**Join us as we enter into a new season at JEMS**

The JEMS Board is so thankful**!**

* First, and most importantly, we are grateful for the Lord’s grace, blessing and protection of JEMS for the past 74 years. Ultimately, JEMS exists on that alone.
* Next, we want to express our deep appreciation to so many individuals who have supported JEMS through prayers and finances to bring us to where we are today.

As an organization, JEMS exists to enable our community ***“to be authentic disciples of Jesus Christ by creatively developing and providing ministry opportunities in partnership with churches.”*** Few ministries have the depth and breadth of JEMS. We have all been blessed in many ways by JEMS and for us on the Board, we feel the weight of the legacy of those who have served so powerfully. I would not be the person I am except for the power of the Holy Spirit working through the ministry of JEMS and I am sure all of you have a ‘JEMS’ story to tell.

Over the past year, the JEMS Board has spent much time praying for the Lord’s direction in providing for the future of JEMS. God has been blessing our ministry with growth in many areas and preparing for more growth is a major calling for our board and staff.

After much prayer and seeking the Lord’s direction, an opportunity has opened up for a new chapter in the leadership of JEMS. We are excited to announce that we are expanding the JEMS leadership structure into **co-executive directors.** We recognize how God has been using JEMS to support His missional activity both internationally and domestically, with a consistent focus on partnering with the local church. With this change, each executive director will lead and manage our domestic and international missions. We expect that this will both strengthen and better align these two areas. The reorganization results in two roles with defined areas of ministry:

1. Rick Chuman will take responsibility of our international missions work in the new role as our Co-Executive Director of International Missions (EDIM).
2. In addition, we are excited to announce that Kenny Wada will be joining the leadership team as our Co-Executive Director of Domestic Missions (EDDM).

We recognize that at its core, JEMS is a ***missions organization***. We believe that having these expanded roles will enable JEMS to continue to make disciples, both domestically and internationally. In partnership with each other and the JEMS Board, Rick and Kenny will lead the ministry of JEMS and will work together to support the JEMS head office staff.

When Rick first joined JEMS, he expressed his calling for the people of Japan. Over the years, Rick’s heart for international missions and our presence in Japan has only increased. The Board has asked Rick to take on the critical new role of Co-Executive Director of International Missions to allow him to focus his efforts at an important time of growth. Rick will be focused on leading and supporting Roy Toma and the staff as we establish a new office in Japan. With Pastor John’s retirement, our work in South America is at a crossroad. We are excited to see how his vision and leadership will bring both these ministries into focus. Of course, supporting our international missionaries and their families will be his priority.

For those who know Kenny Wada, it is clear that his passion is developing deeply spiritual relationships and serving God’s people. The Holy Spirit has made it abundantly clear that He has called Kenny to JEMS and we are overjoyed. Most recently, Kenny was Associate Pastor of Evergreen Baptist Church SGV in Southern California where he served for many years (and where he continues to worship). Kenny has been involved with JEMS for decades and has participated in Mt. Hermon and AACF. As Co-Executive Director for Domestic Missions, he will primarily focus on leading the AACF leadership team, staff, volunteers and students. He will also devote a portion of his time establishing and strengthening our partnerships with local churches and work with the Mount Hermon, sports and music ministry teams.

The JEMS Board feels very fortunate that the Lord has provided Rick and Kenny to lead us at this important time. They are both godly men of high integrity, wisdom, passion, humility and dependence on God.

This entire process involves stepping out in faith and we realize that change can cause feelings of uncertainty. However, we remember Moses’ words to Joshua, “The LORD himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you…” (Deut. 31:8).

We trust that the Lord goes before us as we diligently continue to seek His will as we move forward. We ask that you would join the Board in a season of prayer to support this new leadership structure. Thank you for your continued support. May the Lord continue to build His Kingdom through JEMS!

God is good,

Mark Okada on behalf of the JEMS Board of Directors