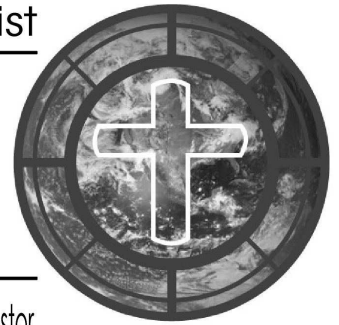

LAKE SIDE CHURCH *of Chicago*

†transforming lives †transforming our world for Christ

The **LAMPLIGHTER**



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MEMORIAL TO WHAT?

Most Americans did something yesterday to commemorate the attacks on America September 11, 2001. On that day, 19 terrorists hijacked four commercial airline planes, flying two into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center, one into the Pentagon and one crashed in a field outside Shanksville, Pennsylvania. The combined death toll of the terrorist acts was 2,996.

The effectiveness of the terrorist plot executed on U.S. soil shook the American ego to its core. The extensive efforts to memorialize the events of that day demonstrate the attempt to regain that sense of American pride and supremacy. The National September 11 Memorial and Museum, constructed at the site of the World Trade Center, is estimated to cost \$350 million. The memorial to the victims of Flight 93 outside Shanksville has already required over \$52 million and needs at least \$10 million for completion. The Pentagon Memorial Fund has set a target of \$32 million for its construction.

Each year at the memorial service, organizers prohibit speeches by politicians, requiring them to do readings only. President Obama chose to read Psalm 46 this year, a psalm celebrating God's selection of Jerusalem as his chosen city through which he will bless the world. It exalts the supremacy of God over all nations and his unsurpassed ability to protect his chosen city.

Portions of that psalm read: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear though the earth gives way The nations rage, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. ... Come, behold the works of the Lord, how he has brought desolations on the earth. He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the chariots with fire. 'Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!' The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress."

The President's suggestion that the U.S. has a special position in God's program will win the applause of a majority of Americans, but such an opinion cannot stand the scrutiny of biblical interpretation. God has made no promises to this country for special protection or blessing. The persistent effort of the U.S. to minimize God and reduce him to a spiritual token places it at the mercy of a holy and just God.

America trusts God for protection as much as it trusts Iran for reliable intelligence. It trusts in a military force unequalled in the world. It trusts in its powerful corporations that have dictated the global economy for decades. It trusts in a political system that preserves power for the wealthy and connected. It trusts in a smug scientific community to rescue Americans from the effects of their hedonistic indulgences. But trust in God as a refuge and strength? Where is the evidence?

Following the 9/11 tragedy, churches experienced a sudden surge in attendance. The fear-induced knee-jerk interest in religion subsided in a few months. Our government, inflated by its military complex, was adequate to restore peace and protect our prosperity. People returned to Best Buy and Wal-Mart. Those great deals that could not be passed up.

A week after Middle Eastern fanatics insulted the U.S. with its terrorist plot, a rare bipartisan Congress authorized Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. The U.S. led military operation pledged to dismantle the Al-Qaeda organization in order to protect freedom in the developed world. Eighteen months later, political leaders spun military intelligence on the Wheel of Fortune to justify an invasion of an impotent Iraq. The true object of U.S. trust exercised its own brand of justice to "break the bow and shatter the spears" of those who would dare to slap the face of the leading democratic society in the free world.

The annual memorial service seeks to remember those who died in this tragic attack. The hyped public performance seems to display inappropriately the grief of family and friends that would better be kept private. But this overt exhibition argues for an attempt to inflate an injured national pride, to restore the bravado to a country that demonstrated a chink in its armor. Nationalism overshadows any theism.

The military liberated Iraq. Saddam was captured, tried and executed by the Iraqi government. Osama Bin Laden was allegedly flushed out and killed. The U.S. is withdrawing its troops from Iraq, nine years after the invasion. The President plans to withdraw troops from Afghanistan in the next year, eleven years after the incursion. Thousands of people lie in graves, including U.S. soldiers and innocent civilians, in the name of democracy and freedom, not because leaders were acting in submission to the Lord of hosts.

I appreciate the President's effort to turn the hearts of Americans to God on such an auspicious occasion. On the surface, it appears sincere, but on closer examination it seems hypocritical. I do not pretend to know his motives, but if he really intends to turn to God for refuge and strength, he needs to revise current American military policies to conform to God's carefully balanced justice and mercy.

"He has told you, O man what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8)

Pastor Stan

LAKESIDE THIS WEEK, Sep 15-21, 2011				SMALL GROUPS/MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES	
Thur	15			Please speak with contact person/elder if interested.	
Fri	16			Small Group	Contact Person
Sat	17			Sun Eve (church)	W Hiyama, 847.677.6548
Sun	18	9:05 am	Morning Prayer	Wed Day Group (church)	R Hall, 847.677.4126
		9:30 am	Sun School for all ages	TNT Bible Study (Tue/Skokie)	J/P Leopoldo, 847.329.0992
		10:50 am	Children PreK-5 th meet downstairs	Arl Hts Group (Fri/Arl Hts)	A DePaz, 847.342.0118
		3:00 pm	Worship Service	Hosanna (Fri/Skokie)	B Kanda, 847.329.0763
		6:30 pm	FVAC		
			YG/High School at church	MINISTRY	POSITIONS AVAILABLE
Mon	19		Lamplighter production	Worship	Ushers and greeters
Tue	20	10:00 am	Lamplighter mailing	Fellowship	Women's Fellowship Group leader(s), person to send hospital/funeral flowers
Wed	21	10:00 am	Day of Prayer and Fasting	Building Maintenance	Deacon and helpers
		10:00 am	Wed Day Group (at church)	Christian Ed	Sun teaching leaders/all ages
				Missions	Committee members
				Finance	Assistants (requires DB review and approval)

UPCOMING EVENTS

10/30 Soup Kitchen (Singular Worshippers)
12/03 Christmas Potluck Dinner

SEPTEMBER CHILDCARE

09/18: S Okazaki, Z Hiyama, D Leopoldo
09/25: J Fujiyoshi, E Kanda, A Martin
Subs: L Mukoyama, Q Babbo, L Babbo

PRAYER REQUESTS are included in the Lamplighter by request. We rely on your input to keep the prayer requests meaningful. If you wish to add someone to the prayer list or update an existing request, please drop a note in the office or email the church at lakesidechurchofchicago@yahoo.com.

Please lift up: Jane Arao & family (passing of her father and uncle), Yaho Fujii, Kim Garcia-Meza (Howard Mukoyama's daughter (Lisa's niece), recovering from surgery), Bobby Giffen (Deb's uncle, physical/spiritual health, broken neck), Nancy Baer (recovery), Jim Giffen (Deb's dad, back pain, diabetes management, seizures), Tak Hiyama (rehabilitating at home), Dan Johnson (continued prayer), Stan Johnson's grandson (MS), Sue Lemons (Deb's aunt, 50% chance may lose both legs), Ritz Hall (continued recovery), Llewellyn Matsumoto (recovering from rotator cuff surgery), Carol Murai (ongoing treatments), the family of Kazuko Murakami (passed away Aug 25), Amy Nakai (God's protection as she has been falling more), Pat Nakashima (general health), Kaiko and Taro Nomoto (recovering at home), Aiden Osakada (ongoing healthcare), Kenny Sakamoto (health management), Dorothy Ping (Brantley's grandmother—wisdom in treatment, strength, healing), Rebecca Schwind (fragile health), Fumiyo Uchida, Phyllis Unosawa (her health), Pat Williams (comfort and healing), and continue to lift in prayer those who are grieving and those near in heart though far away. May God be glorified and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven.



Stay tuned for info about the upcoming school year!!



Sun, Sep 18, 6:30pm: Regular meeting at church

ALPHA GROUP

It's still not too late to follow-up with someone you invited who hasn't gotten back to you yet. The ALPHA Group coordinators welcome new guests to join the group this **Fri, Sep 15, 7pm**, at the home of Ron and Joanne Toyama, 3214 Park Place, Evanston. Just let them (847.475.2585) or George and Jane Kawasaki (847.291.0521) know to expect more guests.

ANNUAL REPORT REPORTS

It's Annual Report time. Ministry heads will be contacting committee heads for reports. For those of you who will be writing a report please check with your ministry "boss" for deadline details.

2011-2012 DIRECTORY

Please help keep the directory up-to-date. Email or phone in corrected info NOW!!! (College kids, this means you too!!)

A draft of the directory will be available for review at the Congregation Meeting on Sun, Oct 2.