

Life in the Light

"Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes." (Isaiah 54:2)



This piano concert was a great opportunity to hear how strong and powerful classical music can be. It was very interesting to see her hands run through the keys on the piano, and time flew by. Also, it was nice that my high school orchestra teacher was finally able to come this year, along with her friend. -H.N.

I was informed by Masami-san that Jun practiced on an electric keyboard for most of the time so as to not disturb the Pastor. To put that into perspective, that is like practicing for an F1 race on a simulator at home and then stepping into the real car on the day of the race. I was quite shocked by her confidence and faith in God to be able to remain completely fine given her circumstances. When I saw her step on stage, she was as calm as could be—not a single worry or sign of fear behind her eyes—that's real swag right there. I find her so cool; her level of seriousness towards doing what she does for God is something I am constantly learning from. -K.T.

I liked the last piece the most because of its smooth, jazzy feel. I also found it to be comforting. -S.K.

Jun Asai Piano Concert

Every year in August, Jun Asai—pianist, the church's music director, and the Pastor's daughter—performs at Zipper Hall in Los Angeles. Below, members of the youth group share their thoughts on this year's concert.

This year, I had the opportunity to do houshi inside the hall. It was a different perspective from previous years and I enjoyed it very much. Jun chan's performance was very vibrant and I especially liked the third piece (Hungarian Rhapsody No.2). Listening to her play, I learned a little more about the importance of being serious about what you do and what it looks like to dedicate yourself to God. -E.N.

This year, I noticed that many more music lovers came to the piano concert than last year, which was great to see how God worked through us as we passed out flyers and posted about the concert.

My favorite piece was Hungarian Rhapsody No.2 by Franz Liszt because it was cool to see how smoothly Jun-chan played the friska part and imagine how much she prepared for the piece. -K.I.

The piano concert was amazing. I was awestruck by how fast and precise Jun-chan's hands moved and produced such bold and powerful sounds. I thank God for giving me another opportunity this year to listen to this music. -A.N.



Summer Bible Seminar

Twice a year, our church has a week-long retreat to study God's word together. Here are some takeaways and reflections from the youth group members on this year's summer Bible seminar themed, "Enlarge the Tent".

I thank God for all the blessings he's given me through this camp. During the camp, I was given the chance to lead the ultimate frisbee activity. Seeing everyone giving it their all and working together as a team was very nice. I thank God for the unity and joy he gave us throughout this camp. (Not just during the activities but throughout it all) -E.N.

In this year's summer camp, I was in charge of pool activities along with some juniors for the younger kids. Here, I learned that preparation isn't just about having materials or planning, but being more aware of how kids are doing that day and always asking God for guidance. -H.N.

At this year's summer Bible camp, I thought it was nice how I was given the chance to connect with people I don't normally talk to as much at church, such as some of the older members. I thank God for giving me the time and opportunity to do so. -S.K.

During the evening service of the third day, the Pastor invited those who wanted to receive God's Spirit to come forward as an act of faith. In the past, I would have allowed my own thoughts of doubt to convince me that I was incapable of receiving such a gift. However, because of how much God has been teaching me personally through Masami-san and Jun, my faith in Him has significantly increased. Thus, as the Pastor and Masami-san guided us—encouraging us that we could receive God's Spirit—and Jun began playing "Oh, the Blood," I was able to let go of my own thoughts and simply accept His Spirit in faith. As we began singing, I sensed His presence overwhelm me as if He was embracing my heart, and in that moment, I knew—everything unclean within me had been replaced with Him (His Spirit). -K.T.

As with every camp, I enjoyed all the time I spent there. In this camp, I learned and experienced how much God loves me, sharing about his great thoughts and plans with mere humans. I thank God for his love and for all the fun times I was able to spend with everyone. -A.N.

This year, I once again had a great time building a strong connection with God and set a new start with His word to walk it out with! When camp starts, I enjoy helping and encouraging others as we grow and build up our faith together. Especially when leading activities, you need to watch out for others and always be prepared. It was our first summer camp we did at Pine Spring Ranch and I was able to visualize what we can to improve and make better when we go back next year! -K.I.



Junior Section

Below, members of the junior group (middle school) share their takeaways and reflections on the summer bible seminar as well as the piano concert.

During summer break, I went to my church piano concert. I was amazed how Jun moved her hands really fast.

After the piano concert, I had the 2026 Bible Seminar Camp with my church. I had fun during the night sitters when I was making the newsletter with Yui and how I played with the kids who were younger than me. Through this camp, I learned that "Enlarge the Tent" means to bring more people together to church to learn more about God. -E.M.

In this year's piano concert, I really liked Liszt's Hungarian Rhapsody. It begins slowly with a dark, sad mood, but suddenly goes faster into a light rhythm. The fast transition played on the piano was amazing. The music was wonderful, and I loved how she rearranged the Hungarian Rhapsody alongside the two surprise extra pieces at the end. I thought the performance was terrific!

Camp this year was very exciting. We did activities, talked, learned, and just had fun. Out of all the activities, I liked swimming the best. We had relays, followed by treasure hunts. During the relays, I swam as fast as I could to the other end of the pool and touched the wall so the next person could start swimming. Eating breakfast, lunch, and dinner together was also really fun because we talked about our days while we ate.

Another activity I really liked was creating a newsletter. My partner and I made a newsletter about women in the Bible and the important roles they played. For example, we wrote about Esther, who saved her people when they were in desperate need of help by turning to God.

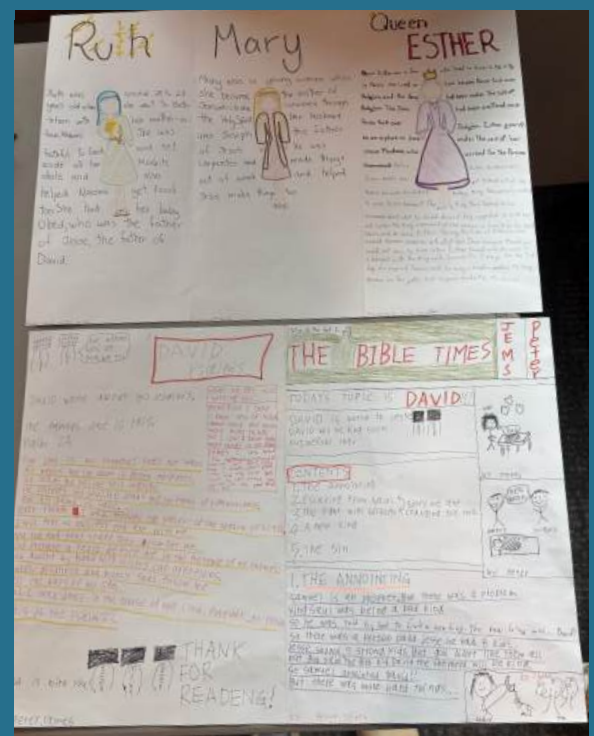
Finally, in church school, we learned about the many different bridges that connect us to God. We discovered how things like fire, clouds, the spirit, pillars, staircases, and the cross served as connections to God in both the Old and New Testaments. These were the activities that I enjoyed the most during camp. -Y.S.

For the piano concert, I felt that I could pay attention to the piano and actually hear how it sounded without feeling sleepy. I also want to thank God that I could enjoy another stay at the campsite (Pine Springs Ranch). Though I am disappointed that we couldn't stay for long, moments like the journal sharing time that I did with Peter, Daniel, Yoshiya, and Timothy, where we discussed the questions in our journals, are what made this camp memorable. I also had fun during activity time, where we played frisbee, went hiking, and we played water polo. -J.M.

At the camp, there were many things I enjoyed, like the meal at the cafeteria, the church school, the activities, and the sitter.

First, at the cafeteria, there were lots of things to eat, and it was really delicious. We enjoyed talking at the meal. And next at church school, we learned about the connection between the staff and the cross and about the pillar of fire and smoke. I remember these two things from the church school clearly. And at the activity time, we played at the pool, and we went hiking too. My favorite activity was the water polo at the pool. It was really fun. And the last thing we did was the Bible newspaper project at the sitter. We wrote about David, and we got to know lots of things that we didn't know.

These 4 things were my best moments at the camp. -P.M. (From Yokohama Branch in Japan)



You Are There

“Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.” (Hebrews 13:5)

This month, I got to spend a fair amount of time with the juniors. Through this, God taught me a lot about how to care for others. -K.T.

8/4-8/5

The week before the camp, I spent two days with them. During this period, I reached a breaking point. I became so exhausted and overwhelmed with stress—being the leader—that I wanted to go home, which was a first for me during a church activity. However, just when I thought I couldn't go on, Masami-san called me. I hadn't told her anything, yet she knew exactly how I was feeling and what I was going through. Her words were a healing potion from God to both my soul and body. She encouraged me not to give up and told me exactly what to eat and drink to keep my body from fatiguing. She also called the juniors and their parents to make sure they would support me as much as possible so I could rest.

Words cannot describe how much I needed that; I would not have lasted the full two days had she not called. I deeply felt the love of God through her words; it was as if He had reached down and pulled me back onto my feet. I was filled with joy because I experienced firsthand how God is always watching over and thinking of me. It reminded me that I wasn't alone—He has my back.

After the call, my exhaustion disappeared, and I felt completely restored. My motivation to continue the event was even stronger than before, and I felt better than ever. I came to understand a little more how much power—God's power—flows through Masami-san.

The story does not end there; she helped me again the following day when issues arose between the children and their parents. As a result, the event was a success, and the kids had a great time. I truly realized that I could not have done this without her; she organizes everything behind the scenes so that everything plays out smoothly.



8/15

Right after the camp, I got another chance to hang out with the juniors. Once again, Masami-san and Jun were working behind the scenes to make sure all was well. Masami-san called me numerous times to check on how everyone was doing. Whenever I had a question, she responded immediately with clear guidance. She even came in person with snacks, popsicles, ice cream, and baked goods that Jun bought for all of us. Looking at those snacks, I could see how much thought Jun put into selecting them. She always gets exactly what we like and want.

I am so grateful for all the work they both put into these events to ensure we have a great time. Because they are always watching over me, I have no worries. I am thankful to God for bringing such loving people into my life so I can learn from them. They have served as God's voice and ambassadors, guiding me to know Him better and become more like Him. I too wish to become like them, where God's Spirit flows through me to others.

JOIN US!



Sunday worship:

Japanese Service: 9 AM - 11 AM

English Service: 11 AM - 1 PM

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