



Global Ministries

Celebrating 200 Years in Mission

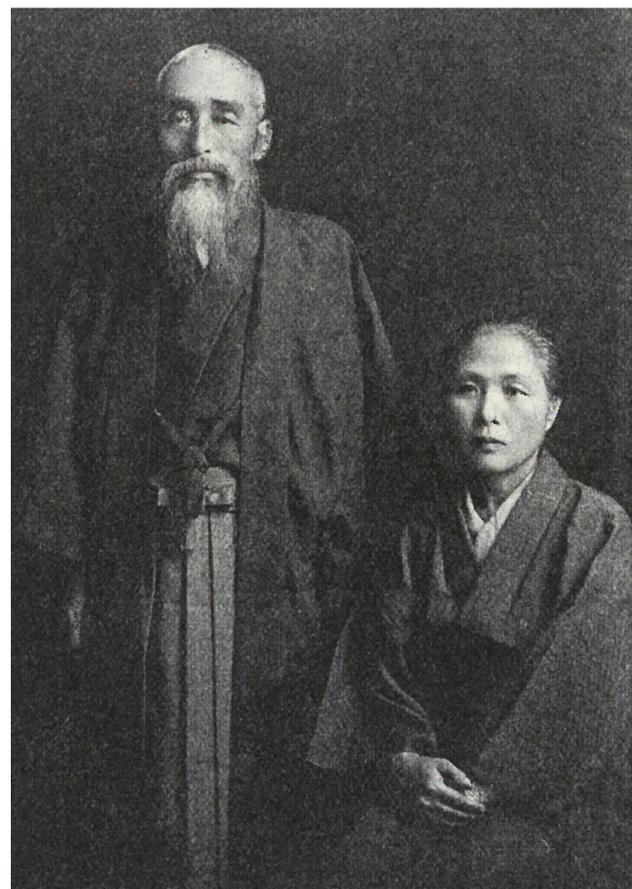


Photo: The Missionary Voice, September 1920

TEIKICHI SUNAMOTO

A Founder of Methodism in Japan

The Rev. Teikichi Sunamoto, 1857–1938, was a Japanese Methodist pastor and evangelist working with members of the missionary Lambuth family in establishing the Methodist Church in Japan in the late 19th century. Following his death, *World Outlook* magazine, then a publication of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, said Sunamoto “was really the founder of our work in Japan.”

Sunamoto joined the Japanese navy at age 16 and served on gunboats until 1880. In that year, he sailed on a merchant vessel to San Francisco and left the military to get an education in the United States. He came under the influence of Methodist evangelist Otis Gibson of the Gospel Society and was baptized on May 7, 1881. Sunamoto worked for the Gospel Society until mid-1886 when he returned to Japan with the goal of leading his mother to Christ, which he did.

Sunamoto started a school for girls in Hiroshima, married and became associated for three years with the itinerate preaching of J.W. and W.R. Lambuth [later bishop] and O.A. Dukes, aiding in opening work in numerous areas of Japan. Then he engaged in mission in Hawaii and San Francisco, returning to Japan to become pastor of the Kojiya Machi Methodist Church in Nagasaki under the Methodist Episcopal Mission. After six years there and having made that church self-supporting, he rejoined the Southern Methodist Mission in 1900. From that time until he retired in 1927, he accomplished much as pastor in Iwakuni, Mitajiri, Kure, Shimonoseki and Oishi. In his 80th year, he was still radiating faith and a holy influence over all.

Source: *World Outlook*, August, 1938, adapted from a profile by Missionary S.E. Hager.