

GROWING TOGETHER

A publication of San Lorenzo Japanese Christian Church
 "A Gospel Community of Growth for Every Generation"

Keeping CHRIST in our Christmas Traditions

Editor's Note: One of our newest SanLo families is actually a family we've supported over the years as missionaries in a sensitive country (last names omitted for security purposes). They arrived to the Bay Area and hit the ground running, serving at our SanLo VBS, Harvest Festival and as Sunday School teachers as soon as they could! I asked if they would be willing to share a few of their favorite Christmas traditions so we can get to know them a little better. Read on to be encouraged!

Christmas is such a special time! Whether being overseas or being back here in the U.S., our family has enjoyed a variety of holiday activities. Over the years we've tried to keep certain traditions to help us remember the true meaning of Christmas. We've also tried to look for opportunities to share our hope and joy with others around us. Here are a couple of those highlights:

Hosting Christmas Parties - We've hosted many Christmas parties over the years. Parties for Mia's classmates, parties for Makoto's university students, and parties for other friends. In our time overseas, it has been especially meaningful to introduce the Christmas story to our local friends. It's often a natural lead in to talk more about our faith. This year, we are looking forward to hosting

some international students for a Christmas party.

Baking cookies - Amy and Mia enjoy baking year round but the production really ramps up during Christmas. Giving baked gifts to friends, students, and kids' classmates have been a way to bless others during the holidays. Amy and Mia also used to bake cookies for a local orphanage each Christmas.

Advent readings - Bible reading is a regular part of our family's nighttime routine but each December we spend time reading through advent focused devotions. It's been good to spend each day in the month to open our hearts and reflect on the arrival of our Lord and Savior. Our family really enjoyed reading through *Prepare Him Room*, an Advent devotional by Marty Machowski last year.

It's been a blessing for our family to be part of the SanLo community. We look forward to spending Christmas together as a church community. As we approach Christmas, we hope that you get to experience some fun holiday activities. But we also hope that you get to enjoy some Christmas traditions that lead to a deeper love and joy in Christ.

- Makoto, Amy, Mia and Samuel T.



Thanksgiving and Christmas are wonderful times of year to reflect on our God-given blessings and to be good stewards of the time and resources God has given us. Help SanLo finish 2021 strong by contributing to our General Fund at <http://bit.ly/sanlogive>.

SanLo is partnering with the San Lorenzo Family Help Center (our local food pantry) to raise funds for local families in need. We are thankful for Janelle Morimoto who is heading up this much needed ministry. If you have questions, contact Jeff Kataoka or Janelle Morimoto. Just \$7 provides dinner groceries for a family of 5. You can give at <http://bit.ly/sanlogive> and choose "Thanksgiving/Christmas" fund.



Grow SanLo and Reopening Updates



Grow SanLo Update:

Thank you for your faithful giving and generosity! We have reached a very important point in our Grow SanLo campaign at 92% of our goal, and we have received the pre-approval letter for a \$1.5 million loan.

Please look out for upcoming updates. We have set a very important church meeting for **Sunday January 9th at 12:15 pm. Mark your Calendars!!** We will be providing you with the steps forward on our church facility.

COVID-19 Update: Expanding our Reopening!

Christmas Sunday at 9 am and 11 am - We are expanding our reopening in December by going back to two services starting on Christmas Sunday December 19th at 9 am and 11am.

Come join us as we celebrate Christmas for All! We will have a special treat with a coffee and hot chocolate bar. Don't miss out on this wonderful time of year to celebrate Christ's birth!

Important Notes:

- **Registration:** It will continue to be online through our weekly email updates or church website. You can register yourself and your family unit. The registration will be first come first serve open on Mondays. It will be **OPEN to 50% capacity, which will allow up to 125 people** in each service.
- **Sunday School Ministry Indoors from 1st to 5th grades and 6th-8th grades:**
 - Make sure to register your child for Sunday children's ministry **ONLY**. No need to register them for service.
 - Please bring your child with you to worship service at 10:45 am (or 11 am when we move to two services). Kids registered for Sunday School will be released to their classrooms after the praise and worship singing.
 - While we don't have an official program for our 2 year olds through kindergarteners, rooms 1-3 (the nursery) is open during worship service as a self-managing play area. There is a limit of 15 kids (and their parents) so please pre-register if you want to use the area during service.
- **Live Streaming:** We will continue our live streaming service for those who would like to remain at home and contact Betty Nakasone for the Zoom Sunday school. Zoom Sunday School for kids TK-5th grade is available from 9:30 am - 10:15 am.

We look forward to seeing you in person and worshipping the Lord together.

In His Care,
Pastor Eric on behalf of the Elders



Congratulations on your ordination Reverend Joshua Makoto Scott!!

Sermon Schedule

We are taking a break from our Acts "Unleashed" series to focus on the Advent season.

12/5/2021 (Pastor Brian)
Advent Week 2 - Luke 1:46-56

12/12/2021 (Pastor Scott)
Advent Week 3 - Luke 1:57-80

12/19/2021 (Pastor Eric)
Advent Week 4 - Luke 2:1-21

12/26/2021
(Pastor Brian)
Luke 2:22-38

