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## HISTORIC ANAHEIM JAPANESE FREE METHODIST CHURCH SEEKS RIGHT TO DETERMINE ITS FUTURE

### *“Reluctantly asks Orange County Court to Declare Rules for Proposed Merger with Another Church”*

ANAHEIM, CA – The historic church with a [100-year history](#), the [ANAHEIM JAPANESE FREE METHODIST CHURCH](#), filed a civil complaint in Orange County Superior Court to ask a judge to stop a merger with another church, the Voice Church of Orange County, until the court establishes that any merger must first be approved by church members. Both churches are organized as nonprofit religious corporations under California law.

The church’s history began over one-hundred years ago in 1921. More than twenty years later, upon returning from incarceration during World War II, the Japanese-American Christians returned to and re-settled in Orange County. They met in a church in downtown Anaheim until the current site was purchased by the church in 1961, buildings were constructed and they began worshipping at the current church property in Anaheim, under the name “Anaheim Free Methodist Church” at 1001 N. Mayflower Street, Anaheim, CA. 92801

Church members have asked the newly appointed pastor, who is also the current Pastor of the Voice Church in Tustin to stop efforts to merge the Voice Church with Anaheim Free Methodist Church until lawful procedures are followed. However, these requests were only met with silence from Voice Church representatives. Members are now told votes of members of the Anaheim Free Methodist Church will not have any effect on the merger. Members were told, by Voice Church representatives that after April 30, 2023, they could not meet at their church as members of the “Anaheim Free Methodist Church.”

The California Corporations Code clearly states that members of a church formed as a “Nonprofit Religious Corporation,” must first vote to approve any merger with another church, and they must vote to decide the name – the identity – of their church. Under California .Corp Code § 9640, this is the procedure:

- a. “Principal terms of the merger shall be approved by the members” [Cal.Corp. Code § 9640(c)]
- b. “The board of each corporation that desires to merge shall approve an agreement of merger” [Cal.Corp. Code § 9640 (d)]
- c. Agreement to merge shall include but not limited to “changes [to] the name of the surviving corporation.” [Cal.Corp. Code §9640(d)(2)]

ANAHEIM JAPANESE FREE METHODIST CHURCH is a Nonprofit Religious Corporation formed in 1960.

AFMC also has a Japanese speaking congregation. <https://www.facebook.com/anaheim.fmc.nichigo/>

Anaheim Free Methodist Church Marks 100th Anniversary by Rafu Reports 09/23/2021  
<https://rafu.com/2021/09/anaheim-free-methodist-church-marks-100th-anniversary/>