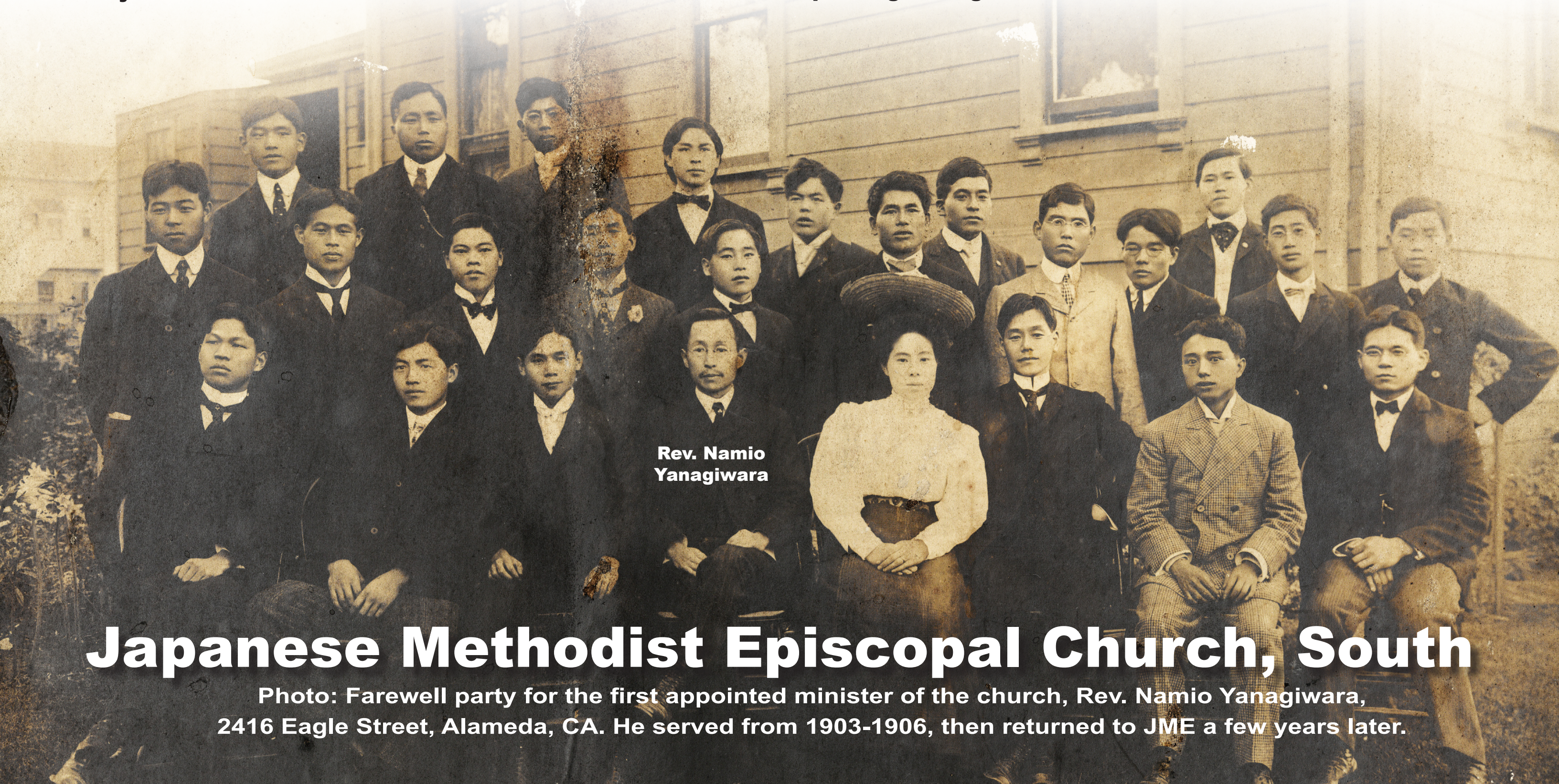


Formally named for the first time as the Alameda Japanese Methodist Church, South, the church was officially organized with a membership of 20 people in 1903. But in those days, the Issei members simply called it “the Mission.”

The congregation was made up of mostly men; gardeners, shoe makers, laundry workers- who lived and worked in a bachelor society near the train tracks of Alameda. The first woman to

join the church did not appear until four years later—Mrs. Tazuyo Maeno, baptized in 1907. The pioneers of what would later become Buena Vista Methodist Church in Alameda, CA., were sojourners—men and women who came in search of California’s Golden shores...hoping to make a fortune and return home.

From the 1880’s, they arrived in Alameda-jobless, homeless and speaking no English.



Rev. Namio Yanagiwara

Japanese Methodist Episcopal Church, South

Photo: Farewell party for the first appointed minister of the church, Rev. Namio Yanagiwara, 2416 Eagle Street, Alameda, CA. He served from 1903-1906, then returned to JME a few years later.

Woman's Home Mission Society

METHODIST EPISCOPAL
CHURCH, SOUTH

Eighteenth
Annual Report, 1904



In 1903 twenty-nine hundred Japanese landed at San Francisco direct from Japan. One thousand, one hundred and seventy-two of these were from the provinces where the Southern Methodist Church has its mission headquarters.

They tell us that they are surprised at the iniquity and unrighteousness they find in our own fair country. They had thought of America as the "Golden Gate" to all good because we had loved them so well as to send missionaries to tell them of the Christ.

In August (1903), Mr. Nishikawa, who had for a time been our Japanese pastor, left us for his native land, but in November the [Rev. N. Yanagiwara](#) came from Japan to take his place.

Mr. N. Yanagiwara took up his resi-

dence in the Alameda Mission and at once began his work, it was at this place that we organized, on November 20, 1903, our first Japanese Church in America with seven members. Since then five have been added to the little flock, and there are several probationers who are being prepared for baptism.

[Mr. Yanagiwara](#) has done faithful and effective work during the year. He practically preaches five times each week besides doing a whole lot of personal work inside and outside of the missions and superintending the rooming and boarding departments of the Homes in San Francisco and Alameda.

He is a fine specimen of a Japanese Christian gentleman, that you like more as you know him better.

• *Mrs R.W. MacDonnel, General Secretary of the Woman's Home Mission Society Journal, 1905*



Words from **Rev. Namio Yanagiwara, Pastor.**

The arrangement of my work in the three places around San Francisco Bay—San Francisco, [Alameda](#), and Oakland—was, during the year, as follows: San Francisco, preaching service Sunday afternoon, Bible class Tuesday night; Alameda, preaching service Sunday night, prayer meeting Wednesday night; Oakland, Bible class Friday night.

Besides these meetings conducted by myself, I am managing two Japanese mission homes, one at Alameda and the other at San Francisco. Since last August, when our San Francisco mission home was secured, I have been staying there for three days in the week, and the

other four days in Alameda, so that I could manage the home affairs in both places, it helped our night school at San Francisco, as there was no regular Japanese interpreter.

The Alameda mission work is growing nicely, showing some good fruits. There was no little trouble among them during the year. The mission is really the center of good influence for the Japanese people in Alameda, both for spiritual and social affairs. Since the Russo-Japanese War began I have been obliged to act as the president of the "Patriotic Association" here.

But fortunately it was rather a good chance for me to work for Jesus, because I and our mission thus became known more widely by

our countrymen. Nothing is likely to be done to our people here without consulting with our mission. May I say that it is our desire that our missions at any place where the Japanese immigrants come shall be the religious, intellectual, and social headquarters?

Our Alameda mission home is very warm in heart and quite simple in manner. We are giving great spiritual and material advantages to young men, whether Christians or not, who are so far from their native land and loving parents.

During the year at Alameda I have baptized five young men and received four young Christians who came from Japan. Total membership, twenty. There are three probationers.



初代牧師柳原浪夫師送別会一九〇六年
於教会 在イーグル街時代

**Japanese Methodist Episcopal Church, South, of Alameda, CA, 1906
Farewell party for the first appointed minister of the church, Rev. Namio Yanagiwara. He is seated front row center, with
the glasses. He served from 1903-1906 at the 2416 Eagle Street location. This version of the photo came from a Buena Vista
Church celebration brochure.**



**Japanese Methodist Episcopal Church, South, of Alameda, CA, 1906
Farewell party for the first appointed minister of the church, Rev. Namio Yanagiwara. He is seated front row
center, with the glasses. He served from 1903-1906 at the 2416 Eagle Street location.**