A LITANY FOR THE BICENTENNIAL

(Lauren Buck Medeiros edit for 9/20/20 Aloha Sunday observance

at Central Union Church, from HCUCC bicentennial resource)

READER 1:

     Christ, our Savior, the one in whom the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, calls us through the scriptures to proclaim in word and deed the good news of God's presence and love for all people.

**ALL:     We heed this call, O God, and we remember those who, in times past, have responded to this call with grace and truth.**

READER 2:

    As members of the Hawai‘i Conference United Church of Christ, we pause to remember Henry ‘Ōpūkaha‘ia, a Hawaiian boy far from home, whose devotion to his new-found faith in Jesus Christ, and his passion to share that faith in his homeland, inspired the first company of missionaries who sailed from Boston to Hawai‘i on October 23, 1819.

**ALL:    We thank you, O God, for those who responded to your call.**

READER 3:

    Among those who sailed aboard the Thaddeus that day were four young kanaka maoli, young men of Hawai‘i.  They were friends of ‘Ōpūkaha‘ia who, before his untimely death at age 26, had studied with him at the Foreign Mission School in Cornwall, Connecticut.  They were determined to carry out ‘Ōpūkaha‘ia’s dream of sharing Christ's gospel of love with the people of Hawai‘i.  Their names were Thomas Hopu, William Kanui, John Honoli‘i, and George Humehume, the son of Kauai's chief.

**ALL:    We thank you, O God, for these brave and dedicated persons who responded to your call.**

READER 1:

    Also sailing that day were seven missionary couples, newly commissioned representatives of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions:  Rev. Hiram & Sybil Bingham, Rev. Asa & Lucy Thurston, Samuel & Mary Ruggles, Dr. Thomas & Lucia Holman, printer Elisha & Maria Loomis, and farmer Daniel Chamberlain, his wife and five children.  All of them knew of ‘Ōpūkaha‘ia, and several had been his classmates at the Cornwall Foreign Mission School.

**ALL:     We thank you, O God, for these brave and dedicated persons who responded to your call.**

READER 2:

    After a difficult voyage of five months, the Thaddeus reached Hawai‘i Island in March of 1820.  The missionaries were welcomed by King Liholiho, who had already decided to adopt Christianity as the new faith expression of the Hawaiian people.  On April 11, 1820, King Liholiho formally invited the missionaries to remain and begin their work among his people.  Hawaiian ali‘i on O‘ahu, Maui and Kaua‘i followed Liholiho's leading, and soon the good news, nū ‘oli, was being preached and taught to people in all parts of the Hawaiian Islands. With substantial assistance from Hawaiian scholars, poets and orators, the entire Bible was translated from the original languages into ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i in 1839, significantly contributing to the remarkable literacy of the Hawaiian population.

**ALL:    We thank you, O God, for those who shared, and for those who**

**responded to the message of Christ's hope and love.**

READER 3:

In this year of the bicentennial, let us also remember that in 1893, a group that included among its number non-native Christian ministers and church members, conducted an illegal overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i. One hundred years later, leadership of the Hawai‘i Conference and the national United Church of Christ formally issued an apology to the people of Hawai‘i for active and silent complicity in those events.

**ALL: Where there is injury, let us seek pardon.**

READER 1: By God’s grace, let us give thanks that we, the Hawai‘i Conference United Church of Christ, are one ‘*ohana,* bound to share in God’s redemptive work throughout all of our stories. Our Bicentennial observance is an opportunity to name the faith of our ancestors; to acknowledge wounds of our past; and to claim our role in the ministry of reconciliation, healing, and hope.

**ALL: We gather under the banner of the God whose love never fails.**

**A Communion Litany for the Bicentennial**

[READER 1] When we come to the table of Christ we are called to remember. We remember love revealed in service, celebration, and sacrifice.

[READER 2] We remember life and how it is blessed, broken open, poured out, and shared.

[READER 3] We remember Christ, our Savior and Lord, who calls us to proclaim the good news of God’s redeeming love for all.

[READER 4] On this Aloha Sunday, we remember the ancestors of our faith who came to the table of Christ years ago. We remember the faith and devotion of Henry ʻŌpūkahaʻia who inspired the first missionary journey to Hawai‘i.

**[ALL] God’s grace welcomes us all to the table.**

[READER 1] 200 years ago, aboard the vessel *Thaddeus,* that first company of missionaries arrived in the Kingdom of Hawai‘i.

[READER 2] Among those who sailed aboard the *Thaddeus* were four young kanaka maoli, young men of Hawai‘i: Thomas Hopu, William Kanui, John Honoli‘i, and George Humehume

[READER 3] They were friends and classmates of ‘Ōpūkaha‘ia who shared in his dream of seeing the gospel come alive within the people of Hawai‘i.

**[ALL] God’s grace welcomes us all to the table.**

[READER 4] Along with these maoli missionaries were seven other missionary couples who had never been to Hawai‘i.

[READER 1] Rev. Hiram and Sybil Bingham, Rev. Asa and Lucy Thurston, and Rev. Samuel and Mary Ruggle were a few of those sent by American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions.

**[ALL] God’s grace welcomes us all to the table.**

[READER 2] Upon their arrival the missionaries were welcomed by King Liholiho, who had already decided to adopt Christianity as the new faith expression of the Hawaiian people.

[READER 3] Hawaiian Ali‘i on O‘ahu, Maui and Kaua‘i followed King Liholiho's leading, and soon the good news, nū ‘oli, was being preached and taught to people in all parts of the Hawaiian Islands.

[READER 4] With substantial assistance from Hawaiian scholars, poets and orators, the entire Bible was translated from the original languages into ‘ōlelo Hawai‘i.

**[ALL] God’s grace welcomes us all to the table.**

[READER 1] Let us also remember that in 1893, a group that included among its number non-native Christian ministers and church members, conducted an illegal overthrow of the Kingdom of Hawai‘i. One hundred years later the Hawai‘i Conference Minister Norman W. Jackson and the Conference Board of Directors Chair Jean Coffman presided over the churches’ formal apology to the people of Hawai‘i for the active and silent complicity in those events.

**[ALL SILENT]**

[READER 2] Lord, make us an instrument of your peace:

[READER 3] where there is injury, let us seek pardon

[READER 4] where there is injustice, let us seek love

**[ALL] Because God’s grace welcomes us all to the table.**

[READER 1] In faith, we take our place at the table of Christ, beside our friends and neighbors, beside our ancestors blessed by grace.

[READER 2] Let us give thanks that we are one ‘ohana, bound to share in God’s redemptive work bringing new life out of all of our stories.

[READER 3] Our Bicentennial observance of the Hawai‘i Conference of the United Church of Christ is an opportunity to name and remember those who have gone before us.

[READER 4] We celebrate their courageous faith; we acknowledge the wounds of our past; and together we claim our role in the ministry of reconciliation, healing, and hope.

**[ALL] God’s grace welcomes you to the table.**