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The Rev. Karen Yokota Love and Edwin Santos take a hike at Asian Camp!

# Senior Pastor Reflection Spiritual Summer: A Time for Spiritual Strength

By The Rev. Karen Yokota Love

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.

-Ecclesiastes 3:1

ummer is a time of rest and relaxation, some are enjoying the last few days of vacation, and, for some, school is beginning. As I look back at summers past, I see a trail of beautiful and bittersweet memories. Beginnings and endings. Transitions. Vacations. Some summers overflowed with joy and other summers were filled with deep sadness and pain. The common thread is that every summer was unique and had its own story to tell. Just as every natural summer has a story, so does every spiritual summer. We will each walk through the spiritual seasons many times. Autumn is a time of change. Winter is a time of

barrenness and preparation. Spring is a time of rebirth. Finally, summer is a time for bearing fruit and embracing the abundant life that surrounds us.

The key to embracing our *spiritual* summer, no matter what time of year it is, is to remember to seize the joy of the season. This is a time to feel the heavenly warmth on our face and revel in the beauty that surrounds us. Relax, have fun, celebrate, and abide in gratitude for the blessings that surround. Fall and winter will come, but don't let thoughts of the unknown rob you of the joy of the moment.

As I write this, I'm on an airplane returning from Asian Camp, trying to make our way back to Seattle. Many of our youth ventured off to Asian Camp (see page 7) and had a wonderful time connecting with new and old friends while growing deep in their faith with Christ. We sang many of our favorite

camp songs including my favorites (they say they're oldies but goodies, now) *Matthew 11* and *Days of Love*.

Asian Camp was at a different location which was new to all of us. For the past 20+ years, both Jr. High Camp and Asian Camp convened at Camp Lodestar, located in the Northeastern part of California. This year, Asian Camp was at Camp Gilbert, nestled in between the foothills of Santa Monica and the Santa Susana mountains in Calabasas, CA. New changes are on the horizon because beginning next year, both Jr. High Camp and Asian Camp will be combined and will be a singular model of camp. Since this was the final year of Asian Camp being set aside, there were rituals of farewell and many memories were shared as they looked back at the decades of camp.

This year's camp also served as the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of Asian Camp and featured many alumni of Asian Camp from years past. There will be a 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Asian Camp Gathering in the fall on October 12, 2024.

We are grateful for the hospitality from Faith UMC in Torrance, CA. A huge loving shoutout to Rev. Allison Mark, Darrell Mark, and Nathan Buck for picking us up at the airport and driving us around, for arranging the transportation to the campsite and for showing us Raising Cain's! We loved the fried chicken! Thank you for taking care of us and showing us parts of Southern California!

A highlight at Asian Camp was hearing different campers, counselors, and directors share their faith stories. Each day in the afternoon, we would gather in the amphitheater to hear two or three campers willingly share their faith journeys of how they found God and how this relationship transformed their lives.

Likewise, I believe we are all inspired when we talk about our faith and hear our peers talk about their faith stories. Throughout the 2024-2025 year, we will hear different church members' call/faith stories. Overall, faith sharing can be a great

benefit to one's spiritual life, not only because you accompany others in their spiritual journeys, but also because you can see the different ways that the Holy Spirit is at work.

I'm grateful for lay member, Anne Arakaki-Lock, who provided her faith story on Sunday, July 14. Thank you for guiding us and being our first model of how we can share our stories.

As Blaine Memorial UMC continues to live into Bishop Cedrick D. Bridgeforth's M.I.L.E. framework, we will spend this year focusing on enhancing laity leadership and layled ministries. Leadership is inspired by each one of us being called to share about our own unique faith journeys.

Finally, the Puyallup Valley
Japanese American Citizens League
is unveiling the Camp Harmony
Remembrance Gallery at the
Washington State Fairgrounds on
August 30, 2024. Blaine Memorial
UMC members are invited to attend
and see the new gallery for the first
time. It will include free admission
on opening day at the fair. Please
respond to blaineoffice@yahoo.com
if you are interested in carpooling with
us to Puyallup.

As we look at Autumn, I'm excited to announce that we're having our well-known Blaine Bazaar! This year's Bazaar is on Saturday, October 5, from 11am-6pm. This year, we're bringing back our signature dish: salmon. We'll have a new menu item which is vegetarian yakisoba. We'll also have our favorites which include BBQ chicken, curry, baked goods, and a Farmer's Market.



Among my prayers this month is for August to be a month of summer blessings. I leave you with this summer blessing by an unknown source: "Take time to claim your strength; this is a gift from God. Take time to have fun; it is God's way of teaching you your strengths. Take time to grow yourself; only you can grow you. Take time to trust yourself; God trusts you. Take time to be self-reliant;

it is better than being dependent. Take time to share with others; they will bless you and you will bless them. Take time to have hope; you are a child of God."

May you be well and be the hope for the future!

The Rev. Karen Yokota Love serves as the Senior Pastor of Blaine Memorial UMC.

# **Lectionary Readings**

## August 4, 2024

2 Samuel 11:26 – 12:13a; Psalm 51:1-12; Exodus 16:2-4, 9-15; Psalm 78:23-29; Ephesians 4:1-16; John 6:24-35

### August 18, 2024

1 Kings 2:10-12; 3:3-14; Psalm 111; Proverbs 9:1-6; Psalm 34:9-14; Ephesians 5:15-20; John 6:51-58

## August II, 2024

2 Samuel 18:5-9, 15, 31-33; Psalm 130; 1 Kings 19:4-8; Psalm 34:1-8; Ephesians 4:25-5:2; John 6:35, 41-51

### August 25, 2024

1 Kings 8: (1,6,10-11), 22-30, 41-43; Psalm 84; Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18; Psalm 34:15-22; Ephesians 6:10-20; John 6:56-69



Several members and friends of Blaine Memorial participated in the annual Walk for Rice event held at Seward Park last June.

# Walk for Rice: BMUMC raises \$11,500 for low-income families!

By Justine I., photo by Audrey Hwang, et. al.

hank You, Blaine Memorial UMC
Community!
A big THANK YOU to our Team
Blaine walkers and the rest of the
Blaine community for everyone's amazing support
with this year's ACRS Walk for Rice! Team Blaine
had a fantastic turnout on June 29th at Seward
Park - with close to 40 walkers this year, we were
the largest team walking on a beautiful Saturday
morning to support the ACRS Food Bank.

At the closing ceremony, Team Blaine was recognized by ACRS at the closing ceremony as being in Second Place among all Walk for Rice fundraising teams- as of this writing, we've raised over \$11,500! We far exceeded our fundraising goal - WAY TO GO, BLAINE!! Our donations will help ACRS to provide culturally familiar food for low-income seniors and families for many months. ACRS will continue to accept donations during the summer, so it's not too late to donate to Team Blaine and the Walk for Rice.

Thanks so much for your support of this important community resource!

Justine I., is a member of Blaine Memorial UMC and served as Team Captain during the Walk for Rice. To learn more about the Asian Counseling Referral Service, visit acrs.org.

# Blaine Memorial 120th Anniversary Aprons!

Aprons commemorating our 120th Anniversary are now available! Suggested donation: \$40 - contact the Church Office, today.

By Dale Kaneko, additional photos by Kim Akimoto

ur unique, one-of-a-kind 120th Anniversary aprons were created because of the generosity and foresight of Blaine's former Tuesday Ladies Group. They saved their all-cotton bags that rice and sugar were sold in, having faith that one day in the future, they would somehow be put to good use. To make these aprons even more special, Glenn Mitsui's 120th Anniversary logo was sewn onto each apron.

With Nina Chinn's inspiration and the skillful expertise of Carol Okano, apron sewing kits were distributed to our volunteer sewers.

We now have a limited number of aprons available for sale. If you are interested in buying an apron, please call the Blaine Memorial UMC office with your request. They are \$40 and you are welcome to pay more if you wish. Funds raised from these aprons will go towards our various 120th Anniversary projects.

Please help us by keeping an eye out for any unwanted cotton rice bags when a garage or basement is being cleared out. You might find a gem, waiting to be re-made into an apron.

These special Anniversary aprons are a practical reminder of the faith, strength and service of our ancestors these past 120 years. Let us continue to honor and embody their legacy by our actions and thoughts today.

We are very grateful to be a part of Blaine's faith family and



# Thank you to the wonderful sewers:

- Nina Chinn
- Carol Kastrup
- Miriam Tong
- Pam Ikegami
- Barbara Kanava
- · Jana Wakasugi
- Yuki Sofronas
- Pam Yorozu
- Kathy Onishi
- Rachel Lim
- Julie Shioshita
- Marina Kozu
- Donna Sekijima
- Eunice Gong
- Dale Kaneko
- Carol Okano

# Thanks to our donors of additional rice bags:

- Janet Kometani
- Kristine Martin
- Jana Wakasugi

to see God using and working through each one of us. We are so blessed and may we continue to be a blessing to others.

Praise be to God!

Dale Kaneko is a member of Blaine Memorial UMC.

# BY LIPDATE CAMPING EDITION

# Junior High Camp Finding Your True Self

By Kai Yamamoto



Junior High Camp (incoming 6th-9th grade) was held on June 23-28, 2024 at Camp Lodestar in Wilseyville, California.

he theme for Junior High Camp this year was "Trust". We followed Isaiah 26: 3-4, a song about Trusting in God. But what does it look like to trust in God?

During camp, the Rev. Keith Inouye presented his sermon on how Peter trusted the Lord - when he stepped off the boat and walked on water. The water was turbulent, and he had many fears, yet he trusted in the Lord and the Lord took care of him. After listening to his sermon, I reflected on the journey that took me

Those with sound thoughts you will keep in peace, in peace because they trust in you.

Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord is a rock for all ages.

Isaiah 26: 3-4

back to JHC this year.

I had not attended Junior High Camp or Asian Camp for several years prior, and this was my first year back. As a camper, JHC was not for me. I did not enjoy attending JHC; it was hard to make friends at camp. But like Peter, I stepped off the boat. I decided that I would make the trip alongside Aidan Lew, who also had not attended JHC or Asian Camp for a few years. Aidan decided that this year he would counsel JHC, even though he had not seen many of his fellow counselors in a while. But we trusted that the Lord would take care of us for the

week and allow us to have a great time --and we did!

Although there were many familiar faces, there were also many new ones, too, and I had a great time. Connecting with the fellow adult staff, campers, counselors, and directors was a great experience! I was able to feel the camp magic for the first time, although from a different perspective. I saw our youth, Jordan and Tyler, connect with friends they had not seen since last year and have so much

Continue to next page

# **Upcoming Events**

August 24, 2024: Asian Camp 50th Anniversary Basketball Tournament

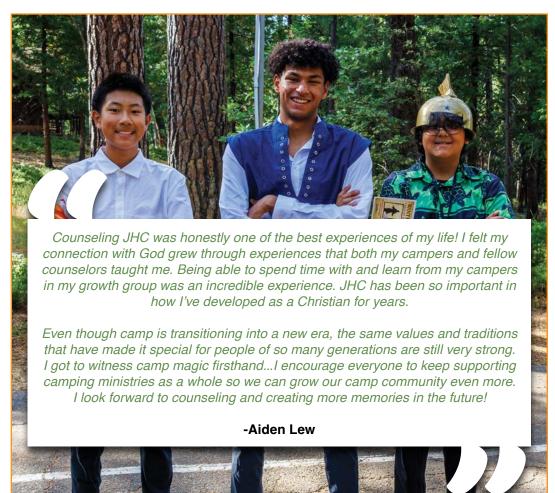
### Continued from page 5

fun! I was also able to see a bond between Aidan and the other counselors, and how tight knit the entire group was! It was hard for everyone to say goodbye at the end of the week. But in trusting God, I know They will bring us all back together next year!

Now going back to the question, what does it look like to trust in God? Pastor Yoshi Kuramoto discussed how we must know that "God wants goodness for you and to find your truest self—not just for you, but for the person next to you, and the person next to that".

To Trust in God is to find ourselves and to be ourselves. We are going to be loved and cared for, no matter who we are and our past experiences.





Tyler and Jordan alongside Counselor Aidan dressed up and ready for etiquette dinner.



(Left) Jordan enjoying the night on the dance floor. (Right) Leadership from this year's Junior High Camp gather for a photo including adult staff, JHC directors, and our own BYG co-associate director Kai Yamamoto.



# Asian Camp 2024 Why AC is important for the future

By Edwin Santos, additional photos by the Rev. Karen Yokota Love



This year's Asian Camp in California prepares youth for their faith journeys, "Yesterday, Today, and Forever".



(Above left) The Rev. Karen Yokota Love speaks during a QA session with clergy. (Right) The Blaine Youth Group got together for a quick photo at Asian Camp 2024 at Camp Gilmore in California.

he 2024 Asian Camp was held at Camp Gilmore in Calabasas. CA from July 14-19, 2024. Asian Camp had youth from various states such as Washington, Colorado, and the majority being from California. As a first-time attendee, it was great to be part of the Asian American community, especially when observing the Blaine Youth Group (BYG) as part of worship, outdoor activities. and faith moments.

The theme of Asian Camp "Yesterday, Today, and Forever" focuses on the growth of our identities. Fellow campers were each part of a "Growth Group" that included a counselor throughout the duration of the camp. The program tied



Compared to other youth camps that I have attended, the food at Asian Camp was delicious and nutritious! Youth camp meals tend to be bland, but Asian Camp checked all the boxes in flavor, nutritional value, and variety!

very well with current life and identity themes with Christ in an ever changing world. As we recognize where God showed up in our past, we can anticipate his presence today, and plan for it in our tomorrow.

Having an excellent experience for youth is important because of their dwindling numbers in the church. If the youth do not have a welcoming experience in a camp, then they won't return for future events. Not only are youth the future, they are the present and they need to be provided a space for all youth in order for them to grow in Christ for the future.

Parents are also important in the camp experience. They can help keep the lessons learned from Asian camp relevant by making sure that their children attend future camps so that they can stay up to date with what's going on in their community. It's crucial to have camps based on affinity/culture so that the youth can stay

Continue to page 10, "We are one family"



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Emma and Katelyn pop balloons over their fellow competitors after a victorious win during the water balloon toss!

# Asian Camp: We are one family

Continued from page 7

connected to their history and culture. I also believe that it is very important that people of color be part of other camps because in the eyes of God we are one family; we are God's family.

Lastly, the theme of faith is part of daily life for our youth. Growing up, many of them are experiencing the hardships of being part of the world but not fully responsible or in control of it. Being reminded of the importance of faith in life is vital for youth in their walk as a believers of Christ.

Edwin Santos attends Blaine Memorial UMC in Seattle, Washington.

# Asian Camp 2024 Reactions

This year's AC provided great experiences for our young people. Let's hear what they had to say about camp!

"I really enjoyed Asian Camp. I attended Junior High Camp for the past two years so going to Asian Camp was really "reconciling-ish." My favorite moment was being part of the (community with the) same faith and similar background. The theme of the camp was "Yesterday, Today, and Forever". It was very centered on the future and how you can still change it and let God lead the way. It's not set in stone yet."

Mia I.

"It was a fun and welcoming experience. We had a lot of fun activities like water day and

a banquet. I'll remember those moments".

Annabelle A.

BYG will not meet on Sunday mornings throughout the summer. We encourage youth and families to attend worship together at 10:00am in-person and via live stream!

Blaine Youth Group (BYG) is a place where youth (6th-12th grade) are invited into a loving community and celebrated as they are. BYG provides a safe environment for youth to build lasting friendships, grow spiritually, learn acceptance of self and others, express compassion for the world and develop a love for God. BYG has a space for any person who is interested and all are welcome.

**Contact Information** 

**Director of Youth Ministry (Outgoing)** Lynne Onishi lynneonishi@gmail.com **Associate Directors of Youth Ministry**Kai Yamamoto and Kaylee Yokoyama

Kai Yamamoto and Kaylee Yokoyama kai.yamamo@gmail.com, kaylee.yokoyama1@gmail.com



# Innovation Hub Update Lynne to attend Claremont Seminary!

By Lynne Onishi, photos by Ryan Kozu, Kai Yamamoto, et. al.



During February 2023, Lynne Onishi and Blaine Memorial participated in part II of the Day of Remembrance at the Northwest Detention Center in Tacoma, WA to protest worsening conditions inside NWDC.

Outgoing Blaine Youth Group Director and Innovation Hub Convener, Lynne Onishi, shares some memories and thank-yous for those she has served during her years of leadership at Blaine Memorial UMC. Thank you, Lynne for being a vibrant part of Blaine Memorial's church history! Blessings to you as you embark on new adventures!



Lynne Onishi supports Seattle First UMC during last year's Pride Weekend.

t the end of the summer, I'll be moving to Los
Angeles to begin a three-year Master of Divinity program at the Claremont School of Theology. It will be a big change in my life, and I ask for your continued prayers. I couldn't take this next step without the care and support of my community at home!

This has not been an easy decision to make. I've been discerning this call to ministry for many years now and I feel like it's finally time for me to take this next step forward. I'm excited for

seminary and for all the new changes ahead, but this is truly a bittersweet moment for me. It's hard to say goodbye to everything and everyone I've known.

It's been seven years since I first began directing the youth ministry at Blaine Memorial in the fall of 2017. What I thought was just going to be a one-year college gig turned into a formative experience leading ministry. It has changed the trajectory of my life! Throughout this time, I have had the privilege of watching several young people grow up

and become more fully themselves! We led ministry virtually for over a year! And in 2021, I embarked on a new project here leading the Blaine Innovation Hub and starting new ministries with young adults. My role has expanded to include leadership and ministry support in several areas since. I've been lucky to see the Spirit moving in so many ways!

I wanted to take a moment to express some big thank-yous to this Blaine Memorial community who

Continue to next page

has walked alongside me. I want to extend my gratitude to the Innovation Hub team who has continually dreamed of new ideas and ways to engage young adults. I want to thank

the reconciling team who has put so much thought and care into becoming a reconciling church. I will forever be grateful to the Blaine Youth Group leaders who show up each week and bring the energy with them. I want to thank the Blaine Memorial pastoral



Lynne Onishi and Blaine's young adults hiked up to Lake 22 near Granite Falls, September 2023. Onishi served as a leader for both youth and young adults!



The Innovation Hub held Zoom Bible Studies that covered various topics such as justice and inclusion. Lynne Onishi helped convened events that brought issues of LGBTQI+ inclusion to the forefront of Blaine Memorial's ministry.



In 2023, the Innovation Hub hosted a family movie night in September! IH events like this provided opportunities for people of all ages to gather and enjoy meaningful, inspirational fellowship with friends of all ages.

leadership past and present for your guidance in all things ministry, grad school, leadership, spiritual formation and life! I want to thank all the youth and their families who have been so supportive and receptive over the years.

And I'd like to make a few shoutouts to the individuals who have been in the depths of this work with me over the years – my co-directors and co-conveners. You've made this work meaningful and transformative not only for the congregation but for me.

Firstly, I want to thank Kai Yamamoto and Kaylee Yokoyama for the ways you've stepped up to lead BYG alongside me for the last year and a half. You've put so much time and care into ministry with our leaders, youth, and families. It has been an honor to see you both grow into the leaders you are today!

Next, I need to make a big shoutout to Lawrence Paltep, who co-directed the youth ministry with me for over four years, including those uncertain and chaotic pandemic years! We accomplished so much thanks to your passion, creativity, and desire to try wild and wacky things!

Lastly, I want to thank Yoshi Kuramoto, who began this journey with me as my BYG co-director all the way back in 2017 and went on to lead the Innovation Hub and young adult ministry! I'm so proud of the work we've done together, and I am forever grateful for your encouragement to keep asking the questions and responding faithfully.

As I transition to new places and new experiences, I hope the Blaine Memorial community will continue trying new ways to do ministry and dream about new possibilities for what this church can look like. I hope you may embrace the neighborhood and wider community that you're part of. And may you continue to listen for God's calling in all of this!

Lynne Onishi is the outgoing Youth Director for BYG, Innovation Hub Convener for Blaine Memorial UMC. Thank you for your service, Lynne and blessing on your journey at Claremont School of Theology!

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August 2024

Visit blaineonline.org/calendar for updates. The Church Office is open Tuesday-Friday (10am-12pm, 1pm-4pm). If you have questions, please email blaineoffice@yahoo.com or call 206-723-1536.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Upcoming Events  • August 25: Scholarship Sunday  • September I: Liberation Obon @ Northwest Detention Center, Tacoma, WA  • October 5: Blaine Memorial UMC Bazaar  • October I2: 50th Anniversary of Asian Camp (California)				• 12pm, B.U.G.S. Ukulele • 6:30pm, Blaine Basketball • Beacon newsletter articles due!	2	• 9am, Pickleball
Communion Sunday  • 10am, Hybrid Worship  • 10am, BYG Gathering  • 10am, VBS  • 1pm, Blaine Basketball	Church Office Closed • 7:30pm, Zoom BYG Leaders Meeting • 6pm, Basketball	6	• Announcements due • 9:00am, Coffee & Prayer w/Rev. Karen • 10:30am, Pickleball • 8pm Zoom Church School Meeting	• 11:30am, B.U.G.S. Ukulele • 6:30pm, Blaine Basketball	9	• Taiko, 8am (LAC)  • No Sports this week due to International Taiko Festival Master Classes in the LAC (August 10-17, 2024)
• 10am, Hybrid Worship • 10am, BYG Gathering • 10am, VBS	Church Office Closed  • 7:30pm, Zoom BYG Leaders Meeting • 6pm, Basketball	13	• Announcements due • 9:00am, Coffee & Prayer w/Rev. Karen • 8pm Zoom Church School Meeting	• 11:30am, B.U.G.S. Ukulele	16	• Taiko, 8am (LAC)  • Mission Guatemala Group Trip (August 17- 24, 2024)
• No Sports this week due to International Taiko Festival Master Classes in the LAC (August 10-17, 2024)						
• 10am, Hybrid Worship • 10am, BYG Gathering • 10am, VBS • 1pm, Blaine Basketball	Church Office Closed • Newsletter articles due • 7:30pm, Zoom BYG Leaders Meeting	20	• Announcements due • 9:00am, Coffee & Prayer w/Rev. Karen • 10:30am, Pickleball • 8pm Zoom Church School Meeting	• 11:30am, B.U.G.S. Ukulele • 6:30pm, Blaine Basketball	23	• Asian Camp 50th Anniversary Basketball Tournament, Los Angeles
Mission Guatemala Group Trip (August 17-24, 2024)						
• 10am, Hybrid Worship • 10am, BYG Gathering • 10am, Church School • 1pm, Blaine Basketball	26 Church Office Closed • 7:30pm, Zoom BYG Leaders Meeting • 6pm, Basketball	27	• Announcements due • 9:00am, Coffee & Prayer w/Rev. Karen • 10:30am, Pickleball • 8pm Zoom Church School Meeting	• 11:30am, B.U.G.S. Ukulele • 6:30pm, Blaine Basketball • 7:00pm, Zoom Ad Board	30	3 I • 9am, Pickleball



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August 2024

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### All are welcome here!

Our core belief is that each person is a beloved child of God — whose giftedness we value and whose presence and participation are a blessing to our community, and to the Kin-dom of God in the world.

Blaine Memorial UMC celebrates God's gift of diversity and values the wholeness made possible in community equally shared and shepherded by all. We welcome and affirm people of every gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation, who are also of every age, race, ethnicity, physical and mental ability, level of education, and family structure, and of every economic, immigration, marital, and social status, and so much more.

We acknowledge that we live in a world of profound social, economic, and political inequities. As followers of Jesus, we commit ourselves to the pursuit of justice and pledge to stand in solidarity with all who are marginalized and oppressed.

# **Ministry Staff Team**

Rev. Karen Yokota Love Senior Pastor, Editor Choir Director Eugene Onishi Church School Superintendent Sai Hanaoka BYG Associate Directors Kai Yamamoto Kaylee Yokoyama

Pianist Kathy Onishi Office Assistant Yuki Sofronas Bookkeeper Mimi Mar

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