

The HERALD Newsletter

Japanese Church of Christ

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

Pastor's Message "Truth in Voting"

August 2024

Editor's Note: *This month, Reverend Haas cedes his Pastor's Message to this article written by Cheryl A. Leanza. Ms. Leanza is a policy advisor at United Church of Christ (UCC) Media Justice Ministry. The UCC is a faith community rooted in justice that recognizes the unique power of the media to shape public understanding and thus society. For this reason, the UCC Media Justice Ministry, established in 1959, works to create just and equitable media and technology systems that give meaningful voice to diverse peoples, cultures and ideas. Learn more at www.uccmediajustice.org.*

As Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson, the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ, explained as part of the Our Faith, Our Vote campaign, voting is an essential way for people of faith to bring about the just world we want to see. It is how we can love-in-action, as 1 John 3:18 teaches us.

Even when politics seems broken, we at UCC Media Justice see, every day, the tremendous impact of national and local elections. Do not give up, get out to vote, and encourage your friends and loved ones to do so also. Do not let forces arrayed against justice prevail in pushing you out of your democracy.

As part of our joint effort to ensure that everyone participates in our civic life, it is important to know about the hurdles that face us. In the lead-up to the 2024 presidential election, one place where our democratic processes face a significant challenge is from a deluge of disinformation and misinformation.

Misinformation is unintentionally false information. Disinformation is false and intends to mislead. Both can play a powerful role in negatively influencing public opinion and voter behavior.

Deceptive practices sow confusion among voters, spreading doubts about the mechanics of voting and the integrity of our electoral process. For example, misleading information about polling locations or inaccurate voting times can prevent voters from casting their ballots and skew election outcomes. Other deceptive information can cause us to lose hope and step away from the political process. Here's what UCC Media Justice will be watching out for:

- Disinformation campaigns targeting people of color that exploit language barriers and cultural nuances to spread false narratives and sow distrust in the electoral system to suppress voter turnout. Recent polling revealed that Black Americans disproportionately encounter lies online.
- The use of AI-generated content, including deep fakes. These technologies create convincing false videos and images that mislead voters, and they are on the rise. For example, early this year Joe Biden's voice was impersonated to influence the New Hampshire primary. This content complicates efforts to distinguish between genuine and fabricated information.
- Distrust in mainstream media and other traditional sources of information which has led to an increased reliance on social media for news. But social media platforms can be the worst place to go for reliable news because they are often rife with unverified and misleading content.

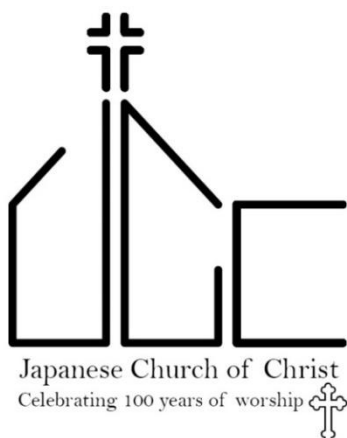
Although these developments are concerning, we can make powerful changes when we work together.

(Continued on Page 8.)

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

Lynne Ward, Personnel
 Julee Mori, Finance/Kenshin Taiko
 Elise Mori, Worship/Deacons
 Karen Okawa, Membership/Nichigo
 Alan Shino, Building and Grounds

Deacons

Nancy Umemura, moderator, Stephanie Mori-Nakao, Allyn Nakashima, Akiko Oki, Laura Olson, Marc Stillman, Yuri Uyeda

Trustees

Jani Iwamoto – President; Pauline Vosburgh – Vice President, Rick Aoki – Treasurer, Daniel Cheung – Secretary, Ron Nishijima, Lorraine Crouse

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

Website: www.jccslc.net

Immunize – Pre-register Now

The annual Flu Shot Sunday will be held on **Sunday, September 15, 2024** from **11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** This year you can receive vaccinations for a number of illnesses – including pneumonia, shingles, COVID and the flu. A signup sheet will be posted on the Fellowship Hall bulletin board. On the day of the clinic, please bring your personal ID, proof of insurance or Medicare and also wear a short sleeved shirt/top.

This year a new provider will be administering the vaccinations. There is a pre-registration form to fill out to determine whether a particular vaccine is covered under your insurance or not. Contact Stephanie Mori-Nakao for a copy. By filling out the form ahead of time, the provider can perform the check before the 15th and you won't have to wait to get vaccinated.

Save the Date! JCC Chapel Centennial

Submitted by Jani Iwamoto

On **Saturday, September 21, 2024**, we will be hosting a reception from 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. to celebrate our chapel's 100th year anniversary – "A Century of Loving Faith". We will also be celebrating with our other congregations which share our grounds and space, including the Anchored in Christ Free Wesleyan Church (celebrating their 10 year anniversary with our church) and the Kachin Trinity Church.

There will be a blessing starting at the garden, just east of our chapel, followed by our guest Wayne Osako (Orange County, CA) and the short documentary in the Fellowship Hall (see description below). The first issuance of the stamp was in Los Angeles, CA – Wayne Osako is working to have a special issuance of the stamp which will be for Utah! We encourage those attending to thereafter enjoy the archival, photographic display of our Utah Nisei, WWII Nisei, Congressional Gold Medal soldiers, and the archival, photographic display of our church, in our newly renovated chapel. Thank you to our own archivist Lorraine Crouse, and the J. Willard Marriott Library Special Collections, University of Utah.

We are also fortunate to hear our taiko drum performers and others from our church family, including the incomparable and beautiful singing by Liliena Manusiu Pupu'a.

The Go For Broke: Japanese American Soldiers of World War II Forever commemorative postage stamp recognizes an important part of our Nation's history. Approximately 33,000 American men and women of Japanese heritage patriotically served in the U.S. military during World War 2 despite the unjust incarceration of over 120,000 Japanese Americans in concentration camps.

Stamp Our Story: Honoring America

The all-Japanese American 100th/442nd Regimental Combat Team became one of the most distinguished and decorated units in U.S. history for their valor fighting in Europe. The 18-minute documentary film "Stamp Our Story: Honoring America" tells the inspiring story behind this Stamp. The film has been featured at numerous film festivals nationwide and received the Heritage Award at the 2023 DisOrient Asian American Film Festival of Oregon. The Stamp Our Story Committee, which co-produced the film, led the campaign for the stamp since 2005, which included vital bipartisan support from Utah lawmakers and citizens. For more information, go to StampOurStory.org.



Updates from SLC NextGen JA

Submitted by SLC NextGen JA

SLC NextGen JA is a group consisting of Salt Lake Buddhist Temple members, Japanese Church of Christ members, and the broader Japanese American community working to ensure that the community is included as key stakeholders in the planning of the SECC district. SLC NextGen JA is dedicated to amplifying the collective Japanese American voice of Salt Lake City through intergenerational collaboration that promotes the diverse voices of Japantown’s past, present, and future.

Background:

Earlier this year, the State Legislature passed Senate Bill (SB) 272 which allows for the creation of a Capital City Revitalization Zone. The zone expands from the Delta Center to two blocks East, an area that includes Japantown (100 S and between 200 W and 300 W). Bill 272 allows the City to impose a 0.5% increase in citywide sales tax that would fund development of Smith Entertainment Group’s (SEG) privately owned Sports, Entertainment, Culture, and Convention (SECC) District which impacts Japantown Street, the Japanese Church of Christ (JCC) and the Salt Lake Buddhist Temple (SLBT).

Update:

At the July 9th, 2024, SL City Council meeting, the City Council unanimously endorsed a Participation Agreement proposed by Smith Entertainment Group that included a rough plan for the redevelopment process of the SECC district. The Participation Agreement includes the following in regards to Japantown:

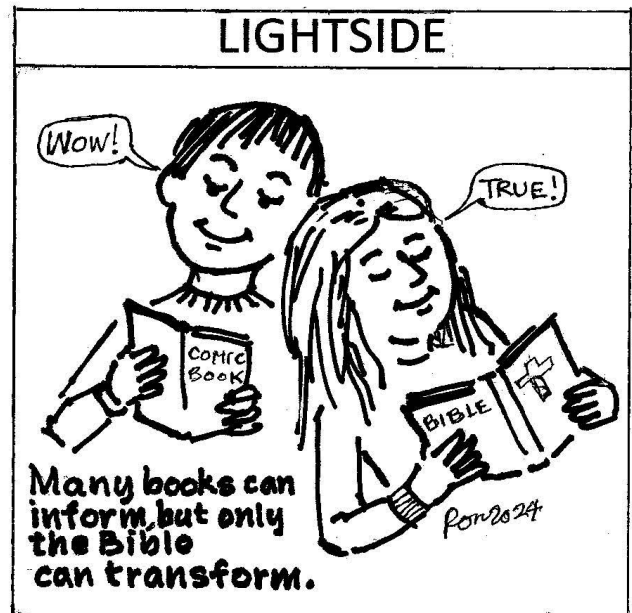
Two meetings a year with SEG and members designated by SLBT/JCC for the first three years to discuss SEG’s development progress and provide input on revitalization and redevelopment of Japantown.

The City will provide at least \$5 million from a Public Benefits Account to revitalize Japantown.

SEG will activate the north side of 100 S. and minimize truck loading and unloading areas, create a pedestrian connection between the district and Japantown, incorporate Japanese architectural elements, and create historical markers approved by the Japanese American community.

A state-appointed Revitalization Zone Committee will review the agreement and will have 30 days from July 9th, 2024 to either approve or reject the agreement. If the Committee approves the agreement, the Council will consider it for final approval to impose the state tax increase by Dec. 31, 2024.

While Japantown was included in the Participation Agreement, there are still several factors to consider and planning discussions needed. As Community Leaders continue planning the development of the SECC District, we need to ensure we have an active voice in redevelopment planning. *(Continued on page 6.)*



Condolences

We are saddened to relay the news that Theodore “Ted” Nagata passed away on July 24, 2024 at the age of 88. Ted was a successful graphic designer and artist; his designs include the Snowbird Ski Resort logo. But he also contributed so much of his talent and time to the Japanese American community and to the JCC. The Oriental Festival posters and the JCC 75th and Centennial Anniversary books Ted designed, displayed his artistic flair. His caricatures of local JA community members will always be cherished. Ted was also a spokesperson for Topaz relocation camp, where his family was incarcerated during WWII.

Ted will be sorely missed. Please keep Yeiko, Stephanie and Stan, Susan and Charlie and their families in your prayers.

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:

- Pastor Nominating Committee Nagata Family
- Steve and Susan Fukushima Japantown
- Kennah and Brighton Misaka
- Ron and Patty Price

Upcoming Community Events

Saturday, August 10: Mount Olympus JACL August Outing, Wheeler Park, 5:00 p.m. Chapter will provide chicken and drinks, others bring potluck.

Saturday, September 14: Nikkei Senior Center Picnic, Murray Park, Pavilion 4, noon. Food provided by Nikkei board, bingo.

Next Nerikiri

The Nerikiri class series continued on July 9 as class members learned another technique to create these confections. A makeup class was held on Tuesday, July 23 as well. Class members presented Akiko Oki with a gift card for teaching us this craft.

The next regular class will be held on **Tuesday, August 6, 2024** at 10:00 a.m.



Cary Umemura carefully decorates his creation. Photo courtesy: Allyn Nakashima

Presbyterian Women's Fall Gathering

Do Everything in Love I Corinthians 16:14

September 20-21, 2024

Cottonwood Presbyterian Church
1580 E Vine Street
Murray, UT 84121

Featuring participants of the Presbyterian Women's Churchwide Gathering bringing the love and understanding to Utah Presbyterian Women

To register, contact Sally Hoffelmeyer-Katz at sahoffelmeyerkatz@comcast.net or 801-272-5356 by September 9, 2024.

Please include registration information:

- First Time Attendee?
- Dietary needs, i.e. Gluten Free?
- Need a Ride? Church?

Cost is \$15.00 payable at the door. Friday 9/20 5:00p.m. to Saturday 9/21 at 3:00 p.m.

JCC August 2024 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4 -Communion Service, 10:30am -Deacons Meeting, 11:45am	5	6 -Nerikiri class, 10am	7	8	9	10
11 -Worship Service, 10:30am -Parking, Peso Pluma, 8pm	12	13	14	15	16	17
18 -Worship Service, 10:30am Guest pulpit – Rev Nakaoka -Parking, Twenty One Pilots, 8pm	19	20	21 -Session Meeting, 6:30pm	22	23	24 -Parking, Marco Antonio Solis, 8pm
25 -Worship Service, 10:30am -Parking, Grupo Firme-La Ultima Peda, 8pm	26	27 -Parking, Jelly Roll, 7pm	28 -Parking, Future and Metro Boomin, 8pm	29	30	31 -Parking, Chayanne, 8pm

*Calendar current as of Herald printing, 7/29/2024.

New Communion Set

A variety of unique Communion sets were used during the GA, handcrafted by local artists. The sets were made available for sale after the GA, so the JCC purchased a new set; a symbolic remembrance of the GA meeting held in Salt Lake City this year. The set will be used during Communion from now on.



New Communion Set
Photo courtesy: Pastor Haas

Happy Birthday!

After worship service on Sunday, July 21, a celebration was held to commemorate Beverly Kikuchi’s 99th birthday. She was joined by daughter Tammy and son-in-law Cal Nakamura, who provided the birthday cake enjoyed by all.



Bev Kikuchi with daughter Tammy and son-in-law Cal.
Photo courtesy: Lynne Ward

Also, happy birthday to Yuri Uyeda, who celebrated her 88th (Beiju) birthday this month too!

New Office Administrator

Great news! Patty Price has consented to be the new part-time Office Admin for the JCC and will begin on August 1. Patty’s career was in education, so she is organized and efficient. Duties and tasks are being defined.

In the meantime, one of her first tasks is to update the JCC directory, so stay tuned for more information in the next month. We are grateful to have Patty fill this position!

Kitchen Courtesies

Note that there are new labels on the drawers and cabinets in the Fellowship Hall kitchen denoting where specific tools and kitchen items belong. As the other congregations or outside groups use the Fellowship Hall kitchen, it is helpful to see at a glance where items are found.

Extras of Coffee Fellowship items (paper plates, cups, plastic utensils, napkins, sugar packets, etc.) can be found downstairs in the “kitchen room.” If you use the last of any item, please go to the basement and bring more up to the kitchen.

The kitchen air conditioner (vent is in the ceiling) is controlled by a remote that is now mounted near the kitchen light switch. If you use the a/c, please remember to turn it off when leaving. (Make sure the vents close and the red light is off.)

Please label and date with your name, any personal food items that are left in the refrigerator or freezer. Anything left in the refrigerator after 2 weeks from the date (open items) or 4 weeks (unopened items) will be discarded. Freezer items, 4 weeks.

Prayer Group

A prayer group is held every Thursday morning at 9:00 a.m. via Zoom.

To join the Zoom Meeting, click on this link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88183384849?pwd=dUd1ZVJlUcVlTWNDcDFtcXQ3UDgvQT09>

Please join us!

Also, pick up a “Pocket Prayers” booklet on the table under the Fellowship Hall bulletin board.

Session July Meeting Recap

Submitted by Karen Okawa, Clerk of Session

The July Session meeting was held on Thursday, July 25, 2024.

Patty Price was unanimously officially ratified as Office Administrator.

Approved date and budget for 100th anniversary of the chapel on September 21 and 22.

Discussion on relocation of Presbytery office, baptism request, Session/Trustee representation and communication/process improvements.

Individual Reports:

Pastor: Pastor Haas thanked JCC volunteers for their efforts during the GA. Internal, Session and Trustees will still have to improve collaboration. Session called for a Joint Task Force whereas the Trustees prefer to continue Joint Meetings of both bodies. More important than the meeting structure is the fact that communication flows freely and quickly so we are all on the same page.

Building and Grounds: Working towards completion of the sanctuary for anniversary event in September.

Finance: The P&L and budget statements for the month of June were reviewed and discussed.

Personnel: PNC will resume interviews after developing second interview questions. Compensation package will be calculated. OA position has been filled by Patty Price. Japantown meetings continue. JCC members volunteered at SLBT Obon festival; in turn SLBT members will help at our future festivals.

Membership: JCC volunteers supported GA events – National Asian Presbyterian Council used our Fellowship Hall for their meetings and gave us a generous donation for the usage. Some volunteered in welcoming committee positions at the airport, TRAX station and Salt Palace. The JCC hosted a worship service and luncheon on June 30 and catered an event for the Synod of the Rocky Mountains on July 2.

Nichigo: Nerikiri class continues; the July class was held on the 9th and a makeup class on July 23.

Worship: Rev. Mike Clang was guest pulpit in July; Chaplain Wilde had a family emergency, so was unable to speak on July 21. Rev. Bob Nakaoka will be guest pulpit on August 18.

Deacons: See report summary on page 3.

Trustees: The chapel roof will be replaced before winter and the Fellowship Hall roof will also be looked at.

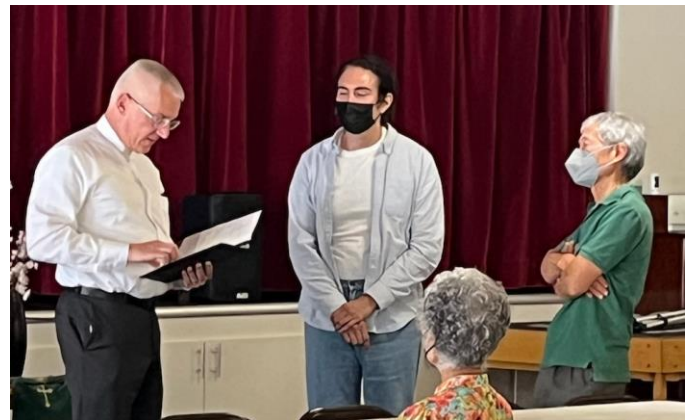
Kenshin Taiko: See article on page 7.

Music Sunday, July 28

Each year on July 28, the church commemorates a trio of important musicians—Bach, Schütz, and Händel—and prays for those who nurture and equip the church's song.

This year the Session wishes to recognize the talented musicians who perform their magic every Sunday in playing hymns and special musical offerings: JCC Worship Band (Rick Aoki, Wes Kida, Dean Shiba and Gene Shimizu), Allyn Nakashima and Marc Stillman (pianists) and Yas Iwamoto (organist).

We are thankful for their time and talent in providing music every Sunday.



Pastor Haas presents gift cards to Marc Stillman and Rick Aoki as a thank you for their musical contributions. Photo courtesy: Julee Mori

(SLC NextGen JA article continued from page 3)

Please take the survey below to provide input on ways to protect and potentially revitalize Japantown.

Japantown Revitalization Survey:
<https://forms.gle/gmgxDnGAPbUt8X5R8>

Or scan the QR code below:



The survey results will be shared in future town halls with community leaders and the broader Japanese American community. Your time, opinion, and willingness to join in the efforts of making a community-inspired Japantown is valued.

Survey operated by SLC NextGen JA. For any questions, please reach out to SLC NextGen JA at SLCNextGenJA@gmail.com.

General Assembly (GA 226) Wrap Up

The General Assembly (GA) of the Presbytery USA (PC-USA) continued into the month of July, ending on July 4.

On the evening of Tuesday, July 2, 2024, the JCC Fellowship Hall welcomed the Synod of the Rocky Mountains for a dinner reception.

Candice Sweet, Stated Clerk of the Synod sends her appreciation to everyone who worked to make the event a relaxing and enjoyable fellowship.



Synod of the Rocky Mountains dinner. Photo courtesy: Jan Aramaki

The Salt Lake Tribune ran a nice article on July 6 wrapping up the General Assembly that featured Rev. Dr. Mirjam Haas-Melchior.

Presbytery of Utah Thank You

Dear members of the Presbytery of Utah,

We would like to extend to you our sincere and heartfelt thanks for your help in welcoming the 226th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) to Salt Lake City. This could not have happened with your countless hours of planning, preparation, and volunteering. Thank you!

Many of the people attending GA last week commented to us how welcome they felt in Salt Lake, and how much they enjoyed the 226th General assembly. They loved our volunteers welcoming them at the airports & Trax stations, and they greatly appreciated worshipping with you in some of your congregations on Sunday June 30th. Pastors and church staff, thank you for helping to publicize this and making it possible for people to sign up and volunteer.

As the COLA chairperson I would like to thank everyone who met with us monthly preparing the numerous little details and tasks and taking care of things that had to be planned and scheduled. None of this could have happened without your collective effort of thousands of hours of preparation and volunteering. On behalf of the Presbytery of Utah, we are so grateful for your efforts. The Spirit was present with well over 1,000 Presbyterians gathering for the assembly. The work of the church continues on, thanks be to God. GA 226 was a success!

Grace and peace be with you all,

Rev. Derek Forbes, FPC Logan; Rev. Dr. Mirjam Haas-Melchior, Executive Presbyter for the Presbytery of Utah; Tim Fluetsch, Volunteer Coordinator

Kenshin Taiko Update

Submitted by Sarah Gregorio

On June 1, Kenshin started the month with a performance at the Gateway, the Multi-Cultural Dance Festival, which we have been playing at for over 20 years! It is under new leadership and name change, and it was a lot of fun. We turned around and came to JCC to play for the support of the Pride Parade float set up area and had a great time! Next, the 46th Utah Asian Festival is always one of our favorites, and we played for them on the 8th. We had a standing ovation!

We had a couple of weeks to break from performing, where we focused on teaching our intermediate players some of the more advanced songs, and working on our newer additions. We then finished out June with two performances for the General Assembly, one on the 29th at the Marriott and one on the 30th at JCC for the BBQ.

This leads right into July, where we started the month with performing a third time for the General Assembly on July 4. A couple thousand people!! Next up was on July 13, where we played two different performances. The first was at the Children's Museum for its Cultural Day, and then we ran to the Utah State Fair Park to play for the Ink Against Cancer Fundraiser, our second time for those folks! Next, we played on the 18th for the Murray City Children's Summer Matinees Series, where kids and parents alike loved participating and trying out our practice drums.

Now, we have a couple of weeks break from performing to work on our songs, while awaiting our next upcoming performance on August 3rd, for the Midvale Sumo Tournament.



Kenshin Taiko members keep busy!
Photo courtesy: Sarah Gregorio

Summer Harvest

Those that missed worship service on July 28 missed out on home grown nasubi (eggplant) and zucchini from Ron Nishijima's garden. Thanks for sharing your "gifts from God", Ron!

(Pastor's Message, continued from page 1)

At UCC Media Justice, we joined with 200 organizations asking social media companies to implement election integrity policies. We are continuing to work to make traditional, broadcast media accountable to the communities they serve, so communities can rely on it. We support the Federal Communications Commission's quick action to sanction electoral deep fake phone calls and to establish transparency rules in political advertising. The UCC is pressing lawmakers, especially Congress, to pass legislation that would firmly prohibit deceptive practices and prevent voter intimidation by making it unlawful to knowingly provide false information, online or offline. Join our email list so you can help.

As individual members of the United Church of Christ community, here are some specific actions *you* can take to fight disinformation and misinformation:

[#KnowYourFacts](#). Always check the accuracy of a video, story, or article from a reputable source before sharing it, using websites like [Politifact](#), [Snopes](#), or [FactCheck.org](#). Or use the Southern Poverty Law Center's [helpful guide for how to spot AI-generated disinformation in your social feed](#).

Don't amplify false narratives: Avoid sharing mis- or disinformation, even to debunk it. Instead, share factual content to contribute positively to online discussions.

Educate your circle: If you see friends or family sharing disinformation or misinformation, engage them with kindness and present correct information. Suggest they check the facts themselves. Don't get into a fight online. [#KnowYourResponsibility](#) [#KnowYourLimits](#)

Report disinformation: Use the support tools provided by social media platforms to report false information. You can also alert organizations like Common Cause through their disinformation tip lines. The FCC also accepts complaints and offers tips on deepfake scams of all kinds.

Many of these pointers are part of UCC Media Justice's [#KnowPeaceOnline campaign](#) which offers six guideposts to a better world online.

UCC Media Justice invites you to join with us in praying during the 2024 election season:

God, help us, our neighbors and our political leaders to put our love for our world into action. As we prepare to vote in November and encourage our neighbors to do the same, let us be vigilant in verifying the information we share and courageous in confronting falsehoods. Call us to seek out truth and justice and educate ourselves and others during this critical election year. Help us to do that by giving us the perseverance to create a society where all people have access to reliable, trustworthy information from sources that are accountable to the communities they serve and that reflect the full diversity of our country.

Deacon's July Meeting Recap

Submitted by Allyn Nakashima

The Board Deacons met on July 7, 2024 and discussed our upcoming schedule for the month of July for coffee fellowship and other calendar events. Of note, Beverly Kikuchi's 99th birthday celebration will be held during coffee fellowship on July 21.

We served communion on July 7 using the new ceramic vessels purchased from the Presbyterian General Assembly.

Pocket Prayers booklets were reordered and are available on the front table in the Fellowship Hall.