

The HERALD Newsletter

Japanese Church of Christ
268 West 100 South
Salt Lake City, UT 84101
(801) 363-3251 www.jccslc.net

Non-Profit
Organization
U.S. Postage
PAID
SLC, Utah
Permit No.1645



Pastor Brad Kramer
info@jccslc.net

Worship Schedule:
Service
10:30 a.m.

Pastor's Message

September 2021

The topic of God's sovereignty is one of my favorite theological subjects. (Yes I know, I'm a little odd – but you should know that by now). I like Jack Zavada's concise definition: "God is in complete control over everything that happens here on Earth. God's will is the final cause of all things." Furthermore, "God is free and has the right to do whatever he wants." Many people get hung up on this because it seems that human responsibility is taken out of the picture. However, the Bible consistently demonstrates the two existing side by side, even though in the end it is God who brings all things to pass through His good and sovereign will.

So what do we do with this? Well, to me, this doctrine speaks not only of God's power, but of His love for us and His ability to ensure that His children are protected and assured of our eternity in Heaven. Nothing happens in this world apart from God's ultimate control. This is emphasized in Proverbs 16:4; "The Lord has made everything for its own purpose, even the wicked for the day of evil." D.A. Carson summarizes this great truth: "There are ultimately no loose ends in God's world." I don't know about you but that gives me great comfort, especially in light of the disaster in Afghanistan, the pandemic and the political divide here in our country. But God is in command and is accomplishing his good purposes through all these things. And I firmly believe that we as a church and as a nation will emerge from this trying time and hopefully learn some valuable lessons along the way if we repent and draw close to God. My challenge to us is that we get to know God better through reading His word and being in prayer. So, let's continue to move forward with the assurance that God is in control, that He loves us and desires to produce devoted and faithful followers of Himself.

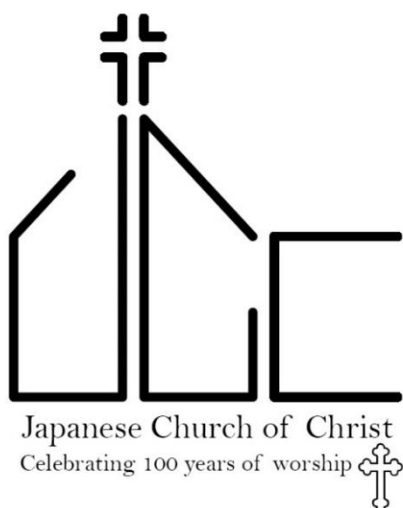
And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. *Romans 8:28*

May God bless you and keep you in His care,
Pastor Brad

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: Daniel Cheung

Session

Lorraine Crouse - Worship
Steve Fukumitsu - Stewardship, Building and Grounds
Yoko DeRose - Nichigo
Allyn Nakashima - Membership
Greg Paige - Education, Personnel
Pauline Vosburgh - Finance

Deacons

Karen Okawa (moderator), Jan Aramaki, Akiko Oki, Julee Mori, Jean Kobayashi, Laura Olson, Elaine Iwasaki

Newsletter articles are due on the **last Saturday of each month at noon.**

Send your articles to jccherald@gmail.com.

Website: www.jccslc.net

Sunday School Schedule

Adult Sunday School will resume on **Sunday, September 12, 2021** at 9:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary. The study this year will be the book of Exodus; it will build on the lessons from Genesis, which we studied last year. Last year because of the shutdown, Adult Sunday School was held via Zoom. That will be an option again this year. Please contact Greg Paige if you prefer to attend virtually so that he can send you the Zoom invitation and link.

Regarding Children's Sunday School, we know that children younger than 12 are not yet eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine. Because of the risk of spread by unvaccinated individuals, child care will be provided outdoors and in the chapel. Volunteers will be asked to provide proof of vaccination or a recent negative COVID test.

Flu Shot Clinic – September 12

Flu shots will be offered by Community Nursing Services at the JCC on Sunday, **September 12, 2021** from **11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.**

Please bring proof of insurance, social security, or Medicare card and also wear a short sleeved shirt or top. It is important to get a flu shot this fall and winter as both the flu and COVID-19 viruses will both be spreading. Thanks to Stephanie Mori-Nakao for making the arrangements as always!

NOTE: Please consult with your physician on the timing of getting this flu shot and a COVID-19 booster vaccination if you are eligible to receive a booster soon.

Vaccination or COVID Test Requirement

Because of high COVID-19 case counts and wide availability of the COVID-19 vaccine, the Session has approved additional requirements to be indoors for church services. **Beginning September 12, to be inside the building for church services, you will need proof of COVID-19 vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test within the last 24 hours.** A COVID-19 test is not required if you are vaccinated.

People who do not meet these requirements are welcome to join the service outdoors or online. They will be asked to remain outside on the patio during the service and will not be permitted to enter the church building.

Finally, we will be maintaining a vaccine registry. On Sunday, bring your CDC vaccination card to Allyn Nakashima. Allyn will record this information in a private file, and you will not need to bring your vaccination card each week. If you have any questions, please contact Allyn Nakashima.

Remember in Your Prayers

If you or know of someone that should be added or removed from this list, please email the JCC website, jccslc.net, and indicate what should be updated. Thank you!

Please remember the following friends and family in your prayers:

Toshiko Marse	Chris Miya	Kai Ronning
Kenta Naraoka	Saeko Nakashima	Dorthie Conway
Betty Morishita	Susan Fukushima	Susan Rosvall
Mary Tabata	Steve Fukushima	Sumiko Rosvall
Shimizu Family	Sumi Arakaki	Chiba Family

An Update from the Session on COVID-19 Precautions

Dear JCC Family and Friends:

A year and a half ago, our church - like so many others - made the hard decision to pause in-person services because of COVID-19. We hoped that this would be short-lived; unfortunately, cases continued to surge, and we did not feel it was safe to reopen until this past June. We were so happy to see each other in person, but as cases rise once again, we want to update you on additional precautions that we are taking to protect your safety and health.

The following precautions have been in place since we reopened in June:

- Requiring everyone to wear a mask over their mouth and nose at all times while indoors.
- Moving the service to the Fellowship Hall and increasing air circulation by opening all sliding doors and keeping the swamp cooler on "high."
- Arranging seats with at least 2-3 feet of "physical distancing" between chairs.
- Providing individually wrapped masks and hand sanitizer throughout the church.
- Using individually wrapped communion supplies and placing an offering plate at the entrance to avoid unnecessary physical contact.
- Posting signs about the requirement to wear a mask indoors.
- Holding coffee fellowship outdoors and requiring that snacks and drinks be pre-packaged.

As we prepare this update, the 7-day average continues to be above 1,100 cases (almost double what it was in July 2020). In light of the higher cases and the continued spread of the highly contagious Delta variant, we will be adding the following precautions:

- Beginning on 9/12, we will require attendees to be vaccinated or have a negative test taken within 24 hours to be indoors. Others will need to participate outdoors or virtually. The church will maintain a vaccine registry to record proof of vaccination.
- We will have weekly reminders about the mask and vaccination rules, including reminders about proper mask wearing (over the nose and mouth).
- Coffee fellowship will be paid for by the church and limited to pre-packaged, store bought items that can be taken "to go." The fellowship hall will be closed after the service, except for restrooms.
- All groups that use the church facilities will be required to wear masks indoors, and food will be limited to pre-packaged, store bought items.

- Sermons will be uploaded onto the church's YouTube page and website on Sunday evening so those who are ill, not comfortable, or unable to attend can view the service.

The situation is constantly changing, and we will continue to monitor these changes and follow the guidance of public health experts. If you have any questions, thoughts, or concerns, please contact any member of the Session - we want to hear from you. We will also post a more detailed, up-to-date COVID-19 policy on the church's website: www.jccslc.net.

We are fortunate to have diverse backgrounds and experiences represented on the Session. We have leaned especially on the expertise and experience of our own Dr. Allyn Nakashima, who served at the CDC and at the Utah Department of Health. However, we also believe deeply in the truth of Proverbs 11:14 -- "Where there is no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counselors there is safety." Every decision that has been made throughout the pandemic has benefited from a shared decision of the Session, with consultation with many members of the church. We are a church that is open to all comers; however, we are also charged with protecting the health and safety of all who attend.

We understand that some of you are anxious about the risks of COVID-19. We hear you, we understand you, and we believe in the importance of prudence and caution. We will continue to monitor COVID-19 and rely on the guidance of public health experts. As a Session, we take the charge in 1 Peter 5:2 to, "[c]are for the flock that God has entrusted to you." We believe this includes caring for the health and safety of the church family.

We also understand that some of you are yearning for in-person gatherings at JCC. The need for "social distancing" has led to social isolation. God made us to be in community, and Hebrews 10:25 charges us: "...let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near." Gathering together on Sundays for worship and fellowship is important, and we hope to remain open in a manner that is safe for everyone.

To all: We encourage you to do as we have also tried to do this past year: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God" (Philippians 4:6). Medicine and science can heal the body; only prayer can bring, "...the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, [that] will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7).

With deep love and gratitude,
The JCC Session

Condolences

Our condolences are extended to the family of Toy Shimizu. Toy passed away on July 28, 2021. Toy always looked forward to attending worship service on Sundays and visiting with friends. Due to the pandemic, a private family service was held. Please keep her children, Treva Bergstrom and Ned Shimizu and families in your prayers.

Our sympathy is also extended to the family of Chiyoko Chiba. Chiyoko passed away on August 21, 2021 in San Diego, CA. She moved from Salt Lake City a few years ago, but kept in touch with the JCC. A service will be held later when it is safe to do so. Please keep her children Cyd, Lisa and Paul and their families in your prayers.

Living with COVID-19: What we can expect for Fall 2021

Submitted by Allyn Nakashima

In the past two months, we now have much more evidence of the high transmissibility of the Delta strain of the COVID-19 virus; it is up to four times more contagious than the original strain. This means that its infectiousness is similar to that of chicken pox or measles. Currently, more than 90% of new cases in the United States are due to the Delta strain. Importantly, this high transmissibility has resulted in very high rates of new infections and many break-through infections as well. In Utah, the daily number of new cases is now between 1,000-2,000 cases. These rates are similar to the high rates we had last winter. We anticipate that these numbers will only increase once schools are in session. Therefore, we must go back to many of the earlier prevention recommendations.

Regardless of vaccination status, in crowded situations indoors (e.g., shopping in stores, movie theaters, games, classrooms, etc.) masks should be worn at all times. Indoor eating in restaurants should be avoided even if vaccinated, especially if you are elderly or otherwise immunosuppressed. At outdoor events, wear masks if social distancing of at least 6 feet from the other person cannot be maintained. In some cities (e.g., New York City and San Francisco), you must show proof of vaccination to be seated in a restaurant. To avoid shut-downs due to COVID-19 outbreaks, many businesses, restaurants, airlines, private schools, etc. may begin requesting this information so it is important to get into the habit of carrying your proof of vaccination with you.

“Waning immunity” (when the vaccine no longer protects an individual) occurs over time with any vaccine, and booster vaccination is needed to maintain high levels of protection.

(Living with COVID-19, continued)

CDC currently estimates that waning immunity occurs in many individuals around 8 months after the last vaccination. Therefore, a booster vaccination will be recommended this fall. The COVID-19 booster vaccine is not recommended to be given at the same time as the flu vaccine to avoid confusion of side effects between these vaccines. Check with your health care provider on how best to schedule your annual flu vaccine and the COVID-19 booster vaccine.

Although break-through infections are increasing, the majority of people requiring hospitalization due to COVID-19 are unvaccinated. Most deaths due to COVID-19 are also among unvaccinated persons. People with break-through infections after vaccination usually have mild cold-like symptoms or are asymptomatic. However, break-through infections in elderly, debilitated, or immunosuppressed individuals can be deadly.

If you are not vaccinated, please consider getting vaccinated for your own safety and the safety of others!

Deacons Brown Bag Project

The JCC Deacons are partnering with other faith-based organizations to provide sack lunches to the homeless to encourage them to get vaccinated. The Deacons plan to make peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for 100 sack lunches to serve to the homeless. Right now the event is tentatively scheduled for **Thursday, September 23**.

However, the event may be cancelled due to the recent uptick in COVID cases, but we will not be informed until a week before the scheduled date. If we do go forward, if you would like to help make the sandwiches and fill lunch bags, we welcome the help! Please check with one of the Deacons for the status before you come down to help.

Thank you to those who have already contributed grocery items – we now have plenty of jars of peanut butter, bottled beverages and bags of chips and snacks, but monetary contributions are also accepted to purchase jam and bread. Your generosity is so appreciated. If the event is cancelled, any staples that you have brought to church will be donated to local food pantries instead.

Update on Coffee Fellowship - Practicing COVID Safety

Unfortunately, COVID-19 cases continue to be high, and the Delta variant is spread very easily. For this reason, the Session has decided to limit Coffee fellowship food until the situation improves. **Only store bought, pre-packaged food and drinks will be served.** The selection will be limited, but we believe that this is necessary to protect the health and safety of the congregation. The Session will be revisiting the situation each month, and we hope to allow homemade food as soon as it is safe. Coffee fellowship is a very important part of the JCC service, and we are so grateful to everyone who has contributed to the Coffee Fellowship since the church reopened!

Agape Meeting Recap

The Agape Women's Group met after worship service on August 15. A signup sheet for volunteers for the Coffee Fellowship teams was distributed, which will go into effect in October. Other discussion items dealt with budget and bylaws. The next meeting will be held on Sunday, October 17.

Also, there is a signup sheet posted on the bulletin board in the Fellowship Hall for Coffee Fellowship volunteers. The schedule will now have teams to host Coffee Fellowship every other month. So far the teams are:

Odd Months: (January, March, May, July, September, November)

Week 1 – Akiko Oki, Yoko DeRose, Tomoko Moses, Yeiko/Victor Homma

Week 2 – Sadie Yoshimura, Jean Kobayashi, Wilma Kimura

Week 3 – Jan Aramaki, Elaine Iwasaki, Karla Paige

Week 4 – *Need volunteers*

Week 5 (Conferences) – Elise Mori, Julee Mori

Even Months: (February, April, June, August, October, December)

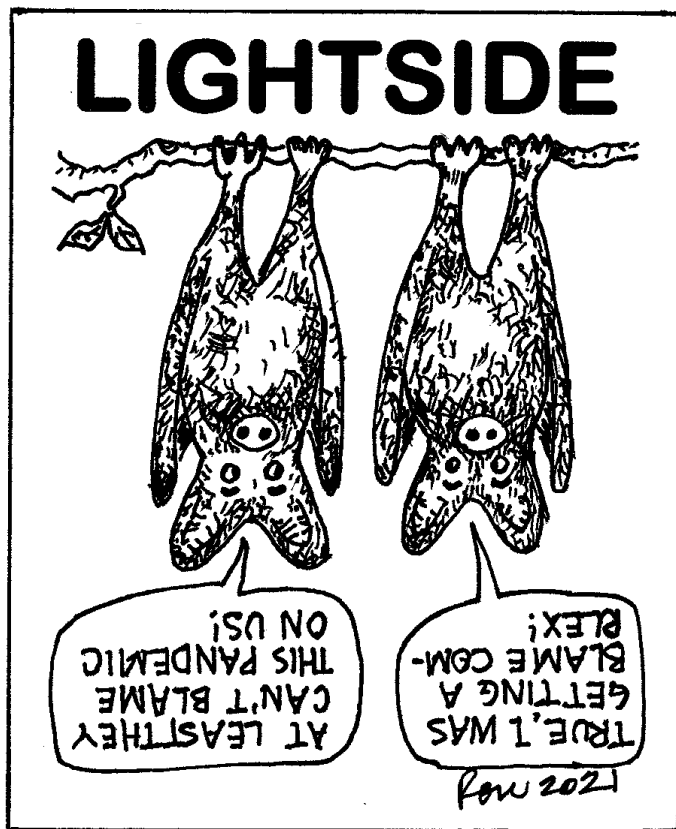
Week 1 – Misako Bowker, Tomiko Osaki, Motoko Lochner, Katsuko Gose

Week 2 – Julee Mori, Elise Mori, Yas Iwamoto, Stephanie Mori-Nakao

Week 3 – Karen Okawa, Laura Olson, *need one more*

Week 4 – *Need volunteers*

Week 5 (Conferences) – Jan Aramaki, Karla Paige, Tomoko Moses



Reminder – No More P.O.

Since we are back at church for in-person worship, the P.O. Box at the Salt Lake City post office (P. O. Box 1495) has been canceled. Send any correspondence to our regular street address: **268 West 100 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84101.**

If you have automatic deductions set up for pledges with your financial institution, you will need to alert that institution to change the address back to our physical street address. Also, since the P. O. box has been canceled, some mail has been delayed by the post office. Please be patient if you have not seen your check clear your bank yet this past month.

September 2021 - Worship Service Participants

	September 5	September 12	September 19	September 26
Liturgist	Laura Olson	Greg Paige	Hiro Iwasaki	Steve Fukumitsu
Scripture Readers	E) Karen Okawa J) Keiko Ikeda	E) Zach Paige J) Akiko Oki	E) Jan Aramaki J) Tomiko Osaki	E) Elise Mori J) Misako Bowker
Greeter/Usher	Betty Kubota Lorraine Crouse	Garin Harada Lorraine Crouse	Karen Okawa Lorraine Crouse	Al Kubota TBD
Organist/Pianist	Greg Paige	Daniel Cheung	Allyn Nakashima	Keiko Ikeda

Birthday Milestones

Happy belated Beiju Birthday to Ron Nishijima, who turned 88 last month! In Japanese culture, reaching the age of 88 is considered a milestone that deserves a special celebration. The Japanese character for number 88 resembles the kanji character for rice 米 (bei). Rice is considered to be a very important commodity in Japan as in other countries in Asia. Rice is a symbol of purity and happiness. It is always respected by the people of Japan because this is their food, their livelihood and their life. Therefore, the eighty-eighth birthday should be celebrated with a happy feast.



Judging by this photo, Ron had a great celebration!

Photo courtesy: Lynne Ward. Thanks also to Tomoko Moses for sharing this information on the custom of Beiju.

P.S. Ron, thanks for the harvest from your veggie garden! Everything was gone in minutes!



Yeiko Homma celebrated her 96th birthday on August 16 and shared Coffee Fellowship treats with the congregation on the following Sunday.



Yeiko and son Victor. Photo courtesy: Jan Aramaki

Also, Laura Olson's mother Toshi Hirose will be turning 100 years of age on September 26, 2021. Laura will be traveling to San Francisco to celebrate the occasion. More to follow (and hopefully some photos) in next month's Herald.

Worship Program Photos

Allyn Nakashima and Laura Olson teamed up to perform the musical offertory on August 29. It is so nice to hear live music fill our worship program.



Photos courtesy: Lorraine Crouse