



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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## Characteristics of Great Schools (or Churches?)

For many, the close of summer means the beginning of the school year. As parents of a newly minted college freshman, my research turned up an article called Characteristics of Great Schools.



As I read through the qualities and descriptions one should seek, my thoughts focused on how several noted equally well as to what makes great churches. I offer these for your reflection.

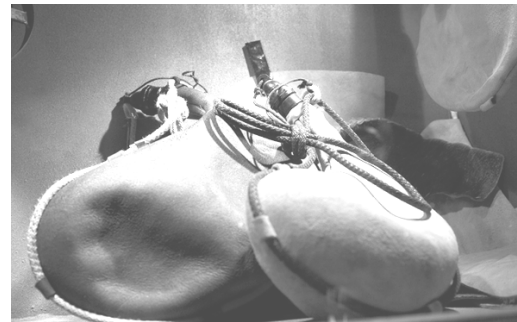
**"Community of Learners.** All in a community of learners are engaged actively in their learning."



It is our personal responsibility to not be pew sitters. How much initiative do you take in order to know God better?

**"Collegiality.** Actively help one another become more skillful." Though self-motivation is important, as a church we need to encourage one another in growing our faith, knowledge, and abilities as Christians. Are you taking advantage of group learning opportunities such as home Bible Studies, Sunday School, and youth activities?

**"Risk Takers.** It is impossible to make a significant move forward without encountering risks. The only difference between a rut and a grave is the depth of the hole." It is far too easy to do the routine. Churches need to be flexible, adaptive, and look to becoming "new wineskins." As church demographics change, so must our strategies, outreach, format, and communication.



**"Humor.** Humor is strongly associated with learning and the development of intelligence." How important it is to express our joy in Christ. Do you join in times of fellowship to share, support, listen, and laugh together?

**"Community of Leaders.** A school can fulfill no higher purpose than to teach all its members that they can make what they believe in to happen and encourage them to contribute to and benefit from the leadership of others."



Leadership is found not in titles, education or position but in a heart attitude of servanthood and sacrifice. Are you seeking to serve Him and one another as God desires us to do and be?

-- Pastor Rod Yee

# God Knows What's Best for Me

By: Jane Lee

I feel so blessed that God has led us to San Lorenzo Japanese Christian Church ... the staff and church family have been so friendly and have been so welcoming to my husband, Ben and me. Thank you so much. I appreciate being asked to share a bit about myself in the church newsletter. I enjoy reading other's testimonies and getting to know the church family.

I was born and raised in San Antonio, Texas, the eldest daughter of Chinese immigrant parents. I have four younger brothers and sisters. Our parents owned a mom and pop grocery store, working long hours, seven days a week to provide for us. They were not believers as we were growing up. God chose us and provided a wonderful elderly Christian couple from the Chinese Baptist Church to help to bring us to the knowledge of Christ. They came every Sunday morning to pick my brothers and me up for Sunday School and church.

I was only five years old when they first took me to church. So, we grew up hearing Bible stories, singing Bible songs. It was natural to me to know that God loved me, Christ died for me and to ask Him to come into my heart. I remember praying for my siblings and my parents to come to know the Lord. I thank the Lord that our prayers were answered for our parents after they retired. Both our parents accepted the Lord as their Savior and were baptized. I rejoice because we know they are with the Lord now.

Fast forwarding... I attended the University of Texas, Austin, and during that time, I met my future husband, Benny. He attended Texas A&M University and it's a long story how we met. What is important is that he loves the Lord and we celebrated our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary this past year. God has blessed us with three loving sons, Darryl, Joshua and Jeremy. Our Jeremy lives in Irvine and just got married. We are grandparents of three fabulous grandsons, Noah, Luke and Zachary.

Praise the Lord that we have three beautiful daughters-in-law, Glady, Adora and Jennifer.



**Adora (Jane's daughter-in-law) with son, Zachary, and Jane enjoying family time ...**

Last year I retired from the Alameda Unified School District after 40 years of service as a class room teacher, district office administrator and principal. Now I'm learning to "do retirement" with Benny. I must admit the best thing is not having the stress of work responsibilities. It's been such a blessing to join the Women's Bible Study group each Wednesday morning.

As I write this quick recap of events in my life, I'm reminded of our study in Jeremiah. God wants us to be as clay in the potter's hand so that He can mold and shape me into the person He desires me to be - I've had to reflect about the times when I haven't been listening to God's leading, when I've believed that I could take care of myself. I want to be a more grateful Christian and open to the Lord's leading and ready to follow Him. Proverbs 3:5-6 have been two of my favorite verses, *"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight."*

In spite of my sinful nature which I must constantly fight, God has been merciful, gracious and so faithful as He directed our paths.

Benny and I are still getting to know all of you and I ask your forgiveness when I don't remember your name or who your spouse is, etc. It's wonderful to be at SanLo, worshiping with all of you and Josh, Adora and Zachary. Thank you for your warm welcome as we have joined the church family -- officially becoming members this past April.

# Vacation Bible School 2010



*This year's VBS, July 19-23, High Seas Expedition, was a fun-filled week, packed with Bible learning and exploring the mighty love of God! There were 83 children registered and 20 first-timers. Thanks to Gloria Kama, our faithful VBS Director, along with volunteers like, Tracy Sugiyama, who helped transform the chapel into a High Seas Adventure meeting place! It was a church-wide effort as there were over 60 helpers and many who donated snacks and prizes for the week. Tracy Sugiyama and her sister, Emily, and brother, Timothy share their thoughts on this year's VBS ...*

We have attended San Lo's Vacation Bible School over the many years. It was always a highlight of the summer for us as "crew kids" and it STILL is as we have grown up, now serving as "Crew Leaders & Helpers." This past VBS High Seas I, (Tracy) served as the Crew Leader for the all-girl group, Marina, which consisted of the 4th and 5th grade girls and helped organize decorations. My sister, Emily, served as a Crew Helper in group, Lacey, with the 1st-2nd grade girls and boys. This was my brother, Tim's 2nd year helping with the 4-5 year old preschool class. No matter how busy the summer can be, we can never pass up the opportunity to serve at VBS. VBS is a rewarding way to experience serving God in a fun, flexible and comfortable atmosphere. By the end of the week, it feels good when your crew kids get comfortable enough to run up to you, call you by your name and hug you without hesitation. We look forward to what next summer's theme will bring!!

*-- Tracy Sugiyama*

"I like helping the preschoolers because they make me laugh and are energetic. It's a good thing when you can teach kids about God but at the same time have fun too!"

*-- Tim (11)*

"This was my first year serving as a crew helper (I normally do the preschool class) and it was fun interacting with the 1st and 2nd graders. I liked taking them to each station but it was a lot of work at times. Haha! But the good thing about this age is that they are starting to be independent, so you don't have to do everything for them. Anyways, I can't wait to serve next summer because each VBS brings a new adventure, new kids, and new friends!!"

*-- Emily (14)*



**Tracy enjoys time with her girls!**



**The guys bond during rec. time**

**Luke Nakasone, Stephanie Kishi and Zachary Sarena love VBS!**



**LOVE EAST BAY – formerly Love San Leandro**  
**Save the date to serve our community!**

**Oct. 16, 9 a.m. to 12 noon**

**A day to gather with other San Leandro churches to love and serve our community.**  
**Pastor Eric is looking for leaders and volunteers to help with military boxes (help prepare gifts for servicemen and women), bike clinic (help kids fix their bikes for free), hands of mercy (build pre-fab walls for homes in Mexico), making Christmas cards for the military (bring the kids!), clean up San Leandro Creek, making fleece blankets for nursing homes, urban church basketball tournament, First Resort baby shower for a teen girl, Fargo Center (garden a senior living quarter), and more!**  
**Make plans to come and serve!**