

The HERALD Newsletter

Japanese Church of Christ

268 West 100 South, Salt Lake City, UT 84101

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In-person worship services are Sundays at 10:30 a.m.

Pastor's Message

January 2024

Yes, Virginia, there is a war on Christmas.

No, it is not happening right after Halloween when the self-righteous do not like the design of disposable coffee cups. By that they only admit not to prepare for their coffee runs by bringing a reusable travel mug. No, the actual war on Christmas is going on right now, between Christmas and Epiphany. Most of our neighbors had their decorations down by December 27th. The Christmas radio station disappears as soon as Christmas begins. Virginia, that is where the war on Christmas is real.

In America there is confusion to when Christmas is happening. Many people and businesses confuse the holiday season with the Christmas season. Christmas is a church service: It is the Mass celebrating the Birth of Christ, short Christ-Mass. Since the 5th century Christians have celebrated the birth of Christ this time of year. Leading up to Christmas is the liturgical season of Advent. Christmas does not start until after Christmas and it goes on for 12 days all the way through Epiphany on January 6th. Whoever insists on saying "Merry Christmas" before then is waging war against one of Christianity's most important holidays.

How did all of this come about? Well, in America we have a thing called the holiday season. It is the period of time from Thanksgiving until New Year, including such festivals as Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa. That is where misunderstandings happen: Most major religions have their festival of light this time of year from Hindu to Jewish and Christian. And the retail industry loves this time of year. The cultural commercial holiday season is there to lead up to and support people in celebrating whatever their faith holds dear. The greeting for the season is "Happy Holidays" because it celebrates a variety of wonderful occasions.

As a Christian I indulge in both, the civil holiday season and the liturgical Christmas season. Not everybody knows that they are distinctly separate things and you will always find the terms used interchangeably. But it is my job as pastor and teacher to remind myself and my readers that, yes Virginia, please leave your lights and decorations up until Epiphany. And you, FM 100.3, please play Christmas music not only during Advent but also during Christmas!

Blessings

Rev. Daniel Haas, BCC-SP
Cell 801-368-1180



Remember in Your Prayers

Names will appear on the prayer list for one month, so we can keep it updated and current. To respect individual privacy, if there is a name to be added to this prayer list, the person must first give permission to have his/her own name published. Email the JCC website, jccslc.net or contact Pastor Haas or any of the Deacons.

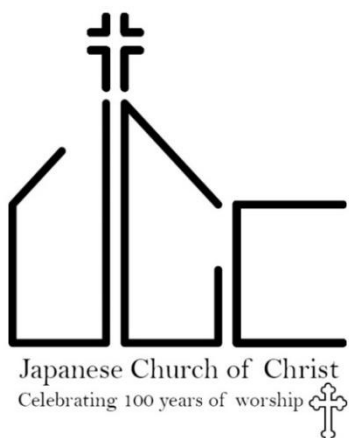
Please remember the following friends and family in your prayers:

Debbie Homma Yeiko Homma Tom Reed Jr. Steve Fukushima

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.

Interim Pastor: Rev. Daniel Haas
Clerk of Session: Karen Okawa

Session

Lorraine Crouse - Worship
 Steve Fukumitsu - Buildings and Grounds
 Lynne Ward - Personnel
 Julee Mori - Finance/Kenshin Taiko
 Liaison
 Elise Mori - Membership/Stewardship/
 Deacons and Trustees Liaison
 Karen Okawa - Membership/Stewardship
 Greg Paige - Education/Nichigo

Deacons

Jan Aramaki - moderator, Elaine Iwasaki,
 Stephanie Mori-Nakao, Allyn Nakashima,
 Akiko Oki, Laura Olson, Nancy Umemura,
 Yuri Uyeda

Trustees

Jani Iwamoto - President; Pauline
 Vosburgh - Vice President, Rick Aoki -
 Treasurer, Daniel Cheung - Secretary,
 Ron Nishijima, Karla Paige

Newsletter articles are due on the third
 Saturday of each month at noon. Send
 your articles to jccherald@gmail.com.

Website: www.jccslc.net

Annual Congregational Meeting

The annual congregational meeting for JCC will be on **Sunday, January 21, 2024**, immediately following worship service that day.

We will be reviewing and approving the budget for 2024 as well as accept the nominations for Session Elders, Deacons and Trustees.

Also at this meeting, the Mission Study Committee will be presenting the results of the Mission Study report and explain the next phase in the pastoral search.

Please plan to attend this very important meeting. A Zoom option is available as well. To join the Zoom meeting, enter this link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85670666159?pwd=Q1lWZW5maUp5Tm53WmR2MUZ1ejRSZz09>

Meeting ID: 856 7066 6159
 Passcode: 508175

Ozoni Sunday

On **Sunday, January 7, 2024**, the Nichigo group will be preparing the traditional New Year's Ozoni (mochi soup).

Mochi has always been associated with good fortune and has been eaten on celebratory occasions since long ago. The custom continues to this day and eating ozoni at New Year's is considered an expression of good fortune (for making it to another year).



Come ring in the New Year (year of the Dragon) with a warm bowl of ozoni after worship service.

Nominations

The Nominating Committee has the following slate of candidates to be presented at the Annual Congregational Meeting:

Session: Victor Homma, Alan Shino
 Deacons: Marc Stillman, Laura Olson (second term)
 Trustees: Lorraine Crouse, Pat Price

We would like to thank the outgoing officers for their service:

Session: Steve Fukumitsu, Lorraine Crouse
 Deacons: Jan Aramaki, Elaine Iwasaki
 Trustees: Karla Paige

Per Capita Reminder

Remember that the PCUSA per capita amount this year per baptized JCC member is **\$42.80**. On the bottom of your check, please indicate "Per Capita".

Another Reminder

To those submitting reports to be included in the 2023 Annual Report, please send them to Karen Okawa by **January 10, 2024**. The annual Congregational Meeting will be held earlier this year, so reports will need to be submitted promptly in order to get the Annual Report printed in time for the meeting.

Deacon's Report – December Meeting

Submitted by Allyn Nakashima

The Board of Deacons met on December 3, 2023.

Many projects surrounding the Christmas holidays were discussed including delivery of poinsettias, organizing the Christmas Eve luncheon, and mochi making.

End-of-year donations were approved for the Salt Lake Rescue Mission's Women's Center, Utah Food Bank, and the Geraldine King Women's Resource Center.

A heart-felt appreciation to our outgoing Moderator, Jan Aramaki, for all that she has done throughout her service as a Deacon.

Session Report – December Meeting

Session met on Tuesday, December 12, 2023.

The proposed 2024 budget was presented. The congregation will be able to review it at the annual Congregational Meeting.

Pastor's report - Pastor Haas is now serving at Intermountain Medical Center in Murray.

Building and Grounds – Flooring in the Sanctuary will be carpet tiles. Awaiting options and pricing info. Current demolition can take place now.

Mission Study – The COM had a question on how data was collected for the Mission Study Report, so a second draft was submitted. UCC will be sent a report for comment.

Education/Nichigo/Nominating Committee – Adult bible study continues the study of Romans. Nothing new to report from Nichigo. Nominees for Elders, Deacons and Trustees have been confirmed.

Finance – A training meeting will be scheduled in January for the teams that do the weekly deposits.

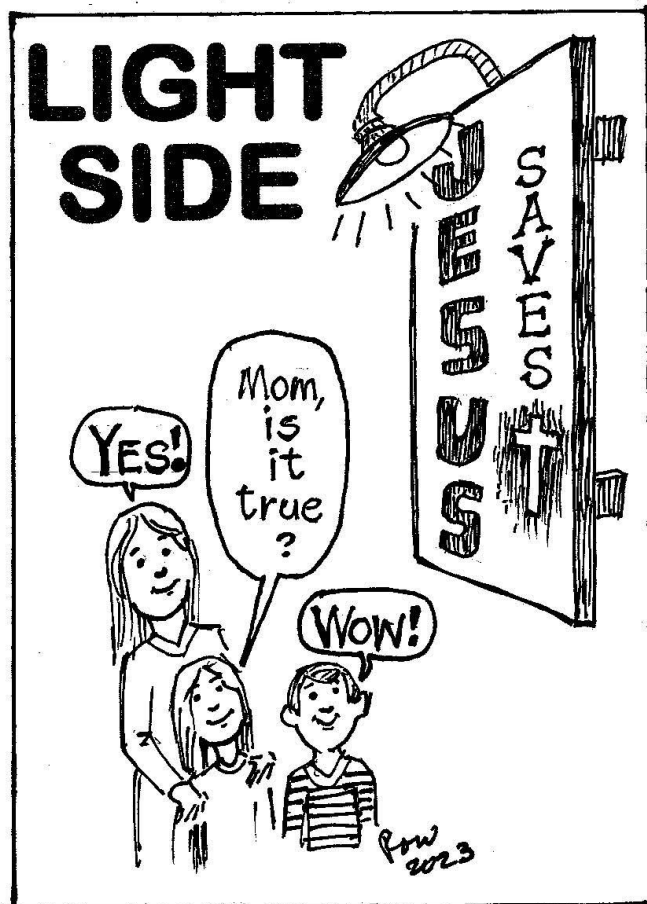
Membership/Stewardship – Email notice on Call for Reports for the annual report was sent out. Christmas offering envelopes were distributed in December Herald.

Personnel – Continuing to work on bank and investment accounts.

Worship – Christmas and Christmas Eve services will be combined since Christmas Eve is on Sunday this year. Regular joint worship will be followed by Christmas pageant, potluck and ending with lighting of Christ Candle.

Deacons – Will be delivering poinsettias and help with mochi making.

Kenshin Taiko – New round of beginners will start in January; 30 new people are interested.



Season of Giving Wrap Up

Submitted by Elise Mori

Many thanks to all who supported the program via shopping and giving. In our pilot year, we were able to give boots, shoes, jackets, clothes, and toys to 24 different people in our three congregation community. It was so great to see everyone come together to help others during this time of year.

Happy 90th

During worship service on Sunday, December 3, Ron Nishijima was presented with a gift card from the Deacons to commemorate his 90th birthday. (His actual birthday was in August, but the Deacons acknowledge all 90th birthdays for the year in the month of December.)

Happy belated, Ron!

Photo courtesy: Lorraine Crouse



Upcoming Community Events

- February (date still TBD) – Nikkei Senior Center luncheon, sponsored by JCC, noon.
- February 17, 2024 - Day of Remembrance, sponsored by Utah JACL chapters. Guest speaker Dr. Duncan Ryokan Williams will talk about the Ireicho project, Utah State Bar Law and Justice Center, 1:30 p.m.

Volunteers?

In the past, in the month of February the JCC has sponsored the Nikkei Senior Center luncheon as part of our community outreach. This year will be the same month, though the date is still TBD; either February 3 or 10 (Saturdays). If you would like to be involved with the food preparation or set up, please contact Karen Okawa.

If you are a senior age 62 and above, plan to attend the luncheon! (\$2 per person or 85+ years of age is free)

Mission Study Status

Submitted by Steve Fukumitsu

The Mission Study committee was asked by the Committee on Ministry to give some additional information on how the data was collected for the study. A revision was provided and reviewed by the Session which was approved on 12/12/23. The revised mission study will be submitted to the Committee on Ministry for final review. Should there be no further review, then the final version will be presented to the congregation at the Congregational Meeting.



JCC January 2024 Calendar

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|---------|--|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| | 1 NEW YEAR'S DAY -Parking, Jazz vs. Mavericks, 7pm | 2 | 3 -Parking, Jazz vs. Pistons, 7pm | 4 | 5 -Parking, Monster Jam, 7pm | 6 -Parking, Monster Jam, 1pm, 7pm |
| 7 -Adult Bible Study, 9:30am -Communion Service, 10:30am. -Ozoni, 11:30am -Deacons Meeting, noon -Parking, Monster Jam, 1pm | 8 | 9 | 10 -Session Meeting, 6pm -Parking, Jazz vs. Nuggets, 8pm | 11 | 12 -Parking, Jazz vs. Raptors, 7:30pm | 13 -Parking, Jazz vs. Lakers, 7:30pm |
| 14 -Adult Bible Study, 9:30am -Worship Service, 10:30am -Parking, Playboi Carti with Destroy Lonely, 7:30pm | 15 -Parking, Jazz vs. Pacers, 7pm | 16 | 17 -Parking, Jazz vs. Warriors, 7pm | 18 -Parking, Jazz vs. Thunder, 7pm | 19 | 20 |
| 21 -Adult Bible Study, 9:30am -Worship Service, 10:30am -Congregational Meeting, 11:45am | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 -Adult Bible Study, 9:30am -Worship Service, 10:30am | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | |

*Calendar current as of Herald printing, 12/27/2023.

Christmas 2023 Wrap Up

Since Christmas Eve fell on a Sunday this year, the regular Christmas worship service was combined with the Christmas Eve service (so people didn't have to come to church twice in the same day). It was a joint service with the Tongan and Kachin congregations and the Fellowship Hall was filled. All three congregations participating in the worship service, Advent candle lighting, Christmas pageant, and the potluck lunch.

Thanks to Laura Olson for directing the pageant production and to all of the performers (angels, wise men, Mary and Joseph, shepherds, narrators) and especially to all of the stage hands!

Food was more than plentiful and there was such a variety! There are some great cooks at the JCC.

Lastly of course, Santa made his annual appearance to the delight of all of the youngsters, young and old. Thank you to Stephanie Mori-Nakao for putting together the goodie bags.



The Haas family, including Pastor's parents visiting from Germany, help assemble the candles for the Advent lighting.



Greg, Yas and Marc



Food was plentiful



Katsuko and Santa



Photos courtesy: Lorraine Crouse, Karen Okawa



Santa's helpers – Phoebe, Marie and Ben



Smile for the camera!



Kitchen servers ready to plate!



Rev. Haas-Melchior to the rescue! Aiding a background prop that refuses to stay up!



Stephanie, Theresa and Mark (visiting from Bay Area)



Santa is popular!