

Belvedere Family Church Newsletter for December 3, 2021

Justin Okamoto
December 3, 2021



Belvedere Family Newsletter

Hello Family!

Welcome to our weekly newsletter. The articles and announcements below are also posted at belvederfamily.com/news. Reading the posts on our website will provide more details and photos. If you miss an announcement, you can always return to belvederfamily.com/news to read all the announcements there.

Belvedere Family Calendar

[Click to for links to weekly and monthly events.](#)



In this edition of the newsletter:

- [Talent Performances for our Christmas Service](#)
- [Sunday Service Survey- We would still like to hear from you- \(English and Japanese\)](#)
- [Next Sunday School Workshop – Sunday Dec. 19th](#)
- [Support Schools of Africa!](#)
- [BlessingFest Watch Party at Belvedere](#)
- [Last Up&Coming of the year and Christmas Party!](#)

- [Pastors Justin and Eric White featured on FamilyFed.org](http://FamilyFed.org)

Talent Performances for our Christmas Service



This year we would like to have a few performances from our members as part of our Christmas Service on Dec. 19. If you can offer a short performance of any kind, we would all enjoy it! Please contact Raoul Joseph at luoar48@gmail.com.

[Continue reading at BelvedereFamily.com >](http://BelvedereFamily.com)

Sunday Service Survey- We would still like to hear from you- (English and Japanese)



Sunday Service Survey: If you haven't already, please take a moment to fill out our survey. Available in both English and Japanese. Click for the links.

[Continue reading at BelvedereFamily.com >](http://BelvedereFamily.com)

Next Sunday School Workshop – Sunday Dec. 19th



The next Sunday School workshop will be Sunday the 19th from 12 - 4PM. Join us for the Christmas Service/Party afterwards as well!

[Continue reading at BelvedereFamily.com >](#)

[Support Schools of Africa!](#)



Our local WFWPU Chapter is hosting a fundraiser for the Schools of Africa project by selling raffle tickets. Please contact Kathy Ross at kathrynross82@gmail.com for more information.

[Continue reading at BelvedereFamily.com >](#)

[BlessingFest Watch Party at Belvedere](#)



Join us on Saturday, December 18th at 10am for a BlessingFest Watch Party! Refreshments will be served. Please register yourself and your party here:

forms.gle/ijDSwr9rMUMEjuxy8

[Continue reading at BelvedereFamily.com >](https://www.belvederefamily.com)

Last Up&Coming of the year and Christmas Party!



This coming Saturday, on December 4th, will be the last day of Up and Coming for the 2021 year! Drop off and pick up will be at Belvedere and the program will go from 4pm - 8:30pm. Click to read more!

[Continue reading at BelvedereFamily.com >](https://www.belvederefamily.com)

[Pastors Justin and Eric White featured on FamilyFed.org](#)



Two new pastors were recently introduced on the FamilyFed.org website. Our own Pastor Justin Okamoto and Pastor Eric White of the Oklahoma Family Church. Both are 30 years old and have accepted the important leadership responsibilities for their communities. Take a moment to read the interview at familyfed.org/news/meet-pastors-justin-and-eric-young-trailblazers

[Continue reading at BelvedereFamily.com >](#)

We hope the information above is helpful and valuable to you.

You can also find the latest the news on our website.

at belvederefamily.com/news.

If you have an article or news item you would like to share with our community please send it to news@belvederefamily.com.



Be sure to visit our website for additional valuable resources.



Belvedere Family Community

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Programs and Events!

Daily Events:

Morning Devotion with Dr. Yong 6am daily: <https://zoom.us/j/94882470936> or edu.familyfed.org

Weekly events:

Sunday:

- [National Family Service](#) at 11am
- BFC Sunday Service every 2 weeks at 4pm
- [Hour of Restoration](#) at 4pm

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
6pm: Chosen (ACLC)	8pm: TribeNet	8pm: YUM-E	8pm: Japanese Ministry	8pm: ACLC Outreach	

This month at Belvedere Family Community:

December 2021						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3	4 Rally of Hope! Up&Coming Christmas Party
5 Service at Belvedere	6	7	8	9	10 Date Night	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18 Blessing Fest 10am to 12noon
19 Sunday School Workshop	20	21	22	23	24	25 Christmas

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Service at Belvedere						
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Events from our news page:



[BlessingFest Watch Party at Belvedere](#)

Join us on Saturday, December 18th at 10am



[Last Up&Coming of the year and Christmas Party!](#)

This coming Saturday, on December 4th, will be the last day of Up and Coming for the 2021 year! Drop off and pick up will be at Belvedere and the program will go from 4pm - 8:30pm. Click to read more!



[Report on the Belvedere Sunday School "True Love" Workshop \(11/7/2021\)](#)

This past Sunday, Belvedere Sunday School had the privilege of hosting our first In-Person Sunday School Workshop at the Training Center. We invited children and parents from across the Tri-State Area, gathering 60+ participants and staff for a day full of activities, songs, dancing, and skits. Click to see more with lots of photos!

Do you have an event that is not listed on the calendar?

Contact us at admin@belvederfamily.com
to add your event to our calendar today!

✉ E-MAIL US!



CONTACT

Belvedere Family
723 South Broadway
Tarrytown, NY 10591
914-366-6171
info@belvederfamily.com

OUR SERVICE SCHEDULE

Come and join us!
Worship Services Every Sunday At
10am
Visit our event calendar for more info.

Belvedere Family Community

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BlessingFest Watch Party at Belvedere



December 18, 2021

Join us at Belvedere for a

Blessing Fest Watch Party

Where: Belvedere Estate

When: Saturday, December 18, 2021, 10am - 12pm



Featuring:
The Mother of Peace

Musical Performances by:
Samuel Suia ft. Goldyn Avenue
AudioLynx
Karen and Oji



Sign up here:
<https://forms.gle/ijDSwr9rMUMEjuxy8>

Join us on Saturday, December 18th at 10am for a BlessingFest Watch Party!

Refreshments will be served.

Please register yourself and your party here: <https://forms.gle/ijDSwr9rMUMEjuxy8>

December 2nd, 2021

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Belvedere Family Community

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Last Up&Coming of the year and Christmas Party!



Hello Up&Coming Participants and Parents. Please read the letter below from our Youth Pastor about the upcoming UC and Christmas Party:

Dear Parents and Participants,

This might come as a shock to many of you but this coming **Saturday, on December 4th**, will be the last day of Up and Coming for the 2021 year! Drop off and pick up will be at Belvedere and the program will go from **4pm – 8:30pm**. Please bring \$4 for dinner!

The reason this is the last day of UC for the rest of the year is because the **Blessing Festival will take place on December 18th** and we wanted to support by hosting a community level watch party! More information will be sent out soon.

We will have an official Christmas party and it will be hosted by Up & Coming and the Belvedere Family Church community. This will take place on December 19th. More information will be sent out soon.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

See you on Saturday!

Stephanie Dias

Youth Pastor

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National

Meet Pastors Justin and Eric, Young Trailblazers

This year ushered in new faces and fresh ideas for the Unification movement in the US, where a growing number of leaders are inspired young trailblazers. Meet Pastor Justin Okamoto of Belvedere, New York, and state leader and Pastor Eric White of Oklahoma. In their own words, they share about family, faith and their personal journeys, as well as the vision they have for their unique communities.



Pastor Justin Okamoto, 30, Belvedere Family Church

I get my joy finding innovative ways to do things.

As the new pastor of Belvedere Family Church, I aim to bring fresh energy, ideas and perspectives and create a community that people can be excited about. I want us to live up to what we believe in and I really want to develop a community where we can raise families and keep marriages strong. People need to feel valued, that they are being served and that our community is a place where they can raise their family. As a community, I want to do more to really create a space for our kids to feel safe, make friends, have fun, and develop their character and life of faith. Organizing a fundraiser for a [bouncy castle](#) and [church cleanup](#) of our parsonage in Tarrytown

have been just some of the creative efforts toward this goal.

Belvedere is my home where I've been a member of this community since I was a small child.

I was born in Hoffman Estates, Illinois, before my family moved to New Jersey and then New York. My parents are Japanese and Australian and have five kids total. I started working in ministry about eight years ago as the assistant pastor of Belvedere. I also worked at CARP headquarters for about a year during Rev. Naokimi's CARP presidency. I then spent four years in Japan as an English teacher and also started my own life coaching business there.

But I was at a crossroads.

I wasn't sure if I wanted to stay in Japan or go back to America. Then Rev. Naokimi became FFWPU national president and Dr. Yong became the regional president of North America. I came back to the U.S. in December 2020 unsure if I wanted to go all in with my life coaching business, or go into ministry. After talking with Rev. Naokimi, I was really inspired by what he said and what Dr. Yong was doing with Morning Devotion.

I wanted to inherit from these leaders and I thought maybe this was God's way of calling me back into ministry.

I started working part time at headquarters earlier this year with the online holy communities, then I became assistant pastor at Belvedere under Dr. Drissa Kone. I felt this was God calling me to do what I was originally inspired to do with my life. Dr. Kone has been a mentor to me but he is now working with the doctoral program at UTS. My wife Kazuka has been an amazing support in my journey. So has my family. All of my siblings are Blessed and there are four grandchildren, including my own two kids. We have a pretty big tribe at this point and it's great. As a father and pastor, I want to see all the kids of our community eventually develop their own life of faith, too, and do this in the most innovative ways possible.



Pastor Eric White, 30, Oklahoma Family Church

Working in law enforcement helped me to see the real transcending value of spiritual principles.

As a Sheriff's Deputy in Cleveland County, Oklahoma, I realize there is no law you can pass or anything you can physically do to solve all the evil and corruption in the world. Arresting people won't change anything. I came to this realization when I kept seeing a trend throughout my career. I arrested the same guy several weeks in a row, for example, and it was always for the same reason – a DUI. No matter what I was doing physically through my job, I couldn't change people's hearts and "save" them.

I believe the core values of the Unification movement, and the *Divine Principle*, is the only thing that will help people.

Living for the sake of others is the answer; there's no other way to save the world. I've lived in the city of Norman my whole life and we have a really small community here. My father was doing ocean providence on the East Coast before moving here after I was born. He's an American and my mom is from Germany. My older brother lives in Wisconsin and has two kids. The importance of family was the recurring theme that led me to rejoin the Unification movement. I had a really amazing childhood growing up – I couldn't have had a better childhood – but despite that, I left the church at age 16. I dated and married my girlfriend, then got divorced eight years later. In February 2020, I received the Marriage Blessing with my

wonderful wife Junko, from Japan.

My driving force is knowing that nothing we do will ever matter if we don't get to where we need to be spiritual.

I became the youth and young adult pastor for about two years before I became the state leader and Pastor of Oklahoma Family Church. We have a few active members and families that regularly come to church; however, if everyone was active, we could probably quadruple our community turnout. So for me, I want to create incentives for people to be active and involved. There is value in coming to church and in being part of our movement, so I want to make people feel welcomed. I want to create that sense of community and experience of being valued by bringing a spark back and investing in the people here.

I think living for the sake of others means we should be uplifting each other so people can really feel valued and loved.

It's challenging to get young people motivated because they have a lot going on with school, friends and family. But I think when we practice what we preach and invest in something outside of ourselves, we see incredible outcomes. I organized a service project where we cleaned a women's shelter for those who have escaped domestic abuse, and a lot of people showed up! We recently had a Thanksgiving potluck as well to create a more open and inviting environment with fellowship, and we tripled our normal attendance. I'd like to do more service-based and community-oriented projects like that.

We are the Family Federation, and we should build that culture of family love and community at every level.

Our community is doing tribal messiahship and we have growing young families. I'm also developing more volunteer projects for the Oklahoma community. My wife and I are expecting our first child in February – a baby girl – and I think to myself, we must really do community outreach now so that the next generation will have a better experience in the future and a world that is better off.

You can share a story idea from your community at

You can share a story from your community at

info@unification.org.

< Celebrating Marriage on a Global Scale

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