

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

July 2024

The chapel renovation is nearing completion. Over the months and months of worshipping in the fellowship we have learned to worship without the Lord's table surrounded by the American and church flags. During our mission study process it has become clear that whom the JCC belongs to: "They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world." (John 17:16-18)

To be clear, the church does not derive its identity through flags, but it does express its ministry through them. During pride month in June, we wave rainbow flags, join the pride parade, and support parade goers with encouraging words, taiko music, and bottled water. Those who spread peace and love get to write history and we do that loud and proud. Flying a rainbow flag at church is a loving ministry that says: your struggle is welcome here.

Flags are also a great way to exclude ideologies that simply do not belong. Churches across the nation banning the confederate flag preach an important message: While your family may have lost loved ones in the Civil War, this expression of grief is not welcome here.

What are our symbols? And how can we be faithful to God's commandment to "seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare." (Jeremiah 29:7)?

Here are a few ways that represent meaningful ministry with flags in the JCC:

- On Memorial Sunday, when we commemorate Japanese-American soldiers, the Scout Troop 442 of the Buddhist Temple conducts a flag ceremony in the cemetery because the Scouting values get reinforced by practicing good flag etiquette.
- Flags as symbols of where we come from could be displayed as they tell the story of where our people hail from. In order to do that, we would need a whole rack: USA, Japan, Tonga, Myanmar, Germany, and more.

Flags moved into American sanctuaries in the 1950s and folks who grew up in the cold war afraid of the Communist threat placed the flag close to the altar over their grief and fear. They lost loved ones left and right during WWII and Korea. They felt vulnerable even at home. They may get angry over "the flag issue." We have had good conversations around our need to have Memorial and Veterans Day opportunities that are about vulnerability instead of national pride.

Vietnam era veterans may be adamant about keeping the flag. In most cases, they never received a proper welcome home. America has not embraced their service, so they need to see at least the flag as a symbol of embrace. Maybe we can provide them with the comfort they need by allowing them to share their grief of being called murderers. For the most part, they were forced into the service through the draft.

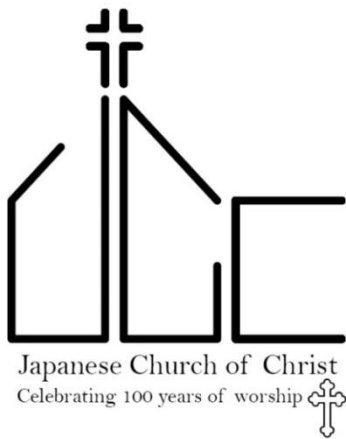
(Continued on Page 2)



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.

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, Pat Price

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

Website: www.jccslc.net

(Pastor’s Message, continued from Page 1.)

In most cases, those hardened veterans and military families want the Stars and Stripes up there out of a sense of grief and insecurity. In their youth “the rocket’s red glare, the bombs bursting in air, gave proof through the night that our flag was still there”. Now they need the reassurance to “O say does that star-spangled banner yet wave?”

The Stars and Stripes have no business in church when they stand for an America First ideology, but they can be a meaningful ministry when they say: We see your pain, your insecurity, and weakness.

The JCC serves a multicultural community. The question of flags in churches in this country does not have to be one of yes or no. We are free to be more nuanced. Symbols provide ministry opportunities, and we ought to be aware of the symbols we use. Because if the church fails to reinterpret symbols and elevate their meaning in our context, ideology will take over. And idols ought to be smashed!

Parts of this reflection were previously published on the UCC Vital Signs & Statistics blog at <https://carducc.wordpress.com/2020/07/06/o-say-does-that-star-spangled-banner-yet-wave/>

Blessings,

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

Search for a Permanent Pastor – Quick Update

Submitted by Lynne Ward, Elder for Personnel

The period of first interviews is now. Some first interviews have occurred, and more are forthcoming. With summer vacations and the General Assembly, the PNC is taking a pause for several weeks.

Please keep the pastors, the process and the PNC members in your prayers.

The PNC members are: Rick Aoki, Jan Aramaki, Lorraine Crouse, Michiko Kenmotsu, Marc Stillman, Nancy Umemura and Lynne Ward.

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	Steve Fukushima	Laura Olson
Jean Irwin	Pastor Nominating Committee	Kennah and Brighton Misaka

Jan Aramaki and Allyn Nakashima will be attending the Lake Tahoe Retreat at the end of this month. Please include them in your prayers that they travel safely. They will share their experiences with us upon their return.

SLC NextGen JA Efforts to Revitalize Japantown

Submitted by Kristine Aramaki

NextGen’s Mission and Vision statements:

Mission: To amplify the collective Japanese American voice of Salt Lake City through intergenerational collaboration that promotes the diverse voices of Japantown’s past, present, and future.

Vision: A connected, sustainable, and lively Japantown community that promotes cultural and historical awareness and creates diverse and welcoming spaces within Salt Lake City for all.

Our goal is to establish a well-structured organization with clear objectives with a commitment to transparency and communication with the community. NextGen seeks and welcomes new members to contribute diverse talents and knowledge to our efforts in preserving and revitalizing J-town.

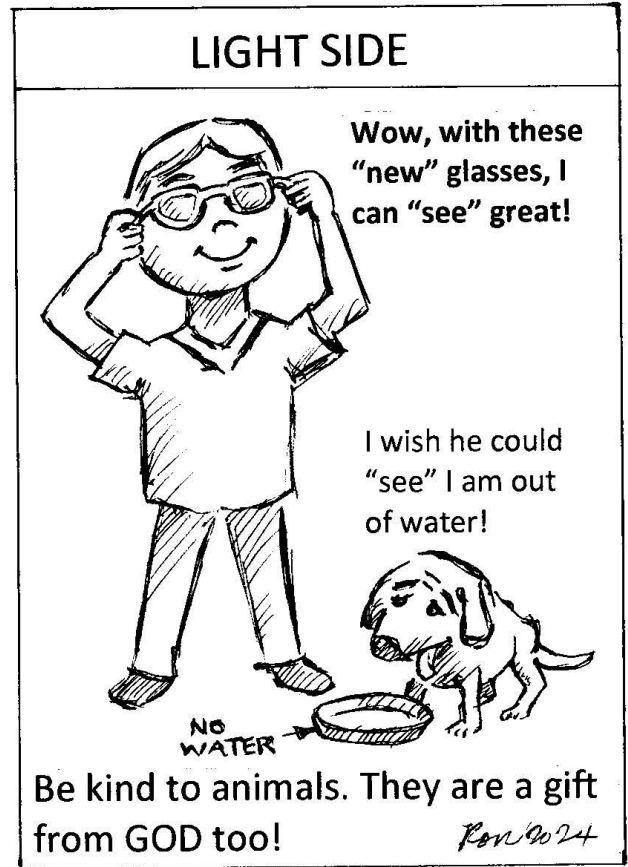
Recently, NextGen conducted a survey within the JA community to prioritize revitalization efforts for J-town. Key priorities identified were: including space for cultural events, renovation of the JCC and SLBT, sustainability initiatives, church parking solutions, and the establishment of Japanese-related businesses along the street. At the June 11th, 2024, SL City Council meeting, Smith Entertainment Group released its latest renderings of the Sports, Entertainment, Culture and Convention District, including J-town. The JCC, SLBT, and Japanese Garden are included in the rendering; however, a tall residential tower will cast large shadows over the JCC; traffic will become a problem on 100 South; turning 300 West into a plaza will cut off JCC’s back parking lot access; and construction will be disruptive. As a community it is our duty to be present, active, and vocal in participating in efforts to re-create a vibrant downtown and J-town.

NextGen has garnered significant media coverage about J-town, including features in The Salt Lake Tribune, Deseret News, KSL News, KUER 90.1FM, U92, and KRCL 90.0. Keep an eye out for an upcoming article in The Salt Lake Tribune focusing on NextGen’s preservation efforts in J-town.

If you haven’t already, please sign the Japantown Revitalization Petition at <https://www.change.org/p/revitalize-salt-lake-city-s-historic-japantown>. For questions or to join NextGen, email SLCNextGenJA@gmail.com.

Deacons June Meeting Recap

The Deacons June recap was not available at press time. It will be included in the August Herald along with the July recap.



SECC Renderings

Renderings of the Sports, Entertainment, Culture and Community (SECC) district proposed by the Smith Entertainment Group (SEG can be found at this link: <https://slc.primegov.com/public/portal>).

From the link above, go to:

LBA, RDA and Council Formal Meeting

June 11, 2024 Meeting

Meeting Materials

See pages 71 through 83

These renderings were presented at the Salt Lake City Council meeting on June 11, 2024.

Copies of the renderings are also posted on the Fellowship Hall bulletin board.

Office Admin Position

The JCC continues to seek someone to fill Office Administrator (OA) duties. Duties include producing the weekly worship script and bulletin, sorting and distributing mail, ordering office supplies, etc. If you are interested, please contact Lynne Ward.

Trustees Update on Japantown

Submitted by Jani Iwamoto

Pursuant to SB 272, Substitute 1, Capital City Reinvestment Zone Amendments, there are certain requirements and established procedures in order to create a sports and entertainment project area for the use of tax revenue for the benefit of creating or improving access to sports and entertainment within the area. There will be requirements for the project area, the local government (Salt Lake City), and designation of a project area as a public infrastructure district. The legislation authorizes SLC to levy a sales and use tax within their boundaries and for use within the project area; as well as other requirements such as entering into a participant agreement, allowable uses of revenue and funds, and to provide reports to the review committee. The deadline is set for September 1st for the completion of the above but there are various other deadlines prior thereto.

Because of questions arising about the SEG Participant Agreement (Agreement), I have relayed to church leadership, that this Agreement is presently in the hands of the attorneys. According to SLC Council Member Eva Lopez Chavez, who is over the Japantown area, "SLC and SEG will continue to negotiate and finalize the terms of the Agreement that will mark the first step towards a generational investment in downtown Salt Lake City. SLC leaders and SEG executives aim to finalize the Agreement and transmit it to the SL City Council early next week. Due to next week's holiday and to give council members and the public opportunities to review the details ahead of the potential endorsement, we anticipate the Agreement discussion to occur on July 2 and a possible vote related to the agreement to occur on July 9. The

briefing on July 2nd will be public and comments will be heard one last time."

Previous input from our community for this Agreement came from our Japanese Community Preservation Committee (JCPC) which includes members from the Japanese Church of Christ (JCC), and testimony from town hall meetings at the JCC and Salt Lake Buddhist Temple (SLBT), as well as at several city council meetings. I know many of us spoke and provided input at these meetings. This agreement is a culmination of many stakeholders, i.e., mayors, etc.

I met for a short visit at the JCC with Smith Entertainment Group's Mike Maughan so he could see the impact of the probable, unfettered height which will surround our JCC – and the importance of the garden honoring our Issei and Nisei pioneers, and also our WWII Nisei Congressional Gold Medal soldiers – but the importance of its existence which is critical now, is that our JCC chapel will continue to have light, as well as the garden acting as a buffer from traffic. The garden has now been included in one of the latest renderings of SEG

There are other critical issues that will be important to relay as the city moves to future developmental agreements.

At this point, we have had a voice, but we will wait to see what has been included. Please note that while we have heard support from the city, county, and state that our JCC and SLBT will be preserved, we will still be impacted by what others do on their land – we will continue to give input, but we do not control the land of others.

JCC July 2024 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 -Rocky Mtn Synod Reception, 5:30pm -North Parking Lot closed for paving	3 -North Parking Lot closed for paving	4 INDEPENDENCE DAY	5	6
7 -Communion Service, 10:30am -Deacons Meeting, 11:45am	8 -Parking, Jazz Summer League	9 -Nerikiri class, 10am -Parking, Jazz Summer League	10 -Parking, Jazz Summer League	11	12	13
14 -Worship Service, 10:30am	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 -Worship Service, 10:30am	22	23	24 PIONEER DAY	25 -Session Meeting, 6:30pm	26	27
28 -Worship Service, 10:30am	29	30	31			

*Calendar current as of Herald printing, 7/1/2024.

General Assembly (GA 226)

The General Assembly (GA) of the Presbytery USA (PC-USA) are meeting in Salt Lake City beginning June 28 and going through July 4.

For three days at the end of June, the National Asian Presbytery Council met in the Fellowship Hall for its annual meeting. The council, representing 11 different nationalities across the country, discussed the future of Asian churches within the Presbytery. It was a pleasure to open our hall to them for meetings.

JCC members also had the opportunity to volunteer through the Presbytery of Utah to welcome attendees at the airport, assist them at the TRAX station, and other tasks at the Salt Palace. Thank you to Jan Aramaki, Kristine Aramaki, Teresa Aramaki, Pastor Haas, Allyn Nakashima and Karen Okawa for taking shifts. It was a great opportunity to meet and work with members of other Presbyterian churches in the valley.



Airport greeters

On Sunday, June 30, thirty guests from the GA walked from the Salt Palace to attend our worship service and a luncheon that followed. Guests were entertained by Kenshin Taiko (who also performed at the opening and closing GA events).



Thank you to the Deacons and all who volunteered to help that day with welcoming our guests and preparing and serving food. Your presence, enthusiasm, and willingness to lend a hand make our events successful and memorable. We are grateful for your involvement.

Special thanks to Theresa Mori-Sueoka for creating the beautiful ikebana that greeted guests entering the Fellowship Hall and to Jerry Mori and Alan Okawa for grilling the teriyaki burgers for lunch.

GA guests remarked how much they enjoyed attending our worship service and our hospitality!



Welcome cross



Wendy Tajima

One GA delegate that attended the Sunday service was Wendy Tajima who is currently Executive Presbyter of San Gabriel (CA) Presbytery. Wendy's grandfather was Reverend Kengo Tajima, who served as a JCC minister from 1921 to 1928.



A full house in the Fellowship Hall



Kenshin Taiko performs for luncheon attendees

Major Improvements

A big THANK YOU to Alan Shino for cleaning and sealing the Fellowship Hall kitchen floor. The Nihon Matsuri committee paid for our floor to be professionally steam cleaned after the festival, but the floor tiles were never sealed after they were installed during the kitchen remodel, so Alan spent hours in scrubbing and applying sealant to the floor afterwards.

Alan and Steve Fukumitsu also painted the deck/patio of the Fellowship Hall. A lot of man hours and paint.

The dead lawn sections of our grounds are now covered in pea gravel and looks great. The signage on the chapel has also been updated with current information.



Also, we appreciate the Tongan and Kachin congregations who helped with clean up and garden trimming a couple of weeks ago. Our church grounds looked great for General Assembly visitors!

We are truly blessed to have such commitment from volunteers. The work is truly appreciated and needs to be recognized. We thank all for their tireless efforts in making the JCC a welcoming place.

Check the Church Events Calendar

Last month's Herald mentioned the new events calendar that should be used to note usage of the JCC chapel and Fellowship Hall and avoid scheduling conflicts. It is located across from the Fellowship Hall bulletin board. To schedule an event, please contact Session (for approval) and Nancy Umemura who will update the calendar.

Pictures of Belonging Wrapup

On Sunday, June 23, 2024, 18 participants viewed the "Pictures of Belonging" exhibit at the Utah Museum of Fine Arts (UMFA) on the University of Utah campus. The exhibit featured three Japanese American female artists and their paintings, pre-war, during WWII and post-war.

Many thanks to Jean Irwin for organizing the private tour for our group, our guide Emily, and to the drivers who provided transportation to the museum. Everyone had a great time!



UMFA tour group



Viewing the gallery. Photo courtesy: Lorraine Crouse

Herald Fund Drive

As with everything these days, the cost of paper, printing and postage continue to increase. Contributions to the Herald fund will assist in covering these costs incurred in producing this monthly newsletter.

If you would like to receive the Herald electronically, email jccherald@gmail.com. eHerald readers receive the newsletter earlier and the photos are in full color!

Also, if you wish to be removed from either the Herald hardcopy or electronic Herald list, please send a message to jccherald@gmail.com.

Nerikiri Class

The second Nerikiri class in the series was held on Tuesday, June 4. The class had homework to make the shiro an (white bean paste) used for the Nerikiri. Sensei Akiko showed us how to create cherry blossoms! The next class will be on July 9 at 10 a.m.



Students gather around Sensei Akiko.

Results of class number 2. Each one is so unique!

Photos courtesy: Allyn Nakashima

Pride Parade Wrapup

The Salt Lake City Pride Parade occurred on Sunday, June 2, 2024. The JCC passed out water and the Kenshin Taiko performed to entertain passersby. The Presbytery of Utah had a large contingent that walked the parade route.



Members of Kenshin Taiko and Pastor Haas



Presbytery of Utah marchers. Photos courtesy: Jan Aramaki

Session May/June Meeting Recaps

May meeting:

The May Session meeting was held on Thursday, May 30, 2024.

The GA meets June 26 through July 4. The Presbytery of Utah needs volunteers to meet and greet people at the airport as well as the Salt Palace.

Pastor's Report: Organizing a task force to select a new hymnal.

B&G: The water heater in the Fellowship Hall needs to be replaced. Bid for a new one was approved and will be installed. The North wall of the Fellowship Hall was water damaged and a new gutter will need to be installed.

Finance: Remodel committee getting estimates from Namba Construction.

Personnel: Seeking to fill Office Administrator position. PNC continues with interviews.

Membership: Planning possible field trip to see "Pictures of Belonging" exhibit at UMFA.

Nichigo: First Nerikiri class to be held May 7.

Worship: Father's Day picnic will be on June 16. JCC Worship Band will provide the music.

Deacons: Deacons will provide support for the Father's Day picnic as well as GA luncheon.

June meeting:

The June Session meeting was held on Thursday, June 20, 2024.

Approval was given to do an event to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the JCC chapel and for the Nisei Veterans' stamp.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Haas testified on behalf of the JCC at the Salt Lake City Planning Commission meeting on June 12.

B&G: The committee has been busy with chapel renovation. The Fellowship Hall has a new water heater and the north wall water damage is fixed.

Finance: Funds need to be transferred by Trustees to cover chapel remodel expenses.

Personnel: Work is in progress to find a new Office Administrator. In the meantime, people are filling in working on the worship script and bulletin temporarily.

Membership: Updated the 2024 Necrology report to reflect the passing of Yeiko Homma in April.

Nichigo: Akiko Oki will continue the Nerikiri class on the first Tuesday of each month.

Kenshin Taiko: Have many performances scheduled, including the June 30 luncheon and GA dinner.

Father's Day Wrapup

The annual Father's Day worship and picnic was held at Sugarhouse Park on Sunday, June 16, 2024. It was nice to have worship service and music by the JCC Worship Band outside on a bright sunny morning to honor our dads and show love for them.

After worship service, a delicious potluck spread was served; the plates were filled! Bingo followed. Thanks to all that donated bingo prizes!

Here are some JCC fathers and families!



JCC Worship Band and families



The Homma Family celebrates Father's Day at the picnic



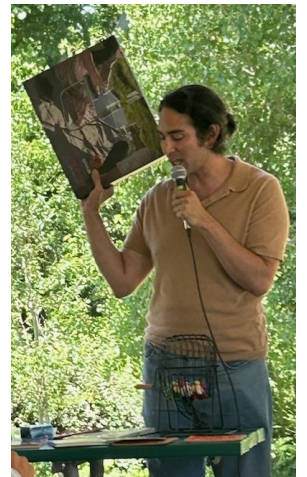
Pastor Haas and family



Four generations of the Murakami family



Twin moms – Betty and Sadie!



Marc calls bingo



The Kubota Klan

Photos courtesy: Jan Aramaki, Lorraine Crouse

July Community Events

Saturday, July 13: Obon Festival. Salt Lake Buddhist Temple, food and fun. Taiko at 7:00 p.m., dancing at 8:00 p.m.

Wednesday, July 24: Matsumoto Sister City Picnic, sponsored by Utah JAACL Chapters, Jordan Park, noon.