

† Pastor's Letter †

Dear Friends in God's Family

September 2023

What a meaningful celebration of the 8th Anniversary of Reconciling Congregation on August 9th! Now we have people who volunteer to share their journeys with others. Before I asked anybody, I got three people who offered their testimonials. Sharon Morgan shared her personal journey with her transgender son. Dennis Buckley shared a brief history of our 8 years as a Reconciling Congregation and delivered his message, "Stop weaponizing the Bible! Love your neighbor... open to a better translation!" And Joe Kick shared his song that was written for Reconciling Ministry, "Let Your Own Light Shine!" I had so many people who told me how much this song touched their hearts:

***You don't have to change – to be okay; Just be who you're always gonna be
With a little love – the world is turning today; Reconciling – you and me***

***I don't have to try – to be someone else; Everybody's gonna find their own way
We're all related – since life was created; And here we are – together on this beautiful day***

***I can see your light shine – just like I know – you see mine; No, you don't ever have to pretend
One family we are – it's a beautiful mystery; We're all God's children – let your own light shine...***

I will be visiting Korea from August 28th to September 9th and back to the office on September 12th. As you remember, I visited Korea last year to celebrate my mom's 90th Birthday. Since my visit, her health went down bad, in January this year, my siblings and I thought that we were losing her. I almost purchased a plane ticket to see her for the last time. But by the grace of God, through so many prayers from you and others, she recovered well and is now doing fine. She even goes out to her favorite park with a dog of 14 years. Thanks to God! I just want to go see her this summer while I can see her one more time.

Another grateful thing is that my son, Hozeh (34 yr), is coming with us to Korea. This is his 3rd time to visit Korea following the first time at the age of 2 and the second at 9. I am very thankful that he is open to this trip and even a little excited about it. Thanks to God and to all of you who have prayed for his recovery from depression! He has not wanted to go anywhere outside his room for a long time. This trip will be a big leap of step for him. May God help him to get boosted with the will for life and motivation for a new thing!

Another thankful thing is that my husband, rev. Sungho Lee (pastor of Central UMC, Stockton), recovered well from his partial knee replacement surgery on August 9th and coming with us to Korea. In fact, he already left for Japan by himself Friday (8/23) in order to offer lectures to Japanese pastors in Fukuoka. His older sister, a missionary, will translate for him. Again, many thanks to God and all those who have prayed for his recovery. Many people at his church could not believe that he had a surgery when he showed up on the very next Sunday to preach. So, he showed his scars on his left knee and they believed him. God has blessed him with extraordinary healing and strength very fast and smoothly. When he suffered so much from pain before the surgery, he prayed to God that he wanted to do more for the ministry up until he dies. His sister got so worried about his condition after the surgery and asked him, "Are you even able to walk?"

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Sungho answered, "I can't walk to Japan because it is too far. So, I will take an airplane!" May God use him to the fullest for the rest of his life!

I am extremely thankful to three guest preachers who will fill the pulpit with the message of the Gospel while I'm gone! May God bless them with spiritual strength and inspiration as well as peace and love!

August 27th (Sunday)

September 3rd (Sunday)

September 10th (Sunday)

Rev. Hugh Stevenson

Rev. Mary Elyn Bahlert

Heidi Stark, Lay Leader of BCUMC

For the following two weeks, please contact our wonderful two Lay Leaders David Funk and Heidi Stark for any need of pastoral presence or prayers. They will do their best until I come back and contact you.

We continue to collect donation for Maui Fire Victims to be sent to U.M.C.O.R. (United Methodist Committee on Relief). Please make a check payable to BCUMC with a note on the bottom "For Maui Fire Victims"! Your generous offerings will deliver a light of hope and encouragement!

I pray with you again:

Come, Spirit, Come

Fill us with Your Love

Come, Spirit, Come

Lead us to Your Peace

Blessed Spirit-filled Journey!

"Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, and give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you!" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)



Your Pastor, Hyesung Lee