

VOLUME XXX
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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.

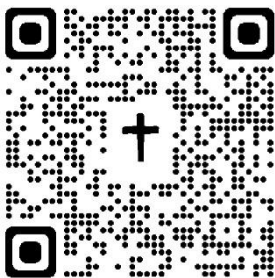
**Waimea United Church
of Christ**

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

Rev. Dr. Olaf Hoeckmann-
Percival, Pastor

(808) 338-9962
www.waimeachurch.org
PO Box 457
Waimea, HI 96796

Sunday Morning Worship,
10 am
Tuesday Morning Bible
Study, 9 am



THE CONNECTION

A Publication of Waimea UCC

Dear Church Ohana,

Every once in a while, it rains on a Sunday. Sometimes we have weather advisories asking us to stay off the roads due to potential flooding or falling trees. This happened last month. On top of the weather issue, four of our regular congregants had Covid and were staying at home anyway. Others were out of town, leaving early for Thanksgiving spent with family on other islands or the mainland.

As the rain poured down before the service, a mango tree two blocks down on Makeke Road caught fire as the power line arced. The electricity went out. I called KIUC, and the repair department sent a tech with a bucket truck out to investigate the incident. I texted Diane, our organist, to let her know that she might have to be on the piano as there was no power.

I went into the Sanctuary to set up for worship and noticed that the side door on the access ramp was already partially open. It seems that someone had spent the windy and rainy night in the sanctuary by forcing open the window and door there. I cleaned up the rubbish that was left. I brought in the decorative palm trees that were laden with rainwater, so an extra weight to bear. Water rained indoors from the palm fronds. I wiped up the water with a rag. The sanctuary was dim and humid without lights and fans. Every once in a while, it rains.

I was back in the office when the power came back. The photocopier whirred on. The lights outside my office shone in. I thanked God and texted Diane again that our organ had power. Next, I had to check all the devices to see if anything was damaged by bad power coming through. All of the ground-fault outlets had tripped, so I reset them all. It seemed as if all was good.

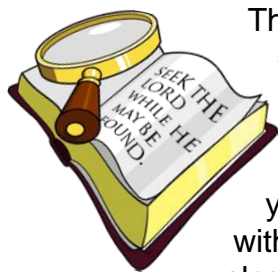
All of this, and I still had not done the usual Sunday-morning routine; *i.e.*, learn the sermon! Deacon Mike set up the coffee pot and plugged it in. I could smell the aroma of hot brew wafting across the patio. With lights and fan again overhead, I cracked open the Word of God and read the passage for that Sunday. I looked at the printout of the sermon text that I had finished the week before. Next I prepared the mini-hune message for the kids while sipping fresh coffee. Sometimes it rains.

Just as the worship started, the rain came down in torrents. The wheelbarrow at the parsonage would fill up to about three inches. The water flew in sideways through the partially opened windows. All the windows and doors would be shut. Then, the most amazing thing: The organ sounded that much better with all the doors and windows shut. The prayer time was evermore so cozy and congenial. I really felt the Spirit leading in the giving of the Word, too. Sometimes it just rains.



Scriptures and Sermons for December

- Dec 3 Isaiah 40:1-11
“Peace: God’s Comfort”
- Dec 10 Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
“Hope: Let Your Face Shine”
- Dec 17 Luke 1:26-38
“Love: The Coming of Love”
- Dec 24 (AM) Psalm 126
“Joy: Harvest of Joy”
- Dec 24 (PM) Luke 2:1-20
Shadow Puppet Play, Carols
- Dec 31 John 9:1-8, 24-30
Jared preaches “Reason for the Season”



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 **“Hanging of the Greens”** decorating of the sanctuary for Christmas will happen after worship on **Sunday, December 3rd.**

CHRISTMAS TEA Join in the singing and games after worship service on **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24.** Tea and cookies and the annual Ugly Sweater competition! Bring your favorite cookies to share.

The **Veterans of the Cross, Christmas Offering**, will be accepted this year on **Christmas Eve.** This is a special gift to our retired pastors through the UCC Pension Board. Please give a veteran of the Cross a merry Christmas.

Mahalo:

Thank you, Chad Slayton, for the incredible piano solo last month! Check the church videos online if you missed him!

Thank you to Pastor Merritt (Waimea Baptist) for the Thanksgiving message at our joint Thanksgiving morning time of worship.

Worship Leaders

Lay Reader: Nani Fukino

Deacon: David Somers

December Deacons: Michael Herrick, Joy Whitehill

Church Council Meeting: December 10 at 11:30 via hybrid zoom and in person



Irwin Oyama for heart and surgeries; Melissa B. healing; Margaret's brother, cancer; Susie Somers, cancer recovery; Ruth's daughter, Carol Alvesos (brain tumor); Mike Matutino, 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); Helen's mother (heart); Kristen to fight infection; 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.

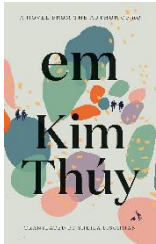
CHRISTMAS STORE WINDOW: Presented by the Sunday School---What is the true meaning of Christmas? Is it all about Rudolph, Santa Claus, and shopping? This little play takes us away from the commercial aspects of Christmas to its true meaning, as the children uncover a decorated window at Christmastime. **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17TH, 10:00 AM**

THE NATIVITY STORY--A SHADOW PUPPET PLAY: Join us at the evening service on Christmas Eve, **SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24, 7PM** for the telling of the Christmas story through shadow puppetry. It will be a time of singing carols and celebrating the birth of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Volunteers are welcome to man the puppets. No experience or training needed!

SPECIAL CHRISTMAS MUSIC: To add joy to the season, a small group of singers will be giving glory to God through music during the Advent worship services. Thank you to Rick Foulks, Lee Miller, Kathy Uyeda, Susie Sommers, Pastor Olaf, Michael Harrick, Sue Carlson, Margarete Kagawa, and Helen HP. And thank you to Jackie Weber, for accompanying us on piano.

Hau'oli la Hanau!

- December 6 Jordon Parongao
- December 9 Jaron Parongao
- December 9 Margaret Kagawa
- December 20 Aviyah Snyder
- December 20 Vicky Mercado
- December 24 Bradley Ceballos
- December 24 Kaili Kanahele
- December 27 Ian Oyama
- December 29 Ryan Collins



Book Club Lucia Laidlaw will host on December 17th at 3:00 pm. Her selection is *Em* by Kim Thúy. Although the novel is only 148 pages it is rich in language and ideas about the impact of colonialism and war on the Vietnamese people. Thuy's prose is

poetic which makes the reader pause and reflect on the impact of the stories she is telling.

An Amazon reviewer states: "This is a must-read for anyone who wants to understand how the Vietnam War and its combatants (the sheer violence, the chemical weapons, the sexual exploitation, the disregard of Vietnamese lives) impacted civilians. I'm in awe of how much information Thuy has managed to pack in 148 pages, as well as how much heart and longing and love. For all the depravity of war, she also shows the moments of humanity: the nanny who ensures her charge gets the best opportunities, the American G.I. who defies orders to rescue a girl, the street kid who cares for an abandoned baby as his own."

Annual Meeting—Save the Date! The last Sunday in January (28th) will be the annual congregational meeting. We will also have a potluck afterwards. All positions for committee chairs and officers will be up for election. We are accepting nominations and would like to find more volunteers to help keep our church functioning smoothly. The positions and a brief description of their duties follows:

Moderator: conducts monthly meetings

Vice-Moderator: conducts meetings when the moderator is unavailable and recruits/nominates people for council/committee positions

News from the Pews

- * We have had great fun with the Book of Esther these last two months, especially the very melodramatic booing of the name of Haman during the bible reading—and sometimes during the sermon, too.
- * Welcome Cody to our church Ohana. She is staying with Joanne Watanabe.
- * The Friday afternoon Bible Club at the Ed Center recently hosted a missionary from Brazil, the Amazon actually. This was "Jungle Jen." The kids watched a video of how life and the mission is there then had a talk story time with her.
- * Graceleanor Baird joined us for worship last month! Great to see her again!
- * We wish a fond farewell and a hui hou to Kay and Kev and family as they once more shuttle back to the mainland due to Kevin's work. We know that God will bring you back to the isles!
- * New sign-up sheets for Bible readers and deacons' duties for Sunday morning are up in the Sanctuary narthex. Please sign up to help in worship in 2024!
- * Thank you to all those who have attended the Christmas Choir rehearsals on Wednesday nights.
- * —Christmas Eve this year will be very special. We will be treated to a shadow puppet play of the Christmas Story from Luke 2. Please join together for the play, candlelight singing, and a glorious time of worship at 7pm in the church! Tell your friends and neighbors, too.

Treasurer: maintains financial information and ensures bills are paid

Assistant Treasurer: assists the treasurer in maintaining financial records

Recording Secretary: Records minutes of all meetings

Chairpersons--Fellowship, Stewardship, Buildings and Grounds, Deacons, Personnel, Missions, Christian Education, and Music and Worship.

A more complete description is available on-line in the by-laws.

Continued from front page

The aloha time afterwards was indoors rather than on the patio. The ukulele group serenaded us as blueberry cheesecake melted in our mouths. The coffee ran out, so more had to be made. I was served from the fresh pot with a smile.

Even when it rains, life is good because God is good. When we feel cold and damp, we seek out the warmth of our brothers and sisters of the faith. We praise God even when it rains. Then, the sun comes back out.

Aloha ke Akua, Pastor Olaf

◆
DOMINOES
TUESDAY, 7-9 PM
AT BAIRD HALL



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Christ
P.O. Box 457
Waimaea, HI 96796**