

Pastor's Page

Dear UJCC Family,

In these times, it's easy to get overwhelmed. There's so much going on, not only on the world stage with the pandemic, tropical storms and wildfires, the upcoming election, systemic racism, unemployment and economic hardship, but also in our personal lives: difficult diagnoses and illness, missing loved ones, broken and difficult relationships, struggle at home and work, feelings of loneliness or not feeling "good enough..."

And then things that bring us joy and hope also fill our hearts and minds: of weddings and babies, of improved air quality and cooler weather, of friends and family and pets, of art and beauty and connection...

All these things are like threads that make up our days and are woven together to make up the tapestry of our lives together. As we experience this tapestry, God calls us to pause and wonder, to stop and reflect, on God's presence with us.

This year's Generosity Movement series is entitled "Selah." You may have noticed this word every so often in the verses of Psalms. "Selah" is sometimes understood to be instruction on how to read the Psalm during worship or indicates where a musical interlude would be inserted. Scholars debate the meaning and purpose of Selah, but it's believed to have something to do with pausing and reflecting. In the midst of all that is going on in our lives and in the world, God calls, "Pause to reflect on things!" This month, we will pause and reflect on all God has done for us as a UJCC community as we celebrate 30 years as a federated church. Can you believe it's been 3 decades since the coming together of Christ United Methodist Church and the Japanese Congregational Church? What a richly-woven and multi-colored tapestry we have as we look back on our life together these past 30 years!

Please join us for the (online) sermon series through the month of October at www.ujcclife.com/blog as we celebrate

Goodness: October 4

Grace: October 11

Giving: October 18

Gratitude: October 25

October 25 will be the culmination of the series with a special video on which Rev. Rae and our 30th Anniversary Committee (Arlene Eberly and Janelle Saito) have been working hard!

Also, stay tuned to the UJCC website and UJCC facebook page for daily bits of trivia and photos from the last 30 years of UJCC. If you have any to share, please let me know (akiko@ujcclife.com or 559-325-4563)! We're looking for fun facts on UJCC ministries, its people, its building, its mission... The sky's the limit and we'd love to hear them!

Then, please be on the lookout in the November Focal Point newsletter for a worksheet to guide your response to these 4 gifts from God, brought to you by the UJCC Generosity Committee.

God's goodness, grace, and giving are gifts we lift gratitude for, especially in this season of celebration!

Akiko

Joys and Concerns

*Praise the Lord,
for he has shown me the wonders of his unfailing love.
He kept me safe when my city was under attack.
In panic I cried out,
"I am cut off from the Lord!"
But you heard my cry for mercy
and answered my call for help. -Psalm 31: 21-22*

Let us give thanks for God's mercy and for the ways God shows unfailing love to us, our loved ones, and our world. In this spirit, we pray for...

Richard and Frances Kurushima
Hisaye Naito
June Kishi
Paras Family

We pray for concerns in our church community...

- For those ill or recovering from COVID, including Monique (a friend of Mike and Carol Swezey), Dennis Yee, Carlisle Maney (Yo and Jo Katayama's granddaughter), and Rev. Allison Byerley (Rev. Rae and Akiko's colleague);
- For all on hospice care, including Sharyn Satterlee (Carolyn Scott's auntie) and Rosemary Stoner (Akiko Miyake-Stoner's auntie);
- For Lenny Matsuyama, Norma Uragami's brother, who was in a hit-and-run motorcycle accident;

- For Marion Masada, that God gives her motivation and inspiration;
- For our UJCC family we don't get to see on Zoom and gratitude for our connection, even when we are miles away
- For Arnold Nakamura as he serves as executor for his late brother Larry and recovers from spinal cord implant removal surgery and for Loette who is a great support
- Protection for all affected by the CA fires, including the firefighters, families & homes in harm's way, and protection for people with breathing problems: Glenn Nakaguchi's cousin who lives dangerously close to the fire near San Jose and Pete Nakaguchi's stepson who is a forestry firefighter, for the safety of the UCC Camp Cazadero and grieve the complete destruction of Hammer Camp (owned by Twin Lakes Church in Santa Cruz; Larry and Diane Honda are friends of the pastor Rene); for Mt. Hermon Christian Camp and their staff who had to be evacuated; for the Swezey's goddaughter Becca's cousin, Kate, who lost her boat business due to the fires; for Ron and Norma Uragami and family and animals; for Barbie Woodard (Mike Swezey's vice principal), the Feeley family, Jeremiah (Glenn and Fay Nakaguchi's step grandson), Syd and Kriss Yamasaki (Fay Nakaguchi's cousins), Nina Alonzo and family (a friend and student of Kaye Migaki), Mike Yamamoto's friend who owned Mammoth Pools Resort which was burned down in the fires, and countless others;
- For all with health concerns, including Jeanette Nishimori's friends, Dick and Cindy (as they care for Dick's knee infection and sepsis); for Bob Neilson (friend of Larry Honda recovering from pneumonia), Mel Imai (and wife Joyce as she cares for him), and Jimmy Lawson (Carol Swezey's brother);
- For all those recovering from surgery, including Susie Nakagawa (hip surgery), Arnold Nakamura, Tay Eberly (Danny and Arlene's niece), John Purcell (heart surgery; Jeanette Nishimori's stepson), and Anna (Garrett and Ritsuko Masterson's daughter);
- For those struggling with cancer, including Jane (Randy Isogawa's neighbor), Cyndi Fletcher (Mike Yamamoto's sister), Jordan (friend of Becca Cumedges, the Swezeys' goddaughter), and Bruce (Loette Zablackis' brother);

For those who grieve...

- For the loved ones of Jolly Peterson who passed away September 12;
- For Don Curly, Glenn Nakaguchi's golf partner, who lost his wife September 1;

- For Rev. Kay and June Sakaguchi as they traveled for a memorial gathering for June's dear friend, Sharon and on the 1st year memorial of the passing of their son Matt on September 13;
- For the loved ones of John Bell, Joyce Imai's friend and co-worker, who passed away Tuesday, August 25, from cancer;
- For Carolyn Richner and her loved ones in the loss of her husband Robert (friends of Irene Ikeda);
- For Dale Engstrom and his family in the loss of his father (Dale was Larry Honda's colleague at Fresno City College);
- Patricia, as she grieves the loss of her dear dog, and gratitude for the prayers of the UJCC family;
- For the loved ones of Wilma Elliott, mother-in-law of Sheryl, whose graveside service was held August 24;
- For Martin Nishikawa and his family as they grieve his mother who passed away in August;
- For those who have lost loved ones to COVID-19;

For our wider community and the world...

- For the people of Iowa as they recover from the Derecho storm, especially Akiko's college friend, Kimberly;
- For all essential workers, including Conor Swezey (providing tech support at Kerman High School); for all teachers as they provide distance learning, including Mike Swezey and Mary-Kay Watkins; for all health care workers, including Dr. Matt Yotsuya (Diane Honda's cousin's son);
- For our country in this time of unrest;
- For all affected by Hurricane Lara;
- For the ongoing threat, illness, and death caused by the Coronavirus;
- 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...

- Hope that God gives to us each day!;
- Thanksgiving for all who celebrated birthdays recently, including Kiyoko Nosker on September 15 and Lauren Nakaguchi (Glenn and Fay's granddaughter);

- Joy for Marissa Honda and Jimmy as they married September 19; gratitude for traveling mercies for their family, especially parents Larry and Diane;
- For all grandparents, celebrated September 13;
- Thanksgiving for the helicopter that was able to rescue many people from the Creek fire and for the emergency care workers;
- Praise for Loette Zablackis in her new retirement!
- Joy for new life in our midst: for Tyler Toshiyuki (born September 12; blessings to parents Ryan and Raeann Maru, grandparents Brian and Colleen Kurasaki, and auntie Gayle Kurasaki), for Ayumi Takasu (born to Kelly and Rin, granddaughter of Gordon and Ruri Honda), and Andrew Nalbandian (born August 24, to Sam and Jenn);
- Gratitude for all who made VBS possible: coordinator Kristine Sakamoto, Sunday School Superintendents Kathie Sakamoto and Mary-Kay Wakins, and Rev. Rae Kim!

If we have made any other 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).

SPRC

Greetings from the SPRC! We all hope that you are all safe and healthy. Although the church is not physically open, we are still conducting business virtually.

As always, we invite you to share your insights, ideas, concerns and any praises with the SPRC to help us serve our congregation better. Normally we would welcome you to speak to us privately in person, as a group or anonymously whichever makes you most comfortable, but that may be difficult during these times. So, please reach out to us by phone or text, so we can keep the lines of communication open to help us serve you better. Here are the committee member's contact information:

Arlene Eberly (559) 960-4044
Garrett Masterson (559) 362-3747
Nathan Nakamura (559) 770-7430
Norman Ocampo (559) 313-6473
Leslie Shirakawa (559) 240-1314
David Wong (559) 978-9694
Tom Wong (559) 930-3400

BIBLE STUDY

Tired of watching Netflix? Looking for a new adventure? Need some spice in your life? Then look no further! Nathan Nakamura will be taking you on a breathtaking ride through the Gospel of Mark. Even if you're a Bible scholar, a skeptic, or someone just looking for some good ole community, we will all be making some wonderful discoveries together. Come find out why this Gospel is so hard on the disciples, why Jesus is constantly telling people to be quiet, and much, much more. Make sure to save the following dates so we can see your lovely face. Also feel free to invite some others to participate:

10/6, 10/10, 11/3, and 11/17 from 7:00 – 8:30 PM via Zoom”

If you would like to join the fun, please contact Nathan Nakamura in order to get the Zoom link. You can contact him as follows:

Phone/Text: (559) 770-7430

E-mail: nnakamura88@gmail.com

Tomodachi Seniors Group and Friends

Senior Corner



Welcome to our “Senior Corner”. Many thanks to our contributors. Consider joining in and sharing a little something about yourself that others may not know about you. Contact Arlene Eberly or Janelle Saito to share your story...or we can reach out to you.

Jo Katayama

What are some facts that no one may know about you?

My family resided in Van Nuys when we were sent to Manzanar Relocation Camp in 1942. The few memories I have as a 3-year old were playing underneath our barrack. I was told that in order for us to play together, our mothers dug the sand from under the living quarters so we could find relief from the 100+ degree desert sun. I also remember it was during the evening when our family left Manzanar to temporarily stay with my maternal grandparents on their farm near Anthony, New Mexico. We later moved to Fresno after my father was hired by the Social Security Administration.

What have you been doing during the COVID-19 pandemic?

We have been Facetiming almost daily with our 5-month old grandson, Nathaniel, who lives in San Jose.

I've just finished reading Born a Crime by Trevor Noah, and I've cleaned and reorganized every closet and drawer in our home!

What advice can you share?

Love and Respect are the greatest gifts of all.

Upcoming October Event



Central Fish Obento and Dessert - Pick Up Via Drive-Thru @ the UJCC
Wednesday, October 28th

11 AM

It's Car Party Time! We'll be ordering box lunches and homemade cookies for your enjoyment. All you'll need to do is make your way to the Church, remain in the comfort of your own vehicle (masked) and we'll hand your obento and goodies to you with a blessing. If you can't make it to the Church, let us know and we'll make arrangements to get your obento to you.

We would love to see you, even if it's for only a moment!

This October event is at no charge to you—compliments of the 2020 UMC Beulah Grant award.

Attached is an **RSVP** form. Please complete the form and mail it to the Church by October 23rd, or leave a message with Janelle Saito at 313-0489 to sign up.

See you on the 28th!

Tomodachi Seniors Group and Friends: Obento and Dessert RSVP
Drive-Thru Pick Up at the UJCC on Wednesday, October 28th at 11 AM
(RSVP Due by October 23rd)

Name: _____ **Telephone:** _____

of Lunches: _____

_____ Please call me regarding my need for special delivery arrangements.

(Please mail this RSVP to: UJCC, 136 N. Villa Ave., Clovis, CA 93612)

Keeping Connected

Do you have the gift of technology? Would you like to serve our church community by being a tech person to help our seniors get on Zoom for our weekly Fellowship and Prayer times?

If so, please let Akiko know (akiko@ujcclife.com or 559-325-4563)! Thank you very much!

Easy Ways You Can Support UJCC

As we get closer to the holidays, a friendly reminder that when you purchase through Amazon at www.smile.amazon.com and choose "United Japanese Christian Church" as your charity, Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchase to UJCC! It takes seconds to set up and generates donations for our ministry. To date, we have raised \$527.05 through Amazon Smile.

Also, even though the church office remains closed, you can still purchase Scrip gift cards. These gift cards are to restaurants and stores many of us already patronize, so why not support UJCC while you do it? UJCC gets a percentage back from the sales of these cards and they make great gifts for any time of year and any occasion. Please contact Stephanie (stephanie@ujcclife.com) if you would like to purchase any scrip.

We give you thanks for your support!

Community Care Happenings

CCT reports that they are donating \$250 to the local Red Cross for helping local wildfire victims. We have heard so many stories of loss of homes for so many in the area that we were moved to help.

Future Events for Community Care

Team Membership If you are interested and want more information about Community Care, please contact someone on the CCT or chair Larry Honda.

Note: Meetings cancelled until further notice.

Craft Fair Thank Yous

A little note of thanks to express huge gratitude to our coordinators of the UJCC Central Valley Asian Cultural & Crafts Fair! Mike & Gail Yamamoto and Paul & Carol Yamashita have done such an amazing job adjusting to these pandemic times, making it a virtual event this year. We also give thanks for Rev. Rae Kim who created and coordinated the Craft Fair website. And thank you to all of you and our community for your participation and support. God is so good!

UNITED JAPANESE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

8/24/20 thru 9/27/20

SPECIAL OFFERINGS

Paulette Hiraoka: In Memories of Joyce Hiraoka & Kiyomi Hirasuna

Mine Ikeda: In Memory of Wilma Elliott

M/M Anthony Ishii: In Memory of Rose Osaki

Darlene Kim: In Memory of Florence Kim

Brett Runyon and Elaine Renge: In Memory of Charles Ideta

Gail Renge: In Memory of Ayako Renge

Robert Yasuhira: In Memories of Kiyomi Hirasuna, Yoshiko Yasuhira, & Henry Yasuhira

M/M Thomas Bee: Earth Angel Mission

Tina Chan: Community Care (Sewing Group)

M/M Larry Honda: In Honor of Marriage of Marissa Honda & Jimmy Chang and In Honor of Rev. Sungrae Kim Ordination

M/M Marc Juteau: Alpha Omega

D/M Ken Kurokawa: Craft Fair and In Honor of Rev. Sungrae Kim Ordination

Marion Masada: For all who made or brought meals for her

Bill Tokumoto: Lay Visitation

M/M Richard Wall: Appreciation of your thoughts, prayers, and notes.

Minerva Carcano: Donation

Yaeko Chong: Donation

Kiesha Oliver: Donation

Lestari Surjapurnama; Donation

IN MEMORY OF CHIYOMI INOUE

M/M Kaoru Aoki
M/M Kenichi Bunden
Karen Hill
M/M Leslie Inouye
M/M Yukio Inouye
M/M Dick Naito
McGee family
June Ohara
M/M Gus Pendleton
Leslie Shirakawa
M/M Victor Takeda
Bill Tokumoto

IN MEMORY OF REV. SABURO MASADA

Kathy Hirasuna
M/M Anthony Ishii
M/M Glenn Nakaguchi
M/M Gus Pendleton
M/M Victor Takeda
M/M Yukio Tani
Bill Tokumoto
M/M John Urabe
M/M Tom Wong

IN MEMORY OF ROSIE OKAJIMA

M/M Michael Garcia
M/M Dick Naito
M/M Glenn Nakaguchi
Ken Okajima
M/M Nicholas Smirnov
Helen Tsudama

IN MEMORY OF JOLLY PETERSON

D/M Ken Kurokawa
Kaye Migaki
Bill Tokumoto
M/M Jaime Visitacion

IN MEMORY OF TAKAKO RENGE

M/M Scott Jura
M/M Dick Naito
M/M Glenn Nakaguchi

IN MEMORY OF HELEN SHIRAKAWA

M/M Anthony Ishii
M/M Dick Naito
M/M Gus Pendleton

FRIENDS CARE

M/M Michael Garcia: In Memory of Rosie Okajima
M/M Clifford Hamada
Susie Nakagawa: In Memories of Takako Renge, Helen Shirakawa, Rosie Okajima,
Rev. Sab Masada, & Chiyomi Inouye
M/M Nicholas Smirnov: In Memory of Rosie Okajima
Ken Okajima: In Memory of Rosie Okajima
Bill Tokumoto

SENIOR CARE RESPONSE TEAM

M/M Dale Claes
Mine Ikeda
Day Kusakai
Tomoko Naito
Joan Nakamura
Bill Tokumoto

UMCOR

M/M Jaime Visitacion: In Memories of Jolly Peterson, Rosie Okajima, Cita Visitacion:
Pray for speedy recovery for Marty Suyama

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Eujeanne Kawasaki: In Memories of Chiyomi Inouye & Takako Renge



PUZZLE

Glad gatherings

The first Christians met together over a meal. Today church families still gather to break bread and thank God.

Follow the instructions below. Then write the remaining words in order from left to right and top to bottom to complete the verses.

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	They	found	broke	bread	acts	in
2	houses	their	homes	beautiful	and	round
3	ate	world	beginning	together	follow	thought
4	with	numbers	god	happiness	lesson	and
5	thanks	sincere	disciples	gathering	hearts	tradition
6	celebrate	good	praising	Christian	God	ever

Cross out all words in column E with double letters.

Cross out all words that are books of the Bible.

Cross out all words in column B that end in d.

Cross out all words in column A that have more than 4 letters.

Cross out all words in row 5 with 3 syllables.

Cross out all words in the table with 9 letters.

Cross out all words in column F with 2 or more vowels.

ACTS 2:46-47, NIV

Answer: They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God. Acts 2:46-47, NIV