

Pastor's Page

Dear UJCC Friends and Family,

Hildegard of Bingen was a Christian mystic who lived in Germany from 1098-1179. She was born to a noble family, the last of ten children. Her parents offered her to God as a tithe; when she was 8 years old, they placed her in a hermitage ran by their family friend. It was there that Hildegard learned the monastic way of life. She became the abbess there and led a life of prayer, writing, and visions.

And she had some wild visions! They began when she was 5, but kept them private for almost 40 years. In her first work, *Scivias*, (meaning "Know the Ways") she began to write and reflect on them. Many of her visions were overwhelming: fire and whirlwinds, blood and smoke, circles within circles, hairy beasts and winged beings, intricate architectural forms, characters from the realms of Heaven and Hell... These visions must have been quite intense.

In one of her visions, Hildegard describes a group of women gathered by the wall of a building. She interpreted the building to be a symbol of the history of salvation, the women symbolizing Virtues. Virtues are the qualities God seeks to nourish and cultivate in each of our souls, coming from the Latin *virtus* which can also be translated as "energy" or "power." The Virtues the women symbolized were Truth, Peace, Beatitude, Discretion, and Humility. Other Virtues, like Charity, Hope, Wisdom, Fortitude, and Celestial Desire, show up in other visions of Hildegard's.

In one of her visions entitled "The Tower of Anticipation of God's Will," she saw an "iron-colored tower" and 5 female figures standing in it—the Virtues of Celestial Love, Discipline, Modesty, Mercy, and Victory. Inside the building were two more Virtues, Longing and Patience. Hildegard writes, "Longing stands next to Patience."* Longing and Patience hanging out together... Hmm... It occurs to me that this might be reflective of this COVID time. We long to have some sense of normalcy again; we long to be together, to worship and pray together, fellowship and eat together, do ministry together. Alas, we must be patient as we protect our own health and the health of our community. Longing calls to us as Patience gently reminds us of the importance of waiting. God works in our longing as we dream and hope and anticipate the future; God also works in our patience as we seek to stay grounded in this present moment.

We will continue our online worship for the month of August, at least. There will be no in-person worship this month and our church office remains closed as UJCC does its part to try and contain the coronavirus. We want our church family to be safe and protected while also being good neighbors!

Please know that the Reopening Committee continues its work, drafting a plan and protocol for reopening and putting the pieces all into place. We continue to seek volunteers to help set up the church and serve as greeters when the time comes to open. If you would like to help out in this way, please let me know and I'll put you on our list! It is much appreciated!

Rev. Rae and I are always here for you; please let us know if you need anything. We are here for pastoral care and chats, both of which can be done over the phone or also via Zoom conferencing. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us!

I'll be praying for your longing and your patience as the virus continues strong. Please pray for mine too! May God continue to bless and keep you!

Akiko

*I've been reading about Hildegard of Bingen in my daily devotional by Jan Richardson, *In The Sanctuary Of Women: A Companion for Reflection And Prayer*. The visions above are shared in it.

Worship Resources

We are continually seeking new ways to keep our church family connected and spiritually nourished during this time of pandemic. We will continue to offer online worship at www.ujcclife.com/blog and our Sunday Zoom Fellowship and Prayer Time at 11:30am.

If you would like the Order of Worship and manuscript of the sermon mailed to you via Postal Service, please let Akiko know (akiko@ujcclife.com or 325-4563). We would be most happy to do so! Thank you!

Joys and Concerns

Jeremiah 29:11 says, "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope." When you feel hopeless, remember God's promises and the hope we have in the Lord. God wants peace for our hearts and our world. Let us remember these blessings as we pray together for...

Richard and Frances Kurushima
Hisaye Naito

June Kishi
Paras Family

We pray for concerns in our church community...

- For all with health concerns, including Mel Imai (and wife Joyce as she supports him)
- For all recovering, including Debbie Ikeda as she recovers from a knee replacement, Larry Yamada and Senor Chavez (Jeanette Nishimori's gardener) who had strokes, Elise (heart surgery June 22, granddaughter of Laji Conlee, a friend of Joy Asami and the principal's secretary at Mike Swezey's school), Robert Yee (Arlene Eberly's cousin's husband) who had a cyst removed from near his pituitary gland June 29; Tay Eberly (Danny and Arlene Eberly's niece) who had corrective noninvasive heart surgery on July 1;
- For Roberta Barton's son, Paul, who took his state exam July 8 to get certified as a Physical Therapy Assistant;
- For Robert Archuleta who is scheduled for hip replacement surgery on September 8;
- For all on hospice care, including Nancy Suda, now living with her daughter in LA; we lift thanks for her receiving palliative care;
- For all receiving treatment for cancer, including Cyndi Fletcher, Mike Yamamoto's sister; praise God that her most recent PET scan showed no new areas affected;

For those who grieve...

- For the loved ones of Rev. Sab Masada who passed away July 20; we especially lift prayers for wife Marion, daughters Charise, Michal (husband Ed and son Joberto), Alisa, and niece Keiko;
- For the loved ones of Theresa Rodriguez, Arlene Eberly's sister in law's mother, who passed away July 17 after being in the hospital for over a week;
- For the Ramage family as they grieve the passing of Richard Ramage, Tom's brother and Tami's uncle, who passed away July 11;
- For the families of Willie Hiraga and Ko Hoshizaki, Iris Hiraga Hata's

- two uncles, who passed away recently;
- For the family and friends of Rosie Okajima, who passed away July 16;
 - For the loved ones of Masako Yanaga, Jennifer Nishikawa's mother, who passed away July 2;
 - For the loved ones of Larry Nakamura, Arnold Nakamura's brother, who passed away unexpectedly July 10;
 - For the Juarez family who lost their father unexpectedly due to a fall and internal bleeding (friends of Roberta Barton);
 - For Day Kusakai's neighbor's sister who passed away from a complication with diabetes last week of June;
 - For the loved ones of Fumi Kawano who passed away at the beginning of July, especially for daughter Janice and niece Melanie Sembritzki;

For our wider community and the world...

- For school districts, parents, students, and families as they figure out what school will look like in the fall;
- For the ongoing threat, illness, and death caused by the Coronavirus;
- For all who have been affected by COVID-19, including Ryan (Tami Ramage's partner Margaret's brother);
- For our country in a difficult place right now;
- For our veterans and service personnel;
- For increased understanding and empathy between people with different perspectives;
- For all who experience trauma and fear due to war;
- For those who struggle with mental illness and those who care for them;
- For refugees all over the world;

For God's goodness in our community...

- Gratitude that Rev. Kay and June's daughter Shelley and family have recovered from COVID; we ask for God's protection as they continue to do ministry;
- Joy for the births of Ben Honda (named after his great-grandfather) to Matt and Kelly Honda at the end of June; for Eve, Neil Campbell's new great-granddaughter; and for Rhys Kebo Zenimura, born July 6, to Brandon & Kiara Zenimura and big sister Zea;
- For all the Junior High Campers, Asian Campers, and Mount Hermon attendees who missed gathering in person this past month and yet were able to be connected online; gratitude for our youth who have stepped into leadership positions and are doing a great job teaching the campers about God during virtual Camp; for Rev. Rae and his

leadership with them;

- For the engagement of Brynn Saito, Gregg and Janelle's daughter, to Dave Lehl on June 26;
- For all who have recently celebrated birthdays, including Glenn Nakaguchi June 25!

If we have made any errors, we apologize and would appreciate any corrections! If you have any changes or additions to our prayer list, please let Akiko know (akiko@ujcclife.com or 322-0701).

UJCC “Senior Care Response Team”

In light of the current local, state, and federal recommendations for individuals 65 and older to minimize leaving their residences....

The **Senior Care Response Team** is here to support you with whatever you may require during these times.

Do you have a need?

Pick-up and delivery of basic needs, such as groceries, food/meals, medications, and/or basic supplies?

What to do? How to access support?

- 1. Call one of our Team members listed below.
Please leave a voice message and we will return a call.**
- 2. One of our volunteers will make sure to get the request out to you.**

Please do not hesitate to call us with whatever you may need.
We are here to support you in any way we can.

Please know that any contacts made through the Senior Care Response Team will remain confidential.

It is important to stay connected and continue to pray for your Church family...

**Blessings,
Janelle Saito – 559-313-0489
Cosh Ng - 559-259-7656
Arlene Eberly - 559-960-4044**

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR THE FIRST SIX MONTHS OF 2020

The first half of 2020 has been tumultuous due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Presently, our finances look good primarily because of the large (\$40,000) annual bequest from the Abiko Charitable Trust. In addition, UJCC applied for and received a SBA loan of \$43,200 under the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) which was primarily for the purpose of paying our staff during these uncertain times. At this point, it looks as though UJCC will qualify for either partial or complete forgiveness of the loan.

The accompanying June 2020 Treasurer's Report summarizes our current financial position. Our total reserves stand at \$705,710 compared with \$655,011 at the beginning of the year but we face challenges during the 2nd half of the year. The status of our major fund raisers (Luau and Silent Auction, Asian Craft Faire, and Harvest Luncheon) are in doubt but on the positive side, our pledge support remains strong.

Take care of yourself and your loved ones. With God's help and your continued support, our church will continue to thrive.

Report prepared by Ken Kurokawa

Generosity Committee

The U.J.C.C. Stewardship Committee met via Zoom on July 19th. Our focus was on ways to promote and educate the church congregation about the practice of Grace, Goodness, Giving and Gratitude. These four "Gs" will be Reverend Akiko's theme of her sermon series for the Generosity Movement this year. And because of this Pandemic Era that we are all facing for much longer than we anticipated, our committee will meet regularly with the other various church committees to discuss and plan on how we can assist with a possible All-Church fund raiser. We are losing the wonderful Luau and the Craft Fair, which we learned will be viral this year. Our church has long depended on these two events for the great job they have done to promote our church and net profits that provide many necessary things for all of us.

From our Stewardship Committee to all of our precious church family members, please stay safe and God bless you all.

Tomodachi Seniors Group and Friends**AUGUST**

Dear friends,

We sure do miss you! We know that we'll be able to meet again in the near future, but until then, we pray that you will continue to be well, stay safe...and keep your hearts smiling! God is good!

**Senior Corner**

We thought that you might like to take a little break from your daily responsibilities to learn a little more about your Church friends. So...we created the "Senior Corner" - we've asked folks to share something about themselves that folks may not already know, along with what they've been doing during this COVID-19 pandemic, and if they have any advice they'd like to share. We would love to include you in the Senior Corner—please contact Janelle Saito or Arlene Eberly if you feel so inclined.

Following are our first "Senior Corner" sharers:

Mine Ikeda

I used to walk every morning for 2-3 miles and be back home by 7 AM! I took a walking class at the Clovis Adult School and it was the best class I took there. Sometimes Fumio would walk with me. At that time, the neighborhood was fig orchards forever. Fumio would cut corners trying to beat me home. But I always got home first! Now, I walk 1/4 mile in 8 minutes and 1/2 mile in 16 minutes (if I put my mind to it). Times change.

Fumio swam for years, until just a few weeks before he passed. He always swam his age in laps on his birthday. I used to swim with Fumio until one evening in December...I thought to myself, "Is this fun—swimming, washing my hair, and taking a shower OUTSIDE when it's freezing cold?" I decided to focus on walking.

What Mine has been doing during the pandemic: Recently, Mine made and delivered fig jam to an old friend. She has made this jam so often that she has absolutely no need to look at her recipe. When feeling bored, Maggie takes Mine out for drives to Auberry, North Fork, and Pine Flat. It is good to get out every once in a while, to break up the monotony.

What advice can you share? Mine's advice for the graduates is "No matter what, there is a whole world out there waiting for you."

Mae Morita

In 1972, Mae was the first Japanese American to run for public office here. Mae sought the position of being a school board member of Biola-Pershing Schools (now known as Biola Elementary School). Mae was always interested in education, and believes that every child is educable, and

should have an equal opportunity to develop their potential to the best they could be. Mae went door to door campaigning, standing by her belief that all children can learn. Mae won the election and served on the Biola-Pershing Board for 2 1/2 terms.

Mae was encouraged to run for the Central Unified School Board. In 1983, Mae was elected and served on the first Central Unified School District Governing Board. She was the only female Board member of 7 elected officials. Near the end of her first term, the Central USD Superintendent and several students approached Mae urging her to run for a second term. Mae chose not to run.

What Mae has been doing during the pandemic: Mae stated that she has taken some time to reflect upon the past and remember some of her friends who have passed on. Primarily, Mae has been cleaning out her house, and trying to downsize. She has been tossing things out and organizing so that she can move at a moment's notice.

What advice can you share? "Treat others as you would like to be treated."

Gregg Saito

I was the Captain of the Reedley HS football team in my senior year. One Summer after I was married, I grew melons on my sister's plot of land in Centerville. I called a foul on Michael Jordan. During these past few months, I've read 9 books and watched 7 Korean dramas. I've been married to my Korean wife for 43 years. "Watashi no Tomodachi"

30 Years of UJCC!

2020 marks the 30th Anniversary of the federation of the Japanese Methodist and Congregational churches! We want to hear your stories from the last 30 years for a video. We have questions prepared to help get the juices flowing. Please let Janelle Saito or Arlene Eberly know your interest in participating by August 6. We plan to record stories on August 8. Thank you for your help in celebrating this important milestone!

UJCC Central Valley
VIRTUAL
Asian Cultural and Crafts Fair
SATURDAY - MONDAY
SEPTEMBER 19-21, 2020
SHOPPING AVAILABLE ALL DAY

*Come
Join Us
Virtually*

WWW.UJCCCLIFE.COM

CLICK LINK ON WEBSITE : CRAFT FAIR

10% OF PROCEEDS FROM EACH VENDOR WILL GO TO
UNITED JAPANESE CHRISTIAN CHURCH'S GENERAL FUND.

United Japanese Christian Church

Central Valley **VIRTUAL** Asian Cultural and Crafts Fair 2020

***It's that time of year again!
We will be holding our 22nd Annual UJCC Central Valley
Asian Cultural and Crafts Fair – YAY!***

It's been a very interesting 2020 so far and we pray and hope that all of you are staying safe and well! Due to the times we live in now with COVID 19 we will be offering a **VIRTUAL** show, where you will still be able to shop with some of your favorite vendors. We will all miss seeing and enjoying the day with our family and friends but we are excited about this new adventure of a **VIRTUAL** crafts fair.

This year its going to be 3-day event. You will be able to shop from Saturday, September 19th 2020 through Monday, September 21st 2020 anytime at your convenience.

More info to come but essentially all you have to do is go to our UJCC website and click on the link "Craft Fair". And as in years past, 10% of the proceeds from each vendor will go to the UJCC general fund.

We will also be offering Kelley's Cookies for pre-sale with your 9 favorite varieties: Shortbread, Macadamia Shortbread, Chocolate Dipped Macadamia Shortbread, Melting Moments, Macadamia Ice Box, Lemon Shortbread, Chocolate Chip with Walnuts, Macadamia Chocolate Chip, and Chocolate Chip Krispy Oatmeal. ***This year we will be offering 2 new cookies*** Banana Delight (A smooth banana shortbread dipped in dark chocolate sprinkled with peanut bits). Coconut Delight (A rich shortbread with roasted coconut and a hint of key lime dipped in a creamy white chocolate). And also like in years past, proceeds will be going to the UJCC youth group.

We will be sending out an event flyer along with a Kelley's Cookie order sheet. Please send your cookie order in by the Deadline of September 7th 2020 along with your payment.

We thank you for your generous support and love so that the United Japanese Christian Church can continue to share God's Love throughout our community.

Matthew 5:16

Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in Heaven.

United Japanese Christian Church

Bell-Ringing Ceremony Commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the Bombing of Nagasaki

Saturday, August 8 @ 6:30pm via Zoom (invite below)

UJCC has been invited by Judge Dale Ikeda and the Board of Sister Cities International, Inc. to host a bell-ringing ceremony that will coincide with the time the atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki 75 years ago. This is Saturday, August 8 @ 7:02pm for us here in Pacific Standard Time.

We will be part of a national project, simultaneously ringing bells in sister cities across the United States and Japan to mark 75 years of peace since the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. You and your friends are all invited to UJCC's contribution; there will be a short ceremony, including bell-ringing for 47 seconds, the duration's of the bomb's drop on Nagasaki.

Please participate even if you don't have access to the internet. Pause for prayer and bell-ringing in your own home at 7:02pm on August 8. Please use any kind of bell you have, big or small!

The Fresno Buddhist Temple will host the bell-ringing ceremony for Hiroshima on Wednesday, August 5 at 4:15pm; please join in ringing your bells for 44 seconds then too.

Let us join with our neighbors near and far to spread the message of peace across the nation and across the Pacific Ocean to our sister cities in Japan! If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Akiko (akiko@ujcclife.com or 325-4563). Thank you and hope to "see" you then!

Zoom info (This link will also be sent out in the UJCC weekly check-in email. If you would like to subscribe to these updates, please email Akiko.)

Topic: Bell-Ringing Ceremony

Time: Aug 8, 2020 06:30 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88123795388?pwd=UTh0RTlDeG5hNEdZK2NJR2gwNmNMZz09)

88123795388?pwd=UTh0RTlDeG5hNEdZK2NJR2gwNmNMZz09

Meeting ID: 881 2379 5388; Passcode: 015424

Dial-in: 669 900 6833

Meeting ID: 881 2379 5388

Passcode: 015424

UNITED JAPANESE CHRISTIAN CHURCH**ACKNOWLEDGMENTS****6/22/20 thru 7/26/20****SPECIAL OFFERINGS**

M/M Mel Imai: In Memory of Larry Nakamura

Tomoko Naito: In Memories of Eisaku, Tomo, Tom, & Emiko Naito

M/M Henry Perry: In Memory of Max Kawano

M/M Jaime Visitation: In Memory of great grandparents of Zea Zenimura: birth of

M/M Robert Chung's grandniece Aubrie

D/M Wallace Yang: In Honor of Hiroshi Inouye's 90th birthday!

Robert Yasuhira: In Memory of Henry Yasuhira

Irene Ikeda: Choir Fund

First Presbyterian Church: Earth Angel Mission

Mae Morita: OGHS

Toshi Sakai: Memorial Day

Bill Tokumoto: Lay Visitation

M/M Jamie Wheeler: Earth Angel Mission

Wilma Elliott: Donation

Kiesha Oliver: Donation

IN MEMORY OF REV. SABURO MASADA

D/M Ken Kurokawa

Day Kusakai

Kaye Migaki

Marsha Okada

IN MEMORY OF HELEN SHIRAKAWA

M/M Robert Chung

Kaye Migaki

Hope Kawashima

Ann Hiyama

Stan Morita

Amy Kiritani

M/M Mel Imai

M/M Yo Katayama

Tracy Kiritani

R/M Saburo Masada

Eujeanne Kawasaki

Toshi Sakai

M/M George Yamamoto

IN MEMORY OF ROSIE OKAJIMA

M/M Robert Chung

Day Kusakai

D/M Ken Kurokawa

Kaye Migaki

Marsha Okada

FRIENDS CARE

Donna Chiamori: In Memory of Tomi Nagare
Tim Ikeda
D/M Lindy Kawahara: In Memories of Fred & Tomi Nagare
Geraldine Kawamura: In Memories of Fred & Tomi Nagare
Kaye Migaki: In Memories of Fred & Tomi Nagare
M/M Van Ogami: In Memory of Tomi Nagare
Tina Saunders: In Memory of Tomi Nagare
M/M Mark Takemoto: In Memory of Tomi Nagare
Teruko Tsuji: In Memories of Fred & Tomi Nagare
Bill Tokumoto

SENIOR CARE RESPONSE TEAM

M/M Kenichi Bunden
M/M Jerry Berson
M/M Dan Eberly: In Memories of Fumiko Kawano, Rev. Sab Masada, & Rosie Okajima
Mae Morita
Jeanette Nishimori
Bill Tokumoto

TOMODACHI

M/M Dan Eberly: In Memory of Helen Shirakawa
Stephanie Sumi: In Memory of Helen Shirakawa

Puzzle!

Using the code, fill in the blanks to discover what we should do each day.

CODE

A	1	B
D		E

F	2	G
H		I

K	3	L
M		N

O	4	R
S		T

U	5	V
W		Y

T
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□¹ □³ □¹ □³ □² □⁴ □⁴ □¹ □³

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□³ □³ □⁴ □⁵ □⁴ □² □¹ □⁴

□² □¹ □³ □² □⁴ □¹”

Answer: Talk to God and listen for God. "Be still, and know that I am God." (Psalm 46:10)