

VOLUME XXXI
NUMBER 5
May 2024

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.

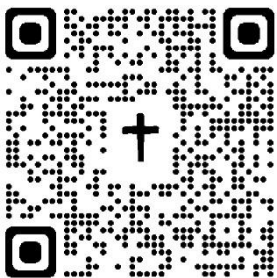
**Waimea United Church
of Christ**

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,

Having a rainy Sunday is quite rare in Waimea; yet, they do come about from time to time. This was the case on April 14th after storms had already shut down some of the roads on the island and shuttered the schools as well. We came together to worship despite the warnings blaring on our cell phones to stay off the roads. Other churches decided not to meet, including our sister Baptist Church down the way. We forded on with the maxim "It is only water after all."

I judged by the smiling faces that we were all elated by how many of the rest of us attended that morning. The worship space was brimming with sogginess. I like to think that it is fun to drive through puddles and mud and try to run between the raindrops. Thankfully, most of you share this sense of adventure!

Mike M. showed up at the door wearing a paper hat made from newspaper. Later he was seen wearing a plastic garden waste bag over his body as a raincoat. The palm trees from the arboretum were bristling raindrops on the leaves, leaving puddles on the chancel. Newspapers were put down in the Narthex for wiping mud off of feet—this giving the effect of stepping into a kitty litter box rather than coming to church.

Who was it that suggested that we sing the hymn "Showers of Blessings"? The torrents came down against the Victorian glass windows. We had the background noise of waterfalls during our quiet time in prayer. The last hymn sung was "You Are My All in All," that has the line ". . .when I am dry You fill me up." Well, it had been very dry for the last few weeks, so God was making up for it with showers of blessings.

Noticing that all the snails were out in abundance during the deluge, I introduced a real live snail into the children's Mini-Hune Message times—about coming out of our shell and not being shy about our faith in Jesus. Little Hanna took the snail down to Sunday school with her. I am not sure what happened to it after that.

My sermon was extra steamy, too. We could not open the windows, and all of our bodies and breath added to the humidity indoors. When was the last time you really sweated through a sermon? How wonderful it was to have the warmth inside the church with all that was happening around us outside. We are so thankful for those who built the walls and roof for us back in the 1800's realizing that life does not always give us perfect weather.

Continued on back page



Scriptures and Sermons for

May

- May 5 Romans 2:17-29
"What to Preach?"
- May 12 Romans 3:1-20
"Nobody's Right, Except Mom"
- May 19 Romans 3:21-31
"Faithfulness"
- May 26 Romans 4:1-12
"A Few Good Men"
- June 2 Romans 4:13-25
"God Promises"

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:

Fri. May 3rd 6pm KAUCC Aha Mele at Lihue Christian Church

Sat. May 4th 8:30am KAUCC Aha Mokupuni at Lihue Christian

Sun. May 5th Cinco de Mayo during worship

Sat. May 11th. 9:00am Aletha's Kaohi memorial at Hanapepe Hawaiian Church

Sun. May 12th Mother's Day Luncheon after church

Fri. May 24th at 5:30pm WHS Graduation parking evangelism

Sun. May 26th Riley Carl Grace Scholarship presentation in worship

June 13-15 Aha Pae Aina & Youth Camp at Central Union Church, Oahu

Women's support group will meet every 4th Sunday in Baird Hall after worship service. Seven women came at the inaugural meeting and openly shared.

Worship Leaders

Lay Reader: Berenice Wagner

Deacon: Mary Hayes

May Deacons: Jared Morsey, Rob Carlson, Vicky Mercado

Church Council Meeting: May 19, 2024, at 11:30 via Zoom Hybrid



Lee Miller. in hospital; Winona for healing her hand after fall; Helen Masaki; Tom Montanus for breathing; Jackie Webber for healing from fall.; Irwin Oyama for heart and surgeries; Melissa B.; healing, and her father Jim in hospice; 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); Russell and Berenice's daughter Selma (stomach); 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.

Mahalo:

- * Mahalo to Tom Montanus for giving all the keiki knitted Easter potatoes! Maybe a new tradition has been started in our church.
- * What a blessing to see the kids running all over the garden Easter morning! Blessings to all the egg stuffers and stashers.
- * Thank you to Chad for the beautiful piano and solo on Easter morning too.
- * Thank you to our Methodist brothers and sisters for the great Easter sunrise worship and malasada breakfast.
- * Thank you to our Episcopal brothers and sisters for the Maundy Thursday service of footwashing.
- * Blessings on our wonderful Easter fellowship chefs: Jackie M for hot crossed buns, Olaf H-P for two carrot cakes, Mary H for devilish eggs, and all the rest!

Hauoli la Hanau!

May 1	Kirra Park
May 2	Priscilla Aguilar
May 4	Victor Aguilar
May 7	Erich Bachman
May 9	Jean Thompson
May 12	Marlene Matutino
May 13	Ted Synder
May 18	Ellie Synder
May 20	Diane Foulks
May 20	Patty Synder
May 20	Ellen Tompson
May 23	Tom Montanus
May 27	Kimberly Aguilar
May 27	Kay Lim
May 30	Irwin Oyama



News from the Pews

- –We were blessed by Vidinha Charitable Trust with a grant to re-shingle the steeple.
- –Mama Kahu Helen H-P will be away in May for visiting kids.
- –Vicky’s daughter is coming to visit her this month.
- –Colonel Vince’s son Lucas has moved to the island!
- –Sue and Rob C. were away “Down Under” hiking and taking in the beauty.
- –Patricia C. headed back to Philly after a long spring visit.
- –Kitty C. also headed back to the mainland.
- –Congratulations to baby Abigail Collins, christened on Easter Morning. Grandma and grandpa came in from Louisiana for the event.
- –Congratulations to Riley Carl, graduate, for receiving this year’s \$1,000 Grace Scholarship from the church.
- –Condolences to the Kaohi family on the loss of Auntie Aletha. She will be missed by all.
- –Jared is training for the marathon again, if you happen to see him running around.

DOMINOES
TUESDAY, 7-9 PM
AT BAIRD HALL

Metaphoric Euphoric Parabolic KAUCC Spring Youth Camp (Part 2)

Almost as if on cue, one of the youth cleared the room with his own example of gas. We should have taken off ten points on the scoreboard for that one, but grace prevailed.

The next day we read the Parable of the Lost Sheep that led to team scavenger hunts for a potential forty-five points if all the items were found. The youth were zipping back and forth as fast as they could; looking for a paper clip, geranium, and the like. Like Jesus, they found even the smallest.

That afternoon we moved the volleyball tourney down to the meadow next to Kokee Lodge and Museum. Almost as if to prove the Parable of the Wedding Feast, some other kids just came over and started playing with our group. Of course, everyone is invited to be with God’s people!

The next day was the big hike into the forest. “Stay in a group! Don’t get lost! We don’t want to have to send Jesus after you to find you again!” We started at the trailhead of Puu ka Ohelo that looped into the Berry Flats Trail. We walked under a canopy of guava, climbed a perfect tree for climbing (nicknamed the “climbing tree”), discovered the secret Menehune Village (now with two-story duplex construction), and rested in the magnificent grove of redwood trees. This is usually a three-hour hike, but we shortened it somehow to two hours and twenty minutes.

This was now the last night at camp. Chef extraordinaire Andrea made her famous bolognese spaghetti, garlic toast, Caesar salad, and really sticky brownies. Already a sadness was setting in as the youth realized it was their last supper together. They were quiet—too quiet. The evening worship was about the “Good Samaritan,” how God uses the least of us to do great things for others. Almost as if on cue again, a lost stranger drove up to camp looking for assistance!

That night around the last campfire together, the youth strummed the ukulele, sang “happy birthday” to Youth Leaders Jared and Olaf, and shared their innermost thoughts and feelings.

“I miss my phone still, but I wish everyday could be like this. This is real life.”

“I have really been bullied at school, so I became a bully too. I got in trouble because I sent another girl to the ER.”

“I do not know if I can come next year to camp because my father wants me to get a job to help pay the rent.”

“Sorry, you caught me smoking marijuana at the Big Green Gym after school.”

“Do you remember my brother? He used to come to camp. He is just smoking and drinking all the time now.”

Continued on back page

Continued from front page

After worship, we shared umbrellas to get down to Baird Hall for fellowship. Always there is one last umbrella that nobody claims. This one belonged to Little Skyler—it was half broken and cutely drooped over her on one side. I took off my shoes, rolled up my trousers, and jumped in puddles with the kids after snacks and before the Council Meeting. By this time, the sun had peeked through the clouds and blessed us on our way. Next Sunday we sang “There Is Sunshine in My Soul Today.”

I love it when I get to hose off the mud from my fenders after church!

Blessings, Olaf

Continued from page 3

“We need another camp in the summer. How can we have another camp?”

Pastor Olaf reassured, “Listen, Jared and I are here for you always if you are in Waimea. If you are in Middle School, we come on campus on Thursdays at lunch in the band room for Bible Club. If you are in High School, Friday at lunch in the band room. Everyday after school we are at the Big Green Gym in Waimea. On Friday we have a special Bible Club meeting at 2:30 there. So, really, camp does not have to end.”

Ah, you must be wondering which team won the camp competition? Somehow the score came out after everything exactly even. That is right, we all won! The big bag of chocolate was evenly distributed to all as were the tears, the smiles, the hugs. And, we all left camp humming that hymn: “Jesus, You Are My All-in-All.”

Please scroll for additional newsletter insert that follows on next page

From Teri Sakai

Hope for Cambodia 2024

I was blessed with the opportunity to attend and support a Leadership Conference for 150 Cambodian Church Leaders in January 2024. Along with Pastor Glenn Fraizer, Ai Hanegawa and 4 Ministers from California, I attended the weeklong conference in Cambodia's second largest city, Battambang. My contribution and participation centered around health and wellness for all attendees. With the funds provided by the Waimea UCC Missions Committee and other individuals, I was able to bring a supply of Tylenol, antidiarrheal medication, several hundred band aids, packets of antibiotic ointment and over 600 toothbrushes. Along with the supplies brought by Pastor Glenn and the California Ministers, these items were distributed equally to the 150 participants representing their small villages and community churches. In between the lectures and workshop sessions (all translated into Khmer/Cambodian) I was able to take Blood Pressures, which the participants appreciated and took quite seriously. There were eight individuals ready for commitment to the Lord and baptized in the outdoor Baptismal Pool. The newly completed men's and women's bathrooms with flushing toilets and showers were dedicated with a ceremony and were definitely appreciated by all throughout the week.

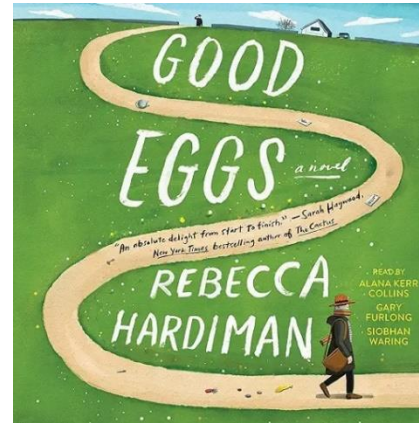
Pastor Glenn, Ai and I were privileged to tour several of the small villages and churches in the area surrounding Battambang, and we were impressed by the friendliness and reception we received. Each of the small churches are led by individuals trained at Battambang's Leadership Train Institute where the Conference was held. The Institute which had been closed during the recent pandemic has now begun a new 2-year cohort of young men and women leaders in training.

I thank you for your prayers and support during my time in Cambodia with this well-run organization.

Sincerely,

Teri Sakai

Book Club



Good Eggs by Rebecca Hardiman is May's book club selection. Teri Sakai will host on May 19, 2024, at 3:00PM. *The Washington Post* has named this novel a feel-good novel. Three generations of a family struggle with different challenges. A teenage daughter who feels that she is misunderstood lashes out. The father is recently unemployed and is trying to take

care of his family while his wife's job takes her around the world to exotic locales. The elder of the family is arrested for shoplifting (apparently for the thrill of it). Into the chaos comes a caregiver for the grandmother ostensibly to keep an "eye on her." Even though sometimes family members create the biggest life challenges, families can also be our salvation.

Next month's novel is *Freckled* by T. W. Neal. A memoir of the author's upbringing next to Taylor Camp in Haena. Jackie Matsumura will host in June.