

VOLUME XXXII
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January 2025

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

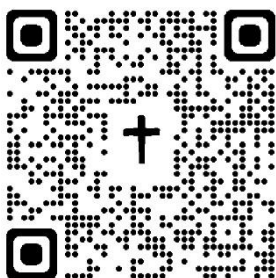
www.waimeachurch.org

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 Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

The author Charles Dickens in *A Tale of Two Cities* starts with the lines "They were the best of times, and they were the worst of times." The truism of human existence is that it is always the best of times and the worst of times. We have a scientific term that was coined first in the 1970's named "hedonic adaptation." This is the human propensity to adjust back to baseline happiness despite a traumatic event or inversely to revert back to a depressed state despite a happy moment.

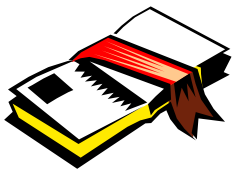
The classic example of hedonic adaptation is the lottery winner that discovers all the money does not improve his or her level of happiness in life. If he were unhappy before, then he will return to being unhappy even after winning the lottery.

How does one then increase one's baseline level of happiness? After all, I would love to indeed have a "Happy New Year!" Well, I pet Lilly the dog under the table while reading the Word of God while at Tuesday Bible Study at Baird Hall. Thank you, Mary H., for bringing in your dog. The sniffing and licking of Lilly the Dog on my hand during Tuesday morning Bible Studies makes me happy. Likewise, reading the Bible makes me happy. Discussing theology makes me happy—I feel as if I have won the lottery, but the happiness stays with me week over week. It is like constant lottery winning.

The Bible makes me happy because I see the people throughout history struggling with hedonic adaptation and can relate my life to theirs. How many times was Moses disappointed but renewed in faith by God? Jacob was made happy as long as he could be with Rachel and was working. Job kept up the faith despite utter destitution. Elijah was in the wilderness being fed by ravens so as not to starve. Joseph was in prison. Jesus was born in a stable only to die on the Cross. Paul was put in prison three times. You get the idea. They all found their ultimate "Happy New Year!" in faith with God.

I know that we are all uncertain about the changes ahead in 2025. We are focused on politics and economics. Whatever is in store for us, we will adapt. Our general level of happiness does not have to suffer. Lilly will still be coming to Bible study to be patted on the head and wag her tail in delight. The Word of God is immutable and immune to current gloominess.

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Scriptures and Sermons for January 2025

- Jan 5th Romans 14:5-12
“Do Not Live to Yourself”
- Jan 12th Romans 14:12-23
“Do Not Injure Your Brother”
- Jan 19th Romans 15:1-13
“Boundless Hope”
- Jan 26th Romans 15:14-21
“Fill Up on Confidence”
- Feb 2nd Romans 15:26-33
“Refreshed in Company”



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

Mahalo:

On behalf of the executive leadership team, department leaders, employees and providers of the Hawaii Health Systems Corporation, Kauai Region -- Kauai Veterans Memorial Hospital, I want to thank all of you for taking time from your busy schedules to sponsor an employee coffee hour for us.

Your delicious homemade baked goods, dips, fruit trays and Aloha Spirit, are truly meaningful to us, and we value your trust in us to care for you and your loved ones. We are sincerely grateful and blessed!

With much Aloha, Lance K. Segawa, Regional Chief CEO

- ♥ -Thank you to all who made the Thanksgiving worship experience so meaningful—especially Helen H-P. The offer was \$452 to Nana’s House Kokua Fund.
- ♥ -Mahalo to Skye and Mahea for a great hula dance in worship.
- ♥ -Thank you to the Christmas Choir for the “Lo How a Rose. . .” Very beautiful!
- ♥ -Thank you to the kids and families for the great Pseghetti Night with the cookie decorating, games, train, and movie!

Worship Leaders

Lay Reader: Berenice Wagner

Deacon: Marlene Matutino

January Deacons: Jared Morsey, Kevin Christian

Church Council Meeting: January 12, 2025, at 11:30 am via zoom hybrid



Danny Smith, Rest in Peace; Helen Masaki; Irwin Oyama, back pain
 Melissa B., cancer recovery; 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); Helen's mother (heart); Kim H-P for a new job; 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.

Mahalo

- ♥ Thank you to Sue for the Stewardship letters AND the mass mailing of Christmas cards via EDDM bundling.
- ♥ -Thank you to Oyamas for the poinsettias
- ♥ -Thank you for Christmas Tea, especially Margaret for her cups and hats!
- ♥ -Thank you to all for doing the Christmas decorations, especially Jared for going up the “Jacob’s Ladder” to the top of the Norfolk pine in the driveway

Calendar Notes:

"Jesus in the Hood" car ministry will be on January 19th after worship

Hauoli la Hanau! Lanuāli

4th Kathy Uyeda
4th Janice Oyama
6th Skyler Kagawa
7th Kairren Park
8th Happy Synder
9th Clint Synder
9th Kara Hegwood
12th Jonathan Galiza
14th Shelbi Kealohakuupuuwai
15th .Elyse Dufour-Collins
17th Crystal (Whitehill) Park
18th Kevin Christian
26th Emily Evans
26th Ruby Doi
29th Barbara Burtch



Official Announcement: The Annual Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, February 2nd, 2025, after worship. If you have not done so already, the officers of the church should have their reports into Jackie for the booklet.

The Rev. Dr. David Vásquez-Levy will speak on the topic "**Faith-Based Resistance to the Rise of Christian Nationalism**" at the January meeting of the Kaua`i Association of the United Church of Christ. Dr. Vásquez-Levy is the President of Pacific School of Religion (PSR) in Berkeley, California.

Dr. Vásquez-Levy's talk will be followed by a time for questions and answers, as well as a brief presentation of upcoming courses in Theological Education in Leadership offered in Hawai`i by PSR. The evening will begin **at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, January 28, 2025, at Kōloa Union Church**, located at 3289 Poipu Road in Kōloa. A reception of hors d'oeuvres and drinks will follow the presentation.

Happy
New Year!

News from the Pews

- –Glenn Molander's son Leif came to visit at Christmas
- –Russell & Berenice became grandparents again. Welcome little "Luna."
- –Susie & David spent Christmas with family in Phoenix
- –Olaf and Helen's family came on-island– Welcome Kim, Carolyn and Chris
- –Nani Fukino is back from her trip to Japan with great stories to tell
- –Kay & Kev & Ohana spent Christmas down under, that is in Australia
- –Jared M. was interviewed for a bio in the Hanapepe Hawaiian Church's newsletter as a visiting pastor. Maybe we will reprint it here in this newsletter, too!
- At the light parade a Waimea High School student who comes to Friday Bible Club was marching in the parade and handing out gummi treats when she spotted Pastor Olaf sitting on the curb. She immediately reached into her bag, producing a packet of gummi treats, and threw them as hard as she could at the pastor. "Now, I am getting you back for all the gummi treats you have thrown at me in Bible Club!" she announced with a loud voice.

Book Club

January's selection is *The Woman in the Window*, a psychological thriller by AJ Finn. The story is told from the first-person point of view of an unreliable female narrator, Dr. Anna Fox. Dr. Fox, a former child psychologist, is agoraphobic due to post-traumatic stress disorder. The novel follows her as she witnesses a crime that no one else believes happened. She observes the people in her neighborhood and imagines stories about what is happening in their lives. She meets a new neighbor and his mother and begins to form a relationship with them. However, things aren't as they seem. How she was traumatized and why she heavily drinks are revealed only slowly.

Cinthy Kagawa will host on January 19th at 3:00 pm.

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Come to think of it, statistically, those who own a pet record higher levels of happiness and wellbeing. Those who are active in church will be happier and live on average two years longer. Put the two together in Bible Study then we are really beating the odds and creating happiness that is at a higher level than could have been before. Happiness be at a Godly level!

Happy New Year, Pastor Olaf

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

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