

THE SPIRIT NEWSLETTER



LIGHT OF THE WORLD

You've heard me talk a lot about the phrase *Light of the World*. That's because this is so core to our vision as a church! Let me connect some of the dots.

We've been seeing in our *God's Design* sermon series that the first thing God created was light. Yes, God created physical light, but on a deeper level, God himself is the light that brings spiritual illumination to our minds and hearts. He designed Adam and Eve and all of humanity to live in the light. But as we've seen, Adam and Eve fell into darkness and as a result, we are born into that darkness of sin.

But God in his grace sent Jesus to be the Light of the World.

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Jesus says this about himself in John 8:12: *I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.* When we follow Jesus, he enables us to live in the light, to live the way God originally designed us to live.

What I'm excited about is this year, the theme of Vacation Bible School is *Illumination Station* and it's all about Jesus. The children will be learning that Jesus is God's *Promised Son*, God's *Perfect Son*, the *Powerful Son of God*, the *Proven Son of God*, and God's *Plan* for Forgiveness. They're going to learn what it really means that Jesus is the Light of the World! And what's great is that all the teachers and helpers (which includes many of you) will also be learning these foundational truths about Jesus... and this will remind us to walk in the light daily.



*I am the light of the world.
Whoever follows me will never
walk in darkness, but will have the
light of life.*

John 8:12

But it doesn't stop there. In Matthew 5:14 during his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus tells all of his followers: You are the light of the world. What a privilege and responsibility we have... to carry the light of Jesus into the dark corners of our family, our friendships, our school, our workplace, our community, and our world. We are not just called to huddle up with other believers, but we are called to break from the huddle and execute the play in the real world, we are called to step into the darkness with the light of the gospel and know that we can walk in the light with Jesus by our side.

I believe that we will grow as a church, but we all have an opportunity to partner with God in bringing about that growth. Who are you praying for? Who have you been inviting? Who have you been sharing your testimony with? What kinds of spiritual conversations have you had recently? May we continue to fulfill our GVBC vision to follow the Light of the World and to be the light of the world!

Daniel Matsuda

Senior Pastor

YOUTH SUMMER CAMP



Our theme this year for our summer camp was Freedom in Christ based on Galatians 5:1. Throughout the week we learned what it's like to experience the freedom the gospel provides and why sometimes it's difficult to live out of that freedom and the work that Christ has already done.



We had times of worship and response to our messages and some students made the decision to give their lives to Christ! Praise the Lord! It was a blessed time where the Lord worked in the hearts of our students and our staff and we came to see how the Spirit is working and moving in our ministry as we continue to do the work that we've been called to do.



Thank you for your prayers and support and we look forward to how the Lord will continue to move and grow in the hearts of our Youth!

Jason Park
Youth Director

FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS

Families with kids from infants to teens came to the Family Ministry Festival of Lights Family Fun Day on June 27th. Almost half of the families attending were invited guests at this outreach event!

Our global mission countries, Thailand, Brazil, Japan and Mexico, were highlighted in a festive environment with lighted lanterns from each country. The message was that Jesus is the true light of the world who brings hope to us all.



Modeled after a night market, there were booths for food, a craft and a fun marketplace for each country. In Brazil, they sampled feijoida (pork and bean stew), made a tambourine and played with shuttlecocks, hacky sacks and a giant soccer ball. In Thailand, they ate tropical flavored ice cream with mangos, hunted for elephants in the elephant sanctuary, and made fans and woven bracelets. In Japan, they made their own bento box, got a toy capsule in a gachapon machine and painted a koinobori flag. In Mexico, they enjoyed a Mexican pizza with handmade tortillas, made a mini pinata, then got to break a giant one at the end of the day! It was a special time for all thanks to the support of our wonderful church family!

Diane Wang
Family Ministry

LOCAL & GLOBAL MISSIONS

THIEN DOAN - JEMS

For most normal people, Summer is a time for rest and relaxation. Not me.

Summer represents the busiest time of the year for me. Summer is usually the time when churches host retreats and pastors ask for guest preachers. I started saying YES to these opportunities months ago. Before I knew it, my Summer became completely packed! From June to August, I have ten different ministry commitments, including 4 retreats, 3 training events, and preaching in 3 churches. This requires me to do a lot of traveling from SoCal to Northern California and Oregon.



Here's a quick summary of my ministry commitments this Summer:

- West LA Holiness Church (June)
- AACF Leadership Training Conference (June)
- Mount Hermon (June-July)
- Home Church OC (July)
- Citylights Church LB (July)
- Valley Baptist Church (July)
- Portland Training Event (July)
- NorCal Disciple Makers Workshop (July)
- Orange Country Retreat (July-Aug)
- AAABC Pastors Retreat (Aug)

I'm thankful that God has given me the opportunity to serve and bless these churches and pastors with my ministry. I think I'm going to need to take a vacation after the Summer is over :)

Please pray for God to bless Summer packed with ministry.

TOMMY & YUMI MORSE - JEMS



In May a missions team from Los Angeles visited J-Lodge. We held an *English Cafe* for working professionals & students who wanted to practice English. Lively conversations developed as we discussed life and experiences living in the U.S. The team shared their faith, and of successes & failures in their careers.

These gatherings opened doors of conversation that wouldn't have happened otherwise. One person shared about his anxieties at school. Another opened up about her parent's divorce. Others have asked why we love to host people the way we do - giving me the chance to share how God has entrusted us with resources to be a blessing to others.

Your support makes moments like this possible. Each conversation allows us to share Jesus, what we value as believers, and why we love the students as a gift from God.

Praise and Prayers

- Praise God for the different events that have happened in May that allowed us to get to know some students better at critical times in their lives
- Praise God that various steps for setting up the roaster are now proceeding, despite shipping delays related to war overseas
- Praise God and pray for Tommy's book club and discipleship with Christian J-Lodge regulars
- Tommy will give a talk on Friday, June 19 at Hongodai Christ Church titled, "What is a Normal Christian Life?" Some of the non-Christian J-Lodge students will attend, pray for them!

JAMES CHOUNG - INTERVARSITY

Hi ministry partners —

Some news: starting in July, I'll be taking on a new role as VP, Evangelism & Student Engagement. It's a brand new department that seeks to inspire witness, cultivate renewal, and engage a student generation. Our first steps will be to raise the evangelistic temperature of the movement, then explore ways to reach students online who haven't yet connected with a faith community.

I'm excited for the new season, and glad that colleagues from the Evangelism department, Creative Labs, on Revival Council and the Gen Z Council will continue to serve alongside me.

I'm also grateful for the past nine years with Strategy & Innovation. We had a gifted crew who expressed their faith in a broad, beautiful way, trusted each other to hold disparate values together in service of the Kingdom, and channeled all of it into resources that helped staff and students thrive in ministry and faith. Most staff will find new places to serve within InterVarsity; some will leave entirely. I'll miss leading and serving them, and I'm proud of who we were and what we built together.

On a personal note: We're a full house for the next two months: Isaiah's back from Korea, Nathan is so glad to be out of school, and Jamie's danced herself to 1.3M views. It's good to have everyone back, although we also know that times like these will likely become more scarce as we go.



Thanks for praying for Jinhee. She's gone through 3 rounds of chemo out of 12 — a quarter of the way through. The toughest days seem to be the day after and the one after that, but we're grateful for the care she's received. She's become something of a hit with the nurses: they told her that she's "popular" and "cool" among them. Of course she is.

Personally, I'm hanging in there. I've also picked up worship leading again at our church, and it's been deeply nourishing. Musical worship has become a particularly resonant part of my faith in this season.

All in all, we're deeply grateful for the overwhelming support we've received. Thank you for partnering and praying with us. May your summer be full of love and mirth.

FAMILY NEWS



Patsy Hasegawa

Patsy Hasegawa passed away on June 26th, 2026 at the age of 86. Her service was on July 25th at Green Hills Mortuary. Please keep Paul and the Hasegawa family in your prayers.

W E L C O M E !



Ella Kazumi Silva

Born July 9, 2026

9lbs, 1oz, 21in

Parents: Kristen & Eliezer Silva

Grandparents: Bill & Violet Dresser

CALENDAR

July 29: Japan Prayer Send Off
Aug 1: Work Day
Hearts for Widows Outing
Aug 6: Fitness for Moms
Aug 8: The Forge Men's Ministry - Table Talk
Aug 14: Parent Workshop: Connect w/your Teen
Aug 16: Connect Membership Class
Aug 17: 25th Annual Golf Tournament
Aug 22: The Forge - Table Talk (Cancelled)
Aug 26: Fitness for Moms

SERVICES

In-Person English: Sundays, 9 AM & 11 AM
Online English: Sundays, 11 AM
In-Person & Online Nihongo: Sundays, 11 AM
In-Person Michi Nihongo: Sundays, 5PM

LINKS

Website: www.gvbc.net
Youtube: www.bit.ly/GVBCyoutube

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