleaning have been completed, and the drying process has begun. However, water remains beneath the floor, and the full extent of the damage to the floors, walls, electrical systems, and other parts of the building is still being assessed.

### **A Turning Point for Our Church**

This is the second time our sanctuary has flooded since 2010, although the previous flood caused much less damage. For many years, our semi-basement sanctuary was used without experiencing flooding of this magnitude. In recent years, however, climate change and increasingly frequent and intense rainfall have made flood risk a much more serious concern. This second and far more destructive flood has exposed the vulnerability of our semi-basement sanctuary.

As we assess the damage, we are also examining the implications of current building and safety standards, as well as future flood risk. While no conclusions have yet been reached, it is becoming clear that we may need to reconsider the continued use of our semi-basement sanctuary and the future of our church facilities at a fundamental level.

The question before us, therefore, goes beyond simply repairing what was damaged: Should we restore the sanctuary as it was, or should we consider significant renovation, expansion, relocation, or rebuilding in order to prepare for the future?

This question is especially important because of the mission God has entrusted to this church.

Masago Baptist Church began nearly fifty years ago through a missionary sent by BGC (now Converge). Since then, many people have come to faith in Christ, and generations of believers have worshiped, served, and shared the gospel here.

Today, Mihama Ward has a population of approximately 157,000 people, yet only a very small number of evangelical churches serve this densely populated area.

Our concern is therefore not simply to repair a damaged building, but to prayerfully consider how Masago Baptist Church can continue its gospel witness in Mihama for the next generation.

### **Recovery and the Future**

We are approaching recovery in two phases.

#### **Phase 1 - Emergency Recovery and Assessment**

Our immediate priority is to dry and assess the damaged building, inspect the space beneath the floor, remove and dispose of flood-damaged materials and equipment, and determine what must be repaired or replaced.

#### **Phase 2 - Restoration and Future Ministry**

Once the building assessment and insurance coverage become clearer, we will determine the best long-term

course for our church facilities. This may include significant renovation or expansion of the present building, relocation to another site, or rebuilding altogether. If relocation or rebuilding becomes necessary, land acquisition may also need to be considered.

We expect to receive some compensation through our property insurance. However, the full cost of recovery, the amount covered by insurance, and the future direction of our facilities are still unknown.

**For these reasons, we have not yet established a final fundraising goal.**

As these matters become clearer, we will provide updates and establish a more specific financial goal.

## **How Your Gifts Will Be Used**

Gifts received through this appeal will be used for flood recovery and the future facility needs of Masago Baptist Church, including:

- drying, remediation, and repair of the building;
- removal, hauling, and disposal of flood-damaged furniture, equipment, debris, and other waste;
- replacement or restoration of furniture, musical instruments, sound equipment, and other church property;
- improvements for building safety and measures to address future flood and disaster risk; and
- if necessary, major renovation, expansion, rebuilding, relocation, or acquisition of land for future church facilities.

If gifts exceed the amount needed for immediate flood restoration, the remaining funds will be used for these broader facility needs arising from this disaster and for the future ministry of Masago Baptist Church.

## **Our Request**

Above all, we ask for your prayers — for wisdom as we make important decisions, for God's provision for the financial needs ahead, for strength and unity within our congregation, and for the gospel ministry in Mihama to continue and grow.

We also invite those who are able to prayerfully consider supporting our recovery and future ministry financially.

Nearly fifty years ago, others prayed, gave, and came to Japan so that a new church could be planted and the gospel proclaimed in this community. We are deeply grateful for that legacy.

**Our prayer is that the gospel witness that began here nearly fifty years ago will continue into the next generation and beyond.**

Thank you for standing with us in prayer and partnership.

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

## **Masago Baptist Church Congregation**

Pastor: Arata Kurashima

Associate Pastor: Noriko Arakawa

Home Missionary: Sosei Nagai

## **Financial Support**

Online giving by credit card is available for those who wish to support the recovery and future ministry of Masago Baptist Church.

### **Donate in U.S. Dollars (Credit Card)**

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





