



Good News



Montebello Plymouth Congregational Church
A United Church of Christ

Sr. Pastor Rev. Mitchell Young
 144 S. Greenwood Ave. Montebello, CA 90640
 (323) 721-5568 MontebelloUCC.org

May 2025

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"For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ."

1 Corinthians 12:12

New Life Beyond Cancellation

In the season of Easter, we look to resurrection as a part of who we are as followers of Christ. It is part of who we are because we follow in the ways of Christ. Our story tells of how powerful people tried to "cancel" Jesus because he was a threat to the system, whether an out-of-touch religious hierarchy that made it incredibly difficult for the average person to be in God's favor, or the imperial political structure that subjugated Israel in the time of Jesus. Jesus' "cancellation" took the form of a gruesome Roman method of capital punishment called crucifixion. However, the story did not end with self-giving sacrifice, but rather triumphantly sees Jesus rise from the grave as testimony that love is more powerful than death!

As we enter the month of May, we recognize with the wider American society, May as Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Heritage Month, a time to celebrate the contributions and diverse cultures of Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islanders to the history and culture of the United States. The month was officially recognized by Congress in 1992. May was chosen to coincide with two significant events: the arrival of the first Japanese immigrants on May 7, 1843 and the completion of the transcontinental railroad, which was a major undertaking by Chinese workers, on May 10, 1869.

Within our beloved United Church of Christ denomination, your Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries (PAAM, of which I am currently serving as national vice-moderator) has been tirelessly working to elevate and acknowledge the voices of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the life and ministry of the UCC. After

many years of considering changing the date of PAAM Sunday from the last Sunday of April to instead be the first Sunday in May (to coincide with Asian Pacific Heritage Month as recognized in the wider American context, it was finally approved by our national UCC Board of Directors late in last year, 2024!

As our PAAM officers were preparing for our new informational brochure, I wanted to be sure to include the official date change in our distributed information. As I was looking for more information about how we wanted to coincide with the national recognition of Asian American and Pacific Islanders that is when I found out: On January 20, 2025, President Donald Trump issued Initial Rescissions of Harmful Executive Orders Executive Order 14148 eliminating US federal recognition of AANHPI Heritage Month.

It may go without saying that I felt like we were cancelled. Nevertheless, the Executive Order only applies to federal recognition of the celebration. I am assuming that anyone outside the direct jurisdiction of the federal government, including individual State governments and private institutions are allowed, if not encouraged, to continue to celebrate the diversity of cultures that enrich our church and wider society. Our voices will still be heard!

This year, we will even be designating two Sundays in May toward that end. Be sure to join us on May the Fourth as we celebrate the new date of PAAM Sunday as the first Sunday in May, with the added theme of Asian American influence in Star Wars (popular culture along with La Hula I Ke Akua dancers joining us as special dance offerings. Then, on May 18, our regional Southern California Nevada PAAM is hosting a Conference-wide pulpit exchange with 8 Conference churches participating. Rev. Teogenes from Faith Community Church in Perris will be our preacher in MPCC that day,

while I go to Los Angeles Filipino-American UCC in Eagle Rock.

So as much as our federal government will not commit resources to recognizing, much less celebrating, our diverse nation, our voices and personhood will not be diminished! If Jewish authorities and the Roman Empire were ultimately unsuccessful in cancelling Jesus Christ, we know there is still hope for Asian and Pacific voices in the diverse Body of Christ!

With You in the Body of Christ,
 Pastor Mitchell

Worship Schedule

May 4

Holy Communion
 PAAM Sunday Potluck
 "A New Net Work"
 Acts 9:1-20

May 11

Mother's Day Breakfast &
 Youth-Led Worship
 "The Works Testify"
 John 10:22-30

May 18

AAPI Pulpit Exchange
 Guest Preacher
 Rev. Teo Tawagon
 "Looking For Love"
 John 13:31-35

May 25

Memorial Sunday
 "A Sabbath"
 John 5:1-9

A Message from our Moderator...

Lori Katayama

In April, the Japanese language sensei added a beginner's class on Mondays which began meeting at 1:30pm before the conversation class. I came down to church to make sure everything was going well with the class and was pleasantly surprised when meeting the participants. Three of the ladies were mothers of former Summer Ex kids. Those "kids" are now in their late 20s and early 30s! It seems so long ago yet I was happy to hear in our brief reunion that they remembered our program and how much fun the kids had back then.

Included in this month's newsletter is information about Summer Exploration 2025. I've always felt that Summer Ex was about changing lives (my own as well) because of its emphasis on outreach to both staff and kids. Please let your neighbors, family, and friends know about this wonderful program.

I realize I have been absent lately – trips to Texas and Japan have kept me busy since last fall. I would like to thank everyone in the congregation for helping out with the many activities especially the installation of our new conference minister, Rev. Rachael Pryor. I have been watching the services online when I'm away (even in Japan!) and I really appreciate all the people who have been stepping up to give that warm MPCC welcome.

Please save the date – June 7 – for our annual Bazaar and don't forget to preorder your bento box. I hope to see you all there!

A Message from our Treasurer...

Bien Reyes

Financial Summary - March 2025

	Month	YTD
Total Income:	\$19,235.58	\$73,409.56
Total Expenses:	\$20,649.37	\$59,816.62
Surplus/(Deficit):	\$(1,413.79)	\$13,592.94

Christian Education Board

Steven Woo, chairperson

We had a great Easter service and had 10 kids participate in our Easter Egg hunt. Thank you to everyone that helped stuff eggs and decorate the yard.

Upcoming this month, we invite all ladies to please join us for our Mother's day breakfast on May 11th at 8:30am. Please contact Ron Nitta if you are able to help prepare breakfast that day.

Diaconate Board

Lynne Hanamoto

Thank you to the church members who helped with our Conference Minister Rev. Rachael Pryor's installation on Saturday March 29, 2025. There were about 200 people who attended. We gave out about 80 stoles. We made

about \$720 which we gave half to our church and half to Southern California Nevada Conference UCC for the Seminarian fund. Thank you to Art and Lynne H., Ron N., Mac R., Melody T., Tricia T., Kiku Y., Annie Y., Evelyn Y., and Nitaya Y. for contributing food. Christine K. and Ku'ulei P. assisted with stoles distribution. Alice H. and Lynne H. welcomed our guests while Bien R., Melody T., and Art H. assisted in the parking lot. We appreciate Maria M. and Yvonne P. who assisted in the kitchen preparations for the reception.

Howard Sakamoto's memorial service was on March 29 at Evergreen Baptist Church SGV. Our church members brought desserts to add to the reception.

Kiku K. was our lay reader for the Maundy Friday Service at San Marino UCC. We enjoyed the delicious soup from our host San Marino UCC. Lori Katayama was the lay reader for Good Friday Service at MPCC.

Our next wider church offering is the Strengthen the Church Offering: (STC) Offering reflects the shared commitment of people across the United Church of Christ to cooperatively build up the UCC. Conferences and the national setting equally share the gifts given by members and friends through their local congregations. The funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations. By your generosity to this offering, you build up the Body of Christ.

Bazaar 2025

Steven Woo & Roger Ng, Co-chair

Hi Everyone,

We are less than one month away until the bazaar! Please place your orders for your bentos ahead of time either electronically or the order form on the flyer. In addition to the bentos, here are all of the other booths:

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

These booths are not pre-ordered and will be sold that day. We will accept cash and checks. If you do not have cash that day, you can buy currency tickets through Zelle online payments that can be used at the booths. 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, spam musubi, and drinks. Thank you and tell everyone you know about our bazaar and place those orders! See you there!

Wednesday Group

Bob Miwa

3/26/25 Nitaya Y., Ed Y., Christine K., and Art H. pressure-washed the lanai and steps, weeded and cleaned the alley by the Pastor's office, and cleaned all parking lots. They mowed and weed whacked 10th St. parkway and parsonage back yard. They also weeded and watered trees in the Angel lot. Terry and Suzy H., Carolyn W., Jean K., Sets S. and her caregiver, Sharon I., Alice H., Kiku K., Ernie A., Chris C., and Lynne H. folded and labeled the Good News for mailing. Sharon brought pizza for us to celebrate Sets' 95th birthday everyone sang "Happy Birthday" along with Pastor's accompaniment on the ukulele.

3/28/25 Volunteers helped set up Mori hall for the upcoming Conference minister installation since our church is hosting it. Afterwards, they took recycled items to the recycling.

4/2/25 Ernie A., Christine K., and Nitaya Y. mowed the Greenwood parkway lawn and helped with the Spring Exploration group by setting up and making lunch for staff.

4/9/25 Art and Lynne H., Alice H., Ernie A., and Nitaya Y. mowed and weed whacked the front and back yard of the parsonage, dug a drainage for water in the Angel's parking lot, and then watered the plants in the parking lot. They also organized the drawers and cabinets in the kitchen.

4/16/25 Christine K., Alice H., Art and Lynne H., Joe P., and Pastor Mitchell and Nitaya Y. weed whacked the strip of 10th Street parkway, and swept Los Angeles and Angel's parking lot. They turned on the sprinkler in the Angel lot and found a broken water pipe, which Joe will help fix the next day. They moved the orange tree in the parking lot due to the broken pipe. They also moved the wood planters to the Greenwood side walk to give away. They did some yardwork on the Greenwood parkway by removing the seeds from the trees, pull weeds, and trim the Bird of Paradise plant. Lastly, arranged the coffee and spice cabinet in the kitchen and cleaned and threw away expired food in the refrigerator.

Special Offerings and Gifts

Bender, Lorran	In Memory of Nitaya's mother & Cookie Walk
Chun, Chris	Youth Ministry
Furogawa, Steve & Naomi	Youth Fundraiser
Higashi, Alice	In Memory of Ray Higashi, Helen Yamane, Howard Sakamoto, & Mits Murakami
Kobashigawa, Kiku	In Memory of Mits M. & Frank's sister
Mekata, Minnie	In Memory of Nitaya's mother & Howard Sakamoto
Miwa, Bob	In Memory of Nitaya's mother & Mits Murakami
Murakami, Irene	In Memory of Nitaya's mother
Nitta, Ron	In Memory of Mits Murakami & Howard Sakamoto
Phillips, Mike	In Memory of Mits Murakami
Shima, Les & Judy	In Memory of Mits Murakami
Tao, Tricia	In Memory of Nitaya's mother
Wada, Mari	In Memory of Howard Sakamoto & Mits Murakami & In Celebration of Denise's Baptism & Membership
Watanabe, Carolyn	In Memory of Mits Murakami
Yoshida, Beverly	Palm Sunday
Yoshimi, Evelyn	In Celebration of Baptism, Church Memberships, & Kuni K.'s Birthday

Easter Flower Donors

Barbara Hangai
Beverly Yoshida
Carol Fujita
Carolyn Watanabe
Chris Chun
Christine Kizuka
Denise Wada

Ed Yasuda
Ernie Agcaoili
Evelyn Yoshimi
Irene Murakami
Jan Fukushima
Jane Masuda
Jean Kobata

Kiku Kobashigawa
Ku'ulei Poole
Lynne Hanamoto
Lynne Shimasaki
Maria Teresa Macias
Nitaya Young
Suzy Hino

Prayers of the People

With deepest sympathy to the family/ies of:

- Pastor Mitchell Y. requested sympathy prayers for Mits M. who passed away March 16th. Let us keep Irene and the family in our prayers in this very tender time.
- Steven W. lift up sympathy prayers for his grandmother Yip Sang Woo who passed at the age of 93 years old.
- Toni M. asked for condolence prayers for Steven W. and his family in the passing of his grandmother Yip Sang Woo.

Prayers of Healing, Comfort and Blessing for:

- We continued to lift up prayers for strength and health for our sons and daughters: Warren H., Bryan H., and Natasha Y.
- Lori K. requested sympathy prayers for the Myanmar and Thailand people who experienced a devastating earthquake losing about 1800 people. We pray for God's comfort for all who have lost loved ones and homes, strength and courage for the first responders and rescue workers as they try to save as many lives as possible. Also, continue praying for Mari W.
- Christine K. requested healing and strength prayers for Teresa G. who broke her left side toe and for daughter Dianne who takes care of her mom.
- Melody T. lifted up healing and sympathy prayers for sister-in-law's sister Sheyla who has stage 4 cancer. Also, for son Daniel who will be having an immigration interview for his permanent visa.
- Kiku K. requested healing prayers for friend Faith who has been experiencing dizziness and vertigo. For son Ryan who is having issues with his tonsils and medication is not helping. Also, for Mary W. who is in the hospital. Friend Marilyn is asking prayers for friend Sandy M. who has some bleeding after a medical procedure.
- Frank M. lifted up comfort prayers for nephew's wife Nena who fell and is in the hospital.
- Congregation invited all to continue joining Jim Y. in a healing prayer for his wife Haru who had been hospitalized following a stroke, and is now in rehab.
- Ivonne P. requested guidance prayers for her granddaughter Zora who is changing majors. Also, wisdom and discernment for elected leaders as well as our appointed leaders.
- Mac R. requested concern prayers "let there be healing in our land".
- Joseph B. asked to be included in our prayers as they resume outreach mission in San Narciso, Quezon province. The mission team will be primarily be reaching out to fishing and farming families.
- Jean asked for healing prayers for friend Barbara who has new medication making her dizzy. Also, for friend July B. whose husband is in the hospital.

Thanksgiving:

- Evelyn H. is thanking everyone for healing prayers after her surgery.
- Melissa H. is praising God that her insurance came through with an approval for a skin graft! All she can say with certainty is God is good.
- Toni M. requested thanksgiving prayers for daughter Drina for her family reconciliation, for niece Jacky who graduated as a Registered Nurse, and for Desiree's safety and blessings for new life.

May Birthday Celebrations

5	Anna Chu
6	Kai Jauregui
6	Kelsey Petersen
6	Blake Sakamoto
8	Kyle Matsumoto
9	Layla Camberos
9	Matthew Okamoto
10	Heather Iwata
13	Mari Mori
14	Judy Shima
16	Anna Castanares
16	Minnie Mekata
16	Jeanne Tsunekawa
17	Yoshi Komaki
18	Audrey Ng
25	Alyssa Harada
26	Fred Alimboyao
29	Ryan Yamada

NOTE:

For prayer requests in the month of May e-mail Pastor Mitchell at myoung@montebelloucc.org or call (323) 893-2672 by the Friday before the Sunday service to be included in the Pastoral Prayer.

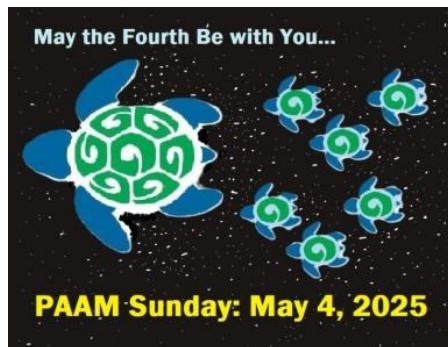
Save Used Stamps Update

"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



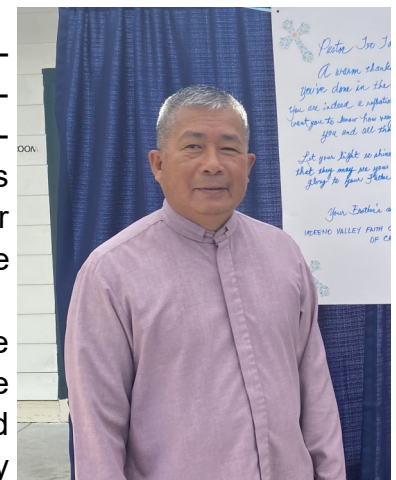
Pacific Islander & Asian American Ministries (PAAM) Sunday

Join us for a special dual themed PAAM Sunday + Star Wars Day worship service on May the Fourth. We also welcome La Hula I Ke Akua dancers who share dance with us in worship. You are encouraged to dress in Asian Pacific, Cross-cultural or Intergalactic attire. You are also invited to share your favorite ethnic or sci-fi inspired food dish for our multicultural potluck after the worship service.

AAPI Pulpit Exchange May 18, 2025

Asian Pacific Heritage Month hosted by regional Southern California Nevada PAAM. This year, 8 churches will be participating in a pulpit exchange to celebrate AANHPI Heritage Month. We had the preaching assignment lottery this past Friday: MPCC will be receiving Rev. Teogenes Tawagon of Faith Community UCC in Perris as our exchange preacher while Pastor Mitchell preaches at LA Filipino-American UCC in Eagle Rock.

Rev. Teo Tawagon is an ordained minister of the UCC and UCCP in the Philippines. A graduate of Silliman University Divinity School, Dumaguete City, Philippines. He served at various churches from the Philippines and U.S for 22 years. Currently, He serves as pastor at Faith Community



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!)

Last Month's Photos



March 30, 2025 Installation of New Conference Minister Rev. Rachael Pryor



**April 13, 2025
Baptism and New Church Memberships**



**April 13, 2025
Sunday school children dyeing Easter eggs and playing with confetti eggs**



Sun
Mon
Tue
Wed
Thu
Fri
Sat

				1	2	3
NOTE: Events marked with an asterisk (*) are private classes and not church events. Please contact the church office for more information.						
4 PAAM Sunday Potluck Holy Communion	5 *Beginner's Japanese class @1:30pm *Japanese Class @2:30pm	6 Bible Study @10am	7 Wednesday Group @8am *Dance Class @7pm	8	9	10
11 Mother's Day Breakfast Youth-Led Service	12 *Beginner's Japanese class @1:30pm *Japanese Class @2:30pm	13 Bible Study @10am	14 Wednesday Group @8am	15	16	17
18 Goodnews Due PAAM Pulpit Exchange	19 *Beginner's Japanese class @1:30pm *Japanese Class @2:30pm	20 Bible Study @10am	21 Goodnews Mailing @9am *Dance Class @7pm	22	23	24
25 Memorial Sunday Last Day to Pre-Order Bento	26 *Beginner's Japanese class @1:30pm *Japanese Class @2:30pm	27 Bible Study @10am	28 Wednesday Group @8am *Dance Class @7pm	29	30	31 Akira Mori Scholarship Due

Coming in
June
2025
1
7
8
15
29
30
Teacher Appreciation & Graduates Luncheon
Annual Bazaar
Strengthen the Church Offering
Father's Day Breakfast & Youth-Led Service
Summer Ex Staff Dedication
Summer Ex Training

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				

BENTO

10AM-12PM	12PM-2PM	2PM-4PM	4PM-6PM CLEAN-UP

PANCIT/LUMPIA: MAC REYES

10AM-12PM	12PM-2PM	2PM-4PM	4PM-6PM CLEAN-UP

SPAM MUSUBI:

10AM-12PM	12PM-2PM	2PM-4PM	4PM-6PM CLEAN-UP

SANITATION

10AM-12PM	12PM-2PM	2PM-4PM	4PM-6PM

DRINKS:

10AM-12PM	12PM-2PM	2PM-4PM	4PM-6PM CLEAN-UP

PASTRIES: TRICIA TAO

10AM-12PM	12PM-2PM	2PM-4PM	4PM-6PM CLEAN-UP
LISA TANAKA			
LAURA SAKAMOTO			
KAREN YASUKOCHI			

PRODUCE/PLANTS:

10AM-12PM	12PM-2PM	2PM-4PM	4PM-6PM CLEAN-UP
	BARBARA HANGAI		
	CAROLYN WATANABE		

INFORMATION BOOTH:

11AM-1PM	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				

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: _____