



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

March 2014

**West Los Angeles
United Methodist Church**
1913 Purdue Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90025
Phone: 310-479-1379
Email: wlaumc@aol.com
Website: 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

Rev. Janet Cromwell, Associate Pastor
Email: jlcromwell8@gmail.com

Rev. Rebecca Hirata, Local Pastor
Japanese Language Ministry
Email: pastorwlaumc@yahoo.co.jp

Lina Yamaguchi,
Secretary and Newsletter Coordinator
Email: 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.

In December, we mourned the passing of one of the giants of our faith, the Rev. Harry Murakami. Rev. Harry joined the great cloud of witnesses on December 17. He was 93.

Although it has been two months since his death, thoughts of Rev. Harry still remain. He was the senior minister of this church from 1971 to 1985, leaving an indelible impression on our members. Rose Honda said, “Rev. Harry prioritized pastoral visitation; he was a great visitor.” Grace Seto remembers him as a compassionate, caring, and humble man, who “quietly went about doing what needed to be done.” Another member told me that Rev. Harry used to come by the church at night to make sure all the doors were locked.

I met Rev. Harry over forty years ago at the first Asian Camp. He was one of the ministerial advisors and I was a college-aged counselor. At Asian Camp, Rev. Harry preached like the whirlwind. He strode around the campfire, bible in hand, voice rising with passion and urgency. His aim was to turn souls to Jesus and I, along with many others, was moved.

Not long after that first Asian Camp, I made the decision to enter the ministry. Rev. Harry stayed in contact and provided encouragement along the way. He sent me his pamphlets, which seemed to be as much about the working out of his faith as they were about trying to convince others.

Rev. Harry loved the West LA church. When Miri died, he made certain that her service was held here. When he died, the family considered having his service at West LA, but in the end decided to have it at Faith UMC to accommodate the anticipated crowd. Knowing Rev. Harry, he would have supported whatever decision the family made.

Although his health was in decline the past year, his mind was still sharp. Gail, his daughter, said that a few weeks before his death, he asked her to bring Paul Tillich’s book, Christianity and the Encounter of World Religions. In his sermon at the memorial service, Bishop Roy Sano said Rev. Harry valued the life of the mind. Rev. Wes Yamaka, a long-time friend and colleague, said “He was a good man, driven to excellence and always striving to learn more about his faith and religious grounding.”

Rev. Harry will be remembered as one who gave his life in service to Christ through the church. May his name be blessed forever.

Sincerely,

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.

For a list of prayer requests, please contact the church office at 310-479-1379.

~~~~~

## **Lectionary Readings for March**

*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.*

|                   |                                       |                                                  |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Mar. 2            | Exodus 24:12-18<br>Psalm 99           | 2 Peter 1:16-21<br>Matthew 17:1-9                |
| Mar. 5<br>Ash Wed | Joel 2:1-2, 12-17<br>Psalm 51:1-17    | 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10<br>Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21 |
| Mar. 9            | Genesis 2:15-17;<br>3:1-7<br>Psalm 32 | Romans 5:12-19<br>Matthew 4:1-11                 |
| Mar. 16           | Genesis 12:1-4a<br>Psalm 121          | Romans 4:1-5, 13-17<br>John 3:1-17               |
| Mar. 23           | Exodus 17:1-7<br>Psalm 95             | Romans 5:1-11<br>John 4:5-42                     |
| Mar. 30           | 1 Samuel 16:1-13<br>Psalm 23          | Ephesians 5:8-14<br>John 9:1-41                  |

~~~~~

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.



*“God does nothing but by prayer,
and everything with it.”
~ John Wesley*

~~~~~

# Worship & Studies

Growing in Faith through Worship and Studies

## February 9:30 AM Worship Services

### **March 2 – Last Sunday after the Epiphany Family Worship and Holy Communion**

Rev. Gary Oba preaching. Text: Matthew 17:1-9  
Theme: Listen to the One who has God's approval.  
Rev. Janet Cromwell giving children's message.

### **March 9 – 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Lent Daylight Saving Time Begins**

Rev. Gary Oba preaching.  
Text: Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7  
Theme: Avoid what is bad for you.  
Rev. Janet Cromwell giving children's message.

### **March 16 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Lent**

Rev. Gary Oba preaching. Text: Genesis 12:1-4a  
Theme: Go where the Lord says go.  
Rev. Janet Cromwell giving children's message.

### **March 23 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in Lent Worship with Praise Band**

Mr. Dave Cook preaching.  
Theme: It only takes a minute.  
Youth giving children's message.

### **March 30 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Lent / Chancel Choir**

Rev. Gary Oba preaching. Text: 1 Samuel 16:1-13  
Theme: Avoid appearances; see into the heart.  
Rev. Janet Cromwell giving children's message.

## **Ash Wednesday Services**

March 5, 11:00 AM and 7:30 PM

The season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday on March 5. Join us for one or both of these worship services that will include scripture, singing, and the imposition of ashes.



## **New Members Class**



Rev. Gary will offer a three-session class for persons wishing to consider becoming a member of WLAUMC through baptism, profession of faith, or transfer. The class will cover information about The United Methodist Church and West Los Angeles UMC, as well as the meaning of church membership.

The class will meet on Sundays, March 9, 16 and 23 from 11:15 AM to Noon, in Room 2. Contact Rev. Gary for more information and to sign up.

## 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 March our theme will be "Living Justly in the Reign of God" with lessons from the letter of James. The women take turns facilitating the class discussion using the Adult Bible Study series. New members welcome!

### **NEW! Lenten Study**

*Tuesdays, 9:30 AM, starting March 11 in Room 2 or  
Wednesdays, 6:30 PM, starting March 12 in L Center.*

Using "The Daniel Plan: 40 Days to a Healthier Life," we will consider the spiritual and practical aspects of caring for our health through eating nutritious food, exercising, and mutual support. See Rev. Janet Cromwell for more information.

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

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

The Men's Study Group is resumed on periodic Tuesdays. 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.

### **Thursday Bible Study**

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

Beginning on March 6, we will be in the season of Lent. During this period, we will put our study of the Gospel of Judas on hold and switch to a study of the book "The Last Week: A Day-by-Day Account of Jesus's Final Week in Jerusalem" by Marcus Borg. Ken Harada will lead this six-week Lenten Study. See Rev. Gary Oba for information.

# Children, Youth, and Family Ministries

Supporting Families in Spiritual Growth and Discipleship

**Ohana 1.0 and 2.0:  
Passing God's Love Forward**

One of the key action items identified in the Church's 2005 Vision/Implementation Plan was the formation of "young family groups" to nurture and support parents and children.

The initial "pilot" group of five families, spear-headed by Jane Shimotsu, became known as the Ohana Connections. Ohana loosely means "family" in Hawaiian and also encompasses extended relationships; for the WLA group it came to mean that we all belong to the "family of God." The Ohana model is grounded in the Church's Vision and Mission, which is to promote spiritual growth – building a community of faith and making disciples of Christ by reaching out with compassion, forgiveness, and love.

Since 2005, the Floyd, Hirai, Kinoshita-Gill, Shimotsu, and Yamaguchi families of Ohana 1.0 have been guided by God's love and inspiration through study, service projects, and fellowship, joined by our large extended intergenerational Ohana who assisted with child care, crafts, potlucks, and more. The Ohana 1.0 children are now in middle and high school, having grown into young leaders and role models for the Ohana 2.0 generation. How exciting to see the Vision realized and the tradition continuing!

We invite young families to participate in our upcoming Ohana 2.0 gatherings. If you or someone you know would like to be part of this fellowship group, please contact Jane Shimotsu or the Church Office.

The next meeting of Ohana 2.0 for families of young children (infants – Pre-K) will be Saturday, March 1, at 10:30 AM in the Social Hall.

May the light of Christ's love shine upon your families as it has upon ours.

*Jeri Okamoto Floyd and Jane Shimotsu*



*Ohana 1.0 – Then and Now!*



**Vacation Bible School – July 21-25**

West LA UMC will host Vacation Bible School on July 21-25! Join us for a fun-filled week of Bible stories, great music, crazy games, cool crafts, awesome science projects, and delicious snacks and lunch!

Volunteers to help throughout the week are welcome! Please contact VBS Director Jeri Okamoto Floyd if you would like to help and in what capacity.

More information and Registration Forms will be available in the coming weeks. In the meantime, mark your calendars and plan to come!



**Special Needs Ministry**

West LA UMC seeks to create an atmosphere of welcome and understanding for all of our children and families, particularly for persons with special needs. To do so, we welcome conversations with parents to discover what type of environment is best for their child(ren) in worship, Sunday School and at special events. This information may also be described on the Church Program Registration Form which is available from the Church Office.

Our Pastors, Sunday School Teachers, and other volunteers want to be sure that all of our children and youth feel comfortable at church and within the church family.

If you would like to share ideas or suggestions, please contact Jeri Okamoto Floyd, Jane Shimotsu, or Rev. Janet Cromwell.



**Sunday School is Fun!**

We are delighted to have four age-level Sunday School classes on Sunday morning! Age 3 to Pre-K meet in Room 1; Kindergarten to Grade 3 meet in the Sunday School Room 3, Grade 4-8 meet in Trekker Room 2; and Grades 9-12 meet in the Youth Room upstairs.

Our dedicated teachers prepare lessons that are designed for each learning level, so that children and youth can grow in knowledge and faith each week!

# Outreach & Social Service

Serving Our Community and World

## Save Lives – Give Hope! Stop Hunger Now!

Saturday, March 22, 9:00 AM, Kardia UMC

On Saturday, March 22, from 9:00 AM to Noon, our church will be participating in a collaborative Stop Hunger Now! project with Kardia UMC on Butler Avenue just south of Santa Monica Boulevard. We will be mixing, bagging, and boxing over 10,000 meals in packets comprised of a high protein, vitamin rich rice-soy casserole. These meals will help feed children in developing nations all over the world. We welcome all church members and friends to participate, including children and youth of all ages. We will be taking sign-ups in the church patio, or if you are interested call the church at 310-479-1379 or Stan Shimotsu at 310-433-8324 or email Stan at ssshimotsu@gmail.com. Please join us as we put our faith into action and as we answer God's call to feed His Children.

Stan Shimotsu



## 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 Social Action Commission.

## Habitat for Humanity Lenten Build

Saturday, March 29, Meet at 7:15 AM

West LA UMC will 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). We will participate on Saturday, March 29 from 8:00-3:30 PM, arriving at the church to carpool to the site at 7:15 AM. If you are interested in helping, please register with Ken Ho. Participants must pre-register and be 16 years or older to be on the build site. Lunch will be provided.

## 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.



## Imagine LA: Mission IS Possible Award

On Saturday, February 8, Stan Shimotsu and Jill Bauman, President and CEO of Imagine LA, accepted an award from the Cal-Pac West District for *Mission IS Possible*. Imagine LA facilitates a mentorship program that matches families exiting homelessness with volunteer teams from faith communities, corporations, and other organizations. The program teaches life skills, aids the families in accessing resources, instills confidence and allows every member of the family to thrive. West LA UMC is proud to be a part of this important, life-changing program.



## Gift Starts New Endowment



A \$50,000 gift from Dr. Ken Ho will provide an endowment for WLAUMC's mercy and justice ministries. The fund will be named the **Takeshita-Ho Fund for Missions and Social Action** in memory of Ken's late wife, Jeanie Takeshita-Ho.

"I have been blessed beyond my dreams both from my work and also the Takeshita's estate," says Ken, who is on the medical staff at Providence Little Company of Mary Medical Center in Torrance. "Besides a tithe, Jeanie and I had set up our trust to donate half of our estate to charitable causes, including the church, UMCOR, environmental causes, healthcare charities such as Doctors Without Borders, and charities that help veteran's families and injured vets. I feel that this is just a natural extension of giving my life in service of my patients."

Earnings from the endowment (up to 5% of the principle, according to the finance committee's guidelines) will be used to support the work of the church's missions and social action commissions, which pleases Ken and Cooke Sunoo, who serve as the chairs of the Missions and Social Action Commissions, respectively. "I have shared Cooke's frustration of our annual search for funding to support worthy mercy and justice ministries," says Ken. "I had been thinking of something like this for some time and that sentiment was just the right trigger for this." Cooke says, "Our church mission will be sustained and broadened, and our church family enlarged, through Ken's heartfelt and inspirational generosity."

It is Ken's hope that members of WLAUMC will contribute to increasing this fund as well as the church's other endowed funds, such as the Ujihara Fund for outreach, evangelism, and the acquisition and maintenance of church property; the Sawahata Scholarship Fund for entering college students; and the J. K. Sasaki Scholarship Fund for Asian American seminarians. Ken says, "I hope all of us can look to help others in areas we might be passionate about, be it mercy or justice ministries, education, elder care, outreach ministries, music, etc."

The church is grateful for Ken's gift and hopes that others will follow his example by establishing their own endowments, supporting existing endowments, and remembering the church in their estate plans. For more information on contributing to an endowment at the church, please speak with Gregg Omori, finance chair, or Rev. Gary Oba.



## GO GREEN!

From the Epoch Times -- with the change in weather, our skin's needs also change. Facing dry air and wind, lips become chapped. In the winter, skin becomes dry, not only on your face and hands, but also on your legs, arms and all over your body. Here are some helpful tips:

- Use a dense, heavy cream instead of the light moisturizers used in summer.
- For oily or combination skin – though your nose may feel oily, it doesn't mean you shouldn't hydrate. You can try various products for oily or combination skin, the key being your skin should feel neither tight and strained nor greasy after application.
- Leave natural honey on your lips for 20 minutes as moisture therapy.
- Be sure to remove your eye make-up well so your eye moisturizer or serum can be properly absorbed. It's important to apply these products to your eyes overnight, as this is when the skin regenerates and is able to take in the most nutrients. When you don't remove your eye makeup well with a cleansing milk or gel, even the most high-end eye serums will not work.
- Use a mask or scrub at least once or twice a month. This will remove the dead skin cells, giving the healthy ones a better chance.
- Use a humidifier at home in the room you spend the most time.
- Take shorter showers and not really hot so your pores won't be so open.
- Wash your face more than an hour before leaving the house, again so your pores are not open when entering the drier air and wind outdoors.
- Drink lots of water and other fluids. Stay hydrated!
- Though the cold outdoors can hurt your skin a little, with the proper protection some fresh air can also do it good.

*Submitted by Jack Ong*



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



**Japanese Film Night**

Friday, March 28, 7:30 PM, Sanctuary

Japanese Film Night on Friday, March 28 will feature "Mother" / "Haha." This 77 minute, color film was made in 1988, and was both written and directed by Zenzo Matsuyama, starring Jitsuko Yoshimura, Takuzo Kawatani and Takako Miki.

David Shikata, Japanese Film Night Coordinator, will provide 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.



**Tanoshimi-Kai**

The group enjoyed an interesting and informative overnight trip to the Imperial Valley in February. With Tim Asamen as our personal guide, we visited the Imperial Valley Pioneers Museum, drove by the former location of the Japanese Methodist Episcopal Church in Brawle, and saw Salvation Mountain and "Slab City."

Our next outing is Tuesday, April 8, to tour the Gamble House in Pasadena and Descanso Gardens in Flintridge. Sign up now. For more information, contact Eleanor Nakano.

**Thank You!**

Thanks to the following persons for helping to install pew book racks, a changing table in the main women's restroom, and door sweeps in the nursery on February 1: Bob Bailey (lead organizer), Mike Dote, Norman Sakamoto, Doug Yamaguchi, Stan Shimotsu, Ken Harada, Otto Nakano, Barry Amos, and Steve Fujii.

**Long-Term Care Options Seminar**

Saturday, March 1, 10:00 AM

West LA UMC Outreach and MemberCare Committee is hosting a Long-Term Care Options Seminar presented by The Institute for Healthy Aging at Keiro on Saturday, March 1, at 10:00 AM in the Learning Center. If you have any questions about Long-Term Care, please join us. For more information, please call Kanako Kusano at 323- 980-2353 or email [kkusano@keiro.org](mailto:kkusano@keiro.org). Come to this free Seminar!

**Genki Conference: Caregiver's Edition**

Sunday, April 27, 2014 at

Venice Japanese Community Center

Caring for a loved one can be physically and emotionally challenging. But knowing what to do, what to expect and who to depend on may help lighten the load on your shoulders. This conference offers tools and practical resources with compassion for current and future caregivers.

Registration, lunch and a Resource Fair starts at Noon and the program runs from 1:30 to 4:30 PM. Space is limited and reservations are required. Please register by one of the following methods:

1. Online at [www.keiro.org/genki-conference-registration](http://www.keiro.org/genki-conference-registration);
2. Email [kkusano@keiro.org](mailto:kkusano@keiro.org) with the subject "Conference Registration" and include your name, phone number, mailing address, your first and second choices of breakout session, and indicate if you would like consultations from an attorney or a pharmacist;
3. Call 323-980-2353;
4. Mail the registration form to:  
Genki Conference: Caregiver's Edition  
325 Boyle Avenue, LA, CA 90033

For more information and to register by mail, pick up a flier in the Social Hall. Co-presented by Keiro Senior HealthCare and the Westside Conference Organizing Committee.

**Handbell Choir**

When you think of Easter, what word comes to mind? I'll tell you what word comes to MY mind: HANDBELLS!



If you love making beautiful music with wonderful people and want to be a special part of the Easter service, please join the Handbell Choir on Sundays from 11:00-11:40 am in room 6. Rehearsals start on March 2 and go through Easter Sunday! Please join us for wonderful music with a wonderful group!

*Musically Yours, Ashley Ramsey*

# United Methodist Women

Women Learning, Growing, and Serving Others

## ***New UMW Members!***

We are delighted to announce that thirteen new members have joined the UMW! They are: Eiko Asahina, Shoko Iwasa, Keiko Iwamoto, Kyoko Kawakita, Takako Nomi, Masuko Ota, Keiko Takahashi, Yasuko Takata, Kyoko Sasaki, and Kayoko Yano from the Nichigo congregation and Keiko Kano, Eiko Iwata and Haru Nakata. We welcome them and look forward to their active participation in all the activities of the UMW.

## ***Holiday Luncheon***

Thirty-two UMW members enjoyed a delicious buffet luncheon as guests of Hisako and Paul Terasaki in their lovely home on Saturday, February 15. It was a wonderful opportunity to get acquainted with some of our new members and to enjoy fellowship with each other in a comfortable and relaxed setting, something the very active ladies are not always able to do! Thank you Hisako and Paul for your gracious hospitality!

## ***Workshop Meeting***

Members met on Friday, February 21 to craft items for the HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE to be held on Saturday, November 1. Rose, Michi and Fusako arranged lunch for the workers. There will be no workshop in March.

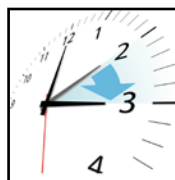
UMW coordinates the All-Church HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE and welcomes all crafty people to participate in making craft items for sale. The proceeds go to mission projects and community outreach.

## ***PATH Dinner***

UMW members are asked to help prepare dinner for PATH (People Assisting the Homeless) on Monday, March 10. Please contact Co-Chairs Eleanor Nakano or Frances Uchida to learn how you can participate.

The Social Action Commission is looking for a organization, group, or set of families to help prepare and serve a meal in the month December. Please contact Michi Matsuda or Rose Honda to sign up.

**SET YOUR CLOCK AHEAD.  
Daylight Saving Time  
begins on  
Sunday, March 9, 2014.**



## ***West LA UMC's Women's Retreat: Where Women Delight in God's Grace***

Plan to attend this year's Women's Retreat on March 22-23 at Aldersgate Retreat Center in Pacific Palisades. The Registration Fee is \$125.00 for three gourmet meals, overnight accommodations, all study materials, and chocolate!

This is a marvelous opportunity to spend time in study and prayer, deepen friendships, and renew your spirit. Sign up today! See Stacey Hirose, Pam Sase-Ryder, or Rev. Janet Cromwell for more information.

## ***Café Aloha – Senior Luncheon***



The next Café Aloha Senior Luncheon is on Saturday, March 8, at 11:00 AM, in the West LA UMC Social Hall. All the 70+ years old seniors are invited for this fun luncheon. Please RSVP to Frances Uchida so that meals and seating may be arranged.

## ***Easter Lily Orders***

Easter Lily order forms will be available in the Social Hall from Sunday, March 23 – Sunday, April 13. The cost for each lily plant will be \$10. The lilies will be set up in the sanctuary for Easter Sunday.



## ***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 a list of Special Offerings, Christmas Offerings, Human Relations Day Offerings, Memorial Offerings, and Altar Flower Donations in February, please contact the Church Office at 310-479-1379.

For privacy concerns, we do not list the names of donors in the on-line version of the Newsletter.



# Japanese Ministry

## 「宣教師へボン」

毎年、夏になると明治学院から高校生がやってくる。そして、素晴らしい歌を聞かせてくれる。今年もやって来るとメールを受け取った。今から交わる時を持つのが楽しみである。

さて、明治学院は、へボンという医療宣教師が自費を投じて始まったというのを御存知でしょうか。へボンは、ニューヨークで開業して名医として評判が高くなり、恵まれた生活をしている時に、日本が開国するというニュースを聞いた。1859年、豊かで安定した暮らしを捨てて、彼は未知の国に旅立つ。へボンが母国に出した感動的な手紙がある。

「日本の国民のように何世紀にもわたって暗黒の中に横たわり、死の影に座っていた国民に、福音を伝える宣教の使命に選ばれたということは、何と光栄極まりないことではありませんか。かつて私が、未知の国に向かって行こうとして、ニューヨークでの富と楽しみと栄達とのあらゆる望みを振り捨てた時、多くの人々は、私を愚か者だとあざ笑いました。けれどもわたしは一時たりとも、そのことを後悔したことはありません。主の約束は、私には満たされて、なおあまりあります。主は実に私に対して恵み深く、親切であり、また慈しみ深くありました。ですから私は主の助けによって死ぬまで主に仕えてきたのです。こうした奉仕のうちに年老いて行くことは何ともうれしいことではありませんか。」

明治学院大学のホームページを読むとおもしろい。

「創設者へボン博士の生涯を貫く信念である『人にしてもらいたいと思うことは何でも、あなたがたも人にしなさい』(マタイ 7:12)を教育の理念として今に受け継いでいます。この理念は明治学院大学の歴史と現在に脈々として息づいています。」現在でも、キリストの精神がしっかり残っているのではないか。

へボンは44才で来日し、33年間日本で働き、77才で帰国。96才で天に召された。

平田

Every year, we host Meiji-gakuin students from Japan. Recently, we heard that they are visiting us again in July. I am always delighted by their singing and enjoy our fellowship time together.

Meiji-gakuin was started by Dr. James Hepburn, a medical missionary, who donated his personal money to start a school for Japanese young people.

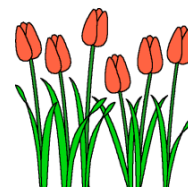
Dr. Hepburn was a successful doctor in New York. When he heard that Japan opened its door to Christianity, he left his comfortable life and went to Japan in 1859. He said "I am honored to be chosen to be part of Japan mission. Japanese people lived in the darkness over many years. Many laughed and ridiculed me for forsaking my comfortable life. Yet, I never regret my decision to come to Japan, even once. I am content by just having God's promise. God has been good, very gracious and kind to me. Therefore, I serve Him until I die. I am delighted to grow older in serving our Lord."

If you visit there, you still find Dr. Hepburn's mission statement "Do to others what you would have them do to you." (Matthew 7:12)

Dr. Hepburn came to Japan at age 44, served for 33 years, returned home at age 77, and went with the Lord at age 96.

The Word of God still reigns in Meiji-gakuin.

Pastor Becky Hirata 平田



## Nichigo's March Calendar

|            |          |                               |
|------------|----------|-------------------------------|
| Mar. 2     | 11:00 AM | Nichigo Worship               |
|            | 12:00 PM | Nichigo Council Meeting       |
| Mar. 8     | 11:00 AM | Café Aloha Senior Lunch       |
| Mar. 9     | 11:00 AM | Nichigo Worship               |
|            | 12:00 PM | Nichigo Bible Study           |
| Mar. 16    | 11:00 AM | Nichigo Worship               |
|            | 12:00 PM | Nichigo Bible Study           |
| Mar. 22-23 |          | Women's Retreat at Aldersgate |
| Mar. 23    | 11:00 AM | Nichigo Worship               |
|            | 12:00 PM | Nichigo Bible Study           |
| Mar. 28    | 7:30 PM  | Japanese Film Night           |
| Mar. 30    | 11:00 AM | Nichigo Worship               |
|            | 12:00 PM | Nichigo Bible Study           |

# March 2014

| Sunday                                                                                                                                                        | Monday                                                                                       | Tuesday                                                                                                               | Wednesday                                                                                                                                     | Thursday                                                                                                  | Friday                                                          | Saturday                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                              |                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                           |                                                                 | 1<br>10:00am Keiro-Long Term Care Workshop<br>10:30am Ohana 2.0 Mtg.                                      |
| 2<br>9:30am English Worship<br>11:00am Japanese Worship<br>11:00am Church Library Open<br>1:00pm Trustee's Mtg.<br>1:00pm Proclaiming the Word Workshop       | 3<br>1:00pm Women's Bible Study<br>6:30-9:00pm Kelton AA Mtg                                 | 4<br>8:30am Fat Tues Breakfast<br>9:30 Healthy Living Workshop<br>11:30am 80+ Women's Lunch<br>7:00pm Choir Rehearsal | 5 Ash Wednesday<br>9:15am "Alive Now" Study<br>11:00am Morning Service<br>7:30pm Evening Service                                              | 6<br>9:30am Prayer Meeting<br>10:30am Tai-Chi Class<br>7:30pm Bible Study                                 | 7                                                               | 8<br>11:00am Café Aloha<br><br>2:00 PM Rose Ono's Memorial Service<br><b>Change clocks forward.</b>       |
| 9 Daylight Saving Time Begins<br>9:30am English Worship<br>9:45am Sunday School<br>11:00am Japanese Worship<br>11:15am Retreat Planning Mtg.                  | 10<br>1:00pm Women's Bible Study<br>6:00pm PATH Meal Service<br>6:30-9:00pm Kelton AA Mtg    | 11<br>9:30am Lenten Study<br>7:00pm Choir Rehearsal                                                                   | 12<br>9:15am "Alive Now" Study<br>10:30am Tai-Chi Class<br>5:30-9:00pm Promise AA Mtg<br>6:30pm Lenten Book Study<br>7:30pm Finance Committee | 13<br>9:30am Prayer Meeting<br>10:30am Tai-Chi Class<br>7:30pm Bible Study                                | 14<br>11:00 Staff Meeting                                       | 15<br>9:30am Master Greeter Workshop                                                                      |
| 16<br>9:30am English Worship<br>9:45am Sunday School<br>11:00am Japanese Worship<br>1:00pm Ad Council Mtg.                                                    | 17<br>1:00pm Women's Bible Study<br>6:30-9:00pm Kelton AA Mtg<br>7:00pm Praise Band Rehearse | 18<br>9:30am Lenten Study<br>7:00pm Choir Rehearsal                                                                   | 19<br>9:15am "Alive Now" Study<br>10:30am Tai-Chi Class<br>5:30-9:00pm Promise AA Mtg<br>6:30pm Lenten Book Study                             | 20<br>9:30am Prayer Meeting<br>10:30am Tai-Chi Class<br>7:30pm Bible Study                                | 21                                                              | 22<br>Women's Retreat Begins<br>9:00am Stop Hunger Now Project at Kardia UMC<br>4pm Praise Band Rehearsal |
| 23 Women's Retreat Ends<br>Worship with Praise Band<br>9:30am English Worship<br>9:45am Sunday School<br>10:45am Fair Trade Sales<br>11:00am Japanese Worship | 24<br>1:00pm Women's Bible Study<br>6:30-9:00pm Kelton AA Mtg                                | 25<br>9:30am Lenten Study<br>7:00pm Choir Rehearsal                                                                   | 26<br>9:15am "Alive Now" Study<br>10:30am Tai-Chi Class<br>5:30-9:00pm Promise AA Mtg<br>6:30pm Lenten Book Study                             | 27<br>Rev. Gary at JA Caucus Mtg.<br>9:30am Prayer Meeting<br>10:30am Tai-Chi Class<br>7:30pm Bible Study | 28<br>Rev. Gary at JA Caucus Mtg.<br>7:30pm Japanese Film Night | 29<br>7:15am Habitat for Humanity                                                                         |
| 30<br>9:30am English Worship<br>9:45am Sunday School<br>11:00am Japanese Worship<br>12:00pm Imagine LA Team                                                   |                                                                                              |                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                           |                                                                 |                                                                                                           |

# Preparing Our Hearts and Minds for Lent



Lent is a 40-day period during which Christians reflect on Jesus' ministry and final days on earth, including his arrest, trials, and death on a cross. This year, Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 5, and concludes with Jesus' triumphal resurrection on Easter Sunday, April 20.

Throughout the centuries, Christians have understood Lent as a solemn time of prayer, repentance, self-denial, and sacrificial giving. These spiritual practices are designed help us expand our understanding of Jesus' sacrificial ministry, deepen our trust in God to provide for our needs, and increase our attentiveness to the needs of others.

In preparation for Lent, take a moment to discern what spiritual practice will assist you in growing in faith and discipleship. Perhaps you'll choose to read parts of the Gospels each day, join the Lenten Study Group at church, give up a favorite food or treat, or make a weekly donation to charity. Whatever you choose to do, make it a meaningful act of worship to God.

## Ash Wednesday Services March 5 ~ 11:00 AM and 7:30 PM

---

### West LA United Methodist Church

1913 Purdue Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90025

wlaumc.com ☎ 310-479-1379

---

*You can also view this newsletter online at  
www.wlaumc.com*

Change Service Requested

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Santa Monica, CA  
Permit No. 27833

West Los Angeles United Methodist Church  
1913 Purdue Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90025  
March 2014