

Centenary *Chimes*

NEWSLETTER | CENTENARY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
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OCTOBER 2017



Pastor's Pen

Friends, in the wake of the tragedy that took place in Las Vegas on Sunday, October 1, 2017, I want to share Bishop Grant Hagiya's call to prayer. As Christians, our belief in prayer is that it's not merely a tool to communicate with God, but a deep spiritual practice that shapes us to be faithful followers of Jesus as we pay attention to God's will for us. Let us consider the ways in which we can bring a change to this nation to end gun violence.

Peace.

Rev. Sunyoung Lee

"I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal." - 1 Corinthians 13:1 (New International Version)

I know that God is in agony over the nearly 60 lives lost and those hundreds of people fighting for their lives because of the shooting that occurred this past weekend in Las Vegas, Nevada.

The many victims of what is now considered the deadliest mass shooting in the United States in recent history include the colleagues, neighbors, and loved ones of many of us here in the California-Pacific Conference region.

We have been left with trying to make sense of a totally senseless act of violence. Not only will we continue to ask the questions of how and why, what and where, for ourselves, we will have to guide our children and young people through such tough questions as well.

As a United Methodist follower of Jesus Christ, I believe that our words alone will not be enough in bringing about genuine healing in times such as these. What we must rely upon is the transformative love of God to be the true balm that will ultimately bring about peace in ourselves and in our society.

We, the California-Pacific Conference, can love transformatively as we embrace in prayer all those directly affected by the violence, as we stay connected with Bishop Robert Hoshibata and our sister conference, the Desert

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Our Prayers

We lift up prayers for these persons and families:

*In remembrance of these saints who now
rest from their labor...*

Lillie Urasaki
who passed away
in April 2017.



Alexis Sasaki received her Bible

Church Events

- Oct. 8 - Church will be open during cicLAVia.
"Blessing of the Animals" @ Worship
- Oct. 15 - Joint Anniversary Sunday Worship
- Oct. 28 - Halloween & Taiko Festival
- Nov. 5 - "All Saints Day" Worship and Holiday
Boutique
- Nov. 11 - Little Tokyo Community Yard Sale
- Nov. 22,23 - Our Thanksgiving Dinner Mission
Project
- Dec. 17 - Morning Worship & Evening Candlelight
Service

Regular Events

- Nihongo Bible Study - 11:00 am Sunday
- Chikara Practice - 1:30 pm Sunday
- Monday Bible Study - 6:00 pm
- Minyo Japanese Folk Dance Class - Tu/W
- Karate - 7:30 pm M/W
- Classical Japanese Dance Class - 7:30 pm M/W

Open Mic Talent Show



On Thursday evening, August 17, a special event was held for the first time at Centenary. AMI (All Methodists Invited) and Skid Row-kyo Mission jointly sponsored an Open Mic Talent Show organized by Woke Weebs. Woke Stage is a performance art series that showcases talent from the fandom community.

The group was welcomed by Pastor Sunnie and several talented young people were provided an opportunity to share their talents. Among the performers were vocalists, a classical violinist, a jazz pianist, an interpretive dancer and a comedian. The event was produced by Ally Algozo.

The Open Mic event was planned as an opportunity for Centenary and Skid Row-kyo to combine efforts to bring people in the Little Tokyo community together, to promote the arts and to help those in need. Refreshments were provided, coordinated by Wesley and Martha Nishinaka and Gloria and Caitlin O'Brien. It was an entertaining evening which, hopefully, will become a regularly scheduled program at Centenary. We thank Wesley Nishinaka and Nancy Hayata for making the arrangements with Woke Stage.

Skid Row-kyo Mission is based out of Centenary. The Mission is "where the Spirit and Culture of Little Tokyo, the Creativity, Imagination and Inspiration of the Artist District and the Compassion and Humanity of Los Angeles' Skid Row District intersect bringing the three communities together in harmony, solidarity and unity. The mission was created so we (Centenary UMC) can partner with groups and organizations (such as Woke Weebs and many others) to raise awareness in regards to social justice issues and to help the less fortunate (such as our neighbors of skid row).



Martha Nishinaka



Nisei Week Fashion Event



April Nishinaka



Pastor Sunnie



Acknowledgements

Donations July 23, 2017 to September 17, 2017

Gary Asano Donation

Nancy & Douglas Campbell & Family *in memory of Riyoko Toda*
Allison Cook *Special Offering for Checking In Ministry*
Susan Edwards *Special Offering for Office Supplies*
Susan Edwards *Special Offering - Turkey Lock In*
Mary Enomoto *Special Offering*
Mary Enomoto *UMCOR*
Mr. & Mrs. Fay *Thank you for the meals - a donation from a homeless couple*
Mitchell Fujii *Special Offering*
Tom Ishimine *Thank You Wesley*
Terry Kasuyama *UMCOR - Mexico Earthquake*
Terry Kasuyama *UMCOR - Irma*
Ruth Kubo *in memory of Rhys De La Torre*
Dora Kunishige *VIT Prayer Shawl Ministry*
Dora Kunishige *Special Offering - Love Gift*
Brian Kurushima *in memory of Marjorie Sanborgi*
Richard & Frances Kushino *Special Offering in memory of Sam Miyamoto for Thanksgiving Turkey Shut-In Dinners*
Richard & Frances Kushino *in memory of Allen Kushino*
Richard & Frances Kushino *in memory of Nob Hangai*
Dan & Sandy Leese *Special Offering Lynn &*
Lynn & Shu Miyazaki *in memory of Sue Terasawa*
Robert & Gail Nishinaka *Special Offering - Thanks for the memories Nisei Week 2016 Court "The 7 Sixters"*
Obon Jivers *Special Offering*
Ernie & Jane Rivera *Special Offering*
Yo Serizawa *in memory of Emi Serizawa (remembering our Wedding Day 9/16/56)*
SFVJACC Meiji Ondo Group *Thank You for the use of the church during Nisei Week*
Janice Teraoka *Special Offering*
Terminal Islanders *Special Offering*
Donna Ujiye *Special Offering*
France Wong *in memory of Carolyn Mizukami Hiraga*
France Yanai Wong *in memory of Tomoko Ohana, out of Faith Ono*
France Yanai Wong *in memory of Joan Ririe, a dear friend*
Kenji & Hideko Yamamoto *In celebration of Kenji's 100th Birthday*

UMCOR - Hurricane Harvey

Judy Asazawa
Elston & Verna Carr
Carol Fujita
Lilia Hansbrough
Judge Ernie Hiroshige
Terry Kasuyama
Susie Koo
Harry & Carole Kuruma
Brian Kurushima
Rev. Sunyoung Lee
Kris & Stephanie Leese
Victor & Cynthia Lew
Terry Miyashiro-Sonoda
Rev. Mark & Pam Nakagawa
Robert & Gail Nishinaka
Marilyn Nobori *(also Irma and Mexico)*
Wendell & Jane Oyama
James & Hideko Robinett
Skeeter & Carole Sasaki
Emi Takashima
Emi Takashima (Florida)
Janice Teraoka
Carolyn Tokunaga
Emmie Yasui

Kid City Back to School Project

Judy Asazawa
Steve & Jan Haruta
William Shepherd
France Wong

Pastor's Pen

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Southwest Conference, which includes Las Vegas, Nevada, as we open our church sanctuaries for spiritual centering and comfort, and as we support and participate in the work of our Cal-Pac Peace with Justice and the General Board of Church and Society to end gun violence.

The California-Pacific Conference is, unfortunately, no stranger to such incidents of mass violence. But, let us step forward in courage and faith once again so that all may experience God's life-giving and transformative love.

Be the Hope,

Bishop Grant J. Hagiya
Los Angeles Area Resident Bishop
The United Methodist Church

Centenary Finances

Giving report for July and August 2017 from Gail Nishinaka, Treasurer

	Actual July/Aug	Budget July/Aug	Actual YTD	Budget YTD
Pledges	\$28,548	\$26,167	\$127,866	\$104,667
Unpledged Giving	\$6,217	\$11,800	\$42,171	\$58,800
TOTAL	\$34,765	\$37,967	\$170,037	\$163,467

NOTE: \$28,815 of the actual YTD pledge amount are from pledgers who have given their total annual pledge.

	Paid Actual Year to Date	Amount Owed
Apportionments	\$38,856	\$38,856

Izumi Kashiwagi Erskine



Organist Izumi Kashiwagi Erskine on her last day at Centenary with Pastor Sunnie and Lay Leader Robert Nishinaka.

We are sad to report that Izumi Kashiwagi Erskine will no longer be able to serve as English Worship Organist/Pianist for Centenary as of August 20, 2017. Izumi has been our Organist/Pianist for more than 10 years providing inspirational music for worship service and accompanying the Chancel Choir. She came to us while a student at USC studying for a Doctorate in Keyboard Collaborative Arts. Over the years while at Centenary she has organized several concerts at the church featuring fellow virtuoso musicians including a concert featuring her own accomplished musicianship.

While serving at Centenary we have been privileged to be a part of her life – her completion of her Doctorate in Keyboard Collaborative Arts, her marriage to Greg Erskine, the birth of their child, Hana Tsubaki Erskine and purchase of a home in Gardena.

Sadly, for Centenary, these life changes have made it necessary for Izumi and Greg to make a change in her long commute to Centenary on Sunday and no longer is she able to serve at Centenary. She has expressed her deep appreciation for the support of the church over the years. She has considered Centenary as substitute family for her because her own parents and siblings live in Tokyo. She has promised to keep in touch with the church and inform us of special concerts and performances in which she may be involved.

We wish Izumi and her family the very best. We will miss her and we thank her for her faithful gift of music. The Chancel Choir members always say "Izumi makes us sound so good!"



Checking In Ministry's Twelfth Anniversary

VIT's Checking In Ministry celebrated its 12th Anniversary with an appreciation luncheon for all those who participate in this program. Thank you to Vicky Leon for providing the delicious lunch, Janice Date for handcrafting the beautiful invitations, Madeline Chandler Mizukami Nishinaka for making the flower pen thank you gifts, and Arline Lew for helping with set up. This was a time for Shepherds and Callers to share experiences and their ideas to make this ministry more efficient. We really can accommodate many more "Callers" and can expand to those outside our church family.

If you live alone, participating in this simple ministry can bring such peace of mind. If you have friends or know of people who live alone, invite them to join this ministry. It is so simple for "Callers" to dial an assigned number on their telephone, and when prompted, give their first and last name and then hang up.

Each day a volunteer known as a "Shepherd" will check the telephone tape to make certain everyone has checked in for the day. Checking in time begins at 5 a.m. and ends at 12 noon although most shepherds will check the calls by 10:00 am.

This ministry is open to everyone and costs nothing. This small gesture on the part of the "Caller" each day provides assurance to families that loved ones are safe. It also assures the Caller that if something were to happen, someone would know within the day, not a week later. The Shepherd will not be satisfied until she knows that the Caller is well and going about his/her daily routine.

VIT (Vision Implementation Team) is indebted to our Shepherds who check the message center daily to make sure all of our Callers have checked in and are okay. Without these volunteers, this ministry could not happen. We thank captains: Vicky Leon, Angel Nishinaka, and Karin Hayashi and our shepherds: Angel Nishinaka, Arline Lew, Carolyn Tokunaga, France Wong, Gail Nishinaka, Karin Hayashi, Monica Cruz, Madeline Chandler, Martha Nishinaka, Mui Koike, Sumi Yonemoto, Vicky Leon, and Wendy Raksin.

Think about joining us – we can accommodate many more "Callers" than those now participating and can always use new "Shepherds." Join yourself, contact your friends and pick up applications from Vicky Leon or Carolyn Tokunaga. We welcome all new participants.



Edward Oyama's Mission of Hope

Edward Oyama's faith has guided his journeys in Muslim Kyrgyzstan and now Beijing. The need to share the Word, to share his love of God, has defined his life's work. On Sunday, July 23, he spoke of his experiences.

In June of 2007, Ed moved to Kyrgyzstan to teach conversational English at the university. He would invite students to his home for Bible Study – a home church which was typical for the area although frowned upon and often illegal.

Ed recounted an event that occurred while he was home for his wedding at Centenary. His apartment in Kyrgyzstan was raided by the police – they had a search warrant claiming, oddly, that he was a Muslim terrorist! They found Bibles and teaching materials and also a Muslim Terrorist training manual that had been planted in his home. His roommate, who was also his best man, informed him of what had transpired. Ed wasn't sure what awaited him on his return to Kyrgyzstan. Would he be denied entry, detained, deported, or jailed? Rather than being fearful, he put his trust in God and wherever this path might take him. In the end, Ed was able to continue his missionary work and he was constantly in God's embrace.

He knows that with Jesus in our lives, there is the sure hope of a renewed and restored relationship with God; sure hope that He protects us; and sure hope of eternity in heaven. We know that we are accepted and can accept death. There is hope in an eternal loving Father that gives us courage.

He shared the stories of some of the students of the church that met in his home. One young girl had a recurring dream of a demon sitting on her chest, suffocating her. As she learned about Jesus, her dream was revised – Jesus swept the demon away. She found peace in her new faith.

A Korean university student born in Kazakhstan doubted his faith due to his parents' divorce, alcohol and depression. But in a time of need, when he had to choose between paying rent, tuition or buying food, a man approached him for help moving some furniture. He was given \$20 for his help! Then he received an unexpected gift when someone paid his phone bill – all at a time when he needed reassurance of God's presence.

The parents of another one of his high school students found her Bible. She was terrified of what might happen next, but God protected her as He protects Ed. There was a violent revolution in Kyrgyzstan in 2010. It was sudden, but Ed was notified with just enough time to gather food and supplies and get home before the fighting began. 80 people died less than a mile away from his home that afternoon, but Ed was safe.

As students in Kyrgyzstan left for other countries to find work, Ed's home church diminished in numbers. As he contemplated his future, he received a call from a friend. A home church in Beijing needed a leader. There is a hunger for knowledge of the Bible. His China group has had 80 students pray to Jesus for the first time in the last few months. They seek conversation and hope. Nothing can separate us



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