

Remembering Two Servants of God

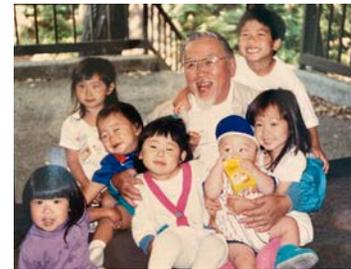
RICK CHUMAN, JEMS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

We finished the JEMS Mount Hermon summer conference in the beginning of July. It's always a bittersweet time when the camp comes to a close. Ministries like Mount Hermon often involve many volunteers. I wanted to recognize two very special people who went to be with the Lord but made a huge impact on JEMS.

The first person is Dr. Mas Okada. He is special to JEMS, not only because he previously served as the first official Mount Hermon camp director, but also for his presence at camp for many decades. He was someone that made you feel special. He was never in a rush when he talked to you. His humor was uplifting, his humility was disarming and his love for God always showed in his smile and actions.

Reverend Sam shares how Dr. Mas was "an important team member who built the JEMS Family Conference to what it has become, a very significant ministry that has touched many hundreds of lives for Jesus! Many of them are in heaven rejoicing and celebrating their time of worship before our Heavenly Father God with Dr. Mas Okada."

Indeed, Dr. Mas' love for Jesus was made tangible through his leadership of the JEMS Mount Hermon conference. He's left his love for Mount Hermon as a legacy to his wonderful wife, Nan, and his children, Paul, Mark, Leanne, and Jill, along with their respective spouses and grandkids. We're so grateful for this man of God. Thank you, Dr. Mas for your service to God!



The next person JEMS would like to honor is Itsuko Teragawa. From Itsuko's personal history shared at her celebration of life, she received Christ when she was 14 years old at the Evergreen Baptist Church located in Boyle Heights at the time. She met and later married Henry Teragawa and they were interned at Poston Arizona.

She was very active in church where she served in various capacities. Her family describes her "devotion to supporting missionaries and those who have gone on missions by praying for them." She was indeed a prayer warrior. I remember the times she would tell me at the JEMS office that she was praying for me. I knew she was.

Itsuko is remembered as a faithful JEMS volunteer who served us for over 50 years. When her husband was still alive, Henry would drive her to the JEMS office. After his passing, Itsuko still volunteered at JEMS by getting rides from various individuals. She was by far the longest and faithful volunteer that helped at JEMS, preparing tens of thousands of JEMS Journals for mailing. Reverend Sam had this to say about Itsuko, "She was always present to help with a big smile!" Indeed, her presence and her smile will be greatly missed. Thank you Itsuko!

Dr. Mas Okada and Itsuko Teragawa I'm sure heard these words from our Lord Jesus Christ when they entered into glory, "Well done, good and faithful servant, well done."

RICK CHUMAN, JEMS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Post-Covid Summer Camp in Tokyo

Some of my earliest memories are from my first time at Mount Hermon. I remember the skits and songs we sang in the little kids’ group, and fun times in the pool. I always get a kick out of the fact that the singing kid in the pool (me) grew up and is now a part of JEMS as a missionary to Japan.

Missionary kids in Tokyo have had their own version of Mount Hermon for decades in the mountains west of Tokyo called Joy Bible Camp. However, this camp was derailed by Covid-19 for two years and almost didn’t happen for a third year, but God had other plans.

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In these conversations, God
revealed to me the new needs of
Joy Bible Camp campers.

After consulting with camp staff, Maki and I decided to revive Joy Bible Camp for middle schoolers this July. Prep was a whirlwind, but God provided through the prayers and gifts of supporters with hearts for Japan. Although there were extra challenges—e.g., take home covid tests, inexperienced camp staff, and RAIN—twenty middle schoolers and eight high school counselors were able to experience summer camp again over three days in mid-July.

When I was a new missionary in Japan, I helped out at JBC and at that time, most campers were missionary kids or expats from Christian families. We played some rather high-level Bible trivia games, and counselors were seasoned veterans at sharing the gospel with children. Fast forward ten plus years later, and the situation today has changed.



My conversations with some kids during this past camp were now about broken homes or homes which were in the process of breaking apart. Even though camp numbers were smaller than in a normal year, I was struck by the number of these stories and stories of kids who have never even met one of their parents. In these conversations, God revealed to me the new needs of Joy Bible Camp campers.

I ended up scrapping my final chapel message and simply encouraged the kids that, no matter what, God wants to be their heavenly father. I shared that while I personally have a relationship with my earthly father for which I am grateful, my father grew up without a dad, but God became his Father when my dad gave his life to Christ as a young adult. I am unsure if that message was what the kids needed, but my prayer is that these kids, who are still only 10-12 years old, will find hope in God as their heavenly father, as they continue to grow up - some without their earthly fathers.

Gravitas aside, the kids had a great time at camp! Though the rain wiped out our field reservation, we were still able to make toilet paper crowns, flour sock bombs and tie-dye t-shirts. We even had a fan powered indoor “campfire” as the rain poured outside. My fear was that my oldest son would miss another year of summer camp, but as always, with God, I ended up having nothing to fear.



The Return of LTC

After three years of holding virtual Leadership Training Conferences (LTC), 2022 marked the return to an in-person conference. And it was good. 88 students and 21 staff gathered for our weeklong conference designed to equip the next generation of Christian leaders.

Our theme was Life at 3 MPH, moving from performance to presence. It was an invitation to slow down and to be with God.

Our cultural values of efficiency and effectiveness have bled into our discipleship; we've allowed secular values to shape our worship and service to Jesus Christ. It's caused our discipleship to lean toward a performance: we superficially measure success, desiring rewards, and we mindlessly follow rituals leading to apathy or burnout.

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The theme of LTC was to expose how our Christian leadership and ministry have become distorted; it was a call to return to ministry that is an overflow of our discipleship with Jesus.

Please pray for creativity and clarity. Next year's leadership teams are meeting right now. Some AACFs already have hosted their core retreats, a weekend focused on planning for



A PORTION OF AACF STAFF WHO WERE ABLE TO ATTEND POST LTC R&R.

next year. Other AACFs will host their planning retreats in early August. Pray for them as they plan their yearly theme, their events, and recruit servant team members (small group leadership, worship leaders, disciplers, prayer leaders, etc.).

Please pray for courage. They are on the frontlines of ministry, reaching unreached young people with the life-changing message of Jesus Christ. The college campus is a challenging mission field. There are conflicts to navigate so that people will be able to hear and experience the Gospel.

Please pray for perseverance. There are so many obligations and relationships that demand their time. They have little time for self-care and renewal. Pray that these students will prioritize their relationship with Jesus Christ and serve out of an overflow of God's grace and love.

TO READ STUDENT TESTIMONIES:

Scan this QR code or visit

www.aacf.org/2022-ltc-testimonies



And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

EPHESIANS 3:17B-19 (NIV)

The Church is Wide Enough

Greetings to all of you in Christ Jesus our Lord and Savior! Happy Mount Hermon edition!

Even though I wasn't able to attend this year, as part of this special JEMS Journal I thought I'd share once again about the powerful impact that Mount Hermon has had for my journey of faith.

My mom, Alice (Tamura) Nishioka, was at the very first JEMS Mount Hermon in 1950. She would have been all of 18 years old at the time. Less than 10 years earlier, her family was being forced into the Gila River internment camp during World War II and now here she was at a very different kind of camp. Isn't it amazing how God works?

My dad, Rev. Richard Nishioka, when he was a student at Cal-Berkeley, got involved with the JEMS Mount Hermon conferences as a mealtime MC and small group leader. One of my fondest childhood memories is of my parents packing up my 3 brothers and me and our dog and driving from Seattle to Mount Hermon every summer for the JEMS conference. God began showing me just how wide and long and high and deep His love truly is as a child through my experiences at the Mount Hermon conferences. I can still remember going to the Day Camp as a kid and getting to go creek walking! It was at the Junior High Camp after a Victory Circle campfire on Thursday night when, as an 8th grader, I dedicated my life to following after Jesus. Then, some years later, while serving as an evening speaker and morning Bible teacher at the Career Camps, God began growing in me the realization that His church is wide enough to include everyone—that Jesus is inviting all people to come and meet the risen Son of God! All praise to His glorious grace! See you along the journey!



ANNUAL NISEI CHRISTIAN YOUTH CONFERENCE, MOUNT HERMON, JUNE 1950



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Waga Tamashii, Shu wo tataeyo! *(Bless the Lord, O My Soul!)*

The 73rd JEMS Mount Hermon family camp was overflowing with fellowship and the visible faithfulness of God. 40 people attended the Nichigo side, 14 of which were first timers.

I witnessed participants meeting each other's needs everywhere and I am thankful that we were able to experience the beautiful fellowship of being a family in the Lord.

Pastor Shinji Seki of the Honolulu Christian Church in Hawaii was Nichigo's morning speaker. He preached from the Gospel of Matthew, asking us to imagine diving literally into the Gospel pages in search of a personal encounter with Jesus. For our evening sessions, a different pastor spoke each night on the Mount Hermon 2022 theme from Hebrews 10:23— "For He who promised is faithful."

We had a very unique experience on Tuesday of that week where a father/son duo delivered the morning and evening messages; Pastor

Shinji Seki (the father) spoke in the morning while his son, Pastor Yuya Seki, was the evening speaker. God's faithfulness endures to all generations. Psalm 119:90.

At the close of camp, we exchanged words of encouragement, peace, love and very fond farewells and returned to our places where God is sending us, assuring each other that we would gather together again at next year's Mount Hermon conference. Until then, I encourage you, my brothers and sisters in Christ, to continue to dive into those Gospel pages hoping for an encounter with our Lord. My soul has been and is truly blessed!



BRUCE AND VAL SATOW
SPECIAL CAMP DIRECTORS

SPECIAL CAMP

Rejoicing at Special Camp

Thank you to our JEMS family for your prayers and support for Virtual Special Camp 2022. Although we were very disappointed that we could not gather in person, the Lord truly blessed our time together online.

Everyone involved thoroughly enjoyed the time of reunion and rebonding and joy still abounded through computer screens in ALL our activities whether it was exercise, worship, Bible lessons or breakout groups. We even had a special treat one evening—a virtual Junko concert! Thank you, Junko!



God was clearly faithful to us during this time. He blessed our staff meetings with meaningful reflections and sharings of God sightings. When met with health-related challenges in our staff, He raised others up to step in and lead and even those who were stricken still persevered in their responsibilities. He brought us a new Bible teacher, Michi Shimada, who did a wonderful job of teaching on the 2022 theme from Hebrews 10:23— "For He Who Promised is Faithful."

God is faithful to us and we are so grateful for His provision and for the blessings of our supporters.

Grateful and Worshipful Hearts

Vincent Guan

Conferee

During this trip, God helped me make new friends, and I'm grateful for that because I didn't know people when I first arrived. The speakers also taught me a lot of memorable things during camp. I also loved how everyone worshipped during worship.

Ariel Kim

Cabin Leader

The Lord revealed to me how I should live with a sense of urgency to share the Gospel, which really confirmed my calling to continue serving. Seeing kids take different postures of worship & hearing their victories was special to me.

Eric Lee

Cabin Leader

I'm extremely grateful that I got to play a small role in my boys' lives and display God's love for them as His vessel. I could see the Lord work in their lives that week as they led by example, prayed for others, and jumped without a care in the world during worship! Even more, I am reminded that He is enough in ALL things in my circumstances!



Ben Wu

Conferee

I'm thankful I got to go to Mount Hermon this summer because it helped me make new friends and it made my summer awesome! I learned that the path to God is very narrow, but it is the right way. I can't wait to go next year!

Anonymous

My favorite part of camp was the worship. Even though some songs were slow and others energetic, we still were able to worship God together. I also like the different postures for worship and their meanings.





Steady

“Hold Fast, He who promised, is Faith-ful. The hope of the world, Hold Fast, He who promised is Faithful forevermore...”

Every heart that attended Inter High this year knows these words well. It’s part of the worship song, “STEADY,” that was written by our very own Matt Sekijima and Tim Lee.

”
It was amazing to see how the Lord connected hearts to each other and to Him.

The song is a reminder of how hearts were turned towards our faithful Father, for “He who promised is faithful.” His faithfulness to us was displayed in the hearts of all of the staff members that poured their ALL into their roles at camp. Every cabin leader and core staff reflected the Lord’s

compassion and love to the conferees. The conferees blew us all away by how they worshipped, their maturity, and pure hearts.

Our week of camp was full of life-giving messages and worship time. We played FUN games, learned about prayer and had times of understanding how to impact the world by serving others. It was amazing to see how the Lord connected hearts to each other and to Him.

Since it was our first time being in person since the pandemic started, a lot of us entered camp with anxiousness. But the Lord provided His perfect peace in the heart of those that sat by us, listened to our hearts and provided a refuge from the things we were struggling with and carrying. The Lord went beyond any of our expectations and He truly revealed to us that He will be faithful forevermore.



Isaiah Tsui

Conferee

My experience at Mount Hermon was very spiritually encouraging. It especially helped with my growth with worship and my walk with God. I learned so much that it makes me want to just keep growing in my faith with the Lord. Mount Hermon is also the only place where I made new friendships that will probably last a lifetime. I thank everyone who contributed to helping with Mount Hermon and making this happen.

Hannah Liu

Conferee

My first time in person at Mount Hermon was different than expected... but I loved it. God's plans were so much better than I could ever imagine. For a week, we set aside our distractions and made Him our priority. As we did so, He revealed Himself in every surprise. I made some awesome new friends. We lifted our voices together in praise and I had some amazing conversations I'll remember forever. I prayed for people and was blessed as Kaira prayed over me. Things didn't always go as expected, but God was working in it all.

Michael Wong

Conferee

I've been going to Mt. Hermon every year since 2017. It is, in a word, incredible. Every year brings memories that will last a lifetime. However, to me there is something special about the youth camps. I attended Senior High Camp as a sophomore this year, and I loved it. I like how the camp was tucked away in the woods, secluded from everything. We were free from the distractions of the world, along with our friends, focused completely on God. It was like a little taste of heaven.



Steven Yano

Conferee

Like many, I've been going to Mount Hermon consistently since I was a child at family camp; however, this past year was the first time that I felt truly "transformed." Christianity had always been a seemingly inherent component of my life, but going into the week, my walk with God was crumbling and I knew that camp was going to be the deciding factor of whether I would continue my walk with God or stray to a new path. After a week filled with insightful sermons, worship, cabin times, and fellowship, my walk with God has never been stronger, and, unlike previous yearly "camp highs," this change is permanent. My entire perspective on life has brightened and I feel an overwhelming sense of peace and love. It's so clear to me now that God is apparent in every miniscule aspect of life and that He is truly a good God. Mount Hermon changed my life for the better and I'll always be eternally grateful.

Alyssa Kubo

Conferee

I was nervous coming to camp since I didn't really know what to expect—it was my first time attending any kind of Christian camp. But my nerves went away because everyone was so sweet and genuine, which made me feel very welcomed. Also, being new to faith, the experience of going to sessions with worship was eye opening in a way that gave me peace and a new perspective on how to live life. I realized pretty quickly that my decision to come was one that I am so grateful for. Going to camp led me to making so many fun memories with new friends, but most importantly, it helped me grow my faith in God.



Wes Sakoda

Conferee

The importance of community was both preached and practiced throughout this week of College Camp. I grew up going to Mount Hermon all my life, and never have I experienced a community so willing to be vulnerable and loving with one another. It broke my heart to hear how much suffering and brokenness my brothers and sisters were experiencing, but I cried tears of joy that Jesus was at work in each one of them. I rejoiced together with my cabin mates, core staff and my cabin leaders that through God's love, he placed this broken community together.

During this week of College Camp, we all fell before the cross as unworthy sinners, but God placed his healing hand through cabin times, worship, sermons, and fellowship. Mount Hermon's community was truly a testament of the gospel, and I'm so grateful that I was able to grow so much in my faith this week.





Successful JEMS Mount Hermon Scholarship Tournament

JEMS 25th Silver Celebratory Golf Tournament For Missions

Thirty-six eager golfers gathered together at Los Verdes Golf Course, RPV, CA, on June 17, 2022 to complete and attempt to win the \$10,000 Hole In One contest offered at Hole #5 and other contest awards for putting, chipping, bunkering and Closest to the Pins on all Par 3s. Mark Okada, JEMS Board President, was present from Dallas, TX to warmly welcome all the golfers and express gratitude for their faithful support in raising funds for Mount Hermon scholarships by participating in this event. He explained the importance of youth and ministry leaders attending this life changing camping experience each year which he and his family have attended annually. He expressed thanks to Tsuneishi Insurance for sponsoring the Hole In One contest for this year and in previous years.

The 25th Silver Celebratory Golf Tournament sponsored by JEMS NorCal Men for Mission took place on May 14, 2022 at the new golf course, At The Villages Golf & Country Club, in San Jose, California. Dr. Mike Matsumoto was in charge of the tournament with the help of Keith Fukui, Paul Matsui and Kyle Sakamoto. Twenty-seven golfers gathered for this special anniversary, seven of which arrived a day early and enjoyed a round of golf at Blacklake, Nipomo, CA.

I was grateful to be able to visit with many friends who have faithfully supported past JEMS golfing events. I was so thankful to see and meet many of them: John Nakamura, Harvey Ujimori, Mike Nakajima at the registration and scoring table, Frank Nakamura who oversaw the putting, chipping and bunker contests with help of Gary, Herb, Matt, and Tak, and Martin Chao and Hiro Nishi who monitored the Hole In One contest and Win Half of the Pot for CP's at Hole #5. Without these volunteers, none of the 2022 golf tournaments would have been possible! Thank you volunteers!

Rev. Sunao Shimada of the Nichigo Department of the San Lorenzo Japanese Christian Church was our guest speaker of the day. We're thankful to him for delivering an inspiring message to encourage and challenge the golfers.

This NorCal golfing fellowship started 25 years ago under the chairmanship of Dr. Jack Tsuji to encourage and reach out to men in the churches in the Bay Area for fellowship, spiritual growth and to support JEMS missions. For example, part of the proceeds from one of the recent tournaments was used to purchase a deluxe waffle maker for the Coffee House Ministry headed by David and Yuka Mills in Japan. Special thanks to all the donors who gave in honor of their loved ones.

Congratulation to golfers led by Tak Shimazaki from Gardena Valley Baptist Church for claiming the NorCal Golf Trophy for the 2nd Year!



MARK TSUNEISHI



MARK, JOHN, MARTIN, HIRO, AND SAM T.



MARK OKADA ADDRESSING THE GOLFERS



THREE GUYS AT THE REGISTRATION TABLE



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Richard E. Chuman
JEMS Executive Director

"I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers because I hear about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints." Philemon 1:4-5

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