

## 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

**June 2025**

Dear Japanese Church of Christ,

As we step into the month of June, my heart is full of gratitude for the way our church has come together in recent weeks. May was a sacred month—one that wove together joy, grief, remembrance, and hope in a way that only the Spirit of God can orchestrate.

On the heels of Easter—our celebration of resurrection and new life—we gathered for two memorial services honoring beloved members of our church family. These services were tender, filled with memories and mourning, yet rooted in the sure promise that death is not the end. Because Christ has risen, we do not grieve without hope. We remember with love, but also with faith in the resurrection that binds us all together.

Our Memorial Day service echoed this spirit. We paused to remember those who gave of themselves for the freedoms we now enjoy—those who have gone before us and whose legacy continues to bless us. These moments of remembrance remind us that we are part of something larger than ourselves, a spiritual family across generations, united in love and sacrifice.

Now, as we look ahead, we approach Pentecost on Sunday, June 8—the celebration of the birth of the Church. It was at Pentecost that the Holy Spirit came upon the early followers of Jesus, igniting a movement that would carry the love of Christ into every corner of the world. It was the moment when God's very Spirit took up residence within us—not in temples made of stone, but in hearts made willing.

We are, quite literally, the dwelling place of God's Spirit.

That reality leads me to a deep and personal question: *How am I being the loving presence of God in this world?*

"This question is not just for me—it's for all of us. At a recent strategic planning session, we discussed a beautiful insight from Japanese architecture: the concept of "**soft transitions.**" These are spaces that gently move from one area to another—inside to outside, outside in, light to shadow, private to public—creating an intentional, gracious flow. Through our discussion of this illustration, I sensed that this was more than a design principle—it was a spiritual calling."

I believe this is a **prophetic word** for us as a church. What would it mean for us to be a people of *soft transitions*? To create spaces—both physically and relationally—where people feel gently invited in? Where those who are already inside are encouraged to go out with purpose and compassion? Where the movement of God's Spirit is not abrupt, but welcoming, thoughtful, and transformational?

In a world that often feels harsh and divided, we are called to be a community that embodies gentleness, openness, and grace. A church where transitions aren't jarring but healing. A people who make room for others, just as the Spirit has made room in us.

This Pentecost, let us not only remember the birth of the Church—but step boldly into the life we've been given. Empowered by the Spirit, let us live with intention. Let us love well. And let us create transitions that bring heaven a little closer to earth, for all of us and those we encounter.

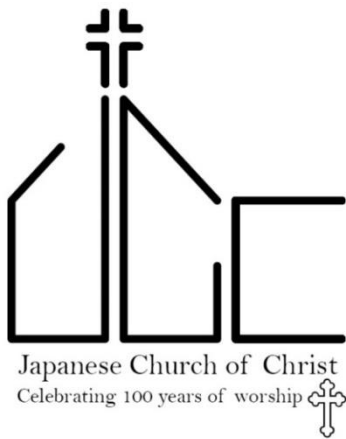
With love and expectation,

Reverend Andrew Fleishman

**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: Rev. Andrew Fleishman**  
**Clerk of Session: Nancy Umemura**  
**Office Administrator: Patty Price**

**Session**

Michiko Kenmotsu  
 Julee Mori, Finance/Kenshin Taiko  
 Alan Shino, Building and Grounds  
 Nancy Umemura, Membership/Deacons/  
 Nichigo  
 Lynne Ward, Personnel/Trustees  
 Elise Yokoyama, Worship

**Deacons**

Allyn Nakashima, moderator; Teresa Aramaki, Stephanie Mori-Nakao, Akiko Oki, Laura Olson, Kory Shino, Marc Stillman

**Trustees**

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

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

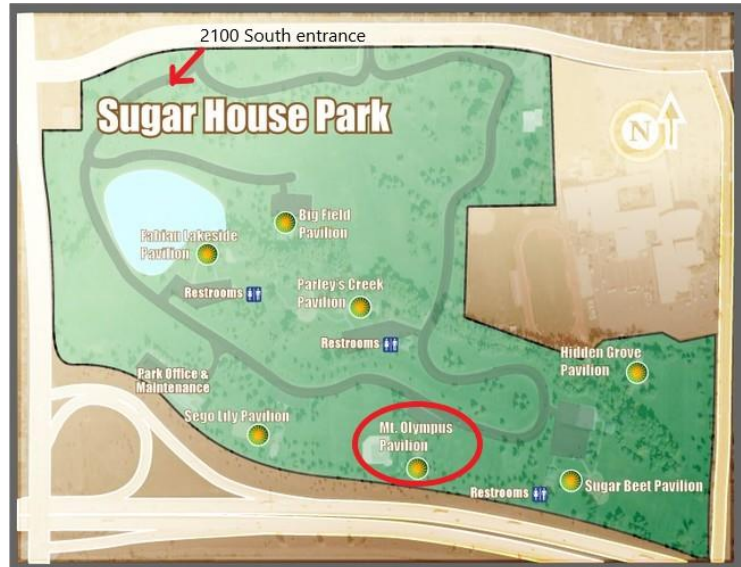
Website: [www.jccslc.net](http://www.jccslc.net)

**Father’s Day Picnic**

The traditional Father’s Day Worship and Picnic will be held on **Sunday, June 15, 2025, 10:30 a.m.** at **Sugarhouse Park**, 1300 East and 2100 South, in the **Mount Olympus Pavilion**. *This is a different pavilion than last year* (that pavilion is closed for construction).

Enter the park from the 2100 South entrance and follow the one way road around to the southeast side of the park. Just before the hairpin curve in the road, the Mount Olympus pavilion will be on the right side.

Please bring a potluck dish to share, drinks will be provided. Bingo to be held afterwards!



**Pentecost Sunday**

**Pentecost Sunday, June 8, 2025** will be a joint worship service with the Anchored in Christ Tongan American Free Wesleyan Church.

**Congratulations Graduates – Class of 2025**



**Elizabeth Ward** – Master’s Degree in Applied Economics, George Washington University, Washington D.C.

**Karley Nakamura** – Bachelor of Science in Sociology, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT

**Ana Holt** – Bachelor of Arts in Visual Arts and Design, Salt Lake Community College, Salt Lake City, UT

**Josh Uyeda** – Bachelor of Science in Chemistry (Biological emphasis), University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT

**Shoji Mori** – Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering, University of Portland, Portland OR

**Condolences**

To the family of Dr. Gary Iwamoto, who passed away on April 30, 2025. Gary grew up at the JCC, before moving to practice a career in medicine. He retired in 2021 and returned to Salt Lake City. Please remember Pam, Yas, Jani and the Iwamoto family in your prayers.

## Utah Japantown Advocates

SLC NextGen JA has officially rebranded as **Utah Japantown Advocates!**

Our new name better reflects the heart of our work today: advocating for the preservation, revitalization, and visibility of Salt Lake City's historic Japantown. Our mission remains grounded in honoring the past, uplifting the present, and building a future where our culture, stories, and community thrive. We are deeply committed to ensuring that the spirit, community and history of Japantown remain a living, thriving part of our city's future.

### Here's what we're working on:

**Advocacy:** We're collaborating closely with community leaders from the Salt Lake Buddhist Temple and Japanese Church of Christ, government officials, and local organizations to make sure Japantown is meaningfully included in ongoing redevelopment discussions in downtown Salt Lake City.

**Oral Histories:** We're collecting and preserving the stories of those who lived, worked, and grew up in Japantown, to honor our community's past and share it with future generations. *If you are interested in sharing your story, please send us an email!*

**Community Perspectives:** We're gathering input through a [community survey](#) to understand how people feel about Japantown and its future—your voice matters!

*Stay tuned for an upcoming Town Hall we will be hosting to share more updates from our community leaders.*

### Stay Connected!

Follow us on Instagram [@utah\\_japantown\\_advocates](#) and visit our [website](#) to stay up to date on our projects, events, and ways you can get involved.

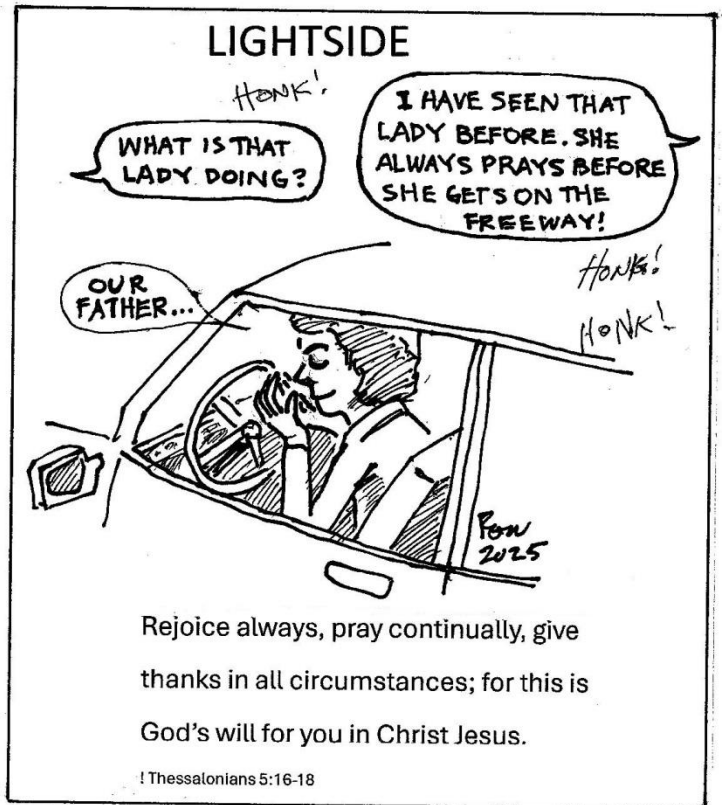
## Session Report

*Submitted by Nancy Umemura, Clerk of Session*

The Session meeting was held April 30, 2025. Pauline Vosburgh attended representing the Board of Trustees to discuss status and follow-up actions for the construction projects, parking, building security, and repairing/upgrading the multimedia system.

We discussed funeral/memorial service planning and joint services for Memorial Day and Pentecost Sunday.

Session met on May 22 to work on strategic planning actions and next steps. The next Session meeting is scheduled for May 28.



## Japantown Update

*Submitted by Lynne Ward*

A digital model or map of the proposed Sports, Entertainment, Culture and Convention District was shown in the May 2025 Herald. They were created by two University of Utah architecture students: Andrew Jeffries and Michael McLaughlin. In concert with the maps, they created 3D scale models of the area which are on display in the Fellowship Hall and were attractions at Nihon Matsuri. They are based on drawings released publicly by SEG and the Richie Group (West Quarter across the street).

The Utah Legislature budgeted \$300 million of state tax dollars for a bridge plaza over 300 West. SEG had originally envisioned a street level plaza on 300 West from North Temple to 100 South with 300 West being buried into a tunnel. An alternate plan was for the plaza and tunnel to be from South Temple to 100 South. Both ideas were deemed too expensive.

The current plan is for 300 West to be lowered from South Temple to 100 South (like 200 West) and the bridge plaza will be placed about mid-block. JCC's north parking entrance from 300 West will be closed or modified during construction and in the final design. We will communicate our needs for access to UDOT.

### Upcoming Community Events

**Saturday, June 7, 2025** – 48th Utah Asian Festival, Utah Fairpark Grand Building, 155 North 1000 West, Salt Lake City, UT, 11:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Website: utahasianfestival.org

**Sunday, June 8, 2025** – Utah Pride Parade, see article on this page.

**Saturday, June 21, 2025** – Closing celebration for exhibit *Uncovering the Journey: Japanese American Pioneers in Box Elder County* from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Link: <https://brighamcitymuseum.org>, Brigham City, UT.

**Saturday, July 12, 2025** - Salt Lake Buddhist Temple Obon Festival. Food from 3:00 p.m. Taiko 7:00 p.m. and dancing at 8:00 p.m.

### Remember in Your Prayers

Names will appear on the prayer list for one month, so we can keep it updated and current. Contact any of the Deacons or Pastor Andrew to add a person.

Please remember the following friends and family in your prayers:

Iwamoto Family Mitsuru Tyler Susan Fukushima

### Our Daily Bread – Summer Issue

Copies of the "Our Daily Bread" for the months of June, July and August are now available.

If you would like a copy mailed to you, send a request to [jccherald@gmail.com](mailto:jccherald@gmail.com). Copies can also be found on the table in the sanctuary and near the bulletin boards in the Fellowship Hall.



### Pride Weekend Events

The Presbytery of Utah will be participating in these events:

**Pride Interfaith Worship service** is June 6 at 7:00 p.m. at First Baptist Church, 777 So 1300 East.

**Pride Booth:** The Presbytery of Utah has a booth on Saturday, June 7. If you would like to sign up to be at the booth and give out stickers and candies to share the love, please email Megan Judkins, email address below.

**Pride Parade:** The Presbytery of Utah will walk with the Interfaith Coalition. If you plan to walk, please email Megan (Megan Judkins [megan.judkins@gmail.com](mailto:megan.judkins@gmail.com)) for details.

### FYI – Lithium Battery Warning

In the news lately, there have been reports of fires connected to lithium-ion batteries. These batteries are found in e-bikes, smart phones, laptops, toys and even cars. If not used correctly or if damaged, the batteries can catch on fire or explode.

Here are some safety tips when charging a device with a lithium battery:

- Purchase and use devices that are listed by a qualified testing lab.
- Always follow the manufacturer’s instructions.
- Only use the battery that is designed for that device.
- Put batteries in the device the right way.
- Only use the charging cord that came with the device.
- Do not charge a device under your pillow, on your bed, or on a couch.
- Do not keep charging the device or battery after it is fully charged.
- Keep batteries at room temperature when possible.
- Store batteries away from anything that can catch fire.

JCC June 2025 Calendar

| Sunday  | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday                                | Thursday  | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--------|---------|--|---|--------|----------|
| 1<br>-Communion Service, 10:30am<br>-Deacons Meeting, noon                    | 2      | 3       | 4  | 5<br>-Presbytery of Utah Council meeting, 10 a.m. | 6      | 7        |
| 8 PENTECOST<br>-Joint Service, 10:30am<br>-Pride Parade, 10:00am              | 9      | 10      | 11                                       | 12  | 13     | 14       |
| 15 FATHER'S DAY<br>-Father's Day worship and picnic, Sugarhouse Park, 10:30am | 16     | 17      | 18                                       | 19  | 20     | 21       |
| 22<br>-Worship Service, 10:30am   | 23     | 24      | 25<br>-Session Meeting, (tentative), 6pm | 26  | 27     | 28       |
| 29<br>-Worship Service, 10:30am   | 30     |         |  |   |        |          |

\*Calendar current as of Herald printing, 5/27/2025.

### Mother’s Day Brunch

On Mother’s Day, May 11, 2025, a continental breakfast was served to honor Mom before worship service. Carnation stems were presented to all moms and like-moms.



Early risers honor the moms!



Shigeko and daughter Shauna



Ana and her mother

### Veterans Memorial Day Service

The annual Veterans Memorial Service, sponsored by the three local JACL chapters, was held on Sunday, May 25, 2025 in the Japanese section of the Salt Lake City Cemetery. Pastor Andrew delivered the closing remarks and benediction during the service that honored local JA veterans of all wars.



Pastor Andrew gives closing remarks at Veterans’ Memorial service. Photo courtesy: Lorraine Crouse

### Memorial Candle Lighting Service Wrap Up

A joint worship service with the Anchored in Christ Tongan congregation was held on Sunday, May 25, 2025. The traditional candle lighting event, remembering family and friends, was held during the service.



Pastor Tipi gives the benediction.



The congregation lights candles in memory of loved ones. Photos courtesy: Lorraine Crouse

### Thank You All!

A heartfelt thank you to everyone that helped with Hiro Iwasaki’s Celebration of Life on May 3. It was a nice tribute to such a valued and cherished member of the JCC family. Food was plentiful at the reception, thanks to the generosity of everyone that cooked, baked and donated yummy salads, sides and desserts. We are so blessed!

### Nihon Matsuri Brings About Fellowship

Thank you to all our volunteers who helped JCC participate in the 20th anniversary of Nihon Matsuri. Nihon Matsuri gives JCC an opportunity for fellowship and to participate with the Japanese community to share our culture and traditions with the community at large. Thank you for cleaning our buildings and grounds; setting up tents, tables and chairs; hanging banners and signs; decorating our church; buying supplies; making and packing manju; cooking and serving in the JCC food booth; setting up and taking down the Hinamatsuri doll and kimono display, historic photograph and art displays; sharing Bonsai and Origami demonstrations; managing cash boxes; monitoring the chapel and fellowship hall; coordinating parking; thinking of everything that needed to be done then tearing down and again cleaning up in time for the following morning's Sunday services – phew!

It takes a village – but most importantly your participation and friendly welcome to the public showcased our church family and friends’ loving hearts. God’s blessings for the day were the huge volume of people who came through the JCC to experience the exhibits, talk with our information booth vendors, watch martial arts, see University of Utah student ideas for Japantown, and to experience JCC fellowship and love. Many thanks to everyone for your fellowship, service, and support.

With gratitude -- Lorraine Crouse and Jan Aramaki



Martial arts demonstration in the courtyard.



Consul-General of Japan Okajima with Nancy and Joel Umemura in front of the tribute to Wat Misaka.



Visitors view the JA in Sports photo display in the Fellowship Hall.



Burger chefs: Doug Murakami, Doug Shimizu, Amy Murakami, Kylie Murakami, Dani Murakami, Michael Erlacher in the JCC food booth.



U of U Architecture displays in Sanctuary.

Photos courtesy: Lorraine Crouse