



*“Together, the Body of Christ;
Individually, Its Parts” 1 Corinthians
12:27*

JAUC is a Christian community seeking to reach out, especially to Japanese and those who are interested in Japan in the greater New York City area, with the purpose of sharing faith in Christ and growing together in Christian discipleship through worship, fellowship, study, evangelism and mission.

◇ Greeting from Rev. & Mrs. Yugo Suzuki ◇

Dear Friends of JAUC, Elizabeth and I would like to express our sincere appreciation for the farewell party that you held for us on July 24. We were truly moved by the way you expressed your love, a love we have mutually cultivated in the past five years. ♦ We will be living in Pennsauken, New Jersey from the middle of September. There will be plenty of opportunities for us to come to New York for visits. We will be looking forward to seeing many of you either in New York or New Jersey. ♦ We pray for each of you and JAUC that you may continue to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world in the City of New York. Sincerely, Yugo and Elizabeth Suzuki (5143 Elvena Avenue, Pennsauken, NJ 08109, Tel: 410-688-1455)

**Since Rev. Yugo Suzuki retired the end of July, there is no “Pastor’s Message” for this issue. The sermon printed in “From Sunday Worship Sermons” section is one delivered by Rev. Suzuki in July. We have also included Mrs. Elizabeth Suzuki’s article on the new English Hymnal, based on her hymnal workshop held at JAUC this spring.*

◇ From Sunday Worship Sermon ◇

“The Road, the Wind, the Sun, and the Rain” Matthew 5:13-16 The most important question we humans can ever ask is, “What is the purpose of life?” To this, Jesus answered, “You are called to be the salt of the earth; you are called to be light in the world.” Christians are people who take that call of Jesus into their hearts with utmost seriousness. ♦ For those who are called to be the salt of the earth and light in the world, Jesus is the road that ever rises to meet them. Remember what the Bible tells us about his followers. They were all at their wit’s end. Fishermen in Galilee were struggling with a meager livelihood; a wealthy tax collector had no one to love him; a certain woman was almost stoned to death in Public Square for her immoral act; a paraplegic at the pond in Bethesda had been abandoned for 38 long years. But to them, Jesus came. To them, Jesus brought hope. To them, Jesus brought human dignity. In

that sense, he was the road that ever rose to meet them. This is true for us today. When we are at our wit’s end, he comes to us. He brings us hope. He brings us dignity. We are to proclaim that message in words and deeds - such life is the salt of the earth, light in the world. ♦ Jesus the road is also Jesus the breeze. Christian life is not trouble-free. Look at Paul. Look at Peter. Look at Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Look at Mother Teresa. Look at Toyohiko Kagawa. In the face of rejection, persecution, even death, they constantly experienced Jesus bringing serenity to their exhausted spirits. In that sense, he is the breeze of God. Today we, too, experience Jesus as the breeze of God that brings us serenity. With the breeze of God at our backs, we can live compassionately in a world of lovelessness; we can live repentantly in the midst of self-righteousness; we can yearn for justice in a world full of injustices. Such life is the salt of the earth and light in the world. ♦ But not only that, the Psalmist declares, “The righteousness of God is like the morning sun that brings warmth to cold and dark fields.” To us Christians, Jesus is the embodiment of God’s righteousness. Jesus is the rising sun in the morning. We are living in a world where Christians easily lose their identity just as a drop of ink gets absorbed into a bucketful of water. But Jesus Christ wakes us up from our stupor as the morning sun transforms cold and dark fields into green pastures. To be awakened by the morning sun - such life is the salt of the earth and light in the world. ♦ Jesus the morning sun is also Jesus the rain. Again, listen to the Psalmist. “The grace and mercy of God is like the rain that waters the parched earth.” As Christians, we say Jesus is the rain of God’s grace and mercy. When our souls are parched, Jesus would not leave us desolate. He would not leave us dried up. He always refreshes us. He will enliven us. To be refreshed by the rain of God’s mercy - such life is the salt of the earth, light in the world. ♦ Jesus comes to us as the road, as the breeze, as the sun, and as the rain. The message for us is crystal clear: It is this Jesus who calls us to be the salt of the earth, light in the world. He is our true friend, our comforter, our sustainer. What a joyous affirmation! What an empowering message! This is the Christian faith that braces us for the living of these days. So my friends in Christ, “May the road ever rise to meet you; may the wind be at your back. May the sun shine warmly on your face. May the rain fall softly in your fields. And until we meet again, may God hold you firmly in the palm of his hand and give you peace.” Thanks be to God.

◇ Church Activity & Schedule ◇

■ **Farewell Party for Rev. and Mrs. Suzuki** To express our sincere gratitude for the faithful service which Rev. Yugo

Suzuki and his wife Mrs. Elizabeth Suzuki have done for us for these past five years, we held a farewell party at JAUC on Sunday, July 24. About 100 people, including the denomination representatives, attended. After lunch, Ms. Rika Marubashi-Downs, Mr. Ken Kurihara, Ms. Motomi Togashi, and Ms. Tomoko Suzuki gave speeches and explained what they had learned from the Suzukis' pastoral works. The JAUC Choir members including Ms. Miyako Tokita and Ms. Junko Noguchi also made speeches to express their gratitude for Mrs. Suzuki, who had served as the Music Director. They then sang Handel's "Holy Art Thou." This anthem is the most favorite piece of both Mrs. Suzuki and the Choir. The Suzukis made addresses in reply, and Rev. Suzuki said: "Since I have already told my most important messages at various occasions, I'd like to sing this time." The song he sang was "Suzukake no michi." This piece, composed during the Pacific War, reflects the author's wish for Peace. The party concluded with singing the "Irish Blessing." As the gift for the Suzukis, we presented two frames of photographs, two volumes of albums with personal messages for the Suzukis, and a restaurant coupon. We want to thank everyone who worked hard to prepare for the party, especially Mr. Dean Kusakabe and Mrs. Gerri Yoshida, who served as coordinators.

■ **Guest Speakers for Sunday Services** The following pastors will deliver messages at our Sunday worship services for September and October: Sept. 4 and Sept. 11 - Rev. Andrew Yamamoto; Sept. 18 - Rev. Taka Ishii; Sept. 25 - Rev. Kei Okada; Oct. 2 - Rev. Taka Ishii; (Oct. 9 - Aishukai; no service at JAUC) Oct. 16: Rev. Takako Terino; Oct. 23 - Rev. Brian Kido. Rev. Yugo Suzuki delivered sermons as a guest speaker at the services on Aug. 7 and Aug. 21. On Aug. 12, Rev. Randy and Mrs. Gay Hongo and their son Rev. Andrew Hongo came and lead worship with their praise songs. Rev. Yasuo Furuya was scheduled to come to the Aug. 28 service, but due to Hurricane Irene, service was cancelled.

■ **Pastor Calling** The Pastor Calling Team of the Board of Directors have compiled a job description for the full-time pastor and other preparatory documents. The Team has started discussing details with the representatives of the denominations. Since Rev. Noel Chin retired, Rev. St. Clare A. Samuel has become the contact for the United Methodist Church.

■ **New Music Director** From Aug. 1, Ms. Naoko Aita has started as our new Music Director. Weekly choir practice (Thursday, 6:30pm-8:30pm) will restart from the first week of September. Anyone who is interested in singing is welcomed!

■ **Children's Summer Camp** SMJ (Special Ministry to the Japanese) "Children's Discovery Camp" was held at Shelter Island, from July 10 to July 22. This year, 22 children and 7 adults participated. From JAUC, Moet Aita and Shinya

Ishigami attended, while Ms. Naoko Aita and Ms. Miyuki Sato served as camp counselors. The children had a wonderful time fishing, doing various crafts, rocket-launching, and blueberry picking. We heard that Shinya-kun, who moved to Bulgaria with his parents mid-August, enjoyed the Camp so much that he carried the texts of the event with him to the new country.

■ **Fall Alpha Course** "Alpha," the introductory course for Christian Basics, will start Sept. 14 ending Nov. 23, (13 sessions). The sessions will be held every Wednesday, from 7PM. For further details, contact Ms. Rika Downs.

■ **From Worship Committee** As you may have noticed, we now have three new sets of bright-color paraments (altar cloths) on the altar - red, green and white. These paraments are displayed in accordance with the church calendars (Red-Pentecost, White-Easter, Green-Everyday). The color of the former paraments faded as we had used them for many years, and Mrs. Elizabeth Suzuki and Mrs. Miyako Tokita recently donated / purchased these new sets. We also received a donation, for worship, from Ms. Tomie Hara the end of last year. We want to express our gratitude for their generosity.

■ **Publication Project** There is a volunteer project to publish a collection of Rev. Yugo Suzuki's sermons from Kyobun-kan. The estimated cost is 1,400,000 yen. If you want to contribute, please make a check payable to JAUC (with "Suzuki Sensei's sermons" in the memo). For details, contact Ms. K. Baumann.

■ **From Treasury** The total amount of the pledge offerings for JAUC from January to the end of July 2011, is \$31,656.70, plus \$19,998.41 for other offerings. So far the total amount of income this year is \$102,412.37 with \$104,469.09 expense. The total amount which has been used, this year, for building projects is \$66,161.11 (Jan. 1- Jul. 31).

■ **Correction** There was a mistake in the last newsletter for the recipients of the 2011/2012 Justin Haruyama Scholarship. The names of the nine recipients (who received \$7,500 in total) are: Ms. Kristin Tomiye-Asami Ou (Fuller Theological Seminary); Mr. Mitsunari Nakashima (Fuller); Ms. Jennifer Ikoma Motzko (McCormick Theological Seminary); Ms. Ken Hiramatsu (Asbury Theological Seminary); Ms. Yukari Hata (Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary); Mr. Seiichi Yaginuma (Trinity Evangelical Divinity School); Ms. Kyoko Murata (Asbury); Mr. Arthur Wolf Rouzr (Fuller); Ms. Yuko Unehara (Drew Theological School).

◇ Aishukai Retreat in October ◇

Our annual retreat Aishukai will be held at the Warwick Retreat Center from Saturday, Oct. 8, to Sunday, Oct. 9. This time, we will not invite a guest speaker; we will have time to prayer together and to share each other's faith so that we can

equip ourselves for future service to God. The room fee (including three meals) is: \$122 for a two-person room; \$211 for a single room; plus \$30 for the bus ride. There is a sign-up sheet in the social hall. Please sign up as soon as possible! There will be no worship service at JAUC on Oct. 9.

◇ Church Members & Friends ◇

■ **Baptism & New Member** Ms. Tomoko Sugawara was baptized on July 17. Congratulations! Ms. Sugawara met Christ through the Alpha session and started coming to our church. On July 24, Dr. Umeko Takeshige transferred her church membership to JAUC and joined our congregation. Dr. Takeshige is a gastroenterologist. We welcome both of them!

■ **Weddings!!** The wedding of **Ms. Naomi Mikami and Mr. Takumi Fukunaga** was celebrated at JAUC at 1:30pm of Aug. 27, officiated by Rev. Yugo Suzuki. Although all public transportations was suspended at noon, due to Hurricane Irene, more than 40 people came to the ceremony. Ms. Noriko Kumada played the organ. After the service, a reception prepared by Choir members was held in the social hall. Ms. Erika Schwannecke (the bride's sister), Rev. Masato Ito (the groom's best friend and the pastor of Jackson Japanese Church in Mississippi), Ms. Miki Honyashiki, and Mr. Dean Kusakabe delivered speeches to congratulate the couple's new start. The wedding cake was baked by Mrs. Elizabeth Suzuki. Ms. Eika Clarke and several volunteers beautifully decorated the sanctuary and the social hall. ◆ **Mr. Jonathan Suzuki**, son of Yugo and Elizabeth Suzuki, married **Ms. Kazuko Linda Sakamoto** on Aug. 26 at JAUC. ◆ The wedding of **Ms. Yukiko Tanaka**, baptized at JAUC and currently a member of Redeemer Church, and **Mr. Milen Pavlov** was celebrated at St. John's Church in NJ on Aug. 20. A celebration gathering for the couple is scheduled at JAUC for Sept. 17, from 2:30 pm.

■ **Visit** Mr. George and Mrs. Miki Honyashiki, currently studying at a seminary in Tokyo, visited JAUC in August.

◇ The Depth of the English Hymnal ◇

(by *Mrs. Elizabeth Suzuki*) In Oct. 2010 JAUC dedicated 125 new English United Methodist hymnals. The Bible tells us to sign praises to God but over time, singing became more complex and was mostly performed by monks. One of the aims of the Reformation in the 16th C. was to make liturgy and music more accessible to the ordinary person. At this time, the words were primarily from the Psalms. A fine example is 'The Lord's My Shepherd' (#136). In the early 18th Century, John and Charles Wesley, the founders of Methodism, insisted that both words and music should be written to stir the emotions of

people. This was a significant change and hymns became an important part of Methodism. Methodists became widely known as 'singing people.' ◆ The first Methodist hymnal was published in the 1870s' and the new edition, copyrighted in 1989, is the first major revision of content. It includes hymns from the 1200s' and as late as the 1980s'. ◆ The Japanese hymnals are collections of hymns and scripture but the UM Hymnal is a 'Book of Worship'. In the front of the book you find Orders of Worship including Communion and Baptism. Orders of Worship for Funerals and Weddings, Affirmations of Faith and Responsive Readings from the Psalms are in the back of the book. By tradition, the first hymn in the Methodist hymnal is 'O For a Thousand Tongues to Sing', words written by Charles Wesley in 1739. He wrote 17 verses although the present hymn begins from verse 7. ◆ At the back of the hymnal you will also find several indexes which help locate hymns based on Topics, Scripture, Authors & Composers, Tune Name as well as Title. The Tune Name is significant because many hymns were not originally written in English but can be located by this name. In a recent workshop at JAUC, numerous people learned much more about how to use a hymnal for personal devotions and meditation. Please contact the office to purchase your own copy of this worship aid.

◇ Local Church Network ◇

VIP Meeting The next VIP meeting will be held at JAUC on Aug. 12, from 7:30pm. Rev. Akio Iyoda will deliver a message.

◇ Prayer Requests ◇

Please remember the following people in your prayers: The sufferers of the Earthquake in Japan, Rev. Barbara Alexander, Hisayo Asai, Michiko Gorman, Yuko Ito, Toshio Iwasa, Rev. Arthur and Mrs. Lily Kamitsuka, Yone Kanzaki, Sue Kubo, Harry Kuwada, Fumiko Matsumoto, George Mukai (Bayside), Minako Noma, Ai Oguchi (Westminster Japanese Church), Hisako Okuda, Akira Yamazaki (Ms. Horiuchi's brother), George and Kimi Yuzawa

JAUC Small Group Ministry

Small Group is the JAUC program for church members' spiritual growth. Through fellowship in a group, we will think and share how we can live as Christians in our daily lives. You may join one of the small groups below which can / you expect to meet your need(s).

SG1. Bilingual Women's Group: 2nd & 4th Saturdays 1pm at Sonoda's

SG2. Japanese Women's Group: 2nd Tuesdays 11am at Kusakabe's

SG3. Bilingual Men's Group: 2nd & 4th Sundays 9:30 at JAUC (Kusakabe)

SG4. Japanese Small Group: 2nd Sundays 2pm at JAUC (Kasuga)

SG5. "The Vine" Japanese: 4th Sundays 2pm at JAUC (Kobayashi)

SG6. "Testimony & Prayer Meeting": Last Friday 7pm at Sagae's

SG7. English Small Group: 3rd Sundays 1:30pm at JAUC (Yoshida)