



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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## The New in New Year



What will you be thinking when the year 2010 rolls around? For many, every new year brings an unwieldy list of new resolutions; we all desire to be or do better in our lives. From a survey of 300,000 people come the most common resolutions...with my suggested biblical emphases....

### 1. Lose Weight and Get in Better Shape

**Romans 14:6** "He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God."

### 2. Stick to a Budget / 3. Debt Reduction

**Luke 14:28** "For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it?"

### 4. Enjoy Quality Time with Family / Friends

**Ephesians 4:32** "Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you."

### 5. Find My Soul Mate

**Ephesians 3:17-19** "so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be

able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God."

### 6. Quit Smoking

**1 Corinthians 6:19** "do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?"

### 7. Find a Better Job

**Colossians 3:23** "Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men."

### 8. Learn Something New

**2 Corinthians 5:17** "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come."

### 9. Volunteer and Help Others

**Galatians 6:9-10** "Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. So then, while we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith."

### 10. Get Organized

**1 Corinthians 14:40** "But all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner."

Reflect on these resolutions through the mirror of scripture. **Happy New Year!!**

Pastor Rod Yee

## Joann's Story

*Joann Yata and David Wu became members of our church last August. We thank them for sharing their spiritual journey with us!*



Jesus said, "Come unto me, little children," (Luke 18:16) and that is what I did. As a young elementary school child in Chicago, IL, I went to church one Sunday with my aunt. There I sat listening to the minister give his message on salvation. The Lord touched my heart. I quietly sat in the pew and asked Him to come into my heart.

I don't recall telling anyone about what I did. I must have been rather scared as to what that really meant. I only knew I was a sinner and I needed Jesus.

Many years later at Gardena Valley Baptist Church, I became involved in the youth group. I began to realize what it was to have Jesus as not only my Savior, but my Lord. At the age of 16, I asked to be baptized. The church believed in full immersion, so in the water I went. Wanting to serve, I began to teach Sunday School. I don't know how great a teacher I was being so young and inexperienced, but I guess the Lord can use all those who are willing to serve.

Throughout life's ups and downs, I have always felt that Jesus was there for me. I now look back and see that even experiencing a temporary loss of my teaching position, the miscarriages my husband and I endured, the numerous relocations we have done, all have brought pain plus growth. Through them Jesus has helped build endurance, a dependence on Him, and a better result in the end. We need only to be "rooted firmly" in Him. He always does provide. His ways are the best. His blessings are never ending. He's given me a wonderful family, a comfortable house, a chance to be baptized in the Sea of Galilee where John baptized Jesus, and a new church to call home.

-- Joann Yata

## Dave's Story



I grew up in a non-Christian family, but was exposed to Christianity at an early age because of my cousin's family. Every time I would sleep over their house over the weekend, church was where we went on Sunday and I always thought it was boring. During dinner we would always say grace, but I just thought it was a ritual and something we did before we eat. It was not until my grandma passed away that our family decided to go to church, because she was a Christian. My aunt, at the time went to Contra Costa Gospel Church in Walnut Creek, so she persuaded my dad to go and he just brought the family. I was really upset going to church because it was on the weekends, a far commute, and I didn't understand the point.

Upon coming, I found it odd that everyone was ridiculously nice to me for no apparent reason. The first couple years, I would often skip Sunday school and service because I didn't want to sit through a lecture and sing kiddy songs. Eventually, I met a couple people who introduced me to many brothers and sisters at the church and they really guided me in my spiritual life. I believe it was my first all-church retreat in eighth grade that allowed me to become a part of the church community. I made many friends that have lasted until now, but I was not entirely sold on the concept of God, Jesus and Him dying for our sins. After getting plugged in, Sundays eventually became routine and I still felt a lack of something in my growth.

One of my friends told me to come to youth group because he said church on Sundays was not enough. He would offer to let me sleep over his house, but it just seemed like a hassle. I knew he was right and tried going to youth group, but it was just too far away. I went once every couple months, but never consistently. Everything would change my junior year of high school, as we hired a youth pastor, who would really change the face of youth group and my life forever. Eddie Cheng at the time was at Western Seminary and lived in Fremont, which was amazing because no one else went to CCGC from the tri-city area. Eddie's fiancé at the time, Cindy, lived about five minutes from me and he invited me to carpool

## New Year & New Community Life

*"And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."*

*Hebrews 10:24-25*

together to youth group every Saturday. Because Eddie was finishing up his degree at Western on Saturdays, I would drive over to Cindy's house and met up with Eddie to ride together for youth group.

I became a regular at youth group, and it made a huge difference in what I learned, the fellowship I had, and led me to really think about the concept of God, Jesus, and His love and grace for us. The same year, during a retreat at a time of worship, God really broke me down in tears for no apparent reason. I felt God's presence in that room like He was there with me and I accepted Christ. I reflected on my life, my sins, and what God had put in my life to lead me to Him. I felt it was crazy how God led me to Himself because of my circumstances. Without God putting Eddie in my life and having him live in Fremont, I don't think I would have come to receive Christ. Just thinking about how God wants everyone to come to repentance and have the gift of life was amazing. I felt that I was someone who had many barriers in becoming a believer, but God made it happen. What blew me away was every little thing that happened was part of His plan to lead me to Himself -- it couldn't have been coincidental but absolutely divine.

I was baptized my senior year of high school and God has continually been molding me since. God opened my eyes as He led me to two mission trips, one to Mexico and one to Korea. God eventually led me to San Lorenzo J.C.C. and has really allowed me to build a Christian community closer to my house which I lacked during my time at CCGC. The transition to this church was so easy because of already knowing people from RAV, BAM, and 3 on 3 basketball tournaments. Coming to San Lorenzo felt like home and there was just a comfortable feeling about being around such great brothers and sisters. I am really happy becoming a member of this church and am excited in the ways God will be using me!

-- Dave Wu

This past November our small group ministry class finished, and it was a great time of learning from each other and growing together in God's Word. As a church, we celebrate God's goodness in 2009; we are already looking forward to 2010. In the coming year, we have set a vision of growing our church spiritually through the small group ministry.

We are looking to start new small group communities in various parts of our church area. In order to do so, we are having a Small Group Kick-off and Breakfast on Sun., Jan. 10, at 9 a.m. Please come join us for a great time of fellowship, games, food, and information. We'll be sharing about the small group ministry and how you can participate in the growth of God's church. If you are interested in participating in a small group, then please feel free to contact me at [ekyata@yahoo.com](mailto:ekyata@yahoo.com). Many blessings on the New Year!

*To His Glory, Pastor Eric*

### **JOIN IN THE EXCITEMENT!**

**We're kicking off the new small group ministry! Find out what it's about:**

**Kick-Off Breakfast  
Sunday, January 10  
9:00 a.m.**

**Did you fill out a survey?  
The survey asked if you are open to  
leading a group, hosting a group  
in your home or interested in  
attending a group.**

**Surveys are available at the church**