

WATSONVILLE-SANTA CRUZ JACL

“*The Bridge* 橋”*The Voice of Our Community***HAIKU**

rain, rain, and more rain
 earthworms on the wet pavement
 wriggling here and there

雨降りて。 [amefurite]

みみず 蠢く [mimizu ugomeku]

ここかしこ [kokokashiko]

[The speaker identifies with the worms which have left the rain-soaked ground to be able to breathe. It may be a subtle reference to immigrants and refugees who must leave their homelands to seek a new life, while being exposed to dangerous conditions. There is an admiration taking place from the powerful (speaker) to the weakest and lowest. Perhaps the speaker also seeks a new path to freedom.]

This haiku was written by

Bob Gómez, Poet-Teacher

Translation by Emi Sato and Hiromi Ushimaru

DONATIONS

Thank you to those who have generously donated since our last issue. We are grateful to all who have donated this past year. It is through your support that we can continue to advocate for justice and equality for all.

- Lester and Michelle Aoki for DOR Education/ Scholarship in remembrance of Mas Hashimoto
- Joseph and Christine Bowes for Paul Ichijii Memorial Garden
- Nobue Fujii in memory of Sadayuki Fujii
- Joyce Kubota in memory of Richard Oyama
- Robert Mayeda honoring Hashimotos
- Watsonville Taiko Group, \$750 hall use donation

Inside this issue

Haiku	1
Donations	1
Watsonville-Santa Cruz JACL:	
- “Day of Remembrance” Program	2
- 2026 W-SC Chapter Board Members	
- Meleia Simon-Reynolds	2
The 2026 Watsonville-Santa Cruz JACL Local Scholarships	3
2026 National JACL Scholarship Applications Upcoming Deadlines - Reminder	4
The Nikkei Community Internship Program	4
Black History Month	4
The SAVE Act, Why It’s Important	4
2026 Jerome Rohwer Pilgrimage	6
28th Annual Freedom Walk	6
Punch	7
News from Monterey Peninsula Chapter	7
Senior Center News for January & February 2026	9
Watsonville Bonsai Club	11
Kokoro no Gakko 2026	11
“I Am An American: The Nisei Soldier Experience”	11
Friends & Family of Nisei Veterans	12
Watsonville Buddhist Temple	12
Westview Presbyterian Chimes	17
Acknowledgements	19

Website: www.watsonvillesantacruzjacl.com

Next issue May 2026!

WATSONVILLE-SANTA CRUZ JACL

**“Day of Remembrance” Program
February 22, 2026**

By Cindy Mine

Which was sponsored by the 5 JACL Chapters: Gilroy, Monterey Peninsula, Salinas, San Benito County, and the Watsonville-Santa Cruz (host chapter).

About 75 Attendees met at the Salinas Memorial Garden on this weather perfect day where:

- * Meleia Simon-Reynolds’s read the Official Land Acknowledgement of the Salinas Detention Center Site.
- * A presentation by Marcia Hashimoto on the Salinas Detention Center Monument and Memorial Garden; and an Appreciation to the Maintenance Team of the Garden to:
Joe Bowes, David Kadotani, Victor Kimura, Gary Mine,
Norris Woodford, Jean Yamashita and the late Iwao Yamashita

The Program continued inside the St. Lucia room where:

- * Marcia presented “Day of Remembrance... Never Again?”
- * Ann Jordan (Salinas Valley JACL) presented “Alien Enemy Act”
- * Larry Hirahara and Gary Tanimura presented “Nikkei Farmers” by the Kansha History Project.

Please refer to the YouTube video [<https://youtu.be/HM3xERZB-MU>] by Wes White for the presentation of our Day of Remembrance 2026 for Executive Order 9066 with Japanese American Citizen League in Salinas, California Program. A thank you to Mr. White.

2026 Watsonville-Santa Cruz JACL Board Members

Co-Presidents: Marcia Hashimoto & Kenny Kusumoto

Treasurer: Victor Kimura

Secretary: Sean Sheehan

1st Vice-President: Joe Bowes

2nd Vice-President: Nikki Hikari

Bonnie Chihara

Meleia Simon-Reynolds

Cindy Mine

Norris Woodford

Gary Mine

Jeanette Hager

Hiroshi Fukurai

Chapter Board Member Meleia Simon-Reynolds *By Meleia Simon-Reynolds*



Meleia Simon-Reynolds

Meleia Simon-Reynolds joined the board of the Watsonville-Santa Cruz Japanese American Citizens League in January 2026. Meleia was first introduced to the Watsonville-Santa Cruz JACL in 2023 when she worked for UCSC’s Special Collections and Archives to create a collection guide on the chapter’s records and an exhibit on the chapter’s histories. She loved learning about how members of the JACL, especially Mas and Marcia Hashimoto, worked to document local Japanese American history. As a JACL board member, she hopes to continue their work by preserving and uplifting histories of the chapter and its members.

Meleia was born in Santa Cruz, but spent most of her childhood years in Orange County, California. She returned to Santa Cruz in 2018 to attend graduate school at UC Santa Cruz. She completed her PhD in Asian American History in August 2025. Her dissertation research focused on Filipino migration, photography, and community-based archiving in the Pajaro Valley and drew upon over five years of work with Watsonville is in the Heart (WIITH), a community-engaged research initiative on Filipino histories of our region, and the Tobera Project, a grassroots, Watsonville-based organization made up of descendants

of early twentieth-century Filipino farm worker settlers. Through WIITH, Meleia developed a passion for preserving and amplifying community histories of the Monterey Bay area that have been overlooked and under-listened to. She most enjoys conducting oral history interviews, digital archiving, and historical research in collaboration with community members and undergraduate students. In her free time, Meleia likes to hike in the redwoods, cook big meals, and take dance classes with her friends.

The 2026 Watsonville-Santa Cruz JACL Local Scholarships

By Marcia Hashimoto, Victor Kimura and Kenny Kusumoto

Applications are available on our website <https://watsonvillesantacruzjacl.com> and by contacting Marcia Hashimoto at hashi79@sbcglobal.net or (831) 722-6859 (please leave a message with your telephone number). The filing deadline is Saturday, June 13th, 2026.

Applicants will apply for scholarships by submitting generic application information that could apply to and satisfy all of the scholarship funds.

The W-SC JACL's Scholarship Committee will determine, based on factors such as meritorious performance; grades; participation in certain social activities and organizations, such as Kokoro no Gakko; level of volunteerism; and length of membership in the JACL, the Watsonville Buddhist Temple, and/or the Westview Presbyterian Church, which applicants receive which scholarships.

All scholarship recipients and their parents must be W-SC JACL, Watsonville Buddhist Temple, and/or Westview Presbyterian Church members for a minimum of one year prior to receipt of scholarship.

An announcement for scholarship applications will be included in the Watsonville-Santa Cruz JACL newsletter, the Watsonville Buddhist Temple's Ichimi, and the Westview Presbyterian Church's Chimes.

Kee Kitayama Memorial Scholarship: The Kee Kitayama Memorial Scholarship Fund was established by Watsonville-Santa Cruz JACL and Mrs. Keiko Kitayama in memory of her husband, Kee, who was our Watsonville-Santa Cruz JACL chapter president in 1987. Mr. Kitayama worked tirelessly for Redress and Reparations with the Civil Liberties Act of August 10, 1988. The Kee Kitayama Memorial Scholarship Fund provides much needed financial and moral support for our young scholars. It upholds Mr. Kee Kitayama's legacy, encouraging our youth in their pursuit of higher education. The Kee Kitayama Memorial Scholarship may be awarded to graduating high school seniors to be used towards their college education.

Frank Mito Scholarship: The Frank Mito Scholarship Fund was established by his family to provide financial support for local students pursuing higher education goals. Frank Mito was an active supporter of the Watsonville Japanese American community, and his scholarship fund was formerly awarded through Kokoro no Gakko ("School of the Heart"). The Frank Mito Scholarship may be awarded to a graduating high school senior, usually with Kokoro no Gakko participation, and may be additive to other JACL scholarships.

The Rekiso "Ray" and Hisako "Louise" Sako Scholarships: The Rekiso and Hisako Sako Scholarships were established in 2012 to help local students who are actively involved with the JACL, Watsonville Buddhist Temple, and/or Westview Presbyterian Church in pursuing their higher education goals. The late Mr. and Mrs. Sako were long time members of the JACL and Senior Center, and leaders among the Japanese American community. A four year undergraduate scholarship may be awarded and may be extended for two additional years of graduate studies. This scholarship may be applied for at any time, from graduating from high school through completion of a masters degree.

Please send your completed forms to our Watsonville-Santa Cruz JACL Chapter Scholarship Committee on or before Saturday, June 13th, 2026. The address for applications should be mailed to:

JACL Scholarship Committee
P. O. Box 163
Watsonville, CA 95077-0163

Note that the 2026 awards will be presented at the JACL Community Picnic on Saturday, June 27, 2026 at the Watsonville Buddhist Temple.

2026 NATIONAL JAACL SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATIONS UPCOMING DEADLINES REMINDER

The National JAACL scholarship applications are posted on their website at <https://jaacl.org/scholarships>. Please see their website for links to the applications, eligibility and the 2026 Scholarship Program calendar.

THE NIKKEI COMMUNITY INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The Nikkei Community Internship (NCI) is the best opportunity for college students to build networks, professional skills, and make an impact in the Japanese American community. For the application, see <https://gokizuna.org/programs/internship>

OVERVIEW

Occurring during the summer, the Internship is a paid, 8-week, full-time internship experience designed to help you make your mark in the community. Participants have the opportunity to intern in Southern California through Kizuna, or Northern California through the Japanese Community Youth Council (JCYC) and Japanese American Museum of San Jose (JAMsj). Design and implement impactful projects, meet community leaders, and build your legacy by helping to shape our community's future in Kizuna's internship program.

PROGRAM DETAILS: DURATION: June 22 - August 14, 2026

PAID POSITIONS: Each intern will receive a \$\$ stipend upon completion of the program. (All interns, regardless of location, receive the same stipend.)

*There is no cost or application fee to participate in NCI.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: April 4, 2026

BLACK HISTORY MONTH *By Cindy Mine*

I hear about Black History Month, what does that mean?

Black History Month is also known as African American History month which originated in the United States.

It began as a way of remembering important people and events in African American History. It's a Celebration of the History, Struggles, Resilience and Achievements by African Americans in U.S. History.

It initially lasted a week and now it's a month long observation, annually in February. It is celebrated in the U.S., Canada, Germany, and Jamaica in February. Ireland, the Netherlands and United Kingdom Celebrate it in October.

There are colors that are used for Black History Month:

- Black: represents resilience
- Red: represents blood of the Innocent Black Lives that were shed throughout History
- Yellow: represents equality for everyone, optimism and justice
- Green: represents rich greenery and other natural resources

These colors are in many of the African and Ethiopian flags also.

Historian Carter G. Woodson established the Negro History week in February of 1926 which grew into The African American History event. He selected February because this month included the Birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, 2 key figures in the History of Black Americans. Mr. Douglass was an Abolitionist (someone who wanted to end the practice of enslaving people). President Lincoln is central to the abolition of slavery (eradicating slavery) in the U.S., famously issuing the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863.

February 10, 1976, President Gerald Ford officially recognized Black History Month which expanded the week event into a month. In 1986, Congress passed a Public Law 99-244 which designated February as Black History month.

Black History month should make you think of the History of the African Americans in the Arts, Business, Civil Rights, Education, Health and Wellness, History, Identity and Diversity, Leaders, Politics, Religion, Representation, Resistance, Scholars, Slavery and Writers.

THE SAVE ACT, WHY IT'S IMPORTANT *By Carol Kawase*

I've been asked by a member as to why the passage SAVE Act is such a bad thing. Here's five aspects of the SAVE Act that needs careful consideration.

1) **Citizenship is already a requirement to vote, Non-citizen voting is very rare.**

[Multiple nationwide studies](#) have uncovered only a handful of incidents of non-citizens voting. [Based on state prosecution records](#), votes by non-citizens account for between 0.0003 percent and 0.001 percent of all votes cast. [Election officials agree](#) that there is no serious problem of non-citizen voting in our elections. The National Association of Secretaries of State, whose Republican-majority membership includes the chief elections officers of 40 states, [said](#) they “are not aware of any evidence that supports the voter fraud claims made by President Trump.”

2) Many eligible citizens don't have access to documentary proof of citizenship.

According to the U.S. Department of State, examples of primary citizenship evidence include a birth certificate, a U.S. passport, a Consular Report of Birth Abroad, a Certificate of Citizenship, or a Naturalization Certificate. (While Real IDs are often assumed to be a reliable proxy for citizenship, [they do not definitively establish citizenship](#).) Many times it costs money and time to get certified documentation.

Although at least one of these documents are in theory available to most citizens, not all voters have them readily available. According to recent studies:

- [9% of all eligible voters](#) do not have, or do not have easy access to, documentary proof of citizenship.
- [52% of registered voters](#) do not have an unexpired passport with their current legal name.
- [11% of registered voters](#) do not have access to their birth certificate.

Additionally, birth certificates often lack information that matches a person's current identity. For instance, someone who has changed their name through marriage or court order may need to present a third document (such as a marriage certificate) to join their proof of citizenship (e.g., birth certificate) with their proof of identity (e.g., driver's license), further decreasing the likelihood that a voter will have the appropriate documentation on hand to successfully register.

Kansas offers a case study of how a documentary proof requirement would likely play out in practice. Before the law took effect, [noncitizen registration in Kansas was exceedingly rare](#), accounting for about 0.002% of registered voters. After adoption, the documentary proof of citizenship requirement [prevented roughly 31,000 eligible citizens](#), or 12% of all applicants, from registering to vote. In short, the law prevented far more citizens from registering to vote than non-citizens.

3) There are better ways to verify citizenship that put the responsibility on government, not voters.

Recent voter citizenship verification proposals tend to take one of two approaches:

1. **Front-end verification**, where the burden is on the voter to prove their citizenship by providing documentary proof to a state or local official. This is the approach the SAVE America Act takes.
2. **Back-end verification**, where election or other government officials, such as those at the department of motor vehicles, consult existing government data to verify a voter's citizenship status.

Both models have trade-offs. Front-end verification risks burdening eligible voters who lack ready access to proof of citizenship, while back-end verification hinges on the accuracy, completeness, and interoperability of government databases. Between the two approaches, we encourage policymakers to prioritize back-end verification over front-end verification because it places the responsibility on government officials rather than voters to prove citizenship.

4) The SAVE America Act could have unintended consequences for election officials and election administration.

For voters who register by mail, the SAVE America Act requires documentary proof of citizenship to be delivered in person to an election office, effectively nullifying the benefits of mail registration.

At the same time, the legislation does not clearly specify how documentary proof must be submitted for online registration, leaving election officials without clear guidance on acceptable delivery methods. This ambiguity increases the risk of inconsistent implementation across jurisdictions and places election officials in the position of making high-stakes judgment calls without clear statutory direction.

The SAVE America Act also exposes election officials to heightened legal and personal risk. It establishes criminal penalties for officials who register an applicant who fails to present documentary proof of citizenship, even if that applicant is in fact a U.S. citizen. The bill also authorizes private individuals to sue election officials under the same circumstances.

5) The SAVE America Act needs more time and resources to be implemented well.

The SAVE America Act requires significant changes to each step of the voter registration process: how voters register, how their identities are verified, and how list maintenance is performed on an ongoing basis. These changes would be costly and time consuming, taking months—if not years—to achieve.

Despite the administrative difficulty of implementation, the SAVE America Act prioritizes expediency over precision. The act becomes effective on the date of enactment, giving states no time to adjust processes. It also requires that the U.S. Election Assistance Commission offer implementation guidance to states within just 10 days of enactment. Further, the SAVE America Act offers no funding to states to assist with implementation costs.

2026 JEROME ROHWER PILGRIMAGE



**Join us at the
2026 Jerome Rohwer Pilgrimage
May 20–23, 2026**



Relate, Reflect, Renew

Pilgrimage information and Registration
<https://tinyurl.com/JRP-Registration>

Yuzuru—Pass It On

**Support the
Jerome Rohwer Committee
and 2026 Jerome Rohwer Pilgrimage**

<https://tinyurl.com/JRCfundraising>
<https://jeromerohwer.org>

The Jerome Rohwer Pilgrimage allows survivors, descendants, and others to learn about and discuss the legacy and aftermath of WWII era concentration camps in the USA. One day of the Pilgrimage is a trip to the concentration camp sites in Jerome and Rohwer, with a short program in McGehee, AR, that includes taiko drummers and a short Obon festival to honor the spirits of our ancestors. There will be two full days of programming in Little Rock, with historical sessions, survivor perspectives, intergenerational and generational discussions, social activities, and opportunities to research family histories. Learning and open conversation lead to understanding and healing.

28TH ANNUAL FREEDOM WALK, SATURDAY, MARCH 28, 2026

Held at the National Japanese American Memorial in Washington DC - Check-in Opens 9:00 AM | Opening Ceremony 10:00 AM

Keynote Speaker: Tak Furumoto

Takeshi “Tak” Furumoto was born in the Tule Lake Segregation Center. He graduated from UCLA’s Anderson School of Business and was commissioned as a Military Intelligence Officer for the United States Army serving in Vietnam and decorated with a Bronze Star Medal. After he returned home, he became a successful businessman and has received many awards as a community activist.

National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism During World War II

SPONSORS: National Japanese American Memorial Foundation, Japanese American Veterans Association, DC Chapter of Japanese American Citizens League & Ekoji Buddhist Temple



28th ANNUAL FREEDOM WALK
SATURDAY, March 28, 2026

CHECK-IN Opens 9:00 AM | OPENING CEREMONY 10:00 AM

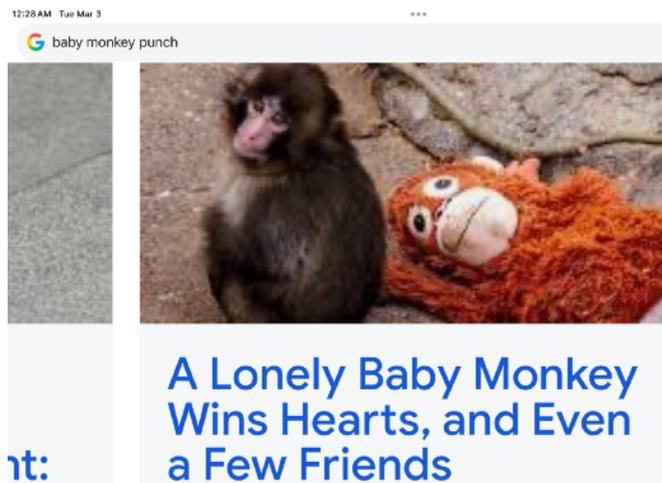
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National Japanese American Memorial to Patriotism During World War II
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Just a “light” sharing to hopefully bring a smile to your heart in these difficult times...

Punch *By Cindy Mine*



“Punch” the macaque monkey at Japan’s Ishikawa City Zoo is becoming famous. He was abandoned by his mother and has found comfort in a large orangutan stuffed toy. Please view his story of vulnerability and perseverance which has captured global attention.



NEWS FROM THE MONTEREY PENINSULA JACL CHAPTER - MARCH 2026

Japanese American Citizens League - Monterey Peninsula Chapter
424 Adams Street, Monterey, CA 93940 | PO Box 664, Monterey, CA 93942
Web Page: <https://www.jaclmonterey.org/> | Phone: 831-648-8830

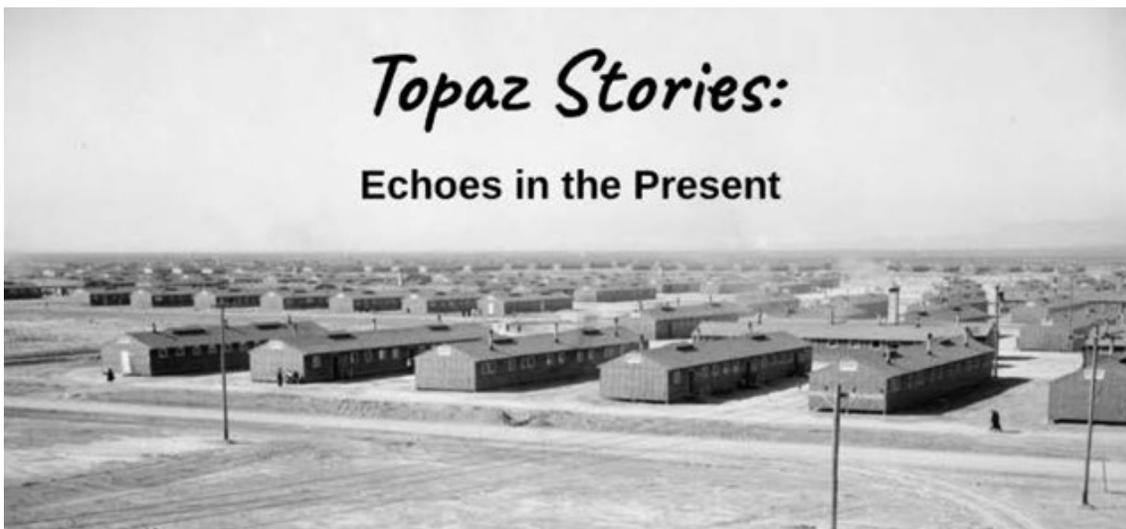
Upcoming Events:

March 28 at 2pm “Topaz Stories”. In 1942, over 120,000 persons of Japanese descent were removed from their homes on the West Coast after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor and moved to concentration camps. Survivors and their descendants from the Topaz Camp will be coming to speak about their experiences.

“Burn Order” – Podcast by Rachel Maddow

Burn Order “exposes the extraordinary chain of events behind the U.S. government’s decision at the outset of World War II to incarcerate tens of thousands of immigrants and U.S. citizens solely on the basis of their race. The series shines a light on the government officials who fueled the policy with lies and racial stereotypes, as well as the desperate internal fight to try to stop the plan before it could go into effect.

It is an excellent 6 series podcast that highlights a dark period in our history which unfortunately is repeating itself. Executive Order 9066 (EO 9066) was spearheaded by 2 US Army officers. They even had babies in orphanages taken to the concentration camps as “enemy aliens”. They said if they had “even 1 drop of Japanese blood”, they should be incarcerated. The podcast also highlights the brave Americans who fought against this injustice.



Topaz Stories:

Echoes in the Present

Every day, news headlines remind us that people have short memories, as immigrants and other groups are demonized and persecuted without due process. The Friends of Topaz Museum is honored to help celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Monterey JACL Hall by presenting “***Topaz Stories: Echoes in the Present***” on March 28, 2-3:30 pm. Moderated by Topaz Stories Editor Ruth Sasaki, we will share from our collection of over 100 stories of the WWII Japanese American incarceration, told by Topaz survivors and descendants—as a reminder of the human consequences of injustice.

Guest speakers include Topaz survivors **May Saito Takashima**, **Kyoko Nozaki**, and **Norm Hayashi**. May was incarcerated at age 10 from San Francisco. Kyoko is a Topaz survivor born in Oakland, CA, who joins us all the way from Kyoto, Japan, where her family repatriated after the War. Norm Hayashi was only two when his family was forcibly removed from their home in Oakland. Although they cannot attend in person, we will also share stories by **Ritsuko Furuya** (pictured below with her family in Topaz), who was from Lompoc, and **Jon Yatabe**, incarcerated from Redwood City.



Saturday, March 28, 2026, 2-3:30 pm

JACL Hall, Monterey
424 Adams St., Monterey, CA
(831)648-8830

May 02 – 10am-3pm + a dance in the evening- 100th Anniversary celebration

We will be celebrating the 100th Anniversary of our JACL building. We will be showcasing Japanese martial arts, music, bonsai, ikebana and in the evening, a dance. The schedule is being worked on, more to come. This building was the heart of the pre WWII Japanese Community on the Monterey Peninsula.

SENIOR CENTER NEWS FOR JANUARY AND FEBRUARY 2026

By Carol Kaneko and Patt Takeuchi, Photos by Gary & Cindy Mine

For the New Year, we celebrated at Hong Kong Gardens for lunch and a little fun. Everyone got a small corsage, made by **Patt Takeuchi**, of silk cherry blossoms to represent the coming Spring. Luncheon was delicious with dishes like eggplant, chicken salad and more ordered by **June Honda**. **Reba Condon** organized two trivia games and a picture bingo. **Gary and Cindy Mine** brought 12 fresh Dungeness Crab donated by **Darrell Uyeda**, which was raffled off. Thanks for thinking of the seniors Darrell! Thanks to everyone who helped get our New Year off to a great start with full tummies and happy hearts!

Birthday cake delivery by **June Honda** and **Lizzie Goodson**, thank you as always.

Our January birthday celebration included **Victor Kimura** and **Noemi Sakaguchi**. Absent was **Nancy Shikuma**, **Karen Sugidono** and **Hatsuko Tsuji**.

Our gratitude to the cadre of members who help make bingo so successful: bingo callers, **Leigh Sakaguchi** and **Anita Alvarado**; card checkers **Marcia Hashimoto**, **Reba Condon** and **Sharon Bobo** for managing the bingo prizes for us each week.

Our generous members continue to donate bingo prizes, which we are truly grateful for:

Anita Alvarado, Carol Noble, Carol Carpenter, Carol/Paul Kaneko, Carolyn Misumi, Connie Dimas, Emi Hirano, Evelyn Nartates, Hideko Nagamine, Hiroko Dean, Hisako Kodama, Jean Akiyama, Judy Hane, June Honda, Kim Tao, Kitty Mizuno, Kyoko Oka, Jeanette Crosetti, Lilia Freitas, Liz Goodson, Maria Burnette, Mary Perez, Marvin/Joanne Mine, Mitsuyo Tao, Nobue Fujii, Nobuko Akiyama, Reba Condon, Sharon Carreiro, Toshi Yamashita and Victor Kimura.

For Valentine's Day, **Eileen Byers**, once again made a cute little gift to share with everyone. Thank you as always for your creativity and generosity.



January Senior Center Birthdays:
Victor Kimura and Noemi
Sakaguchi - Photo by Gary Mine



February Senior Center Birthdays: Gary, Hisako, Haru, Anita,
Jeanette and Carol - Photo by Cindy Mine

February birthdays included **Haru Ishibashi, Hisako Kodama, Carol Carpenter, Jeanette Crosetti, Anita Alvarado and Gary Mine**. Absent were **Jean Akiyama, Eiko Ceremony, Carol Kaneko, Bobbi Jo Palmer, Chiyeko Shikuma and Eiko Stewart**.

Haru Ishibashi was presented with a special 100th birthday blanket from the Center. Each member was given a bento from Miyuki's assisted by her daughters **Carol Cooper** and **Liz Goodson**. Thank you Haru for such a delicious treat.



Liz Goodson (daughter), Haru and Carol Cooper (daughter)
Photo by Gary Mine

Birthday donations for January and February include: **Betty Garcia, Haru Ishibashi, Jeanette Crosetti, Hisako Kodama, Anita Alvarado, Carol Carpenter, Noemi Sakaguchi, Carol Kaneko** and **Victor Kimura**.

Special donations were received from: **Nancy and Gerald Yamada, Joanne Hayashi, Amy Dobashi, Gordon Kobara and Carolyn Misumi** (In memory of **Yae Sakamoto**). Thank you as well to everyone who donated to the Senior Center Anniversary.

With a full-hearted and with a resounding, “For he’s a jolly good fellow”, we say thank you to **Paul Kaneko** in providing announcements all these years. We appreciate so much keeping all of us informed of the local JACL and community events which affect our many citizens.

Thanks again to all non-national JACL members who have paid their 2026 senior center dues of \$20. These dues go to our local JACL chapter to help with the upkeep of Kizuka Hall. Please see **Carol Kaneko** if you still need to pay for 2026.

Watsonville-Santa Cruz JACL Senior Center Schedule

March 2026

Mar 26 - Regular Bingo

April 2026

Apr 2 - Regular Bingo
Apr 9 - Regular Bingo
Apr 16 - Regular Bingo - **Birthday**
Apr 23 - Regular Bingo
Apr 30 - Regular Bingo

WATSONVILLE BONSAI CLUB *By Charlie Thompson*

The upcoming meeting dates for the Watsonville Bonsai Club are:

- April 11, Saturday, Regular Meeting and Workshop at JACL Kizuka Hall 1:30 PM
 - April 20, Monday, Regular Meeting and Workshop at JACL Kizuka Hall 6:30 PM
 - May 3, Sunday, Annual Bonsai Exhibit, Watsonville Buddhist Temple 11 AM to 4 PM
 - May 9, Saturday, Regular Meeting and Workshop at JACL Kizuka Hall 1:30 PM
 - May 18, Monday, Regular Meeting and Workshop at JACL Kizuka Hall 6:30 PM
 - June 13, Saturday, Regular Meeting and Workshop at JACL Kizuka Hall 1:30 PM
 - June 15, Monday, Regular Meeting and Workshop at JACL Kizuka Hall 6:30 PM
-

KOKORO NO GAKKO 2026 *By Zoey Diggory Jo***Registration is open for Kokoro no Gakko 2026!**

Kokoro no Gakko – or “School with a Heart” in English – is a one-week summer program dedicated to the culture and arts of Japan and founded to pass on an understanding of Japanese American culture. It has operated for more than 30 years.



Kokoro no Gakko

Children between kindergarten and 6th grade learn traditional Japanese customs and practices through hands-on activities, including bonsai, ikebana, origami, calligraphy, cooking, language arts, singing, and much more. The program typically closes with an Open House showcasing the cultural skills acquired by the students, a raffle, and potluck dinner.

Gakko is held at the Watsonville Buddhist Temple (423 Bridge Street, Watsonville) and is a parent-cooperative venture, thriving on the support from all the children’s families and the generosity of the classroom and resource-specific senseis. It is more than a summer program; it is a one-week close knit community!

Schedule: June 22-June 26, 2026, 9 AM - 3 PM

Enrollment: Students who have completed kindergarten through 6th grades. Enrollment includes materials and a hot lunch, with a vegetarian option, each day.

Tuition: \$400 per student, and \$380 for siblings, if registration and payment is received by March 31, 2026. After March 31, \$440 per student, and \$427.50 for siblings. <https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/kokoronogakko> or pay by check to Kokoro no Gakko, c/o Phylis Nagamine, PO Box 2063, Freedom, CA 95019

Register at: <https://gakkowatsonville.wordpress.com/registration/>. Registration closes on May 31, 2026.

For More Information: visit <https://gakkowatsonville.wordpress.com/> or email kokoronogakkowatsonville@gmail.com

“I Am An American: The Nisei Soldier Experience” debuts at Presidio in San Francisco
Five-year national tour premieres honoring the story of World War II Soldiers of Japanese ancestry

From the National Veterans Network

San Francisco (February 20, 2026) - Family members of World War II Nisei Soldiers were among the first to preview a new national traveling exhibit that opened to the public at the Military Intelligence Service Historic Learning Center at the Presidio in San Francisco on Monday, February 23. “I Am An American: The Nisei Soldier Experience,” tells the storied history of American Soldiers of Japanese ancestry during World War II, recounting how second-generation Japanese Americans, known as Nisei, demonstrated their loyalty to the nation as U.S. Army Soldiers.

“The service of Nisei Soldiers during World War II is one of history’s most inspiring examples of Army values and American ideals,” said retired General Eric K. Shinseki, 34th Chief of Staff, U.S. Army. “In the face of fear, these Americans demonstrated their unwavering faith in their country by choosing to serve as American Soldiers, with many fighting in the hardest won battles of the war.”

The exhibit, which will remain at the Presidio through August 31, will appear in 11 venues across the country during its five-year national tour. The 1,700-square-foot exhibit features firsthand accounts, photographs and rare personal items that tell the stories of Japanese Americans who became some of the most highly decorated Soldiers in U.S. history.

Nearly 33,000 Nisei Soldiers served in the European Theater as part of the 100th Infantry Battalion and the 442nd Regimental Combat Team, in the Pacific Theater as linguists in the U.S. Army’s Military Intelligence Service, and stateside. The Military Intelligence Service Historic Learning Center was once the site of a secret school for training the linguists. The exhibit presents their service against the backdrop of fear and racial tension that followed the attacks on Pearl Harbor and led to the removal of 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry to Wartime Relocation Authority incarceration camps during the war.

“The National Veterans Network is grateful to debut this exhibit in a city that has so much history with the Japanese American community, particularly in a venue that was itself a part of the Nisei Soldier experience,” said Christine Sato-Yamazaki, executive director of the National Veterans Network, co-curator of the exhibit. “Families with connections to the World War II Nisei generation will feel so much pride in this exhibit, and every visitor will be compelled and inspired by its stories.”

The exhibit is presented by the National Veterans Network (NVN) with the National Museum of the United States Army and supported by The Army Historical Foundation. Visitors can experience the exhibit five days a week, Monday, Tuesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, from noon to 5 p.m.

For more information about the exhibit and its national tour, visit nvnvets.org/exhibit.

FRIENDS AND FAMILY OF NISEI VETERANS



FFNV

FRIENDS & FAMILY OF NISEI VETERANS

100th Infantry Battalion/442nd Regimental Combat Team
Military Intelligence Service

FFNV Calendar

Memorial Service at Roberts, Park, Oakland, May 16, 2026 at 12:00 noon.

Reunion at California Hotel, Las Vegas, September 21 - 25, 2026

Please stay in touch with us: facebook (Friends and Family of Nisei Veterans), website (ffnv.org), or email: (bshiroyama@gmail.com).

FFNV Annual Membership Meeting *By Cindy Mine, Photo by Christine Bowes*

Some of our JACL Board members shared in the wonderful program presented on February 7, 2026 with Emcee Joanne Sakai. Brian Shiroyama shared Opening remarks, followed by a Moment of Silence and Remembrance. We recognized the Nisei Veterans and all other Veterans. Then there was an Introduction of Special Guests.

Naomi Shibata was the Keynote presenter who is a sansei from the Bay Area who had nine members of her extended family serve in the United States Army during World War II, five of who were linguists. She is currently a docent for the FFNV exhibit aboard the USS Hornet in Alameda and for the Military Intelligence Service Historical Learning Center at the Presidio of San Francisco. She is also a speaker and author on the 20th Century Japanese American Experience. Her sharings were so enlightening, you probably needed to listen to it at least three times to grasp it all. I am sure we all walked away having learned a lot.



Watsonville-Santa Cruz JACL Board members and Friends Victor, Jean Yamashita, Gary, Cindy, Joe, Tom Graves and Marcia (Jean Yamashita and Tom Graves joined us).

Thank-you to the organizers who provided such a wonderful and informative experience, we also enjoyed our lunch and of course the door prize drawings!

WATSONVILLE BUDDHIST TEMPLE

Dana

“...the sacred Name is a gift we have received from Amida Buddha. Therefore, all we do is entrust ourselves to Amida in accordance with Amida’s Vow, enabling us to be born in the Pure Land. We are saved immediately; and our response is only to express gratitude, reciting the Nembutsu in appreciation.”

~ Rennyō Shōnin, Goichidaiki Kikigaki



There are two words associated with an act of generosity. The Buddhist term in Dana or selfless sharing. The other term is the Japanese term *kimochi* 気持ち which means being thoughtful, considerate, appreciation or kindness.

A fellow minister uses a Buddhist story when he conducts a wedding to convey the idea to the couple to live their lives in gratitude. Below is the story.



A poor samurai wants to express his gratitude to his devoted wife, who never complains despite their hardships. He decides the perfect gift for her would be a *kanzashi* – a beautiful ornamental hairpin to adorn her beautiful hair. But, lacking money, he sells his sword, a symbol of his pride and status to raise the money for the hairpin.

Meanwhile his wife wants to show him her gratitude with a gift. She decides to buy an ornament for his sword scabbard. With that his appearance as a samurai would be elevated. However, she too lacked the funds to purchase, she then cuts and sells her hair to purchase the ornament. When they meet to exchange their gifts, they are both surprised and saddened. The samurai no longer had his sword for the ornament, and the wife had no hair to hold the *kanzashi*. After their initial surprise they were both filled with joy and emotionally moved by each other's thoughtfulness. This is the meaning of *kimochi*, and the act of *dana*.

In Jodoshinshu, Amida Buddha's wish is for everyone to live in peace and safety. By reciting the Nembutsu (Namoamidabutsu), we receive the Buddha's Vow and his *kimochi*. The above quote by Rennyō Shōnin expresses this sentiment.

".....the sacred Name is a gift we have received from Amida Buddha." When we can accept and receive this gift from Amida Buddha, we respond with Namoamidabutsu in gratitude. At that moment we share the wish for peace and safety for all beings. Sharing this brings warmth and gratitude into our lives.

Gassho,
Rev. Hosei Shinseki
Minister Emeritus"



The Watsonville Buddhist Temple wishes to extend our condolences to the families of Osamu Nagamine, Ritsuko Kowaki and Jackie Yamashita. Our thoughts are with you at this difficult time.

Hanamatsuri – The Flower Festival



The Watsonville Buddhist Temple will celebrate the birth of Shakyamuni Buddha on April 12th at 10:00 am. We are honored to welcome Rev. Brian Nagata as our guest speaker.

Rev. Nagata was born and raised in Fowler, California. He has worked for Mitutoyo Corporation for 39 years and is currently assigned to Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai - Society for the Promotion of Buddhism, founded by Japanese industrialist Rev. Dr. Yehan Numata, whose older brother Rev. Chien was the minister at Watsonville about 100 years ago. Brian oversees Numata Programs in Buddhist Studies at 13 North American universities including UC Berkeley, Harvard, UCLA, Princeton, Yale, Chicago and the IBS as well.

Brian has served on various BCA and IBS committees through the years, was active in YBA and a Dharma School teacher, serves on the publication committee of the Jodo Shinshu International organization, volunteers at Jodo Shinshu Center, previous editor of the Wheel of Dharma, serves as an advisor to the East Asian Library at UC Berkeley, member of the Advisory Council for the University of Chicago Divinity School, the University of Toronto Ho Center for Buddhist Studies advisory board and advisor to the American Buddhist Study Center in New York City. When he's not working, Brian leads foodie tours to Japan for his friends.

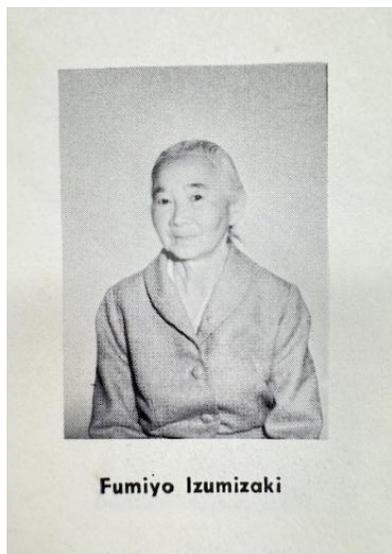
HAPPY NEW YEAR

We welcomed the New Year on Sunday, January 18th with a catered luncheon after our Hoonko Service with guest speaker and introducing our new Supervising Minister Rev. Hibiki Murakami.

We had a great turn out serving 90 members and non-members with a delicious meal of prime rib, potatoes au gratin, sautéed vegetables, salad, cake, sake, cider, coffee, and tea.

We would like to thank all the board members, non-board members, and Carmona's for graciously helping to cater, prep, serve, and clean up after the luncheon, as we couldn't have done this without you. Thank you also for the generous bingo prize donations. Bingo was a highlight and enjoyed by all.

Watsonville Buddhist Temple Lanterns



This is a picture of Mrs. Fumiyo Izumizaki. The photo was taken from the Watsonville Buddhist Temple anniversary book. I don't know much about Mrs. Izumizaki, but I do know that she was a devoted member of our temple.

In July 1977, Mrs. Izumizaki made a generous donation of two large lanterns. Each year the lanterns have been hung at our temple during the Obon season. They were donated to the temple by Mrs. Izumizaki in memory of her husband Mr. Kanetsuchi Izumizaki who died on January 18, 1966. The other lantern she donated is in memory of her son Henry Sadao Izumizaki who died in the war on November 2, 1944.

Mrs. Izumizaki returned to the Pure Land and was reunited with her husband and son on May 8, 1981. Although gone for many years, she wanted to honor the memory of her husband and son. Over the past 48 years the two large lanterns have hung during Obon in remembrance of Kanetsuchi and Henry Izumizaki.



On the left is Henry who died rescuing the famous Texas Lost Battalion in Bruyeres, France. The following is an article about Henry.

Henry Sadao Izumizaki was born in Watsonville, California on May 20, 1921, to Kanetsuchi and Fumiyo Izumizaki. In addition to Henry, the Izumizaki family included two other sons, James and Arthur. He attended local schools in the Pajaro Valley and entered Watsonville High School. During his high

school years, he played on the football team and was a member of the Block W Society.

Henry, who was described as a quiet and shy person, worked as a farm hand in the Pajaro Valley for the Bronson vegetable farm after graduating from high school. Following the US entry into World War II, the Izumizaki family was moved to the Salinas Rodeo grounds in April 1942 and later relocated to the Japanese-American internment camp at Poston, Arizona. While at the camp, Henry worked as a carpenter with the school construction crew. In 1943 the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) made a request to the government to create a special army unit made up of Nisei (second-generation Japanese-American) men. He wanted to enlist in the army, but fearing retribution from the camp's pro-Japan element had to sneak out of the camp to enlist.

Henry Izumizaki enlisted in the US Army on May 26, 1943. Following training at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, he was assigned to Company F of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. The combat team members boarded a troop ship bound for Italy on May 1, 1944, and arrived at Naples, on June 2. Company F participated in the fall of Rome and in the pursuit of retreating Germans up the boot of Italy to Livorno, which was captured in July 1944.

In the fall of 1944, the 442nd was transported to Marseilles, France, to clear the Germans out of the Rhone Valley and recapture French border towns. Mas Hashimoto, a Watsonville historian, shared the final episode in the life of Private First Class Henry Sadao Izumizaki and his role in assisting a trapped Texas Battalion.

“During the Battle of the Lost Texas Battalion in early November of 1944, Henry was the Fox Company's runner. The Texas battalion was completely cut off in the Vosges Forest and was destined to be annihilated by the Germans. Several battalions fell short of the rescue operations. A very tired but game 100th/442nd was ordered to rescue of what remained of the Texans. The fighting lasted four more days. Tree bursts from German mortars and artillery filled the sky, and shrapnel rained on the men of the 100th/442nd below. The Germans, who had commanded the high ground, lobbed hand grenades down the hill. No one remembers who called it first but with “Go For Broke!” the men of the 100th/442nd charged. When the hand-to-hand combat ended, the Germans surrendered and 211 Texans were rescued.

Henry sprained his ankle during the steep hillside battle, but he refused to seek medical aid or rest because so many of his comrades were being killed, and there were no replacements! Henry was one of the 184 killed during that battle. A sliver of shrapnel entered his side and had pierced his heart. Another 600 of the 100th/442nd were badly wounded. Several rifle companies were reduced to less than 10 men.”

Pfc Henry Izumizaki died on November 2, 1944, and was initially buried in Epinal, France. Mrs. Fumiyo Izumizaki’s wish was for her son’s remains to be returned to Watsonville, and in 1948, his remains were returned to Watsonville for interment in the Pajaro Valley Memorial Park.¹



Through the devotion of a mother and the sacrifices of father and son, we have adorned our temple with these two beautiful lanterns for many years. The lanterns are tattered and worn after so many years. However, the kindness, generosity and a mother’s love will be remembered always. We will continue to honor the Izumizaki family and we will continue to remember the devotion of Mrs. Izumizaki. No one wants to be forgotten and the donation many years ago by a loving mother and devoted wife made sure that we at the Watsonville Buddhist Temple continue to remember her and her family.

After 48 years we will be retiring the lanterns due to their condition, but we will not forget the donation from the Izumizaki family.

Special thanks to Kenny Kusumoto and the late Mas Hashimoto for their contributions to this article.

Gassho,
 Rev. Shinseki
 Minister Emeritus

¹ (NAWRP November 24, 1944 1:5, Mas Hashimoto, Re-enactment
<http://www.watsonvillesantacruzjacl.org/reenactment/lessons2.htm> [16 September 2008];Pajaro Valley Cemetery Headstone 5/12/08)



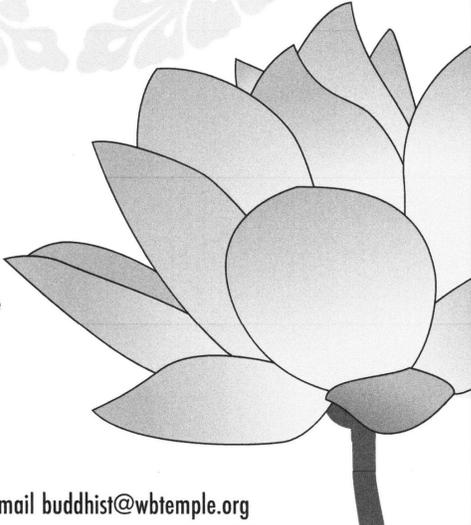
**One Bedroom Temple Apartment is now available for rent
 in Watsonville**

**Must be a Senior 55 or older and a member of the
 Watsonville Buddhist Temple**

**For more information,
 Call the Watsonville Buddhist Temple Office
 (831) 724-7860
 or email buddhist@wbtemple.org**


WATSONVILLE BUDDHIST TEMPLE
HANAMATSURI
 CELEBRATE THE BIRTH OF SHAKYAMUNI BUDDHA

<p>Flower Festival Saturday, April 11th 11:00AM to 2:00PM 423 Bridge Street, Watsonville</p> <p>Displays Ikebana Bonsai Mataro Kimekomi Doll making Boy Scouts Kokoro No Gakko</p> <p>Entertainment Watsonville Taiko Martial Art Demonstration</p> <p>Food Limited Bento Boxes for sale Hapa Bros. Asian Fusion Cuisine</p> <p>Vendors Nikkei Traditions Tangled Messes Hug a Sumo</p>	<p>Service Sunday, April 12th 10:00AM with guest speaker: Rev. Brian Nagata</p>
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For info call 831-724-7860 or email buddhist@wbtemple.org

Our Hanamatsuri Festival will be on Saturday, April 11th from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm with Ikebana, Bonsai, and Doll making displays as well as entertainment and raffle prizes. We are offering a bento box that must be pre-ordered/pre-paid by Friday, March 20th. Orders will be taken on a first-come, first-serve basis up to 300. If you have any questions, please call the Temple Office at (831)724-7860 or email: buddhist@wbtemple.org.

SAVE THE DATE

120 YEARS

JOIN US IN COMMEMORATING THE
 WATSONVILLE BUDDHIST TEMPLE'S
120TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

SATURDAY OCTOBER 24, 2026



尊い道を 次ぐ世代へ
Honoring our past. Inspiring the future.

120th Anniversary apparel and gifts will be available for purchase soon. Stay tuned for our upcoming anniversary projects!

Schedule of March Events

- March 22, 2026 – Pancake Feed 8:00am – 11:30am
- March 22, 2026 - Sunday Service (MA David Correia) 10:00am
- March 29, 2026 – No Sunday Service

Tentative Schedule of April Events

- April 5, 2026 - Shotsuki Hoyo 10:00am
- April 11, 2026 - Hanamatsuri Festival 11:00am – 2:00pm
- April 12, 2026 – Hanamatsuri Service, Guest Speaker Rev. Brian Nagata
- April 19, 2026 - Sunday Service 10:00am
- April 26, 2026 - Sunday Service (MA David Correia) 10:00am

Watsonville Buddhist Temple

Temple Office Telephone (831) 724-7860
 Temple Office is open by appointment only.
Email: buddhist@wbtemple.org **Website:** www.wbtemple.org

Westview Presbyterian Chimes

Confession is Coming Back to the Embrace of Beloved!

Sin is merely running away from God instead of towards God (whom I like to refer to as Beloved from Song of Solomon 6:3).

Sin is merely violating our covenants of love (with God and others).

Confession & forgiveness are central elements of love

Lent is a 40-day, solemn Christian season of reflection, prayer, fasting, and almsgiving leading up to Easter. Beginning on Ash Wednesday, it serves as a "second chance" for spiritual renewal, repentance, and examining one's life to align with God's desires. It is a journey toward the Cross, ultimately focused on preparing the heart for the joy of the Resurrection.

Traditionally, Lent is marked by three main practices:

- **Prayer:** Deepening one's relationship with God.
- **Fasting:** Self-denial (e.g., giving up luxuries or bad habits) to focus on spiritual growth.
- **Almsgiving:** Sharing with others and performing acts of charity.

Lent is A Journey of Repentance: It is a time for "sober reflection" on the cost of sin and a conscious turning back to God.

The "3 R's": Reflection, Repentance, and Reconciliation.

Preparation for Easter: The purpose is to prepare spiritually for the celebration of Christ's victory over death, to realize our need for a Savior, and to come back to God.

Repentance is a time for us to root out the things in our lives (the things we do) that keep us from God, that hurt ourselves and others. Confession is a time to relieve ourselves of the heavy weight we carry of the things we do that hurt others and the things we carry because we have not come to Beloved (God) and entrusted Beloved with them. It is about having more of Beloved and love in our lives.

Before Easter on April 5, I pray you can find ways to make this time of Lent a time of renewal in your spiritual life. I pray you can take time grow closer to Beloved, who is the source of all life and love, and adores you deeply.

May Beloved enfold you in an embrace always,

Pastor Dan

HOPE Village Photos



A HOPE Village Room



Westview family touring HOPE Village

More HOPE Village Photos



Los Gatos Presbyterian Church visit Westview to take a tour of HOPE Village.



Local Ministers tour HOPE Village



Peggy and Margo help decorate a Hope Village room.

HOPE Village Update

HOPE Village (Tiny Homes) opened in early February and now has about 14 residents. CAB is adding more residents weekly until they reach max capacity at 34 residents. I (pastor Dan) have met 3 or 4 of them already. They are very grateful and beaming with joy and gratitude. They have shared how they are getting their lives back in order after the trauma of being unhoused. They are filled with hope. I told them they are welcome to come to our worship service on Sundays and prayed for them. I can't wait to meet more of them. The leadership team had a retreat in January and talked about ways we can welcome

our new neighbors, possibly with a BBQ, and also with providing ways they can serve meaningfully to others in need like through the SonRise Kitchen Breakfast ministry. Thank you to all of you for your prayers and donations to help make Hope Village a hospitable, loving and healing place! You can continue to support the ministry through your support of Westview Presbyterian Church and through support to Community Action Board of Santa Cruz county (just make sure you note that it is for HOPE Village or for SonRise Kitchen if you prefer it to go there).

Gym Stage Curtains

Donations needed to replace the Gym's curtains at Westview. Please write "Curtains" in the memo of your check.

Live and Zoom Worship Services at Westview!!

Live and Zoom Online Worship Services are being held at Westview Presbyterian Church Sunday at 10 am!!

To join Westview for Live Zoom Sunday Online Worship Service please send Westview an email at westviewpc@gmail.com so you can be added/accepted to our Zoom live recordings and can receive an automatic email reminding you of our upcoming live services. If you are in need of any assistance with Zoom call Westview at (831) 724-6222 and leave a message. Someone will call you back as soon as possible.

Guest Speakers: Pastor Julie Center Porras – March 8th, Pastor Mick Erickson – March 15th

Wednesday Zoom Scripture Reflection & Mid-Week Check-In

Wednesdays at 4 pm. The link is emailed out weekly. Please send Westview an email at westviewpc@gmail.com if you would like to automatically be sent a link/reminder on a weekly basis about our Wednesday Mid-Week Check-Ins.

SonRise Kitchen

Experience the joy! We need volunteers to help with serving breakfast by River Park M-F 7:30 - 8:15am & making snack bags Wednesdays 9:15am.

We need donations of cereal, and lightly used: jackets & sweatshirts, sleeping bags, blankets, shoes, & socks. We also need monetary donations to help pay for cups, sugar, spoons and some food items.

Please write “SonRise Kitchen” in the memo of your check. Contact Margo or Pastor Dan for question/information regarding SonRise Kitchen. Thank you!

Luncheons

1st Sunday of each month along with a Social Hour/light lunch/cake for Birthdays! Come enjoy! And we are now having coffee hour (a snack, not lunch) weekly as well.

Photos



Photos from left to right: Emilie Holder ordained as a Deacon, Jolly treating everyone to lunch for her 80th birthday after Service, supporting our neighbors at a protest in Watsonville.



Acknowledgements:

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- All the Contributors
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