



Good News

Montebello Plymouth Congregational Church
A United Church of Christ

Sr. Pastor Rev. Mitchell Young
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June 2025

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"While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven." Luke 24:51

Graduation Steps

As I prepare this reflection, it is the week of my daughter Natasha's graduation from Chapman University in the City of Orange. I have flashbacks of taking a picture of Natasha with crayon still in hand, giving mother Nitaya a neck hug good-bye on her first day of kindergarten nearly 18 years ago and nearly 4 years ago, I took a parallel picture of Natasha on her first day in the university dorm, hugging mom with grayer hair, this time a cell phone in Natasha's hand in place of the crayon.

Beyond the warm nostalgia of seeing a little girl grow into a young woman, I paused a moment to reflect on the literal meaning of graduation. To that we need to know that it is tied to the word graduate as literally since the 15th century referring to "one who holds a degree" which through a series of etymological steps comes from the Latin word gradus "a step; a step climbed (on a ladder or stair);" figuratively "a step toward something, a degree of something rising by stages".

On June 1, we will also celebrate our annual Teacher Recognition and Graduate Sunday to acknowledge the nurture and educational ministries of our Sunday School teachers as well as recognize students in our church family in their academic achievements and milestones. I hope all of you will join us that day to share our gratitude and celebrate our children.

The beginning of summer in the liturgical Christian year also arrives soon after the Season of Easter

(Resurrection) as we remember the transition between the resurrected Christ and the beginning of the Church as the continuing "Body of Christ" in the world. It perhaps may be even be seen as a graduation of sorts as followers of Christ climb the next gradus step up to becoming who God intends us to be. The final Sunday in the Easter season is often observed as Ascension Sunday to remember when the resurrected Christ after 40 days with his disciples ascended into heaven (i.e. the sky). Now, that's what I call a graduation! The next step up!

Soon after that, the next big step for Jesus' followers was "graduation" to becoming the Church with the coming of the Holy Spirit mightily upon the disciples on the Day of Pentecost, often marked as the "birthday of the Church".

Now, I need to be careful not to draw too many parallels between these graduations of Jesus and the early Church to our own transition as we enter my final year as your pastor. After all, the only ascension into the sky that I will be making is when I depart entering a jet plane with a one-way ticket to retire in Honolulu (although some people do call Hawaii paradise). And in our church tradition, I ethically must remain "hands-off" with regard to who God calls into your next pastoral leadership. (Depending on your tradition or theological point of view, some Christian faiths regard St. Peter as Christ's explicit successor. In fact, the title "Vicar of Christ" given to the pope, the Archbishop of Rome, implies the pontiff's supreme and universal primacy, both of honor and of jurisdiction, over the Church of Christ.)

Nevertheless, I am excited by the opportunities to bring as many new

preachers into the MPCC pulpit as possible in my final year with you. It is by no means an audition for your next potential pastor. However, I do want to expose you to the kind of energy and vision that the next generation of pastoral leadership brings to the Church.

Isn't it exciting to envision the possibilities when we are open to the movement of the Holy Spirit? Let us prepare to take MPCC to the next level! It's graduation time!

Pastor Mitchell

Worship Schedule

June 1

Holy Communion
 Graduate/Teacher
 Appreciation Potluck
 "Opened Minds"
 Luke 24:44-53

June 8

"Truth, Trouble, and Fear"
 John 14:8-17, 25-27

June 15

Father's Day Breakfast
 Youth-led Worship
 "All Truth"
 John 16:12-15

June 22

Guest Preacher
 Bernard Garcia
 "In God's Presence"
 1 Kings 19:1-15a

June 29

Summer Ex Staff Dedication
 "Pick Up the Mantle"
 2 Kings 2:1-2, 614

A Message from our Moderator...

Lori Katayama

May was filled with moments of remembrance and thanksgiving for the people of our church.

- We celebrated our beginnings as a mission to the Japanese American community in the early 1900s.
- We celebrated how we have evolved into a multicultural community of faith and in particular our Pacific Islander Asian American brothers and sisters.
- We celebrated our longtime members who led our church and leave us with this legacy.
- We celebrated the women of our church and recognized their contributions to our church.
- We celebrated and gave thanks for those who have gone on before us.

In truth, every Sunday is a celebration of how God works in our lives individually and collectively. Praise God! See you at the bazaar on June 7th!!!

A Message from our Treasurer...

Bien Reyes

Financial Summary - April 2025

	Month	YTD
Total Income:	\$22,918.04	\$96,327.60
Total Expenses:	\$23,261.26	\$83,735.88
Surplus/(Deficit):	\$(343.22)	\$12,591.72

A Message from Our Boards

Christian Education Board

Steven Woo, chairperson

Hi Everyone,

Thank you to the church men for cooking breakfast for our church women on Mother's day. Also, thankful for Tricia Tao for helping decorate our tables and getting carnations for our church women.

Upcoming this month is our Graduate and Sunday School teacher Appreciation day on June 1st. If someone you know is graduating, please contact BJ so she can include it in the program. We will have a luncheon after service. It's a pseudo potluck with CE providing a main dish and cake. Please feel free to bring anything you like.

Father's day is June 15th. We will have a breakfast cooked by our church women. Let's have a great summer!

Diaconate Board

Lynne Hanamoto

On May 4 PAAM Sunday, we thank Darin Yamada's Hala "Le Hula I Ke Akua" for participating during our

PAAM Worship Service.

We thank all who participated in providing food for our PAAM Potluck following the worship service. So much Ono food was enjoyed by all!

On Mothers Day Sunday prior to Sunday Worship Service, we thank the men who cooked for our Mother's Day Breakfast. It was nice to have a special breakfast prepared by the Church Men. Thank you to B.J. and Youth for the Mother's Day Service.

May 18 PAAM Pulpit Exchange our Guest Preacher was Pastor Teo Tagawon. He serves as Pastor of Faith Community UCC in Perris. After church, we celebrated Mari Mori's 100th Birthday! Thank you Ann Mori for the special food and cake.

We, as Diaconate Board, thank you for remembering to use your personal coffee mugs for coffee hour. When you do remember to bring your own take home containers it will help as we continue to strive to be good stewards of the earth.

Let us donate what we can for our Strengthen the Church Offering, which helps support youth ministry, leadership development, and new churches in the UCC.

Bazaar 2025

Steven Woo & Roger Ng, Co-chair

Hi Everyone,

June 7th is right around the corner! Depending on when you read this, bento pre-orders might be closed but you have until May 25th to place them. You can place your orders for your bentos either electronically or the order form on the flyer. Here are all of the other booths during the event and pricing:

Pancit and Lumpia
Spam Musubi
Pastries
Kona Shaved Ice Truck (1 PM-4 PM)
Produce
Drinks
Games

We will also have a table for our sister church Altadena UCC. As many of you know, they lost their building to the Eaton Wildfire earlier this year.

They will have info about their church and ways to support them. They are also selling things and there will be donated tools for people to buy to support them as well.

These booths are not pre-ordered and will be sold that day. Each booth will accept cash or tickets. Tickets are available to purchase if you do not have cash that day through Zelle online payment or check. We will have hula as entertainment throughout the event from various groups. We will need help with all aspects of the event so please look at the sign up sheet in Mori hall. You can

also let us know at bazaarchair@montebelloucc.org if you are not at church. We also need donors for the booths such as pastries, and drinks. Thank you and tell everyone you know about our bazaar and place those orders! See you there!

Wednesday Group

Bob Miwa

4/23/25 Joe P., Art H., Christine K., Grace S., Ernie A., and Nitaya Y. weed-whacked, pulled weeds, and cleaned the Los Angeles parking lot. They also trimmed the heavenly bamboo, weed-whacked, and swept the Greenwood parkway and sidewalk. Afterwards, they worked at the parsonage yard. Some filled two holes in the lanai with cement and then dug in the Angel's lot ground to locate the water pipes to water the trees. Terry and Suzy H., Alice H., June Y., Kiku K., Jean K., Lynne H., Ed Y., Beverly Y., Sets S., and Silvia P. folded and labeled the Good News for mailing.

4/30/25 Art H., Ernie A., Alice H., Christine K., Frank, and Pastor Mitchell and Nitaya Y. replanted 4 trees in the Angel lot. Frank fixed the lighting in the parsonage kitchen and set a longer timer for the new security light by Sunday school building. Some organized the kitchen, fixed the cabinet door in the kitchen, and changed the air purifiers in the sanctuary.

5/7/25 Ernie A., Christine K., Alice H., Lynne and Art H., and Nitaya Y. took apart the "sneeze guard" (Plexi-glass barrier) and put it away and organized the cabinets in Mori Hall. They also cleaned up the 3 giant fans in Mori Hall and removing the dust, screw the door jam protector at the exit door from the sanctuary to the lot, and cleaned up one wall of the boiler room.

5/14/25 Art H., Christine K., Ernie A., Alice H., Frank., Joe P., and Nitaya Y. cemented the gate's post at Los Angeles parking lot, watered the Greenwood and Los Angeles parking lots, weeded the flower bed by the Mori hall bathroom, and changed sprinkler head at the Los Angeles parking lot. In the Sunday school wing, they put a cover on the power outlet in room #7 and changed the broken security light by the alley. In Mori Hall, they cleaned the track of the glass door, organized the green cabinets, and painted the kitchen walls.

Special Offerings and Gifts

Chun, Chris	In Memory of Mits Murukami
Fujita, Ben & Carol	In Memory of Mits Murukami
Hagihara, Yasuko & Pam	In Memory of Mits Murukami
Hangai, Barbara	Easter Flowers
Higashi, Alice	In Memory of Ray Higashi, Joanne Tao, John Tao, & Helen Yamane
Kizuka, Christine	In Memory of Mits Murukami
Kobashigawa, Kiku	In Memory of Steven Woo's grandmother
Masuda, Jane	In Memory of Mits Murukami
Mekata, Minnie	In Memory of Mits Murukami
Mitsueda, Eileen	Easter Flowers
Mori, Ann	Mari Mori's 100th Birthday and In Memory of Mits Murukami
Okamura, Mike	In Memory of Mits Murukami
Phillips, Mike & Yvonne	In Memory of Mits Murukami
Sakado, Elinor	In Memory of Mits Murukami
Sato, Chris & Grace	"Happy Birthday" to all
Tsunekawa, Jean	Mari Mori's Birthday
Yasuda, Ed	In Memory of Mits Murukami
Yoshimi, Evelyn	PAAM, Mother's Day, and In Celebration of Yoshi's & Mari's Birthdays

Prayers of the People

With deepest sympathy to the family/ies of:

- For the passing of Pope Francis and comfort to all that are saddened by his passing.
- For the Uchihara family in the passing of their father.
- Frances T.'s son, Harvey Y. was killed in a traffic accident in Northern California this week and his wife is seriously injured and hospitalized.

Prayers of Healing, Comfort and Blessing for:

- We continue to lift up prayers for strength and health for our sons and daughters: Warren H., Bryan H., and Natasha Y.
- Kiku K. requested prayers for the Koshi family that they may find good caring help. Also, prayers for the Leal family especially for son Legend and for nephew Randy.
- Frank M. lifted up prayers for friend's wife Marie who has a blockage in her stomach.
- Maria T. M. requested prayers for her brother Jose Luis who had a stroke and is in a hospital in Florida.
- Ron and Michi T. requested prayers for friend Laurie G. who is going through chemotherapy. They also wanted to say "Bless all our friends at church".
- Christine K. requested prayers for brother Jeff who had a car accident. Celebration prayers for grandfather who is turning 96 years old and travel mercy prayers for David who is returning from a camping trip. A special prayer for new Pope Leo XIV, and our general minister and president/CEO of UCC Rev. Georgia Karen Thompson.
- Carolyn W. requested prayers for Bob who will be receiving an implant that will help reduce a stroke.
- Sandra L. requested prayers for niece Hope who is in her 3rd year in medical school and will be going to an internship in Ohio.
- Melody T. prayed for a peaceful, fair, and honest local election in the Philippines.
- Lynne H. requested prayers for Professor Aki Maehara who was riding his e-bike in Montebello when he was struck by a car and was called racist slur.
- Jan F. requested prayers for friend Emmett R. who is struggling with low blood pressure.
- Annie Y. requested prayers for Sam K. who has a lump on his neck and is getting tested. Also, prayers for husband Ron for good recovery after his knee surgery.

Traveling Mercies for:

- Carolyn W. requested prayers for son Keith and co-workers as they fly to Japan on the 11th for work and return in a week. Afterwards, Keith will drive up North on the 18th to pick up daughter Ashley for summer break.
- Church congregation lift up prayers: For Yoshi and Mari to continue to enjoy the journey of life that have so richly given to them and to continue to be blessed.

Thanksgiving:

- Rosa R. requested prayers for Ana and Kiefer on their 13th year anniversary. Also, birthday blessings for Fiona. Additional prayers for herself for upcoming surgery.
- Toni M. requested prayers for mother Amelia who is feeling better and for niece Jacky who is recovering after a car accident.
- Christine K. lift up prayers of joy for students and their proud parents this graduation season: Natasha is graduating from Chapman University this weekend, parents Nitaya and Pastor Mitchell, Christine's grandchildren: Grandson Kenzo K. is graduating from Cal Poly, Pomona this Saturday, parents Joyce and Ton, granddaughter Natalie K. is promoted to high school in May, parents Frank and Alice, and granddaughter Maya K. is promoted to high school in June, parents Michi and Dave.
- Joe P. requested prayers for grandson Josiah who is going to Disney for his grad night and graduating from high school this year.
- Ann M. requested thanksgiving and celebration prayers for her mother Mari M. on her 100th birthday.

**June
Birthday
Celebrations**

2	Noah Leal
3	Xander Tapia
4	Kassidy Hata
4	Harry Koshi
5	Avery Ly Hino
7	Aaron Katayama
7	Ramon Pablico
8	Everett Iwata
9	Maggie Mada
13	Alyce Fujimoto
13	Cary Tanaka
14	Lynn Higa
14	June Togioka
18	Dori Kaneoka
20	Albert Leal
23	Jose Bedolla
24	James Tanouye
24	Xavier Tapia
30	Sachi Fujita

Save Used Stamps Update

"Thank You"

We are trying to fill a new medium size priority postal box. Thank you to all who have been diligently collecting "used" stamps, I greatly appreciate your time and effort.

After Japan receives the stamps, it is sold to collectors. With that money, aides are sent to countries in need.

Our goal at MPCC is to help the church, community, and other nations collectively with other UCC churches collecting "used stamps", we can make a difference! - Evelyn Yoshimi



66TH BAZAAR

MONTEBELLO PLYMOUTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH



Annual Bazaar June 7, 2025

Invite your friends and families for our fundraising for our church. Come help set up on Friday June 6 to cut vegetables for pancit or set up booths/tables. Sign-up for Bazaar shifts (see pg. 8).



Bakers Needed For Bazaar!

Cookies, Bars, Brownies, Cereal Mixes, Mochi, Pretzels.

Please package items in quantities of 6 per bag/plate.

Labels to be provided. Please email Tricia T. ttao@aol.com – your item and along with a list of ingredients, noting if nuts are included (VERY IMPORTANT – due to nut allergies!)

Thank you very much for your help!

Guest preacher for June 22: Bernard Garcia

Bernard Garcia (he/him/his) is a 1.5-generation Filipino American, born in the Philippines but raised in Los Angeles. Bernard and his spouse, Gillian, are both students at Fuller Theological Seminary, pursuing their Master of Divinity. He is currently serving as a fellow with the Pastoral Formation Initiative of Fuller's Center for Asian American Theology and Ministry. In addition to his academic pursuits, Bernard works as a data analyst for an NGO called International Justice Mission, and is also involved with grassroots Filipino American community organizing groups.



Mother's Day Photos

May 11, 2025 Mother's Day Breakfast by the Men's Group Youth-led Service and afterwards the Youth passing out carnations to church women. Special performance by the church women.



**May 18, 2025
PAAM Pulpit exchange Rev. Teo Tawagon from Faith Community UCC in Perris
100th Birthday Celebration for Mari Mori**



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Holy Communion Teachers/Graduates Appreciation Potluck C.E. Board Meeting @11:30am	2 *Beginner's Japanese class @1:30pm *Japanese Class @2:30pm	3 Bible Study @10am	4 Wednesday Group @8am *Dance Class @7pm	5	6 Bazaar Prep & Setup	7 Annual Bazaar 12pm-5pm
8 Diaconate/Trustees Board Meeting @11:30am <i>Last Day for Summer Ex Registration</i>	9 *Beginner's Japanese class @1:30pm *Japanese Class @2:30pm	10 Bible Study @10am	11 Wednesday Group @8am *Jets/Jetts Meeting @7pm	12	13	14 *Halau Hula
15 Father's Day Breakfast Youth-Led Service	16 *Beginner's Japanese class @1:30pm *Japanese Class @2:30pm	17 Bible Study @10am	18 Wednesday Group @8am *Dance Class @7pm	19	20	21
22 Guest Speaker Bernard Garcia Council Meeting @11:30am Goodnews Deadline	23 *Beginner's Japanese class @1:30pm *Japanese Class @2:30pm	24 Bible Study @10am	25 Goodnews Mailing @9am *Dance Class @7pm	26	27	28 *Workshop 10am-3pm (contact Pastor Mitchell for details)
29 Summer Ex Staff Dedication	30 *Beginner's Japanese class @1:30pm *Japanese Class @2:30pm Summer Ex Training	NOTE: Events marked with an asterisk (*) are private classes and not church events. Please contact the church office for more information.				

Coming in
July
2025
1-3
7
11-15
20

Summer Ex Staff Training
Summer Exploration 2025
General Synod
Summer Ex Sunday Church Picnic

See our updated online calendar at:
<http://Montebelloucc.org>

Join us for our **Virtual & In-Person Worship Service on Sundays at 10 a.m. :**

YouTube Livestream

Subscribe to our Youtube page to watch our latest videos

(www.youtube.com/mpccucc)

*Contact our Church Office for more info



BOOTH SET-UP (FRIDAY) FROM 4PM-8PM

MANPOWER:

Need 16-20 people to set up bazaar booths,
supplies, signs, and materials

ART HANAMOTO

BENTO

10AM-12PM

JANE MASUDA

SANDRA KINOSHITA

JAN FUKUSHIMA

JAY FUKUSHIMA

12PM-2PM

LES SHIMA

JUDY SHIMA

2PM-4PM

4PM-6PM CLEAN-UP

PANCIT/LUMPIA: MAC REYES

10AM-12PM

NITAYA YOUNG

MELODY TAMPOYA

12PM-2PM

BABY FLORDELIZA

2PM-4PM

SUSAN PABLICO

EMY PABLICO

4PM-6PM CLEAN-UP

BIEN REYES

MAC REYES

SPAM MUSUBI: DENISE WADA

10AM-12PM

BEVERLY YOSHIDA

KU'ULEI POOLE

12PM-2PM

2PM-4PM

4PM-6PM CLEAN-UP

KU'ULEI POOLE

SANITATION

10AM-12PM

12PM-2PM

2PM-4PM

4PM-6PM

DRINKS:

10AM-12PM

LOW FAMILY

12PM-2PM

LOW FAMILY

2PM-4PM

LOW FAMILY

4PM-6PM CLEAN-UP

LOW FAMILY

PASTRIES: TRICIA TAO

10AM-12PM

KAREN YASUKOCHI

LAURA SAKAMOTO

12PM-2PM

EVELYN YOSHIMI

2PM-4PM

4PM-6PM CLEAN-UP

PRODUCE/PLANTS:

KATAYAMA/FUROGAWA

10AM-12PM

JEAN KOBATA

LORI KATAYAMA

STEVE/NAOMI F.

12PM-2PM

BARBARA HANGAI

STEVE FUROGAWA

NAOMI FUROGAWA

2PM-4PM

STEVE FUROGAWA

NAOMI FUROGAWA

KIKO KAWAMOTO

4PM-6PM CLEAN-UP

STEVE FUROGAWA

NAOIMI FUROGAWA

INFORMATION BOOTH:

11AM-1PM

ALICE HIGASHI

KIKO KAWAMOTO

1PM-3PM

3PM-5PM

BOOTH TEAR-DOWN (SATURDAY) FROM 5PM-8PM

MANPOWER:

Need 16-20 people to tear down and store
bazaar booths, supplies, and materials

Chairpersons:

STEVEN WOO/ROGER NG

People Power:

LYNNE HANAMOTO

Entertainment/Sound:

LYNNE HANAMOTO

Supplies:

Sanitation/Ice:

Summer Exploration 2025

Montebello Plymouth Congregational Church
 144 S. Greenwood Avenue, Montebello, CA 90640-4694
 Tel. (323) 721-5568 Email: summerex@montebelloucc.org

REGISTRATION FORM**DATES:** July 7th – July 20th 2025

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS: June 8, 2025. Space is limited and students will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. Applications and a \$50 (per child) deposit are required to determine the budget and to schedule special events and trips. Scholarships are available. Please contact Ms. BJ Woo at (323) 721-5568 if you have any problems meeting this deadline or if you would like to apply for a scholarship.

Please make checks **payable to MPCC-Summer Exploration** and send to the address above.

Last Name _____ Home Phone: (____) _____
 Father/Guardian _____ Work/Cell (circle one) Ph: (____) _____
 Mother/Guardian _____ Work/Cell (circle one) Ph: (____) _____
 Address _____ City _____ Zip _____
 E-Mail Address _____ Past Summer or Winter Ex attendance? Y/N _____
 School(s) Attending _____
 Name of Church currently attending or N/A _____

Program Fees Please contact the director if not attending both weeks:

Name of Child	Grade (ending 6/25)	Date of Birth	T-Shirt Size (Indicate Child S/M/L or Adult S/M/L/XL)	Fee	Total
1. _____	_____	_____	_____	\$200.00	_____
2. _____	_____	_____	_____	\$175.00	_____
3. _____	_____	_____	_____	\$150.00	_____
4. _____	_____	_____	_____	\$100.00	_____

"Early Bird" discount (per child; for full time/2 week participants if registration received on/before 5/4/25)

<____ X \$25> = <____>
#children

"Returning Student" discount (if your child has attended Summer/Winter Ex)

<____ X \$25> = <____>

"Bring a Friend" discount (Invite a new student to join Summer Ex and they'll also receive this discount)

<\$25> = <____>

TOTAL _____

(A \$50 deposit will hold your space. **Full amount due by July 7, 2025.** All payments non-refundable after 7/7/25).

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date: _____

Office Use Only – Rcvd Date: _____ Check No: _____ Amount: _____ Response: _____

Rcvd Date: _____ Check No: _____ Amount: _____