

## Pastor's Reflections



At the beginning of the year, in the January Plowshare, I announced that this year's theme for Lake Park is "Heaven on Earth". All the work that Marlene Yamashita and I have been doing for the last couple of years have been to move Lake Park to that place of being "Heaven on Earth".

A few days ago, I received an email from the Bread of Life Center (a spiritual formation center in Davis, CA) about a lecture by Martin Rutte, co-author of *Chicken Soup at Work*, and his work on Project Heaven on Earth (visit his website, [www.projectheaveneearth.com](http://www.projectheaveneearth.com) for more information). The Center is inviting congregations to participate "via 6 simple and accessible steps for exploring your local vision of 'heaven on earth' over the next three months." While I was not able to attend the lecture, the Center will be sending us resources. I was told that there are pockets around the area that are working toward "Heaven on Earth" at their churches.

I have previously mentioned that the Zephyr Fellowship Retreats have been where I have truly experienced "Heaven on Earth". I described it as a place where people were warm and welcoming. You could feel God's love being shared.

Imagine if you will, what "Heaven on Earth" means to you. What would it look like? Was there a time when you have experienced it? In fact, **I am very curious as to what peoples' definitions of "Heaven on Earth" are.** You can either email me, mail me, or write out what it is to you and give it to me. While I won't mention names (unless you want me to), I want to write some of the responses I get in future Plowshares. So PLEASE let me know what it is to you.

Marlene and I truly want to see Lake Park become this "Heaven on Earth". As followers of Christ, we are ALL to work toward that end in the communities in which we live, in the family of faith in which we worship, and even in our personal families. Jesus showed us the love of God and said, "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this

everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:34-35). Can people tell that we have love for one another? The smaller we get, the more important it is that we show love for one another. When we have visitors, we want them to feel the love, to know that we are truly followers of Jesus. We want them to come back; and we want to keep those we have.

What a joy it was to have **74** people in worship on Easter Sunday!!! It **could** be like that **EVERY** Sunday! I want to **CHALLENGE** those who are reading this article to make it happen! It is possible, you know! But we need your help! How you may ask? First of all, **PRAY** for it to happen; and **BELIEVE** in your heart that it is possible! Secondly, **COME!**

For those of you who haven't been to worship in a while (maybe even years), I can attest to the fact that Lake Park has changed since I first came here almost five years ago. People are much friendlier, less cliquish - truly concerned about each other. Philip told Nathaniel (John 1:46), "Come and see." And I tell you the same thing, "Come and see." I know it is hard to come back when you haven't been to Lake Park in a while. Take the challenge; for I guarantee you that you will be met with open arms!

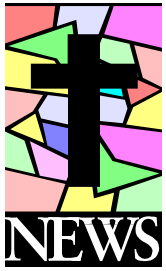
Each of us, regular attendees, those who come every once in a while, and those of you who are contemplating coming back, let us be intentional about creating "Heaven on Earth". Don't wait for the next guy to change - we can only change ourselves! So do what you can! Be Christ in the world! Don't forget the Golden Rule! Open yourselves to the Spirit's moving. The Spirit will help us work toward that end. Tell a friend about "Heaven on Earth"! Tell a friend about Lake Park!

May God bless our efforts and may God bless each and every one of you! I did hear from our District Superintendent; and I will be at Lake Park for another appointment year.

Blessings always,

*Barbara*





## In and Around Lake Park

By Sachi Kajiwara

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, the 40 days before Easter. While some people give up something during Lent, others try to do something good. Though Lent and Easter are over, the list of Fasts and Feasts, presented by Rev. Barbara at the Ash Wednesday service, are not just one-time deals and can be done at any time of the year. So if some apply to you, go for it:

Fast from worry, and **feast on divine order by trusting in God.**

Fast from complaining, and **feast on appreciation.**

Fast from negatives, and **feast on affirmatives.**

Fast from unrelenting pressures, and **feast on unceasing prayer.**

Fast from hostility, and **feast on tenderness.**

Fast from bitterness, and **feast on forgiveness.**

Fast from self-concern, and **feast on compassion for others.**

Fast from the shadows of sorrow; **feast on the sunlight of serenity.**

Fast from idle gossip, and **feast on purposeful silence.**

Fast from judging others, and **feast on the Christ within them.**

Fast from emphasis on differences. **feast on the unity of life.**

Fast from apparent darkness, and **feast on the reality of light.**

Fast from thoughts of illness, and **feast on God's healing power.**

Fast from words that pollute; **feast on the phrases that purify.**

Fast from discontent, and **feast on gratitude.**

Fast from anger, and **feast on optimism.**

Fast from personal anxiety; **feast on eternal truth.**

Fast from discouragement, and **feast on hope.**

Fast from facts that depress, and **feast on verities that uplift.**

Fast from lethargy, and **feast on enthusiasm.**

Fast from suspicion; **feast on truth.**

Fast from thoughts that weaken, **feast on promises that inspire.**

Fast from problems that overwhelm, and **feast on prayer that undergirds.**

***IN OTHER WORDS, LIVE A HOLY LIFE.***

[ continued ]

Following the Litany on Fasts and Feasts there was the Blessing and Distribution of ashes, which was prepared from last year's palm leaves. This reminds us of the briefness of human fame and how quickly we can go from celebrating Christ's love and power to participating in those acts which led to his crucifixion.

March was declared to be a Month of Healing, and on the 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday, Dr. Anase Taharka spoke on "Can the Healer Heal Today?" The answer was a resounding YES! This Healing Service concluded with a Blessing and Anointing of oil on the forehead.

On Palm/Passion Sunday, Jesus was greeted with loud Hosannas; people thought of him as Savior, a Mighty King who would bring honor to their land. A few days later, when Jesus was betrayed and turned over to the authorities, people saw him as a failure and turned against him as he was led away to be crucified. At the end of our service, the decorations in the sanctuary-- the cross, the candles, the Bible, altar cloths and flowers--were all removed from the front as a symbol of the sorrow that was felt.

The Good Friday service was a series of readings, responses, silent reflection and prayers designed to help us enter more deeply into the meaning of Good Friday. Those in the congregation were asked to pick up a red ribbon and a nail and write their name on the ribbon. Then each one went to the altar and pounded the nail and ribbon into the wooden cross while others sang "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?" The seven candles were gradually extinguished one by one. It was an emotional experience to pound the nail into the cross while hearing the words of the song.

Come Easter morning, those red ribbons were replaced with white ones, symbolizing the washing away of our sins.

It was so good to see so many people in the sanctuary on Easter Sunday. Frank Takeuchi and his crew served a delicious Pancake Breakfast. The Alleluias were sung with much gusto. The children had an Easter egg hunt after the service. They found some plastic eggs filled with candy and even some real eggs.

James and Soon Tze Yapp from Malaysia are visiting their daughter who lives near the church. They will be here in Oakland until July—we hope we will continue to see them.

David Iino has been to Southern California to visit his daughter and grandson. Lynette Bradshaw went to the Midwest and New York and came back with a bad cold. But she was well enough to sing in the choir.

Rev. Barbara announced that her daughter, Renee, is engaged to be married. Date hasn't been set yet. [ continued ]

## In and Around Lake Park [concluded]

On April 22, Rev. Barbara will help register those who will participate in the EAST BAY CROP HUNGER WALK around Lake Merritt. Marlene Yamashita will do the walking after the Follow-Up to Forgiveness Meeting and luncheon at the church.

Last, but certainly not the least. The Good News is that Rev. Barbara has been notified by the District Superintendent that she will be returning to Lake Park for another year.



### Care Corner

We received word from Michiko Taniguchi, Elaine Yamada's sister, that Elaine passed away in November of last year. Elaine had been living in Kaneohe, Hawaii with her sister. Our prayers of sympathy go out to her and her family.



Prayers of healing go out to Hugh Lee who is recovering from ankle surgery. He fractured a bone in his ankle during a recent fall. Prayers of support go out to Irene as she cares for Hugh. Additionally, prayers of healing go out to those in our church family who have medical problems.

Please hold the following in your prayers:



Yasuko Gamo & family

Ari Inouye

Hugh and Irene Lee

Ruby Ouye's brother

Hale Prather

Cathy Saito

Daniel Thompson

Lake Park's future

Margaret Tsujimoto & family

Elaine Yamada's family

Servicemen and women serving abroad & families back home.



### TEA FELLOWSHIP FOR MAY

Amy Eto and Ruby Ouye

## Lectionary Scripture Readings for May 2007

May 6: Acts 11:1-18, Psalm 148, Revelation 21:1-6, John 13:31-35

May 13: Acts 16:9-15, Psalm 67, Revelation 21:10, 22-22:5; John 14:23-29



May 20: Acts 1:1-11, Psalm 47, Ephesians 1:15-23, Luke 24:44-53

May 27: Pentecost Sunday, Acts 2:1-21, Psalm 104:24-34, 35b; Romans 8:14-17, John 14:8-17, 25-27

### WELCOME, BISHOP SANO & REV. WASHINGTON!

**While Rev Barbara is on vacation in May, we welcome Rev. Mary Washington to the pulpit on Mother's Day, May 13<sup>th</sup> and Bishop Roy Sano on May 20<sup>th</sup>! He will also be our Celebrant for Communion Sunday.**

**Please come listen to them and give them a warm Lake Park welcome.**

### NAMES NEEDED

On Memorial Sunday, we will be remembering those who passed away since our last remembrance. Please let Rev. Barbara know by May 6<sup>th</sup>, if you want to remember a loved one.



Names of graduates and those being promoted are also needed, so we can honor them on June 17<sup>th</sup>. Again, please let Rev. Barbara know by June 3<sup>rd</sup>.



## Highlights from the April Admin Council Meeting

### Reports:

◆ Trustees: Outlets in the parsonage replaced by Steve Derreberry, Leo Saito, and John Golden, saving labor cost. Ridout Company repaired roof tiles and flashing for a cost of \$1,200. Hydrex Company will do the termite treatment for \$2,050 and \$281 a year for maintenance contract. Home Solutions will replace the toilets and shut off valves at about \$200 per toilet, which Leo and Steve picked out. Home Solutions will also replace the dripping faucet in the kitchen. Additionally, Steve and Leo will test seven 150watt fluorescent bulbs, per fixture, for use in the sanctuary lighting. The Council thanked the Trustees for the terrific job they are doing. So far no bid has been gotten for the repaving of the parking lot.

◆ Worship: Sara Stalder reported that she contacted the Native American Health Center to see if someone would come and talk on Native American Ministries Sunday. Janet King, Program Director, said she will find someone, or she will come herself.

◆ JASEB: Ed Oshika reported that they have a new Board Chairperson, Bruce Hironaka. He has lots of energy and new ideas; and is familiar with nonprofits, and is in the process of developing new policies for investing money. He is looking into restructuring the Board and revitalizing it. Ed had to fill out a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis for JASEB, which he passed out. Laura Takeuchi is running Bingo for JASEB at the South Alameda County Buddhist Church in Union City. Presently, one half of the proceeds go to the church and half to JASEB. But soon the proceeds will be divided three ways with a third going to the Senior Center, the church and JASEB. JASEB having difficulties getting volunteers to work. Each organization is supposed to send two volunteers into the rotation schedule each Friday night. Ed told them Lake Park didn't have anyone who could physically work a shift of 5:30 to 10:30pm.

◆ Pastor's Report – Rev Barbara thanked those who participated in and helped set up for the various Lenten, Palm Sunday, Good Friday and Easter activities. She also thanked the Trustees for their work on getting the repairs done. She and Marlene Yamashita will be participating in the CROP WALK on April 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Eritrean Group has asked to use one of the Sunday School rooms for the three children who attend their services on Sunday afternoon. Permission was granted for use of room across from the Horikoshi Chapel. She invited them to Lake Park's Easter activities. She has not heard about a move yet. Due to meetings on Saturdays, she will be in Oakland until her vacation on April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

◆ Sachi reported that Rev. Naomi Southard's laptop was taken from BMU; so we all need to be careful. Tables for the breakfast need to be set up Saturday morning. Frank needs help with the Pancake Breakfast.

**Next Meeting is Wednesday, May 2, 2007 at 7:30pm.**



### THANK YOU!!!

**“Thank You’s” go out to the following: Frank Eto, Steve Derreberry and Leo Saito for putting up the palms for the Palm Sunday service; Steve for helping to decorate for the Good Friday service and Dr. Ananse Taharka for participating in the service; Frank and Miye Takeuchi, Margaret Tsujimoto, Tsugiye Oshika, David Iino, Leo Saito, Rev. Mike Morizono, Frank and Amy Eto for helping with the Pancake Breakfast; and to Marlene Yamashita for planning the Easter Egg Hunt, even having eggs and prizes for the seniors.**



**Plowshare Acknowledgements  
March 11 to April 8, 2007**

**Special Gifts**

Alexander, M/M George	Peace Offering
Cleary, Kazuko	Glory to God
Lee, M/M Hugh	Thank Offering
Ouye, M/M Dennis	Memory mother, Mary Ann Utsumi
Parker, Melissa B.	Good Friday Offering
Takaki, M/M Teruo	Memory father Kenzo
Taniguchi, Michiko A.	Memory sister Elaine Yamada



**In Memory of Min Tsujimoto**

Aikawa, Dr/M Jack and Haratani Family  
Oyama, M/M George

**Food Fund – St. Vincent de Paul**

Kajiwara, Sachi	Saito, Dr Leo
Oshika, Tsugiye	Takeuchi, M/M Frank
Anonymous	

**Conference Offerings**

**One Great Hour of Sharing**

Derreberry, M/M Steve	Narasaki, Theresa
Futagaki, Chiyo	Oshika, Tsugiye
Horikoshi, Hisako	Saito, Leo
Kajiwara, Sachi	Yamashita, Karie
Lee, M/M Hugh	Yoshida, M/M George
Morizonono, Rev/M Mike	Anonymous

**Native American Ministries**

Eto, M/M Frank	Iino, David	Narasaki, Theresa
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**Easter Offering**

Austin, M/M Raymond	Horikoshi, Hisako
Derreberry, M/M Steve	Horikoshi, Kathy
Eto, M/M Frank	Iijima, Maru
Fujie, Ron	Iino, David
Futagaki, Chiyo	Iriki, Keiko
Hom, Dr. Edwin/Teshima, Carolyn	Ishida, Sachi
Horikoshi, Dr/M Elliott	Isokawa, Sue
Kajiwara, Sachi	Saito, Dr. Leo
Kobayashi, M/M Minoru	Takaki, M/M Teruo
Komatsu, Ori	Takeuchi, M/M Frank
Koyama, Ben	Tanaka, Dr/M Ted
Maniwa, M/M Kazuo – Memory Amy Maniwa	
Miyazaki, Minako	Teshima, Nancy/Strei, William
Moritani, Eiko & Neva	Tsujimoto, Margaret
Morizonono, Rev/M Mike	Yamada, Sachi–Memory Lee Mullis
Nakayama, Nancy Fujita	Yamamoto, M/M Gordon
Narasaki, Theresa	Yamashita, Karie
Narita, Leona	Yamashita, Marlene/Kawabata, Douglas
Oda, Dr/M Thomas	Yoshida, M/M George
Oshika, Tsugiye	Yumae, M/M Tosh
Sasaki, Yoshie	Anonymous



**Floral Acknowledgements  
March 18 to April 15, 2007**

Mar. 18:	Ruby Ouye, for Mother and Father Ugaki
Mar. 25:	Sara Stalder, for Caesar Chavez's Birthday
Apr. 1:	Rev. Barbara, Glory to God!
Apr. 8:	John Towata Flowers
Apr. 15:	Kumiko Derreberry, for Steve's Birthday