

The Japanese United Methodist Church of Sacramento originated from the merger in June 1968 of the former Pioneer Methodist Church (Japanese) of Sacramento and the Florin Japanese Methodist Church. The four acre site located in South Sacramento and the multi-purpose building was donated by the dispersed Merwin Memorial United Methodist Church. The new sanctuary and multi-purpose social hall was built in 1970 at a cost of \$250,000.

Though its history is less than a decade, the Japanese United Methodist Church of Sacramento has its roots deep in the past of these two historic Methodist Churches. The recorded history of the Pioneer Methodist Church, the third oldest Japanese Methodist Church in the United States, goes back to around the year 1891. Using the river boat as a means of transportation, ministers came from the Japanese Methodist Church in San Francisco to engage themselves in evangelistic meetings, such as "road-

side preaching" and worship services among the Japanese people in Sacramento. The Reverend Sotohichi Kihara arrived in Sacramento as its first appointed minister and the congregation assembled in a house at 510 "L" Street, on February 1892. The church was formally organized in 1893 under the directive of Superintendent Harris. After moving several times, due to size and condition of the houses, the church finally moved to its permanent location at 310 "Q" Street in 1931. In its earlier days, the church maintained a boarding house for the many young men who came to Sacramento from Japan, and sought places to stay. "This endeavour helped many young people". Many of the early converts to the Christian faith and lay leaders of the church in its later years came from among those young men. While working and looking towards a new era in missions among the English speaking Niseis, war came. "Many long years of hard and noble works seemed to have vanished like a bubble in thin air".

Japanese United Methodist Church, 1970



Former Florin Japanese United Methodist Church Approximately 1927 - 29



Although many of the former members did not return to Sacramento at the close of the war, the church embarked on a building program in 1948 and a new sanctuary was completed on December 10, 1950 costing \$45,000. "December 17, 1950 is one unforgettable day in history of the Pioneer Methodist Church. On this Sunday . . . the entire sanctuary was filled with emotion and thankfulness . . ." The chapel was named the Richardson Memorial Chapel in memory of Superintendent Channing Richardson. In 1954, the name was changed and the Japanese Methodist Church of Sacramento came to be known as the Pioneer Methodist Church. The Pioneer United Methodist Church with its history of over 76 years had over 30 ministers. The beginning of the Florin Japanese Methodist Church located in the original town of Florin dates back to 1913 when Dr. H. B. Johnson met with leaders of the Florin Japanese community to establish the Christian work and also the teaching of the Japanese language. "On the hot day of July 24, 1913, Mr. Yasaburo Tsuda (who later became an ordained Methodist minister and appointed to the church in 1921) arrived in Florin as a teacher." With three students, the class was held in a stable. The first minister, the Reverend Raiichi Minabe, was appointed to Florin in 1915. A two-story structure was acquired for the church and language school use and a year later, in 1916, the present

chapel was built. Beginning with 7 members and 7 children in Sunday School, it is reported that 3 years later, 350 attended the Christmas program. The large multi-purpose social hall was built for the church and Japanese community use in 1927.

1931 marked the beginning of the "Florin Revival" where within a period of 6 months, 62 persons were reported to have received the Christian baptism. Stimulated by the "revival", a period of growth continued through the early 1930's. It should be pointed out that the "Florin Revival" remains as one of the 3 "great revivals" among Japanese Methodist. Just before the outbreak of the 2nd World War, the church became self-supporting and the English-speaking work among the Niseis was just then getting a start. At the close of the war, former families returned and the church hall was used as a Hostel. The 55th anniversary in June 1968 marked the closing of the Florin Japanese Methodist Church as she became a part of the Japanese United Methodist Church of Sacramento.

The history of the Pioneer Methodist Church and the Florin Japanese Methodist Church makes fascinating reading, however, the merger of these two historic churches into one and its continual existence with its hopes and mission is one of the finest pages in its ongoing history.

Former Pioneer Methodist Church, 1948 - 49





Pastoral Chronology

orin Japanese Methodist Church
 1913-1915 — Rev. Yasaburo Tsuda
 1915-1917 — Rev. Raiichi Minabe
 1917-1920 — Rev. Shichi Takata
 1920-1921 — Rev. Yuzuru Yamaka
 1921-1924 — Rev. Yasaburo Tsuda
 1924-1927 — Rev. Iwakichi Haratani
 1927-1929 — Rev. Seichi Niwa
 1929-1931 — Rev. Hiroshi Norisue
 1931-1940 — Rev. Yonosuke Sasaki
 1940-1941 — Rev. Kuranokuse Sasaki
 1945-1950 — Rev. Yasaburo Tsuda
 1950-1954 — Rev. Junichi Fujimori
 1954-1955 — Rev. Taro Goto
 1954-1955 — Rev. George Nishikawa
 1955-1958 — Rev. Sadao Masuko
 1958-1968 — Rev. Casper Horikoshi

Pioneer Japanese Methodist Church
 1892-1893 — Rev. Sotohichi Kihara
 1893-1893 — Rev. Toshio Fujiwara
 1893-1894 — Rev. Tsuyoshi Hiraga
 1894-1895 — Rev. Asanosuke Hirano
 1895-1898 — Rev. Tokusaburo Morimoto
 1898-1899 — Rev. Yoshimi Kimura
 1899-1900 — Rev. Chuzo Nakamura
 1900-1901 — Rev. Eisaku Tokimasa
 1901-1902 — Rev. Akitoshi Kawasumi
 1902-1903 — Rev. Yotaro Kudo
 1903-1908 — Rev. Morizo Yoshida
 1908-1909 — Rev. Genshichi Tsuruta
 1909-1913 — Rev. Morizo Yoshida
 1913-1914 — Rev. Yuzuru Yamaka
 1915-1923 — Rev. Otoe So
 1924-1925 — Rev. Zenro Hirata
 1924-1926 — Rev. Shigeichi Miyasaki
 1926-1927 — Rev. Kitahide Yoshioka
 1927-1929 — Rev. Sosaburo Watanabe
 1929-1932 — Rev. Tamotsu Machida
 1932-1936 — Rev. Seiichi Niwa
 1936-1937 — Rev. Zenro Hirata
 1937-1942 — Rev. Shigeo Tanabe
 1945-1948 — Rev. Yasaburo Tsuda
 1946-1947 — Rev. Masaji Goto
 1947-1952 — Rev. Waichi Oyanagi
 1952-1954 — Rev. Junichi Fujimori
 1952-1958 — Rev. Harry Murakami
 1954-1956 — Rev. Susumu Kuwano
 1958-1960 — Rev. George Nishikawa
 1959-1960 — Rev. Ken Miyake
 1960-1968 — Rev. Lester Suzuki