

Bill and Nellie Takeda made sure their children were dressed in their Sunday finest. After all, it was Easter Sunday, and all the Japanese Methodists in Alameda, CA would do the same.

The difference was on the morning of Easter 1946, they awoke inside their church building (seen at left), with several other families displaced by racism during World War II.

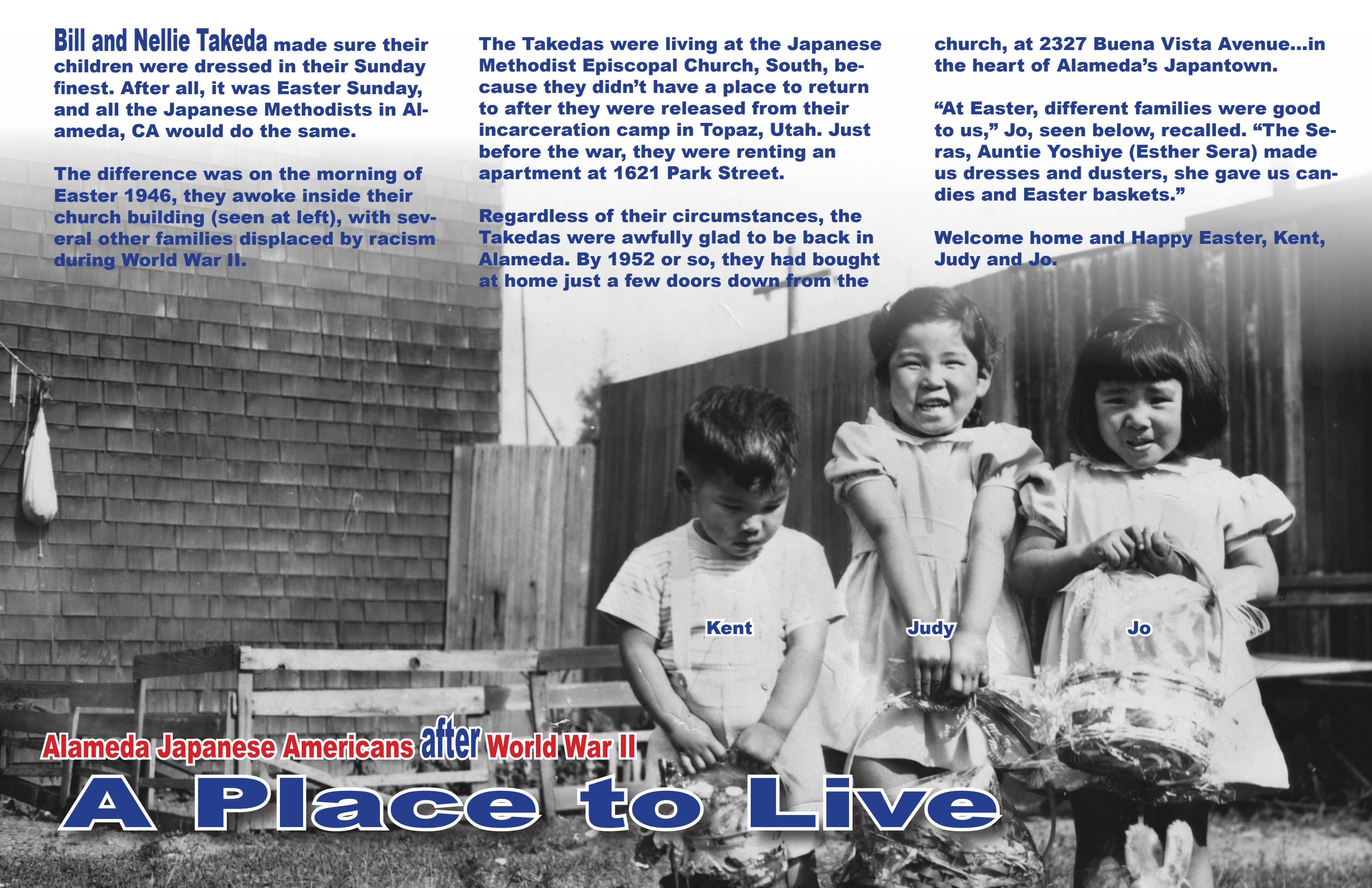
The Takedas were living at the Japanese Methodist Episcopal Church, South, because they didn't have a place to return to after they were released from their incarceration camp in Topaz, Utah. Just before the war, they were renting an apartment at 1621 Park Street.

Regardless of their circumstances, the Takedas were awfully glad to be back in Alameda. By 1952 or so, they had bought at home just a few doors down from the

church, at 2327 Buena Vista Avenue...in the heart of Alameda's Japantown.

"At Easter, different families were good to us," Jo, seen below, recalled. "The Seras, Auntie Yoshiye (Esther Sera) made us dresses and dusters, she gave us candies and Easter baskets."

Welcome home and Happy Easter, Kent, Judy and Jo.



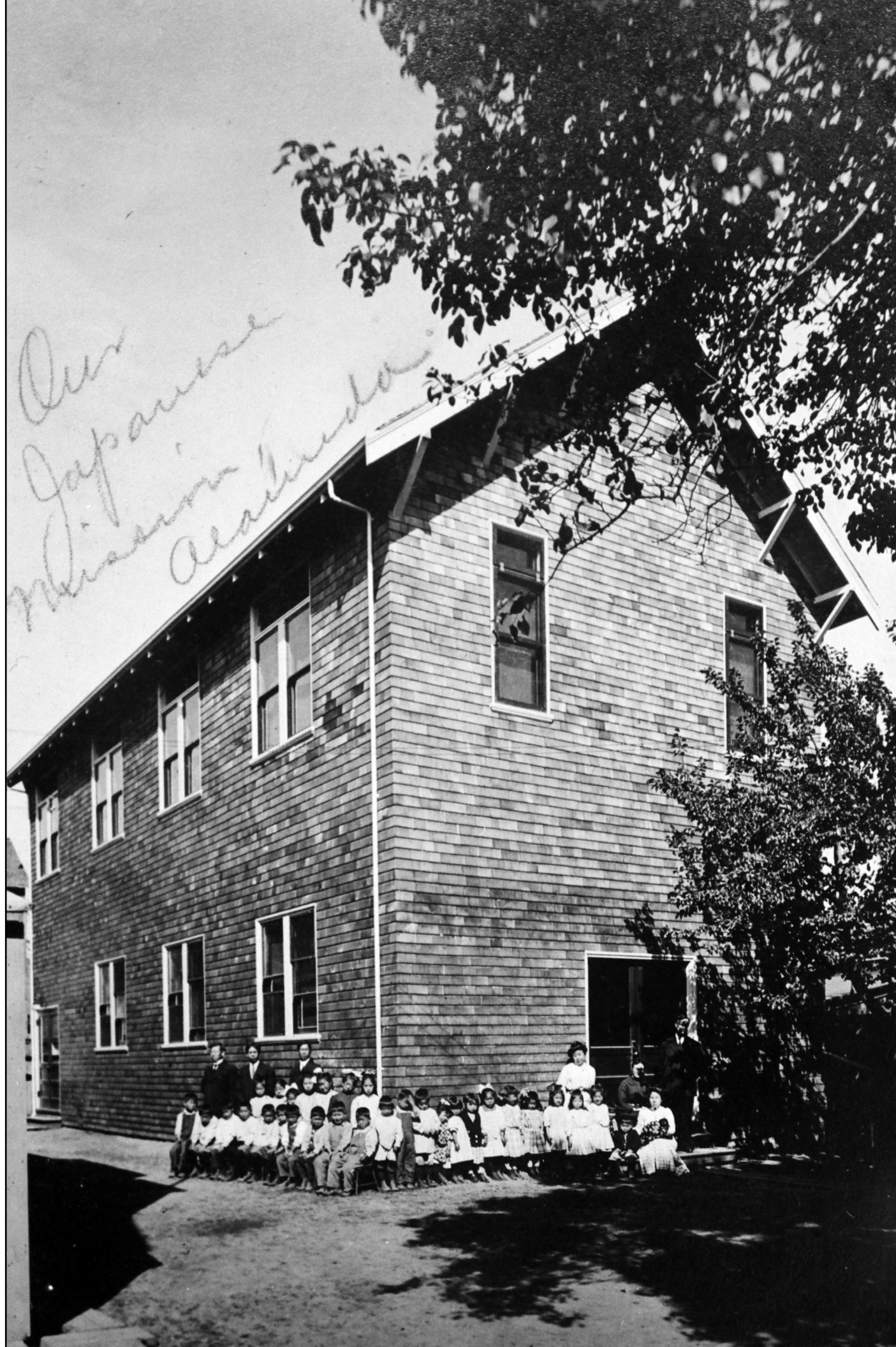
Kent

Judy

Jo

Alameda Japanese Americans after World War II

A Place to Live



Right: the JME building in 1911, not long after it was built. It was the Takeda's home for seven years after WWII.

Kent, Judy and Jo were born in Topaz, where their family was incarcerated during World War II.

Their younger siblings, Carol, Susan and David were born while the Takedas lived at the JME church building after the war ended.

"We lived below the sanctuary, the first story of the brown shingle building," Jo said. **"We lived there from 1945 to 1952. We didn't have a bathroom, a bath or a kitchen. The kitchen was in Mary Helm Hall (which was in the church building next door which also housed the bathroom and running water)."**

"We bathed *outside* in a galvanized tub," Jo continued. **"We had to stand in line. Daddy (Bill) would start with our face."**

"Daddy did that everyday. He also washed our shoelaces everyday, polished our shoes everyday. There's a dignity to that." Today, that tub is used for watermelons at picnics.

Per Japanese custom, friends would come to the church and bring food for the Takedas to eat. "We were so poor, everyone was poor, we didn't know we were poor," Jo said.

In 1952, buying a house was still difficult for the Japanese in Alameda.

"We couldn't buy, they weren't selling to Japanese," Jo said. **"The Hackett's bought it and we got it from them, the deed. There were 10 of us in that house, with 1.5 bathrooms. Makes you feel grateful."**

ALAMEDA
Japanese
American
HISTORY PROJECT

**The galvanized tub is now used
for watermelons at picnics.**

