

# The Friend



## HAWAII CONFERENCE

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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## Workshops Offer Learning Opportunities

Among the highlights at the 193rd 'Aha Pae'aina will be a diverse assortment of workshops on Friday.

"Personal Money Matters," an introduction to supporting personal financial health in your community, will be led by Cheri Lovell, Director of Marketing and Strategic Communications at United Church Funds. Cheri will also lead a second workshop, "Building the Future—Planned Giving and More."



*A workshop based on the Pū'ā Foundation initiative to strengthen families affected by incarceration is one of the workshops that will be offered on Friday.*

The Pū'ā Foundation, which will deliver this year's keynote address, will offer "From Trauma to Transformation," examining faith-based initiatives designed to help victims of injustice heal from trauma.

Basket weaving will be taught by

Associate Conference Minister Donald Schmidt during both workshop sessions.

"Photovoltaic in Hawai'i," led by the Stewardship Missional Team, will include a panel of members from UCC churches that have installed photovoltaic systems.

During the second workshop session, there will be a rehearsal for those interested in singing in the choir during Saturday morning's worship service.

The Justice Leaders Engaging and Developing (Justice LED) workshop will provide an introductory overview of the intensive full-day training that will be offered throughout the Conference in the coming months. Justice LED is meant to inspire a lifelong passion to "do justice." Leading the workshop are Ellen Carson, member of Church of the Crossroads, and David Schlicher, Pastor of Makawao Union Church, who have been trained to be Justice LED facilitators.

## Welcome to the 193rd 'Aha Pae'aina!

This week the Hawai'i Conference gathers for the 193rd 'Aha Pae'aina, which began June 10 with the 'Aha Iki for Hawaiian churches. Delegates and visitors to the 'Aha Makua, June 12 and 13 at the Pagoda Hotel in Honolulu, can expect two days of worship, fellowship, good food, and workshops.



*Participants at this year's 'Aha Pae'aina will again have opportunities for learning through the workshops being offered.*

The Pū'ā Foundation, this year's keynote presenter, will explore the 'Aha Pae'aina theme, "Ho'āla Hou I Huliau (To reawaken within so that a meaningful transformation can take place)." Executive Director Toni Bissen and current and former female prisoners will share how storytelling helps bring healing and



transformation to break the cycle of poverty and imprisonment. Recognizing the community trauma caused by the overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom that still exists today

and individual trauma that individuals experience in life, Pū'ā hopes to offer participants tools to create transformation in their own families and communities. Pū'ā will also lead one of eight workshops on Friday. (See story at left for workshop details.)

On Saturday, delegates will vote to approve the Conference budget and elect new Conference Council members.

This year's 'Aha Iki, which included annual business meetings, workshops, and a lu'au, was hosted by Kawaiaha'o Church. Founded in 1820, Kawaiaha'o was the first Christian church built on O'ahu. The current building, consisting of about 14,000 half-ton slabs of coral, was completed in 1842. The church still incorporates Hawaiian language and culture in its services. It is registered as a state and national historic landmark and celebrates its 195th anniversary this year.

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## When Miracles Happen

by Charles C. Buck, Conference Minister

Not long ago, I witnessed a miracle. Actually, I only read about it in the news, and it hasn't happened yet, but it could over the next fifteen years.

In April, the World Bank invited religious leaders to a roundtable discussion on poverty. At the end, they made a pledge to "combat injustice and uplift the poorest in our midst." But they went even further and set a specific goal: to end all extreme poverty by 2030 ([www.rebelmouse.com/Faith2EndPoverty/](http://www.rebelmouse.com/Faith2EndPoverty/)).



Ambitious? To be sure. Impossible? Not at all, according to World Bank President, Jim Young Kim, who told the gathered religious leaders that while he once was a critic of the World Bank, he now is a believer that it can be a means to helping eradicate poverty ("Why the president of the World Bank is asking religious leaders for help," *Washington Post*, 15 April 2015).

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*Miracles happen when we realize that with God there is no scarcity of resources.*

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And therein lies the miracle: Not so much the ending of poverty itself, but believing that we have what we need to end extreme poverty. Miracles happen when we realize that with God there is no scarcity of resources. Jesus made this point to his disciples when he sent them out on their mission. After giving them "power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases," he told them to "take nothing for [the] journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money, not even an extra tunic" (Luke 9:1, 3).

Jesus reiterated reliance on available resources in the Feeding of the Five Thousand: When the disciples ask him to send the crowd away to find food, he said, "You give them something to eat" (Luke 9:13). In both cases, miracles happened because the disciples discovered that they lacked for nothing. God had already provided.

Recognizing that God has already provided what we need is the challenge of faith. Figuring out what God has provided, or how to use God's provision, is the focus of prayer. And seeing the sufficiency of God's provision for all our problems, from personal to global, is the witness of miracles.

Whether we are in church or at our 'Aha Pae'aina this week, may our sermons, songs and stories remind us of God's constant and abundant provision—all that we need to make miracles happen.

## Cleveland Hosts Thirtieth General Synod

General Synod brings together faithful members of the United Church of Christ every two years for witness, worship, and fellowship. Delegates to General Synod, who come from each of the 38 conferences, make decisions on behalf of the UCC.

The next General Synod will convene later this month in Cleveland, Ohio, which happens to be the birthplace of the UCC. Thousands from across the country, and more than a few from abroad, will come together from Friday afternoon, June 26, until Tuesday night, June 30. The Hawai'i Conference will be represented by eleven delegates (who were introduced in previous issues of *The Friend*) and two associate delegates (featured on page 3 of this issue).

The Synod agenda includes daily worship, workshops, hosted meals, and many other events. In business sessions, delegates will consider resolutions on a variety of issues and topics, including the centennial of the Armenian Genocide, mass incarceration, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, renewable energy, reunification in the Korean peninsula, full communion relationship between the UCC and the United Church of Canada, and undocumented children seeking refuge in the U.S.

Delegates will also elect John Dorhauer, currently Southwest Conference Minister, as the next UCC General Minister and President, succeeding Geoffrey Black, as well as consider amendments to the UCC Constitution and Bylaws that would re-organize the staffing structure of the denomination and change the frequency of General Synods.

Among the many workshops offered are those focusing on the support of veterans, multi-generational worship, global warming, adult literacy, welcoming persons with disabilities and special needs into worshipping communities, social media, youth, mental illness, congregational growth, economic injustice, and disaster ministries.



God is still speaking

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## Associations Experience Worship and Fellowship During Spring Gatherings



The five associations of the Hawai'i Conference met this spring for fellowship, business, celebrations, and music. Pictured above (clockwise from top left): Tri-Isle Association gathered at Keawala'i Church on May 17; Association of Hawaiian Evangelical Churches met February 20 and 21 at Waiola Church; Lihue United Church hosted the Kaua'i Association meeting April 24 and 25; O'ahu Association met at Moanalua Community Church on May 9; and the Hawai'i Island Association was hosted by Imiola Church on April 25.

## Introducing General Synod Associate Delegates

Iese Tuuao (Conference Council Chair) will attend General Synod for the eighth time, but this will be his first time as an associate delegate. In addition to chairing the Conference Council, Iese is Pastor of Samoan Church of Hawai'i, LMS, in Nanakuli and serves as Moderator of the National Council of Samoan Churches in the UCC.



"I am looking forward to the resolutions that come before the floor, the worship, the business agenda of the Synod, as well as the unexpected that would help encourage us to be and do God's will," said Iese.

Charles Buck (Conference Minister) has been Hawai'i Conference Minister since 2004. He has attended numerous General Synods in various capacities, including as delegate, associate delegate, committee chair, and workshop leader.

"On paper, every Synod looks similar," Charles reflects. "But actually each one has a character and flavor all its own. I look forward to seeing how the Spirit will flow and shape us, individually and as a church, when we're together in Cleveland!"

## In Memory

**Jia He Cheng**, former pastor of the Chinese congregation at First Chinese Church of Christ in Hawai'i, died April 7 at the age of 93. Before coming to Hawai'i in 1991, he was a pastor and seminary instructor in the People's Republic of China. His family includes his wife, Lydia, and son, Xing.



**Richard Neill**, former pastor of Kahikuonalani Church and member of Church of the Crossroads, died March 27 at the age of 84. Ordained in 1958, Dick also served churches in New York and Vermont. His family includes his wife, Diane, and four children.





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## Around the Conference



### Highlights from the Website

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

#### Services of Ordination and Installation

The O'ahu Association ordained **Joshua Hayashi**, Chaplain at Punahou School, on Sunday, April 26.

The Association of Hawaiian Evangelical Churches installed **Wendi Gordon** as Pastor of Ka Hana O Ke Akua Church on Saturday, May 2.

The O'ahu Association ordained **Randy Reynoso** and installed him as Pastor and Teacher of Ewa Community Church on Sunday, May 17.

#### Pastoral Changes

Lili'uokalani Protestant Church and Pastor **David Kieffer** mutually agreed to complete the one-year term of his call to the church without renewal. His last Sunday was March 31.

**Richard Kamanu** resigned as Pastor of Kaumakapili Church after ten years of ministry there. His last Sunday was April 5.

He has been called by the Hawai'i Conference Council to be an Interim Associate Conference Minister beginning June 1.

Associate Conference Minister **Diane Weible** was elected Conference Minister of the Northern California Nevada Conference. Her last day on the Hawai'i Conference staff was May 20. She begins her new duties on June 8.

**Mary Olney-Loyd** ended as Interim Pastor of Church of the Holy Cross on April 15.

**Choo Lak Yeow** began as Interim Pastor of Church of the Holy Cross on April 16.

**Craig Nalette** resigned as Pastor of Keolahou Hawaiian Church on May 4.

#### Conference Calendar of Events

June 10-13	193rd 'Aha Pae'aina
June 15	Conference Office Closed
June 26-30	General Synod 30
July 3	Independence Day Holiday (Office Closed)
August 1	Conference Council