



# West L. A. Connections

Where **N**urturing **E**mpowerment **W**elcoming **S**ervice Happens!

A Monthly Publication of the West Los Angeles United Methodist Church

May 2013

## West Los Angeles United Methodist Church

1913 Purdue Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90025  
Phone: 310-479-1379  
Email: [wlaumc@aol.com](mailto:wlaumc@aol.com)  
Website: [www.wlaumc.org](http://www.wlaumc.org)

### Office Hours

Monday–Friday, 9AM to 1 PM

### Pastors' Office Hours:

Rev. Gary: Tues-Fri, 9 AM to 1 PM  
Rev. Janet: Tues-Fri, 9 AM to 1 PM  
Rev. Becky: Sat, 10 AM to 12 PM

### Sunday Worship Services

#### ◆ 9:30 AM

English Language Worship  
Child Care and Sunday School

#### ◆ 10:30 AM

Fellowship Time for both congregations

#### ◆ 11:00 AM

Japanese Language Worship

### Staff

**Rev. Gary Oba**, Senior Pastor  
Email: [obagary@gmail.com](mailto:obagary@gmail.com)

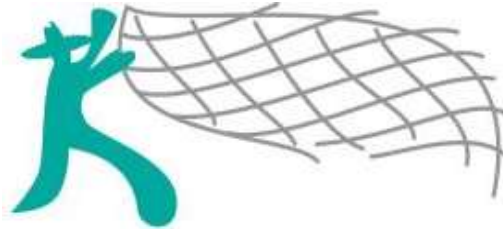
**Rev. Janet Cromwell**, Associate Pastor  
Email: [jlcromwell8@gmail.com](mailto:jlcromwell8@gmail.com)

**Rev. Rebecca Hirata**, Local Pastor  
Japanese Language Ministry  
Email: [pastorwlaumc@yahoo.co.jp](mailto:pastorwlaumc@yahoo.co.jp)  
Home Phone: 310-370-7351

**Lina Yamaguchi**,  
Secretary and Newsletter Coordinator  
Email: [wlaumc@aol.com](mailto:wlaumc@aol.com)

### Our Mission Statement

Our Mission is to promote spiritual growth - Building a community of faith and making disciples of Christ by reaching out with compassion, forgiveness and love. At West LA UMC, building a community of faith is what we are about.



Recently, the scripture reading in worship was one of the resurrection “narratives,” a story found in the gospel of John (21:1-19). In it Peter and six other disciples decide to go fishing. They fish all night

without any success. At daybreak a stranger calls out to them from the shore and suggests that they try casting their nets to “the right side of the boat.” They heed the stranger’s advice and catch so many fish that they are unable to haul their nets in.

This narrative is not about fishing, of course; it is about making disciples for Jesus. This incident, which takes place after Jesus’ death, recalls the time Jesus called this first group of disciples, many of whom were fishers, and said to them, “Follow me and I will make you fish for people” (Mark 1:17).

The story provides two lessons for the church. The first is that, on our own, we will struggle to make disciples for Jesus. The disciples were experienced fishermen who on their own fished all night with nothing to show for it. When we look only to ourselves, our attempts at making new disciples will prove unsuccessful. The second lesson is that when we are open to the Spirit’s leading, our efforts will bear fruit. In the reading, the Spirit speaks to the disciples through the voice of a stranger. It is when they heed that voice that they begin to catch fish. The Spirit, coming to us outside ourselves in unexpected ways, will assist us in our mission of making new disciples.

Our Praise Band is working on a new idea for outreach. It is to organize a “Rock and Soul Summer Evening.” They are planning to invite a number of groups, perhaps as many as nine, to play in the sanctuary and patio areas of the church on a Saturday evening in July. This is a fresh idea that came from one of our newer members, Tim Yasui, who himself is a drummer in a rock ’n roll band. This is an example of being open to the Spirit’s leading.

The Christ of There and Then is the Christ of Here and Now, who helps us in our mission of making new disciples for Jesus. May we be receptive to his voice, from wherever it may come!

In the Spirit of our resurrected Lord,

**REV. GARY OBA**  
Senior Pastor

# Prayers

Connecting and Nurturing through Prayers

*As a community of faith, we support one another through prayer. To add or remove a prayer request, please contact one of the pastors or the church office.*

## **We give thanks to God and rejoice for:**

- United Methodist Women for preparing and serving the meal at PATH on April 8.
- All those who volunteer and those who schedule and recruit weekly offering counters, worship leaders, ushers, and Fellowship/Coffee Hour hosts and donors.
- Education Committee Members who prepared and served Sunday refreshments during the month of April.
- The Praise Band for leading worship on the last Sunday of each month.
- Birth of babies to families in our congregation.
- Those who provided lunch and baked goods for all the workers at the Habitat for Humanity building project.
- Those experiencing increased health and ability to return to Sunday worship.
- Rev. Julie Elmore's ministry in Nome, Alaska, and her message on April 21.
- A safe and enjoyable Tanoshimi Kai trip to the Japanese Garden and Nethercutt Museum on April 4.
- A joy-filled Women's Retreat on April 13-14.
- Guests and friends attending West LA UMC.

## **We pray for those seeking healing and comfort:**

- The family and friends of those who have recently passed away.
- All those with on-going health issues.

## **Lectionary Readings for May**

*These readings serve as the foundation for the Wednesday morning Bible Study and Sunday morning Worship Services. By reading these scripture lessons during the week, you can prepare your heart and mind for Sunday worship.*

May 5	Acts 16:9-15 Psalm 67	Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5 John 14:23-29
May 9	Acts 1:1-11 Psalm 47	Ephesians 1:15-23 Luke 24:44-53
May 12	Acts 16:16-34 Psalm 97	Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21 John 17:20-26
May 19	Acts 2:1-21 Psalm 104:24-34, 35b	Romans 8:14-17 John 14:8-17 (25-27)
May 26	Proverbs 8:1-4, 22-31 Psalm 8	Romans 5:1-5 John 16:12-15

## **West LA Prayer Ministry**

Each Thursday morning at 9:30 AM, a small group gathers in the sanctuary to pray for persons on the church's prayer list. If you would like to be a part of this prayer ministry but are unable to meet at the church on Thursday mornings, please contact Lina Yamaguchi, Church Secretary at 310-479-1379. An updated prayer list will be emailed to you.



# Worship & Studies

Growing in Faith through Worship and Studies

## May 9:30 AM Worship Services

### May 5 – 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

#### Family Worship / Holy Communion

Rev. Gary Oba preaching. Text: John 14:23-29  
Theme: In Jesus' absence, the Holy Spirit teaches us all things. Rev. Janet Cromwell giving children's message. Children remain in worship.

### May 12 – 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Easter

Mother's Day service led by the youth.

### May 19 – Day of Pentecost

One Worship Service at 10:30 AM

Rev. Becky Hirata preaching. Rev. Janet Cromwell giving children's message. **Everyone is encouraged to wear something red!** After the joint worship, please join us for coffee fellowship and reception to celebrate with all those who have been baptized and received as members of the church this past year.

### May 26 – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Pentecost Worship with Praise Band

Rev. Gary Oba preaching. Text: John 16:12-15  
Theme: The Spirit teaches us the things of God and Christ. Rev. Janet Cromwell giving children's message.

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## Church Library – Open Hours



The Church Library will be open for reading and borrowing books on Sunday, May 5 from 11:00 AM to 12:00 Noon. Come and see the library and use the many resources that are available to church members. Please

contact Jean Dote for more information.

## Sunday School and Bible Studies

### Children's Sunday School

Sunday School is the perfect place and time for children to learn about God, the life of Jesus, and important lessons in the Bible. Children of all ages will enjoy these Sunday School classes:

Toddlers Nursery (located next to the sanctuary)  
Grades K-5 Explorer Room 3  
Grades 6-8 Trekker Room 2  
Grades 9-12 Youth Room 8 (located upstairs)

### Women's Bible Study Group

Mondays 1:00 to 2:30 pm

In May, we will continue our study of Resurrection Hope with lessons from Acts and Thessalonians. The women take turns leading the class discussion using the Adult Bible Study series. Please join us for fellowship and discussion.

### Men's Bible Study Group

The Men's Study Group is on recess until further notice. For future meetings, contact Fred Hifumi.

### "Alive Now" Study Group

Wednesdays, 9:00-10:15 AM in Room 2

This study focuses on the lectionary text that will be the basis for Sunday's sermon. (See page 2 of this Newsletter for a list of scripture lessons.) New members are welcome.



### Thursday Bible Study

Thursdays, 7:30-9:00 PM in the Learning Center.

The study is back to Thursday evenings in May. Rev. Gary will finish up the study on the book of 2 Corinthians using the Immersion Bible Studies Guide by James L. Evans.



## Pentecost Sunday, May 19 One Worship Service 10:30 AM

Join us for this special combined English and Japanese Worship Service on May 19, followed by a reception in the Social Hall.

Pentecost commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus' followers as described in the Book of Acts 2:1-31. For this reason, Pentecost is often described as the "Birthday of the Church."

**Plan to wear something RED on Pentecost!**

# Children, Youth, and Family Ministries

Supporting Families in Spiritual Growth and Discipleship

## Asian Camp



Asian Camp will be held July 28 – August 2 at Camp Sierra. This camp is open to students who have completed 9<sup>th</sup> Grade through their second year in college.

A Jr. High Camp is scheduled for June 30-July 5 at Camp Colby.

More information and registration materials will be sent to parents and youth when it is received at the church. In the meantime mark your calendar and plan to attend! Contact Rev. Janet Cromwell if you are interested in either camp program.

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## The new Children's Choir!

The new Children's Choir is preparing to sing during worship on Mother's Day, May 12. All children and youth are encouraged to participate.

The Children's Choir is directed by West LA UMC's Music Director, Chris Heckman. A rehearsal will be held after Sunday School on May 5 in Room 3 from 11:00-11:45 AM. All children and youth are encouraged to participate!

~ Pamela Sase-Ryder

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## Parenting Beyond Your Capacity



We have been describing "Orange-ology" as the combination of two vital influences in the lives of children and youth – the **red** heart of the home and the **yellow** light of Christ in the church. Combined together, **orange** becomes a dynamic way to guide and nurture the next generation in the Christian faith!

The Christian Education Committee is encouraging all parents to read "*Parenting Beyond Your Capacity: Connect Your Family to a Wider Community.*" This insightful book by Orange founder, Reggie Joiner, provides concrete examples of how parents and the church can partner to develop healthy relationships and support families in growing in faith.

On Sunday, May 5 at 11:00 AM, we will have a presentation on Orange-ology and how the ideas presented in the book may guide our ministry with families at West LA UMC! Hope you can join us and share your thoughts on this important ministry.

~ Rev. Janet Cromwell

## Vacation Bible School – July 8-12



Everyone looks forward to Vacation Bible School! This year's theme is "Everywhere Fun Fair: Where God's World Comes Together!"

Mark your calendar for July 8-12 for a fun week of Bible stories, singing, games, science projects, crafts, snacks, and more!

Volunteering at VBS is a wonderful way to get to know the children and youth of our church. Please contact Jeri Okamoto Floyd if you would like more information about helping in a classroom or the kitchen, or assisting with registration, the mission projects, or cultural components of the week!

Registration Forms for children and youth helpers are available at the church.

We look forward to seeing you at the Fair!

## Items Requested

This year's Vacation Bible School will be assembling gift packets for various groups. Donations of small cosmetic bags (the type given away with Department Store promotions), sample-size bottles of shampoo and lotions (like those provided at hotels), and school supplies (glue, pencils, markers, etc.) are welcome. In addition, we welcome Bed Bath & Beyond coupons for the purchase of items used at the church.

## West LA UMC's Women's Retreat

Twenty-three women enjoyed an overnight Retreat at the Aldersgate Retreat Center April 13-14. Together the women studied the story of Ruth and Naomi while enjoying singing, personal prayer and reflection time, delicious meals, and wonderful fellowship.

# Outreach & Social Service

Serving Our Community and World

## Habitat for Humanity Report

On March 16, twenty five earnest volunteers from WLAUMC gathered and helped Habitat for Humanity. In getting busy together, we put our faith into action, splitting into teams that included, as our leader asked for- those with "anger issues" (led by that angry coffee lady, Stacey Hirose, but anchored by not so angry Doug Yamaguchi). We had groups doing yard work, painting, removing a section of roofing. (Yes, the scary scene of the day was Stan Shimotsu with a power tool in his hand!)

Then there were those with actual skills, including Steve Fujii and Kenji Maeda who replaced the subflooring in the bathroom. Part of our team also made a 45 foot fence from scratch.

Thanks to all who helped. Chris Untiet from Habitat for Humanity said they refurbished 9 houses during the Lenten season. To qualify for one of these homes, the families sign loan papers (with a default rate Bank of America would envy) and must volunteer a large number of hours to help others as well. Supporting Habitat in just one of many ways we can be a blessing to others!

*Submitted by Ken Ho*

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## Ralph's Shopping "Profits" WLAUMC

Ralph's Supermarket donates a percentage of every dollar you spend there to our church, IF you ask them to. If you are a Ralph's Club Card member, all you have to do is take this newsletter to the cashier and ask him/her to scan the bar code at the bottom of this article.

You may have done this previously, but Ralph's requires that you update your card each year in September. So if you have not renewed, or if you don't remember, simply take this bar code and ask the friendly cashier or manager to scan it.

WLAUMC uses the Ralphs dividends to support Social Action activities. We thank you and our care recipients thank you. Any questions? See Cooke Sunoo or any other Social Action Commission member.

NPO# 90163  
WEST LOS ANGELES UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



Thank you for your support!

~ Social Action Commission

## Saving the Environment: A Spiritual Perspective May 5 Program at WLA UMC May 25 LA River Tour



Caring for the environment is important to most all of us. Global warming is a serious concern for us; we recycle and re-use to reduce our carbon footprint. We know that protecting the earth is protecting a sacred gift from God, but integrating it into our everyday spiritual and ethical practices isn't always on our minds.

West LA UMC's Social Action Commission is presenting what promises to be a fascinating dialogue on these important topics. Dr. Doug Christie of our congregation will join with environmental writer Dr. Jenny Price in a conversation unlocking some of the fundamental questions of nature and our faith. Doug has done extensive writing on ecology and Christian thought while Jenny has spent years writing about nature in LA. Together they hope to involve our congregation in seeing our faith and environment with new focus and deep connections.

The May 5 (1:00-3:00 PM) presentation will be followed by a May 25 LA River field trip to see places of restored natural beauty and wildlife and sites of wonderful potential. The River Tour will provide an opportunity for our congregation to see first-hand the possibilities of transformation of the concrete flood control channel into a thriving urban oasis.

The May 5 presentation is free and open to all. The cost of the May 25 field trip is \$10 per person/\$25 per family. The Social Action Commission is subsidizing the fee to make it affordable for everyone to participate. Invite friends to join us, but the number of participants is limited, so first-come first-served. Sign-ups will take place after church on Sundays.

*Submitted by Cooke Sunoo*

P.S. To learn more about Dr. Jenny Price, please see her article, "Thirteen Ways of Seeing Nature in LA" at [www.believmag.com/issues/200604](http://www.believmag.com/issues/200604).

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## Café Aloha – Lunch for Seniors



Seniors! Please come and enjoy Café Aloha Lunch on Saturday, May 4 at 11:30 AM at the West LA UMC, Social Hall. We will eat Japanese food, sing, and enjoy fellowship time together.

There will be a free piano concert after the lunch in the Sanctuary. Invite a friend to come along! Please RSVP to Frances Uchida.

## **GO GREEN!**

Remember... we can do a lot to help care for the planet by simply bringing used ink cartridges to church. Our own Harriet Woo will take them to Staples or to a cartridge recycling company, where she gets cash for the items. These proceeds pay for subscriptions to "The Upper Room," a monthly devotional magazine we provide for homebound church members; the proceeds also support our Social Action Commission projects. Thanks, Harriet!

Warning from the Gas Co.: pipelines may be located anywhere, including under streets, sidewalks and private property, sometimes just inches below the surface. Excavation, planting, demolition and other forms of digging are a major cause of pipeline damage. That's why it is important to know where they are located before you begin any type of digging.

So...whether you're planning to build a major development or just landscaping your yard, protect your safety and that of those around you by calling Underground Service Alert at 811 at least two business days prior to excavating. You can call Underground Service Alert between 6:00 AM and 7:00 PM, Monday through Friday (excluding holidays). They will coordinate with Southern California Gas Company and other utility owners in the area to mark the locations of buried utility-owned lines. This is a FREE service and it can help prevent injury, costly property damage and loss of utility service.

Can you figure out how to drive just 10 fewer miles per week this year? If so, you'll personally prevent 500 lbs. of CO2 from polluting the atmosphere!

*By Jack Ong*



**REUSE! REDUCE! RECYCLE!**

## **Manzanar Educational Bus Tour Save the Date! September 21-22**

The Manzanar Educational Bus Tour will take place September 21-22, 2013. For more information, please contact Rose Honda, Sadie Hifumi, or Eleanor Nakano.

## **Annual Church Bazaar Save the Date! September 28**

Our annual West Los Angeles United Methodist Church Asian Cultural Bazaar will be held on Saturday, September 28, 2013 from 11:00 AM to 5:00 PM with food, entertainment, children's games and crafts, a silent auction, plants, door prizes and cultural displays! Bring your friends and family to a joyful day of faith, food, music and more!

For more information and to volunteer to help, please contact Stan Shimotsu, Doug Yamaguchi, or Sonia Dixon.

## **WLA JACL Scholarship Award Dinner**

The West LA JACL will hold its annual Scholarship Award Dinner at the Aki Restaurant, 11513 Santa Monica Blvd., on Wednesday, June 12, at 6:30 PM. Scholarship Awards will be given to graduating high school seniors from area schools. Also, a Chiyo Hattori Medical Scholarship Award will be awarded to a qualified recipient currently attending medical school. Dinners will be \$30 including tax and tip.

Everyone is invited and urged to attend to support this important program, which has resulted in tens of thousands of dollars awarded to graduating seniors of local schools in their search for education.

Please call or email Sandy Toshiyuki, 310-399-4526 (sanfran508@gmail.com) or Jean Ushijima, 323-980-8225 for reservations or information. Thank you.

## **Fun Walk for Hunger Awareness**



On Saturday May 18, you are invited to join members of Centenary UMC in a "Community Fun Walk for Hunger Awareness" from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM. Participants will promote hunger awareness and raise money for The United Methodist Church's Loaves and Fish ministry. The Walk will begin at Centenary (300 S Central Ave, Los Angeles) and walkers will trek within the church's neighborhood including Little Tokyo, the Artist District and Skid Row. Walkers will also venture to Boyle Heights, Keiro Nursing Home and our neighboring United Methodist Church at La Placita Olvera on Olvera Street. This is a family event with a festive atmosphere, food, games and entertainment. All are encouraged to sign up to walk or pledge a monetary donation to one (or more) of walkers. This event is hosted by Centenary United Methodist Women.

For more information and to receive a Pledge Form, call Centenary UMC at 213-617-9097.

## **Japanese Film Nights Friday, May 31, 7:30 PM**



Japanese Film Night on May 31 features "After Life" aka "Wandafuru Raifu." This film was directed by Hirokazu Koreeda in 1998, is 118 minutes long and in color.

An introduction to the film, including background information on the director and actors, is provided at the beginning of each film. The movie starts at 7:30 PM in the Sanctuary. Admission is free and open to the public.

## UMW NEWS UPDATE



It pays to advertise on the internet! With Rev. Janet's help, the UMW is reaching out to all the women of our church via e-mail.

Our first announcement resulted in two visitors, Joann Ayres and Shinhee Ro at our meeting on March 15. Their help was especially welcome as we packed ten layettes for Alaska and about three dozen toiletry bags for homeless UCLA students. Thanks to Grace Seto who again coordinated the layette mission project and to Eleanor Nakano who delivered the toiletry bags and food to Rev. Jeanne Roe Smith for distribution. Thank you, too, to Aya Okada and Toshie Setoguchi who prepared the delicious luncheon.

Our e-mail invitation also brought out new volunteers, Keiko Kano, Keiko Kikuta and Kale Langley for our P.A.T.H. dinner preparation on April 8. Thanks to Eleanor Nakano and Frances Uchida for coordinating the dinner preparation and to the Easter Breakfast cooks who donated two hams.

The UMW was informed by Rev. Becky that our old rice cookers were not steaming rice as they should, which made it difficult for the volunteers to prepare Café Aloha Lunch for seniors. The UMW donated two twenty-cup electric rice cookers at the cost of \$600.00. The rice cookers will be used to prepare rice not only Café Aloha lunches, but for potluck luncheons, the Bazaar and other church functions.

UMW members Fusako Hamamoto, Sadie Hifumi, Michi Matsuda, Eleanor Nakano, Frances Uchida and Kathi Yamazaki, along with seventeen other women, enjoyed the inspirational and fun Women's Retreat at Aldersgate April 13-14. Thanks to a donation from the UMW General Fund, the cost of the retreat was lowered considerably for all the Retreat attendees.

For more information on the United Methodist Women, please see the bulletin board in the Social Hall or speak to Sadie Hifumi or Toshie Setoguchi.

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## Tanoshimi-kai Outing



Please join us for our next outing on Thursday, June 6, to see the Watts Tower Art Center followed by lunch and then a tour of the Space Shuttle Endeavor at the California Science Center. The cost of the day trip is \$50.00 per person and includes travel and admission. To sign up, please contact Eleanor Nakano.

## UMW JAM SESSION

Friday, May 3, 9:30 AM



You're invited to a Jam Session – that is a Strawberry Jam-Making Session, on Friday, May 3 beginning at 9:30 AM. If you would like to help make freezer jam, come join us. Just let us know if you are coming so we can make lunch for you.

We will be selling the fruits of our labor, namely Strawberry Freezer Jam, after the Joint Worship Service on Pentecost Sunday, May 19. At the same time, we will have a BAKE SALE. Everyone is invited to participate in this fund-raising project with home-baked goods. Please let our Co-Chairs Eleanor Nakano, Grace Seto and Sadie Hifumi know if you would like to donate your specially prepared goodies. All proceeds will go to mission projects.

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## Message of Love

Ms. Joni Eareckson Tada will be the guest speaker at the Southern California Japanese American Christian Federation 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Program on Saturday, May 25 at Calvary Chapel in La Habra. The program begins at 1:30 PM. Advance tickets are \$15.00 by calling JEMS at 213-613-0022.

A diving accident at age 17 left Joni paralyzed. With God's grace, Joni learned patience, perseverance, and an appreciation for the small things in life. Through her books, paintings, and presentations, Joni's life has inspired millions of people with disabilities and given hope to millions more! Together with her husband, Ken Tada, they continue to share God's message of love, hope, and freedom.

Please contact Aiko Inouye for more information.

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## West LA UMC Pet Policy

Everyone loves pets, especially children! However, some people are allergic to pets and others risk falls due to tripping over pet leashes. Therefore, the Trustee's policies state that **pets are not to be brought to the church** except for certified service dogs. Thank you for your kind consideration in following this policy.

Submitted by the Trustees

## **Ghana Mission Appreciation**

Dear WLAUMC Family,



Thank you for your generous donation to Mephibosheth Training Centre in Ghana, West Africa. Thank you so much for all of your prayers, gifts and donations! The children and staff were touched to know that people across the world were thinking of them. Thank you!

~ Mariko Yamazaki

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## **Thank you for Palm Sunday donations**

Thank you to Bob and Carol Matsumura and Larry and Margaret Toy for the beautiful Sego palm branches which graced the church sanctuary and courtyard. Thank you to Bob and Thelma Adachi for the rafus branches which were majestically waved on entry and during the service by the worshippers.

~ Altar Guild

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## **Easter Lilies**

Thank you to everyone who purchased the Easter Lilies that adorned our Sanctuary on Easter Sunday. Also thank you to Otto Nakano for helping to unpack the lily plants when they were delivered and to the Altar Guild Members Eleanor Nakano, Grace Seto, Sadie Hifumi, Fusako Hamamoto, Frances Uchida, and Carol Nakano for decorating the sanctuary. Thank you!



~ Kazie Kame



# JAPANESE MINISTRY

「石巻」

2年前、3月11日に東関東大震災があった。その年の夏、津波で町が流された南三陸へ行った。避難所を訪問して、野菜や果物、ジュースなどを差し入れした。次の年、南三陸の人々が教会が欲しいと願い、教会の無い町にクリスチャンセンターが建った。感動的なストーリーは忘れることが出来ない。

今年は、6月に石巻に行く予定である。石巻も東関東大震災で、津波の被害にあった。石巻は漁業の町で、神社や寺の数が多いと言われる。

しかし、石巻には教会がいくつかある。石巻で設立されたプロテスタント教会は、明治18年(1885年)、吉田亀太郎が両親宅を集会所として礼拝を始めたのが最初であると聞いた。初代牧師となった吉田亀太郎牧師は、色々な迫害を受けながら、苦労を重ねたと言う。そして、福音伝道の種を蒔き、確実に御言葉は石巻に根を下ろした。

2年前の大震災の時、教会が多く働きを担ってきた。教会が灯台のように町を照らし、世界から集まるミッションの働きを引き寄せた。

すばらしい事に、石巻に福音の種を蒔いた吉田牧師は、橋本兄弟姉妹、久野姉妹の曾祖父である。主の不思議な摂理を感じて感謝している。主は、アメリカと日本に、つながりを与えてくれたのである。やはり、主あって、石巻とロスのクリスチャンは兄弟姉妹だなど新たに思わされた。

平田

## “Ishinomaki City”

Do you remember Higashi Kanto Earthquake and Tsunami from March 11, 2011? That summer, I had a privilege to visit shelters in Shizugawa village and distribute fruits and vegetables. After I came back, I heard that village people wished to start a church. Their dream came true last year when the first Christian Center was built in Shizugawa Village.

This summer, I plan to visit temporary housings in Ishinomaki City. Ishinomaki City has many temples and shrines compare to other cities in Japan. But, there are several Christian Churches in this city too. After 3.11, Christian Churches became the lighthouse in Ishinomaki City. Many Mission groups and Christian brothers and sisters from all over the world visited Ishinomaki and built houses, cleaned up, and provided food. The Love of God has been shining in this city.

In Ishinomaki, the first Protestant Church was established by Mr. Kametaro Yoshida in 1885. In the beginning, he converted his parents' house as a church. When he became a first Christian Pastor in Ishinomaki, he received lots of prosecution from the village people. But, he was faithful to God. He planted the seed, and the Good News spread in Ishinomaki.

I was surprised to hear that Pastor Yoshida from Meiji era is a great-grandfather of Chimie Hashimoto & Nanayo Hashimoto Kuno (our Nichigo members). God has already provided a strong connection between Japan and America! As I prepare to visit Ishinomaki and serve the people there, I would like to remember Pastor Yoshida's passion to serve God in Ishinomaki. May God be glorified in Ishinomaki.

Pastor Becky Hirata 平田



## Nichigo's May Calendar:

May 4	11:30	Café Aloha Senior Lunch
	12:30	Free Piano Concert
May 5	11:00	Nichigo Worship (Children's Day)
May 12	11:00	Nichigo Worship (Mother's Day)
May 19	10:30	Joint Worship Service (Pentecost Sunday)
	11:30	New Member Reception
May 26	11:00	Nichigo Worship
May 31	7:30	Japanese Film Night

***You are invited to attend...***

## ***Saving the Environment: A Spiritual Perspective***

Two special events to draw our attention to protecting God's sacred gift.



### ***A Dialogue***

*with*

Dr. Doug Christie,  
Author and Professor

Dr. Jenny Price,  
Environmental Writer

**May 5, 2013**

1:00 – 3:00pm

West LA UMC Sanctuary  
Free and Open to the Public



### ***LA River Walk***

*led by*

Dr. Jenny Price

**May 25, 2013**

To reserve a space for the  
walk, please call  
310-479-1379.

Donation:

\$10/individual, \$25/family

*For more information, see page 5 inside!*

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## **West LA United Methodist Church**

1913 Purdue Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90025

wlaumc.org  310-479-1379

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