

## David K. Popham Recommended for Conference Minister

BY ELWOOD KITA,  
SEARCH COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

The Hawai'i Conference United Church of Christ (HCUCC) Conference Minister Search Committee, laity and clergy representing a cross-section of the Conference in age, ethnicity, Associations, and theology, has made a unanimous recommendation to the Hawai'i Conference Council. The Committee reviewed 13 profiles (two with Hawai'i experience), conducted four video conference interviews, and two in-person interviews. The HCUCC Council met the final candidate in person and unanimously voted to recommend the call of the Reverend Dr. David Kentner Popham to be our Conference Minister.



Rev. Popham was ordained by the American Baptist Church in 1992 and was granted Privilege of Call in the UCC in 1995.

After pastoring local churches for 11 years, Rev. Popham went on to serve as Associate Conference Minister in two Conferences over the past 14 years. He recently earned his Doctor of Ministry degree from Lancaster Theological Seminary.

Rev. Popham's experience has exposed him to a wide variety of challenges facing the UCC. He

understands that changes are impacting our churches and has the capacity to lead the church toward the future. He is a collaborative and sensitive leader.

Rev. Popham listens well and deeply, a critical skill for his conversational leadership style. He asked questions and made us feel comfortable as we shared our desires, concerns, and hopes for the Hawai'i Conference. We are confident he will use what is shared in conversation to empower our churches, Associations, and Conference to thrive.

One of Rev. Popham's strengths is strategic planning. He called the HCUCC Strategic Plan outstanding and said he looked forward to implementing it. He will seek to

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## Nānā I Ke Kumu: Workshops at the 'Aha Pae'āina

BY JACK BELSOM  
FORMATION TEAM CHAIRPERSON

When I first arrived in Hawai'i, an Associate Conference Minister advised me to read *Nānā I Ke Kumu (Look to the Source)*. I read and learned how Hawaiian culture shaped the people



'Aha Pae'āina. We wanted the delegates and visitors to *nānā i ke kumu*—to look to our roots—our source.

In a time in which so much discourse is strident and adversarial, Don and Bill urged us to go to the roots to rediscover the source of our life as the church, the Body of Christ. If trees in a forest can protect and nurture one another, so can we. If we communicate at the level of the roots of our faith—the source of our life together—our conversations will be different, and our ministry will be "rooted and grounded in love" (Ephesians 3:17). It is time to care for the roots of the Hawai'i Conference UCC. Bill Lyons and Don Remick will each address the plenary on Friday to help us prepare to care for the roots of our churches.

**Bill Lyons** served more than 30 years in local church, state prison, and hospital settings. He is the

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I was now in ministry with. Last December, six of us from the Hawai'i Conference heard William Lyons and Donald Remick address UCC participants at Authorized Ministry in the 21st Century (AM21) about ministry in the UCC. They showed us several short videos about how trees communicate, support, and care for one another in a forest. Trees in a forest communicate through their roots!

That alone was amazing, but applying that learning to the church led us to invite them to join us for the

## Why Do You Love the United Church of Christ?

BY GABRIELLE CHAVEZ, INTERIM CONFERENCE MINISTER

For this issue of *The Friend* which highlights the business of our upcoming Hawai'i Conference annual meeting and the biennial General Synod of our national United Church of Christ, I am reflecting on the question of why I love the UCC. What would you say? Below are some of my favorite answers.



I love the UCC because:

- the highest values of the United Church of Christ are grounded in the biblical great commandments to love God and one another in the way of love shown by Jesus.
- we are encouraged to think, question, and love God with our whole mind as well as heart and strength.
- we know God is still speaking and listen for the Holy Spirit.
- we are resilient and adaptive because UCC polity is democratic and local church based, not hierarchical, with great freedom of expression to preach and teach the gospel in changing times.
- the United Church of Christ is the only US denomination that was formed by a merger, not a split; a marriage, not a divorce. We have been doing the hard work of seeking unity in diversity since our founding. If you want a denomination with a track record and some wisdom about what it takes to walk together in diversity, the UCC is for you.

• we have a great cloud of witnesses in the foremothers and fathers of our founding traditions, who articulated the vision of a church dedicated to answering Jesus' prayer "that they all may be one."

- UCC historical understandings of the gospel were born and have been carried forward by the Second Great Awakening wave that brought the missionaries to Hawai'i with a passion to include non-Calvinist peoples in Jesus' good news of the Kingdom of heaven and the love of God. In the 200 years since, that wave in our UCC has continued to break through historical prejudices, widening our embrace of the excluded in God's Kingdom of heaven and church on the ground.
- without a creed to demand uniformity of belief, or a hierarchy to enforce it, the genius of our unity is found in our commitment to covenant. What holds us together is our defining quality, a willingness to stay in relationship as the United Church of Christ.

My interim work with you has highlighted the essential value of our covenants. Covenants are the voluntary commitments we make to be in mutual supportive relationships

in all settings of the church, even if we don't agree. They are foundational to the identity and existence of the United Church of Christ.

UCC churches exist because they have members who join by covenant promise. Our Associations function in covenant with our congregations. The Conference, which connects the congregations to each other and to the wider UCC and ecumenical partnerships, holds together through covenant.

What makes us UCC is not a formula of belief, but the promises we make to be faithful to our covenant relationships in the church. Like a good marriage, this is hard work and sometimes strained because it allows for diversity of opinion, history, and tradition. Expect our UCC meetings to be lively!

The freedom of voluntary association, or covenant, is risky, but it is the kingdom way. It is how God wants us to be with each other as well as Godself. We see in the Bible that time and time again God stays in relationship even when we are unfaithful. The United Church of Christ, trusting God's grace, takes that risk, too. That's why I love the UCC.

In covenant with you,  
*Gabrielle*

### Nānā I Ke Kumu, continued from page 1

Conference Minister of the Southwest Conference UCC. He serves on the Arizona Attorney General's Clergy Council and is a member of that group's committee on the opioid crisis. Bill is a graduate of Kentucky Christian University, The University of St. Joseph, Cincinnati Christian Seminary, and McCormick Theological Seminary.



Bill Lyons

**Don Remick** is the Transitional Interim Conference Minister of the Massachusetts Conference UCC. His ministry has been in Massachusetts in local churches, through outdoor and disaster ministries, and as an associate conference minister. He has a degree in Wildlife Management from the University of Maine and graduated from Andover Newton Theological School.



Don Remick



God is still speaking

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**Phone:** (808) 537-9516 or (800) 734-7610 (Neighbor Island Toll Free)

**Fax:** (808) 521-7196

**E-mail:** [hcucc@hcucc.org](mailto:hcucc@hcucc.org)

**Contributing Writers:** Jack Belsom, Elwood Kita

# Eight Workshops Offer Wide Range of Learning Opportunities at ‘Aha Pae‘āina

During the upcoming ‘Aha Pae‘āina, there will be two time periods in which attendees can choose from a wide range of learning opportunities:

## First Workshop Period

### • **Come and See New Beginnings** (John Derby)

John will introduce New Beginnings, a program to define a church's purpose.

### • **Supporting Mission and Ministry in the HCUCC** (Panel of HCUCC and HCF Leaders)

HCUCC and HCF leaders discuss ways to support doing mission in light of our assets and revenue, including the Coan Trust and grants.

### • **Strategic Initiatives 1, 3 and 6** (Tracy Barnowe)



Action Teams 1, 3 and 6 will share what they have been working on and proposals for the future for each of their initiatives.

### • **HCUCC in the #MeToo Era:**

Session 1: Stories from the Heart (Gloria Imamura, Janice Ogoshi, Rachael Wong)

Local residents will share their experiences of sexual harassment and assault, the impact it has had on their lives, and their ongoing journeys of healing and resolution.

## Second Workshop Period

### • **HCUCC in the #MeToo Era:**

Session 2: Opportunities to Respond to the #MeToo Movement (Gloria Imamura, Janice Ogoshi, Rachael Wong)

**Prerequisite:** Attendance at Session 1 of the workshop.

Local business and nonprofit leaders will share how they have responded to sexual harassment and misuse of positional power by improving policies, procedures and practices within their organizations.

### • **Mohala Farms** (Mark Hamamoto)

Learn about the unique ministry of sustainable agriculture, lifelong education and cultural arts.

### • **Changing Landscape**

(Don Remick, Bill Lyons)

This workshop will look at some of the changes in views on religion and spiritual practice. There will also be discussion on three faithful choices all churches are facing and their consequences: stay the same, adapt and transform, birth something new.

### • **b1** (John Eisenhauer)

John will share an update on the b1 platform. This is a time to meet with the developer and explore what is yet to come.

## Popham, continued from page 1

align Conference resources with the strategic plan.

Rev. Popham's experience working with culturally and theologically diverse churches has prepared him to serve in our Conference. He has worked with a number of immigrant churches and understands their challenges. He is eager to learn the many cultural practices, values, and issues that are unique to Hawai'i.

Rev. Popham has experience addressing conflict in churches. He will bring a compassionate, healing approach to conflict resolution. Even when it is difficult, he will strive for reconciliation and mutual respect, extending God's grace and love in each situation.

Rev. Popham is married to Kerrie Shahan, and they have two daughters. The Pophams describe their relationship as a "mixed orientation marriage." Rev. Popham is gay and his wife is straight. They have been married 30 years, and Rev. Popham confirms

they are committed and faithful to their marriage. Inquiries to the Conferences he served indicate that this was a non-issue with regard to his ministry.

Rev. Popham shared that his initial focus will be the Strategic Plan, Conference needs, building relationships, learning about Hawai'i's peoples, and supporting Conference staff.

Above all, Rev. Popham is a man of abiding faith and integrity whose relationship with Jesus Christ guides all facets of his ministry.

As one voice, the HCUCC Conference Minister Search Committee and the HCUCC Council now offer their highest recommendation to call the Rev. Dr. David Kentner Popham to serve as Conference Minister.

*Search Committee Members:*  
Rosemarie Caberto,Carolynn David,  
Wayne Higa, Phyllis Meighen,  
Wahineaukai Mercado, Miguel Morales,  
Janice Ogoshi, Joan Sakaba, George  
Winchell

## Happenings Around the Conference



Church Leaders Event



Church Leaders Event



Rev. Enja and Mrs. Risko Enos



Rev. Enos and friends



Central Union Church Blue Zones Straw Challenge



Church Leaders Event



Pastoral Leaders Retreat



Pohnpeian FUNdraiser



Central Union Church Blue Zones Straw Challenge



Mary Herbig and her parents at her Installation Service



Retirement Housing Foundation 55th Anniversary Celebration



Service of Recognition of Licensing for William Fale



Conference Disaster Coordinators gathering in Puerto Rico



Dorothy Lester and Gabrielle Chavez at the Tri-Isle Spring Mokupuni



Corinne Murashige is the new Controller for the Conference and Foundation



David Baumgart Turner, Frances Wong and Sharon MacArthur at Frances' Service of Ordination and Installation

# Meet Our Synod Delegates

*Eleven delegates from the Hawai'i Conference will be in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, from June 20 through June 25 for the Thirty-Second General Synod of the United Church of Christ. One delegate has yet to be named. Meet our local church folks who have been selected to represent our Conference.*

**Class of 2019:**  
**Isaiah Kaauwai**  
 (Kaua'i Association;  
 Kapa'a First Hawaiian Church)



**Diane Meyer**  
 (Tri-Isle Association;  
 Po'okela Church on Maui)



"Attending General Synod in 2017 was a highlight of my year. I experienced highs in worship and lows in touching testimonies. The Exhibits/Marketplace was amazing. Exposure to different cultures was stimulating. This year I look forward to experiencing more spirit-filled worship, learning more about the vast array of outreach programs sponsored by the UCC, sharing fellowship with other delegates, and meeting new people from all over the world."

**Sue Smith** (Hawai'i Island Association;  
 Church of the Holy Cross)



Sue is a member of the Justice & Witness Missional Team for the Conference and serves as the secretary of the Hawai'i Island Association. She is looking forward to attending her second General Synod and to gathering more information, discovering new materials and making contacts to broaden her work for the Justice & Witness Missional Team.

**Kristen Young** (O'ahu Association;  
 United Church of Christ—Judd Street)

"I am grateful for the opportunity to attend a General Synod! I am most looking forward to gathering with people of all ages and seeing the wider church at work. I hope to witness faith in action, engage my own faith, and return home to share about the collective work that our denomination is doing to create 'a just world for all.'"



**Class of 2021:**  
**Kerisa Carmelo**  
 (Association of Hawaiian Evangelical Churches;  
 Lanakila Congregational Church on Hawai'i Island)



Kerisa is the AHEC Pu'uuku (Treasurer) and a representative on the AHEC Committee on Ministry. She is very excited to attend her first General Synod. She has heard so many good things about what goes on and is thankful to be able to participate and experience a gathering such as this.

**Florentino "Tino" Cordova**  
 (Tri-Isle Association;  
 Lao United Church of Christ on Maui)



Tino is the pastor of Lao UCC, an Open and Affirming church for ALL people. "I hope that I will learn the process of how the UCC does Synod and how the delegates can come together to make an informed decision. I am looking forward to this Synod as it will be my first as an Ordained UCC Pastor."

**Linda Kaauwai-Iwamoto** (Kaua'i Association;  
 Kapa'a First Hawaiian Church)



Linda serves on the Kaua'i Association Committee on Ministry. She is inter-

ested in learning about what more the General Synod can offer Hawai'i's UCC ministers on each of our islands and how our island churches, and especially our Committees on Ministry, can assist our pastors who are moving toward ordination in the UCC.

**Kyle Lovett** (O'ahu Association;  
 Central Union Church)



Kyle is an authorized minister of the UCC and is the Chairperson of the O'ahu Association Committee on Ministry. Thinking of her first Synod representing Hawai'i, she says she's "excited to network with other UCC folk who are 'living into' the new *Manual on Ministry* across the settings of the denomination."

**Neal MacPherson**  
 (O'ahu Association;  
 Church of the Crossroads)



Neal is a retired UCC pastor, having served churches in Hawai'i for the past forty years. This is the first Synod he will be attending in nearly twenty years and he is interested in witnessing the changing patterns of the national setting of the church. Knowing that the UCC has been undergoing a diminishment in numbers, he is anxious "to see if the national church is acknowledging this new reality in a theologically sound, realistic, and imaginative way." He looks forward to being part of the Hawai'i delegation.

**John Narruhn**  
 (Hawaii Island Association;  
 Church of the Holy Cross)



John is a student attending Wheaton College in Illinois and this is his first General Synod where he is a delegate. He is hoping to have a great time with his fellow brothers and sisters in Christ and will let the Spirit lead him through whatever he needs to go through.

*continued on page 6*

## Women Will Highlight Worship at General Synod in June



Four creative and dynamic preachers, all of them women, will highlight the worship services at General Synod, June 21-25, in Milwaukee. For the first time in UCC history, General Synod will feature

all women in the roles of preachers, liturgists, and worship writers. Sharon Lee MacArthur, Interim Minister of Community Church of Honolulu, is one of the four women chosen to preach.

## Hawai'i Conference Well-Represented at General Synod 32

In addition to our official delegates to General Synod 32, the following people from the Hawai'i Conference will be seen around the plenary floor:

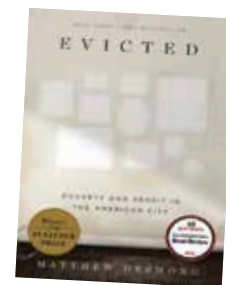
- **Eric Anderson**, Pastor of Church of the Holy Cross in Hilo, will be the Hawai'i Conference's General Synod correspondent, providing a daily update on the Synod experience and its decisions. He will also be a writer/photographer for the United Church News' Synod coverage.
- **Eleanore Chong**, member of Central Union Church in Honolulu, has been nominated to serve on

the UCC Board of Directors. She would serve as an at-large member in the Class of 2025. The slate of nominees will be presented to the General Synod for a vote.

- **Sharon Lee MacArthur**, Interim Minister of Community Church of Honolulu, will be the featured preacher on June 24 at the Monday night prayer service during General Synod.
- **Caroline Belsom**, member of Waiola Church in Lahaina, and **Pualani Muraki**, member of Lanakila Congregational Church in Kealahou, both serve on the UCC Board of Directors.

## Synod Speaker is Pulitzer Prize-Winning Author

Pulitzer Prize-winning author Matthew Desmond will be the keynote speaker at General Synod 32. His New York Times bestselling book, *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*, has been selected as the subject of the UCC's 2019 All Church Read. Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the host city for General Synod, is also the location where the events of his book take place. *Evicted* introduces readers to eight families struggling to make ends meet and builds a case for eviction as being a root cause of poverty.



*Delegates, continued from page 5*

In addition to delegates, every UCC conference sends two Associate Delegates. **Kealahou Alike** and **Gabrielle Chavez** will represent the Hawai'i Conference. **Nixon Jack**, a Member in Discernment, has been awarded a Brown Endowment Grant to attend. The following Hawai'i Conference staff persons will also be in attendance: **Richard Kamanu**, **Dorothy Lester**, and **Lori Yamashiro**.



### Strengthen the Church

Strengthen the Church, one of four special mission offerings of the United Church of Christ, builds

the future of our denomination.

Split evenly between the Hawai'i Conference and UCC national ministries, money received from this offering largely supports youth ministries and leaders for new churches in parts of the country where the UCC voice has not been heard.

In Hawai'i, Strengthen the Church breathes life into new local church

projects, especially those focused on youth ministry, through Christian Investment Grants administered by the Stewardship Missional Team.

Churches are invited to receive this offering on any Sunday, but this year's suggested date is Pentecost Sunday, June 9. Resources for promoting Strengthen the Church are available at [www.ucc.org/stc](http://www.ucc.org/stc).

## Highlights from the Website

Go to [www.hcucc.org](http://www.hcucc.org) to learn more about these and many other news items from around the Conference.

### Pastoral Transitions

**Dillon Shaw** began his ministry as Associate Pastor of Kahului Union Church on January 16.

**Sharon MacArthur** began her ministry as Interim Minister of Community Church of Honolulu on March 1.

**Wallace Ryan Kuroiwa** began his ministry as Interim Minister of Nu‘uanu Congregational Church on March 10.

**Yasushi Nemoto** began his ministry as Nichigobu Pastor of Kahului Union Church on March 16.

**Chris Czarnecki** began his ministry as Pastor of First United Protestant Church on March 1.

**Heather Robertson** began her ministry as Associate Pastor of United Church of Christ—Judd Street on April 1.

**Choo Lak Yeow** began his ministry as Interim Minister of the First Chinese Church of Christ in Hawai‘i on April 1.

### Services of Ordination, Installation and Recognition

**Mary Herbig** was installed as Minister of Congregational Life of Central Union Church on March 31.

**William Fale** was recognized as a Licensed Minister of Cup of Freedom Church on April 13.

**Frances Wong** was ordained and installed as Associate Minister of Christian Education of Community Church of Honolulu on May 5.

### Conference Office Transition

**Corinne Murashige** began as the new Controller for the Hawai‘i Conference and the Hawai‘i Conference Foundation on April 4. She is a CPA, with an MBA, who has more than 25 years of experience working in the nonprofit sector. She can be reached at 808-791-5628 or [cmurashige@hcucc.org](mailto:cmurashige@hcucc.org).

## ‘Aha Iki Convenes June 5-6

The ‘Aha Iki, the annual business meeting of Hawaiian churches and affiliated partner organizations, will convene on June 5-6 at Kaumakapili Church. The partner groups include the Association of Hawaiian Evangelical Churches (AHEC), the State Council of Hawaiian Congregational Churches, the State Sunday School Association, and Christian Endeavor Hawai‘i. They come together to fellowship, engage in Bible study, discuss issues and programs of the Hawai‘i Conference in preparation for the ‘Aha Makua, and transact business.

### In Memory



**Enja Enos**, 74, President of the JRD Marshallese Churches, died on March 10 in Hilo, Hawai‘i. He was accorded a state funeral at Nitijela in Majuro in the Marshall Islands on March 28. He is survived by his wife, Risko Enos, eight children, and 14 grandchildren.

## Conference Calendar of Events

May 17 - 18 Kaua‘i Association Spring Mokupuni

May 18 O‘ahu Association Spring Mokupuni

May 27 Memorial Day  
(Office Closed)

June 5 - 8 ‘Aha Pae‘āina

June 10 Office Closed

June 11 King Kamehameha Day  
(Office Closed)

June 21 – 25 General Synod 32 in Milwaukee, WI

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# *Ka Papa Ho'olālā*

## Imaging the Hawai'i Conference

BY KRISTEN YOUNG

How would you represent the Hawai'i Conference United Church of Christ, made up of more than 130 unique churches with diverse congregations spread out over six Hawaiian Islands, in a two-dimensional narrow rectangle?

The new banner for the Hawai'i Conference (featured on [www.hcucc.org](http://www.hcucc.org)) was created with these elements in mind, portraying a band of colors made with clippings of images taken around Hawai'i. Each image is of nature, beyond the walls of a church building in which God and our faith are not confined. The placement of the images follows the colors of the rainbow, a symbol that reminds us of God's faithfulness and represents the coming together of differences and the beauty of diversity among us.

A cross, a symbol of our Christian



faith that holds different meanings for us all, lies on the band of colors revealing words from our Conference's vision: "We are one 'ohana: a unified, radiant, and transforming expression of the body of Christ." Below the cross, etched across the band of colors is the United Church of Christ's motto "That they may all be one" (John 17:21).

A closer look at the text on the left will show you that the two i's in "Hawai'i" are in the shape of people, reminding us that the Hawai'i

Conference is made up of many people, all of us standing side by side, united. The new UCC logo of our denomination is also included, a comma that reminds us that God is still speaking in our islands.

However you interpret the banner, I hope you find that it represents the Hawai'i Conference for you and the loving, creative, diverse God that unites us all.

Wear the banner on a black shirt! Shirts will be sold at the 'Aha Pae'āina for \$15.