



# El Estero Echoes

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## The Birth of the Savior

### Luke 2:1-20 (KJV)

<sup>1</sup>And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed.

<sup>2</sup>(And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

<sup>3</sup>And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

<sup>4</sup>And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)

<sup>5</sup>To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

<sup>6</sup>And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

<sup>7</sup>And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

<sup>8</sup>And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

<sup>9</sup>And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

<sup>10</sup>And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

<sup>11</sup>For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

<sup>12</sup>And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

<sup>13</sup>And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

<sup>14</sup>Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

<sup>15</sup>And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

<sup>16</sup>And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.

<sup>17</sup>And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

<sup>18</sup>And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

<sup>19</sup>But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart.

<sup>20</sup>And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

## **Eight ways we can view the New Year and every year as:**

### **A Year of:**

**New Beginnings:** Start out the New Year with a fresh point of view to new experiences, memories and blessings. Having an opened mind and heart to where ever the Lord may take you with full assurance and confidence that He is with you. (Matthew 28:19-20)

**New Possibilities:** There's no limit to what God can do in your life and nothing is impossible with God. God opens doors that no man can shut and also closes doors that no man can open. The possibilities are endless with God that is according to His will. (Philippians 4:13)

**New Plans:** Every year is a new season, be prayerful of what God has planned for you and be willing to walk by faith in obedience as you follow His leading. Remember that His plans are always for good and not for evil to give you a future and a Hope. (Jeremiah 29:11-13)

**New Purpose:** As you forge ahead, God always has a plan and a purpose for what you will go through and experience. Remember that God always has a reason for what He allows in your life and through it you can trust Him completely. (Proverbs 1:3-5)

**New Provisions:** The bible says to not worry about tomorrow for tomorrow has enough worries of it's own. Trust in your Heavenly Father who knows everything you need, who is your God and your Provider. He is faithful and He will do it. (Matthew 6:1-33)

**New Growth:** When we are willing to let go and let God work in us and through us, He will always stretch us and grow us. It is an important part of the growth process. Continue to grow in your relationship with Him and in His Word. Pray for God to mold you and make you pliable in the potters hand and then watch the master craftsman work on His masterpiece; which is you!

**New Wisdom:** With new experiences and new lessons come new wisdom and insight. Always make it a priority to seek out wisdom as hidden treasure or fine gold. In Proverbs it says that it will be like a garland of grace around your neck and honor you and present you with a crown of splendor. (Proverbs 4:7-9)

**Renewed Peace:** As you go through new experiences and new adventures whether they are good or bad, my encouragement is to keep your eyes fixed on Christ and He will give you rest and peace, because He is our peace and loves you and cares for you deeply. (John 16:33)

Keep in mind that if even the wicked give good gifts to their children how much more will your Heavenly Father give to those that ask Him? (Matthew 7:7-11)

Let us give thanks to the Lord for getting us through another year as we look forward to what He has for us up ahead and praise Him that He is faithful and worthy to be praised!

Excerpts from "A New Year Perspective " by Filoian Wiedenhoff

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## **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**

Please join us in celebrating Christmas Eve with scripture, carols, hymns and lighting of the fifth advent candle.  
Service begins at 6:30 PM - Cookies, beverages and fellowship to share afterwards.

## Session Highlights

**Devotion:** Pastor George Doyal, Moderator. Reflection on how photographs and television showed a banner hung across the street in Ferguson during the rioting which said, “Peace”. Would things have been different if it instead had the words, “Peace of Christ”? “The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds, through Christ Jesus.”—Philippians 4:7.

**Deacons:** Deacon representative was invited to meeting by Session. Deacons feel they would like to discontinue hand washing as prelude to Communion as they believe it is wasteful of water during water rationing. Deacon written guidelines call for them to hand pieces of bread out. Session recommended Deacons not touch the bread. Session voted to discontinue hand washing and instructed servers not to physically hand the bread element to members of the Congregation during Communion. Deacons were reminded they can ask past ordained Deacons to assist in serving Communion. Deacon expressed concern about limited range of LifeLine reception when outdoors and away from base station. Junki Kitahara will research LifeLine options for out of the home and report findings/recommendations to the Session.

**Clerk’s Report:** Lynn Gunter. Membership changes. The present Book of Order does not have a category called “Inactive” member. El Estero had 80 members in “Inactive” status and 76 in “Active” status prior to the Book of Order change. According to the new Book of Order our church would be considered to have 156 “Active” Members. The church is assessed Per Capita for “Active” members. The Stated Clerk of the Presbytery, Rev. Kelso, had advised our Session that churches are allowed to maintain an “Inactive Member” category and enforce their policy. Under the old Book of Order, Inactive Members are not allowed to Vote at Meetings of the Congregation or serve in office or as a Member at Large, A Session vote is required to move a member to “Inactive” status and again when restoring a person from the “Inactive” to “Active” membership. Session voted to authorize Clerk of Session continue to maintain an “Inactive Member” category as spelled out in the prior Book of Order and with the same stated prior restrictions. Church Corporation. Don Chin. Expenses for the month exceeded income by about \$5,000. The Presbytery has set the PerCapita assessment at \$31.50 per member in 2015. The church will be expected to pay for 76 Active members. Attendees can contribute a donation to the assessment by Presbytery.

**Administrative Branch: Building & Grounds:** The outside stairs will be removed in January. Worship Service will be held downstairs in the Fellowship Hall until the stairs are rebuilt with appropriate inspections. Session voted to authorize purchase of carpeting for 2<sup>nd</sup> floor areas, stairs and entry up to \$12,000. Yvonne Han and Dori Chin will select and negotiate on behalf of church. Hisao Yamanishi can consult on purchase. Locksmith made repairs to all locking mechanisms on the front doors to the church and they now close and lock securely. The locks to the doors required changing. **Church Nominating Committee:** The committee met several times, reviewed the recommended qualities of officers as stated in the Bible and Book of Order and came to an agreement on Nominees. Session voted to call a Congregational Meeting for the Election of officers on December 28, 2014 at which time the proposed 2015 Church Budget will be shared. **Finance Committee:** Church Budget for 2015 will be shared at the Congregational Meeting in December. Line item of \$3,000 was added for Pastor Nominating Committee expenses. The Committee on Ministry has asked Session to develop a potential salary package for a future pastor along with prayerfully considering and developing a robust job description. The Personnel Committee will review prior Job Descriptions and provide a draft for review by Session. The Liaison from COM is to assist Personnel Committee in obtaining the Personnel Records. Outreach: Mission Giving: Session voted to continue Mission Giving grant to Missionary Rev. Mark Hall. His ministry is in Guatemala. He will be here to speak on Sunday, December 14<sup>th</sup> and will be given the check at that time.

## Session Highlights (cont'd)

Ten members attended the Organic Outreach Conference. Session voted to purchase 10 tickets for 2015. Tickets purchased at discount of 50%. \$69. Members who wish to attend can reimburse the church for cost. Yae Kuwatani reported on progress of inventorying donated items for the Asian Crafts Fair. **Spiritual Growth:** Richard Marquez. Requests volunteers interested in leading Worship Service to contact him. **Dick Wong**, Commissioner to Presbytery of San Jose meetings, reported the Presbytery gets 52% of its income from giving by churches, 37% invested assets, 11% Synod Grants and 2% from General Assembly Grants. It will lose 45% of its membership as a result of churches leaving PC(USA). The Presbytery voted to approve dismissal of Mayflower Church in Pacific Grove. Voted to approve dissolving the pastoral relationship with Rev. Roberts and move to Member at Large status in the Presbytery. **Marian Kageyama** has advised Session she wishes to provide refreshments during Fellowship on January 4<sup>th</sup> to celebrate 88<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## Vacant Pastor Position

Session has been in contact with the Commission on Ministry (COM) representatives of the Presbytery of San Jose. The COM has requested information to help determine which individuals would be suitable for El Estero as an interim pastor to guide the church in our search for a permanent pastor. Please continue to pray with the leadership that God's plan for El Estero will move us forward into the future.

## El Estero Crafts and Food Fair

The Committee for the El Estero Crafts Fair has been working on inventorying and sorting the items collected for the festival. For those who were helping before and still have crafts they are working on, please contact Yae Kuwatani, Nora Shen, Marlene Sato or Naomi Pich. All who are willing to give us a hand with ideas and help are always welcomed. Information and future notices will forth-coming soon.

## Nancy's Project

For many, many years El Estero Presbyterian Church has contributed to Nancy's Project (Nancy Costello's Migrant Worker program). This year the migrant workers have been hit hard financially...not as much work in the fields. Therefore, Nancy's Project decided to distribute Food Boxes this year instead of individual gifts. They felt that this would reach many more people and provide much needed food for the families.

The Deacons have collected and packaged personal and toiletry items to be distributed to the migrate workers for Christmas..

Many thanks to all who have been so generous in providing the much needed provisions and to help make this Christmas season a joyful one for many in our community.

## PRAYER CONCERNS Let us continue to pray for:

Bill & May Wong - Hiro & Royal Manaka  
Bobby Kuwatani - Hedy Yamamoto—Cary Gota—Skye Gota  
Clifford & Nancy Nakajima and son Scott—John & Susie Mitchell  
Bob & Joan Ouye Susie Marquez—Miles Marquez in Afghanistan

Karen Kakishiba, Kiku and Taye's niece

**El Estero Church Gifts**

*Thank You for your most generous donations for the works of the Lord*

11/23/2014 through 12/16/2014

Lynn Gunter -Conference Registration 2015      Nora Shen      May Wong- Birthday Blessings  
 Robert&Diane Uyeda-Lunch Bunch: In memory of Lynda Yokogawa 4yr, Casey Sakai 15yr, Rinzi Manaka 14yr

**Thanksgiving Offering**

Don&Dori Chin Cary&Joyce Gota Lynn Gunter Sachi Hayashi Ralph G Heun Paul&Sumi Ichiuji  
 Marian Kageyama Reiko Kageyama Yo Kageyama Marilyn Kodani Kiku Kuwatani  
 May Kuwatani Yae Kuwatani Eugene Lee Tim&Marion Manaka Richard Marquez  
 Johnnie&Emiko Montoya Takeko Nishida Miyo Oka Lyle&Meja Quock Nora Shen  
 Robert&Taye Suzuki Tomiye Tanaka Lily Uyeda Hideko Yamamoto Hisao&Setsuko Yamanishi

**Christmas**

Don&Dori Chin Skye Gota Rick&Ellie Hattori Marian Kageyama Reiko Kageyama Junki Kitahara Eugene  
 Lee  
 Clifford&Nancy Nakajima Takeko Nishida James&Barbara Tabata George&Jean Tanaka Doris Uyeda  
 Namiko Uyeda Dick&Yuriko Wong May Wong Hisao&Setsuko Yamanishi

**VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED TO FILL WORSHIP TEAM ASSIGNMENTS**

Please let Aiko or any Elder know in which position you may be called to serve.

Jan	Leader	Greeter	Ushers	Coffee	Flowers
4	TBA	Yuriko Wong	Richard Marquez Lyle Quock	Marian Kageyama	
11	TBA	Marian Kageyama	Junki Kitahara Marilyn Uwate	Jean Tanaka	
18	TBA	Junki Kitahara Gene Lee	Dick Wong Dori Chin	Yvonne Han	
25	TBA	Yae Kuwatani	Marian Kageyama Lyle Quock	Marilyn Uwate	

If unable to attend to your duties, please make other arrangements. Please sign up for Flower display.  
 Help is needed for more **Ushers, Greeters and Coffee.**

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After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born King of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.”

*Matthew 2:1-2*

# JANUARY 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>SUNDAY SERVICES 10:30 AM</b>				1	2	3
<b>4 Communion Sunday</b>	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>11 Sunday Service</b>	12	<b>13 Session Mtg 6 PM</b>	14	15	16	17
<b>18 Sunday Service</b>	19	20	21	22	23	24
<b>25 Sunday Ser Cong. Mtg</b>	26	27	28	29	30	31