

# Regional/National

## S.F. police dept. apologizes for leaked report on Adachi's death

Bay City News Service

A freelance photographer is alleged to have offered a TV news station confidential police information on the death of San Francisco Public Defender Jeff Adachi in exchange for money, an official with the Public Defender's office said April 18 at a Board of Supervisor's committee hearing.

City Supervisor Sandra Lee Fewer called for the hearing in front of the Government Audit and Oversight Committee to look into the policies the Police Department has in place for the release of private information.

Following the unexpected Feb. 22 death of Adachi, 59, at a North Beach apartment, news reports citing a police report, complete with pictures of the apartment, surfaced detailing the investigation into his death.

During the April 18 hearing, Supervisor Hillary Ronen called the leaked report "disturbing."

Hadi Razzaq, with the Public Defender's Investigation Unit, said a TV news reporter told him that the photographer offered the leaked police report to their station for \$2,500. That station, however, reportedly couldn't afford the price and the photographer went on to sell it other news outlets, he said.

"The report was released prematurely at best, and far more concerning was sold to the media," he said. "And something the public should be aware of is that the police report was in the hands of media within hours of Mr. Adachi's death in a situation where the police themselves viewed the location as a possible crime scene and ongoing investigation. The fact that this happened involving the elected public defender who had a history of battling the police, exposing misconduct, is all the more troubling."

Adachi's widow, Mutsuko Adachi, fighting back tears, said at the hearing, "It was despicable what the police did to myself and my daughter... We had no privacy. It was an ongoing investigation and I don't believe that they should have released it. To say that it doesn't affect the family is an understatement. It's incredibly painful to have the Police Department do this to you."

Police Cmdr. Greg McEachern offered an apology to Adachi's family and said the department was conducting an investigation, adding that anyone found responsible would be held accountable.

## L.A. ministers criticize anti-gay policy of United Methodist Churches

By TAKESHI NAKAYAMA  
Nichi Bei Weekly  
Contributor

LOS ANGELES — Disturbed by the United Methodist Church's continuing anti-gay stance, Revs. Mark Nakagawa and Sunyoung Lee, two local ministers with connections to Little Tokyo's Centenary United Methodist Church, publicly criticized that decision and declared their continued support for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer persons.

The controversy followed the United Methodist Church's Special Call General Conference, held Feb. 23 to 26 in St. Louis, when delegates elected to continue the Traditional Plan, which upholds the Book of Discipline language declaring that "no self-avowed practicing homosexual shall be ordained in the United Methodist Church," and also states that "no United Methodist clergy shall perform a same-sex marriage and no United Methodist church shall host a same-sex marriage."

Paradoxically, the United Methodist Church in the past denounced the "flagrant violations of human rights" of another persecuted minority, Japanese Americans detained in United States concentration camps during World War II. Furthermore, in 1980 and 1984, the church called on Congress to support legislation that would "determine appropriate remedies" for those 120,000 incarcerated *Nikkei*, according to the *United Methodist News Service*.

Nakagawa, former senior pastor at Centenary and now superintendent of the West District of the California-Pacific Conference, The United

Methodist Church, stated in a letter to the Southern California region's clergy and laity: "As a third-generation Japanese American, I bear the legacy of the WWII internment camp experience which my parents and grandparents were forced to live out. Like [the recent General Conference] events, their experience was the result of a decision ... grounded in exclusion, fear and hatred, rather than inclusion, acceptance and love. Like our LGBTQ brothers and sisters, my parents and grandparents were labeled as 'the other,' and looked upon with second-class status (or less)."

"Thankfully, their harsh experience living in the camps was softened by those on the outside of the barbed wire fences who showed up to provide care and ministry to them during this three-year period of their lives," he added.

### Church Membership Unaffected

The Special Call General Conference, convened to decide the church's "LGBTQ issue," does not affect church membership, Nakagawa stated in a telephone interview. "The Book of Discipline does not prohibit any LGBTQ person from becoming a member of the United Methodist Church. It also does not prohibit any LGBTQ person from taking an active part — you can hold office in a local church and you can be on the board and all that stuff."

However, under the Traditional Plan, if a United Methodist minister performs a same-sex wedding, that person is subject to a one-year suspension without pay, Nakagawa related. "If he or she does

it a second time, then they have their orders revoked and they'll be defrocked."

Nakagawa favors another plan, the One Church Plan that would have removed all language pertaining to the word "homosexuality" in the Book of Discipline. "It would have removed all references of sexuality from the Book of Discipline, it would have allowed individual clergy and individual congregations to make their own decisions on who to marry and who not to marry, and it would have allowed each conference to decide who to ordain and not to ordain."

Regarding homosexuality, the One Church Plan "would not have forced clergy and churches to do anything they didn't want to do," Nakagawa stated. "I call it the 'Live and Let Live Plan.' I think it's the most reasonable, most balanced, most logical plan."

Prior to the General Conference, the United Methodist Church's nine-member Judicial Council, the church's Supreme Court, ruled last fall that 40 percent of the Traditional Plan was unconstitutional, Nakagawa reported.

"Our Judicial Council is going to meet again ... to review the Traditional Plan," he said. "At the very least, they will continue to uphold the 40 percent that was already ruled unconstitutional. They can't walk that back."

### Oppressive and Harmful

Centenary United Methodist Church's current Senior Pastor Rev. Lee, in a letter to Centenary's family and friends, called the Traditional Plan "oppressive and harmful

to our LGBTQ brothers and sisters."

Lee, who has been at Centenary for the past three years, added in a telephone conversation that her church has not had a policy banning LGBTQ persons in any way. "Our church has always been a very open church and affirming of all persons. We believe that God created them all equally and we are to love them. That's our stance."

Centenary will continue to be "that welcoming church on the corner of Third and Central, where everybody and anybody, regardless of their sexual orientation, race, class, gender, language, immigration status, and age, will be received as a fellow sister and brother in Christ," Lee continued. "We remain a strong advocate to the LGBTQ persons as we have been for years, and we hope to provide Centenary as a spiritual home for all."

Commenting on other local churches' responses to the UMC decision, Lee, a Korean American, commented, "I think most of our Japanese American United Methodist churches out here are pretty progressive and very inclusive as far as including LGBTQ members. We continue to educate and nurture people so that there is a better understanding of LGBTQ persons ... Since I am part of the JA community right now, I believe, based on what I have witnessed, it's a very loving community and very inclusive."

Formed in a merger in 1968, the United Methodist Church claims about 12.6 million members worldwide, including nearly seven million in the United States.

## Descendant of WWII concentration camp inmates receives Congressional recognition

ORANGE, Calif. — Patti Hirahara received a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition from Rep. J. Luis Correa, (D — Calif.), at his second annual "Woman of the Year" award ceremony, which was held March 23 at Chapman University.

"Hirahara was nominated by the Anaheim High School Alumni Association for her work in preserving the Japanese American legacy in the United States, as well as at her alma mater of Anaheim High School," a statement issued by Correa's office said.

Hirahara is working on two projects this summer to hold a program at Anaheim High School entitled "The Poston Experience — Paving the Way for

the Next Generations" and the "I AM AN AMERICAN: Japanese Incarceration in Time of Fear" - The Unknown History of Anaheim's Japanese Pioneers" exhibition at the Anaheim Museo Museum and Cultural Center.

The George and Frank C. Hirahara Collection is considered the largest private collection of photos depicting life in the Japanese American concentration camp at Heart Mountain, Wyoming.

Patti Hirahara's grandfather, George Hirahara, and his son Frank, built a secret darkroom while incarcerated at Heart Mountain.

They took thousands of photos from inside the World War II concentration camp.



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