

Faith Bible Study Guide
For the Week of December 14, 2025
Third Sunday of Advent
WHAT DO YOU FEAR? INSIST ON HOPE THIS ADVENT
“Even in Our Fear, We are Called Forward”



Mary's Yes
by Lisle Gwynn Garrity
Inspired by Luke 1:26-39

Be still [2 Minutes]: As you hear these Centering Words, let us greet each other, greet the Holy Spirit, and begin with 1 minute of silence, breathing in the breath of God and allow the group to open themselves to the Holy Spirit today:

CENTERING WORDS/ WORDS TO PONDER:

Watch any parent. It starts with the first step.

They kneel down. They smile with anticipation.

They reach for their baby, calling and cooing them forward.

And then before they know it, they're running behind a bike. They're yelling,

“Keep pedaling! You got it! I'm right here!” And they're jumping up and down,

because that little red helmet passed the mailbox.

And then, just like that, they're driving circles in the church parking lot.

They're giving instructions about easing on and off the pedal.

They're having conversations about curfew and heartbreak.

And then, before they know it, they're standing in a hospital room.

Their heart is bursting. And they say, “Put her head right here.

Rock her gently. Do you remember the nursery rhymes?

You were born for this.”

The first step is always the hardest, but you, beloved, were born for this.

OPENING PRAYER:

Gracious and Holy God, You are the One who calls prophets, shepherds, and unsuspecting young women into Your story. Like Jeremiah, we confess that we often feel too small. Like Moses, we worry that we are not enough. Like Mary, we struggle to understand how Your promises can take shape in us. And like so many throughout the ages, we come carrying our own fears. Yet You are the God who draws near—the God who invites us closer, even when our hearts tremble. So this morning, give us the courage to trust Your voice, the openness to receive Your invitation, and the faith to say “yes” to the work You are doing within us. Strengthen us to step forward with holy boldness. Fill us with Your Spirit as we study together. May our songs rise with courage, may our prayers deepen with trust, and may our hearts echo Mary's willingness and Jeremiah's call. We offer this time of worship to You—our courageous, inviting, and ever-calling God. Amen.

Luke 1:26-38

Jesus' birth foretold

26 When Elizabeth was six months pregnant, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a city in Galilee, **27** to a virgin who was engaged to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David's house. The virgin's name was Mary. **28** When the angel came to her, he said, "Rejoice, favored one! The Lord is with you!" **29** She was confused by these words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.

30 The angel said, "Don't be afraid, Mary. God is honoring you. **31** Look! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. **32** He will be great and he will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of David his father. **33** He will rule over Jacob's house forever, and there will be no end to his kingdom."

34 Then Mary said to the angel, "How will this happen since I haven't had sexual relations with a man?"

35 The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come over you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the one who is to be born will be holy. He will be called God's Son. **36** Look, even in her old age, your relative Elizabeth has conceived a son. This woman who was labeled 'unable to conceive' is now six months pregnant. **37** Nothing is impossible for God."

38 Then Mary said, "I am the Lord's servant. Let it be with me just as you have said." Then the angel left her.

Jeremiah 1:4-10

Call of Jeremiah

4 The LORD's word came to me:

5 "Before I created you in the womb I knew you;
before you were born I set you apart;
I made you a prophet to the nations."

6 "Ah, LORD God," I said, "I don't know how to speak
because I'm only a child."

7 The LORD responded,
"Don't say, 'I'm only a child.'
Where I send you, you must go;
what I tell you, you must say.

8 Don't be afraid of them,
because I'm with you to rescue you,"
declares the LORD.

9 Then the LORD stretched out his hand,
touched my mouth, and said to me,
"I'm putting my words in your mouth.

10 This very day I appoint you over nations and empires,
to dig up and pull down,
to destroy and demolish,
to build and plant."

L: The word of God for all People.

P: Thanks be to God.

Be present: [Being mindful of others and sharing time]

1. Take a deep breath. How is it with your soul?
2. Do you like holiday movies? What is your favorite one? (I didn't say which holiday! Feel free to be creative!)
3. Often our stories take us into emotions and places that we don't always speak aloud about?

Have you ever felt deep despair? What do you relate that to? (How did it feel?)

- How about joy? What is that feeling like? What can you relate/equate to in this world as pure joy?

Be rooted: [Bible Study]

The series at a glance

1 st Sunday of Advent	2 nd Sunday of Advent	3 rd Sunday of Advent	4 th Sunday of Advent	Christmas Eve	Sunday After Christmas	Epiphany
IN THE TIME OF HEROD, WE LONG FOR GOD TO BREAK IN	WHEN WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF HOPE, GOD IS AT WORK	EVEN IN OUR FEAR, WE ARE CALLED FORWARD	WHEN YOU'RE AFRAID, GIVE ME YOUR HAND	GOOD NEWS IS LOUDER THAN FEAR	LET FEAR FUEL A FIRE FOR JUSTICE	FEAR DOESN'T STOP US
Luke 1:5-13 (Luke starts the story with King Herod, in an era of fear) Lamentations 3:55-57 ("When I called on you, you said, 'Do not fear!'")	Matthew 11:1-11 (John the Baptist is running out of hope and reaches out to Jesus) Isaiah 43:19-21 ("I am about to do a new thing")	Luke 1:26-39 (The angel visits Mary) Jeremiah 1:4-10 (Jeremiah is called as a prophet)	Matthew 1:18-25 (The angel visits Joseph in a dream) Isaiah 41:5-10 ("Do not fear, for I am with you")	Luke 2:1-20 (The angels deliver good news to the shepherds, who go to the newborn Christ)	Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23 (The Holy family flees to Egypt, then returns to Galilee once it's safe)	Matthew 2:1-12, 16-18 (The magi visit Christ; Herod responds with the massacre of the innocents)

Theme connections for Luke 1:26-39 and Jeremiah 1:4-10

Sometimes saying “yes” to God’s call fills us with fear. Like Mary and Jeremiah, we fear that we aren’t enough. That we’ll be alone. That no one will listen. And yet, God calls us forward, inviting us to live fully into who we are created to be and promising to be with us every step of the way as we move forward through our fear. Too often we talk about bravery and courage in terms of hero narratives or big actions, but each day presents many moments to practice small, quiet acts of courage. May we say “yes” to God, even when our knees shake and our voices tremble.

Considerations for this week

As we developed this week’s sub-theme, we decided to include the phrase “even in our fear” to emphasize that when we step forward in faith, we’re not necessarily leaving our fears behind. This week’s texts are “call stories” for both Mary and Jeremiah; in them, we are reminded that most callings begin with some degree of self-doubt, trepidation, and uncertainty. When taking uncertain steps forward, we may be comforted to imagine the mother of God saying “yes” with a trembling voice. In the gospel reading, we intentionally conclude with verse 39 to show that, immediately after receiving the angel’s message, Mary sets out “with haste” to Elizabeth’s home in the Judean hill country. Whether she retreats to her cousins’ house to find physical safety, to avoid social scrutiny, or to receive emotional and spiritual support—or all of the above—we wanted to highlight this detail in the story as proof of the fears and threats Mary faces. And yet, she steps forward anyway, with the words of the Magnificat forming on her lips.

Guiding Questions:

- In their commentary on Luke, Amy-Jill Levine and Ben Witherington III note that Mary’s virginity is intended to emphasize God’s divine miracle. They write: *“The one miracle greater than that of a postmenopausal woman conceiving is that of a virgin conceiving.”*⁹ This is meant to reinforce the angel’s words: “For nothing will be impossible with God” (Luke 1:37).
 - Have you ever experienced something seemingly impossible becoming possible?
 - How do you trust God in the midst of impossible situations?
- Both Jeremiah and Mary protest their inadequacies at first: “I’m only a boy” (Jeremiah 1:6); “I’m a virgin” (Luke 1:34). How often do fears of inadequacy or impossibility keep us from living fully into our calling?

3. Read the poem “Mary Considers Her Situation” by poet and essayist Luci Shaw.¹¹ Imagine all the emotions and thoughts that stir within Mary. What does she consider? Does she calculate her sacrifices and risks? lucishaw.com/lucis-poetry/mary-considers-her-situation/
4. What visions and passions burn within her “like a sun rising”? Social researcher and author Brené Brown asserts that vulnerability is the greatest measure of courage. She defines vulnerability as uncertainty, risk, and emotional exposure—which are all necessary for true acts of courage. In her book, *Daring Greatly*, she writes: “*Our willingness to own and engage with our vulnerability determines the depth of our courage and the clarity of our purpose; the level to which we protect ourselves from being vulnerable is a measure of our fear and disconnection.*”¹²
 - In light of this definition, how does Mary show vulnerability and courage by saying “yes” to God?
 - In your own life, when have you engaged in vulnerability in order to act with courage?
5. In her commentary, Boyung Lee writes: “*Some fear protects us. But some fear is the threshold of transformation—the fear that comes when we are on the edge of saying yes to God.*”

Commentary on Luke 1:26-39; Jeremiah 1:4-10 | by Rev. Dr. Boyung Lee

When the angel Gabriel appears to Mary, her response is not immediate acceptance but confusion, resistance, and fear.

The text says she is “greatly troubled” (*diatarassō*)—a word that intensifies *tarassō*, suggesting not just inner disturbance but a deep, bodily dissonance.

Mary is not simply puzzled—she is shaken, thrown off-balance, possibly afraid for her life.

And with good reason.

Mary was young, unmarried, and living under the weight of imperial and patriarchal control.

To be told—without warning—that she would bear a child by divine initiative wasn’t just a spiritual shock; it was a profound social and bodily risk.

Her “yes,” then, cannot be read as simplistic or naïve. It emerges from a complex matrix of vulnerability, trust, and survival.

That’s why it matters that Mary questions.

“How can this be?” is not doubt—it is agency.

It is a boundary drawn around her body, a claim to her own understanding before offering consent.

Gabriel does not rebuke her.

Instead, he offers a promise: divine initiative (“the Holy Spirit will come upon you”) and shelter (“you will be overshadowed”).

These words carry no hint of coercion; they speak of protection, not domination.

Still, her consent remains essential.

Mary listens, considers the impossible, and then responds with courage:

“Let it be with me according to your word”
(Luke 1:38b). (*cont.*)

This is not fear erased—
it is fear acknowledged and moved through.

A choice made with trembling faith.

Mary's story resonates with the call of the prophet
in Jeremiah 1:4-10.

"I am only a boy," Jeremiah protests, gripped by
the fear that he is too young to speak for God.

Like Mary, he hesitates—aware that answering
the call will come at a cost.
And like her, he hears these words of reassurance:

"Do not be afraid . . . I am with you" (Jeremiah 1:8).

What connects them is not a lack of fear,
but a deep, trembling resolve to move forward
anyway—not with certainty, but with open hands
and the courage to say yes, even in the unknown.

Neither Mary nor Jeremiah embody
boldness as spectacle.
Their strength lies in quiet resolve—
in the holy, hesitant yes
that dares to trust.

This week's texts remind us:

Call often comes when we're just trying to survive.

Mary, like so many marginalized women,
was likely trying to make it through the day,
avoiding shame, violence, and invisibility.

Survival mode leaves little space for dreaming—
let alone imagining oneself "blessed among
women."

And yet God's call interrupts that quiet survival—
not to exploit it, but to awaken her
to a fuller, riskier, more radiant self.

This call is not without cost.

Mary's "yes" will bring silence,
estrangement, and pain.
She will bear not only the Christ child,
but the burden of imperial suspicion,
poverty, and loneliness.

Still, she says yes.

We're often taught that fear is failure—
something to silence or push through.

But this Advent, we're invited to see
fear as information.

Some fear protects us.

But some fear is the threshold of transformation—
the fear that comes when we are on the edge of
saying yes to God.
The fear that signals deep vulnerability,
and deep possibility.

Too often, dominant Christianity defines courage
through heroic masculinity—
loud, bold, certain.

But Mary and Jeremiah model a different courage:
the courage to ask questions,
to hesitate,
to need more time,
to take just one uncertain step.

And they do not walk alone.

After her yes, Mary runs to Elizabeth,
who meets her with joy and affirmation:

"Blessed are you among women" (Luke 1:42).

Elizabeth becomes confirmation and community.

This too is part of calling—
we are not meant to walk forward alone.

God calls us not only to action,
but to become fully ourselves.

Fear doesn't disqualify us—it's part of the process.
And God promises to walk with us, every
trembling step.

This Advent, we ask:

What fear are you carrying?
What invitation are you resisting because you
feel inadequate?
What would it mean to say yes—not fearlessly,
but faithfully?

Mary's words can become our own:

"Let it be with me."

- How do you discern between the fears that are protective and the fears that are holding you back from transformation and moving forward?

Be transformed: [Faith in Action Challenge]:

Let's use our other senses and hear how artists reflect theologically on the art they have created for Advent...

In her artist statement for Mary's Yes, Lisle Gwynn Garrity posits that Elizabeth's pregnancy is proof of God's emerging miracles, which reassures and emboldens Mary.¹⁰

- What do you think is the significance of Elizabeth being six months pregnant?
- Why does Luke emphasize this detail twice in the annunciation story?



Mary's Yes

by Lisle Gwynn Garrity

Inspired by Luke 1:26-39

Photography with digital drawing

In the *sixth month* of Elizabeth's pregnancy, the angel goes to Nazareth to find Mary. I was six months pregnant with my second daughter when I reread this scripture and began this image, so at first, this detail seemed like a happy coincidence. But as I pondered it, I wondered if Elizabeth's pregnancy might have everything to do with Mary's willingness to say yes to this wild, wonderful—but risky and terrifying—undertaking.

Elizabeth's pregnancy provides reassurance that Mary can trust the angel's impossible news. By the sixth month, Mary will be able to see for herself that Elizabeth is truly pregnant. By the sixth month, Mary can place her hands on Elizabeth's belly and giggle as

the baby leaps and kicks. By the sixth month, the risk of miscarriage has significantly decreased. By the sixth month, Elizabeth will be emotionally, mentally, and physically preparing for birth. Her miracle is real, even as it is yet to be born. Therefore, Mary can rest her hope in an emerging—not empty—promise.

Mary's willingness to say "yes" is also fortified by the assurance that she is not stepping forward alone. Even as fears surely surround her, Mary will go to Elizabeth for protection and comfort. She won't fulfill her calling without support. Her hope will be strengthened in solidarity.

In this image, we see the angel greeting Mary in the form of dappled light.⁶ Mary's back is turned to the angel, but we see her in the process of pivoting toward the warmth of the cascading light. I imagine this is the moment after the angel responds to her initial question, "How can this be?" After hearing the angel's response, Mary closes her eyes, imagining her cousin Elizabeth and perhaps her many ancestors holding her up as she prepares to step forward. The wrap around her head carries the angel's good news, anointing her with the promise that fear won't stop her. Embroidered along her neckline is Mary's willing response: "Here I am." Her lantern earring is a sign to each of us, to anyone who is fearful. It's as if Mary herself becomes a lantern, emanating courage in the face of a fearful calling, lighting a way forward.

—REV. LISLE GWYNN GARRITY

⁶ I captured these textures by photographing the shadows cast by a lantern.



To Build and to Plant

by Hannah Garrity

Inspired by Jeremiah 1:4-10

32"x20" Paper lace and graphite drawing, backed with cyanotype print

This scripture is Jeremiah's call story. Jeremiah is a prophet just prior to the fall of Jerusalem to Babylon. Once Jerusalem falls, Judea's ruling class is taken into exile in Babylon. We learn of their story through the book of Ezekiel. Jeremiah stays as a prophet for those left behind in Jerusalem. At that time, the major theological question of the people was whether or

not God was present without the temple and the Ark of the Covenant. In Jeremiah chapter 31, the prophet delivers a new covenant from God, written on the hearts of the people. "Fear not; God is with all people always" (Jeremiah 30:10-11).

As I explored the process of cyanotype printing for this piece of art, the visual metaphor of negative and positive space offered a parallel to this major theological question: *Is God gone?*

First, I painted a photosensitive solution on the paper in a dark room, then it dried in the dark as well. Once dry, I placed leaves, buds, blossoms, and branches on the paper and took it outside. These natural forms created a negative image as the paper was exposed to the sun. Just as Jeremiah will eventually offer the new covenant when the people fear that the absence of the tangible means the absence of the divine, so it is that in this artwork the absent spaces become deep and dark with color. The present spaces, where items were placed, become void of color, creating a negative image.

On top of the cyanotype, I overlaid a paper lace image of leaves, branches, buds, and blossoms weaving around the hand of God reaching out to touch the lips of Jeremiah. There are boxes too, portraying the building up after the tearing down. Do not fear. Like Jeremiah, we are but children ill-equipped for the call, but God reaches out and calls us anyway. So let us prepare ourselves for the planting and the building of God's justice. The temple is gone. Hard work is ahead. —HANNAH GARRITY

Further reading & research:

- Read "Mary's fear and desperation (Luke 1:39-55)" by Austin Shelley. The Christian Century. December 19, 2018. [christiancentury.org/sunday-s-coming/mary-s-fear-and-desperation-luke-1-39-55](https://www.christiancentury.org/sunday-s-coming/mary-s-fear-and-desperation-luke-1-39-55)
(Note: In this article, pastor Austin Shelley contemplates the very real threats Mary would have faced. She writes: "Mary has reason to be afraid. While Elizabeth's pregnancy would have been understood by her community as a miraculous sign of God's favor, Mary's would have been cause for alarm—cause, even, for her to be put to death.")
- Read Chapter 3: "Hope Lives in the Body" in Hope: A User's Manual, by MaryAnn McKibben Dana (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2022). 59-88.
(Note: In this chapter, McKibben Dana asserts that the incarnation means that hope is embodied, "or it is nothing at all." She asks, "Do we believe that our bodies—their strengths and their frailties—are vessels for hope? And if we do, what does that mean for how we live in them and care for them?" (59). As you read this chapter, consider how Mary physically embodies both hope and vulnerability, and what this means for how we ourselves use our bodies to enact hope and courage.)
- Read "Meeting Fear with Rest" by Cole Arthur Riley. Center for Action and Contemplation. January 26, 2024. cac.org/daily-meditations/meeting-fear-with-rest
(Note: In this short reflection, Cole Arthur Riley admits: "If there is any bravery in me, it is in my refusal to let fear eclipse my imagination for anything other than pain. To maintain imagination for both the beautiful and the terrible is to marry prudence and hope.")

9 The Gospel of Luke, by Amy-Jill Levine and Ben Witherington III. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018). 33.

10 The art and artist statement are included in our What Do You Fear? Visual Art Collection.

11 You can read the full poem on the author's website here: lucishaw.com/lucis-poetry/mary-considers-her-situation/

12 Daring Greatly: How the Courage to Be Vulnerable Transforms the Way We Live, Love, Parent, and Lead, by Brené Brown. (New York: Avery, an imprint of Penguin Random House, 2012).

Prayers & Concerns / Announcements:



*We lift up prayers for all of God's
Creation. Lord Hear our Prayers.*

continued prayers for Healing and Wholeness

Rev. Alan Mark	Eline Yoshida	Juliet Koyanagi	Noah Miyagawa-Sun	those in Community Living & Homecare
Alice Kajiya	Eleanor Ngai	Kaitlyn Sabedra	Oscar Philip Bland, Jr.	Chic Miyake
Alvena Fukuhara	Emi Hino	Karlyn Fernandez	Patty Kobayashi	Doris Kato
Amy Higa	Emie Santiago	Kay Sexton	Polyana Tsama'u	Emma Hariuchi
Anthony Anderson, Sr.	Faith Tanaka	Kian Tehrani	Priscilla Kandel	Faith Tanaka
Apalai Lokotui	Flanora Nakakura	Kiki Hashimoto	Raquel M. Martinez	Rev. Harry Fujimaki
Audrey Goto	Frank Sato	Kim Foster	Rev. Mike Hirasawa	Irene & Tak Ryono
Austin Maeda	Fred Oshiro	Kraig Nakano	Ron Hamaguchi	Jane Kiyohara
Barbara Tamura	Geri Shiraki	Rev. Kim Montenegro	Rick Katsuki	Marion Antoku
Betty Kobata	Glenn and Millie Shimizu	Kelsey DeGracia	Ruth Hirata	Mary Jung
Bill Morris	Grace Tochihiro	Kenny Medeiros	Ruth Taira	Nobie Shikori
Brian Okumura	Grant Hanada	Kyle Ichikawa	Sandra Minjarez-	Ruth Hirata
Cami Bruns	Harriet Tateyama	Larry Takumi	Grange	Seth Asano
Chic Miyake	Haru Yasunaga	Layne Nakasone	Scarlett Bone	Sue Hasegawa
Christine Keim	Hiroko Shohara	Linda Jung	Steph Matsunaga	
Claretta Foster	Ingrid Peterson	Liz Harner	Sue Hamada	for our Worldwide Community
Dan Segawa	Irene Munesato	Lucas Yniguez	Sue Hasegawa	for the Leadership of our Country and our Churches
Danny Tokudomi	Jack Honda	Marion Antoku	Susan Mizuki	for the immigrants: migrants, refugees, asylees
Dan Yamashita	Jayne Watanabe	Mae Nakakihara	Susan Slade	for our siblings in Christ who struggle and in need of God's care
Diane & Destiny	Jehiel Vinluan	Mary Jung	Tam Kobayashi	
Ueda-Banda	Jerry Osaka	Mary Marchand	Theresa Apicella	
Dr. DoAnn Tsuneco	Joanne Sato	Mary Tamura	Tommy Sakaguchi	
Kaneko	Jordan Sasaki	Maxine Butler	Tseyli Mantooth	
Dr. Nguyen	Joye Barker	Mutsuko Nishi	Victoria DelaTorre	
		Nancy Matsushima	Walker Wilkerson	
			Wayne Shimizu	
			Whitney Nakayama	
			Winnie Quaki	

for All Our Saints

Nancy Harada and family, on the passing of Jack Harada.

The Furuta Family, on the passing of June Furuta. [11/12/25].

Ron Troester and family, on the passing of his son, Derek Troester. [11/12/25]

Joy Kobashi-Yoneda and family, on the passing of her father, Arthur Kobashi.

Iizuka Family, on the passing of Pearl Iizuka [11/4/25]. *A Celebration of Life is scheduled for December 20, 2025 at 1:00pm. RSVP with Church Office.*

Elaine Yoshida, on the passing of her brother, Sadao Larry Sakai (10/16/25)

Ralph Ichikawa, on the passing of his brother, Ken Ichikawa (10/26/25)

UPDATED 12/12/2025

Celebrations:

Doris Shigihara's Award, December 7, 2025

Birthdays:

For healing and recovery

- This week asking for prayers for:

- Pam Fink
- Ellie Park
- Diane Ueda-Banda
- Victoria DelaTorre
- Dan Yamashita
- Takai Finau

- Always: Rev. Alan, Harriet, Victoria, Larry, Kraig, Alvena, Audrey, the Shimizus, Winnie, Tseyli, Walker, Nancy, Mary, Ruth, Faith, Irene, Tak, Winnie, Nobie...many who are homebound and those unable to be with us... and so many other that we all that we miss their presence next to us in the sanctuary and our groups.

- Frank Sato
- Mary & Bob Kiely (siblings of Ann Kiely)
- Jennie Shitakubo
- Alan Mark
- Tam Kobayashi (9/9) / (10/21)

- Audrey Goto recovery
- Kraig Nakano
- Alice Kajiya
- Larry Takumi
- Harriet Tateyama

- Scarlett Bone - Surgery, 10/31 (12:30pm)
- Liz Harner, Scarlett's Grandma
- Diane & Destiny Ueda-Banda
- Victoria DelaTorre
- Tseyli Mantooth
- Kim Foster & Claretta Foster
- Debra (surgery for cancer) and Deborah (101 yo mother; fell) (Kim Foster's friends)
- Dan Yamashita
- Juno Uyematsu

- Kenny & Penny Medeiros
- Walker Wilkerson
- *Whitney Nakayama (recovery from surgery)*
- Alvena Fukuhara
- Jason Sasaki
- Kiki Hashimoto (Sue Kunisaki -friend)
- Oscar (Kim Foster's cousin; cancer)
- Meredith Wilkins (Holman; surgery) / Christopher Wilkins Sr. (passed)
- Susan Slade's friend, Sherri

Traveling Mercies

- Nargis Basu - Traveling to India for 3 months
- Donna & Darrell Iki and family

World Concerns:

- All who struggle, suffer, experience pain and grief...
- US government; restoration of benefits, medical, food stamps, social security...
- War-torn countries, Natural disasters...
- Immigrants, Refugees, Asylees losing rights and protections...

Absent from the Body, Present with the Lord

- Rev. John Miyahara and the Ishihara family on the passing of Dorothy's son (100yo), Tim Ishihara (12/13/25)
- Nancy Harada and family on the passing of her father, Jack Harada (10/2025)
- Ron Troester on the passing of his son, Derek Troester (11/12); A Celebration of Life for Derek, today, 11/30 (in Omaha, Nebraska);
- Joy Kobashi Yoneda and husband Curtis Yoneda, on the passing of Joy's father, Arthur Kobashi (11/12)
- The Furuta Family, Sandee Furuta, Deanne & Young Kim and the boys, Ty, Jake, and Cody on the passing of their mother and grandmother, June Furuta (11/12); A Celebration of Life for June Furuta on 12/12 at 11am.
- Mel, Lisa and Kristin and family on the passing of Pearl Iizuka. A Celebration of Life for Pearl will be held on December 20, 1pm at Faith. *We are collecting photos of Pearl in ministry and with you, if you please have some, please send to me or Andie in the church office. We have also asked if our ministries can help with a video for Pearl's Faith Life. *If members would like to bring desserts for the reception...*

CELEBRATION OF LIFE
SERVICE

Pearl Ann Iizuka

November 27, 1955 – November 4, 2025



In-Person:
December 20, 2025
1:00 PM

Faith United Methodist Church
2115 W. 182nd Street
Torrance, CA 90504

Casual, colorful attire
No koden please

RSVP by December 13:
<https://forms.gle/2Cq94BYVCvhsSkcq6>

Virtual:
<https://vimeo.com/event/5534515>



Church Contact: (310) 217-7000
Church Email:
communications@faithsouthbay.org

And Know that He is God: Closing Prayer & Blessing

In a fearful world,
may you look for God's spirit.
May you reach for each other's hands.
May you choose courage whenever you can.
And in all things, may you remember
that good news is louder than fear.
In the name of the one who calls,
the one who sends,
and the one who journeys with—
go in peace and
be not afraid.
Amen.