

## Professor Remembered as NIV Translator

**R**ev. John Stek didn't promote himself. But the Calvin Theological Seminary Old Testament professor was known in some circles as the godfather of the popular New International Version of the Bible.

More than 300 million copies of the NIV have been published since it was released in 1978. The NIV is highly accessible to contemporary readers, and yet, partly because of Stek's insistence, is full of important details that adhere to the original Greek and Hebrew translations.



Dr. Douglas Moo speaks at the memorial service for Rev. John Stek.

Stek died June 6, 2009. A memorial service in his honor was held at Calvin Seminary.

"John Stek has had a greater role in the translation of this Bible than any other person," said Douglas Moo, professor of New Testament at Wheaton College and a member of the committee that oversees publication of the NIV.

Moo spoke of Stek's tenacity for detail and commitment to listening to the text. He expressed his amazement at Stek's long leadership of the project that included creation of the popular NIV Study Bible. He said that only Stek's wife, Nadine, could truly appreciate how many hours of her husband's life had been given to this effort.

Stek made a singular contribution in his translation of the Psalms and his Study Bible footnotes on the Psalms. His passion was not only to be technically accurate in translating them, but also to understand and communicate their broad theological vision.

He maintained that the gravitational center of the

Psalms as a whole is the message "God reigns." Psalm 103, which Stek interpreted as a compendium of the content of the entire psalter, was his first love and formed the liturgical framework for his memorial service.

"For the rest of my life when I read the Psalms I will hear, along with the Lord's voice, the voice of John Stek," Moo said.

Born and raised in Oska-loosa, Iowa, Stek graduated from CTS in 1952 and served a Christian Reformed congregation in Raymond, Minn., before teaching at the seminary.

—Duane Kelderman is vice president for administration at Calvin Theological Seminary.

## Surprise Guests

**E**very June, the Back to God Ministries International Japanese staff holds an open house at its Tokyo office. This year two unexpected visitors, who listen to BTGMI's *Morning Word* program, showed up for the event.

Michiko S. tuned in to the program last November and has since become a faithful listener. She has not yet committed her life to Christ, but has taken a sincere interest in the Bible and the Christian faith. Michiko listens to *Morning Word* not only on the radio, but also receives the transmission on her cell phone. She noted that when she is unclear on the message, "I repeatedly listen to the message on my phone."

The other surprise guest was Yuri K. She found the BTGMI website when she bought a new computer and began connecting to the Internet. Yuri was a member of a local cult, but now she is



Yuri K. speaks into a tape recorder about what BTGMI means to her.

beginning to realize that she was being misled. She is seeking the true Christian faith and has begun attending a Christian church near her home. Yuri told BTGMI, "Your daily radio programs are helping me in my search for truth."

The open houses are a way for Christians and seekers in Japan to come together for fellowship and encourage-

ment, which is a great need in Japan, where Christians tend to be somewhat isolated.

In addition to this year's new guests, another visitor was Miki U., who has listened to BTGMI programs for more than 12 years. Miki shared that she had been baptized last December. Because of opposition from immediate family and other relatives, it is not uncommon for Japanese people to take a long time to declare their Christian faith publicly. Miki acknowledged, "It took a long time before I was baptized, but I feel that everything that happened during that time had meaning."

Please pray for people like these women who are finding Christ through media. Pray that many more people in Japan may become true believers in Jesus Christ.

—Rev. Masao Yamashita, Japanese Leader, Back to God Ministries International