



West Los Angeles United Methodist Church
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West LA Connections

West Los Angeles United Methodist Church Monthly Newsletter | March Issue



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MAR. 2025

March 2025 Pastor's Reflection

Dear WLAUMC members and friends,

I pray you are well in these days amidst the rapidly changing political, social, and spiritual condition of our nation and world. The start of this new 2025 year under our new President and Administration certainly has been extremely alarming and tumultuous to be sure. I have tried to faithfully address what has been happening in our nation through my sermons over these past few months and hope that what I have shared expresses the unity of our church and faith community.

Online WLAUMC worships of November 24, 2024, January 26, 2025, and February 9, 2025 most especially convey what I feel our Christian response should be as we seek to live in accordance with the life and teachings of Jesus the Christ. I welcome dialogue with you and hope that we can mutually hold each other up and encourage one another

Rev. Keith Inouye



in our call to work toward positive change in our nation and world.

I feel it is important for all of us to understand the perspective of our denomination as well.

For this reason, I share the following letter from the President of our United Methodist College of Bishops dated February 3, 2025 and addressed to President Donald J. Trump. Clearly what is most profoundly conveyed is the conviction of faith that we cannot, in good faith, disengage ourselves from being concerned with the conditions of the larger global community. Here below is our United Methodist Council of Bishop's letter to President Trump.

Rev. Keith Inouye

February 3, 2025

A Letter to the Honorable President of the United States, Donald J. Trump

From the Council of Bishops of The United Methodist Church

Dear President Trump:

We greet you in the mighty name of Jesus Christ, whom we United Methodists claim as Lord and Savior.

We pray for you and your Administration. May God grant you wisdom and sustaining grace as you serve as President of the United States, and as a world leader.

Our letter comes to you at this critical time because of your Administration's Executive Order to suspend all U.S. foreign assistance programs and subsequent Work Stop Order issued by the Department of State. We present our concern to you after much prayer and in response to our Christian faith in the Wesleyan Tradition. As religious leaders of The United Methodist Church, we believe that we bishops are called to be pastors and prophets in every generation. Furthermore, our United Methodist Church understands its role in political matters in the manner that is defined by our Social Principles.

"Our involvement in political systems is rooted in the Gospel imperative to love our neighbors, to do justice, and to care for the vulnerable. As United Methodists, we acknowledge that love requires responsible political action and engagement aimed at the betterment of society and the promotion of the common good. We acknowledge that such political engagement demands humility and mindfulness of our own complicity in perpetuating injustice. It also necessitates compassion, prayer, and a willingness to discern God's guidance.

We further believe that God calls all members of the human family to recognize and protect the dignity and worth of all people and to work for the well-being of all God's creation."

(The Social Principles of The United Methodist Church)

Your Administration's recent Executive Order to suspend all U.S. foreign assistance programs for 90 days raises profound concerns for The United Methodist Church. As a world-wide Church we engage with congregations and communities throughout the world. We bear a long-standing commitment to serving the vulnerable and promoting global justice. In seeking to understand your perspective on this particular matter we have learned that your Administration is concerned that U.S. foreign aid may not align with American interests. We would respectfully ask that you consider the moral imperative to assist those in need and the significant contributions programs supported by U.S. foreign aid make to humanitarian relief and peace.

The United Methodist Church has an agency, the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), that provides



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LETTER CONTINUES...

relief and assistance in response to natural and human-made disasters in addition to supporting programs in the areas of migration, health, food security and environmental sustainability. Through this global response effort that today spans 85 years of service, we have often partnered with U.S. relief offices and efforts and learned how U.S. aid fosters global stability, alleviates suffering, and promotes the well-being of communities in need. We also know that today U.S. Foreign Aid comprises only about 1% of the federal budget. Yet, this 1% plays a crucial role in reflecting the U.S. values of compassion and service, values we United Methodists are deeply committed to as well.

As Christians we believe that we are called to care for our neighbors, regardless of race, religion, status or nationality. These are not uniquely Christian values. We share these values and teachings with persons of Jewish, and Muslim faith as well as persons of other faiths. Coming to the aid of the less fortunate and advocating for justice are shared values among people of faith, but we also believe that they are values upon which the U.S. was founded.

Recently we have come to know that a justification framework being implemented by your Administration to determine the distribution of U.S. foreign assistance is the requirement that every dollar of U.S. foreign assistance be evaluated on its impact on U.S. national security, strength, and prosperity. We lament that this justification framework overlooks aid's spiritual and ethical dimensions. Faith communities understand that humanitarian assistance is a matter of security, but it is also an expression of love and compassion. Inaction can create vacuums for adversarial influences to thrive, undermining both the stability and the safety of vulnerable populations.

As we write this letter to you, Mr. President, we are attending to the needs of United Methodists in areas like the Democratic Republic of the Congo where there is much political unrest. We are praying and working not only for the protection of United Methodists but the protection of all who are vulnerable in this part of the world affected by extreme conflict and poverty. As you know, serious circumstances of this nature are happening in regions all over the world. We are deeply concerned that abruptly ending aid in regions of the world like the DRC could exacerbate suffering and create environments ripe for even greater and long-standing unrest, forced migration, and death.

In conclusion, we again commit to continuously pray for you and your Administration and to live the values of our faith in support of compassion and justice in the U.S. and in the world. We urge you, as the President of the United States, to consider that the call to assist others in crisis is a moral obligation of both national and spiritual dimensions.

We strongly ask you to rescind the Executive Order to suspend all U.S. foreign assistance programs for 90 days.

May the words of the Psalmist be upon all our hearts as we discern our living in these days:

**“Give justice to the weak and the fatherless;
maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute.
Rescue the weak and the needy;
deliver them from the hand of the wicked.”**

Psalm 82:3-4

Respectfully,

Bishop Tracy S. Malone, President

Council of Bishops

The United Methodist Church



LINX YOUTH CONFIRMATION JOURNEY KICKS-OFF

LINX, the collaborative youth program of Centenary, Faith and West LA churches, kicked off its first Confirmation meeting on February 8th. West LA hosted the group of confirmands for the beginning of many discussions, activities, and reflections on topics of faith. The goal of the confirmation program is to help understand foundational concepts of faith, United Methodist beliefs and to challenge each participant to discern a faith they can own and walk each day.

A total of eight youth is participating with 3 youth from West LA! We look forward to growing in sacred community and embarking on this journey together. Please keep this group in your prayers.

PEN FRIEND REVEAL!

What does French Toast Fridge, Leggy, Cinderella, Wobbly Brain Drain and Dragon all have in common? They are all Pen Names! After 3 months of writing letters, card and notes, Pen Friends (an adult and child) finally got to meet in person!

A puzzle introduced them to their Pen Friends real name, and they finally met face to face! After making and exchanging a snack gift bag with one another, they talked over lunch and were partners for a game. New friendships were made! Thanks to all our Pen Friend participants: Kids: Dylan & Hazel Enock, Theo Gunter, Joey & Penny Nagata and Mira Yu. Adults: Joy Cha, Mark Holmes, Mui Koike, Kimiko Maeda, Joyce Patterson, Grace Seto.

Stay tuned for another Pen Friend opportunity in the fall!

GOD'S GARDEN VALENTINE'S DAY PARTY

The youth hosted a Valentine's Day Party for the God's Garden children, aka: parents' night out! To no surprise the evening theme centered around hearts, beginning with the main entree at dinner of spaghetti and red pasta heart shaped ravioli! Yummy!

The children worked hard folding hearts and sibling partners used their creative ideas and design esthetic to arrange them to make a one-of-a-kind, wreath for their home. Other heart fun included, making Valentine's Day cards and adding heart shaped sprinkles to chocolate dipped pretzel rods. The evening wound down watching the video "Be My Valentine Charlie Brown" while playing fun board games and enjoying hot chocolate and heart cookies for snack.

As parents arrived to pick up their kids, many did not want to go home, a sign of a fun and special night together! Thanks to Jennifer Aoki, Claire and Natalie Izumi for helping prepare dinner and for spending the evening with the kiddos!



ALL THINGS LENT

Beginning on **March 5th**, the Christian church season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. This is a season that reminds us to turn back to God, to repent, to prepare heart, mind and spirit for Holy Week and Easter and far beyond as we continue to journey with God.

ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP SERVICES: MARCH 5TH • 11:00 AM & 7:00 PM

This year we will have two services; a morning Ash Wednesday service at 11am and an evening service at 7pm; both in our church sanctuary. We hope to see you there!



In Person Workshop: "Setting Intentions for Lent"

Join us for this in-person interactive workshop on **Sunday, March 2nd** to prepare for the Season of Lent through prayer, spiritual practice, and creative activities. We will discern "focus words" for the Season and make "Joy Jars" as vessels to accumulate moments of joy and gratitude through the 40 days of Lent and beyond. Sign up at church or with Jeri at jotwlaumc@gmail.com. This workshop complements the online Lenten Study.



ONLINE LENTEN STUDY: "DRAW CLOSE: A CREATIVE COMPANION TO LENT"

We invite you to gather each Wednesday evening for a time of reflection, conversation, creativity, and spiritual practice using the new Lenten devotional "Draw Close," by UMC pastor Rev. Stephanie Dunn. In this book/journal, each of the 40 days of Lent introduces you to a biblical text, prayer, and word prompt to ponder, followed by a blank page for you to respond in whatever way you choose—sketching, doodling, poetry, journaling, collage, or however your heart desires! Sign up at church or with Jeri at jotwlaumc@gmail.com. We have books available for purchase for \$10. While you are invited to attend all sessions, feel free to drop-in when your schedule permits! We will add in-person gatherings if there is interest.



NEXT GEN LENT LUNCHEON (20'S-40'S)

On March 9th, the first Sunday of Lent, we will hold a **LENT LUNCHEON** in Rev. Keith and Viki's parsonage, just behind the church building. This gathering will take place right after English worship (around 11AM) and is open to anyone in their **20s to 40s** (but we are inclusive to those outside this range too!). If you need childcare to participate, please let me know via the RSVP.

Rev. Keith and Viki will provide lunch! We'll use Rev. Olu Brown's book **Our Lenten Prayer** as a guide for our time together. Whether you've never observed Lent, love it, are indifferent to it, know nothing about it, are an expert, or are somewhere in between, you are invited and welcome! Please RSVP to info@wlaumc.com so we can get a headcount. After this initial meeting on the 9th, we'll gather for discussion and reflection on the Sundays of Lent until Holy Week: 3/16, 3/23, 3/30, 4/6.

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH: Holiday Boutique Craft Workshop

The WLAUMC United Women in Faith is planning our first 2025 craft workshop for **Saturday, March 22nd** from **10am- 12pm** in the Learning Center. We are excited that Lois Tateishi has planned and organized another group quilt project for our annual Holiday Boutique. Please join us as she provides a hands-on sewing lesson, including step-by-step instruction and assistance.

Please contact Lois (littfuj@gmail.com) if you plan to attend the quilt making workshop as you will need to bring materials for making the quilt. We want to ensure a quilt design variety!

Our UWF Holiday Boutique is scheduled for **Saturday, November 15th** so please mark your calendars to support this special shopping experience, as all proceeds support children, youth and women organizations and ministries. We are grateful for everyone's support throughout the year!

OHANA FAMILY EVENT: Robots, Fun, and Family

LET'S BUILD TOGETHER! Join us in partnership with the 580 Cafe for a hands-on, family-friendly robotics experience! Come build robots, connect with others, and enjoy a fun-filled time of creativity and collaboration. As we design and construct our robots, we'll also explore meaningful ways to stay connected to God in our daily lives.

Let's innovate, create, and grow together!

Saturday, 3/15, 10am at WLAUMC

Lunch will be provided.

RSVP to Kristen,

805-350-0518



2025 ALL CHURCH ANTIQUE STORE, YARD, BAKE & PLANT SALE

May 10, the day before Mother's Day

Thanks to your donations, volunteer work, and inviting friends, our 2024 sale was a tremendous success. Our church community collectively worked over 1,000 volunteer hours, and the vast majority of shoppers came from outside our church family! Let's beat that this year - with a larger gathering, more stories of fellowship, and more funds for our church!

Contact **Kay Yang @ knyang1016@gmail.com** or call the church office at (310) 473-1379 to volunteer!

Sale Day: Saturday, May 10

Donations & Set up: Sunday - Friday, May 3-9

Your 2025 Antique Store & Yard, Plant & Bake Sale Committee:

Elaine Sunoo, Jane Harada, Kay Yang, Steve Seto

GATHER ITEMS TO DONATE

- High value antiques & collectibles
- Luxury Brands - Gucci, Louis Vuitton, Chanel, etc
- Japanese household items - dishes, bowls, vases, serveware and storage, Kimono/obi & yukata, fabrics, decorative boxes
- Unused Gifts - wedding, anniversary, birthday, housewarming, omiyage
- Barware - vintage cocktail & water glasses

- Collectibles - trading cards, character & sports memorabilia
- Anything kawaii-cute
- Tools - hardware, gardening
- Home & office - storage containers, organizers, small electronics
- Toys, games, sports equipment, camping, picnic
- Kids & Babies - toys, games, sports equipment, clothes
- All those knick-knacks and junk you just need to get rid of
- Curiosities - Surprise us! We love STRANGE

- Kitchen and Housewares - appliances, cooking & baking, utensils, restaurant supplies
- Jewelry - costume and fine jewelry
- Precious metals - gold, silver, platinum in any form, eg old tooth fillings, coins
- Purses, Handbags, Coin Purses - new and old, designer and hand-made!
- Select clothing items - MUST be clean and wearable

- Vintage items that are 20+ years old and characteristic of a prior era. Women's period dresses, blouses, hats
- Kimonos & obi, yukata, happi coats, haori
- Men's Pendleton and Aloha shirts - any era
- Dodgers, Lakers, Rams, Kings, Galaxy, LA Football Club official branded clothing
- Modern consumer electronics - earbuds & headsets, bluetooth speakers, etc

Grief Support Group Lunch! Thursday, March 13, 11:30am

If you would like support to help you through loss; loss of loved ones or other kinds of losses as well, please join our Grief Support Group. Whether one's loss and grief is recent or years ago; talking with others can really help one feel strengthened emotionally and spiritually as the support nurtured in community can make a profound difference in facing our grief. Please contact Rev. Keith Inouye or Jeri Okamoto-Tanaka if you would like to participate in our Grief Support Group.

Our next gathering of our WLAUMC Grief Support Group will take place on **Thursday March 13th**. We meet in our Learning Center from 11:30am until approximately 1:00pm. Please RSVP to let Rev. Keith know that you will be attending as lunch is provided. A small collection of \$5.00 from attendees to help pay for lunch expenses is appreciated. Please come! We would love to welcome you!

Thursday Breakfast Bunch March 6, 8am

Our next Thursday Breakfast Bunch gathering will take place on Thursday March 6th at 8am at the Marie Callender's Restaurant near the corner of Sawtelle and National Avenues (11324 National Blvd, Los Angeles, CA).

If you are able, please RSVP to Rev. Keith Inouye as soon as possible. However, even if you do not RSVP, please come anyway! We always have more room at the restaurant to expand and welcome all.



Senior Fun Day - Friday, March 21, 10am to 2pm

Please join us (generally once-a-month) for our Senior Fun Days! We play games; some old games and some creative new games and lots of whacky ones! We laugh and smile a lot at Senior Fun Days! We chat away and get to know each other better. And we share a meal together! All these things we experience at Senior Fun Day are nourishment for our souls!

Our next two Senior Fun Days are Fridays March 21st and April 11th! Don't miss out! Contact Rev. Keith by calling him on his cell phone (408) 355-0837 or email him at: KInouye27@gmail.com. RSVP'ing helps us to plan the amount of food to prepare for lunch! Also if you need a ride, we will try to arrange someone to pick you up; just call Rev. Keith.



Dr. Yuki Schwartz to Preach at WLAUMC - Sunday, March 9th

On Sunday March 9th at our 9:30am English worship we will be blessed to have Rev. Dr. Yuki Schwartz preach the Sunday morning message. Dr. Schwartz is the Associate Dean for Academics and Assessment & Associate Professor of Constructive Theologies, Spirituality & Decolonial Studies at the Claremont School of Theology. Here is Dr. Schwartz bio from the CST faculty pages:

"Dr. Schwartz's areas of scholarship include deimperial/decolonial studies; Asian and Asian American theology; political theology; and critical race, gender, and sexuality studies. Their dissertation, titled "The Ends of Shame: Toward a Deimperial Political Theology of Messianism," investigated the development of shame theories under European and US imperialism, with an emphasis on the role of US Cold War politics in Asia in constructing political and theological understandings of shame and guilt. Dr. Schwartz is a longtime participant in the Pacific Asian North American Asian Women in Theology and Ministry (PANAATM)

conference, and now serves as a member of the Board of Directors and as a mentor. They also are an ordained Christian minister withstanding in the United Church of Christ."

It is indeed such a blessing to have such close proximity to CST! The potential for gleaning the theological insight of such academic scholars from CST is truly an exciting opportunity to grow in faith. In addition, Dr. Schwartz is married to our own Rev. Clint Collins, our Choir Director who is also a staff member of CST! Let us extend a warm welcome to Rev. Dr. Yuki Schwartz.



Pictured: Retired Bishop Mary Ann Swenson (left), Rev. Clint Collins (middle), and Rev. Dr. Yuki Schwartz (right)

SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE

We are thrilled to celebrate such a successful effort by the Social Justice, Next Gen, & UWF collaboration on this year's **"Souper" Bowl Sunday for Wildfire Relief**.

The congregation enjoyed 10 soups (gallons of soup!), a mountain of bread rolls and mini bagels, yummy onigiri, and sweet treats!

Thanks to all who contributed to the spread

and event, and to all who made donations. **We raised more than \$1,300 for fire relief** that will be donated to the fire relief efforts of World Central Kitchen, the organization founded by Chef Jose Andres that rallied local chefs and volunteers to feed first responders and displaced residents while the fires were still blazing, similar to what WCK has done in other disaster zones around the world.



We kicked off our first Social and Environmental Justice Ministry Team Meeting of the year on February 2nd with lunch and introductions by the 19 attendees. The Team includes seasoned and new volunteers, as well as representatives from the 580 Cafe/Wesley Foundation Serving UCLA (Deaconess Jeanne Roe Smith and grad student David Tanoko); Reconciling Ministries Network (RMN fellow and Claremont School of Theology seminarian Lynne Onishi); CLUE/Clergy & Laity United for Economic Justice (fellow Kiana); and Friends of the Ballona Wetlands (board member Steve Hirai). They shared about the concerns from the front lines of justice work in organizing, advocacy, and service. All bring expertise and connections that will keep us abreast of the needs in these areas and provide resources as we set priorities.

We look forward to continuing our work with Habitat for Humanity (including fire rebuilds) and neighbors at Kardia UMC, as well as focusing on the immediate needs regarding fire relief, migrant and immigration threats, LGBTQIA+ solidarity, and the many other challenges before us given the new federal Administration's massive disruptions to the safety nets so many rely on for their well-being.

Given the overwhelming number of issues before us, Jeri invited us to reflect, pray and discern: **"what is mine to do – given my time, talents, gifts, and passions?" "What is God stirring within us individually, as a ministry team, and as a church congregation?"**

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Reflecting back on the tragic fires of a month ago, many of us are looking to help and show our love for our neighbors. Habitat for Humanity had a zoom call on 2/6/25 that outlined some of their early thoughts on how to help out. One thing mentioned by Erin Rank, CEO of Habitat LA was that after the Woolsey fires in 2018 Habitat LA helped 128 families who were affected. The LA and San Gabriel chapters are now teaming up as **Rebuild LA** to provide the most help possible. Donations can be sent to Rebuild Last the Habitat for Humanity LA website. Some of the greatest needs are items for the **Habitat for Humanity Restore**. Vouchers are being given to those who lost homes to help with refurbishing rentals. Erin Rank has also been going to evacuation centers to speak with residents about their needs. So, if you are moving or downsizing please consider sending things to the Habitat Restore. When Lisa and I moved last year we sent much of our old furniture to them. Just remember, the journey is just beginning for these families. My prayer is that we have the strength to be with them for the long haul.



Blessings,

Ken Ho

INTRODUCING ARC

As a Reconciling Congregation, West LA UMC is honored to be a founding faith-based member of the Asian Pacific Islander Rainbow Coalition (ARC). Established in the summer of 2024, ARC is a new alliance of organizations and individuals of diverse backgrounds, ages, and identities committed to centering the unique needs and challenges of LGBTQIA+ persons within the API community. ARC celebrates diversity and unity through collaboration with other LGBTQIA+ and API organizations to amplify their voices, create stronger support systems for the vulnerable, and raise awareness about the intersectionality of being API and LGBTQIA+.



To combat misinformation, stigma, and discrimination and promote inclusion and empowerment, ARC facilitates community education workshops, cultural sensitivity trainings, campaigns, and community visibility. Other founding member organizations include API-PFLAG, Okaeri: A Nikkei LGBTQ+ Community, Search to Involved Pilipino Americans, and the K.W. Lee Center for Leadership. West LA is invited to march with ARC in the upcoming Chinatown Parade on **March 22nd**.

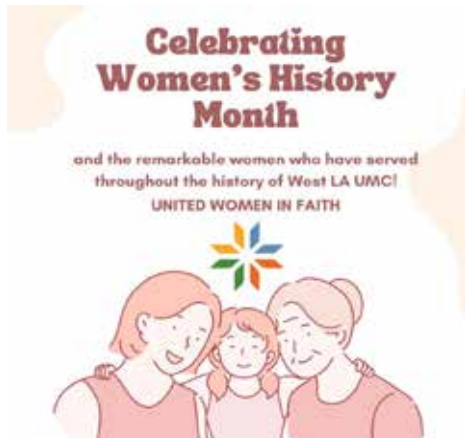
Congratulations to Lynne Onishi, 2025 Reconciling Ministries Network Fellow



Lynne Onishi was born and raised in the Pacific Northwest but currently lives in Los Angeles, CA where she is pursuing a Master of Divinity degree at the Claremont School of Theology and attends West LA UMC. As a queer Asian American Christian, Lynne hopes to equip faith communities to engage more intentionally in intersectional justice. Lynne is thrilled to be joining the RMN team as a fellow, where she hopes to contribute to the reconciling movement with curiosity and creativity. As a self-described eccentric introvert, Lynne sustains herself through neighborhood walks, musical theater car karaoke, and keeping up that Duolingo streak!

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH


Join us for 9:30 am worship on **Sunday, March 30th**, as UMC Deaconess candidate Jeri Okamoto-Tanaka highlights the contributions of women in the church in the message.



UMCOR SUNDAY


Churchwide celebrations unite us to accomplish missions that no single church can achieve alone. **On March 23rd, 2025**, our WLA community will give to support special programs endorsed by the church. Gifts given on UMCOR Sunday strengthen the church's global humanitarian response by underwriting UMCOR's administrative costs. This allows UMCOR to use 100% of additional funds for specific programs like U.S. disaster response, international disaster response, and global migration.

UMCOR SUNDAY
TOGETHER
OUR REACH IS BEYOND MEASURE



WHAT ARE CHURCHWIDE SUNDAYS?
Churchwide celebrations unite us to accomplish missions that no single church can achieve alone. On these designated days, United Methodists come together to reaffirm their commitment as God's people and to support special programs endorsed by the Church. To see how your contributions make a difference, visit UMC.org/yourimpact.

GIVE TO YOUR CHURCH:
Make checks payable to your local church or donate online via credit or debit card at donate.gcf.org. Scan the QR code to donate with your phone.



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The people of The United Methodist Church*

「桃の節句」

3月3日は桃の節句(ひな祭り)。教会では女の子を主に感謝して押し花のクラフトをします。主に守られ、祝福され、すくすくと育つことを祈ります。

「桃栗3年、柿8年」実を結ぶ時期のことです。何事も、時期が来なくてはできないことを教えています。聖書には「天の下では、何事にも定まった時期があり、すべての営みには時がある。」(伝道の書3章)と教えています。生まれる時。死ぬ時。泣く時。踊る時。黙っている時。愛する時。と、賢い著者ソロモン王は、神様が人に与えた時を知るようにと教えてくれます。

3月5日は灰の水曜日。受難節が始まり、救い主である主イエスの苦しみを覚える時がやってきました。イエス様は弟子たちが伝道する時、困難に直面し、厳しく容赦ない世界を見ると教えました。ただ、主はヘビのように賢く、鳩のように素直な心を道具として使うように教えられました。賢くなるとは、ずる賢く、人をうまく操る意味ではなく、思慮深く、祈り深く、気配りがあるようにということ。誤解され、批判され、困難に直面し、周りとは歩みが違っても、主が純真な心で知恵深く生きることを教えています。神様の愛を清い心を持って宣教する大事さを覚えましょう。受難の時は、復活の勝利の時へとつながるからです。

“Momo-kuri(peach-nuts) three years, Kaki(persimmons) eight years.”

As “Momo no sekku”(Peach festival/Girl’s Day) approaches, I remember this phrase that we learned in Japan since we were little children. It reminds us that it takes time for fruits to bear and teaches us to “gaman.”

In the Bible, we learn that “There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven: a time to born and a time to die, a time to weep and a time to laugh...”(Ecclesiastes 3) A wise King Solomon wanted us to know God has a plan and time for all.

March 5th is Ash Wednesday. It is a time to remember the suffering of our Savior, the Lord Jesus. Jesus knew His disciples would face challenges and suffer in ministries like Him. They are like sheep trying to survive in a world that can be harsh, not accepting, and unforgiving. But Jesus doesn’t just leave them there; He gave them tools for the journey: the wisdom of serpents and the innocence of doves. We all need to learn to navigate the complexities of our life with discernment and best attitude. Being wise doesn’t mean being sneaky or manipulative; it means being thoughtful and prayerful. Even if we are misunderstood, criticized, if we face difficulties, and walk a different path from those around us, the Lord teaches us to live wisely with a clean heart. We know that Jesus suffered, but He won victoriously!

平田



Rev. Rebecca Hirata

3月1日(土)11時 Café Alohaシニアミニストリー集会&弁当

教会では桃の節句をお祝いして、シニアの集会をします。参加できない方にはお弁当を届けます。ご希望の方は、サインアップ、又は教会オフィスまでご連絡ください。

Café Aloha Senior Program & Bento delivery On March 1 (Sat.) at 11am

To celebrate Girl’s Day, Café Aloha ministry would like to reach out to seniors 70 and older. We will meet in the Social Hall for lunch, music and Bible story. Also, we will deliver Bento to those who can’t participate. If you are interested, please sign-up or contact Church office.

メニュー：寿司、スープ、菓子、フルーツ

Menu: Sushi, Soup, Kashi, Fruits



Fire and the Environment

Jamie Thierman, Environmental Justice Chair

While forest fires have been a part of life for millions of years, and forests have adapted to recover, the effect of cities and toxins have significantly impacted this natural process. I'm writing this on February 5th, and by the time this article goes to print, things may have already changed; however, there is some important information circling from TreePeople and Heal The Bay which I would like to relay:



What is the best thing we can do to help the burned areas?

Avoid visiting them. Visitors may unintentionally disturb the soil, hinder regrowth, or spread invasive seeds that could out-compete the native plants. When trails do open, please stay on the path at all times.

Will there be restoration efforts?

Yes! However, before any restoration can begin, it is critical to observe how the ecosystem is beginning to recover, so we can have a better understanding of what restoration approach may be necessary.

When will restoration begin?

Eight months to two years after the fire.

Can I help?

Yes! As soon as TreePeople can safely work on the project, announcements will be made. In the meantime, TreePeople has multiple projects working in burn scars. Please visit the Volunteer Calendar and select any event with the word "Restoration" in it.

How did the recent fires effect our Ocean?

With the ensuing rain, the hazardous material from the fire made its way to the ocean. This was in addition to the materials of "the first flush," where the trash and pollution that has accumulated on the surfaces in urban areas during the dry season, flows into the storm drains and waterways during the first rain of the wet season. At the time of writing this article, much of our beaches and oceans are toxic, and to be avoided.

What can I do to help the ocean?

Heal the Bay, Friends of the LA River, and The Ballona Wetlands are all hosting trash cleanups to get the trash out of the environment. Additionally, keep your own property as clean as possible. Do not hose down your property, as any chemicals and ash will run straight into the storm drains. If you are dealing with ash, gentle sweeping, followed by a wet mop or an HEPA-filtered vacuum is the best technique. Always protect yourself with gloves and a mask.



SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

In-person Services
9:30 AM—English Worship
11:00 AM—Japanese Worship
Online worship at wlaumc.com

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday-Friday
8:30am-12:30 pm
or call the Church Office at
310-479-1379
to speak to the staff

STAFF

Rev. Keith Inouye Senior Pastor
408-355-0837 cell
SeniorPastor@wlaumc.com

Rev. Rebecca Hirata
Japanese Language Pastor
Nichigo@wlaumc.com

Rev. Dr. Richard Kuyama
Pastor Emeritus
dryrkuyama@gmail.com

Viki Inouye

Director of Children, Youth,
Young Families Ministries
Children-Youth@wlaumc.com
408-355-0836

Jeri Okamoto-Tanaka

Director of Spiritual Engagement &
Compassion Care
jotwlaumc@gmail.com

Kiana, Admin Assistant
info@wlaumc.com
310-479-1379

