



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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WHEN AMAZING HAPPENS *And God Renews us through Small Groups*

"We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us." 1 Thessalonians 2:8

This morning, I woke up at the crack of dawn to drop off my wife, Pam, at Oakland airport for a business trip to Southern California. We jumped onto the 880 freeway jammed with slow moving vehicles. It brought back a flood of memories when I was working at PG&E as an engineer, and I would make that daily grind from San Leandro to San Francisco with what seemed like everyone in the Bay Area. The commute was tough and tiring at times. Now my commute is only a few traffic lights away (tough life!).

It brought me back to that weary feeling when I would come home quickly and eat something before I would head off to San Lo Young and bible study. The difficult thing is that when I came home there would be almost always be this inner struggle between my flesh and my mind. My weary flesh would be telling me it would be so much better to stay home in the peace and quiet and watch my Oakland A's win (*they were winning at that time*). Everything in my body was screaming, "Just stay home!" But in the back of my mind and heart, God was always speaking to me, "No, I have something special for you. Get up and go to fellowship." Sometimes, in joy and other times in complaining, I would get up and go to bible study.

Yet, as I gathered together with brothers and sisters in Christ, we began to praise God through worship. There was a renewal that happened in my flesh and in my mind. As we dove into God's Word, there was refocusing that

took place on my God-given purpose in life. As we talked and laughed together, there was a reenergizing of my soul where my weariness turned into gladness. As we prayed with each other, there was a revival in my heart for the Lord. My small group became a place *where the amazing happened* like no other ballgame or TV show can. The reasons for not going became a distant memory, and I wondered why I thought that in the first place, because the time was so good!

I can say the same thing for then and now that my small group is a place where my life is changed and renewed for the Lord. This is why I'm so excited to see many of you overcome the daily challenges of life to spend time in a small group. It has been wonderful to see God work in your lives as four new small groups started and several small groups continue. It brings me great joy and excitement to see God moving and growing our church into a place where *No One Stands Alone*.

As we journey along in the sermon series on Christian Community and the vision of small groups, may God richly bless you through your fellowship together. I pray that if you haven't yet joined a small group or never thought about it, then you'd consider it because it certainly is a place *where the amazing happens* and where God renews us. May we as a church continue to follow in the words of 1 Thessalonians 2:8 by never giving up to live out the gospel of Jesus Christ in community with each other. -- Pastor Eric Yata

God Knows Best

By: Josh Lee

Growing up I've always had this attitude that I needed to plan ahead and be punctual for everything. This was great for school and even arriving to work on time. However through the years I've learned in good and bad ways that life isn't about how well you plan for things or how well you arrived on time, it's about what God wants you to experience in life and trusting that He will provide in every situation.

A year ago I remember adjusting back to work life. Our son, Zachary, was just over a month old and I had returned to work for about two weeks. This was probably one of the biggest challenges for me because I already had a lack of energy and sleep yet was going into work for a full day. At work, my future was very uncertain as my current manager moved me to a different group and building. He told me about this move my first week back at the office. There were so many questions in my mind: Why are you moving me? Do I bring any value to your area? Why would they make this decision while I'm out on leave? It's so easy to be angered and want answers all the time, but I had to take a step back and realize that God had a bigger plan and to trust Him. He did have a plan and the new group I was moved into was refreshing and a great new start.

Seven months later I found out my team was reorganized back to the manager who just moved me. I felt speechless and helpless. Is my position in jeopardy? Where are things leading? Why is this happening?

How can you praise God with trials and tribulations? For our family we knew God had provided for us in many situations prior. I think the reassurance and encouragement of this came from the San Lorenzo church family. I truly believe God developed relationships for us at SanLo to help encourage and remind us of community especially during challenging times. We will never forget the support and encouragement before and after our son was born through prayers, e-mails and meals.

I knew God had a plan for my work situation. If he wanted me to be there long term, He would work it out. If He didn't, He would still work it out and it meant there was another plan for me.

Josh Lee with his son, Zachary. Josh and his wife, Adora, became members of our church last August and have become a vital part of our church family.



At the end of last year I was let go. I am thankful for a generous severance package and the people I was able to network with during my tenure there. I am thankful for the time off to spend with my family and the flexibility to do projects. I am thankful for the opportunities to spend some time with people from our church.

Paul encourages the people of Ephesus that they are part of God's will and plan in Ephesians 1:11-12, *"In Him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of Him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of His will, in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of His glory."*

I look back and realize that God knows what is best for our lives and I need to trust Him the most when it's not easy or comfortable.



The church has paid your way and invites you to attend the BASS Convention, March 4-6, at Redwood Chapel in Castro Valley. With over 350 workshops to choose from you are sure to find something that will fit your specific interest. Go to the main sessions and hear Luis Palau, Dr. John Ortbert and John Teter. Worship with the BASS praise teams that lead the powerful worship sessions. Browse through the various booths and find great resources, books, dvds and cds. Go to the registration booth and let them know you are registered with San Lorenzo Japanese Christian Church. Programs are at the church or go to: www.bassconvention.org.

God's Mercies are New Every Morning

Jean Yamamoto, who attends our 55+ group, and is a part of the Fremont Asian Christian Church expresses her praise and thanks to God for answered prayers. Jean raised her two children at San Lorenzo J.C.C. and her late husband, Takashi Yamamoto, served as the chairman of the building committee and led the way to build our English sanctuary that we currently worship in now.

We give thanks and praise to God, along with Jean, for how He answers prayers!



Is it strange that God gives us miracles? Every day we pray hoping and believing that He will grant our request. Then we are amazed that He does! The answers are many times more than we imagined.

I believe that I am the recipient of your faithful prayers. I believe that God has answered your prayers along with those of other believers. This is why I am urged to share my thanksgiving and praise to God for His mercy and healing – *Psalm 105:1-3 says, "Oh, give thanks unto the Lord; call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples. Sing unto Him, sing psalms unto Him; talk ye of all His wondrous works. Glory ye in His holy name; let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the Lord."*

In the middle of November I started having symptoms of hiccups and burping which persisted through the first part of December. After several different medications this continued to get worse until my voice and swallowing became greatly affected. As I shared this with Emi Tabuchi and Jane Kishi, they requested prayer on my behalf. I might have been in denial but would like to believe that I placed my confidence in God and clung to the verse in Romans 8:38-39, *"I am persuaded that neither death, nor life...nor any other creation, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord."* So no matter what happened I would trust in God... knowing that prayers were being lifted up and it was totally in His hands.

On December 7th I drove to the emergency room after I was told that my left vocal cord was paralyzed and I needed to have a brain scan. The exam showed that I had an aneurysm but I didn't know this at the time but clung to the fact that many were praying for me.

The miracle is that I am alive. Had I waited another day to see the doctor, I would not be here. I saw in the hospital how quickly my condition worsened (voice and swallowing kept getting worse). I don't believe I could have gotten the care I needed had I waited. The other miracle is that the surgery was supposed to take 4 to 5 hours, but was performed in 1 1/2 hours.

God is showing mercy every day as I feel His healing hand. I give thanks and praise for the prayers that are lifting me up as I continue to recover.

"They (mercies) are new every morning great is thy faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in Him. The Lord is good unto those who wait for Him, to the soul that seeketh Him." Lamentations 3:23-25

-- Jean Yamamoto

All are invited to the 55+ Potluck and "Art of Gaman" Presentation



The 55+ will have a potluck luncheon on Fri., March 19, 12 noon. After lunch, Rick Quan will share his DVD production done in collaboration with author, Delphine Hirasune, on her book, *"The Art of Gaman,"* along with original camp artifacts that will be displayed. Both Rick and Delphine will be available to answer questions.

"The Art of Gaman: Arts and Crafts from the Japanese American Internment Camps, 1942-1946," showcases arts and crafts made by Japanese Americans in U.S. internment camps during World War II. Soon after the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December 1941, almost all ethnic Japanese – more than two-thirds of whom were American citizens by birth – were ordered to leave their homes and relocate to internment camps for the duration of the war. While in these bleak camps, the internees used scraps and found materials to make furniture and other objects to beautify their surroundings. Arts and crafts became essential for simple creature comforts and emotional survival. These objects are physical manifestations of the art of gaman, a Japanese word that means to bear the seemingly unbearable with dignity and patience (Note: *The Art of Gaman* book and video will be on exhibit at the Smithsonian Institute from March 5, 2010 to January 30, 2011).

Please invite others to learn about this important time in history. All ages are welcome! Sign up at the church or for more information, call the church office.