

# OPPORTUNITY PROFILE

## ASSOCIATE PASTOR

**KOBE UNION CHURCH**  
*serving Christ and the city of Kobe since 1871*

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December 2016

### WHO WE ARE



Kobe Union Church is one of Japan's oldest protestant churches, providing an English-speaking Christian home for Christians from many different nations for close to 150 years. First established by foreign businessmen who wanted to worship in their own language, the church has served the international community and has been the spiritual home to people from all over the world, from all walks of life, from many different cultures and languages, and from richly diverse church backgrounds. Despite our diversity, KUC has a rich sense of unity.

Although many languages are spoken, English is our common language. We have also become the spiritual home to many Japanese Christians and this has continued to increase in recent years. The vision of KUC is "to be a grace filled and Christ led church, that is a welcoming, growing and sending body of Christian believers in Kobe". That very much reflects who we are. We **welcome** people to our church - every week we have visitors, some of whom are just visiting, many who have come to Kobe for work, or for education, or for business. And while people are with us, be it a month, a year or many years, we help them **grow** in their relationship with Jesus, and then we send. We **send** people back out into the world. We do a lot of sending, and we are constantly saying "sayonara" to people.

Our church is situated high in the Rokko hills overlooking the city. At one time we were downtown Sannomiya (the heart of Kobe), but 25 years ago, we moved up the hill to our present site where we have a wonderful building complex, with a beautiful sanctuary, and many multi-purpose rooms that are used on Sundays and through the week. While this does present some challenges in terms of getting people to KUC (we provide shuttle services from local train stations) it is a beautiful setting overlooking the city.



## MEMBERSHIP PROFILE

KUC has approximately 145 members, with average Sunday attendance at our two morning services around 170 (145 adults, 25 children). Two years ago average attendance was 150 (125 adults, 25 children). Numbers fluctuate widely through the year due to the nature of the international church, with many families leaving Kobe over the summer, and winter breaks. KUC is made up of people from many denominations and nationalities. Our congregation includes international business people, professors, teachers, diplomats, teachers, masters and doctoral students, Japanese nationals and cross-cultural families. Our congregation is made up of people from America, Africa, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand, as well as many parts of Asia and Japan.

## PRESENT STAFF

Our staff includes our Senior Pastor, Bruce Bradburn who has served as Senior Pastor since 2010. Bruce comes from New Zealand. Our Youth Pastor David Livengood, who has been on staff ½ time, will be finishing in May 2017. We have two staff in the office, both Japanese nationals and we have caretaking staff / Property Manager. We also employ part-time nursery assistants. You can read more about our staff on our website [www.kobeunionchurch.com](http://www.kobeunionchurch.com).

## WORSHIP TIMES

We currently meet for two services per week on Sundays at 9am & 11.30am  
We have special Sunday evening services from time to time.  
And we have Sunday School Programs for all ages on Sundays.

## MINISTRY TO CHILDREN

KUC values our children, and we have many children ranging from babies, through to junior high. We provide a staffed nursery during the worship service, with one paid staff member, along with volunteer helpers. During the Worship service, we have either a Children's Worship Program or Cheerful Notes (Children's Choir) Program. Children leave the service after the first 30 minutes for their own program of worship (Childrens Worship) or children's choir music (Cheerful Notes – learning new songs to present to the congregation during worship services). This is for children up to 2nd grade. We also provide a Sunday School program for children up to 5th grade every Sunday (during the school terms). All of these programs rely heavily on dedicated volunteers who faithfully share their time and talent with the children.



## MINISTRY TO YOUTH

KUC partners with Young Life to provide programs for our middle-school and high-school youth. Programs include mid-week on Tuesday evenings for High School Youth, and on Thursdays for Middle School, along with occasional Friday and Saturday events, and Sunday school classes. The evening groups typically involve food, games, music and discussion. The youth also have a yearly opportunity to attend a service trip during Spring Break (visiting places like Philippines, Thailand etc) to do service projects and mission.

## WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Our women's ministry includes regular groups called Oasis and WOW, along with occasional fun events and retreats. WOW (Women on Wednesday) meeting at KUC includes fun, fellowship, and Bible Study along with English conversation class and a staffed nursery for preschoolers. Oasis meets on Rokko Island, for Bible Study & Prayer. We have recently appointed a Women's Ministry Leader who will oversee and develop more opportunities for involvement for women.

## MINISTRY TO ADULTS

We provide Adult Christian Education classes on Sunday mornings between the 9am service and 11.30am services. Along with our Childrens Sunday School, we have a number of Adult Sunday School classes, with both English and Japanese Bible Study options, along with a bi-lingual class. We also run occasional Baptism classes for those interested, and occasional series on special interest topics. We also are actively encouraging the development of small groups. We currently have some small groups that meet during the week in different geographical parts of Kobe, along with two groups that have recently formed and meet on Sundays – one Chinese and the other Filipino.

## EVANGELISM, OUTREACH & COMMUNITY SERVICE

KUC has active outreach ministries as well as many community service opportunities:



*Evangelism to Students;* A number of events take place through the year to provide a first connection-point to KUC, aimed particularly (but not exclusively) to Japanese university students. These include Hawaiian-themed Summer-themed and Christmas-themed Parties.

*Shinai Children's Home:* A Christian Children's home in nearby Mikage. Every December we organise and serve a traditional Christmas or thanksgiving dinner and provide a program, ending with a short worship service.

*Homeless Lunch Ministry:* Every two months or so, KUC volunteers with a Catholic Church program to provide lunch for the homeless of Kobe. We prepare and serve curry rice meals to 120 – 150.

*Other Local & Global Mission.* We partner with many different mission organisations both within Japan and globally, providing financial resources. We provide disaster relief both in offerings, as well as service in local disaster relief. KUC has been involved in providing relief in the Tohoku triple-disaster as well as the recent Kumamoto Earthquake.



## FELLOWSHIP

We have an active Fellowship ministry that provides fellowship opportunities throughout the year centered around food on Sundays after the service. These include events around Valentines, Mothers & Fathers Days, Sayonara Sunday, Summer Sundaes, Thanksgiving, Easter along with International potlucks. The Fellowship Team also provide breakfasts for those who like to arrive early on Sundays, and we have many lunches prepared and served by different groups in the church including the youth, African, Chinese and Filipino groups. Fellowship is a very important part of the life of KUC. For many people who come to KUC, this church is their “home away from home”, and fellowship is an important part of their life while they are in Kobe.

## WORSHIP



We have a large and very active worship team within KUC, with people participating in many different ways, including instrumentalists (guitars, bass, drums, pianists) singers, sound and projection people. We also have a beautiful organ which is used most Sundays. Our worship is a mix of both hymns and contemporary music, some liturgy, as well as Biblically-based Christ-centred preaching. We have communion once per month. Most Sundays we have some extra “feature” which may include Mission Moments (promoting one of our mission partners), Cheerful Notes (Childrens Choir), offertory items (groups or solos from our congregation), testimonies etc. We also have a Christmas & Easter Choir.

## CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

- With our recent move to two services, which has been done to provide further opportunity for growth, has brought some pressure on volunteers, mainly in the worship team.
- We want to increase our ability to provide discipleship and growth to people who attend KUC. This is a key area we have identified, and one of the roles for a new staff position.
- Another high priority for a new staff position is ministry to families. We have many families coming to KUC, and we want to create opportunities to support and encourage families with both fun events, and discipleship.
- Oversight of children’s and youth ministries is an important part of the Associate Pastor’s role. While you might not be actively involved in the ministry, being able to encourage and support our team of volunteers will be important.
- We want to reach out to the sizable English-speaking international community within Kobe. Many are Christians, but seem not to connect with a church in their time in Kobe.

## WHAT WE BELIEVE AT KUC

- **KUC is an interdenominational** church – this means that all Christians (and non Christians) are welcomed , and all Christian traditions and expressions are encouraged and expressed. The word “Union” (in Kobe Union Church) is used to indicate that the membership is composed of Christians from many churches and nationalities who are united through a common faith in Jesus Christ
- **KUC is evangelical.** We focus on Jesus as Lord and Saviour of all. To be evangelical essentially means that we believe salvation comes through our faith in Jesus (*sole fide* = faith alone), and that the ultimate source of authority for our faith & practice is God’s written Word—the Bible (*sola Scriptura* = Scripture alone).
- **KUC is autonomous.** Self-governing, congregational (governance), separate and independent from any denomination or church body. We have links to other international churches , but this is through relationship rather than organization. Kobe Union Church maintains links with other Union (and International) Churches around Asia via the Asian International Pastors Conference and groups like MICN.
- **KUC is missional** We exist to serve others. We take seriously the call of Jesus to “go into all the world” to “preach the gospel” in the spheres in which God has placed us in. Our “primary mission field” are expatriates and international people who struggle through dislocation from their home countries, family & friends. But we also reach out to the local community and the local people – and we are seeing many Japanese who are becoming an increasing part of our church family.
- **KUC’s Statement of Faith** - KUC uses one of the historical creeds of the church, the Apostles Creed as the basis for declaring the essential and foundational beliefs of Christianity. The Apostles Creed is one of the earliest and most widely-used creeds in the Church.

## ASSOCIATE PASTOR POSITION

### KEY OBJECTIVES & RESPONSIBILITIES

**Primary Objective:** The Associate Pastor's role, working in partnership with the Senior Pastor and Ministry Leadership teams, is to lead and develop Christian Discipleship, and Family Ministry within the whole KUC Community, along with Pastoral Care and General Pastoral duties.

**Organizational Alignment** – The Associate Pastor reports directly to the Senior Pastor.

#### Key Responsibilities: Summary

1. Discipleship
2. Family Ministry
3. General Pastoral Duties

#### Key Responsibilities: Detail

1. Discipleship. To foster and encourage spiritual growth of believers in KUC.
  - Oversee the Sunday School program of KUC which provides spiritual growth & discipleship for Adults, Youth & Children, supporting and encouraging our teachers.
  - Provide other opportunities for spiritual growth – retreats, seminars, alternative church services, and other opportunities for spiritual discipleship and nurture
  - Encourage the growth of small group ministries
2. Family Ministry. Oversight of ministry to families – families, youth and children. To provide opportunities to connect with the Local & International Community, and integrating people into the life of KUC.
  - Oversight of the youth and children's programs.
  - Encouragement and support of families
  - Looking for opportunities to reach out to the international community (eg: family events, VBS, programs for mothers and children, parenting classes, social events etc)
  - Integrating people into the life of KUC,
  - Provide oversight to the Evangelism Ministry team initiatives to the local community.
3. General Pastoral Responsibilities.
  - pastoral care, supporting multiple services, leading of worship, occasional preaching & teaching.

## REQUIREMENTS

### Experience and Qualifications

- A Bible College or Seminary degree
- An Ordained Pastor by a recognized mainstream Protestant denomination
- Previous proven experience in Pastoral Ministry
- Have an appreciation for a broad range of Christian and church expression and an openness to diverse theological perspectives
- Preferably had some cross-cultural experience, and a willingness to learn about Japan.
- Native or near-native English speaker (Japanese language ability would be helpful but not essential).

### **Relational**

- Ability to relate to diverse groups and ages
- Have good pastoral skills – caring, and a good listener
- Be a good communicator - with excellent written and verbal communication skills, conflict management skills, and computer skills
- Have strong interpersonal skills
- Have a heart for people of other cultures
- Have a strong mission heart for involvement in families and outreach
- Be adaptable and flexible
- Must be capable of taking initiative, articulating vision and building team

### **Personal**

- Be a passionate follower of Jesus, committed to following a life-style of service and worship
- Committed to helping people become life-long followers of Jesus
- Must accept and agree to support the vision and mission of KUC

### **Other Details**

This position is full-time. While the initial appointment is for a two-year term, we would anticipate that the position will be much longer term.

## **REMUNERATION**

**Remuneration will be based upon the applicants experience.**

**The following benefits are all negotiable:**

- Salary
- Health Insurance
- Housing allowance (or housing provided)
- Utilities
- Home Leave
- Relocation Allowance
- Some professional Expenses
- If the candidate is married with school-age children, educational opportunities need to be discussed. This is unlikely to form part of the remuneration package.

## **HOW TO APPLY**

Email your CV / Resume along with a cover letter to Senior Pastor Bruce Bradburn at [kucpastor@gol.com](mailto:kucpastor@gol.com)

KUC Website: [www.kobeunionchurch.com](http://www.kobeunionchurch.com)