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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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## Ask Not

John F. Kennedy was the 35<sup>th</sup> president of the United States. One of his quotes that I always remember is, "And so, my fellow Americans, ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country." If I changed a couple of words, it would read like this, "And so, my fellow church members, ask not what your church can do for you; ask what can you do for your church." Kennedy's quote at the time was his way of asking the American people to perform volunteer work. The modification is my way of asking you to volunteer and help out at the church.

There is a myth that the pastors do all the work and run the church. At an earlier stage in the church's life, pastors did do tasks that are now performed by others out of necessity, because people resources were not as plentiful. Membership is larger than it was 25 years ago and our pastors cannot do everything past pastors did and be effective. The fact is without volunteers, the church could not function.

We have volunteers that have served for many years. Some responsibilities are highly visible and some are transparent to members and visitors. They continue to serve, because of their love of God and to serve Him. Serving can be a simple task of being a greeter for Sunday service or it can be more encompassing by being on the Board of Deacons or Trustees.

### **Road blocks to being a volunteer:**

1. "I'm not good at anything." - What do you like

to do? Do you have a hobby? One church member loves to cook and turned that passion into a ministry by volunteering to cook for most of our church events. Most of us have enjoyed his gourmet cooking at many fellowship times. We all have skills and passions that can benefit the church.

2. "I don't want to get stuck doing this forever." - Volunteering can be short term by helping the day of an event. There is Craft Day, Harvest Festival, 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament, VBS, and more that require help during the event.

3. "I'm shy." - There are many opportunities to serve in the "background."

4. "Why should I volunteer?" - The lives you touch benefit from your service. You benefit from the satisfaction of helping others, making new friends, and gaining a sense of belonging that we all seek. A common thread among volunteers is gaining more out of their service than what they put into it.

"How do I volunteer?" Whether you help with church clean-up once every few months, serve as an usher, greeter, teach Sunday school, help with a Coffee Hour, there is something for everyone and many ways to get involved. Contact our pastors or staff for more information and opportunities - they'll be happy to point you in the right direction or get you in touch with the proper contact person!

*Galatians 5:13 ... "but through love serve one another."*

■ Eric Lee

## The Never-Ending Love Of Christ

*Connie Gallegos and Kevin Tsurumoto were both baptized this past summer. They share of their spiritual journey and how they came to have a more committed relationship to Jesus Christ ....*



**Connie Gallegos**

I was born in Carlsbad, New Mexico. My parents had five children, four boys and a girl. I not only was the middle child, but the only girl. My family and I relocated to Oakland in 1961. My parents were devout Catholics. We attended church every Sunday as a family. I can remember taking my First Holy Communion, my Confirmation, and helping the nuns teach catechism at the age of 10, in the basement of an old Victorian home in Oakland. Little did I know that my helping the nuns teach other children would always serve me as a blessing. I look back now and I realize that my dear Father has always been with me and that His plan to choose me as His very own was His divine plan. It grieves me to think that it would take me almost 30 years to really know the Lord.

I married at a very young age, 17 years old. My marriage ended up in divorce and having two children. At the age of 24, I accepted an invitation to an Apostolic Church. It was so different from what I was used to. Their praise and worship was so exciting for me. It was different in that I, for the first time ever, felt loved and a freedom I didn't know. I accepted Christ as my Lord and Savior. I began attending church regularly, reading my Bible, praying and building a relationship with Christ. I can even remember the very first time I felt the Holy Spirit's presence. It was so awesome. I couldn't believe it.

Shortly after, my parents became ill. My father had a heart attack then suffered a stroke. My mother suffered from diabetes and had to go on dialysis. They were always ill -- in and out of hospitals. They lived in Modesto and I found myself having to run to them all the time. On top of this I remarried. I married Peter and after one year I was blessed with Peter John, my youngest son. I also worked full-time at Eden Hospital in the Radiology Dept.

Soon I found myself not going to church, not praying, and having no time to read the Bible. I became too busy for Jesus. It would take me another 25+ years to find my way back to Him.

It happened when my parents passed away. I found myself alone and afraid. I didn't know what to

do with myself. I had an emptiness in me that I couldn't fill. That void started to consume me. I felt depressed and very alone. My husband and children couldn't help me. It was then that I remembered Jesus. I called out to Him with tears streaming down my face and I prayed like I had never left Him. Jesus lifted me up quickly and I began to live again. Almost immediately I was back to praying and spending a lot of time talking with God about my life. God is merciful, forgiving and gracious. I know because He forgave me of my sins immediately. I'm a different person now in every way. I have changed as a wife, mother, grandmother, sister, etc. I now know what love is and I am able to share it. Having the Father in my life and living under His direction daily is my greatest blessing of all. Thank you, Jesus, for hearing my plea and bringing me home again.

I was baptized by Pastor Rod on Aug. 9 of this year in the sanctuary of SANLO. Thank you all so much for accepting me into your church and embracing me with so much love. SANLO is very special, I have made so many friends and I have learned so much from the Women's Bible Study. God blesses all.

*In His love, Connie Gallegos*

## Kevin's Story ....

Ever since I was young I had been exposed to the Word of God. While I was growing up, I attended a Christian school, and through that I was able to accept Jesus into my heart. But that was just something I did when I was young, and I really had no clue what it meant, I just kept living my same old life.



**Kevin Tsurumoto**

When I was in middle school, the Yoshihara family began to invite me to church and I began to attend regularly. I give them a lot of thanks, and I would probably not have gotten baptized if it weren't for them. As time went on, Jesus started to become more and more real to me. Then I attended Mt. Hermon, and that is something that changed my life. For the first time, my walk with God became a priority and not something I was only focused on when I had time for it. Throughout high school, I struggled with balancing my time for school, and my time for God, but whenever I found myself at a low point, it seemed like there was always something to pick me up.

I am praying that my walk will continue to grow as I now attend college at U.C. Irvine.

*-- Kevin Tsurumoto*



**The 55+ group had an outing to the Asian Art Museum on Sept. 18, in San Francisco. The next 55+ meeting will be a potluck on Fri., Nov. 20, 12 noon at the church**

## Congratulations Pastors!

Our church celebrated the acknowledgement of Pastor Rod Yee's ordination into the O.M.S. Holiness Conference on Sun., Oct. 18. Pastor George Toda announced the recognition of Pastor Rod's ordination in 1980 from another conference into the O.M.S. Holiness Conference and gave a prayer of dedication for Pastor Rod and Koko.

Dr. Gary Yamashita, our Board of Deacons Chairman, announced the licensing of Pastor Eric Yata and Pastor Brian Tekawa, which authorizes them to perform the sacraments of communion and the ordinance of baptism. A cake reception followed to congratulate our pastors and celebrate these important steps.



**Pastors Sunao Shimada, Rod Yee, George Toda, Brian Tekawa and Eric Yata on Sun., Oct. 18**

## Thanksgiving Basket



Our Annual Thanksgiving Food Basket starts in November.

Thanksgiving is coming soon and it is a good time to think about those that are in need of support. With the recession this year, the need to help people is even greater. The Junior Church will start the Thanksgiving Food Basket Competition on Sun., Nov. 1 and it will run for three Sundays, ending on Sun., Nov. 15.

As in previous years, we will divide the congregation into teams and have a friendly competition to see which team can bring in the most canned and non-perishable food. Every week, the Junior Church will weigh the canned food brought in by each team and record the weight. The Junior Church will prepare a special snack for the whole congregation at the Coffee Hour on Dec. 6th and the team with the most pounds of food will receive special recognition. Everyone will have a chance to participate.

Teams were announced on Sun., Oct. 25, and Thanksgiving Food Basket areas are ready to go. So, please be in prayer about this ministry and get ready to bring in your canned food donations.

-- Jeff Kataoka

## Operation Christmas Child

**Fill a Shoebox,  
Give a Blessing!**



**Operation Christmas Child** is an international Christian relief program that gives shoe boxes filled with gifts for needy children all over the world. Our church has the opportunity to give the joy of Jesus and bring gifts to children, 2-14 years old. Instructions and gift ideas are available at the church or go to: [www.samaritanaspurse.org](http://www.samaritanaspurse.org). Shoe boxes will be collected at the church until Sun., Nov. 22. A suggested \$7 donation for shipping (placed inside your box) is recommended.