

**KANAANA HOU CHURCH
CENTENNIAL WORSHIP SERVICE
SEPTEMBER 29, 2015**

Prelude: Kanaana Hou Choir

Greeting: Introductions and Thanks

Opening Prayer: Reverend Charles Buck

Litany: Leader: For the worship of you, God, in prayer and praise, for the preaching of your Word, for the celebration of the holy sacraments,

People: Offered by this church, we give thanks.

Leader: For the comfort of those who mourn, for the help of those who are perplexed, for the guidance of those who seek strength,

People: Offered by this church, we give thanks.

Leader: For guarding against evil, for fostering faithfulness, for promoting peace and justice to the world,

People: Offered by this church, we give thanks.

Leader: For the opening of minds to your truth, for the care of the needy, for the giving of hope and courage,

People: Offered by this church, we give thanks.

Leader: For the unity of all believers in Christ, for the carrying of the gospel into the world, for all the furtherance of compassion for all people,

People: Offered by this church, we give thanks.

Leader: For the consecration of life and service, in grateful remembrance of those who have gone before us, and in gratitude for our life together,

All: We give thanks to you, God, for this church's past, and pray for your continued blessing and guidance. Amen.



First Reading: Jeremiah 29: 4-7, 11-13

Gospel Reading: Matthew 16: 13-19

Sermon: “Upon this Rock”

Testimony: Everyone is welcome to contribute

Prayer: All: Loving God, we offer you thanksgiving and praise on this festive day. We give special thanks to those who responded to your call to establish this church. We are thankful for all that this church has meant to its members and friends through its history. Help us to preserve the best of the past here, and to be open to whatever tomorrow may bring. May this local church continue to be a sign of your Spirit and a witness to Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen

Pass the Peace: Handshake or Hug

Hymn: “Amazing Grace” page 418 Praise and Worship

Benediction



“Upon This Rock”
By Richard Miller, Licensed Minister
Kana‘ana Hou-Siloama Church

My Friends, how can we ever come into this church without thinking of the devotion and sacrifice of those who constructed it as a house of God? They dedicated and consecrated it to worship and the teaching of truth. A great and sacred trust is placed on us, therefore, as we occupy this building, to speak words of faith, to open our hearts and minds to words of God’s overpowering love. To that end I humbly seek for each of us the direction and serenity of the Holy Spirit. So may the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable you, O Lord!

We are gathered today in this historic building, surrounded by other remarkable buildings which testify to the wisdom and endurance and true faith of our predecessors. But the real depth of the unending love of God is not in this building, nor in the thousands of houses of worship across the world, nor in the universities which train our church leaders and world leaders, nor in the hospitals which treat and comfort those in need. These are all facilities, desirable means to an end, but only auxiliary to that which is the true presence of God. The strength of a church lies in the hearts of its people, in the individual testimony and conviction of the faithful which was exhibited way more than a hundred years ago and which, through God’s grace, and the teaching of Jesus Christ, is still alive and vibrant today. This is the everlasting rock Jesus spoke of: faith. Yes, this peninsula, this island can be referred to as a rock. But that is not the foundation of the church community which had this building built. No. It was upon the immovable rock of their faithful lives that this church community and this church were built. And it because of rock solid faith that it endures today.

There is an unmistakable analogy between the words you just heard taken from Jeremiah and the situation of people here long ago, who found themselves in exile, cut off from all they previously knew and from those they loved. Now Jeremiah is quite clear that his words, while issued from him, are the words God has put into him to deliver. Be peaceful, take heart, establish yourselves, grow gardens and eat the food. And have faith in God, who will deliver you from this to a better place. For those taken to Babylon, the deliverance took seventy years. Many did not live to experience their release from bondage. And so here in Kalaupapa, in the history of this church community and the other church communities which flourished on this peninsula, there were those who sat where you are sitting who did not ever experience the end of their earthly captivity. Yet we know that in faith they gathered together, that they prayed, they wrote and performed music, they fell in love and were married, they grew gardens!, they lived the best lives they could. And they remained faithful and determined in the knowledge that through the power of the Holy Spirit, God would give them strength, would buoy them up when they were being held down by circumstance, would ultimately deliver them to a better place. The lessons of their faithful lives, the lessons of this enduring church, stand as a guidepost for us today, that when turmoil and stress afflict us. We have within us the same Holy Spirit, the same spark of God which enabled our predecessors, and which will sustain us until God delivers us as well to a better place.