

194th 'Aha Approves Partnership with Korean Church

At the 194th 'Aha Pae'aina, held June 8-11 at Central Union Church on O'ahu, delegates unanimously approved a mission partnership with the South Seoul Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK). Representatives from the Presbytery were present to witness this moment and to sign the Memorandum of Agreement formally establishing the partnership.



South Seoul Presbytery and Hawaii'i Conference leaders celebrate the approval of a mission partnership.

"This is a kairos moment in all of our lives," said UCC ecumenical officer and keynote speaker, Karen Georgia Thompson. "It is an opportunity to live as partners called to God's service, and it is for this that we live in hope."

Pointing out that global systems of oppression have formed in the wake of early missionaries who colonized nations, Karen Georgia asserted that the church in the West is called to

(continued on page 7)

UCC Disaster Ministries Saves Lives

"Our Church's Wider Mission is the engine of our vehicle," said Zach Wolgemuth, Executive for UCC Disaster Ministries.

Zach, who was in Hawaii last May to lead a disaster preparedness workshop, said that the United Church of Christ provides lifesaving relief to thousands of survivors of natural and human-induced disasters in more than 140 countries. This year, the UCC has already responded to six domestic and ten international disasters.

He explained that UCC Disaster Ministries is funded primarily through offerings to One Great Hour of Sharing and contributions to the International Emergency Relief and Emergency USA Funds. Because churches give to Our Church's Wider Mission, which supports the operations of the UCC, one hundred percent of funds designated for disaster relief is used solely for that purpose. No overhead is deducted from contributions.

"Quite frankly more of the money goes to directly responding to people's needs than in other organizations," said Zach. "It's not always the biggest and flashiest groups that do the best work."



Earthquake-resistant homes are being built in Nepal following the 2015 earthquake.

Last April, when nearly nine thousand people died and 600,000 homes were destroyed by a 7.8-magnitude earthquake in Nepal, the UCC provided \$190,000 worth of food, water, shelter, medicine, and supplies. Long-term recovery includes construction of fifty earthquake-resistant homes.

"That kind of witness—showing God's love unconditionally—has had a significant impact on people," said Zach. "I think disaster response gives the world a different view of Christianity."

Zach stressed the importance of donating undesignated dollars—money not designated for a specific disaster—

(continued on page 3)

What's Inside

- 2 Only One, by Charles C. Buck
UCC General Minister Speaks in Hawaii'i
Youth Camp Deepens Faith
- 3 Small Churches Make Big Impact
- 4 Faces around the Conference
- 5 'Aha Workshops Address Homelessness
Resource Box: Neighbors in Need
- 6 UCC News
- 7 Highlights from the Website
- 8 Conference Calendar
Characteristics of a Healthy Partnership

Only One

by Charles C. Buck, Conference Minister

The scene was heartbreaking: an Indonesian beach piled high with tons of clothes, donated by well-meaning people from around the world after the devastating Indian Ocean tsunami in 2004. After sitting there for days, the clothes rotted, turned toxic, and finally had to be destroyed by dousing them with gasoline and setting them afire.



The message in this CBS news piece, "When Disaster Relief Brings Anything But Relief," shown at a disaster recovery workshop at the Conference Office this last May, was clear: After a disaster, what's most helpful and needed is cash. An aid worker said that while cash may not feel very personal, "it's one of the most compassionate things that people can do."

It doesn't take very much: one church, one person, one dollar, one God.

Giving to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM), the basic financial support of the Hawai'i Conference and the United Church of Christ, is an act of compassion, touching and transforming people's lives here locally and around the world.

In the story about UCC Disaster Ministries beginning on page 1 of this *Friend*, Zach Wolgemuth talks about how our giving helps survivors in disaster-stricken areas, both in the U.S. and abroad, recover and rebuild their lives. Our financial gifts are a witness, he says, "showing God's love unconditionally."

The page 3 profile of four local churches, two each on Moloka'i and Maui, illustrates the importance of living out faith through the generous giving of offerings and tithes. All four churches are "5 for 5," that is they give to OCWM as well as all four special UCC offerings taken throughout the year. Most remarkable is that these churches are what many would consider "small," both in numbers and budget. But despite their size, they are making an outsize difference through their generosity.

It doesn't take very much: one church, one person, one dollar, one God. Only one is needed to do the compassionate thing and make a real difference in our world. May each of us be that one.

UCC General Minister Speaks in Hawai'i

John Dorhauer, General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ, will keynote the Hawai'i Conference Clergy Retreat this September in Honolulu.

John will talk about themes in his book, *Beyond Resistance: The Institutional Church Meets the Post-Modern World*. In his book, he discusses how society's transition between modern and post-modern realities has resulted in a perceived diminishment of religion today and a sense that the church is a dying institution. However, he believes that these changes point the way to a new and hopeful future where people of faith can unite as agents of change to support and promote a common good.

The retreat, "Our Best Days in the Church Are Ahead," will be held at the Ala Moana Hotel beginning at 10 a.m. on Monday, September 26, and concluding at noon on Wednesday, September 28. For information and to register, go to www.hcucc.org.

In addition to the retreat, John will preach at a community-wide service on Sunday, September 25, 3 p.m., at Central Union Church in Honolulu. All are encouraged to attend.

Youth Camp Deepens Faith and Connections

"Metamorphosis" is the theme of the Hawai'i Conference Fall Youth Camp, taking place October 9-12, at Camp Mokule'ia on the North Shore of O'ahu.

At this year's camp, staff from the Pū'ā Foundation will lead youth through activities like writing, hula, games, art, poetry and drawing as ways to express themes of change, or metamorphosis, in their lives. Directing the camp this year is Sarah Jones, Associate Conference Minister and Pastor of Lana'i Union Church.

In past years, campers have said that they come away from camp feeling both a sense of connection with youth from all the islands in Hawai'i and a deepened personal faith with God through Jesus Christ. They love meeting new people, doing recreational activities together, and bonding through shared experiences.

Information and registration forms will be sent to churches later this summer.



God is still speaking

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Small Churches Make Big Impact through OCWM

Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) is the lifeblood of the United Church of Christ, supporting more than 150 ministries that change lives and transform the world.

"Contributing to OCWM has been a tradition of our church for many, many years," said Pat Kikukawa, vice-moderator of Waialua Congregational Church on Moloka'i. "The work made possible by OCWM is too important not to support."



Giving to OCWM multiplies the power of local churches to further God's mission and change the world. It supports disaster relief, refugee resettlement, missionary appointments, pastoral placement and a myriad of

local ministries such as the Fall Youth Camp, Church Leaders Event, and Search and Call.

Last year, Waialua Church's overall giving to OCWM totaled nine percent of its local expenses. Despite operating on a small budget, the church has always been "5 for 5," contributing to OCWM and the four special missional offerings of the UCC.

At Ho'olehua Congregational Church, which, vice-moderator Ray Skrocke said, receives only enough to pay its bills, pledging to OCWM is a giving of heart.

"Helping others is a fundamental Christian value," he said. "It has always been the will of our church to support OCWM. Until we cannot give for some reason, we will continue giving generously."

At the 194th 'Aha Pae'aina, Ho'olehua was one of eight churches recognized for increased giving. With only twenty members, the church doubled OCWM giving over the previous year at \$400—a figure it has already matched this year.

Ray noted that although most members are between ages 70 and 90 and have physical restrictions, OCWM remains a meaningful way for them to support the UCC mission at home and abroad.

Lahuikalanani Ka'anapali Congregational Church on Maui is a "5 for 5" church and ranks first in 2015 per capita giving to OCWM in Hawai'i with \$3,740, or fourteen percent of local expenses. Moderator Aileen Trout said the church gives out of a commitment to covenant and to help congregations in need.

"As a small Hawaiian church, we honor our commitment to help others struggling to exist," Aileen said. "Hopefully it never happens, but our church may need help one day."

Another small church committed to OCWM is Olowalu Lanakila Hawaiian Church on Maui. With average worship attendance of fifteen, the congregation has managed to pledge \$500 per year since 2012.

Eighty-seven-year-old Adeline Rodrigues, whose family comprises the majority of the church's members, has made it her responsibility to ensure that the church continues to give faithfully even after she passes.

"I told my children, 'When I am gone, I want you to keep on giving. That is what church is all about—helping to serve God. We must keep giving to the wider church,'" she said.

Last year, OCWM giving in Hawai'i totaled nearly \$291,000, and forty-five churches were "5 for 5." A complete listing of these churches can be found at tinyurl.com/2015ocwm.

"Hawai'i churches receive many gifts through OCWM ministries," said Pat. "All churches can find a way to give, and the contribution does not have to be large to make an impact."

(Disaster Ministries, continued from page 1)

because events not covered by national media often receive insufficient funding. Undesignated gifts allow UCC Disaster Ministries to fill those critical gaps.

"There have been droughts in Ethiopia and Zimbabwe this year for which I'm certain we have not received one penny of designated funding," he said. The Ethiopian drought has killed more than 400,000 livestock and triggered food shortages for 10 million people, prompting the UCC to direct \$10,000 for food assistance and potable water.

UCC Disaster Ministries focuses on long-term recovery and disaster preparedness, and volunteers are key to this effort.

"When homeowners realize they are volunteers, they think, 'Either they are clinically insane to drive a thousand miles in ninety-degree heat to crawl under a trailer and rip out wet insulation, or something compels them to do this,'" Zach said. "We do not proselytize, but when people ask why we are there, it helps dispel the view that Christianity is all talk."

Hawai'i Conference members are encouraged to volunteer in their local communities by focusing on disaster preparedness. Mitigating the impacts of disasters provides more "bang for your buck" than response efforts, said Zach.

"I am often surprised at the lack of awareness among our members that there is even a disaster ministries arm within the United Church of Christ," said Zach. "We need to help people understand that their donated dollars are transforming lives all over the world."

For more information about UCC Disaster Ministries and avenues for volunteering, visit www.ucc.org/disaster.

Scenes from the 194th 'Aha Pae'aina

Pictured clockwise from right: Procession of cultures during Friday worship; Filipino UCC Choir; Musicians at the 'Aha Iki; Karen Georgia Thompson, UCC ecumenical officer and keynote speaker; Central Union Church volunteers; Joshua Hayashi preaching in Saturday worship; David Rivers welcoming participants to Central Union Church; Musicians at the 'Aha Iki; Min Heui Cheon, PROK Executive Secretary for Partnership and Ecumenical Relations and 'Aha Makua keynote speaker; Brandon Duran during Friday worship; South Seoul Presbytery (PROK) representatives.



'Aha Workshops Address Homelessness

Hawai'i has the highest per capita homeless rate in the nation, and churches can play a vital role in addressing this crisis. At the 194th 'Aha Pae'aina, three workshops explained how partnering with nonprofits can help end homelessness in Hawai'i.

Building Homes and Hope

Since 1988, Honolulu Habitat for Humanity has built seventy-seven homes for more than four hundred O'ahu residents.

"It's not about the house; it's about the community that builds that house," said Executive Director Jim Murphy. "We are looking to get as many people involved as possible."

With local affiliates on five islands, Habitat for Humanity teaches volunteers how to build affordable homes for people in need. Other avenues for partnering include working at ReStore (refurbishing and selling discounted furniture, appliances and building materials); serving on a committee (family selection, finance or resource development); and housing volunteers from abroad at local churches.

"Iao United Church of Christ is a partner of Habitat and houses international volunteers at our church," said workshop participant Kalani Wong. "It's neat to see people go from living in a car to owning a home. It gives people a lot of hope."

Churches wishing to partner with Habitat can provide meals at build sites, register volunteers, donate items to ReStores and invite Habitat staff to speak to their congregations.

Ten Years of Family Promise

If your church facilities are unused at night, you can help end family homelessness.

For ten years, Family Promise of Hawai'i has housed and supported more than 1,500 parents and children through partnerships with host congregations. By sheltering families and providing meals, churches help transition them to sustainable independence.

"In 2015 our 1,500 volunteers and sixty host congregations—many of them UCC—provided 10,268 shelter bed nights and 30,000 meals," said Program Manager Christy MacPherson. "We could not run our program without them."

Between eighty and ninety percent of families entering Family Promise never return to homelessness. Family Promise provides showers, laundry facilities, internet, case management and an address to use for employment searches.



Jim Murphy, Executive Director for Honolulu Habitat for Humanity

Life skills training, money management, parenting and vocational classes are also offered.

Churches unable to house families can aid host congregations by providing meals and volunteer labor. Being an affordable housing landlord or offering employment to hardworking parents are also options for supporting Family Promise.



Christy MacPherson, Program Manager for Family Promise of Hawai'i

Ministering with the Homeless

Institute for Human Services (IHS) is the largest full-service homelessness agency on O'ahu, providing outreach, employment, case management, urban gardening, chaplaincy, shelter and meal programs for hundreds annually.

"Most professionals in Hawai'i are living paycheck to paycheck, so if somebody gets sick, they can end up homeless," said Chaplain Terry Ogawa. "We have veterans with PTSD [Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder], drug abusers, people with mental illness, migrants, families and increasing numbers of seniors."

(continued on page 7)

resource List

Neighbors In Need 2016

Love your neighbor as yourself by giving to the Neighbors In Need (NIN) special mission offering of the United Church of Christ.

Each year, one-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM) and its witness in Native communities plagued by poverty, alcoholism and domestic abuse. Two-thirds of the offering strengthen UCC justice initiatives, advocacy efforts and direct service projects through grants of up to \$3,000.

Several Hawai'i Conference churches have received NIN grants for ministries that include feeding the hungry and sponsoring a monthly family movie night.

Gifts to NIN offer hope to millions of people and transform lives. The suggested 2016 offering date is World Communion Sunday, October 2, although the offering may be received on any Sunday. For more information and to apply for a grant, visit www.ucc.org/nin.

News briefs are adapted from *UCC News*, the online news portal for the United Church of Christ. For details on these and other stories, visit www.ucc.org/news.

Faith Leaders Call for Morality in Politics

Faith leaders are crossing denominational, racial and social lines to come together on behalf of the marginalized, calling on the Republican party—including presumptive presidential nominee Donald Trump—to embrace a moral agenda that champions justice and equality instead of fear and rhetoric.



Their statement, the “Higher Ground Moral Declaration,” calls on the entire American political system to rise above “hatred, fear, left-

and-right politics, in order to reach our highest values of love and justice,” said William Barber, a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) pastor. He is one of the leaders of “The Revival: Time for a Moral Revolution of Values” cross-country tour that launched in April.

Traci Blackmon, acting executive of the UCC’s Justice and Witness Ministries and part of the Revival tour, said, “We are all responsible for what is happening [because of our silence], and we are all obligated to participate....We are in a time when people are hungry, homeless and hurting, and we are in a time when the government wants to cut social services.”

In addition to delivering the Higher Ground Moral Declaration to RNC leaders, a copy will also be delivered to Democratic Party headquarters ahead of its national convention in Philadelphia (July 25-28), and to every presidential, gubernatorial and congressional candidate this fall along the fifteen-state tour. The Revival aims to challenge faith leaders to be more vocal to harmful policies that impact marginalized communities.

Three Conferences Consider One-Staff Model

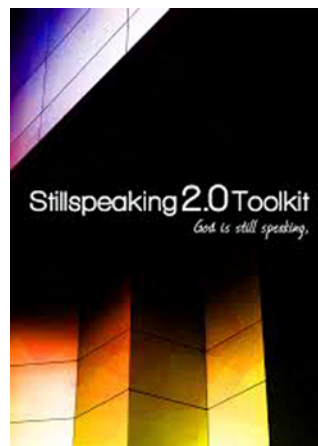
A Tri-Conference One-Staff Model was passed by the South Dakota Conference on June 4 and the Nebraska Conference on June 11. If the Iowa Conference gives its approval this fall, there will be one conference minister and associate ministers in each of the conferences to serve the three regions. In this model, which is not a merger but a plan to collaborate in staffing, each conference will continue to be governed by its own board of directors and maintain its own budget. The plan envisions more efficient use of resources and better ability to adapt to the changing needs of the church.

Opinions Are Sought on UCC Mission Statement

UCC General Minister and President John Dorhauer invites UCC members to comment on proposed Purpose, Vision and Mission Statements for the denomination. Input from individuals and groups is being sought through August 22 in an online survey that should take about twenty minutes to complete. Results of the survey will help the Rev. Dorhauer and the UCC Board shape the future of the UCC. Complete the survey at: www.research.net/r/UCCPurposeMission.

Stillspeaking 2.0 Toolkit Is Available to Churches

A toolkit to help churches create an online presence is available for download at UCC.org. The kit includes directions and suggestions for social media; graphics for social media, print, and other uses; help with creating or upgrading church websites and Facebook pages; updated brand guidelines; and a list of free or inexpensive ways to increase the profile views and reader interest for local churches in their communities.



UCC Board Votes to Boycott Wendy's

The United Church of Christ has joined the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW) in support of its boycott against fast food chain Wendy's. The CIW, a group of farm workers based in Immokalee, Florida, stands for greater justice against corporations that exploit the hard work of its members. For the past ten years, the CIW has been asking Wendy's to join the Fair Food Program (FFP), a partnership that supports growers, farm workers and retailers to ensure fair treatment of farm workers. However, Wendy's has refused each invitation. The UCC Board is encouraging members to boycott the fast food chain until it joins the FFP. Learn more at the UCC Boycott Wendy's page: www.ucc.org/boycott_wendys.



(‘Aha Partnership, continued from page 1)

reorient itself with the global church. In this century, she said, partner relations are not about colonization but our collective fight for freedom based on mutuality and respect.

“This is a historic moment where we can model a new way of being in relationship together,” she declared. “I would hope that we are willing to walk, learn and grow together as equals.”

Min Heui Cheon, PROK Executive Secretary for Partnership and Ecumenical Relations, expressed similar sentiments in her keynote address the day before. She also offered ideas for living out the partnership, including church-to-church exchanges, church leaders serving as mission co-workers, and young adults participating in a two-year ecumenical study program in Korea.

Min Heui said that Hawai‘i churches can provide their Korean partners valuable insights on ministering to people of diverse cultures as Korea experiences an influx of migrants.

“I am so grateful to God and the Hawai‘i Conference for this partnership,” she said. “When we are alone, we are weak. But when we hold each other’s hands in strong solidarity we can make changes, even one millimeter at a time.”

Delegates to the ‘Aha Pae‘aina passed a budget for fiscal year ending in June 2017 and elected the following to the Conference Council: Iese Tuuao, Chair; Daniel Shimomura, Secretary; Wryen Kiwaha, At-Large Youth/Young Adult; Suzanne Smith, Justice and Witness Missional Team Chair; and Elwood Kita, Stewardship Missional Team Chair. Also elected was Joyclynn Costa to the Hawai‘i Conference Foundation Board of Trustees.

A resolution calling for evaluation of Conference ministries was introduced but could not be voted because the required number of persons needed to amend the agenda had not been attained. The resolution will be taken up by the Conference Council for consideration and implementation in the coming fiscal year.

A letter summarizing the ‘Aha Pae‘aina was sent out to churches from Conference Council Chair Iese Tuuao, Vice-Chair David Iha and Conference Minister Charles Buck. To read the letter and to download ‘Aha resources, including workshop handouts, sermons, keynote addresses and photos, visit www.hcucc.org.

Thanks to our friends, *The Friend* is free of charge to anyone who requests it. We offer our sincere mahalo to those who have generously given a monetary gift to help defray publication costs. A gift of \$10 will pay for one person’s subscription for one year. Gifts may be sent to the Hawai‘i Conference UCC, 1848 Nu‘uanu Ave., Honolulu, HI 96817.



Highlights from the Website

Go to www.hcucc.org to learn more about these and many more stories from around the Conference.

Jonathan Pak was installed as Pastor of Waikeola Congregational Church on June 26.

Bradstreet Smith, Associate Pastor of Makiki Christian Church, retired on June 26 after twenty-seven years of ministry.

Bill Hawk, retired minister with standing in the Montana-Northern Wyoming Conference, began as Interim Minister of Hokuoia UCC on July 1.

Gloria Imamura was called as Associate Pastor of Makiki Christian Church on July 1.

Sharon Inake was named Interim Supply Pastor at Lili‘uokalani Protestant Church for six months beginning July 3.

C. Dennis Alger, from the Central Pacific Conference (Oregon), became Interim Pastor at Waiola Church on July 10.

Trina Zelle, a Presbyterian Church (USA) pastor, was called as Interim Pastor to Manoa Valley Church beginning July 17.

In Memory: Lloyd Young

Retired minister Lloyd Young died April 7 at the age of 82. He was ordained in 1972 and served Central Union Church in Honolulu; Imiola Congregational Church in Waimea, Hawai‘i; as well as churches in Montana, Colorado, Washington, Nevada and Maine. His family includes wife Leah and daughter Cynthia. Private services were held.



(‘Aha Workshops, continued from page 5)

Opportunities to partner with IHS include volunteering at its shelters, which include meal services, employment training, urban gardening and keiki afterschool tutoring. Donations of new and unused socks, razors, underwear and diapers are always needed.

“We are also trying to find landlords to partner with,” Terry said. “Hawai‘i has lost forty thousand affordable housing units in the last twenty-five to thirty years.”



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August 2016

Around the Conference

Conference Calendar of Events

- August 12-13 Conference Council and Foundation Trustees
- August 19 Statehood Day Observed (Office Closed)
- September 5 Labor Day (Office Closed)
- September 24 Tri-Isle Association 'Aha Makua
- September 25 Community-Wide Worship with John Dorhauer
- September 26-28 Clergy Retreat
- October 9-12 Fall Youth Camp
- October 15 O'ahu Association 'Aha Mokuuni

Characteristics of a Healthy Partnership

Karen Georgia Thompson, one of two keynote speakers at the 194th 'Aha Pae'aina held in June, suggested that healthy church partnerships share the following characteristics:

- **Having Trust**, which is the foundation of partnership
- **Holding Common Values**, such as a commitment to justice and faith in the living God
- **Setting Defined Expectations**, outlined in a covenant or memorandum
- **Communicating Effectively**, to sustain relationships through understanding
- **Praying for Each Other**, inviting the spirit of God in the journey together
- **Learning from Each Other**, acknowledging that neither alone has all the answers
- **Applying the Lund Principle**, or acting together in all matters except those where deep differences of conviction compel partners to act separately