



*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

◇ From Sunday Worship Sermon ◇

■ Oct. 16: Rev. Takako Terino "Whose Image is This?"

Matthew 22: 15-22 It is often said that the Bible is, for Christians, life's operational manual, the guide to the life of faith. True, for Christian the Scripture is God's Word, and we believe the will of God is revealed in it. The Bible was written at a particular time in history and in a particular cultural context, but God's will which the Bible reveals, for us humans, is not transient or changeable. The reason the Bible remains the manual and the guide for the life of faith, is precisely because the unchanging truth of God is behind the surface meaning of the stories in the Bible. ♦ At the same time, from the time of Jesus, and even earlier, the act of interpreting the Bible was always deemed important. The Scripture in Jesus' time meant the Torah, the Law of Moses. Compared to the time Moses lived, the political environment and the life style of the Israelites had changed quite a bit by Jesus' time. So, naturally, there was a limit to how literally you could take the law, if you wanted it have any meaning in the contemporary life. ♦ The passage we read today is a good example of such a situation. However, those who brought the question to Jesus didn't care about the relevant application of the law; their goal was to get him into trouble. Their question is, "Is lawful to pay taxes to the emperor, or not?" The taxes mentioned here were imposed on the Jews by the Roman government, paid for using the Roman coin, the denarius. The Jews must not have been happy paying taxes to a foreign government, but what posed a real problem, was the fact that the coin they used, to pay the tax, not only bore the image of the emperor, but also had a marking that read "Tiberius Caesar, august son of divine Augustus." The first and foremost in Mosaic Law is that you shall have no other God besides the God of Israel, so walking around with coins that acknowledge the Roman emperor as God is problematic. The question is, whether paying taxes using the coin that acknowledged the emperor as God would cause one to violate the Mosaic Law's call to acknowledge only one God, the God of Israel. If Jesus says that's not a problem, he would be accused of not taking the Law of Moses seriously. On the

other hand, if he said it is not lawful for a Jew to pay tax to the emperor, it would be easy for them to have him arrested by the Roman authority for sedition. This was the entrapment. ♦ Notice, Jesus does not answer Yes or No. "Show me the money that is used for the tax" he says, and asks them, "Whose head is this and whose title?" And they answer "the emperor's". Then Jesus says, 'Give therefore to the emperor the things that are the emperor's, and to God the things that are God's.' ♦ If you follow Jesus' logic, if the coin belongs to the emperor because it bears the image of the emperor, that which belongs to God would bear the image of God. What does the Scripture say bears the image of God? It is us; we bear the image of God. The Greek word that is translated as "head" in the passage "Whose head is this?" is the same word as the word IMAGE in the Greek Old Testament, where God say "Let us make humankind in our image." When God created us humans, God marked us as His. That is the same mark we receive when we are baptized. The coin of the Roman emperor said "august son of divine Augustus." In the same Gospel according to Matthew Chap. 3, when Jesus had been baptized, the voice from heaven said, "this is my Son, the beloved, with whom I am well pleased." Likewise, we are recognized as God's children in our baptism. It is we ourselves that we must give to God as that which belongs to God, because we bear the image of God. ♦ The one who holds the coin, is me. And if I bear the image of God, the foundation of my life is to do God's will. If so, how I use the coin would depend on how I live as one that belong to God. In the same Chap. 22, Jesus is quoting the most important commandment, to love your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind, and to love your neighbor as yourself." According to Jesus, this is how one that belongs to God should live. This is what it means to "give onto God what is God's." The Truth Jesus tells is eternal. As to how that truth plays out; that is something each human being bearing the image of God must grapple with and discern. ♦ The Scripture is not an operational manual that prescribes specific action. The way of life worthy, of one who belongs to God, is shown by the way Jesus lived. Let me conclude with Paul's words. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure" (Philippians 2). We are made in God's image. We bear the mark of God's children. God is at work in us, enabling us both to will and to work for God's pleasure. Trusting this Word of God, let us strive to give ourselves back to God daily, looking up to Jesus.



◇ Church Activity & Schedule ◇

■ **Guest Speakers for Sunday Services** The following pastors will deliver messages at our Sunday worship services for November and December: Nov. 6 - Rev. Kei Okada; Nov. 13 – Laity’s message (Mr. Ken Kurihara); Nov. 20 – Rev. Takako Terino; Dec. 4 – Rev. Yugo Suzuki; Dec. 11 – Laity’s message (Ms. Chizuko Imado); Dec. 18 and 25 – Rev. Andrew Yamamoto. The schedule is subject to change.

■ **Thanksgiving Sunday (Nov. 20) Schedule** After Sunday Thanksgiving worship service, the annual Thanksgiving Dinner will be held. A potluck lunch was initially proposed, but after some discussion at the Board of Managers meeting, the members decided to prepare traditional roast turkey and pies in teams. In order to confirm the amount of food needed, if you want to participate, please sign your name (and # of guests) on the sign-up sheet in the social hall or contact the Church Office. Helpers also needed. ◆ The donations collected at Thanksgiving will be sent (1) to the United Methodist Church and used for the victims of the Japan Earthquake and the people in the Horn of Africa, suffering from hunger caused by drought; (2) to the Reformed Church to be used for support for those churches in New York state damaged by Hurricane Irene. We thank you for your generosity.

■ **Building Restoration** The Building Restoration Committee had decided to hire Mr. Alfred Nazari of Sevan Construction to complete the restoration work. The contents are: (1) To install stucco siding on the building façade; (2) to install the Anslu System in the kitchen; (3) to set Emergency Exit signs and lights throughout the church building; (4) to obtain a “Certificate of Operation” from the Department of Buildings. The cost for the repairs is \$50,180 (The budget approved by the congregation is \$75,000). Repairs will start at the end of October, and we are hope to finish by the end of November.

■ **Parsonage Repair** A congregation meeting was held at JAUC on Oct. 30 to discuss the parsonage repair plan. Quorum was attained with 27 members in attendance. After discussions, the congregation approved a \$20,000 budget to waterproof the basement and repair the driveway. These repairs are necessary to prevent deterioration and mold in the parsonage basement.

■ **Stewardship Month** November is “Stewardship Month,” when we meditate on the Blessings which God has bestowed on us and consider how we should respond to His Love and Calling. Pledge Offering Cards will be provided soon.

■ **Fall Alpha Course** “Alpha,” the introductory course for Christian Basics, will start Sept. 14 ending Nov. 30 (13 sessions). The sessions will be held every Wednesday, from 7PM. The topics are: Nov. 16 – “Does God heal today?”; Nov.

Nov. 30 – “Why & how should we tell others?” For further details, contact Ms. Rika Marubashi Downs.

■ **Free Movie Nights** Free movie nights will be held, once a month, at JAUC from November to February. The titles of the films are: “The Cross and the Switchblade”(Nov. 12 from 7PM); “The Muppets Christmas Carol” (Dec. 3 from 4PM); “Fireproof” (Jan. 7 from 7PM); “The Chronicles of Narnia: Part 1” (Feb. 4 from 4PM). Language is English, but Japanese summaries will be provided. Please invite your friends!

■ **2012 Children’s Camp Planning** The 2011 “Discovery Summer Camp” was blessed with 22 children as participants. The planning of the 2012 Camp has already started, under the leadership of Rev. Jun Yoshimatsu. The first meeting of the Camp Preparation Committee will be held at JAUC on Nov. 28. We ask for your continuous support for Summer Camp.

◇ Aishukai Retreat ◇

Our annual retreat Aishukai was held at the Warwick Retreat Center from Oct. 8, to Oct. 9, and 17 church members attended. The theme of the retreat was “What is to be a Christian?” Mr. Ken Kurihara led the first session on Saturday afternoon and explained what the Lord’s Prayer taught us about Christian life. After the session, the participants were divided in small groups and shared their thoughts. On Saturday night, we had a camp fire in the woods near the Retreat Center. Rev. Taka Ishii joined us Saturday evening, and shared the story of his life journey. On Sunday, a worship service was held from 11am and Ms. Chizuko Imado delivered a message: “The important points of worship are “to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God” (Romans 12). Worship is not an emotional event, but an active response to God, to offer ourselves to God so that He can transform us in the image of Christ. By placing God on the center of our daily lives, our whole lives will become worship.” It was wonderful to leave our busy lives and have time to concentrate on our Lord Christ!

◇ Church Members & Friends ◇

■ **Passing of Mr. George Yuzawa** Our beloved brother Mr. George Yuzawa, who served as the Board of Directors Chairperson for many years and worked as a prominent leader of the Japanese-American community in New York, passed away on Oct. 8. He was 96. Mr. Yuzawa was born in Los Angeles and managed a successful flower business until the Pacific War. As the war broke out, he and his wife Kimi were interned in the camps in Colorado. He volunteered to join the US Army and was later stationed in Tokyo with the MIS (military intelligence). After the war, he resumed his flower business. Mr. Yuzawa was known for his activism, opposing

racial discrimination against Japanese-Americans. His activities contributed to the realization of the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, which granted \$20,000 to every living Japanese-American interned during the war. His warm generosity to anyone in need was well-known. We will never forget his energetic life, his open-heartedness, and his gentle smile. Please pray for his wife Kimi, living in Isabella Nursing Home.

◆His memorial service (Celebration of his life) will be held on Nov. 27 from 11AM, at JAUC during part of the Sunday worship service. On the same day, from 2:30PM, there will be a gathering at The Japanese American Association (Reservation needed). Another program is scheduled at Isabella Home on Nov. 28, from 2PM. Regarding donations for the Yuzawa family, they have requested that gifts be sent to the George Yuzawa Legacy Fund, established by Ms. Patricia Yuzawa with Fidelity Charitable Services. Please make checks payable to Fidelity Charitable Gift Fund (Mailing address: P.O. Box 770001, Cincinnati, OH. 45277-0053) and write "George Yuzawa Legacy Fund, Account No. 1041019" in the memo.

■**Passing of Ms. Minako Noma** Ms. Minako Noma, who had been a Fujinkai member, passed away on September 13. She was 94. Our prayers are with her family.

■**Passing of Family** On Oct. 15, Ms. Wava Kuhn, mother of Mrs. Elizabeth Suzuki, passed away in Ohio. She was 90. Rev. and Mrs. Suzuki immediately travelled to Ohio. May God surround the Suzuki's with warm consolation. ◆On Oct. 2, Rev. Kei Okada's father Mr. Toshihiko Okada passed away. Ms. Claire Chase, the mother of Rev. Brian Kido, passed away on Oct. 19. Please keep all the families in your prayers. The Fujinkai sent sympathy cards to the families.

■**Wedding** The wedding of Ms. Akira Yokozeki and her fiancé Mr. George Bumeder was celebrated at JAUC on Oct. 29. Rev. Kei Okada officiated the ceremony. Congratulations! The couple went to Aruba for their honeymoon. A photo of their wedding is posted on the social hall bulletin board.

◇ Local Church Network ◇

■**Ordination of Rev. Terino** The ordination ceremony of Rev. Takako Suzuki Terino, who is currently serving as the Director of Special Ministry to Japanese (SMJ), was held at The Brick Presbyterian Church in Manhattan on Oct. 23. During the service, the JAUC Choir sang "Panis Angelicus" with piano accompaniment by Ms. Naoko Aita. Rev. Jun Yoshimatsu, Rev. John Norton (Reformed Church of America), Rev. Makoto Kato (The United Church of Christ in Japan), and Ms. Etsuko Suzuki (Rev. Terino's mother) also attended the service and celebrated the new beginning of her ministry.

■**JCFN / VIP Meeting** At the VIP on Oct. 10, Rev. Jun Yoshimatsu, who had studied art history, talked about the life and faith of the 17th-century Dutch painter Rembrandt. "When he was young, Rembrandt produced many masterpieces with dramatic and gorgeous style and acquired wealth and fame. However, later he went bankrupt, suffered from scandals, lost his family, and was left alone. As the difficulties in his life increased, changes appeared in the styles of his paintings. In his famous painting "The Return of the Prodigal Son," painted in the last year of his life, he painted himself as the Prodigal Son, kneeling down in front of God the Father and begging for forgiveness. His fall started when he reached the peak of worldly fame and wealth, and at the end of his life he returned to God's love. When we think about his life, our impressions of his paintings are changed."

■**SMJ Lectures** The SMJ lecture series "What happened after the Bible? Part 2" by Dr. Paul and Dr. Yasuko Grosjean are held at the Tenafly Presbyterian Church (55 Magnolia Ave, Tenafly NJ). This talk covers European history between the official recognition of Christianity by the Roman Empire to the Protestant Reformation and considers how these topics relate to us. The lectures are in English, but Japanese translation is provided. Session No. 1 was held on Oct. 29, and No. 2 will be held on Dec. 3, from 10AM. For the details, contact Mr. Junsuke Motai (junmotai@gmail.com) or Rev. Takako Terino (smjdirector@gmail.com).

■**Open House** New York City Rescue Mission (90 Lafayette St. NY) will have an open house of their homeless shelter on Nov. 13 (Sun), 2pm-4pm. See www.nycrescue.org for details.

◇ Prayer Requests ◇

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

JAUC Small Group Ministry

Small Group is the JAUC program for church members' spiritual growth. Through fellowship in a group, we will share how we can live as Christians in our daily lives. Please join one of the small groups below.

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: 1st 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)