

## Fellowship - Lorraine Respicio

My service to the Lord as Chair of the Fellowship Committee, began with the Thanksgiving luncheon held on November 18, 2018. Not knowing what to expect, Tena Ponder Thacker graciously worked alongside with me as I ventured on this new journey.

I was pleasantly surprised by the fact that, although the food sign-up list looked sparse, there was so much food! The buffet tables were unable to accommodate all the food that was brought for the luncheon. The generosity of the congregants was such a blessing because I didn't have to make "ants on a log" due to the lack of food.

As I look toward the future, I pray that all of you will continue to support me on my new adventure. *Tanomimasu--I'm depending on you for your help.*

Our next event will be on December 23rd, which is our Christmas luncheon.

Your servant,  
Lorraine Respicio

*Psalm 136:1 – Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.*



## 2018 Christmas Program - Elaine Wong - CE Christmas Program Coordinator

Five years ago, I took a step of faith and volunteered to coordinate the Christmas Program for the Christian Education Ministry. It was a scary thought to organize over 50 children and a dozen or more teachers and volunteers. But each year I have the privilege to bring the message of Christmas through the hard work of the children and staff. This journey is not without its ups and downs. I have learned so much and gained incredible wisdom working with many dedicated people.



When I ask for help each year, I find so many willing people to play music, sew costumes, design t-shirts, rehearse skits, cook, and serve food.

The young adults step up to the challenge by practicing dance moves and learn new songs. We have volunteers that decorate the church and serve as ushers for the evening performance.

Our sound and video tech teams do a great job and give so much of their time for set up and rehearsals.

I have been thanked numerous times for taking on this BIG project, but I truly believe that God is the real organizer. I enjoy watching Him at work.

This year is no different and plans are currently underway to present "Christmas This Year – The King's Birthday." Please pray with me that many will attend to hear the message of God's Love.

Merry Christmas!

## Thanksgiving Service - Tena Ponder Thacker

It is so special to have such a thankful and down-to-earth pastor. Our Pastor Stan appears to "give thanks in all things" including his teeth and modern dentistry! His timely reminder gave pause for some quiet reflection. Just what are the things for which we remember to give thanks?

Recently I heard a statement which reminded me of a plaque in my own home. What if we wake up tomorrow with only the things that we thanked Our Lord for today. I would find my cupboards figuratively and literally bare. As we move through this busy holiday season let us remember to take time out to give thanks to the One who gives us all good things.

One of the extra good things that we can thank Him for right this moment is bringing Aiko Sprinkel into our church family. The church had the great pleasure of accepting her as a member on Thanksgiving Day.

As is our tradition, open mike time was set aside for any and all to give thanks. As the sharing time was coming to an end, Elaine Nagasako asked everyone to remember to give our appreciation to Darren Nako and his crew of minions, hmmm, did I say minions? I meant young *men!* We are so blessed to have the energy of youth within our church. We sometimes take for granted the work that our youth perform for us. Let's not do that. Let them know how much you appreciate them.

And remember in all things, *give thanks.*



2018 WOCC CE Christmas Program

**THE KING'S BIRTHDAY**

**Saturday, Dec. 15, 2018**

**5 pm - Dinner for family & friends**  
**6 pm - Program**

Clothes giveaway and refreshments to follow program.

**Upcoming Events:**

**Dec. 15**  
**CE Christmas Program**

**Dec. 23**  
**Christmas Service**  
**10:45 AM**



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## Missions Corner - Roberta Nagano

Currently, we are partnering with nine missionaries who have dedicated their lives to go out into the world as well as here in Hawaii to evangelize and make disciples for the Lord Jesus Christ. They are:

**Ron & Cissy Boyer** (Zoe International) – Thailand

**Child Evangelism Fellowship** – Hawaii

**Joel & Grace Dasalla** (CRU) – Persia, Armenia, Central Asia, Turkey

**Gay Hongo** (Christian Vision) - Hawaii

**Hal & Karen Jensen** (Navigators) - Hawaii

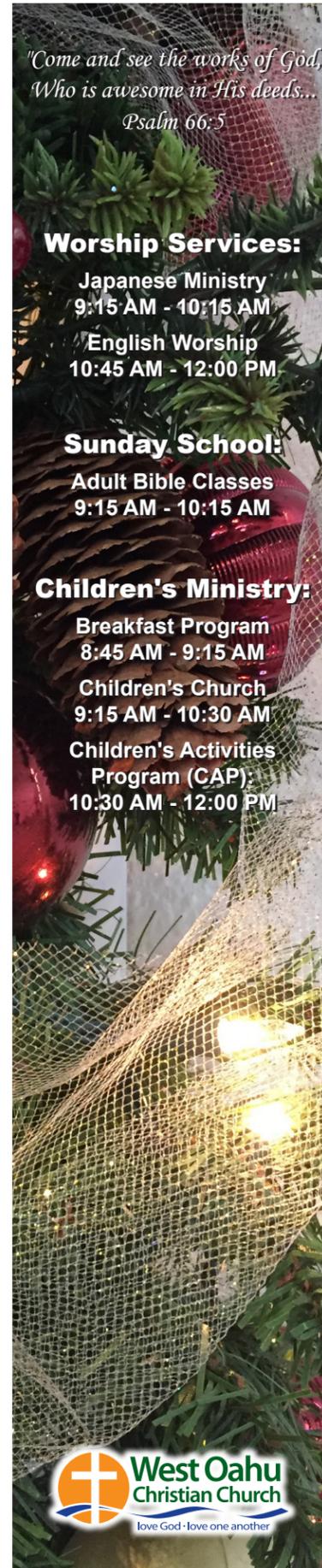
**Tharshish Johnson** (Every Nation Ministries) – London

**John & Pen Letaw** (2018-TEAM; 2019 – SEND INT’L) – Japan

**Rev. Yuichiro & Mieko Nakano** (Mount Olive Ministries) – Hawaii, Japan

**Eric & Sue Takamoto** (SIM) – Japan

The Lord has blessed our missionaries through the generosity of our church family as they remember the words of Jesus, “It is more blessed to give than to receive” (Acts 20:35). They have willingly given so that a total of \$1,820 goes out from our Missions Fund every month to them. In addition to that, between \$1,050 - \$3,050 is designated by our members to individual missionaries monthly. Their generosity has also allowed us to send each of them \$75 for Christmas, and we wish all of our missionaries a blessed, Merry Christmas! I would also like to say mahalo to all of our donors and church family.



# KOINONIA

West Oahu Christian Church Christmas 2018 Volume 17, Issue 4

## Pastor's Corner - YOU!

*For unto YOU is born this day in the city of David a Savior...* (Luke 2:11, ESV)

Christmas is often said to be the season of giving. And it is! It is when we celebrate God giving His Son, Jesus Christ, to humanity. Because of God’s gracious gift, there is a sense in which we reflect God’s generosity when we give. But in this article I would like to switch things around for a moment, and say ... **It’s all about YOU.** (Huh?)

At Christmas, God came for YOU. On that first Christmas the angel declared to the shepherds, “... unto YOU is born ...” Note that the significance of Christmas is not just that the Savior was born, but born to YOU. The sentence structure emphasizes the recipients of the angel’s message such that would lead the shepherds to ask, “Unto me???” In other words, as far as God is concerned, YOU are the reason Jesus came!

It’s seems a bit ironic, doesn’t it? It’s like a twist in the plot took place, except that the focus on YOU has always been there, in plain view!

Don’t get me wrong. On Christmas we rightfully celebrate Jesus birth because it is truly one of the most extraordinary events of all time! But I wonder if our marveling might be one-sided, and so may unintentionally obscure God’s reason for Christmas? Isn’t the “YOU” in Christmas important? So I say it again... God’s reason for Christmas is YOU!

The angel makes clear that Jesus came to save YOU. Saviors save. Who? YOU! The question gnawing in our hearts is, “saved from what?” Well, what are the deepest things YOU (that’s right, YOU!) need to be saved from? Although God cares for the hair on our head and unnoticed blades of grass, for now can we move beyond the petty, dime-a-dozen issues of life like our backaches, need for a pay raise, or what Christmas gifts we should get for our friends? Sin has countless little “deaths” we face all the time. But sin also creates some truly profound “deaths” doesn’t it? Fear of failure. Indescribable griefs. Lack of meaning in life. Haunting guilt. Anxiety about eternal destiny.

At Christmas, God would love nothing more than to take care of all that for you through the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ. When YOU receive Jesus Christ, YOU receive all that comes with Him – eternal life, purpose, and joy! Now, just so you don’t get big headed, not everything is about YOU. But much of Christmas is! Let God transform your life by humbly receiving God’s gift to YOU!

This Christmas we at WOCC are unwrapping how Jesus came for YOU. We would love for YOU to join us at our Sunday services and Christmas program. And we’d love for you to visit our website at westoahuchristian.org. See you soon!

Merry Christmas to YOU,

Pastor Stan