



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

# Firmly Rooted

"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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## Traditions

**"...But the angel of the Lord said to them, 'Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy...Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you, He is Christ the Lord..." Luke 10-11**

Of course, the true meaning of Christmas centers on the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. But, it is also a time to reflect about family, blessings, and traditions.

Judy and I have been blessed, especially this year, with the birth of our beautiful granddaughter, Addison. Years from now, what do we want her to remember about us? What traditions do we hope to share with her? What memories will she have about us?

What are the memories our daughters, Jennifer and Akemi, have about us? One memory I hope they will cherish is our traditional reading of the Christmas story every Christmas morning before opening presents. We have done this every year for 38 years. We started by reading from children's books and switched to different versions of the Bible as our daughters got older. We also have traditions for other major holidays that I hope they will remember and, perhaps, continue.

What traditions and memories are you forming?

When I return to my college reunions every five years in Brunswick, Maine (Bowdoin College), I participate in a memorial service in our college chapel where we remember our classmates who have passed away. This is a very meaningful time for me.

What traditions and memories have we established and are we establishing at San Lorenzo Japanese Christian Church?

- We have a tradition and history based upon our Japanese-speaking brothers and sisters.
- This is a history from our roots in the Holiness Conference and found in our Mission Statement.
- We are a traditional multigenerational church that provides a special attraction to all of us.

- We have a sharing time that has deepened our relationships and strengthened our dependency on prayer.

The list goes on and on.

There are also some traditions or practices that change. For example, we have a very active website to attract seekers. In the past, we would have sent flyers or postcards as part of our outreach. We have praise singing and hymns where we once had only hymns. We have eliminated our pastoral prayer and replaced it with other prayers during our service.

The important thing is to retain the traditions and truths that build the foundation for our church body and to know when it is time to change.

May you have many fond memories and traditions.

And may our Lord bless you with a very Merry Christmas.

-- Gary Yamashita

**Please come and worship  
with us on Christmas Sunday,  
Dec. 19. There will be  
two services, 8:45 a.m.  
and 10:45 a.m.**



**Nursery and children's church will only be  
offered during the 10:45 a.m. service.**

**Sunday school is canceled  
Dec. 19 and Dec. 26.**

**All classes will resume on  
Sun., Jan. 2, 9:30 a.m.**

**Have a blessed Christmas  
celebrating the birth of Jesus!**

# Love East Bay!

For the second year in a row, SLZICC has participated in the Love East Bay event. It is a half day service event from 9 a.m.-12 p.m., where our church partnered with several other churches in the San Leandro area to serve and to love our community. I was excited to see an increased number of participants from our church.

Many of our members took part by planting a garden at a near by senior center, helping to clean up the San Lorenzo Creek, making fleece blankets for seniors, or creating cards for servicemen and women. Thank you to all who participated and for many of you who contributed to the event by donating various supplies and food which were sent to servicemen and women overseas. It is great to see our church reaching our community for Christ. I hope you'll join us next year!

*To His Glory, Pastor Eric*

My name is Sarah Yee. On Oct. 9, my two sons and I attended a community event called, Love East Bay. I chose to participate in making Christmas cards for the military. I chose this event because I think it is never too early to teach my boys about "giving back." My husband, Ed, and I have been so blessed in our own individual lives and with God providing us with two wonderful, loving, kind boys. It only seemed right that we would want to share with others the many ways in which God has blessed us and showered us with His unconditional love.

We arrived at Creekside Community Church to many eager, happy faces. It was a bit overwhelming as we tried to find our place amidst the hustle and bustle. Things quickly settled as we were led in song and prayer before all of us broke off in our smaller groups. I had brought our supply of stamps, markers and colored pencils. To my astonishment, God was working in a completely undetected way from the moment we signed up for this event. When we walked into the smaller room and displayed our individual card-making supplies, no two people brought the same things.

In just a short hour or so, an announcement came from our coordinator that we had made enough Christmas cards. We met the quota so easily and the love in the room was so apparent to all. In fact, my boys didn't want to stop making cards. They really had a good time. Our card making was followed by a delicious Mexican lunch with one of the best chocolate cakes for dessert. Thanks to Frank Nakasone for sharing one of his with us!

One last example of how deeply moved I was by participating in Love East Bay -- at dinner that night, the boys were sharing about the day to Ed. After providing many details, Nathaniel looked across the table at me and said, "Hey Mom, guess what?" I said, "What?" and he proceeded to state, "God's love was definitely in the room today." Yes, Jesus!!

-- Sarah Yee

My name is Nathaniel. I had a good time making cards for the soldiers. It was nice to see some people from SLZICC, the church I go to. I also enjoyed meeting new people. There were about 7 to 8 churches there and it was fun. We are looking forward to next year. P.S. I love Jesus.

-- Nathaniel, age 7 1/2

My name is Kenji. I am 6 years old and in first grade. To show God's love, we made Christmas cards for the troops. I like the part when we ate and we did making cards. I sat next to a woman called Gail. She shared stickers with us. It was fun.

-- Kenji, age 6 1/2

Eleven women from the Women's Bible Study participated in the Fleece Blanket Making project for the residents at Jones Nursing Home.



We first gathered at Creekside Church for an uplifting time of praise singing and prayer. We then disbursed into our project groups where we cut and prepared fleece fabrics for the blanket making at Jones Nursing Home. Once there at the Home, we each came alongside and paired with a resident to assist them with the making of the blanket which they kept. Afterwards, there was a time of Bingo and much laughter. What a rewarding and heart tugging experience to see the smiles and joy in their faces from such a brief and simple time spent with them. How grateful and humbled we are for this opportunity. Praise God!

-- Marilyn Kadomatsu



## More Love East Bay ...

My day began at Creekside Community Church in San Leandro where I arrived to a bustling room full of energy. This room was the staging area for the many projects that encompassed Love East Bay, one of which was the San Lorenzo Creek Cleanup which I was a part of. Once at San Lorenzo Creek, I was given the task of picking up litter and removing the invasive pepperweed plant. Being outdoors and with nature was great - it felt like I wasn't in an urban city anymore. Seeing people of all ages come together to do this project really brought forth a sense of community. I was blessed by God that day by helping others in addition to the environment. Whether it was helping people lift something heavy or holding a child's hand so they didn't fall, I felt that what I was giving kindness and compassion to others. I felt this was the true meaning of Love East Bay -- spreading love to others, even in the smallest of ways, while working to improve the East Bay Community.

-- Josh Lai

Our job was to clear out an old garden to prepare it for a new crop to be planted at a senior center. I worked as a gardener for several years and my job would get tedious. Since I've come to the church this past year, I've volunteered for three different projects. Even though it's been the same type of work I did before, it feels so different. I believe it's partly because I serve in the name of Christ and I enjoy being around such good people. I like being around people who are motivated and have a purpose.

Since I've been at this church I notice the leadership and staff have been able to inspire us and to challenge us to serve. They aren't just telling people what to do, they are out there doing it too. It's been a long time since I have felt a sense of accomplishment, but since I've been following Christ, everything is different and I'm having fun!

-- Glen Toji



## Harvest Festival Draws Crowd

(even with the Giants in  
the World Series!)



The Harvest Festival was a great evening that drew a crowd of close to 300 people. There were 72 adults and 83 children who did not attend our church, so we were glad to open our doors to them and give a warm welcome!

Along with fun costumes, great food, games, and lots of treats, Red and Stripes, our puppets, shared about Jesus and His sacrificial love for us. Thank you to Scott Shimada and the many helpers who pitched in and gave so much time. Thank you to the Sugiyamas and their kitchen crew for all the hard work in preparing dinner and snacks. Praise God for a safe and fun evening!



### California Women's Retreat -- "We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure."

Ladies, do you feel adrift in today's busyness of life? Do you know where you are anchored?

Spend a refreshing weekend at the California Women's Retreat. This yearly retreat is held at the San Ramon Marriott and offers inspiring speakers, heart-moving praise singing, fellowship, and time away from hectic schedules. Mark your calendars for February 25 -27, 2011. Registration forms are in the church foyer. There is assigned seating, so let's register as a group so we can all learn, praise God and share meals together. Go to: <http://www.cawr.org/> for more information. Contact Nadine Yamamoto to register. Early registration ends on Jan. 24, 2011.