# A Litany of Thanksgiving for Asian Heritage Month

Asia stretches over a wide area from Turkey in the west to Japan in the east, and from Siberia in the north to Indonesia in the south. It covers approximately a third of the land area of the earth.

**O God, we praise your work in creation.**

In Asia we find jungles, deserts, forests, grasslands, wetlands, and more. There are mountains more than 8,000 metres high and islands no higher than sea level. There are places which have a tropical climate and places which experience permafrost. There is great diversity in the natural environment.

**O God, we praise your work in creation.**

There are 48 countries in Asia and 60 per cent of the world’s population live in these countries. There is a multitude of races, languages, cultures, and religions. The society in which people find themselves is often very diverse.

**O God, we offer our thanks for your love and grace at work in our diversity.**

Many of the countries and areas in Asia became colonies of Western countries in Europe and North America. Even after achieving independence, there was continuing difficulty and much suffering as people experienced internal conflict and government instability. Japan made colonies of Taiwan, Korea, and parts of China, ruling them in a way that caused much suffering to many people.

**O God, forgive us for the suffering that we have caused each other.**

We, too, are a part of Asia. Let us turn our hearts towards Asia and seek a way that we may live and journey together.

**O God, please go with us as we seek this path of peace and justice.**

May we rid Asia of poverty and disease. May we put an end to war and conflict. We pray that you will give us the strength we need to travel this path.

**O God, we pray that your blessing might be upon the people of Asia, the churches of Asia, and ourselves as we seek to journey with you.**

**Amen.**

— Rob Witmer, retired United Church mission personnel, translated this prayer. This litany is used at Tsurukawa Church located in the city of Machida, a part of Tokyo Prefecture and of the West Tokyo District of the United Church of Christ in Japan.