



## GARDENA VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH



## HISTORY

BY MICHELLE LAW, YOUTH MINISTRY DIRECTOR

Summer Camp is one of my favorite weeks during the year— a large group of students and leaders surrounded by nature with no electronic distractions, eating every meal together, studying God’s word, and spending true “Facetime” with each other; there’s no place I’d rather be! Is it tiring? Yes. Are there moments where things get a bit chaotic? Definitely. But each time we gather together to focus on God and His Kingdom, He shows up in powerful ways.

This year’s Summer Camp theme was **HISTORY**, and we spent time learning about God’s overall story that He has revealed in His Word. Throughout history, God has used imperfect people to accomplish His plans. There is much encouragement that comes from knowing that God takes both the beautiful and broken events in our lives and uses them for good.

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*“...store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal.”*

*Matthew 6:20*

From creation to covenants to Christ to the church and the end, God’s unfolding plan points to the final defeat of Satan, sin, and death by Jesus Christ who will be worshipped forever and ever. The hope for this camp was that we would leave with an eternal perspective and realize that our lives on earth cover such a small, yet significant, amount of time in history. And if our lives are like a mist— here one day and gone tomorrow— what might it look like to take our eyes off of things that are temporary and fix them on what is eternal?

Jesus said, “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. (Matthew 6:19-21)

Jesus knew that it would be a great temptation to store up treasures on this earth: to obtain that which is considered valuable and work hard to live “the good life.” When we choose to invest what God has given us in what is temporary, our hearts stray from eternal treasures. Perhaps some of us have found ourselves with rooms and closets full of stuff that we once thought would make us happy, but now they just lie there collecting dust. Nick Vujicic once said, “If you put your happiness into temporary things, your happiness will be temporary.”

It is a deep desire of mine to see the youth love Jesus Christ as their greatest treasure, and to grow in having an eternal perspective in every area and season of their lives. I see the potential of what this upcoming generation could do if they were to see that purpose comes not from what they obtain on this earth, but through giving away the blessings that they have received. They were created to do good works that point to God. Their stories are for His glory. Our stories are for His glory. May we live daily in this truth, allowing God to actively help us invest in eternity together.



## OUTREACH TO DRIFTWOOD RESIDENTS

BY KENNETH CARPENTER

This year's summer Evangelism Ministry Outreach to Driftwood was truly memorable! Led by the College Group Ministry, many of them were able to make it out and engage in a time of fellowship with all of the residents. Sarah Sunada acted as the group's official representative. As the day unfolded, members of the team participated in an arts-and-crafts session with their elders while enjoying a devotional from Tommy Shirota! Music also played a significant part in the festivities, with a worship session led by Dylan Uyemura and Michael Hill, who put his piano skills to good use. By the end of the afternoon, all 90 of Driftwood's rooms had been visited. Each resident was gifted with a specially made 4th of July GVBC portrait engraved with a friendly reminder that the church is praying for them, and will continue doing so! We must always remember that even a single visit can make all the difference in spreading His glory.



*"There's nothing I'd rather  
do than ministry."  
- Ryan Tsukamoto*

# LOVING MINISTRY

## PROFILE OF RYAN TSUKAMOTO

BY KATHY AISO

It was the work of the Holy Spirit. Once Ryan Tsukamoto received the Lord a second time (at age 16), the Holy Spirit sparked inner motivation to read the Bible and attend church. He felt joy doing both and could recognize the change in himself. What a contrast with Ryan's former attitude of "have to".

The same inner motivation drew Ryan to more eagerly pursue ministry. As part of the former WAVE movement at his high school, North Torrance, Ryan helped with the student Christian rallies and also shared Christ one-on-one. In sharing the Gospel, Ryan became more aware of where he stood in his own faith, as he answered personal questions from non-Christian students.

God led Ryan to apply to only one college, Biola University (BU). A junior, Ryan is majoring in computer science and taking Bible courses. After graduating from BU, Ryan is interested in possibly attending seminary. Within ministry, Ryan's areas of interest are church planting and Bible translation. Ryan realizes that having a degree in computer science is a good back up, as many churches cannot afford to fully support full time staff. He is wisely thinking ahead, if God opens the door to seminary.

In summers 2018 and 2019, Ryan served as a GVBC summer intern. He has enjoyed ministering with the youth and helping out with the Long Beach Missions trips. On the recent summer missions' trip in June, Ryan wrote the daily devotionals, co-led a crew of high school students, and headed up the carnival.

Growing up in a Christian home, Ryan is thankful for strong Christian parents, Brandon and Sandy Tsukamoto, as well as younger siblings, Bethany and David. At age five, Ryan repeated the "Sinner's Prayer" receiving Christ with both his parents at home. As a child, Ryan missed league basketball games if it conflicted with Sunday morning church. "I was really mad!" he recollected. Ryan now appreciates and understands how his parents demonstrated the importance of attending church. During five years of elementary school, Ryan also accompanied his dad to Bible Study Fellowship (BSF). Ryan participated in the children's BSF, requiring him to do Bible Study homework. At the time, Ryan disliked having extra homework, but now appreciates all he learned, studying five books of the Bible.

Ryan's favorite Bible passage, II Timothy 2:3-6 reminds him to imitate the soldier's dedication to the battle and the athlete's faithfulness and obedience. "Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier. And also, if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules." Ryan strives to be like the good soldier of Christ, single-minded and wholehearted in complete devotion to Jesus.



# MISSION UPDATES

## SHORT TERM MISSIONS

by Timothy Keahey

Thank you for your support as I spent two weeks in Mongolia from July 8-21. I was able to spend time visiting local believers in the remote regions of the west, a nomadic herdsman in the countryside, and key Christian leaders in the capital city of Ulaanbaatar. I was exposed to their familial struggles, spiritual needs, and the challenges that they face. It was exciting to see the ongoing ministry of the local churches, the Mongolian Union Bible Society, and the Mongolian International School, and how God is currently at work in their midst. I am open to God's leading for long-term work there, and felt that the trip has given me a clearer vision for my calling and possible ways that I can be used for His kingdom. I am very thankful for your partnership and support!



## BRAZIL MISSIONS

by Linda Hayashi

Thank you for your prayers and generous Advent Conspiracy gifts that funded the Brazil missions trip from July 4-16 to serve with Hope Unlimited. We were able to partner with our missionaries, Philip and Corenne Smith, and their work providing comprehensive care for children rescued from the streets. Our team members shared mental health seminars, medical resources, and prayed for and encouraged the staff. The youth residents were able to enjoy English classes, swimming, games, and special outings coordinated by the team. We also worked to renovate a dormitory on site. The thrift stores there gratefully received all the donations that we brought from GVBC donors, and this will help fund the ministry. It was a blessing to have team members of varying ages, since this meant that we were able to share God's love with people of all ages! Praise God for all that He accomplished in Brazil and in us.





# MINISTRIES

## VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

BY SUSAN WAKUTA, CHILDREN'S DIRECTOR



- 1,503 Books and magazines (VBS Mission's Project partnering with the City of Gardena, Human Services)
- +176 Enthusiastic children (99 not regular attenders and 23 new visitors)
- +164 Wonderful volunteers (Including 35 youth and 15 Nihongo members)
- +19 Gospel seeking children accepted Christ
- +9 Amazing core members
- +5 Fun and Spirit filled days
- +1 Awesome God

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A Blessed Vacation Bible School

## MINISTRY LEGACY: YOSHIKO OGATA

BY KATHY AISO



### The Fragrance of Ministry

Yoshiko Ogata has generously contributed and had been involved in GVBC's ministries. At the dedication service for the Nehemiah building project, Yoshiko and her shop, "Flowers by Don" (which she started running in the 1980's), donated all the beautiful flowers. The service was held in a huge tent on the church parking lot on La Salle. Since closing "Flowers by Don" this past June, Yoshiko will be heading a new floral ministry. With assistants, Yoshiko will continue making flower arrangements, on behalf of GVBC, for new babies and hospital stays, and deliver them, too! As part of Nihongo, Yoshiko has been their representative on the English speaking Board of Deacons for 2 1/2 years. She is also chairperson of the Nihongo Ladies Group, which cooks and provides food for Nihongo Sunday morning worship services. With a beautiful voice, Yoshiko is also part of the Nihongo choral group. Yoshiko enjoys serving and has been coming to GVBC since 1982.



# FAMILY NEWS

## FAMILY NEWS

### Donations and Flowers given in honor or loving memory

FROM	TO
Amy Kato	honor Hazel Endo
Ueda Memorial Fund	Lois Uyeda

Monetary donations given in honor or memory of loved ones support College Scholarship Fund, unless specified.

To GVBC, our church family,  
Thank you so much for sending us the beautiful flowers for Kyoko's funeral service. They were so beautiful and godly and encouraged us so much. Thank you for thinking about us and having sent us a godly gift.  
Love & blessings, Ed & Izumi Kawasaki

Many thanks to the GVBC Family for the love and support expressed to our mother, Hazel Endo. She loves visits from you and continues to be at peace while under Hospice care. So many of you have faithfully visited her and we are overwhelmed by this gesture of love. If she were able, she would be making batches of chirashi to thank you!  
With love and appreciation, Family of Hazel Endo

Dear GVBC Family,  
Thank you to Alice Kimura and Geri Oda for bringing me the beautiful pastel colored flowers. What a nice surprise! We are blessed to have such a caring church where people practice their love for others this way. While I recover from my knee replacement surgery, I look at the beautiful flowers God created, and they cheer me and comfort me. Thank you again for your wonderful ministry.  
With appreciation, Yoshiko Rock

### Congratulations to our Scholarship Recipients!

Seminarians: Annette Kakimoto and Tommy Morse  
Christian Service: Sophie Abe, Jonathan Cheng, Stephen Fujimoto, Keito Hino, Brandon Hirano, Joshua Matsuda, Ami Mittelsted, Bethany Tsukamoto and Ryan Tsukamoto

Thank you all so much for the Christian Service Scholarship. I pray that God will continue to work within me as I keep studying at El Camino and serving here at GVBC. Though I do not know where God will lead me after El Camino, I am thankful that He is with me and whatever happens, it is because He loves me. Thank you all so much again.  
With much thanks, Brandon Hirano

Thank you so much to the scholarship committee for selecting me to receive this scholarship! I really appreciate the support and the church's investment in me.  
Joshua Matsuda

Thank you so much for the great news! This scholarship is truly yet another example of God's faithfulness and providence and it is my prayer to serve him at Davis because he has made a way for me to be there. Stephen Fujimoto

### Sympathies to our GVBC families:

Our deep condolences to Alice Kimura and family on the passing of her beloved husband Richard. His memorial service will be Saturday, August 17, 10 AM at GVBC.

Our heartfelt sympathies are also with Chiyo Aiso and family on the sudden passing of her daughter, Kathy Aiso. Kathy has written *Spirit* articles, including the profiles, for 25+ years. This edition's profile is her last. Kathy's memorial service will be Saturday, August 17, 9 AM at Green Hills Chapel.



## MINISTRY OUTLOOK

August 18	YOUTH SERVICE
August 23	*GVBC Golf Tournament @ Rio Hondo Golf Course
Aug. 31 - Sept. 2	Labor Day Weekend
September 1	Community Group Huddle
September 8	Leadership Gathering



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