



West Los Angeles United Methodist Church  
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## Growing More Christlike Together

West Los Angeles UMC is a Reconciling  
Congregation, welcoming all persons and  
affirming the dignity of all.

# West LA Connections

West Los Angeles United Methodist Church Monthly Newsletter | AUGUST Issue



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# AUGUST 2026

*Grace and peace be with each and every one of you — friends and members of West Los Angeles UMC (WLAUMC), both near and far!*

Our June and July summer season has been particularly eventful for our community. I was able to drive our students up to our historic Asian American Summer Camp at Camp Wrightwood and be their Thursday morning and evening preacher. It was amazing to see the incredible talents and gifts of our young people, particularly because all three of our church youth — Sam, Dylan, and Lauren — were part of the Camp Talent Show! What I lost in sleep that week, I gained in gratitude for the emerging leaders I witnessed.

In June in particular, I was honored to be commissioned by our UMC Bishops (including Bishop Dottie but also a handful of other Bishops, including our very own Bishop Grant Hagiya) as a Provisional Elder in the California-Pacific Conference.

From January until my commissioning, I was serving as a Local Licensed Pastor (LLP) in our conference. As a local pastor, I was given authority to lead and serve in the particular local church context to which the Bishop and Cabinet assigned me; however, my ministry was limited specifically to our church. As a Local Pastor,

I had the freedom to say yes or no to an appointment, as Local Pastors are not bound to the itinerant ministry. As an Elder, however, I am authorized for Word, Sacrament, Order, and Service in all

of the communities and contexts I find myself in, and beyond my appointed church. I also submit myself to the itinerant process, which gives the Bishop and Cabinet the authority to appoint pastors to various churches, which may be re-evaluated every year. In the process of becoming an Elder in Full Connection, candidates have to first be commissioned as Provisional Elders.

I have had to go through a multi-year process in order to be recommended and commissioned as a Provisional Elder. This process has included interviews at our District Level (DCOM: District Committee for Ordained Ministry), interviews at the Conference Level (including multi-hour interviews with the Board of Ordained Ministry), as well as 60+ pages worth of essays answering theological, practical, and personal questions. I've also had to complete medical checks, background checks, a psychological evaluation, credit checks, and more!

All of this to say, it was a blessing to have passed my papers and interviews in order to be commissioned at our Annual Conference. I will be able to apply for membership as an Elder in Full Connection (fully ordained person) as early as next year.

Thank you, West Los Angeles UMC, for all of your encouragement and support. I truly could not and would not want to be on this journey without each of you and your incredibly compassionate hearts. The way you laugh with each other, serve each other, and express your faith is truly inspiring. I am forever grateful to be able to say you were my first appointment as a Senior Pastor.

In peace,  
Rev. Kiana Nicholson  
Senior Pastor, West Los Angeles UMC



*Left: Asian American Summer Camp at Camp Wrightwood; Above: Annual Conference with Stan Shimotsu, Jeri Okamoto-Tanaka and Lynne Onishi.*

## 「敬老の日」

まず、父の日をお祝いした6月を主に感謝したいと思う。6月7日、礼拝で原田ケン兄が、信仰的なお父さんの証をして、皆が恵みを受けた。2世として442部隊で戦った父の人生はイエス様なしでは語れない。死の谷の陰を歩む人生を主が守られたからである。また、6月21日、日英礼拝後に焼き鳥井で父の日をお祝いできた恵みを主に感謝したい。焼き鳥は、仕事終わりにふらっとお父さんたちが吸い寄せられる食べ物。炭火の香りが、おいしさを引き立ててくれる。皆、味噌汁と漬物、日本のお菓子も一緒にエンジョイできたであろうか。奉仕してくれた青年チームにはただただ感謝！

7月5日の礼拝後、アメリカ独立記念日を感謝して焼肉をエンジョイする。建国250周年のお祝いである。アメリカは主に祝福され建てられた特別な国。素直にすごいと思う！アメリカのように日本にも多くの主を信じる人が起こされて欲しいと願ってしまう。だから、いつもこのみ言葉を忘れないでいる。「みことばを宣べ伝えなさい。時が良くて悪くてもしっかりとやりなさい。」IIテモテ4:2

9月は敬老の日をお祝いする月。9月5日、CafeAlohaシニア・ミニストリーは対面式の集会をもって敬老の日をお寿司でお祝いする。9月20日は敬老の日礼拝を覚える。さあ、主の恵みが注がれる時を覚えて祈ろう。

First, I want to give thanks for the month of June, during which we celebrated Father's Day. On June 7, Dr. Ken Harada shared a testimony about his father's faith, a message that brought blessings to everyone. One cannot speak of the life of his Nisei father, who fought with the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, without Jesus. The Lord protected him as he walked through the valley of the shadow of death.

On June 21, we celebrated Father's Day with "yakitori-don" following the Eigo-bu & Nichigo services. "Yakitori" is the food that Otoo-san loves to eat after a long day of work; the aroma of charcoal grilling truly enhances the flavor. I hope everyone enjoyed this simple meal, along with the miso-soup, tsukemono, and Kashi. My heartfelt thanks go to the young adults for serving over 100 yakitori-don!

On July 5, we will enjoy a "yakiniku" to celebrate American Independence Day. This year is the nation's 250th anniversary. When I learned that America is a special nation, founded and blessed by the Lord, I was truly amazed! Reminded of the 250 years of faith history, I would like to keep this scripture in mind: "Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season." (2 Timothy 4:2)

In September, we celebrate "Keiro" month. On September 5, the Cafe Aloha Senior Ministry will hold an in-person gathering to celebrate Keiro day with sushi.

Then, on September 20, Nichigo will enjoy keiro worship service. Let us honor our seniors! May the Lord bless "Keiro" month.

平田

## 8月1日(土)夏の弁当

教会ではシニアのメンバーに夏の暑い日、栄養あるお弁当を届けます。ご希望の方は教会オフィスまでご連絡ください。

## Café Aloha Senior Lunch Bento delivery On August 1 (Saturday)

Café Aloha ministry would like to reach out to seniors 70 and older by delivering summer bento. If you are interested in receiving bento, please contact Church office.

メニュー：鰻、味噌汁、菓子、フルーツ

Menu: Unagi, Soup, Kashi, Fruits

## 9月5日(土)11時よりCafeAlohaシニアミニストリー集会&弁当

教会では敬老の日を感謝して70才以上のシニア向けに、ランチ、賛美、体操、聖書のお話しの集会をします。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 Saturday, September 5 at 11am

To celebrate Keiro-no-Hi, Café Aloha ministry would like to reach out to seniors 70 and older. We will meet at Nisei Fellowship Hall for lunch, music, exercise and Bible story. Also, we will deliver Bento to those who cannot participate. If you are interested, please sign up or contact Church office.

メニュー：寿司各種、味噌汁、菓子、フルーツ

Menu: Sushi, Miso-soup, Kashi, Fruits



# 2026 Manzanar Autumn Series

"I never realized how beautiful the mountains were when I was [incarcerated] here" mused Rose Honda in 2013, during a WLAUMC Manzanar pilgrimage. Under a brilliant blue sky, Rose was looking past the Manzanar memorial at the Sierras towering nearby, reflecting on her life as a high school student there during WWII. Manzanar holds much history and many memories for our WLAUMC community. The injustices committed against Japanese Americans during WWII still resonate in the present moment, with continuing assaults on the civil liberties of different communities within our country.

This fall, WLAUMC will offer several events related to Manzanar for our members, families, and friends. We seek to create greater awareness of the connections between our history as a church community and contemporary social justice issues so that we might stand in solidarity with other communities experiencing assaults on their human rights as contributing members of our society. Activities include the following:

### PRELUDE (September 13 and October 4)

A Sunday afternoon event that begins with short film on Manzanar to provide historical context, followed by a discussion with WLAUMC members who were incarcerated at Manzanar and/or other relocation centers as children. The Oct 4 event will include a potluck lunch following a joint worship service.

### PILGRIMAGE (October 24-25)

Church members, family, and friends are invited to travel with us on a chartered bus to Manzanar. Rangers Sarah Bone and Alysa Lynch (retired) will present the decades-long struggle to get the US government to recognize Manzanar with national monument status as well as provide informa-

tion about its ongoing restoration. Participants of all ages are invited. Stay tuned for more details about registration, cost, and itinerary in the upcoming weeks.

### POSTLUDE (November 8)

In a joint service with the English and Nichigo congregations, reflections on Manzanar will be offered. Following a potluck lunch, an afternoon presentation will feature a dialogue between Pilgrimage participants, Nikkei Progressives (a non-profit advocacy organization) and other members of WLAUMC to reflect on how we, as a church community, can respond to current social justice issues drawing from our history and our faith.

**Note:** We are working to reduce the out-of-pocket costs for participants and the possibilities of providing stipends where appropriate. We have submitted a grant proposal and will continue looking for other sources of underwriting.

For more information, please contact Co-Chairs Jennifer Abe or Cooke Sunoo. Manzanar Working Group members include Grace Seto, Wayne Nomi, Jennifer Akamine Phillips, Maile Hirai, Steve Hirai, Bennett Kim, Adam Kim, Janice Maeda, Kenji Maeda, Shawna Cullinan, Yosuke Yoshikawa, Bert Tanaka, Lynne Onishi, and Stan Shimotsu, with Rev. Kiana Nicholson and Deaconess Jeri Okamoto-Tanaka.

If any of your family members were incarcerated at Manzanar or any other WWII relocation center, please give us their name(s) and identify the specific wartime camp/detention center to where they were sent.

Please call or email Maile Hirai: smghirai@yahoo.com, 424/321-5200 or Steve Hirai: stevehirai@yahoo.com with your family members' information so we can honor their memory as part of our Pilgrimage experience.

## WLA UMC UWF Holiday Boutique Craft Workshop

OUR FIRST 2026 craft workshop held on Saturday, June 27th with instructor Melanie Murai was attended by 12 participants who created gorgeous gift cards for our annual Fall event. Thanks to Melanie who generously provided all materials, supplies, tools, and instructions to make some of our first handcrafted merchandise!

We are looking forward to our next UWF group crafting workshop with instructor Lois Tateishi on Saturday, August 8th, as she provides instruction on making Holiday Christmas tree ornaments with a hands-on sewing les-

son, including step-by-step assistance.

Our UWF Holiday Boutique is scheduled for Saturday, November 14<sup>th</sup> so please mark your calendars! Feel free to start crafting your favorite holiday dona-

tion items to support the many children, youth and women organizations and ministries.

We are grateful for everyone's support throughout the year!



## Reconciling Ministries Updates

WE KICKED OFF Pride Month with a special worship service and coffee fellowship on May 31st. Our West LA, Centenary & Faith congregations joined with Okaeri to co-host *We Choose Love*, the premier video screening of Glenn & Karen Murakami's journey as United Methodist Japanese American parents of two gay sons as part of the Okaeri Voices series. A heartfelt panel followed with the Murakami Family (Glenn, Karen, Derek, Kyle & his husband Zach) discussing faith, family and belonging. What an affirming and uplifting afternoon! Thank you to Faith UMC for your hospitality!



*Okaeri and the Murakami family*

View the video here:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NXO6AGM6\\_Sk&list=PL1qM4Sh-5Br-Hfhx-omXq7haDWwdM4hdaN](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NXO6AGM6_Sk&list=PL1qM4Sh-5Br-Hfhx-omXq7haDWwdM4hdaN)

### Coming Soon:

**Asian Pacific Rainbow Coalition (ARC) Speakers' Bureau Training on Saturday, August 22nd** to educate and train individuals to speak about transgender rights and challenges, particularly in our AAPI communities. Application required.

**Nisei Week Parade in Little Tokyo** – March with **Team West LA UMC** and **ARC** on the afternoon of **Sunday, August 16th** to show our Rainbow Pride!

Contact Deaconess Jeri at [jotwlaumc@gmail.com](mailto:jotwlaumc@gmail.com) for more information about these events and if you or someone you know needs LGBTQIA+ affirming resources.

**Nisei Week Japanese Festival**

Walk in the Grand Parade  
with WLAUMC & ARC  
August 16<sup>th</sup> - 4:00 pm start  
Contact Jeri at [jotwlaumc@gmail.com](mailto:jotwlaumc@gmail.com)

West Los Angeles UMC | Asian Pacific Rainbow Coalition

## International Day of the Disappeared Sunday, August 30 – Special Worship & Vigil

"International Day of the Disappeared was established by the United Nations in response to the widespread issue of enforced disappearances, particularly in conflict zones and under repressive regimes. The day was created to honor the memory of those who have disappeared, to support their families, and to call for justice. Enforced disappearances have been recognized as a crime against humanity under international law, and this observance serves as a reminder of the ongoing need to address this serious human rights violation. The day is marked by global efforts to seek truth, justice, and reparation for the victims and their families." (Source: <https://www.awarenessdays.com/awareness-days-calendar/international-day-of-the-disappeared/>.)

We also hold vigil for the migrants, immigrants, refugees, and citizens who have died or are being held indefinitely in American detention centers under poor conditions. We especially pray for the children separated from their parents.

## INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE DISAPPEARED

Sunday, August 30, 2026

9:30 am Worship Service

1:00 pm Vigil



Social & Environmental Justice and Missions  
West Los Angeles UMC  
1913 Purdue Avenue, LA 90025  
[www.wlaumc.com](http://www.wlaumc.com)

## ジャパンミSSIONトリップに参加して

私はこのミSSIONの旅の10日間を夢中で過ごしたという表現があっているでしょうか。生まれて初めてのミSSIONは毎日の行事を遅延なく確かにこなしていくという緊張感でいつもいっぱいでした。ベッキー先生はじめチームのメンバーのほとんどが何年も続けて参加している経験者で、初心者(私ともう一人)の私たちはとても助かりました。今回は、WLAの日本語礼拝を一緒に守ってくださっていた池田由美先生とご主人のTommy Morseご夫妻が宣教の拠点として受け継がれた神奈川県平塚市東海大学の近くのJ-Lodge Caféと宮城県の石巻市の2か所を中心に訪問しました。どちらも印象深い経験でした。この中で2つ特に心に残ったことを紹介します。

ひとつ目は、石巻の女川の復興住宅のクラフトと祈りの会です。会の初めに石巻クリスチャンセンター長の長内先生が、今までの女川ミSSIONの歴史をスライドショーで振り返ってくださいました。WLAUMW婦人会のみなさんのお馴染みの顔が映った写真もありました。毎年参加するメンバーは変わるけれど、途切れず交流を続けることで友情のような信頼関係がそこに生まれて、私たちのグループを歓迎してくださっているのが感じられ嬉しかったです。母の日の歌も2曲ほど聞いていただいたり。クラフトも皆さん集中して取り組んでいました。神様の愛と恵みが訪問する側も迎える側にも注がれて、それは消えることなく増えていだけなんだと実感し感動しました。

2つ目は、渡波レインボーシアターでの母の日コンサートです。津波のために何もかも流されてしまって、いまだ辺り一面野原でした。その中にひっそりと木造の美しい劇場がありました。所

有者の遠藤さんも足を運んで下さいました。皆で会場の掃除から始まり劇場に備え付けのクッションや毛布を座席に準備したり、風よけカーテンを引いたりしました。石巻にお住まいの女性一人も当日一緒に歌って下さいました。

会場にはこの短期間の間で知り合いになった人々、赤ちゃんやお子様連れの家族が集まってくれました。現在石巻に在住という私たちの学生時代の後輩も駆けつけてくれてとても励まされました。この日のために何か月も日曜日の礼拝後に集まって練習をしてきたかいもあり、和やかでアットホームなコンサートになりました。皆さんにここにでました。楽しんでもらえてうれしかったです。

第一ペテロの手紙4章10節 それぞれが賜物を受けているのですから神の様々な恵みの良い管理者としてその賜物を用いて互いに仕えあいなさい。

このみ言葉を頼りにして今回初めてのミSSIONの旅に参加し、そして無事に終わることができました。

また、帰国してからある日のアパルームのお祈りの言葉に”助けを必要とする人々が、私たちを通してあなたの愛を感じ取れるように、私たちがどこで助けとなれるのかをお示ください“とありました。このように祈ることがミSSIONの旅には必要だと心に響きました。ミSSIONはほかの人を励ますと同時に自分も同じように励まされることを実感し、この機会が与えられたことに感謝しています。

高橋圭子



Above: Onagawa government housing, craft making; Dinner with Ishinomaki Missionary families.



Below: Sunday worship with Mission team: Cheryl, Keiko, Toshio, Chris, and Gary; After concert at Rainbow Theater with owner, Mr. Endo.



THE TEN DAYS of the Japan mission trip went by quickly. I was completely immersed in this experience. As this was my first-ever mission trip, I was constantly filled with a sense of tension, determined to carry out each day's scheduled activities precisely and without delay. Most of the team members—including our leader, Pastor Becky—were veterans who had participated for years. They were a huge help to the two of us who were newcomers. On this trip, we focused our visits on two main locations: the J-Lodge Café near Tokai University in Hiratsuka City, Kanagawa Prefecture; a mission site of Yumi Ikeda (who used to attend the WLAUMC Nichigo) and her husband, Tommy Morse, and, also, Ishinomaki City in Miyagi Prefecture. Both visits were deeply memorable experiences. I would like to share two things that particularly touched my heart.

The first was the “Ochakko” (tea & craft) gathering at the government housing in Onagawa, Ishinomaki. At the start of the meeting, Rev. Osanai, the director of the Ishinomaki Christian Center, presented a slideshow to review the history of the Onagawa mission. There were photos showing the familiar faces of women from WLAUMC! Although our Mission team members change every year, the strong bond of friendship, is still present. It brought me great joy to feel how warmly our group was welcomed. We sang a couple of Mother's Day songs for them. They enjoyed the craft activity. I was moved to see God's love and grace which poured out upon both the mission team members and the residents, and His love never diminished but only continued to grow.

The second highlight was the Mother's Day concert at the Watanoha Rainbow Theater. The Watanoha area had been swept away by the tsunami and still remains as an open field; yet, standing quietly amidst it all was a beautiful wooden theater. The owner, Mr. Endo also came to the concert. We worked together to prepare the theatre for the concert—cleaning the space, arranging the theater's cushions and blankets on the seats, and drawing the windbreak curtains. A local woman from Ishinomaki also joined us in singing that day. The theatre was filled with people we had gotten to know over our short stay, as well as families with babies and children. We were greatly encouraged by the visit of our College friend who now lives in Ishinomaki. We practiced our songs for five months after Nichigo Sunday service which really paid off. It was a warm and intimate concert. Everyone was smiling, and I was delighted that they enjoyed it.

**1 Peter 4:10** “*Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.*”

Remembering this scripture, I participated in this mis-

sion trip. It was my first mission trip and I was able to complete it successfully.

After returning home, I came across a prayer in our Upper Room daily devotion, “Please show us where we can be of help, so that those in need may feel Your love through us.” It deeply resonated with me that this kind of prayer is essential for a mission trip. I realized that a mission trip encourages others while it simultaneously encourages, and I am grateful for having been given this opportunity.

## Nichigo Father's Day Luncheon

OUR NICHIGO MEMBERS and friends prepared a delicious *yakitori* (chicken) bento for a Father's Day luncheon on Sunday, June 21. Over 90 bento were served and prepared by chefs Rev. Becky Hirata and Keiko Takahashi. Helping to serve the scrumptious bento were volunteers: Naoto Tashiro, Takumi Takasugi, Adam and Bennett Kim, Mike Dote, and visiting all the way from Georgia was Adam and Bennett's cousin, Dorien Lauren! Everyone enjoyed and praised what was served! What a blessed day! (Keiko Takahashi, not shown.)

—Naoto Tashiro



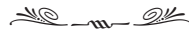
# 580 Cafe: Celebrating One Year of 'Neighbors Feeding Neighbors': Nurturing Our Humanity, Feeding Our Future

(Submitted by Deaconess Jeanne Roe Smith and Dixie Bailon)

IN JUNE 2025, the 580 Café and West Los Angeles United Methodist Church acknowledged an urgent call to uphold our vulnerable community members. As intensifying enforcement from ICE and DHS cast shadows of isolation and fear over our immigrant neighbors, a collective vision for solidarity emerged. Guided by the leadership of Deaconess Jeri, 580 Cafe intern Dixie Bailón, the West LA Community Coalition, and Westside Food Bank, we began weaving a safety net of mutual aid. The resulting initiative, "Neighbors Feeding Neighbors," stands as a testament to those early dialogues—a system of communal care that persists today, ensuring that even as threats to safety endure, the right to reliable, life-sustaining nutrition remains unshakable.

Our hearts are full of gratitude for the West Los Angeles UMC, whose unwavering solidarity and sacred commitment to sharing the earth's abundance have been a beacon of hope for our community. Through this partnership, we collectively embody the Christian values of compassion and mutual care, striving to **Nourish, Flourish, Cherish, and Astonish** as we uplift one another. You are invited to read this inspiring reflection from Dixie Bailón, who serves as the coordinator for our Neighbors Feeding Neighbors project.

With gratitude and grace,  
*Deaconess Jeanne*



AS WE APPROACH our one-year anniversary this August, we invite you to reflect on a journey rooted in resilience, solidarity, and the enduring power of community.

Born out of a necessity to protect and uplift our fellow Bruin families during a time of heightened vulnerability and fear, the NFN Produce Box (Neighbors Feeding Neighbors) was established to ensure that access to fresh, nourishing food was never compromised by external threats.



In the face of ICE raids that targeted our community and created barriers to essential resources, we chose to turn inward, strengthening our ties and ensuring that no Bruin had to choose between their safety and their health.

At the heart of this initiative lies my family's P'urhépecha essence of community and the Lakota concept of **Wóčhaŋ'uy**—the profound understanding of reciprocity, where the health of the individual is inextricably linked to the well-being of the collective. Through this program, we have not only shared the earth's bounty but have had the meaningful opportunity to relearn what it means to be villagers within our own complexes. By showing up for one another, we have transformed our housing spaces into true homes, deepening our bonds as neighbors and honoring our ancestral traditions of mutual aid.

Over the past year, we have been honored to serve **1,978 student families**; **78%** having dependent children, **26%** being system-impacted, **48%** BIPOC-identifying and **15%** preferring not to state, and a total average of **68%** food insecure Bruin households. This transformed that initial spark of protective action into a lasting system of support.

As we look toward the future, we remain committed to this circle of care, proving that when we nurture our connections and nourish one another, we grow stronger together.

Thank you for being part of this vital work!

Diosĩ maiámu je, Mitákuye Oyás'in—To all my relations, thank you kindly. (P'urhépecha/Lakota)

*Dixie Bailón (UCLA Parenting-student - NFN Coordinator- 580 Café Intern)*

## Feeding Ministry Continues

OUR COLLABORATION with the Westside Food Bank continues after a successful year of providing weekly fresh produce boxes to parenting students and others through the 580 Café serving UCLA. We thank our friends at the West LA Community Coalition and Food Bank for coordinating the program with our interfaith neighbors since the summer of 2025. We are planning an all-church volunteer event at the Food Bank in the fall. In the meantime, click here to volunteer: <https://www.wsfb.org/take-action/volunteer-opportunities/>.

*Rachel Floyd, Bob Bailey, Westside Food Bank Coordinator Shaun Dyer, Disa Lindgren and Jeri Okamoto-Tanaka help pack Summer Food Boxes for children and families who lose access to school feeding programs during the break. July 12, 2026.*



## Milk and Animal Welfare (Part II)

Jamie Thierman

**I**N THE previous newsletter, we talked about milk production's impact on our environment. In this article I would like to discuss the animal welfare portion of this issue. This is a hard article to write, not only because the subject matter is so disconcerting, but also because the information available is extremely convoluted. Animal rights activists sometimes will only cite the most extreme examples, while the dairy industry, of course, declares everything is done in the best interest of the cows.

For instance, it is standard practice to confine newborn calves to individual plastic hutches (about the size of a small walk-in closet) for the first 2 to 3 months of their lives. Animal activists say that this practice is cruel, depriving calves of social interaction, natural play behaviors, and cognitive development. Dairy farmers say that hutches are much safer for the calves since their immune systems are weaker, and rearing calves in large groups and poorly ventilated barns often resulted in disease challenges. But

then, why are the cows in such large groups and poorly ventilated barns in the first place?

In all my research, I do believe that any industrial-sized dairy farm is most likely treating their cows very poorly. I would like to quote an article on the FACT website (Food Animal Concerns Trust) which sums up what is going on in a succinct but firm way:

For the average industrial dairy farm (200+ cows), the financial margins invariably run tight, and workdays are exceedingly long. Choices are often made not from a lack of care for their livestock, but from necessity. In such a compromised yet seemingly necessary industry, dairy cows endure subpar living conditions, including overcrowding, little-to-no-pasture access, and premature culling. Surprising to many consumers are the standard practices used in all industrial dairies of forcibly separating calves from mothers immediately after birth, the performance of painful medical procedures without pain medication, and the drastically reduced life span

of animals. The average lifespan of a milk cow is fifteen to twenty years; For a factory farm cow, it is five years. Additionally, calf mortality is incredibly high.

I have shied away from including the true horrors that I discovered while researching this topic, but if you're interested in learning more, the short video on the <https://animaloutlook.org/dairy-life-of-a-cow/> website sums up the more disturbing aspects of this industry. One thing's for sure, the dairy industry deserves immediate and serious scrutiny. **In the next article I will discuss what we can do as consumers.**

And please mark your calendars for September 27! We will be having an Alt Milk palooza during the social hour after church, in which we will bring all different types of plant-based milks for you to try and figure out which ones may work for you.

Jamie Thierman  
541-207-5666  
[www.jamiehierman.com](http://www.jamiehierman.com)

## Hikari: Sacred Parenting Pilot Project

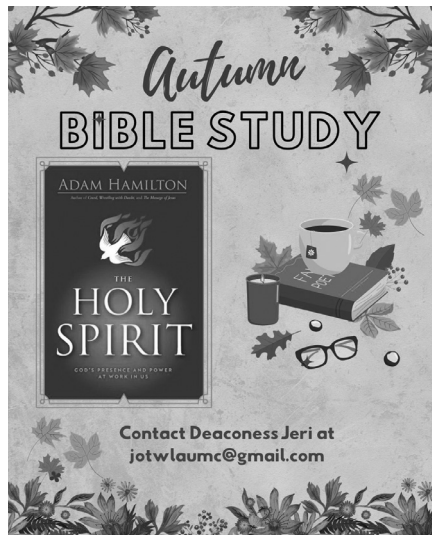
West LA UMC received a \$5,000 grant to launch Hikari: SACRED Parenting in God's Garden with Love, Light & Laughter, a new summer initiative to facilitate "parenting as a spiritual leadership path" that is rooted in contemplative practice, compassion, justice learning, and community healing. "Hikari," meaning light in Japanese, symbolizes clarity and hope. An orientation was held in June, with the first gathering on Sunday, July 26th. Future gatherings will be held on Sundays, August 9 and September 27th, with a follow-up in the fall. Sessions include parent discussions based on the book SACRED Parenthood, a hosted shared meal, and childcare/activities. For more information and/or to be added to our Hikari Distribution List, please contact Pastor Kiana or Deaconess Jeri.



## Welcome Home Deaconess Joy!

Deaconess Joy Prim is a member of West LA UMC and a UMC missionary with the General Board of Global Ministries. She serves with the Mission for Migrant Workers in Hong Kong which "supports migrant workers in crisis, empowering them to regain dignity and encouraging recognition of them as an integral part of multicultural and inclusive Hong Kong society." During her upcoming U.S. itinerancy, Joy is visiting West LA UMC on Sunday, September 20, for the 9:30 am worship service and fellowship following.

"My faith journey," Joy says, "has been influenced and led by the United Women in Faith ... purpose, growing up with a mother and grandmother who were both members and my choice to become a UWF member at 12 years old. I could recite the purpose before I could read chapter books. The foundation they laid for caring for issues of women, youth and children in our local communities and around the world sparked my yearning for mission work."



## Autumn Bible Study for Adults

Please join us for Bible Study Fellowship as we explore Adam Hamilton's new book, *The Holy Spirit: God's Presence and Power at Work in Us*. In this Study we will discover what Scripture teaches us about the Holy Spirit—from the Hebrew Bible through Jesus' promises in the Gospels, the powerful Pentecost experience in Acts, and the rich teachings found in the Epistles. If interest, we will also explore how Asian American and other theologians have engaged with the Holy Spirit in their contexts. We will coordinate the dates, times, and format (live, virtual and/or hybrid) with the group and anticipate beginning in September. Contact Deaconess Jeri at [jotwlaumc@gmail.com](mailto:jotwlaumc@gmail.com) to share your interest.



*Kanata Anthony Takahashi, grandson of Keiko and Toshio Takahashi graduated from Nanakusa Preschool to Richmond Elementary School.*

## SAVE THE DATE!

### THURSDAY BREAKFAST BUNCH

**August 6:** Marie Callender's Fundraiser and Thursday Breakfast Bunch at 8 am

**September 3rd:** Marie Callender's Thursday Breakfast Bunch 8 am

### SENIOR FUN DAY:

**Friday, August 14th,** 10:30 am-1 pm

**Friday, September 25th,** 10:30 am-1 pm

Bring your favorite game!

### MIDPOINTER'S FELLOWSHIP NIGHTS:

**August 6th, Thursday evening:** inviting young adults to have dinner at Marie Callender's for our Church Fundraiser! RSVP to Pastor Kiana!

**Join us for our Fall Young Adult Study:** Dinner, discussion, and fellowship time for young adults.

Wednesday, September 9th, 7 pm

Wednesday, September 23rd, 7 pm