

Waves of Faith

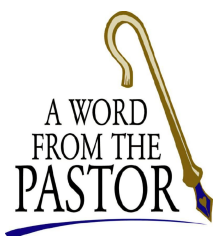
Kailua Christian Church (United Church of Christ)
317 Manono Street, Kailua, HI 96734-2211
Chartered 1959 –



December 2023

Volume 38

Issue 12



“Hope”

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” Jeremiah 29:11

As we move into the season of Advent, we hear the word “Hope” often. Hope, by definition, exists in a place of waiting. It imagines something that has not yet become. You all may feel that you’ve been sitting in the season of Advent for years now, waiting hopefully to see what will happen to our church and its future. You may be quite ready for the joy and abundance of Christmas already.

The length of your time hoping may feel frustrating to you as you review the long time spent without a pastor, watching members and friends slip away and the church budget slowly decay. The thing about Hope, though, is it’s what helps us retain our humanity when everything has gone wrong. Cities burn, loved ones die, and we humans are painfully aware that nothing is permanent or guaranteed. When these difficult and terrible things happen, the only thing that keeps us from being consumed by the darkness is Hope that God has plans for us to prosper.

Because Hope is such a powerful force in moving out of dark places, it’s a vitally important thing independently from the Joy of actualization. This long season you’ve spent Hoping for the last several years was not for naught. That Hope shaped you into a community willing to work together; helped you to remember your love for helped you to remember your love for each other

and for Jesus; helped you to listen and learn with integrity. The Hope transformed you into a stronger community that was steadfast when everything seemed to be crumbling around you. Just as there is no baby Jesus without 9 months of Mary’s pregnancy, there is no Joy in Christmas without the long season of Hope that precedes it.

God knows the plans He has for us. Your willingness to endure a long season of Hope will turn into the Christmas Joy when the time comes. Until then, we wait in that sacred space of Hope together, growing and becoming fully who we are meant to be as one body of Christ.



**May all these be yours this
Christmas**

HOPE, JOY, PEACE, LOVE

DEACONS CORNER

Be the One



Are you familiar with the story of Jesus and the ten lepers? These ten lepers cried out to Jesus for healing and were miraculously healed of their terrible disease. But only one came back to say thank you. Ten miracles. One thank you.

The ratio probably hasn't changed much over the years. A spirit of ingratitude pervades our society. In fact, the Bible tells us in 2 Timothy that one of the characteristics of the End Times is that people will be ungrateful.

Imagine how you would feel if no one ever thanked you for your kind actions. In the same way, God's heart is broken when we do not thank Him for touching our life with Love. In light of God's magnificent Grace, ingratitude is a grievous sin.

Don't allow the spirit of ingratitude to sneak into your life. Be the one, who, like the lone leper, returns to give thanks. Be the one who remembers to say, "Thank You, Lord".

Florence Miyashiro, Deacon



PRAYERS & PRAISES

Please keep in your prayers

- ~ Nathan Kohashi
- ~ Warren and Lynne Nakano
- ~ John Sakamoto, son-in-law, Tony Sarabia and Coreen and Cheryl (John's daughters)
- ~ Myrtle & Lowell Terada continued health



- ~ Henry Tom, and daughter/Val Aquino
- ~ Sharon Nishihira ~ Steve Hammann
- ~ Larry & Sandra Siu ~ Harrison Lum
- ~ Christine Matsumoto ~ Ed & Noelani Jai
- ~ Winchell & Lily Lee ~ Richard Texiera

- ~ Dennis Nakashima ~ Jennie Lee
- ~ Dennis Jinnohara ~ Carson's Mom
- ~ Jean Miyaji, Jiggs Tamashiro, Walter Yeda, Stella Wakamatsu, Nani Oda, Nancy Arakaki, Brian Nakashima, Harry Imai, Hazel Masuda, Carl Nemoto, Jean Kanazawa, Sharon Mon, Dot Suzuki, and all our families with high-risk health factors.
- ~ Maureen Wakuzawa mom's recovery
- ~ Lisa battling Thyroid Cancer
- ~ Prayers for our Worship Team & Musicians

Sincere Condolences on the passing of Brett. Black, a dear friend of Steff and Keith and of KCC. Brett passed in late Nov. after a long illness. Deepest Sympathies goes out to his wife Kimmie who is also struggling with health issues.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

- Myra Yamada
- Kai Lau
- Jean Miyaji
- Myrtle Terada
- Paul Grable
- Brandon Gerber
- Molly Hagmann
- Sandra Siu
- Carol Soma



- Jackie Ostiles
- Jennifer Yoshimura
- Pat Oyama
- Lauren Shiroma Hong
- Michelle Morikawa
- Alaka'i Todd

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

- Dean & Maureen Wakuzawa
- Matt & Pie Pie Wong
- Howard & Saeko Yoshida



CONGRATULATIONS, IT'S A GIRL!



Richelle and Chris Vance welcomed a beautiful daughter, Eliana just in time for Thanksgiving. Needless to say great grandpa Carl and grandpa Nate were joyful as well with this precious addition to the Nemoto and Vance's families.



FROM OUR MODERATOR

Merry Christmas Kailua Christian Church. It's time to celebrate with our Lord again.

As I think about the Holiday Season and all of the family celebrations that we engage in at this time of year I'm drawn to the parable of the Prodigal Son. Luke 15: 11-32. It's my favorite.

It's about a celebration of the return of a son to his father. It illustrates so clearly how little we deserve and how much God wants to bless us and have us be a part of His family. It applies to all of us and gives us all hope. No matter how much we have fallen short from what God has planned for us to

be, and no matter how far we have strayed away from His loving embrace, He is still waiting outside looking down the road expecting us to come home so that He can run to us and kiss us and embrace us again and celebrate the love that He has waiting for us.

Christmas is the celebration of God reaching out to us, His lost children, who have squandered the time and talent and money that he has given to us. Time and talent and money that we have not earned and that we do not deserve. These blessings have been given to us freely out of the goodness and grace of God. They are intended for us to have and use for the glory of God and to further the Kingdom of God. They are not intended for us to use for our own selfish desires.

The fact that we have not earned these things and do not deserve them is illustrated vividly in the parable by the younger son asking for his share of the inheritance that he would have received if the father was dead. The son has not earned this inheritance and the only way that the young son would be able to receive this windfall is if the father had died. The son is basically telling his father that he wishes that the father was dead so that he could have the father's money. This is very rude and would not be well received by most parents. This father, however, gives the son what he asks for, but does not deserve, knowing that the young son will probably squander these gifts.

I think that God has done basically the same thing for us. He has given us that which we do not deserve, and when we do not use our time and talent and money to further the Kingdom of God, but instead use it for our own selfish purposes, it disappoints Him. Even though He is disappointed and hurt, He does not give up on us. He is still loving us and waiting for us to return to Him and welcome us home with open arms. He wants to restore us to our place in the family and have a party for us when we do return home.

We have all strayed away and none of us deserve to be welcomed home. Nevertheless, our God does welcome us home if we come to our senses and

allow him to welcome us back into the family.
Let's celebrate that together this season.

Love, Aloha & Agape, Paul Grable



WORSHIP NEWS

O Holy Night

"O Holy Night" is one of the most popular Christmas Carols and my favorite. It's a beautiful carol rich in meaning and imagery. In the middle of the first verse are two important lines that we sometimes fail to recognize, but that we need to hear.

"Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
Till he appeared' and the soul felt its worth."

"For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him." (John 3:17). And God sent His Son because we're worth the journey and the effort. We matter in the eyes of God. We are worth the risk. Jesus risked the hurt and rejection and suffering and even death in order for us to know that we are the object of God's love.

When we sing Joy to the World, we recognize that we are the joy of God's world. In Ephesians, Paul wrote, "For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." (Eph. 2:10). We are created in Christ Jesus for good works. That's what his birth means for us — the knowledge that we are God's special creation.

God has come close to us to share our hopes and dreams and to give us life. He has come to awaken us and call us to life so that we come to know our inherent worth as children of God and so that our lives can then be given for our neighbor in love. Like Jesus, none of us were born for ourselves to do whatever we want, to pursue our own pursuits. Like Jesus, we were created to reveal the glory of God and reflect that glory and light with our lives, as souls, by God's grace, who know their worth. When this happens, others might come to know what we know and celebrate at Christmas. It's the gift we continue to give to the world.

When our souls begin to feel their worth, we recognize that the world will never be the same again: "For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn."



SERVING OPPORTUNITIES

~ **Kings Company/Jr. Church Ministry** for the children is seeking a team of leaders to take turns on Sunday mornings during worship to respond to the call that Jesus said, "let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

~ **Altar Flower Ministry** welcomes you to sign up to provide flowers for the Altar on a designated Sunday morning of your choice (Check the dates available on the flower calendar in the back of the sanctuary. The flowers can be cut in a vase or be in potted form and may be used during the service and distributed to shut ins or for someone with a special event and we are more than happy to acknowledge who it is given in honor of....



Stewardship Schedule

Sunday, Dec. 3, 2023

Congregational Meeting in person to approve Ministry Vision, Our Annual Budget for 2024 and new Officers for 2024.

Sunday, Dec. 31, 2023

Installation of Officers for 2024 and the Release of Officers who have completed their terms of service. Please join us as we support, thank, and encourage all of our 2023 leaders and those for the new year during our worship service.

With prayer and open heartedness to God's leading, let us venture into the new year with hope in our hearts and joy for the possibilities together.

NA ANELA I KA HANA A KE AKUA

(Angels in the Works for God)

LEARNING IS LIFELONG!

SAVE THE DATE: Jan 27, 2024, First Event of 2024 – Come join us to hear our awesome Pastor Irene, present, Trauma Informed Care: Best Practices of Working with Populations suffering Post-Traumatic Stress. 10 – 11:30 am; KCC Sanctuary and Zoom. Invite a friend or relative to her dynamic research-based presentation!

Sat, Nov 18 was a very special time for 29 of us (in-person and Zoom)! Our wonderful, past interim Pastor Chris Eng, provided an excellent overview and Q/A of his newly published book, **Finding Aloha in Grief: Memoir of a T'ai Chi Sifu, Pastor and Hospice Chaplain. Comments included:** “thoroughly enjoyed Pastor’s session; Pastor Chris’s warmheartedness allows him to connect extremely well with people, especially in their darkest times; **especially treasured** the personal aspects of stories he related over the years as a pastor and his experiences connecting with people in their darkest times of loss and grief, and thankful that his book is not a textbook or clinical manual on grief, but, reflections of a pastor who has sat with countless souls who were dying and has walked with their families and loved ones in their grieving” **Mahalo Plenty Pastor Chris!**



St. Francis Healthcare System’s Caregiver Education and Wellness Series continue to provide excellent caregiving and health/wellness classes for the community.
St. Francis Healthcare System of Hawaii’s Caregiver Education and Wellness Series. December classes can be found at:
<https://www.stfrancishawaii.org/s/courses>.
Register directly online.
For questions, please contact Kauai Asing (808) 547-8092 or kasing@stfrancishawaii.org.

Individual Classes:

Dec 05: Tue, 10:30 – 11:30 am; Let’s Not Sugar Coat It (focus on Diabetes)
Dec 07: Thu, 5 – 6 pm; The Basics of Advocacy
Dec 11: Mon, 11 – 12:30 pm; Cooking with Gini

Weekly Session Classes:

Dec 01 – 29: Tue and Fri; 12 – 12:30 pm; Boxing Fundamentals
Dec 02 – 30: Sat, 8 - 9 am; Zumba Gold by Francis; no classes on 12/23 and 12/30
Dec 04 – 25: Mon, 8 - 9 am; Big Moves! Monday (focus is on people with Parkinson’s); no class on 12/25
Dec 05 – 26: Tue, 9 – 10 am; Body and Brain Yoga Tai Chi, no classes on 12/26 and 1/2/24
Dec 06 – 30: Mon, Wed and Fri, 5:15 – 6:15 pm; Zumba by Frances; no classes between 12/20-12/29
Dec 06 – 27: Wed, 8 – 9 am; Empower You! (focus is on people with Parkinson’s)
Dec 07 – 28: Thu, 9 – 10 am; Tripudio Movement System with Ellie; no class on 12/07

Note: In-person sessions will be held at Senior Community Center at the Kupuna Village in Liliha.

Contact me at [yamadamya@hawaii.rr.com](mailto:yamadamyra@hawaii.rr.com) or call (808) 348-2297 if you have questions.

Please invest your time and energy in any one of these free and informative classes.

Mahalo!

Enjoy your Wellness Journey and Stay Healthy!

God Bless you all, Myra

Kailua Christian Church (UCC)
317 Manono St.
Kailua, HI 96734-2211
PH: (808) 261-0125
E-Mail: kailuacch@gmail.com
Website: www.kailuachristianchurch.org

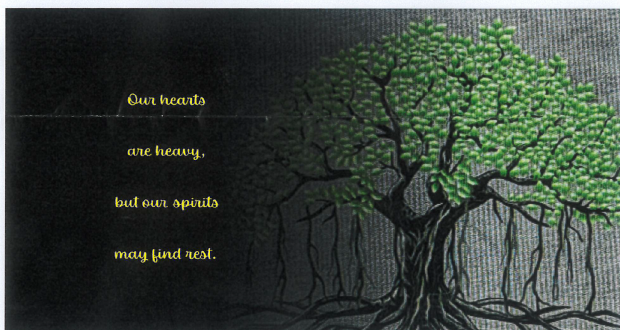
MISSIONS MOMENTS



Our UCC Conference Minister, Rev. Dr. David Popham has sent a letter of thanks and acknowledgment of the contributions of \$1,100 to the UCC 2023 Wildfires Relief Fund. The letter is to thank you for standing in solidarity with those who lost so much in the fires and ways the funds will be of help.

- A 3 year commitment for intentional support of Maui Clergy that includes counseling, peer groups, and covered time off.
- Emerging needs focus which includes immediate housing needs, assisting with downpayment on new cars, food and water security, and economic support for families and individuals and the Maui economy through gift cards and gas cards.
- Long-Term Recovery (still 1.5 – 2 yrs. off) we are projecting to include temporary housing, utilizing the work of our local congregations as they assess needs in their areas, and seeking to be proactive with unmet needs that other Voluntary Organizations assisting in Disasters are not set up to meet.

As a token of his appreciation for the support given, he has shared this picture, on the right side is a banyan tree which has become a symbol of resilience and hope for Maui Strong. On the left side is a sentiment which I think best sums up where we are as we face this tragedy. He added – Your donation, by the way, helps our spirits to find rest.



This year, we will be providing a Blue Christmas Service with a lunch reception and wreathmaking activity. Blue Christmas services traditionally provide space for those who don't feel so "merry and bright" during the holiday season. This service at Kailua Christian Church will provide reflective liturgy, music, and preaching. Please indicate to the office by Dec. 10th if you will attend the wreath making event. Mahalo.

