

The H ERALD Newsletter  
 Japanese Church of Christ  
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Pastor Brad Kramer  
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Worship Schedule:

Canceled until further notice  
 due to COVID -19 pandemic.

### 3 D V W R U ¶ V O H V V D J H

**August 2020**

I was recently asked to speak to our Deacons on the subject of prayer: specifically how to feel more comfortable when praying in front of others. This is such a good issue, that I jumped at the opportunity. In the midst of our time together, one of the Deacons asked if I would write an article for the Herald based on this subject. So I thought I might give you some of the high points of our discussion, in hopes of encouraging you to consider the value and joy of public prayer. Now I understand that many of you are already rejecting this idea, because prayer in a public setting can be at the very least uncomfortable and in many cases downright terrifying. So let me say that no one should feel obligated to pray out loud. However, I do believe there are some steps we can take that might ease the discomfort of such an intimidating activity, and actually allow us to find joy in adding another dimension to our Christian life.

Step 1. Simple and short is best - Like me, you have undoubtedly heard pastors and laypeople alike offer some RI WKH PRVW EHDXLIXO DQG 3VSLULWXDO DV ZHOOD DV OHQJWK\ SUD RIIHULQJV WR ZKLFK DOO \*RG ¶V SHR SaD Jesus In His Second Vis The Mount Rainier People HF against prideful public prayers that are long on content but short on substance and heart. I truly believe God is honored by the simplest of prayers, when they are true and sincere. This is not to devalue longer prayers. However, on a personal level, I really appreciate a prayer under 30 seconds that reveals a desire to honor and please God.

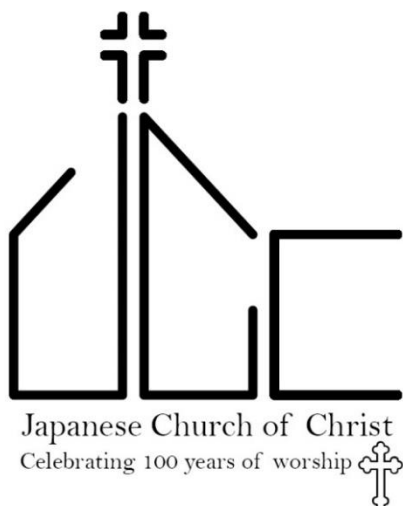
Step 2. Gratitude is key ±I often begin my prayers with gratitude. A grateful heart seems to be most appropriate fo U HYHQ D EULHI 3WDON ZLWK RXU /RUG 7KHUH DUH PDQ\ PRF EHRPH IRUJHWIXO RI ZKDW \*RG KDV GRQH IRU PH DQG EHJLQQLQJ P\ rest of the prayer. My suggestion is that you begin your prayers with thankfulness; and you will hopefully find the rest becoming easier.

Step 3. See prayer as conversation with God - Finally, instead of trying to be spiritual or religious, approach \RXU SUD\HU DV D FRQYHUVDWLRQ KZLW KL WRVGRX GRQHWVPHRSQ\ RU WKRX making casual small talk with a friend. (Continued on Page 2)

**The JCC Mission Statement**

To proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ and seek spiritual growth for the entire congregation through:

- Worship, prayer, and Bible study
- Outreach and evangelism
- Loving service to the Church and community
- Fellowship
- Cultural activities unique to our ethnic congregation



**THE HERALD**

A monthly publication of the Japanese Church of Christ, Salt Lake City, UT.

**Pastor Brad Kramer**

**Clerk of Session: Allyn Nakashima**

**Session**

- Pauline Vosburgh, Finance
- Lorraine Crouse, Worship
- Keiko Ikeda, Nichigo
- Patricia Arakaki Price, Membership
- Steve Fukumitsu, Building
- Yoko DeRose, Nichigo
- Daniel Cheung, Personnel

**Deacons**

- Jan Aramaki, Moderator; Wilma Kimura, Karen Okawa, Akiko Oki, Misako Bowker, Julee Mori, Jean Kobayashi

Newsletter articles are due on the last Saturday of each month at **noon**. Send your articles to [jccherald \[at\] gmail \[dot\] com](mailto:jccherald@gmail.com)

Website: [www.jccslc.net](http://www.jccslc.net)

**Pastor’s Message Continued (from page 1)**

No, I am approaching a holy God, so there should be a sense of reverence. At the same time, it should be Brad Kramer saying the prayer instead of Charles Spurgeon or Billy Graham. I need to be expressing my heart in conversation. So I talk to my Lord; I don’t try to insert lofty or impressive sounding words into my prayer. I try to make it natural.

I offered the following as a sample prayer for the Deacons that I believe is appropriate for almost any occasion in which someone may ask you to “say a few words in prayer”:

*Dear God,*

*Thank you so much for this day you’ve given us. Thank you for how you show your love toward us. Please guide us in this time, and help us to honor You. In Jesus’ great name we pray, Amen.*

I hope this helps you as you seek to step out of your comfort zone just a little... or a lot.

May God Bless You Richly,

Pastor Brad



**JCC COVID-19 Task Force**

Unfortunately, there is no change in the status of reopening the church from last month – Salt Lake City and County still remain in the “orange” phase (as of this writing), so the JCC will not be opening for live services anytime soon. However, a task force has been formed to discuss and make plans for a safe return once we can.

This task force is chaired by Paul DeRose and committee members are Pastor Brad Kramer, Daniel Cheung, Lorraine Crouse, Karen Okawa, and Greg Paige. The team has met twice already and is working on a proposal to present to the Session.

It is important to hold any kind of "reopening" lightly and prayerfully. We will include information about how COVID-19 spreads, the "right" way to mitigate risks, and where we are as a state. These factors all change on a daily basis. The team is mindful of the need to balance the safety of our congregants with the needs of those sheltering at home.

Regardless of what the situation is, a detailed plan will be approved and in place so we are ready for action when and if the time comes that we can reopen the church facilities. The team will discuss different scenarios for reengaging members of the JCC family. While we don't know when things will improve, whether it is next month or next year, the task force will do so in a carefully thought out manner.

If you have any concerns or ideas regarding reopening, please contact one of the task force members. We welcome your input!



### Fellowship Hall Remodeling Done!

Here are some photos of our "new" Fellowship Hall. A stainless steel kitchen with new equipment; Fellowship Hall with new flooring, lighting and curtains; 2 new accessible restrooms on the main floor - all waiting for our return to the JCC!



New 3 compartment kitchen sink and shiny new cabinets. All photos courtesy Greg Paige.



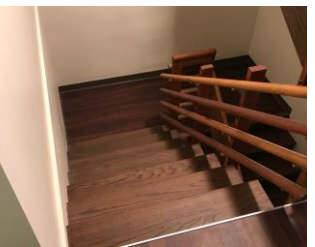
New flooring, stage curtains, track lighting along the wall and Asian inspired lights in the main hall area.



Pastor Brad's office, redone after extensive water damage and mold were discovered.



New flooring, stove, and stainless steel all around.



Left: New working filtered drinking fountains!

Above: Back stairway to basement.



Business office and entry to Pastor's office.