



A Publication of the San Lorenzo Japanese Christian Church  
"Growing together and reaching out in the love of Christ"

# Firmly Rooted

## Our Values

Serve Adore Nurture Learn Outreach

"Just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in Him, rooted and built up in Him." Col. 2:6a

Vol. 29, no. 1

January 2019

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## "So Long, Farewell"

Last advent season, we visited Salzburg, Austria, viewing locations where the classic movie, "**The Sound of Music**," was filmed: *Do-Re-Mi* in the Mirabell gardens, German "headquarters" in the town center. As we approach our transition from SanLo, I was reminded of the song, *So Long, Farewell*, sung twice in the movie: "So long, farewell, Auf Wiedersehen, goodbye."



With deep feeling, Koko and I say farewell as we step aside from 39 years with this church, 16 as your Pastor. We are so encouraged by what God has for SanLo, its future, hope, and promise before you all. To express our own farewell, I did word searches on a few "relevant" goodbyes.

I enjoy Hawaii, especially after serving a pastoral stint there a few years ago. So, I say to you all: "**Aloha**", expresses love, affection, gratitude, kindness, compassion, grief, parting. That sums up our emotions as we move on in life and ministry.... sad not being able to see you each week, yet joy in knowing that SanLo is embarking on next steps in her growth and impact for Christ.

I also bid you "**Shalom**," the rich Hebrew word for peace. But there is much more than that; it indicates a state of wholeness or being without deficiency, to be made complete. That was always the goal of our church – Values: Serve, Adore, Nurture, Learn, Outreach; that we seek completeness in Christ for oneself and for one another. We will miss going along that journey with you; but for what we have experienced together, we are grateful to God beyond measure.

So, to our dear family and friends at San Lorenzo Japanese Christian Church... **Aloha**..... **Shalom**... and of course...**Sayonara**.

*The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. (II Corinthians 13:14)*

-- Pastor Rod and Koko Yee

# New Beginnings!

Happy New Year Y'all!!

They say the new year is all about 'fresh starts' and 'new beginnings,' Eye roll, I know. But here I am, embarking on a new journey - to New York! #newyearnewme.

It all happened so fast! I guess that's the theme for me for when God is in control. I love my job and I love living in the Bay. I joined my team a little over three years ago. We are a startup nuzzled in the confines of a big tech company. Our task: Develop a world class global sales training program.

Fast forward three years: We're totally doing it!! I love the crazy of a startup - I thrive in the madness. For sports fans - it's the 4th quarter - All.The.Time. What keeps me sane is knowing I have a greater purpose. It's fun to see how God uses me at work, and how He uses what I learn through work to glorify Him.

A recent casual coffee date with my director quickly turned into a new job offer and a move for me across the country. I'll be helping to redesign our Sales Onboarding program to be launched in 2019 in New York City. My grandpa always tells me to 'work hard while I'm young.' Well, I'm doin' it, Gramp! Like a start-up, my life is a constant sprint. I've learned that God made me this way.

People always ask if I grew up at SanLo. I'm quick to answer 'No!' But actually...I-totally-did. Mind blown. It's only been seven years, but God has used SanLo to raise me in my faith. I truly found my identity in Christ at SanLo. That's HUGE for me as I think about the move. If I wasn't grounded in my identity and my faith, I'm confident NYC would eat me alive. Now that I'm leaving, I guess I can be totally honest - I didn't choose to come to SanLo. I didn't even choose to stay. Op there it is. You know I love you.

I came to SanLo because my grandma brought my cousin, Sarah, and me. Gram never attended church and considered herself "Buddhist by association," so we were shocked she even wanted to try it out! SanLo has, hands down, the best welcoming crew and Gram was hooked. SanLo on Sundays became 'a thing' for the Asai girls. Seven years later, and we've got the routine down: Sarah



**Yone Asai with her granddaughter, Stacie, enjoying their vacation in Oahu. Yone is the reason Stacie and her cousin, Sarah, came to SanLo!**

and I show up late to Gram's house. ... ok fine...I show up late to Gram's house. She's prepped breakfast, we chat a bit, hop in the car, and she drives us to church. You thought we brought her, huh? Nope, she insists - and we fear for our lives the whole way from San Ramon to San Lorenzo!

Gram is the matriarch of the family -- the coolest and smartest person I know (she will beat you in Jeopardy any day!). She tells me that she knew there was something more to life. There's no way there couldn't be a God. She was searching, and found what she was looking for at SanLo. She now considers herself a Christian. Praise God!

I stayed at SanLo because God is doing something crazy. And you know I love crazy. I see SanLo as a start-up -- there is urgency in our mission. I've seen many accept Christ as Lord and Savior, my Gram being one. I've seen lives changed by mentors and pastors, I'm exhibit A. I've seen friends head off to seminary. I've seen the church number multiply in adults and kiddos (there is DEFINITELY something in the water..!).

God is so present at SanLo, it's palpable. He encouraged me to want to know more; to learn about Him, about myself, about how He's made me, and to seek Him with everything I've got.

So, I served. I served anywhere y'all would have me. I popped up in youth group, in Ignite, in Grow SanLo, in Regional Gathering, in small group, etc. When you sprint towards God, the results are addicting. There's no denying it - if you seek God, seek the Holy Spirit, He's right here. And it's wild.

SanLo, to me, isn't a place or a church building, it's a spirit - a vibe. It's Sunday mornings with Gram and Sarah, it's a genuine smile or big bear hug.

It's knowing I've got an army of friends praying for me. It's pure joy because it's a reflection of Jesus.

The last seven years have been the most transformative and liberating for me and SanLo was a HUGE part of that! I know this new adventure will bring ups, downs, twists, and turns, but you better believe I'll carry that SanLo spirit with me wherever God leads :).

My wish is that God gives me an awesome experience in NYC for a couple years and then calls me back to the Bay Area. My prayer, is that His will be done.  
OXO, -- Stacie Asai

*Celebrating Pastor Rod and Koko's  
years of dedicated service  
to San Lorenzo JCC!*



*Place: Bay Area Chinese Bible Church  
1801 No. Loop Rd., Alameda  
When: Jan. 26, 2019, 11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.*

*Registration for the celebration is  
closed, but if you would like to  
be on the waiting list, please  
contact the church.*

## GROW SANLO Update



We praise God for the \$661,938 raised which is 44% toward our goal of \$1.5 million for a new church facility! Thank you for your generosity to the Lord and for our future!!

After the GROW SANLO Summit, the elders and leadership heard many of your hopes and dreams for the future as we all participated in discussions about our future, and you gave us creative and innovative ideas as we move forward. We believe through your enthusiasm and commitment that God is leading us to continue to press on toward our goal. We see this next phase as one peak in climbing a mountain toward our capital campaign goal of \$1.5 million.

If you have felt the Lord has blessed you through the ministry of our church and you have a desire to GROW God's kingdom in the Bay Area, please prayerfully consider giving toward the GROW SANLO campaign. It may be a one-time donation or pledge to make an on-going donation so we can continue to GROW SANLO.

*Press On – Elder Board*