



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*

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## **"Being Thankful to the Lord in Difficult Times"**

I don't have to tell you about the difficult times that the world is experiencing lately. We have all been a part of it and watched it unfold before our eyes. Covid-19, people ill and dying, shelter-in-place, the loss of jobs and the effect on the economy. Add to it, the terrible death of George Floyd in Minneapolis, the opening of our eyes to the racial injustice that is still in our country, the major protests and damage to our cities by the looters. Still, we can find bright spots to be thankful to our Lord Jesus Christ for.

Last Sunday, I taught Sunday School for the Middle Schoolers via Zoom. The lesson for Sunday was "Jesus heals 10 Lepers" from Luke 17:11-19. <sup>11</sup> While traveling to Jerusalem, He passed between Samaria and Galilee. <sup>12</sup> As He entered a village, ten men with leprosy met Him. They stood at a distance <sup>13</sup> and raised their voices, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" <sup>14</sup> When He saw them, He told them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And while they were going, they were cleansed. <sup>15</sup> But one of them, seeing that he was healed, returned and, with a loud voice, gave glory to God. <sup>16</sup> He fell facedown at His feet, thanking Him. And He was a Samaritan. <sup>17</sup> Then Jesus said, "Were not ten cleansed? Where are the nine?" <sup>18</sup> Didn't any return to give glory to God except this foreigner?" <sup>19</sup> And He told him, "Get up and go on your way. Your faith has saved you."

Luke 17:11-19

The key message to the students was "Thankfulness is the natural response to God's work in our lives." The fact that these 10 men were victims of a terrible disease reminded me so much of Covid-19 and the health crisis that many in America have experienced. Yet, there are many things that have

happened during this same time period that we can be thankful to the Lord for -- The bright spots or blessings that happen each day.

Many of us can be thankful that we are healthy and safe. We can thank the Lord for answering our prayers that our families are healthy or for those that have been ill, have recovered. We can be thankful for all the good work and sacrifices that the essential workers are doing to care for those that are sick, such as the doctors, nurses, hospital workers and healthcare professionals. And beyond that, all the police, firemen, EMTs, truck drivers, grocery store workers, teachers, and more. We can thank the Lord for all of these people.

Many have experienced joyful blessings. I know of three babies born during this time, a blessing to their families. I'm thankful for how technology has allowed SanLo to carry on Sunday worship, Bible studies and prayer via video conferencing. Still, I know that there have been multiple tragedies and bad times too for some people. I know some at our church have experienced the terrible results of the virus for their family or friends. Our hearts and prayers go out to all of them. We ask the Lord to comfort them and provide His peace.

With all that is happening around us, we can show our thankfulness for God's work in our lives and the world. Just as the leper, we need to remember to return to Jesus and express our thankfulness.

*With much prayer and thanks,  
Jeff Kataoka*

# CONGRATULATIONS!

*Class of 2020!*

## We thank God for our high school seniors!

Looking back, high school was okay. I had good friends and we had fun, I had homework and many late nights. My overall experience was mediocre, nothing more nothing less. But I'm glad that it wasn't just that, that my previous four years wasn't just high school.



Church played a big role in my life. Every Friday I would go to youth group and unlike school, I felt comfortable there, I could be myself. It was my safe haven. What had the most impact on me was having good youth leaders to talk to. People I could be real with about my faith, struggles and questions.

The most impactful youth leader for me was Nathan Masuda. Knowing him since I entered youth group in 6th grade, he has guided me throughout my teen years, listening. I received a better grasp of what I was experiencing. He helped me realize that God was doing things day to day, and that it's okay to struggle and have questions. More than anything when I look back, I have to thank Nathan for being there these past six years.

*-- Samuel Inori*

Being the class to graduate during COVID-19, the end of the school year definitely tested my faith, yet I am grateful for my time at California Crosspoint Academy for helping me grow in my spiritual life.



The staff have been caring in leading Friday Night Bible Study, Bible class three days a week,

and chapel presented by pastors from local churches including Pastor Scott and Pastor Josh. I've enjoyed the small group discussions in these activities to study the Bible with teachers and classmates, helping each other apply Bible verses to our lives. In addition, I've worked with staff individually to overcome my spiritual doubts and mental and emotional hardships through Biblical counseling.

One passage my principal recommended for me is Psalm 23, which is especially applicable now to be reassured that God is here for us. Finishing my senior year virtually, I am excited to attend college at UC Riverside! I look forward to meeting fellow Christians by joining the school's Asian American Christian Fellowship and hopefully finding a Christian roommate. I would appreciate prayers for college to start in-person and a smooth transition into college. Thank you!

*-- Angela Louie*

High school has been the best experience and greatest adventure of my life. Granted, I'm young and life most assuredly has more in store for me. I will remember the lessons, friendships, and blessings I have been given. School was never difficult for me; my greatest challenges always originated from my life separate from my classes, and ultimately made me into who I am today.



Whether it was the huge differences between my personality and those of my family that have strained our relationship or the wavering status of my faith and how I defined myself, there were many obstacles that were present with few other constants remaining true throughout my high school career.

Ultimately, I believe God has brought me through high school with friendships and others He put into

my life to provide light for me and for me to provide light for them. Were it not for the people I met, I am not sure if the outcome would have been the same. The friends I met in my four years have been indescribable blessings. Additionally, I was given many resources in my walk with God in the form of the youth group, RING discipleship, friends I met on Sundays after service, and the new college Bible Study group led by Nathan and Mika. These have all been blessings in my life.

Regarding next steps, God opened many doors and blessed me with the luxury of various options. I was accepted at UC Riverside, UC San Diego, and CSU East Bay. After much consideration I have accepted admission at CSU East Bay as a jazz studies major, studying under one of the best jazz saxophonists on the West Coast, Dann Zinn. I eagerly await the next steps in my life and ask for simple prayers of general support. I am excited to begin the next chapter and hopefully build upon what have been the best four years of my life.

-- Cale Lee-Takaki

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## Grow SANLO Update – We are so grateful!



In these challenging times, the church leadership has felt so blessed by your generosity. We are beyond grateful for your amazing giving to support our General Fund and GROW SANLO campaign. This past month, **we hit a milestone of over \$1 million** in donations for our capital campaign with a special thanks for a significant donation. However, we know life has changed for many in the midst of this COVID-19 time, and we understand it may be a challenge to give. We

realize that many of you are facing financial hardships of your own, so please do not feel obligated to give in hardship. If you need assistance, please let us know as we do have a Crisis Fund available.

We are humbled as you continue to support San Lo's gospel ministry. **Your giving continues to ensure we are a gospel community of growth for every generation.**

### COVID-19 Update: Reopening - Safety First!

The Elders are grateful that we can continue to meet together online through the benefits of technology. We long for the day when we can meet back together in person, and we want you to know that we are keeping track of the latest updates from our governing authority especially in Alameda County as it has seen a high rate of COVID-19 infections. **Therefore, we have outlined steps toward reopening:**

- Create a strategic plan
- Consult medical professionals and local churches.
- Submit to the governing authority and love our neighbors.
- Build in the proper safety procedures and protocols (COVID-budget - \$20k - new technology to keep online services going and cleaning services)
- Survey the church (*thank you for completing the survey!*)
- Continued online service even after reopening.

The Elders have decided to continue to withhold in person services through June even though you might hear and see other churches reopen. We want to ensure a safe and meaningful environment when we do reopen.

While we are meeting online, Stan Naruo has effectively used the time to make improvements. He has opened up the stage and built a wall for a 85" TV that was generously donated to us for our English sanctuary. These improvements were already planned to take place, so we are grateful for the opportunity to do so. We appreciate the hard work of Stan to make these amazing improvements. Please continue to pray for the elders as we make decisions toward reopening.

*In His Care,*

*Pastor Eric on behalf of the Elders*