



# 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

February 2014

**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.com](http://www.wlaumc.com)

### 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.

Last December, you may have heard the news about a United Methodist pastor who was “defrocked” (his ministerial credentials taken away) in central Pennsylvania. The pastor was Rev. Frank Schaefer, and the reason was his refusal to publicly state that he would uphold the *Book of Discipline*, our denomination’s rulebook. This was prompted by his decision to perform a wedding ceremony for his son, who is gay, in a state (Massachusetts) where same-sex marriage is legal. Since 1972, the *Discipline* has held that homosexuality is “incompatible with Christian teaching” and forbids pastors from performing same-sex marriages and ordaining gay or lesbian pastors.

What saddens me about the decision of the Central Pennsylvania Annual Conference it is un-Christ-like tone. Jesus never sent anyone away for breaking a law. His harshest criticisms were reserved for those who would condemn others but not admit to their own hidden faults. The founder of Methodism, John Wesley, agreed, believing that grace is the central tenet of the Christian faith.

Our bishop Minerva Carcaño made the national news by inviting Frank Schaefer to become a licensed local pastor in our annual conference. (Ministerial credentials can only be restored by a conference’s Board of Ordained Ministry, and she has encouraged our BOOM to do so.) Bishop Carcaño has said,

*While I recognize that our brother Frank has been defrocked by those in authority in his conference, I believe that those who have acted in such a way have done so in obedience to the Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, an imperfect book of human law that violates the very spirit of Jesus the Christ who taught us through word and deed that all God’s children are of sacred worth and welcomed into the embrace of God’s grace. I believe that the time has come for we United Methodists to stand on the side of Jesus and declare in every good way that the United Methodist Church is wrong in its position on homosexuality, wrong in its exclusion of our LGBTQ brothers and sisters, and wrong in its incessant demand to determine through political processes who can be fully members of the body of Christ.*

I agree with this stand taken by our bishop and hope that our church will find grace-filled ways to be in ministry with the LGBTQ community.

On the journey 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.*

*To receive a list of prayer requests, please contact the Church Office or read the Sunday bulletin.*

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### **Lectionary Readings for February**

*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.*

Feb. 2	Micah 6:1-8 Psalm 15 I Corinthians 1:18-31 Matthew 5:1-12	<i>Presentation of the Lord:</i> Malachi 3:1-4 Psalm 24 Hebrews 2:14-18 Luke 2:22-40
Feb. 9	Isaiah 58:1-9a (9b-12) Psalm 112:1-10	I Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16) Matthew 5:13-20
Feb. 16	Deuteronomy 30:15-20 Psalm 119:1-8	I Corinthians 3:1-9 Matthew 5:21-37
Feb. 23	Leviticus 19:1-2, 9-18 Psalm 119:33-40	I Corinthians 3:10-11, 16-23 Matthew 5:38-48

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### **Library Donation Acknowledgements**

Thank you to the following for their gifts to the library: Emily and Alex Lui, Norman Sakamoto, Diana Lock, Pam Ryder, Harriet Woo, and Deborah Purcell, a friend of Yuka O'Day. Harriet Woo has donated Cynthia Kadohata's "Thing About Luck," a National Book Award for juvenile literature and "Imprisoned" about the relocations camps. Deborah Purcell donated a book of photos of Japan by Horace Bristol, a photographer for LIFE and other publications.

You are welcomed to visit the library on the first Sunday of each month from 11:00-12:00 Noon.

*The Library Committee*

# Worship & Studies

Growing in Faith through Worship and Studies

## February 9:30 AM Worship Services

**February 2 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany  
Family Worship and Holy Communion**  
Rev. Gary Oba preaching. Text: 1 Corinthians 1:18-31.  
Theme: Preaching the cross of Christ.  
Rev. Janet Cromwell giving children's message.

**February 9 – 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany  
Scouting Ministries Sunday**  
*Scouts, please wear your uniforms!*  
Rev. Gary Oba preaching. Text: 1 Corinthians 2:1-12.  
Theme: The wisdom that comes from the Spirit.  
Scout leaders giving children's message.

**February 16 – 6<sup>th</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany**  
Guest preacher: Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Kuan,  
President, Claremont School of Theology.  
Rev. Janet Cromwell giving children's message.

**February 23 – 7<sup>th</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany  
Worship with Praise Band**  
Rev. Gary Oba preaching.  
Text: 1 Corinthians 3:10-11, 16-23.  
Theme: All things are ours.  
Rev. Janet Cromwell giving children's message.

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## **Guest Preacher, Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Kuan Sunday, February 16**



The Rev. Dr. Kah-Jin Jeffrey Kuan, President of Claremont School of Theology, will offer the morning message on Sunday, February 16 at the 9:30 AM worship service.

Dr. Kuan is the seventh President and Professor of Hebrew Bible at Claremont School of Theology, beginning his tenure on July 1, 2013. Before coming to CST, he served as the Dean and Professor of Hebrew Bible of the Theological School at Drew University. He earned his Ph.D. in Old Testament studies at Emory University. Dr. Kuan's research and teaching interests include ancient Israelite and Near Eastern history, Asian and Asian American hermeneutics, the Book of Job, as well as approaches to biblical instruction for the churches.

We look forward to welcoming Dr. Kuan to West LA UMC and hearing his message for us.

## 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 February our 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 are welcome!

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

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

The Men's Study Group is resumed on periodic Tuesdays. Please contact Fred Hifumi for dates and times.

### **"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. No Study Group on February 26.

### **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. No Bible Study meeting on February 27.

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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



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### **4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Overnight Retreat**

Everyone had a great time at the 4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade Overnight Retreat on January 19-20. Twelve students and four adult leaders went bowling, enjoyed dinner at the parsonage, played games, and developed friendships.

This year, the Retreat used the Disney animated film "Wreck-It Ralph" to discuss important theological issues including *Why everyone is needed in God's Kingdom*, *How God sees the best in each of us*, and *How people can change with God's help*. Through activities, scripture study, and conversation, participants grew in faith and understanding. During the morning Prayer Circle, the group reflected on how the movie character Ralph, like Jesus, loved his friend Vanellope so much that he was willing to die to save her.

On Sunday evening, participants worked on a mission project creating fleece scarves that will be given to persons living at PATH. They learned how PATH provides temporary housing to homeless persons as they seek employment, save money, and find a permanent place to live.

Many thanks to Sharon Kinoshita Gill, Lenny Gill, Mike Dote, and Rev. Janet Cromwell for planning the Retreat and serving as leaders.

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### **Valentine Making**



On Sunday, February 2, you are invited to make Valentines for persons on our Prayer List. Addressed envelopes and art supplies will be provided in the Social Hall after worship. Enjoy a bowl of homemade soup, be creative, and bring joy to a special person on our Prayer List.

### **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. Registration materials will be available in the coming months. In the meantime, mark your calendar and plan to attend!

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### **Christian Education & Family Ministries Planning Meeting**

Developing a holistic and meaningful Christian Education program for West LA UMC's members and friends requires thoughtful planning and preparation. You are invited to join the Christian Education and Family Ministries Team on Saturday, February 22, 9:30-11:00 AM in the Learning Center, as we review programs and study groups for the Spring, Summer, and Fall seasons. Your insights and ideas are welcome!

For more information or questions, please contact Co-Chairs Jane Shimotsu or Rev. Janet Cromwell.

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### **Ohana 2.0: Families with Young Children**

What a joy it is to have so many babies and toddlers at church! Ohana 2.0 is a gathering of families with young children (from newborns through Pre-K) who gather periodically for friendship, fellowship, mutual support, spiritual renewal, and fun! In recent months, participants have begun discussing topics from a study guide, shared potluck lunches, played games with the children, and developed new friendships. At times, both parents and grandparents have participated, making it a wonderful intergenerational gathering.

If you or someone you know would like to be part of this fellowship group, please contact Jane Shimotsu or Rev. Janet Cromwell at the church office. New families are always welcome!

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### **A Family-Friendly Church**

West LA UMC welcomes families of all ages, shapes, and sizes. Recently, we redecorated Room 1 with child-size tables, toys, and children's Bibles and books to start a new Sunday School class for children Age 3 through Pre-K. A new changing table will be installed in the women's restroom. As we seek to grow as a welcoming church, let us know how we can continue to improve!

# Baptisms and New Members

Welcoming Children and Adults into Christ's Church

In December and January, West LA UMC was delighted to baptize three infants and one adult, and welcome new members into the congregation.

## Rose Yuki Kishi

Early 1890's, my paternal grandparents (Kumagai) and their sons sailed from Japan and settled in Wyoming. Two of their sons relocated to California's Imperial Valley. My father and his older brother opted to remain with their parents and raise their families.



My three siblings and I were born in Wyoming. Following the outbreak of World War II, my father and all the Japanese Union Pacific Railroad foremen were dismissed. We relocated to Salt Lake City, Utah.

Michael Kishi, a longtime resident of West LA and I were married in 1950. Sadly, he passed away in 2003. We were blessed with two boys and two girls. I, now have four adult children, their spouses, five grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, one sister-in-law, nieces and a nephew.

I stand proudly before God, family and friends to receive my baptism.

## David Allen Tokushige

Dave was born in Pasadena and raised in La Puente. He is a graduate of Whittier College and has been employed by the LA County Assessor as a real estate appraiser for 36 years. Dave is transferring his membership from the La Puente First United Methodist Church. His uncle is retired UM minister, Alpha Takagi. He is the proud father of Katie Tokushige, a talented musical theater actress and member of the Church Choir. Dave enjoys golf, dining out, classic rock and roll, following USC football and UCLA volleyball, tennis and basketball.



**Nicholas James Yeo.** Parents: Diana Lock and Geoffrey Yeo.



**Kylie Lola Sarang Yang.** Parents: Emily and Kyle Yang.



**Jackson Masayuki Kikuta.** Parents: Jeffrey and Jane Kikuta.

# Outreach & Social Service

Serving Our Community and World

## **Love Knows No Borders Immigration Reform Panel Discussion**

Sunday, February 23, 1:00 PM, Sanctuary

"Love Knows No Borders: A Dialogue on Immigration Reform and Faith" will be presented free to the public Sunday, February 23, at 1:00 PM in the Sanctuary. The panel discussion, featuring several participants, will be led by Deaconess Jeanne Roe Smith of the UCLA Wesley Foundation, and will be sponsored by the WLAUMC Social Action Commission.

*Submitted by Jack Ong*

## **Soup-er Bowl Sunday and Valentine Making**



On Sunday February 2, Super Bowl Sunday we will be having a delicious meal prepared by some of our WLAUMC cooks as a benefit to help feed the hungry in LA. Please bring your appetites and help feed the hungry with your free will donation.

Following lunch, come to the Valentine Making table and create a colorful Valentine for someone on our Prayer List. Your card will bring joy to a church member or friend who is homebound, recovering from surgery, or otherwise unable to attend worship. Supplies will be provided.

*Submitted by Ken Ho*

## **Serving Dinner at P.A.T.H. A Fun, Easy New Year's Resolution!**

Volunteering to cook and/or serve dinner at P.A.T.H. (People Assisting the Homeless) on the second Monday of each month is a longtime WLAUMC tradition. Individuals do it, small groups of friends do it, and it is a fine family affair too.

Providing this meal for about 30 men and women who are getting back into the work force is a great ministry, and it's really quite easy. Yes, some cooks have spent hours "slaving" over a hot stove, but store-bought entrees and vegetables are just fine too. Add a simple dessert like cookies and milk, and you have some very blessed, appreciative recipients indeed!

P.A.T.H. is located at 2346 Cotner Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90064 (near our church). For more details and to volunteer, contact Rose Honda or Michi Matsuda. This project is sponsored by the Commission on Social Action.

## **Christmas Toy Delivery Report And Prayer Request**

On January 5, 2014 toys were delivered by Joe Rodriguez, La Plaza UMC Council Chairman and myself to Rev Saul Montiel, Cal-Pac Border Missionary, located in San Diego area. Pastorally, Rev Montiel in coordination with Guillermo Navarrete Chair of the Northwest Conference of the United Methodist Church of Mexico Mission Committee and Chaplain of "El Faro" a border church, will be doing the toys distribution to those families identified by them.

While in conversation with Rev Montiel, we dialogue about the situation of 35-40 deported people who are actually living in the hinterland canyons area of the Mexico-USA border and their living conditions. Occasionally, these families are visited to bring them health kits, and some food. They are exposed on a daily base to the inclement weather and physical risks that sometimes includes exposure to dead bodies, among others. Please help us by keeping these people in your prayers. We are exploring with Rev Montiel how we can better contribute to the welfare of these brothers and sisters.

Once again, thank you Pastors Janet and Gary, and THANK YOU to the people of WEST LA UMC!

*Paz, Pastor Vilma Crux Baez*

## **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 \$20, and includes workshops and a catered lunch.

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

## **Habitat for Humanity Lenten Build**

West LA UMC has been invited to participate in Habitat for Humanity's Lenten Build in which a home is built and completed for a low-income family during the Lenten Season (March 5-April 20). If you are interested in helping, please see Ken Ho.

## GO GREEN!

Heating and cooling account for the most energy use in our homes. Here are some basic ways to make sure you're not wasting energy on heating while also saving you money on your heating bill!

1. **Install a programmable thermostat.** One simple way to save both energy and money is to turn your thermostat down a few degrees, during the day if you are away from home, or overnight while you're sleeping. It can be hard to remember to change your thermostat every morning as you're trying to rush out of the house, or every evening when you're practically asleep before your head even hits the pillow. So the best way to make sure that you're keeping your heat turned down is to install a programmable thermostat. You can program it so that it lowers the heat on days when you're away from home, or any other time throughout the day when you are okay with your heat being lower.
2. **Change the direction of your ceiling fan.** Did you know that you can actually use your ceiling fan during the winter months to help distribute the warm air that rises to ceiling? There should be a switch on the side of your ceiling fan that changes the direction of the rotation. In the winter, you want to have your ceiling fan rotating clockwise, or in a forward direction, to move the warm air that gets trapped up by the ceiling, around the room. This can be especially helpful in homes that have high or vaulted ceiling where the heated air rises so high that it doesn't help to warm the room.
3. **Change the filter in your heater.** It's important to change the air filter in your HVAC unit every few months (based on the type of filter you have) or when it is dirty. It's a good idea to change the filter before you begin using your furnace in the winter. To help you remember when the filter needs to be changed again, write the date you need to change the filter on the edge that shows, before installing the filter. Changing your air filter helps your furnace to run more efficiently saving energy and money on your heating bills.
4. **Get a humidifier.** When the windows are closed and the heater is on during the winter it makes the air inside your home extra dry. A humidifier is a good investment to help add moisture to the air, which can help to keep your family healthier by relieving symptoms of the cold and flu.
5. **Close the damper in your fireplace.** It's always important to keep the damper in your fireplace closed when it's not in use because you can increase the energy needed to heat your home by 30% by leaving it open. Also be sure that your damper is sealed correctly or consider installing a fireplace stopper that can be removed before use because a poorly sealed damper can still leak up to 14% of the warm air in the home.
6. **Insulate your windows.** If you have older, leaky windows in your home, you can easily and affordably cover them with insulating shrink film. If you're pretty sure that you won't be able to open your windows again until spring, you can install this film to keep your drafty windows from letting the cold air in, and keep your home warm and toasty indoors.

*Submitted by Jack Ong*



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

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

## **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, February 28, 7:30 PM, Sanctuary**

Japanese Film Night on Friday, February 28 will feature "The Go Master" / "Go Seigen: Kiwami no Kifu." The film was made in 2006, is in color and 104 minutes in length.

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

# United Methodist Women

Women Learning, Growing, and Serving Others

## Join Us!



If you haven't done so already, please let Lois Tateishi know if you would like to join the UMW (United Methodist Women). You don't have to be a member of the West LA UMC; only that you believe in the mission of the UMW.

To affirm your support, you are asked to give a \$10.00 Pledge to Missions, which goes directly to the District UMW. We have an exciting year planned, so please join us!

## 2014 Holiday Boutique

The UMW is again sponsoring the bi-annual All-Church HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE to be held on Saturday, November 1, 2014 from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm.

We emphasize that this is an All Church event and invite everyone in the church, especially if you are crafty and creative, to participate by making craft items to sell. Otherwise, on the day of the Boutique, we will be seeking volunteers to help set-up, man the tables, cashier, clean-up, etc.

All proceeds will go toward mission projects, church projects and community outreach.

UMW members began working on craft items at their meeting on Friday, January 24 and will hold monthly workshops.

The next Craft Workshop will be on Friday, February 21 at 9:30 a.m. Lunch will be served so if you plan to attend, please notify our Secretary, Toshie Setoguchi. Continue to be on the outlook for new crafts that we can make!

## Holiday Luncheon

UMW members will be guests of Hisako and Paul Terasaki for the Holiday Luncheon on Saturday, February 15 from 11:30 AM. Members who responded by Sunday, January 26 will carpool from the church at 11:00 AM, unless other arrangements have been made.

## Looking Ahead – PATH Dinner

PATH Dinner will be prepared on Monday, March 10, with Eleanor Nakano and Frances Uchida coordinating the preparation. PATH (People Assisting The Homeless) provides meals, education, and support for person seeking permanent housing. See Page 6 for more information.



## West LA UMC's Women's Retreat

Plan to attend this year's Women's Retreat on March 22-23 at Aldersgate Retreat Center in Pacific Palisades. The UMW is providing a scholarship so that if you register before February 23, for only \$99.00 you will receive overnight accommodation, three gourmet meals and all study materials.

Those who attended last year unanimously agreed it was a wonderful opportunity for fellowship and reflection. Don't miss out! Sign up today!

## 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.

## 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 from 11:00 AM to 12:00 Noon, or by request. See the Sunday Bulletin for details.

## Wear Your Nametag

The church is blessed by the presence of many guests and friends at worship and activities. Please wear your nametags in worship and during Coffee Fellowship to help everyone learn names.



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



*for your generous gifts!*

For a list of Special Offerings, please contact the Church Office.



**Thank You!**

On behalf of the entire Murakami family, may we extend our heartfelt thanks and appreciation to all those who provided words of comfort, prayers of support and donations in honor of our father, Rev. Harry Murakami. Our family was surrounded by the love and grace of our Lord through each and every one of you during our father's illness and eventual passing. We appreciate Rev. Oba and the church family for understanding that we were unable to hold the memorial service at WLAUMC given the large number of guests anticipated to attend the service. Many thanks go to the UMW for providing desserts for the reception. We move forward with God's grace knowing that our father is resting from his labors and is reunited with our mother and many loved ones in God's heavenly kingdom. God Bless.

- Ann, Peggy, Glenn, Alan, and Gail Murakami

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**Record Retention and Archives**

*Preserving and Sharing Our History*

The Trustees remind us that each committee and commission (incoming leaders and past leaders) of the church is to catalog and forward certain documents for the church archives for retention. Trustee's Chairperson, Otto Nakano has a helpful list of what is currently stored in the church archives and what is required by the Annual Conference. Please see Otto if you have questions.

At a recent meeting of West LA UMC's Archives and History Committee, Randy Sakamoto proposed a time to get together to sort and label the many historic photos of the church, from the church's beginning through recent years. Volunteers will meet on Saturday, February 22 from 9:00-12:00 Noon to begin the process of sorting and labeling. You are invited to come, help, and enjoy reminiscing about the rich history of this congregation. For more information, please see Randy Sakamoto.

Preserving the church history provides a legacy for future generations. These photos and records will also provide a helpful foundation as the church prepares for its 85<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in May 2015.

## Giving Beyond the Local Church 2013

### Donations by the Congregation: Designated Giving

| Designated Giving                                   | Amount           |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Missionary Support                                  | \$2,000          |
| Missionary Travel Expenses                          | 1,221            |
| Peace With Justice Offering                         | 100              |
| Human Relations Offering                            | 284              |
| Native American Ministries Offering                 | 212              |
| One Great Hour Offering                             | 532              |
| World Communion Offering                            | 934              |
| UM Student Day Offering                             | 325              |
| UMCOR US & Philippines Disaster                     | 4,862            |
| Cal-Pac Camps                                       | 1,000            |
| Wesley Foundation UCLA                              | 2,000            |
| 40 Toiletry bags for WF at UCLA (VBS)               | unknown          |
| Donations by Tanoshimi Kai Group                    | 900              |
| Loaves & Fishes Food (UMM W. District)              | 3,200            |
| Donations by Manzanar Trip Committee                | 800              |
| Food Pantries - canned goods                        | unknown          |
| Habitat for Humanity Missions Project               | 2,500            |
| Tohoku Mission Trip                                 | 8,773            |
| National JA UM Caucus                               | 250              |
| PATH Project (meals)                                | unknown          |
| Thanksgiving Baskets                                | 510              |
| Thanksgiving Baskets- groceries & turkeys           | unknown          |
| Stop Hunger Now!                                    | 3,750            |
| <b>Apportionments &amp; Conference Benevolences</b> |                  |
| Retired Pastors Pensions & Health Care              | 15,875           |
| World Service & Conference Benevolence              | 14,022           |
| Bishops and District Superintendents                | 21,085           |
| Annual Conference Administration                    | 9,060            |
| Min Ed Fund/World Service Gen'l Church              | 2,293            |
| Black College Fund & Africa University Fund         | 929              |
| Ethnic Minority Local Churches/Christian Ed         | 141              |
| Cal-Pac Hunger Appeal & AIDS Ministry               | 129              |
| Youth Service Fund/Campus Min                       | 556              |
| <b>Congregation Total</b>                           | <b>\$98,243</b>  |
| <b>Donations by United Methodist Women</b>          |                  |
| UMW Missions                                        | \$192            |
| Alaska Layettes Project                             | 1,453            |
| Keiro South Bay bingo prizes, etc.                  | 265              |
| Toiletry bags for UCLA Food Pantry                  | unknown          |
| Wesley Foundation UCLA                              | 2,000            |
| Cal-Pac Camps                                       | 1,500            |
| Mephibosheth Training Centre, Ghana                 | 1,200            |
| Epworth Apartments Project                          | 1,000            |
| Step Up on 2nd                                      | 1,000            |
| Asians for Miracle Marrow Matches                   | 1,000            |
| Asian Pacific Women's Center                        | 1,000            |
| Tohoku Mission Trip                                 | 1,000            |
| UMCOR Philippines Disaster Response                 | 1,000            |
| PATH Project (meals)                                | 166              |
| <b>UMW Total</b>                                    | <b>\$10,610</b>  |
| <b>GRAND TOTAL</b>                                  | <b>\$108,853</b> |

Thank you for your generosity!

Submitted by Diane Yamagata

Editor's Note: Some titles have been abbreviated to fit the space.

## Healthier Living

Honoring God by Caring for Our Health

### Healthier Living Course

West LA UMC and Keiro Senior Health Care are co-sponsoring a six week Lifelong Learning Course for lifestyle management and healthy living. The course will address coming with "the blues," reducing fatigue and anxiety, managing pain, improving communication with doctors and family members, setting goals, and maintaining a healthier diet.

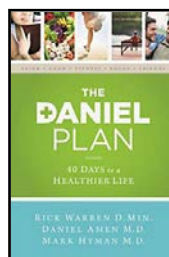
The Healthier Living Course is being offered at West LA UMC's Social Hall on six Tuesdays, beginning January 28 to March 4, from 9:30 AM to 12:00 Noon. The Course is free but you must RSVP to Kanako Kusano at 323-980-2353 or kkusano@keiro.org.

This Course was developed by Stanford University Healthier Living and is open to persons of all ages. While seniors may find it most helpful, the information will assist all persons in developing good habits and supporting others in doing so as well.

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### Lenten Study:

#### The Daniel Plan: 40 Days to a Healthier Life



As we look ahead to the Lenten Season, beginning with Ash Wednesday on March 5, a unique Lenten Study will continue the goal of living a healthier life.

If we believe, as scripture tells us, that our bodies are a gift from God and should be honored, then it is right to care for our bodies through eating

nutritious food, exercising, and resting (enjoying Sabbath time).

However, in our fast-food, fast-paced culture, we often make poor choices and fail to honor our bodies. Our health becomes compromised, and we lack the energy to fully serve God.

The Daniel Plan focuses on God's power and the support of friends to be transformed. The book explores the connection between faith, food, fitness, focus, and friends to assist in lifestyle changes. Plus, it offers practical ideas and recipes to get started.

The Lenten Study will be offered on Tuesdays at 9:30 AM beginning March 11, and Wednesdays at 6:30 PM beginning March 12. Pam Sase-Ryder, a trained dietitian, will provide a simple soup supper on Wednesday evenings.

To order a book through the church, please contact Rev. Janet Cromwell before February 9 to receive the discount price of \$14.00.

# Japanese Ministry

## 「祝福を祈る日」

2月3日は節分。「季節が分かれる時」という意味で1年に4回ありました。立春、立夏、立秋、立冬の前日は全て節分。もともとは中国から伝えられ、春を迎えるにあたって、悪を追い出し福善を願うもの。クリスチャン用語では、祝福を祈り願う日と言えば分りやすいかもしれません。

日本では豆まきをして、楽しく福を招くイベントになっているので、子供の頃から思い出は多いものです。

しかし、クリスチャンは年に一回ではなく、4回でもなく、いつも主なる神様に祝福を祈る日を覚えます。祝福は神様が自らの恵みを授けること。天の父なる神様は、悪い人にも良い人にも太陽を上らせ、正しい人にも正しくない人にも雨を降らせて下さるお方です。(マタイ 5:45) 又、日ごとの糧も与えて下さいます。(マタイ 6:11) 私達は神様の祝福を受けなくしては、生きられないのです。

今、この記事を読みながら、主の祝福を祈り、食事をする度に主の祝福を祈り、疲れたと思う時、主の祝福を祈ります。

2月4日は立春。しかし、2月はまだまだ寒い季節。風邪をひかず、皆様の日々の生活、そして健康が守られる事を祈ります。

平田

February 3<sup>rd</sup> is “節分” (Setsubun). 節(Setsu) means season, and 分(bun) means to divide. One day before February 4<sup>th</sup> (the first day of Spring), Setsubun is celebrated. People wish to pray for blessings on this day. Originally, Setsubun came from China and was celebrated four times a year, but Spring Setsubun became a dominant one in Japan today.

Do you pray for God's blessings once a year? Or four times a year? Or everyday? We remember that our God causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. (Matthew 5:45) God gives us daily bread.(Matthew 6:11) It is not possible to live without God's blessings!

On Setsubun, we pray to God for special blessings. But, we pray for His blessings, not once a year, not four times a year, but every day, every moment.

Pastor Becky Hirata 平田



## Nichigo's February Calendar

Feb. 2	10:30 AM	Soup-er Bowl Sunday
	11:00 AM	Nichigo Worship
	12:00 PM	Nichigo Prayer Time
Feb. 9	11:00 AM	Nichigo Worship
	12:00 PM	Nichigo Bible Study
Feb. 10-11	7:30 AM	Tanoshimi Kai Overnight Outing
Feb. 16	11:00 AM	Nichigo Worship
	12:00 PM	Nichigo Bible Study
Feb. 22	9:00 AM	Sorting Historic Church Photos
Feb. 23	11:00 AM	Nichigo Worship
	12:00 PM	Nichigo Bible Study
Feb. 28	7:30 PM	Japanese Film Night

# February 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 9:00am Pew book rack installation
2 9:30am English Worship 10:30am Souper Bowl Sunday and Valentine Making 11:00am Japanese Worship	3 1:00am Women's Bible Study 6:30-9:00pm Kelton AA Mtg	4 9:30-12:00pm Healthy Living Workshop #2  11:30am 80+ Women's Luncheon at HopLi on Santa Monica Blvd.	5 9:15am "Alive Now" Study 10:30am Tai-Chi Class  5:30-9:00pm Promise AA Mtg	6 9:30am Prayer Meeting 10:30am Tai-Chi Class  7:30pm Bible Study	7	8 8:00am-2:00pm LA District Workshops at Holman UMC
9 9:30am English Worship 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Japanese Worship 11:30am Women's Retreat Planning Mtg.	10 Tanoshimi Kai Overnight Outing  <i>No Women's Bible Study</i> 6:00pm PATH Meal Service 6:30-9:00pm Kelton AA Mtg	11 9:30-12:00pm Healthy Living Workshop #3  7:00pm Choir Rehearsal 7:15pm Men's Bible Study	12 9:15am "Alive Now" Study 10:30am Tai-Chi Class  5:30-9:00pm Promise AA Mtg	13 9:30am Prayer Meeting 10:30am Tai-Chi Class  7:30pm Bible Study	14 Valentine's Day 11:00am Staff Meeting	15 11:30am UMW Luncheon
16 9:30am English Worship – Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Kuan 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Japanese Worship	17 President's Day No Bible Study 6:30-9:00pm Kelton AA Mtg 7:00pm Praise Band Rehearsal	18 8:30am Fat Tuesday Men's Breakfast at Marie Callender's 9:30-12:00pm Healthy Living Workshop #4  7:00pm Choir Rehearsal 7:15pm Men's Bible Study	19 9:15am "Alive Now" Study 10:30am Tai-Chi Class  5:30-9:00pm Promise AA Mtg	20 9:30am Prayer Meeting 10:30am Tai-Chi Class  7:30pm Bible Study	21 10:00am UMW Meeting	22 9:00am Photo Sorting Party 9:30am Christian Ed Mtg 12:00 Visioning Team 4:00pm Praise Band Rehearsal
23 9:30am English Worship 9:45am Sunday School 11:00am Japanese Worship 1:00pm Immigration Reform Presentation	24 1:00am Women's Bible Study 6:30-9:00pm Kelton AA Mtg	25 9:30-12:00pm Healthy Living Workshop #5  7:00pm Choir Rehearsal	26 Rev. Gary at JA Caucus Mtg. <i>No Study Group this morning.</i> 10:30am Tai-Chi Class  5:30-9:00pm Promise AA Mtg	27 Rev. Gary at JA Caucus Mtg. 9:30am Prayer Meeting 10:30am Tai-Chi Class  <i>No Bible Study tonight.</i>	28 Rev. Gary at JA Caucus Mtg.  7:30pm Japanese Film Night	

# **Have Fun and Help Others!**

## **Soup-er Bowl Sunday and Valentine Making Sunday, February 2**



Enjoy a bowl of delicious soup prepared by some of our WLAUMC cooks as a benefit to help feed the hungry in LA. Bring your appetites and your free will donation to support hungry people in LA.

After lunch, come to the Valentine Making table and create a colorful Valentine for someone on our Prayer List. Your card will bring joy to a church member or friend.



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### **West LA United Methodist Church**

1913 Purdue Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90025

wlaumc.com ☎ 310-479-1379

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