



# 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

January 2014

**West Los Angeles  
United Methodist Church**  
1913 Purdue Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90025  
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### 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)

**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.

## *Marching in the Light of God!*

As we begin the new year, the theme that will guide us as a church is, “Marching in the Light of God.” In worship, the sermons, and our various programs, we will touch upon this theme.

The theme affirms that, in all that we do, God guides us. We don’t march to the beat of our own drum. We don’t follow the leads of politicians, actors, or sports figures. We allow God be our guide, our drum major.

The expression “light of God” suggests knowledge or knowing. The One whom we declare is immortal and invisible may be known to us. God has spoken to us through language, which is a rational event. Through the many ways it comes to us, God’s Word guides us. As the psalmist has written, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” (Psalm 119:105)

“Marching” suggests an active response to God’s Word. When we have heard God’s call, we are prompted to do something. Our response may be as complex as organizing a protest or as simple as sharing our faith. I was at Macy’s on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. The saleswoman behind the counter looked worn and harried. I said, “Must’ve been crazy yesterday, on Black Friday.” She said, “It was; lines out the door all day and I got home after midnight. But I thank God that I have a job. I may be tired, but I feel blessed.” Knowing God’s Word will lead us to act in many and varied ways.

As the new year begins, let us explore together what it means and looks like to march in the light of God!

Marching with you,

*Rev. Gary Oba*

# Prayers

## Connecting and Nurturing through Prayer

*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.*

*The Prayer List is published in the Sunday Bulletin or may be obtained by contacting the Church Office.*

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### **Lectionary Readings for January**

*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.*

Jan. 1	Ecclesiastes 3:1-13 Psalm 8 Revelation 21:1-6a Matthew 25:31-46	Numbers 6:22-27 Psalm 8 Galatians 4:4-7 or Philippians 2:5-11 Luke 2:15-21
Jan. 5	Isaiah 60:1-6 Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14	Ephesians 3:1-12 Matthew 2:1-12
Jan. 6	Isaiah 60:1-6 Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14	Ephesians 3:1-12 Matthew 2:1-12
Jan. 12	Isaiah 42:1-9 Psalm 29	Acts 10:34-43 Matthew 3:13-17
Jan. 19	Isaiah 49:1-7 Psalm 40:1-11	1 Corinthians 1:1-9 John 1:29-42
Jan. 26	Isaiah 9:1-4 Psalm 27:1, 4-9	1 Corinthians 1:10-18 Matthew 4:12-23

# Worship & Studies

Growing in Faith through Worship and Studies

## January 9:30 AM Worship Services

**January 5 – Epiphany Sunday/ 10:30 AM  
Joint Family Worship and Holy Communion**  
Rev. Becky Hirata preaching. Text: Isaiah 26:1-3.  
Rev. Janet Cromwell giving children's message.

**January 12 – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany with  
Baptism and Membership**  
Rev. Gary Oba preaching. Text: Isaiah 42:1-9;  
Matthew 3:13-17. Theme: God brings forth newness.  
Rev. Janet Cromwell giving children's message.

**January 19 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany**  
Rev. Gary Oba preaching. Text: 1 Corinthians 1:1-9  
Theme: Develop your spiritual gifts!  
Rev. Janet Cromwell giving children's message.

**January 26 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany with  
Worship with Praise Band**  
Rev. Gary Oba preaching. Text: 1 Corinthians 1:10-18  
Theme: Christians, be in agreement!  
Rev. Janet Cromwell giving children's message.

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## **Joint English & Japanese Worship and All Church Potluck**

**Sunday, January 5, 10:30 AM**

Mark your calendars for the combined English and Japanese Worship Service on Sunday, January 5 at 10:30 AM. Together we will celebrate the new year in worship with Rev. Becky Hirata preaching and a special communion with mochi.

Following worship, everyone is invited to the All Church Potluck in the Social Hall. Please sign up with Keiko Takahashi so we are sure to have plenty of food.

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## **Children's Music Ministry**

The church's theme for the New Year is "Marching In the Light of God." On Sunday, January 5, the children will have the opportunity to sing the choral introit with the chancel choir during the worship service.



We will have a practice during Sunday School on December 29. If your child is planning to sing, please be at church at 10:00 AM on January 5 for practice before the service. Hope to see you there!

Ashley Ramsey, Music Director

## Sunday School and Bible Studies

### **Children's Sunday School**

Sunday School helps children to learn about God, the life of Jesus, and important lessons in the Bible.

Infants & Toddlers	Nursery (next to the sanctuary)
Age 3 to Pre-K	Cool Kids Room 1
K to Grade 3	Explorer Room 3
Grades 4-8	Trekker Room 2
Grades 9-12	Youth Room 8 (located upstairs)

### **Women's Bible Study Group**

Mondays 1:00-2:30 PM in Room 9.

In January the theme will be "Jesus Ushers in the Reign of God" with lessons from the Gospel of Luke. The women take turns facilitating the class discussion using the Adult Bible Study series. New members welcome!

### **Men's Bible Study Group**

Tuesdays, 7:15-8:15 PM in Room 2.

The Men's Study Group is resuming. They are reading and discussing the book of Genesis using a study guide. For more information, please contact Fred Hifumi.

### **"Alive Now" Study Group**

Wednesdays, 9:15-10:15 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 always welcome to join the conversation. See Rev. Gary Oba for more information.

### **Thursday Bible Study**

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

The group continues a study of the gnostic gospels, including the gospels of Thomas, Mary, and Judas. The study meets weekly on Thursday evenings. New members are welcome. Please see Rev. Gary for class materials.

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### **West LA Prayer Ministry**

Join us on Thursday mornings at 9:30 AM in the Sanctuary to pray for persons on the church's prayer list. If you would an updated copy of the Prayer List, contact Lina Yamaguchi, Church Secretary at 310-479-1379.



# Children, Youth, and Family Ministries

Supporting Families in Spiritual Growth and Discipleship

## **Thanksgiving Eve Worship and Meals**

This year marked the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Thanksgiving Youth Mission Project led by Dave and Emily Cook. Each year, the youth collect canned goods for low-income families. Following the Thanksgiving Eve Worship Service, the youth and adult volunteers prepare full Thanksgiving Dinners that are delivered to families in Los Angeles on Thanksgiving morning.

This year, Dave Cook presented the message during the Thanksgiving Eve Worship Service. Mike Dote, Valerie Harada, and Brandon Yamaguchi (on behalf of his father, Doug) offered reflections on the importance of this important outreach ministry.

Thanks to our church members and friends who donated food and time to this annual mission project. Over 33 meals were provided for families this year!



## **“Just a Little Christmas”**

On December 15, the children and youth presented “Just a Little Christmas,” a charming retelling of the Christmas story through drama and song. In this photo, the children used hand-motions when singing “Away in a Manger” to show how “the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.”

Many thanks to our talented children and youth, Music Director Victoria Yamashita, Accompanist Thomas Gaff, and Co-Directors Sharon Kinoshita Gill and Rev. Janet Cromwell. We also thank Sharon’s woodworker friend, Bill Yee, for constructing the beautiful stable for this year’s Pageant.

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## **Christmas Caroling**

On December 15, nine singers sang Christmas carols to very appreciative audiences at Berkeley Convalescent Hospital, Hollenbeck Palms and the homes of a few friends. Special thanks to the Trekker’s Retreat participants for providing gift bags and Steve Fujii for preparing the music and playing his guitar. The joy of Christmas was enjoyed by all.

*Pam Sase Ryder*

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## **Christmas Toy Drive**

Thanks to everyone who donated toys to this year’s Christmas Toy Drive. West LA UMC was able to provide toys to the children of families to whom we delivered meals on Thanksgiving Day, in addition to giving toys to Pastor Vilma Cruz-Báez who will carry them to a United Methodist pastor just within the Mexico border. These toys will bring joy to children who would otherwise not receive gifts this holiday season.



## Church Library

The West LA Church Library is located on the second floor of the Learning Center (located behind the Sunday School classrooms). Under the leadership of Jean Dote and the Library Committee, they receive donations of books relating to Asian American history and culture, Bible study materials, religion, and theology. The books are catalogued and available for our church members to borrow. Parents are encouraged to bring their children to the Church Library to enjoy the large selection of children's books.

The Library Committee encourages you to visit the Library and use its resources. Generally, it is open after worship on the first Sunday of the month, or by request. See the Sunday Bulletin for details.

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## PATH Meal Service

People Assisting The Homeless is all about supporting individuals as they seek employment, secure permanent housing, and save enough to move from homelessness toward stability. Our church members support this ministry by preparing one dinner each month for adults who are getting back on their feet.

If you or your family would like to either cook or serve a meal in 2014, please contact Cooke Sunoo, Social Action Commission Chairperson. Funds are available for persons who are able to cook a meal, but may not have the funds to pay for the supplies.

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## Ohana 2.0

West LA UMC is delighted to host Ohana 2.0, a new group for parents of young children (newborns to Pre-K). A potluck lunch in November brought together church families and their friends for a delicious meal and lots of family play time. Under the guidance of Jane Shimotsu, the group is meeting regularly for mutual support and fellowship. For more information on meeting dates and times, please contact Jane or the Church Office.



## 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Overnight Retreat

Sunday – Monday, January 19-20

Our 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> Graders will enjoy a fun Overnight Retreat in January. Participants will meet at the church on Sunday afternoon at 3:00 PM and head out on a fun adventure before cooking dinner at the Parsonage. Sunday evening, we'll gather in the Learning Center to watch "Wreck-It Ralph" and learn how *everyone* is needed in God's Kingdom! We'll enjoy games, work on a mission project, team up for a cool art project, and stay overnight in the Church Library.

On Monday morning (Martin Luther King Jr. Day), we will eat breakfast, wrap-up our discussion, and have a closing prayer circle. The Retreat concludes Monday at 10:30 AM.

To register, each participant must submit a 2013-2014 Church Program Registration Form (which includes medical/emergency information) and a \$20.00 fee. Friends are welcome!

Details will be sent to parents and 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Questions, please contact Ms. Sharon Kinoshita Gill, Mike Dote, or Rev. Janet Cromwell.

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## Asian Camp Dates

Asian Camp is designed for youth and young adults to meet new friends and grow in Christian faith. This year, Asian Camp will be held July 27 – August 1 at Camp Sierra. This camp is open to students who have completed 9<sup>th</sup> Grade through their second year in college. More information and registration materials will be available in the coming months. In the meantime, mark your calendar and plan to attend!

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## Job Announcement

The United Japanese Christian Church in Clovis, CA, is seeking a part-time Youth and Young Adult Leader. If you know someone who might be interested in this position, please have them contact Rev. Akiko Miyake-Stoner at [ujclife@gmail.com](mailto:ujclife@gmail.com).

# Outreach & Social Service

Serving Our Community and World

## **West District Visioning Event: “God’s Future for This Conference”**

**Saturday, January 25**  
**Wilshire UMC, 8:30 AM – Noon**  
**Los Altos UMC, 1:30 – 5:00 PM**

All church leaders will want to attend the West District Visioning Event on January 25. This is an opportunity to be in conversation with Bishop Minerva Carcaño. This is being described as a mandatory event for pastor and key leaders.

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## **West District Training Conference** **Saturday, February 8, Holman UMC**

The West District Training Conference will be held on Saturday, February 8 at Holman UMC, from 8:00 AM – 2:00 PM. This annual event includes inspiring worship, informative workshops, lunch, and fellowship time with persons from churches throughout LA.

Participants will choose from 14 informative workshops on missions, hospitality, evangelism, Advance Care Planning, using social media for the church, ministry with young adults, SPRC, Trustees, and Finance. Registration Fee is only \$10 before January 21, and includes lunch and program. Please submit your registration to the Church Office early so we can pay this discounted price.

Registration materials are available in the Social Hall, or see Rev. Janet Cromwell for more information.

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## **Workshop on Greeting People** **with Master Greeter Rich Liedtke** **Saturday, March 15, 9:30 AM – Noon**



Making people feel truly welcomed is an invaluable skill. Whether at church, home or work, people of all ages can learn to perfect the warm greeting.

Our guest speaker, Rich Liedtke, a master of the art of greeting people, has presented his seminar to countless church groups wanting to develop that warm welcoming feeling. He comes highly recommended.

Please mark your calendar for Saturday, March 15, at 9:30 AM for coffee and registration, and 10:00 AM for the Seminar in the Sanctuary.

Plan to attend this workshop and bring a friend. See Pam Sase Ryder for questions and registration.

## **Japanese Film Night** **Friday, January 31, 7:30 PM, Sanctuary**

Japanese Film Night will resume on Friday, January 31 with “Chronicle of My Mother”/“Waga Hana no ki” with director Masato Harada and starring Koji Yakusho and Kirin Kiki.



Made in 2011, this film is in color and 108 minutes long. This award winning film brings new meaning of life.

Greg Shikata, Japanese Film Night Coordinator, provides an introduction to the film at the beginning of each film, including background information on the director and actors. These films are free and open to the public. Come and join us.

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## **West LA UMC Supports Philippine Relief**

In the wake of Typhoon Haiyan on November 8, the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) has actively mobilizing resources to respond to this latest and largest in a series of disasters to hit the Philippines. Although an accurate casualty toll is yet to be determined, it is clear that the destruction and disruption of lives is massive.

The initial response from UMCOR involved the distribution of food and water purification tablets. UMCOR expects to provide relief services to at least 1,000 families. UMCOR will continue to assess the viability of longer-term rehabilitation projects.

To date, WLAUMC has raised \$4,577 for UMCOR’s efforts, including a \$1,000 gift from our United Methodist Women. If you would like to contribute to UMCOR, make your check payable to *West Los Angeles UMC*, and write *International Disaster Response, Advance #982450* on the memo line. All of your gift, 100 percent, will be used to help those in need.

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## **Love Knows No Borders**

Mark your calendars! “Love Knows No Borders: A Dialogue on Immigration Reform and Faith” will be presented by the Social Action Commission on Sunday, February 23, at 1:00 PM in the Sanctuary. Jeanne Roe Smith of the UCLA Wesley Foundation is coordinating the program, which will feature several special guest speakers. This timely and important program will be offered free to the public, so spread the word and invite your family and friends!



**2013 Manzanar Reflections**

*These written reflections were shared with Rose Honda following the trip to the Manzanar National Historic Site in September 2013.*

Geoff and I had visited Manzanar many years ago, but this was our first opportunity to see the reconstructed barracks and Merritt Park. The trip was made more meaningful because we were able to visit with former internees and attend the worship service, which was very moving, at the cemetery. It was also a special trip for us because it was Nicholas' first road trip.  
*Diana Lock, Geoff Yeo & Nicholas Yeo*

Our trip to Manzanar was filled with so many memories that we will carry with us... feeding the fish at the hatchery... touring the barracks and mess hall... getting a better understanding of what each of our father's experienced... watching movies on the bus... and experiencing it all with good friends!  
*Roger & Victoria Yamashita*

I really enjoyed the trip to Manzanar. I learned new things about the camp and the people who lived there. I completed my booklet and earned a Junior Ranger Badge! This was an educational and fun trip.  
*Ally Yamashita*

This Manzanar Trip was a little more special than other trips to Manzanar. Maybe because it was a trip in memory of Mary Ishizuka whose dad was so instrumental in the development of the Japanese Garden. It was gratifying to see that the damage from the recent storm was not as devastating as I had imagined! The organizers of the trip must be commended for a job well-done! Also having my son and his family on the bus was so meaningful to me! Thanks for a great trip!  
*Sets Yamashita*

This was my home during age 3-5 and my most vivid memories include:

1. In the Fall, fine sand blowing sideway as my dad said, "Close your eyes, hold my hand, to shower at the bath house."
2. Building a snow man one winter. I had never experienced that earlier in Sawtelle.
3. Riding my tricycle round-and-round a dirt pathway in-between our barracks.
4. A special trip with many other kids, all with hand-made sling shots, riding a big open truck outside the barbed wire to chase jack rabbits and see a nearby pig farm.  
*Ted Tanaka*

**GO GREEN!**

Late Autumn and early Winter can be quite cold even in sunny Southern California. We may not be enduring below-zero temps, but all things are relative, and 60 degrees sure feels cold to me!

It takes longer for water from the tap to get warm, so this is a good opportunity to collect all that precious cold water for later use, like watering thirsty plants indoors and out.

Start your wood-burning fireplace with dry kindling to minimize emissions and maximize efficiency. Feed blazes with small loads of hard woods that have aired out ("seasoned") for at least six months. (Well-seasoned hardwood offers a cleaner burn.) Never burn chemical- or pressure-treated wood. Keep flames hot and bright; low, smoldering fires pollute more. When the fireplace is not in use, close the flue to keep warm indoor air from escaping out the chimney.

Warm car engines are dangerous for cats and small wildlife. Parked cars attract small animals who may crawl up under the hood looking for warmth. To avoid injuring any hidden animals, bang on your car's hood to scare them away before starting your engine.

Thousands of paper and plastic shopping bags end up in landfills every year. Tell store clerks you don't need a bag for small or oversized purchases.

Approximately 33 million live Christmas trees are sold in North America every year. Recycle yours if you can't replant it. There are Christmas tree recycling stops all over WLA, including most of our public parks.

Scrape dirty dishes clean, instead of using water to rinse them before you put them in the dishwasher. If you don't use a dishwasher, fill the sink with a few gallons of soapy wash water, clean your dishes, and put them aside. Then rinse them all together afterward.

*By Jack Ong*



Have a good green tip? Please send it to [jack@jackong.com](mailto:jack@jackong.com).

**REPAIR! REDUCE! REUSE! RECYCLE!**



**Running to End Homelessness**



For the second year in a row, WLAUMC member Stacey Hirose completed the United Way's HomeWalk to end homelessness on Saturday, November 23. She raised \$2,380.50 in contributions which were matched by the Conrad

Hilton Foundation, thereby ultimately raising \$4,761.00 to support strategies to end homelessness in Los Angeles. Congratulations Stacey!

**Special Offerings**  
Giving to God through our Tithes and Offerings



*for your generous gifts!*

A list of Special Offerings, Altar Flower Donations, Memorial Offerings, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and UMCOR Philippine Offerings are available from the Church Office. Thank you for your generosity.



**Marching in the Light of God**  
**2014 Pledge Campaign**

“We are Marching in the Light of God” is the guiding theme for this year’s ministry at West LA UMC, and we can’t wait to see what God has in store for us! You can support the church’s many outreach ministries by submitting your 2014 Pledge Card. Please see Pledge Secretary Harriet Woo for more information.



**Beautiful Christmas Poinsettias!**



Thank you to all who donated the poinsettia plants that adorned our Sanctuary for the Fourth Sunday in Advent and Christmas Eve services. Also, thanks to the volunteers who set up the poinsettias in the Sanctuary.

*Kazie Kame, and the Worship Committee*



**United Methodist Women’s Assembly**

Have you considered attending the international United Methodist Women’s Assembly in Louisville, KY, April 25-27, 2014? If you are interested in possibly attending, please speak to UMW President Sadie Hifumi or Rev. Janet Cromwell to discuss registration.

**United Methodist Women**  
Women Learning, Growing, and Serving Others

**UMW News**

Our holiday luncheon, originally scheduled for January 18, has been postponed to February. A very special event is being planned with details to follow as soon as everything has been finalized.

Our first meeting of the year will be on Friday, January 24. This will be a workshop meeting, from 9:30 AM to 1:30 or 2:00. Participants can come and go according to what best suits their own schedule. Lunch will be served. We invite all women of the church to join UMW. It would be a great way to start our new year with new members. Our workshop meeting activities will be to start making items for our Holiday Boutique which will be on November 1st.

The Holiday Boutique is an all-church activity sponsored by UMW so we encourage anyone who would like to make something to sell at the boutique to feel free to contribute. Proceeds from the Boutique go for charitable causes outside of our church as well as within our church.

Reminder to all UMW members that we are collecting \$10.00 per person which is a pledge to the District UMW. You may give it to Lois Tateishi, our treasurer.



**Café Chocolat Women’s Retreat:**  
**Where Women Delight in God’s Grace**  
**March 22-23, Aldersgate Retreat**

Plan to attend the Women’s Retreat March 22-23 at Aldersgate Retreat Center in Pacific Palisades. Together we will reflect on Jesus’ miracles while we enjoy some delicious chocolate! What could be better than that?



Registration materials are now available. Thanks to a generous gift from the UMW, the Early Bird Registration Fee is only \$99.00 for women who register before February 23! Sign up early to save! After February 24, the fee will be \$125.00. The fee covers three meals, overnight accommodations, and all materials.

Please contact Stacey Hirose or Rev. Janet Cromwell if you have questions or would like to serve on the Retreat Planning Team.



# Japanese Ministry

「新年」

新年、明けましておめでとうございます。  
今年もよろしくお祈りします。

お正月は、一年の抱負を考える時です。

今年目標やビジョンは何でしょうか。

「神の国と神の義をまず第一に求めなさい。そうすれば、全ては与えられます。」

(マタイ 6:33) と、主イエスが言われました。

主は、人が色々な人生のドラマに直面するのを知っておられます。しかし、何があっても、主を第一にする信仰を持ち、兄弟姉妹のためにいつも祈り、支え合うことを教えて下さいました。

久保姉妹が交通事故に合ってから半年が経ちました。ある日、「おはよう」と久保兄弟が声をかけると、「おはよう」と久保姉妹が返事した事を聞き、皆で驚きました。少しずつ良くなっていることを確信して、主に感謝しました。続けて、久保姉妹のため祈り覚えるようお祈りします。

今年も新年礼拝は、日英合同礼拝です。礼拝後は、合同愛餐会を持ちます。新年をお祝いするのにふさわしい楽しい聖日でありますようにお祈りします。新年の祝福をお祈りします。

平田

## Combined Japanese and English Worship Service and Potluck Lunch

Plan to attend this special worship service at 10:30 AM on January 5, followed by a Potluck Lunch in the Social Hall. See Keiko Takahashi to sign up to bring something to the Potluck.

## Akemashite Omedetoo Gozaimasu!

On New Year's Day, we set a goal or vision, hoping to grow in some areas of our life. Lord Jesus said, "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." (Matthew 6:33)

Jesus knew that we all go through different dramas in our lives. Yet, no matter what comes, He taught us to put God first and stay faithful to Him.

Mrs. Junko Kubo got into a terrible car accident about 6 months ago. Her recovery was too slow that we felt little frustrated at times. Yet, we were very grateful to hear from Mr. Kubo that she said "Ohayoo" (good morning) one day. She is getting better little by little. Please continue to remember Junko in your prayer.

This year again, we start our New Year with joint worship service. And we are celebrating New Year with all church potluck. Remember, we need Mochi (food) to celebrate!

May the Lord help us to put God first this year.

May the Lord bless Year 2014. Happy New Year!

Pastor Becky Hirata 平田



## Nichigo's January Calendar

|         |          |                         |
|---------|----------|-------------------------|
| Jan. 5  | 10:30 AM | Joint Worship           |
|         | 12:00 PM | All Church Potluck      |
| Jan. 12 | 11:00 AM | Nichigo Worship         |
|         | 12:00 PM | Prayer Group            |
|         | 12:15 PM | Nichigo Council Meeting |
| Jan. 18 | 11:00 AM | Café Aloha Senior Lunch |
| Jan. 19 | 11:00 AM | Nichigo Worship         |
|         | 12:00 PM | Bible Study             |
| Jan. 26 | 11:00 AM | Nichigo Worship         |
|         | 12:00 PM | Bible Study             |

# January 2014

| Sunday                                                                                                                                                                 | Monday                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Tuesday                                                                                                                       | Wednesday                                                                                                            | Thursday                                                                              | Friday                                  | Saturday                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                               | <b>1 Happy New Year!</b><br>Church office closed.                                                                    | <b>2</b><br>9:30am Prayer Meeting<br>10:30am Tai-Chi Class<br><br>7:30pm Bible Study  | <b>3</b>                                | <b>4</b>                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>5</b><br>10:30am Joint Worship Service<br>12:00pm Potluck Luncheon                                                                                                  | <b>6</b><br>1:00pm Women's Bible Study<br>6:30-9:00pm Kelton AA Mtg                                                                                                                                       | <b>7</b><br>11:30am 80+ Women's Group Luncheon<br><br>7:00pm Choir Practice<br>7:15pm Men's Bible Study                       | <b>8</b><br>9:00am "Alive Now" Study<br>10:30am Tai-Chi Class<br><br>5:30-9pm Promise AA Mtg                         | <b>9</b><br>9:30am Prayer Meeting<br>10:30am Tai-Chi Class<br><br>7:30pm Bible Study  | <b>10</b>                               | <b>11</b><br>9:00am Trustee's Mtg<br>11:00am Archives Mtg.                                                                                                                   |
| <b>12</b><br>9:30am Worship in English<br>9:45am Sunday School & Youth<br>11:00am Japanese Worship<br>11:00am Social Action Mtg.                                       | <b>13</b><br>1:00pm Women's Bible Study<br>6:00pm PATH Meal Service<br>6:30-9:00pm Kelton AA Mtg                                                                                                          | <b>14</b><br>7:00pm Choir Practice<br>No Men's Bible Study<br>7:30pm Altar Guild Mtg.                                         | <b>15</b><br>9:00am "Alive Now" Study<br>10:30am Tai-Chi Class<br><br>5:30-9pm Promise AA Mtg<br>7:30pm Finance Mtg. | <b>16</b><br>9:30am Prayer Meeting<br>10:30am Tai-Chi Class<br><br>7:30pm Bible Study | <b>17</b>                               | <b>18</b><br>10:00am Admin Council Mtg<br>11:00am Café Aloha Senior Luncheon                                                                                                 |
| <b>19</b><br>9:30am Worship in English<br>9:45am Sunday School & Youth<br>11:00am Japanese Worship<br><br>3:00pm 4 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Retreat begins | <b>20</b> Martin Luther King Jr's Birthday Observance<br>Church office closed.<br>10:30am 4 <sup>th</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Retreat ends<br>6:30-9:00pm Kelton AA Mtg<br>7:00pm Praise Band Practice | <b>21</b><br>8:30am Fat Tuesday Men's Breakfast at Marie Callender's<br><br>7:00pm Choir Practice<br>7:15pm Men's Bible Study | <b>22</b><br>9:00am "Alive Now" Study<br>10:30am Tai-Chi Class<br><br>5:30-9pm Promise AA Mtg                        | <b>23</b><br>9:30am Prayer Meeting<br>10:30am Tai-Chi Class<br><br>7:30pm Bible Study | <b>24</b><br>9:30am UMW Mtg.            | <b>25</b><br>West District Visioning Event: "God's Future for This Conference" –<br>8:30am Wilshire UMC <i>or</i><br>1:30pm Los Altos UMC<br><br>4:00pm Praise Band Practice |
| <b>26</b> Fair Trade Sale<br>9:30am Worship in English<br>9:45am Sunday School & Youth<br>11:00am Japanese Worship<br>12:00pm Worship Mtg.                             | <b>27</b><br>1:00pm Women's Bible Study<br>6:30-9:00pm Kelton AA Mtg                                                                                                                                      | <b>28</b><br>7:00pm Choir Practice<br>No Men's Bible Study                                                                    | <b>29</b><br>9:00am "Alive Now" Study<br>10:30am Tai-Chi Class<br><br>5:30-9pm Promise AA Mtg                        | <b>30</b><br>9:30am Prayer Meeting<br>10:30am Tai-Chi Class<br><br>7:30pm Bible Study | <b>31</b><br>7:30pm Japanese Film Night |                                                                                                                                                                              |



Celebrate the New Year  
With Your Church Family!

**Sunday, January 5**

**Combined English and Japanese Worship Service**

**10:30 AM in the Sanctuary**

**All Church Potluck Lunch**

**12:00 Noon in the Social Hall**

Everyone is invited to rejoice in God's gift of a new year on Sunday, January 5 at 10:30 AM.  
Rev. Becky Hirata will provide the morning message and we will celebrate a special communion with mochi.  
Following worship, we will enjoy an All Church Potluck Lunch in the Social Hall.  
Please see Keiko Takahashi to sign up to bring something to share.

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**West LA United Methodist Church**

1913 Purdue Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90025

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