

Pastor's Reflections

“Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways, says the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, says the Lord God. Turn, then, and live!”

Ezekiel 18:30-32

It's only February, but Lent starts early on February 21st. Lent is a time of prayer and fasting. A time of reflection . . . a time of repenting and turning from our transgressions . . . a time of turning to the Lord. What is it that needs to be cast off in your life? What bad habit or way of life needs to be more in line with Christ? What can be done in our lives that will allow us to live to our full potential, using all the gifts that God has given us? Lent is a time to find out.

But many of us don't want to search for the answers to those questions, because it involves change. We don't like change, even if it means that we will live more fulfilled lives. Some of us want to be in control of our lives, and don't like relinquishing control over to God. Yet, God has given each and every one of us the power of the Holy Spirit to help us change. God guides us to righteous paths. God even helps us to resist the temptations of those transgressions that want to rule our lives.

Henri Nouwen wrote in a devotion to God: “I am still so divided. I truly want to follow you, but I also want to follow my own desires and lend an ear to the voices that speak about prestige, success, pleasure, power and influence. Help me to become deaf to these voices and more attentive to your voice, which calls me to choose the narrow road to life.” We, too, face similar conflicts within. We want to follow Jesus, but end up listening to all those other voices within us. Sometimes those voices are deep in our subconscious and we don't realize that they exist; but they exhibit themselves in our lives, causing us to fall short of what we were created to be.

But change is a choice; just as Jesus journeying to the cross was a choice he made. He didn't have to. He could have chosen the easy way out; but he didn't. He chose to die for our sins. He chose to be the sacrificial Lamb to set God's people free. It wasn't an easy choice to make. It would involve much pain and suffering. But God loved us

so much that he sent his Son to pay the price – God paid the price for our sins. In so doing, Jesus made us one with God; and recipients of new life in the Spirit and eternal life in the heavens.

So let us all take a serious look at our lives. Let us meditate on the Word of God. Let us be in prayer, not only for ourselves, but collectively for Lake Park, too. Those questions asked earlier apply to Lake Park as a congregation, too. What needs to be cast off? What needs to be done that will allow Lake Park to live to its full potential, for what God created Lake Park to be in this time and place? May your journey through Lent be a time of meditation, prayer and fasting. May God bless your efforts as you choose to follow God's will.

Blessings,
Barbara

Lenten Studies



Lenten studies will begin on Tuesday, February 27th, at 2:30pm and will continue on Tuesday, 13th and 27th. Please mark those days on your calendar.

More information about the studies will come later.

If you are interested in attending, please let Rev. Barbara know.

Scripture Passages for February

- Feb. 4: Isaiah 6:1-8, Psalm 138, 1 Corinthians 15:1-11,
Luke 5:1-11
P “Are You Catching People?”
- Feb. 11: Jeremiah 17:5-10, Psalm 1, 1 Corinthians 15:12-20, **Luke 6:17-26**
“Luke’s Beatitudes and Woes”
- Feb. 18: Exodus 34:29-35, Psalm 99, 2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2, **Luke 9:28-43a**
“Why Couldn’t the Disciples Heal?”
- Feb. 25: 1st Sunday of Lent
Deuteronomy 26:1-11, Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16,
Romans 10:8b-13, **Luke 4:1-13**
“The Devil’s Temptations”

In and Around Lake Park

By Sachi Kajiwara



It was so nice to see Dr. Karen Tsujimoto and her daughter Michele visit Lake Park, not once but twice within a short time. In one of her visits, Michele helped light the candles before the service. She enjoyed it and said she would like to be candle lighter again when she comes the next time.

Teruo and Mary Takaki took a short trip to Japan recently, where they had not been for over 30 years. They enjoyed visiting family and friends they had not seen for such a long time, but were glad to come back home.

Some of you may remember Lynne Ono from years ago. Her son, Evan, now has a son who is already a year old, and is named Derek. So now that Lynne is retired, she is kept busy being a Grandma.

We thank Jonathan Davis for being substitute organist for two Sundays while Jim Meredith was touring Japan with his Sonos Handbell Ensemble. One of Theresa Narasaki's Japanese friends phoned her after being part of the audience of 2000 attending the Sonos concert in the city of Nishinomiya. This friend was absolutely enthralled about the whole performance and kept telling Theresa how much they enjoyed having Sonos in Japan.

Lake Park observed the Advent Season with the lighting of a candle for each Sunday as preparation for the Birth of the Baby Jesus. On the 2nd Sunday of Advent, the Christmas tree was set up and decorated after a luncheon served by the United Methodist Women. Ron Fujie and his crew did a beautiful job decorating the Sanctuary with wreaths, swags, lights, and poinsettia plants.

Christmas Eve was very special this past year. Ellen St. Thomas and Sally Terris provided beautiful music that certainly enhanced the spirit of the Season. We are grateful to them for adding so much to the Candlelight and Communion Service. Of course, Jim and the Choir helped too. Many people said it was the loveliest Christmas Eve service they could remember.

Since December 31st was a 5th Sunday, it was Rev. Barbara's day off. So several persons were asked to tell how an "Epiphany Event" occurred in their own lives. To George Yoshida, "Epiphany" means an "intuitive grasp of reality through something simple and striking." Both his father and mother went to Christian Mission Schools in Japan and loved Christian music. With this kind of background, George finds singing in the Lake Park Choir a valuable experience. He is grateful to

both Ellen St. Thomas and Jim Meredith for choosing wonderful music that inspires him to use all parts of his body to sing, as well as filling his heart and soul with emotion and an enriched sense of his spirituality.

Sachi Kajiwara shared her "Epiphany" which occurred when she was a beginning nursing student. She was asked to write why she chose Nursing as a career. She thought she wrote a good piece about 'serving mankind,' but the instructor wrote on the bottom of the page—"Why not serve God instead?" This helped her throughout her nursing career: no matter how distasteful or difficult the situation, she was always reminded of that remark. Even in her later career, while serving in the Women's Division as a Director (volunteer) and later as Staff, she was constantly reminded through God's "nudges" that she should do the job to the best of her ability with God's help.

Hugh Lee followed. At the end of World War II, Hugh was a 16-year old high school student in North Korea. While standing on a train station platform one day, a freight train passed with a load of long metal strips hanging out at one end, and one of the beams hit him on the head. He remained in a coma for 6 months under the care of a Japanese doctor. When he finally came to, the doctor told him that his mother had been constantly praying at his bedside. The doctor was convinced that his mother's prayers were the miracle that kept him alive. Hugh had grown up in a Christian family, but hadn't much enjoyed going to church. All that changed after the accident that happened so many years ago.

Jim Meredith had investigated the etymology and said the original definition of Epiphany was 'the sudden appearance of a Deity' which eventually came to mean a sense of great or sudden insight. He remembered that as a 4th grader, the music teacher asked that someone volunteer to sing solo. Jim wanted to, but was afraid he couldn't do it. However, he worked up enough courage, raised his hand, and DID it. That changed everything. From that moment on he knew he would devote his life to music.

After these persons spoke, the congregation was asked if they had some experience to contribute. Marlene Yamashita volunteered how the song "Star" by the group Earth, Wind and Fire (she played a recording of it for us), came out just when she was in a very bad period in her life. The words "Star smiling in the night" somehow struck a special note with her and provided much comfort. She says she has learned that God/Spirit sometimes communicates with her through songs.

In and Around Lake Park - continued

And Amun Taharka took the microphone and told us that when his brother, Naten, was born, Amun didn't like him at all. But as Naten (now 7) grew older, Amun began to love and trust him more and more and now Naten is his best friend. Naten was grinning as Amun went back to his seat, and smiled from ear to ear when Amun gave him a big hug. There was so much love expressed that the whole congregation was touched and clapped.

A big Thank You to the Sonos Quartet, composed of Kathie Fink, Ruben Mendoza, Jason Tiller, and Melissa Vainio who came to play special music for our January 7th service. This was the First Sunday of the New Year and there was also a Sprinkling of Water to help us to "Remember our Baptism and Be Thankful."

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JASEB CRAB FEED SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12



Asian Cultural Center
388 9th Street – Suite 290
Oakland, California

Two seatings: 4:00-5:30 p.m. & 5:30-7:00 p.m.
Take-out from 4:30 – 6:25 pm.

Tickets : \$25.00 in advance. \$30.00 at the door.
\$1,000 grand prize Raffle tickets - \$2.00 each or 6 for \$10.00.

If you would like to help out at the Crab
Feed, please let Reverend Barbara know.

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Floral Acknowledgements December 17, 2006 to January 14, 2007

Dec. 17: Tsugiye Oshika, in memory of husband, Thomas
Dec. 24: John Towata Flowers
Dec. 31: Suzanne Yamamoto, Glory to God
Jan. 7: Dr. Leo Saito, in memory of Margaret
Jan. 14: Diane Shigematsu, in memory of David's 20th Anniversary



Ash Wednesday Service and Soup Supper

On **February 21, 2007**, all are invited to attend the Ash Wednesday Soup Supper followed by a service in the sanctuary. The supper will be at 6:15 pm and the Service will start about 7:00 pm. Please bring a can of any kind of soup, either on the Sunday before (leave in the kitchen) or by 6:00pm that night. All the soups will be combined and cooked together so that the flavors will be well-blended. It always turns out so yummy!



After our bodies and souls are warmed, we will have a service of the imposition of ashes.

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Care Corner



Please pray for those who suffer chronic pain and medical problems, for their caregivers, and for those who are engaged in life struggles. Pray that all those who have been affected by seasonal illnesses will regain their strength and vitality and can again resume their full lives. Pray that those who live in constant fear can soon have peace and security. Pray for all those serving abroad and for their families at home. And may we continue to be in prayer for the following:

Yasuko Gamo & family
Ari Inouye
Haruko Narita
Hale Prather

Ruby Ouye's brother
Cathy Saito
Daniel Thompson
Lake Park's Future

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Tea Fellowship for February

Sachi Kajiwara & Ruby Ouye

Highlights from the Administrative Council Meeting, January 3, 2007

Reports:

- Christian Education: none
- Finance/Treasurer: Handed out the report for December. \$18,660 back rent recently received, but is not yet on the report. Expenses came pretty close to budget. Insurance continues to be a big expense that is difficult to estimate. Planning to have a pledge Sunday in Jan. Refer to the report for more details.
- Mission and Outreach: The Adopt A Family project was completed. An amazing \$405 plus gifts were collected. Discussed that this was a good service project and one to possibly do at another time of the year.
- Staff/SPRC: Sachi will give SPRC guidelines to Ron. Questions on whether to reexamine gardener duties. Rev. Barbara to look for description of the duties.
- Trustees: none (will have first meeting of the year on Jan. 7)
- Worship: We had a successful Dec 31st Epiphany Sunday program. Currently having problems in getting ushers and liturgists. Possible suggestions: training session, signups by week rather than for whole month.
- Music: We had a very nice Christmas Eve service. Beautiful decorations for Christmas season were noted and Ron was thanked. Discussion on chandeliers – Rev. Barbara to ask the Trustees to look into replacing them; amount of amp power could be an issue.
- JASEB: JASEB Crab Feed is on Feb. 11th. Ed received the assignments for our church for it. 5:15 – 7:15pm shift needs 4 more volunteers. By Jan. 19 need number of people who want tickets. JASEB to hold another board meeting on Jan 22nd. Status of Adachi property: Adachi wanted another offer from JASEB, but cooler heads prevailed and no offer was made, so nothing happened.
- Pastor's Report: St. Paul's United Methodist Church in Vacaville sent a thank you note for our donation to them to help them repair flood damages. Conference Year-End Reports to be completed by Jan 19th by Ron and Rev. Barbara. District Superintendent James Lockwood-Stewart will be retiring as of July 1, 2007, therefore, our Bay View District will be getting a new DS. Special Sunday offering envelopes were finally received on Jan. 2nd. East Bay CROP Hunger Walk will be held Sunday, April 22nd. Flyer was given to Marlene for Mission and Outreach Committee to look at. Conference Consultation with Ethnic Ministries Caucuses – of the three topics:

shared facility usage; communication and language; and reaching youth and second generation UMs, including future clergy and lay development future lay and clergy development, Rev. Barbara participated in the latter although it was frustrating and not very productive. The installation of officers for 2007 will be held during Sunday's worship service on Jan. 7th.

Items to follow:

Church usage - kitchen	Referred to the new Task Force on opening church to others.
Lake Park's future	Will we close due to not enough participation? Most want to see us remain open.
Church appearances	chandeliers – Trustees to be asked to look into replacing them
Church office	Office computer DSL – Trustees to be asked to look into it so that church phone can ring/be used when Rev. Barbara is on the computer.

Please contact church, Marlene Y., or Rev. Barbara for items you want to see tracked here.

New Business: Eritrean Jan 7 celebration (according to orthodox traditions) - bouquet of flowers and card to be given from the church. Replenishing paper towels in downstairs restrooms is not being done regularly. Chevron employee involvement fund grant of \$471 was received to be used to purchase Adobe Acrobat software and two external microphones for the conference phone. Office computer DSL Rev. Barbara to bring it up to Trustees.

Calendar Review:

- Feb 7 – Admin Council meeting 7:30pm
- Feb 11 – JASEB crab feed
- Feb 18 – UMW meeting
- Feb 21 -- Ash Wednesday, service 7pm (soup supper 6pm?)
- Feb 27 – Lenten studies start, 2:30pm
- Mar 7 – Admin Council meeting 7:30pm
- Mar 17 – UMW District Leadership Training event
- April 1 – Palm Sunday
- April 8 – Easter

Next meeting is Wednesday, February 7, 2007 at 7:30pm

Note: next month's minutes will have the new committee names, Spiritual Growth in place of Christian Education and Care & Nurturing in place of Mission and Outreach.

Idea Incubator / Caring Complaint Converter



An idea appeared through my younger daughter, Erin's, school newsletter. In it, the principal was thanking the school children who complained to her because it indicated that they cared about what was happening at the school.

Wow! I hadn't looked at a complaint like that before, but you know, she's right – if they didn't care, you wouldn't even hear about it. So really, a complaint is an idea in disguise – it's just that the way to fix it hasn't surfaced yet. And it gets better -- we even have the perfect forum for complaints from our caring people – let's list them here in this article and people who have the same complaints and/or some ideas on what to do about them can get together and get the job done! Thanks!!

Idea / Caring Complaint	Month first posted	Number of people expressing interest
Put up a large banner in front of the church saying that we are a "Community Church" and all are invited.	Dec*	
The couches and lamps in the Wesley Room look really dated and could use some updating.	Feb	one

Ideas posted 3 consecutive months. Contact church if interested or to submit additional ideas/complaints.

* = this is the last month this idea will be posted

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Thank You to Those Who Helped with the Church Clean Up

"Thank You" to the following for their help on the Church Clean Up Day: **Steve and Kumiko Derreberry, Sachi Kajiwara, Tsugiye Oshika, Gordon Yamamoto and Karie Yamashita!** Your dedication and commitment are greatly appreciated!

PLOWSHARE ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

December 3, 2006 to January 7, 2007

Special Gifts:

Alexander, M/M George	Memory George & Noralee's parents
	Memory U.S, troops
Maniwa, M/M Robert	Memory Amy Maniwa
Matsuoka, Fumi	Behalf of brother James H. Azuma
Oshika, Tsugi	Memory husband Thomas
Shigematsu, Diane	
Shigematsu, Doug , Kendra & David	In memory of
Penny, Alex & Scott	David T. Shigematsu
Stowe, Alan, Jill, Kayli & Darius	
Takaki, M/M Teruo	Trip to Japan
Tekawa, Toshika	Appreciation for newsletter
Toji, Larry K.	Memory Toshida Toji

Conference Offering

Human Relations Day

Fujie, Ron
Gregory, Gail
Morizono, Rev/M Mike
Narasaki, Theresa
Takeuchi, M/M Frank



Food Fund

St. Vincent de Paul

Kajiwara, Sachi
Narasaki, Theresa (1st Qtr)
Oshika, Tsugiye
Saito, Dr. Leo (Dec & Jan)
Takeuchi, M/M Frank

Christmas Offering

Aoki, M/M James
Derreberry, M/M Steve
Eto, Susan/Nicola, David & Lauren
Geron, M/M Alfred
Hirahara, M/M Mike
Horikoshi, Hisako
Horikoshi-Firebaugh, Rev. Barbara
Iino, David
Iriki, Keiko
Isokawa, Sue
Kawashima, Revs Mas & Hope
Komatsu, Ori
Koyama, Ben
Miyazaki, Minako
Morizono, Rev/M Mike

Austin, M/M Raymond
Eto, M/M Frank
Futagaki, Chiyo
Harada, M/M Hiroshi
Horikoshi, Elliot
Horikoshi, Kathy
Iijima, Maru
Inouye, M/M Ari
Ishida, Sachi
Kajiwara, Sachi
Kobayashi, Eizo
Kondo, Chie
Lee, M/M, Hugh
Morizono, M/M Matthew
Narasaki, Theresa

Christmas Offering, [continued]

Narita, Leona	Oda, Drs Thomas & Dorothy
Ogawa, Helen	Oshika, Tsugiye
Ouye, Ruby	Saito, Dr. Leo
Sasaki, Yoshie	Shigematsu, Diane
Shimamoto, William	Soo Family, Lester, Mary, Stacey, Cameron
Takaki, M/M Teruo	Takeuchi, M/M Frank
Takizawa, Hagumi	Teshima, Carolyn/Hom, Dr Edwin & Jeffrey
Teshima, Nancy/Strei, William	Tsujimoto, Dr. Karen & Michele
Tsujimoto, M/M Minoru	Yamagata, June
Yamamoto, Suzanne	Yamashita, Karie
Yamashita, Marlene/Kawabata, Douglas	
Yoshida, M/M George	Yumae, M/M Tosh

