

VOLUME XXIX
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December 2023

The mission of the Waimea United Church of Christ is to provide, through Jesus Christ, the means by which people grow spiritually, thereby preparing and empowering them to witness to God's love, to identify the needs of the community, and to minister to them.

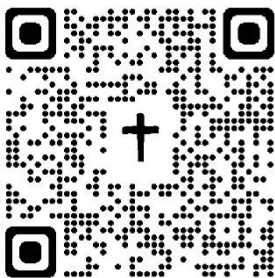
**Waimea United Church
of Christ**

Located at the corner of
Makeke and Tsuchiya
Roads, Waimea, Kaua'i.

*Rev. Dr. Olaf Hoeckmann-
Percival, Pastor*

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PO Box 457
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Sunday Morning Worship,
10 am
Tuesday Morning Bible
Study, 9 am



THE CONNECTION

A Publication of Waimea UCC

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The church's book club in November read the book *The Psychology of Money* by Morgan Housel. I thought it was a great way to start off the Christmas shopping season and prepare us for the greatest holiday of the year.

I am reminded that Christmas was made a holiday officially in the United States only in 1870 by President Grant. When the Pilgrims came to America, they did not celebrate the holiday at all. So, for 250 years it was not a holiday in America. And, please make note that the original missionaries to Kauai did not celebrate it either. Christmas was originally dubbed a "commercial" holiday for Constitutional reasons, that being the separation of church and state. So, for the last 150 years it has been the prime shopping holiday; that is, a time to spend money.

In the book by Housel, somewhere around page 93, the author makes the point that people are not so keen on getting new expensive items for themselves as they are interested in "being liked and admired." The author goes on to say that "wealth is what you do not see." In this understanding, the best gift of all for Christmas would be the humble gift, one that shows admiration.

This raises a question as to the intent of the original Christmas gift givers. Were the Three Wise Men of the Bible giving gold, frankincense, and myrrh to make themselves look regal and to be admired? I am sure the shepherds that were there had to have been impressed by the three. After all, what would you think if three kings suddenly showed up on your lanai? No, they gave their gifts to admire God born on earth in a child.

A great mystery of Christmas is that children, e.g., the Christ child, are suddenly the center of everyone's attention. For one brief moment in December our focus shifts from power politics and wealth to lift up the innocence and joy of childhood again. Isaiah foretold of this time in his prophecy, (Isaiah 11:6) "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid, and the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them."

Our children hold that wealth that we cannot see or count. They have that joy and love. We admire the playfulness and joy in children that remind us all of simpler times—of perhaps being closer to God. We admire the King of the Universe as a simple baby born in a stable, sleeping in a manger.

Merry Christmas, Pastor Olaf

Scriptures and Sermons for December 2022

Dec. 4th Psalm 72:1-7
"Justice"

Dec. 11th Psalm 146
"Righteousness"

Dec. 18th Matthew 1:18-25
"Conviction"

Dec. 24th Luke 2:1-20
"Once Upon a Story"

Dec. 25th *Christmas Morning
at Waimea Baptist*

Jan. 1st Luke 14:15-24
"No More Excuses"



The Tuesday morning Bible Study group meets in Baird Hall at 9 am to discuss the Scripture for the upcoming Sunday sermon. Come share your inspirations and insights with the Pastor. Everyone is welcome

Calendar Notes:

The next "Pseghetti Night" for the kids will be **Wednesday, December 7th at 5:30pm** and will include making and baking Christmas Cookies!

Christmas Tea Aloha Hour—December 18 after service. Games, prizes, and COOKIES! Bring your favorite cookies to share. We will also sing carols backed by the ukulele players.

Christmas Eve, "Once Upon a Story" program of reading, music, and dance by candlelight. **7pm.**

Congregatiional Meeting—January 29, 2023 immediately following worship service.

Community Outreach

Christmas Cards from the church to the community (an evangelical outreach to be mailed out to every mailbox in Waimea and Kekaha) are available also on the back table in the Narthex. Please note that if you take one to mail, the postage that is printed on the card will not work for regular mailing. Please also take an envelope, address it properly, and add the needed postage.

Worship Leaders

Lay Reader: Helen Hoeckmann-Percival

Deacon: Vickie Mercado

December Deacons: David Somers, Jared Morsey, Jill Whitehill

Church Council Meeting: December 11, 2022 at 11:30 via Zoom hybrid



Margaret's brother, cancer; Susie Somers, cancer recovery; Dr. Fukino, cancer recovery; Ruth's daughter, Carol Alvesos (brain tumor); Jill Faye, cancer recovery; Mike

Matutino, cancer recovery; Janice's friend Ron, cancer recovery; Leinani Springer, cancer recovery; Galen Kaohi, cancer recovery; Norma Watanabe cancer recovery; Jared's father (stroke); Lucia's son Michael for healing; Mahea's mother (stroke); Berenice's mother Hortencia (stroke); Pastor's Uncle Olaf; Helen's mother (heart); Gladys Okada (blindness); Kristen to fight infection; Robert Medeiros knees; Robert's Mom Dorothy breast cancer surgery; Sue Carlson (hip replacement recovery); Rob Carlson; Beth Hanashiro (headaches); An end finally to the pandemic; Healthcare workers; Those suffering from spiritual distress; Our local, state, and national leaders, our men and women in the military fighting terrorism, and a speedy end to wars everywhere.

The online fundraiser for our Waimeke Cabins septic rebuild will be available through December. Click on the Facebook link on the bottom of our church website to find the giving site (www.facebook.com/waimeamissionchurch). If you can at all help personally that would be great. It is super easy, and 100% of what you give online will go to the camp ministry. Thanks in advance for your generosity.

Niches are available in the new columbarium. Call the church office if interested. \$2,000 per niche for the general public \$1,500 per niche for WUCC member

Hauoli la Hanau!

December 6 Jordon Parongao
December 9 Jaron Parongao
December 9 Margaret Kagawa
December 20 Aviyah Snyder
December 24 Bradley Ceballos
December 27 Ian Oyama



News From the Pews

- Those of you who were blessed by attending the Fall Aha Mokupuni at the Waimea First Marshallese Church not only heard the Word in Marshallese, ate great food, but also saw Rumina (Pastor Inok's wife) dancing on the front steps of the church. What a great event!
- This Christmas Eve at the 7pm of service we will be Christening little baby Abigail, Kevin and Kay's newborn. Congratulations to little Abi!
- Let it be herewith known that after the children took to polishing Pastor Olaf's shoes during the Minihune Message a few Sundays back, the pastor quickly went home and polished his own shoes so that they are now black and shiny again. (You had to be there!)
- We welcome Kitty Calhoun back on island. Great to see you again!
- Vicky Mercado won at Game Night for the first time ever! Really, everyone who comes is always a winner.
- Charlie Kaneyama's granddaughter and her family came to visit the church and to say hello again!



Announcements

Please also consider your special giving for the UCC Pension Board's "**Christmas Fund**" (formerly known as "Veterans of the Cross" offering). This special collection will take place on Christmas Eve and the Sundays before and after (please mark your gift for proper accounting).

Now is the time to consider serving in leadership of the church as well. Soon you may be asked to share your individual ministry gifts by sitting on the **Church Council** or being a **Deacon**. Please consider this request prayerfully. Our **Annual Meeting** will take place the last **Sunday in January**.

Book Club

December's selection(s) will be hosted by Debbie Santmyer. She suggested a different idea for the busy month of December. Each person will send a favorite essay, poem, or story to the other "bookies". We will gather via Zoom hybrid on December 18th at 3:00 pm to discuss our choices. Don't forget to send the other members your selection. If you would like to participate, please let any of the book club members know so we can include you (Helen H-P, Teri S., Jackie M, Sue C, Lucia L, Cinthy K, Cindy H, Katie C, Diane F.)

Next month's selection is *After: A Doctor Explores What Near-Death Experiences Reveal about Life and Beyond* by Bruce Greyson, M.D. Cindy Horton will host in January 2023.





◆
DOMINOES
TUESDAY, 7-9 PM
AT BAIRD HALL
◆

Waimaea United Church of
Christ
P.O. Box 457
Waimaea, HI 96796