



# Good News



Montebello Plymouth Congregational Church

A United Church of Christ

Sr. Pastor Rev. Mitchell Young

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## July 2025

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**"...not my will but yours be done." Luke 22:42**

### When Politics and Faith Collide

In the wake of immigration raids taking place not just in the City of Los Angeles, but also our own Montebello and neighboring cities of Downey, Pico Rivera, Alhambra and others, our communities have been struck with confusion, rage, and fear, disrupting the lives of families in our neighborhoods. Is there only one possible Christian response to such events? Can we seriously ask "What does God want in all of this?"

Let me share a portion of the reflection offered by Hawaii Conference Minister, David Popham, as he looked back at some of the respectful discussion that took place at the Hawaii Conference 'Aha Paeaina (cf. Annual Gathering) a couple weeks ago:

**Speaking to Political Concerns**  
During the 'Aha Makua [business meeting], we took up debate and voted for the resolution to oppose the 2025 immigration roll backs. While all present seemed to be in favor of the actions called for by the resolution, there was concern for some of the language in the opening Summary paragraph which specifically names the current D.C. administration. The debate was cordial and passionate, as is typical of our debates. It cannot be said that the members of this Conference are anything less than passionate, and I continue to praise Ke Akua [God] for our deep connections to faith.

What struck me was that as we sought to speak spiritual truths to secular powers we were struggling with how to address a political issue without dipping into partisan politics. I can speak only from my perspective, but there was a moment or two when

comments were those of partisan politics. Some recognized this and sought to bring attention to it. Unfortunately, we have been so conditioned by society's rancorous public debates that we followed the same lines of division into this debate.

*By these observations I don't seek to shame anyone. I simply seek to observe how politics continues to inform the church instead of faith informing politics. Political debate is based on establishing dominance and emerging the winner. Faithful conversations should be structured by grace and compassion in which the goal is mutual support, even in disagreement. If political debate is about getting our way, faithful debate is about getting God's way.*

Of course, there are likely churches and pastors that our fully invested on one side or the other, not seeing eye-to-eye with each other. I imagine in those churches there may not be a lot of debate since they already "know" that they are on God's side and God is on theirs. However, for a church like our dear Montebello Plymouth Church which the members show great love for one another, yet hold that in tension with disparate political views, we too, struggle with how to be faithful to God's call to love and serve and proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Let us endeavor to engage in respectful conversation, that "faithful debate (in Rev. Popham's words), to engage in" toward getting God's way, rather than political debate intent on getting our way. There is too much at stake for our intent is to win a political debate. Jesus, though victorious over death, in the world's view might be seen as a loser: he aligned himself with losers, the poor, the powerless, the unclean, the sinners and

was arrested, tried, and executed as a traitor to the empire. How can we say that this is about winning? It is indeed about being faithful, which in the end may mean losing or at the very least conceding that what I "know and want" may not always be what God wants.

God, show us your wisdom and your ways! Show us your steadfast love that endures forever!

Trying to Hold onto Faith,

Pastor Mitchell

### Worship Schedule

#### July 6

Holy Communion

"Like Lambs"

Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

#### July 13

Special Service of Music &

Testimony

"Caring Neighbors"

Luke 10:25-37

#### July 20

Summer Ex Sunday

Church Picnic

"Few Things Are Needed"

Luke 10:38-42

#### July 27

"Teach Us"

Luke 11:1-13

**A Message from our Moderator...**

*Lori Katayama*

We're in such a time of uncertainty and fear but one thing for certain is that the church will continue to be a place of peace, safety, and unwavering faith. I pray that you are all safe.

July 2025 will mark the beginning of Pastor Mitchell's last year with us. His retirement date has been set for July 31, 2026. On behalf of the church Council please join us in celebrating his service here at MPCC by joining in the many activities we have planned.

So far we have the following events planned:

**August 17**

Pastor Mitchell's Birthday

We'll be serving cake to celebrate Pastor Mitchell's birthday during coffee hour. Please join us!

**October 11**

The weekend of October 11th is Apple Pie Day at Pilgrim Pines in Yucaipa. The council is planning to take a group to enjoy the activities (and pie!) at the camp. This will most likely be our last opportunity to fellowship with the Youngs at Pilgrim Pines. Details and a sign up sheet will be available soon. Please save the date.

There will be many more activities to come. Please check the Good News for updates.

The council will not be meeting in July but we would greatly appreciate your feedback. If you have any comments, questions, or concerns you may approach our members-at-large, Ron Yamasaki and Evelyn Yoshimi, and they will share it with the council anonymously or by name.

**A Message from our Treasurer...**

*Bien Reyes*

**Financial Summary - May 2025**

	<b>Month</b>	<b>YTD</b>
Total Income:	\$16,989.64	\$113,317.24
Total Expenses:	\$22,603.09	\$106,138.97
Surplus/(Deficit):	\$(5,613.45)	\$7,178.27

**Board of Trustees**

*Annie Yamasaki, chairperson*

Greetings From MPCC Trustees-

It's officially summer and I am not looking forward to the heat. I hope everyone has made preparations to stay healthy and safe. Let's heed the experts' advice to remain hydrated and stay indoors as much as possible.

July 2026 will be Pastor Mitchell and Nitaya's last month at MPCC. Every church event from the end of this July till then will be their last. The last Thanksgiving, Christmas, etc... The party planning committee would like to honor their dedication and service to this church with special activities to celebrate their retirement. Please let

BJ, Lori, or I know if you have any fun and relevant ideas on how we can show our appreciation. We will take suggestions into consideration.

On the church financial front, there were a few months this year where church monthly operating expenses exceeded monthly income. Year-to-date numbers are still positive for now and the income from the June bazaar will help but it would be nice and prudent to be able to meet financial obligations each month.

I will miss the Youngs deeply, but for now, I look forward to a fun filled year ahead.

Take good care and God Bless.

**Christian Education Board**

*Steven Woo, chairperson*

Thank you to all of the church women for cooking the Father's Day breakfast. We greatly appreciate it. Our church picnic will be on July 20th after the Summer Ex Sunday service. The C.E. Board will provide hamburgers, hotdogs, and ice cream! The school year has been starting earlier, our Rally Sunday will be August 3rd. We will be providing school supplies and pre-packaged goodies for families to take while supplies last. It would also be a good time to enroll your child or grandchild in Sunday School! Lastly, we are planning an outing to a local park to have lunch and play games on August 9th. More details will be announced when we have the time and place.

**Diaconate Board**

*Lynne Hanamoto*

Thank you to all who contributed to our UCC's Church's Wider Mission "Strengthen the Church" offering.

On Father's Day/Trinity Sunday we thank Rhys and Steven for the praise song "Good, Good Father".

Ally and Davy L. participated as readers for our Youth-led Father's Day Service. For those of us who were present in the sanctuary and those who watched on Youtube, we enjoyed our MPCC Men singing a special Father's Day Anthem "You'll Never Walk Alone". Also, we thank Ms. B.J. for the wonderful Father's Day video which showed our MPCC families.

**Bazaar 2025**

*Steven Woo & Roger Ng, Co-chair*

Hello Everyone,

Our Bazaar was a great success. Although we had to make some changes to how the event ran, like preordering, we did better than last year. We would like to thank everyone that came to support the church in any way. Whether you came to help set up, cook, clean, or just buy food, we couldn't have done it without you. We would like to specifically thank the booth chairpersons:

Christine Kizuka - Bento pre-ordering  
 Tricia Tao - Pastries  
 Bien and Mac Reyes - Pancit and Lumpia  
 Denise Wada - Spam Musubi  
 Chris and Sandra Low - Drinks  
 Glenn Hino/Jets - Games  
 Lori Katayama and Naomi Furogawa - Produce/Plants  
 Kona Ice

Thank you all for taking the lead on running a booth this year. Your dedication and commitment helped provide a lot of great food for our event. Also, thank you to our hula groups for entertainment:

Hālau Hula Moani'a'ala Anuhea  
 Le Hula I Ke Akua  
 Ohana Hula Halau

It is always amazing to see people of all ages perform with elegance and grace. Lastly, we would like to thank the groups and affiliations that helped us:

Jets/Jetts  
 Girl Troop (BSA Troop 365 G)  
 Montebello High School Interact Club  
 Tanaka Farm  
 AAA Rubbish

Set up and clean up went extremely smooth and we couldn't have done any of it without all their help. We are still trying to accurately account for all of the money raised, but we raised over \$11,000 so far. There are a few factors why we did better than last year. This year was technically a private event with pre-ordering bentos. Since it was a private event, we didn't need permits from the city or county. We were no longer exempt from the fees last year, so we decided to have a private event to bypass those expenses. Anyone was still more than welcome to come without pre-ordering so we didn't turn anyone away. They were just not able to buy a bento because of the limited quantity we had. I'm glad that we finally were able to utilize our new parking area for a few more spaces. Parking has always been an issue so more parking was a nice plus. Thank you all once again for your support! Have a wonderful summer!

### **Bazaar Pastries Booth**

*Tricia Tao*

Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Pastry booth!!! From cookies, jellies, breads, dorayaki, tapio-ca, mochi, rice Krispy treats, mixes, to bars, we had a large variety of goodies. Thank you for making our booth a big success!

### **Wednesday Group**

*Art Hanamoto*

**5/21/2025** Bob M., Chris C., Suzy H., Terry H., Alice H. Ernie A., Lynne H., Jean K., Beverly Y., and Ed Y. folded and labeled the Good News for mailing. Christine K., Ernie A., Art H., and Nitaya Y. 1) watered the plants in both the Greenwood and Los Angeles

### **Special Offerings and Gifts**

Hagihara, Yasuko	Easter Flowers
Katayama, Dave & Lori	In Memory of Noby Uyesugi & Tim Okuma
Kobata, Jean	In Memory of Steven Woo's grandmother
Masuda, Jane	In Memory of Yosh Masuda
Takahashi, Patricia	J.F.K. Scholarship Fund
Yano, Lorrin	For Natasha's Y.'s Graduation
Yoshida, Beverly	Father's Day
Yoshimi, Evelyn	Father's Day

parking lots, 2) fixed a sprinkler in the Los Angeles park-way, and 3) paint the kitchen walls. The recently hired gardener is helping to maintain the campus.

**5/28/2025** Ernie A., Christine K., Art H., Alice H., and Nitaya Y. 1) watered the plants in both the Greenwood and Los Angeles parking lots, 2) purchased a new knob to turn the sprinkle valve on the Greenwood park-way lawn, 3) cleared tables in Mori Hall, 4) reorganized a cabinet in the kitchen, 5) completed painting the kitchen walls, 6) gave away books and DVDs to the library, and 7) bagged goodie bags for the Bazaar. Due to construction near the Los Angeles gate, a cord is being used to prop open the gate.

**6/4/2025** Christine K., Ernie A., Art and Lynne H., and Pastor Mitchell and Nitaya Y. 1) took items to the recycling center, 2) replaced a water filter in the kitchen, 3) fixed sprinklers in the Greenwood parkway, and 4) painted a wall outside of the kitchen. To prepare for the Bazaar, some citrus and shiso plants were repotted for sale and the ice chests were cleaned.

**6/11/2025** Alice H., Maria M. Christine K., Lynne and Art H., and Nitaya Y. 1) rearranged the Bibles, hymn books and chairs in the sanctuary, 2) watered the plants in both the Greenwood and Los Angeles parking lots, 3) hosed down the entrances to the lanai and sanctuary, 4) fixed a kitchen cabinet door, and 5) throw/giveaway plants.

**6/18/2025** Christine K., Ernie A., Alice H., Art H., Lynne H., and Nitaya Y. activities were: 1) watered the plants in all three parking lots, 2) fixed sprinklers in the Greenwood parkway, 3) soaped and scrubbed ten tables from Mori Hall, 3) cleaned the glass doors in the Sunday School wing, sanctuary and door by the piano, and 4) continue to organize and declutter the green cabinets in Mori Hall.

## Prayers of the People

### With deepest sympathy to the family/ies of:

- Mamie O.'s friend Susan, Susan's brother-in-law Andrew S. passed away suddenly last week.
- Kendis F.'s husband's mother, Hanna F. who passed at the beautiful age of 93.
- Lori K.'s cousin Tim O. who passed away after a stroke on May 30.
- Jan F.'s fellow member of the Friendly Hills Woman's club, Selma, who passed away last week at the age of 101.
- For all the families who lost their dear ones due to a plane crash in India, about 260 people died.
- For the family of the Minnesota State representative Melissa Hortman who was assassinated in a shooting at her home in Brooklyn Park, alongside her husband, Mark. Also, state senator John Hoffman and his wife Yvette were shot in their home.

### 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.
- Yvonne P. for her cousin's husband Tony S. whose lung cancer has returned after 2 years of being cancer free. Also, prayers of healing for their very dear and long-known friend Harry A. as the doctors continue to diagnose his sudden health issues of cold chills. He had tests done and were negative. In the meanwhile, he feels better but very concerned. Lastly, prayers for a successful Bazaar.
- Lori K. asked for prayers healing and comfort prayers for elderly neighbors Kimiko and Kuniji H. The wife is hospitalized and husband is by himself.
- Kiku Y. asked for healing prayers for friend Stuart who has a complicated heart issues. Also, lift up prayers for peace after the National Guards came to Los Angeles to support ICE.
- Michi T. asked for healing prayers for husband Ron T. Ron had a couple of surgeries to remove a tumor on his spine. Additionally, Ron has developed heart issues.
- Sandra L. asked for healing prayers for herself since her back went out for a few days and is still hurting. Also, prayers for brother, Steven F., who got laid off and is looking for a new job. Sandra has been getting bug bites all over for a month and family has none. Prayers for son Daniel who is on the Navy ship. He'll be there for a number of months and his wife Regina will stay taking care of their household and pets.
- Lynne H. asked for continued healing prayers for Haru Y.
- Jan F. requested prayers of healing for friend Gracia H. who recently fell.
- Karen P. asked for healing prayers for close family friend Motomi A.
- Julie T. requested healing prayers for her grandmother Rosalba who has liquid in her lungs and has been in the hospital for four days.
- Chris C. requested continued prayers for Bob M. Bob's been approved for his heart procedure, but apparently outpatient surgery department is very busy, so he has been scheduled for next month.
- Christine K. requested prayers of healing and comfort for friend Diane M. during these coming weeks and months.

### Traveling Mercies for:

- Carolyn W. for granddaughter Ashley who is now flying to Florida for training for an internship at Wells Fargo. For granddaughter Emi and her classmates who will be flying to Japan for a student exchange program. For son Keith and his wife Loreen as they fly to Japan and return June 19. Then after for Keith and his co-workers as they fly to Guam for work. For sister Sachi S. and family as they fly to Europe.
- Ivonne P. for David P. who is driving to Santa Cruz to pick up Asa from School. Grandson, Kunta G. move to Carolina for a new job as a Nascar photographer. Also, for Zora and Nerandi who will go to Tennessee for a summer job training and travel back to work in NorCal.
- Mac R. for sister Estelita and brother Hermy and his wife Susan who are traveling from the Philippines to California.
- Joe P. for safe travels for Rosa as she returns back to Los Angeles.

### Thanksgiving:

- For Warren H., wife Melissa posted: "Skin flap surgery was a success! Thank you for praying! Also praising God, the doctor decided a PICC line was no longer needed!"
- For Natasha Y., her graduation ceremony at Chapman was Friday night and she receives her diploma at another ceremony this afternoon, May 25, 2025.
- Toni M. lift up prayers for her grandson Jose B. who graduated from Arroyo Valley High School. Jose will be attending San Bernardino Valley College toward becoming a welder. Also, thanksgiving for Samantha's safe return trip from Colorado.
- Lynee H. lift up prayers for at least 20 Montebello High School volunteers that came to help with our Bazaar from the interact club, especially for their president Bryant.

## July Birthday Celebrations

- 4 Robert Haynes
- 5 Carol Iwata
- 7 Grant Mikuriya
- 8 Mitsie Miya
- 8 Ryan Togioka
- 9 Kiku Kobashigawa
- 10 Patrick Fukushima
- 10 Bryce Hanamoto
- 11 Andrew Chao
- 12 Damian Camberos
- 12 Suzy Hino
- 12 Michio Oyakawa
- 13 Les Shima
- 15 Ramon Corrales
- 17 Maria Martinez
- 19 Ann Shimizu
- 24 Justin Akiyoshi
- 24 Megan Matsuda
- 26 Yuna Yamada
- 26 Toni Martinez
- 28 Joyce Khowdee
- 28 Elinor Sakado
- 31 James Yoshitake



## 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



## Bazaar Meeting July 6, 2025

This meeting is a recap of our recent Annual Bazaar on June 7, 2025. Feedback and comments are encouraged to improve our future bazaar. A survey form will be distributed, please return it before the scheduled meeting.  
[bazaarchair@montebelloucc.org](mailto:bazaarchair@montebelloucc.org)

## CWS Packing Party

Church World Services is an organization that helps with disaster recovery and preparation. They also work with UCC churches to create awareness in the community on how to be prepared and how to help others when disaster hits. On August 23rd they will bring supplies for everyone to make their own emergency kit. There is no cost for the materials and everyone is welcome so please sign up your family, friends, and neighbors. (A time will be determined soon).



## Church Picnic hosted by the CE Board

Join us for our church picnic on July 20 after our Worship Service. Our church boards will provide hotdogs, burgers, salad, and an ice cream bar.



***Mother's Day Photos***

**June 7, 2025  
66th Annual Bazaar**



**June 15, 2025  
Father's Day Break-  
fast & Youth-led  
Service**



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Bible Study @10am	2 Wednesday Group @8am *Dance Class @7pm	3	4 Office Closed	5
		Summer Ex Staff Training				
6 Holy Communion Bazaar Meeting	7 Summer Ex Begins! *Beginner's Japanese class @1:30pm	8 Summer Ex Swim Day Bible Study @10am	9 Summer Ex Wednesday Group @8am	10 Summer Ex	11 Summer Ex	12
				General Synod		
13 Special Music & Testimonies	14 *Beginner's Japanese class @1:30pm	15 Summer Ex Swim Day Bible Study @10am	16 Summer Ex Outing Wednesday Group @8am	17 Summer Ex	18 Summer Ex	19 *Workshop
20 Summer Ex Sunday Church Picnic Goodnews Deadline	21 *Beginner's Japanese class @1:30pm	22 Bible Study @10am	23 Goodnews Mailing @9am *Dance Class @7pm	24	25	26
27	28 *Beginner's Japanese class @1:30pm	29 Bible Study @10am	30 Wednesday Group @8am *Dance Class @7pm	31	NOTE: Events marked with an asterisk (*) are private classes and not church events. Please contact the church office for more information.	

**Coming in**
**August  
2025**

 3  
9  
17  
24

**School Supplies Drive/Rally Sunday  
Family Picnic Outing  
Pastor Mitchell's Birthday  
Guest Speaker Veronica Ota**
**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

