
The JCC Times

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May 2010

A Newsletter of the Japanese Congregational Church

A Fellowship Divine

By Gregory Rawn

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. (Acts 2:42)

Shortly after Pentecost and Peter's sermon to the crowds in Jerusalem, many believed in Jesus. After they were baptized, these three thousand believers devoted themselves to teaching, breaking of bread (taking Holy Communion as well as eating common meals), prayer, and fellowship. These are obviously all important things, but what is fellowship, really?

Fellowship is more than just attending church together, and definitely more than drinking coffee and eating cookies with others. And, fellowship is more than good friendship, although worshipping, eating, and friendship are all important aspects of fellowship. Fellowship, in the Christian sense, is sharing life together. It is not just any life that is shared in Christian fellowship, but the very life of God at work in our daily lives. Any group of people can have secular fellowship, but to have Christian fellowship, you must have Christ at the center.

Cultivating fellowship brings with it many blessings. Christians in fellowship share the joys, trials, and temptations in their lives. They "rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep" (Rom. 12:15). Such support gives us strength and encouragement to walk through the darkest valley, knowing that Jesus, in the form of our friends, is always with us. Friends in fellowship also proclaim God's Word to us, calling us short when we are wrong, and bringing us back to the great news of God's love and forgiveness. In fellowship, we know that we are not alone, that we are not judged, that we are loved.

Fellowship, then, is a tall order. We will not experience it at all times and in all places. The biblical Christians certainly did not. Paul often wrote

to congregations in conflict and to individuals separated. We do not fellowship with other believers as we ought, but neither do we pray, study, rejoice, or confess as we ought. That is why fellowship is a spiritual discipline like the others. A lack of perfection is no excuse for a lack of effort. The benefits and importance of fellowship cannot be overstated.

Congregations should be the ideal of Christian fellowship. As people gathered to hear God's Word, worship, pray, and share under the cross of Christ, closeness and community should be the defining characteristics of the local church. However, many times this is not reality. Small groups, Bible studies, prayer groups, and even families can provide the fellowship we all need. But, most of all, through our baptisms we have fellowship with the One with whom it matters most: Jesus Christ our Lord. Each of us has been united with Jesus in his death and resurrection. He takes all that is ours (our sins, death, and selfishness) and gives us everything that is rightfully his (righteousness, life, and love). Fellowship with others helps make life bright and bearable, fellowship with Jesus makes life joyous and eternal.

I challenge you to seek out fellowship with others, in the name of Jesus. Join (or form) a small group that can share life together. Truly listen to others at church and share your burden with other believers you can trust. Trust is indeed the foundation of fellowship, for without it, fellowship is impossible. But, even if it is just with a spouse or close friend, commit yourself to praying, proclaiming, and sharing with others. God often works through others, and he just might work on others through you.

And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching. (Hebrews 10:24-25)



DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS

Special Offerings: January-April

In Memory of Fusako Leslie:
Peter and Joyce Tsai

Appreciation:
Aiko Ii

Good Friday and Easter:

Bi-Lan Chiong
Sue and Gene Hanson
Mitsuko Hashiguchi
Aiko Ii
Bob Kuramoto
Larry and Bisim Lee
Tim and Mari Louie

In Memory of Ryo Tsai:

Terry Acena and
Sharon Nakanishi-Acena
Nancy Adachi-Osawa
Elaine Akagi
Bi Hoa Caldwell
Chiong Family
Diana Congdon
Rhys & Sharon Farren
Carol & Gene Hanson
Mitsuko Hashiguchi
Starr Hashiguchi
Rae Hayashi & Bruce Pulmano
Aki & Kenny Higashi
Yoshiko Higo
Yukiko & Julian Hiraki
Akira & Lillian Horita
Katherine Hutchings
Eileen & Robert Iguchi
Gary and Nancy Jang
Miye and Henry Kanazawa
Sally Kazama
Yuriko Kumasaka
Bisim & Larry Lee
Cheri Lee & Damon Mar
Perry & Vickie Lee
Terry & Shirley Lee
Lorene & Stuart Leong
Calvin & Ruth Locke
Steve and Elaine Locke

Birthday Offering:
Aiko Ii

Special Offering:
Ching-Chao and Cheryl Wang

Eiko Nikaido
Chiyako Oka
Kazuko and Frank Robertshaw
Jun and Keiko Terayama
Peter and Joyce Tsai
Kenji Yamada
Linda Zee

Vincent & Nancy Magnuson
Janet Matsumoto
Ruth Medsker
Takako Mitsuzono
Gerry & Nancy Miyazaki
Kimi Ota Family
Jean and Albert Pastores
Judy and Ralph Rei
Kenneth & Beatrice Saito
Mark Sakagami
Dr. & Mrs. Cheng-Mei Shaw
Jerry Shigaki
John & Polly Shigaki
Haruko Shoji
George and Kim Suyama
Kathryn Suyama
Bobby & Lily Takatsuka
Victor & Lilly Takemoto
Donna Terayama
Bilin Tsai & Don Poe
Peter & Joyce Tsai
Stephanie & Trent Tsuchikawa
Shirley Yabu
Dennis & Patsy Yamada
Jack Yamashita
Susan Yano Mise
Vivian Yorita

Extra! Extra!

We hope everyone can join us for our annual **All Church Retreat & Potluck** at the Tsai's Hood Canal home on Saturday, May 15th. Peter will be providing hot dogs, hamburgers and salmon.

We will be arranging carpools to leave from the church around 9:00AM. Please let Peter or Joyce know if you are able to join us for this fun day of fellowship, food & relaxation!



For the month of May, the **Sunday Morning Bible Study** will meet on the first four Sundays of the month. Due to the Board Meeting on the 30th, they will not meet on that Sunday. Everyone is welcome to join as we continue our study of the Book of Acts.



Due to **Takako Mitsuzono's** visa issues, she has to return to Japan on May 18. Her last Sunday with us will be the 16th. It doesn't appear that she will return to Seattle later as originally planned, but is hoping to obtain a green card after her daughter obtains her citizenship, and then move closer to her daughter in VA. She will be taking her final CNA exams on Sunday, the 9th. Please pray for her as she prepares for her exams and that she will trust the Lord as he prepares her for her future. We also want to thank God for bringing her to us and her faithfulness to JCC.



Let's keep the **prayer list** updated and active at all times. If you have a prayer request or an answer to prayer, please let Pastor Steve or Sue Hanson know. We want to pray for each other and also rejoice together as we celebrate God's answers to our prayers!



Several members have expressed an interest to support the **Haiti Relief efforts**. Please pray that we select the most effective way to assist those affected by this tragedy.

Summer Sunday School Teacher Wanted!

Congratulations to Hannah Ehler who will be traveling to Japan for her summer internship program! We are currently looking for substitute Sunday School teacher(s) for the months of July and August. Please contact Joyce Tsai or Sue Hanson if you are interested.



JCC Calendar of Events

May 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
 <p>Happy Birthdays! May 3– Sue Sumioka May 9– Soichiro Sato May 20– Hannah Ehler</p>						1
2 <u>9:00 AM</u> Bible Study <u>10:00 AM</u> (Communion) Worship & Sunday School <u>11:30 AM</u> Nichigo Bento Fellowship	3	4	5 <u>12:15-1 PM</u> Prayer at the Cross	6 National Day of Prayer	7	8 <u>11:00 AM</u> Women's Bible Study ❖ Men's Fellowship
9 Mother's Day <u>9:00 AM</u> Bible Study <u>10:00 AM</u> Worship & Sunday School <u>11:30 AM</u> Fellowship Time/Tutoring	10	11	12 <u>12:15-1 PM</u> Prayer at the Cross	13 Ascension Day	14	15 <u>9:00 AM</u> Hood Canal Retreat
16 <u>9:00 AM</u> Bible Study <u>10:00 AM</u> Worship & Sunday School <u>11:30 AM</u> Fellowship Time/Tutoring	17	18	19 <u>12:15-1 PM</u> Prayer at the Cross	20	21	22
23 Pentecost <u>9:00 AM</u> Bible Study <u>10:00 AM</u> Worship & Sunday School <u>11:30 AM</u> Fellowship Time/Tutoring	24	25	26 <u>12:15-1 PM</u> Prayer at the Cross	27	28	29
30 Trinity Sunday <u>9:00 AM</u> Board Meeting <u>10:00 AM</u> Worship & Sunday School <u>11:30 AM</u> Fellowship Time/Tutoring	31 Memorial Day	<p align="center">Summer Newsletter deadline will be <u>Sunday, May 30th</u> Please email submissions to the editor at Gregory.Rawn@gmail.com.</p>				

Japanese Congregational Church

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Seattle, WA 98144

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



Mailing Address
Street Number and Name
City, State, 98165-4321



Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord

Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord!
Be all Thy graces now outpoured
On each believer's mind and heart;
Thy fervent love to them impart.
Lord, by the brightness of Thy light
Thou in the faith dost men unite
Of every land and every tongue;
This to Thy praise, O Lord, our God, be sung.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Thou holy Light, Guide divine,
Oh, cause the Word of Life to shine!
Teach us to know our God aright
And call Him Father with delight.
From every error keep us free;
Let none but Christ our Master be
That we in living faith abide,
In Him, our Lord, with all our might confide.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Thou holy Fire, Comfort true,
Grant us the will Thy work to do
And in Thy service to abide;
Let trials turn us not aside.
Lord, by Thy power prepare each heart
And to our weakness strength impart
That bravely here we may contend,
Through life and death to Thee, our Lord, ascend.
Hallelujah! Hallelujah!

Hymn text by Martin Luther and others, 15th cent.

