

# The Friend



## HAWAII CONFERENCE

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

*The Oldest Newspaper West of the Rocky Mountains. Founded 1843*

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## Our Giving Changes Lives

Every year Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) changes lives. More than 150 ministries are made possible by OCWM sharing in the Hawai'i Conference, wider church and beyond. Two of those, disaster relief and search and call, are highlighted here.

### Disaster Relief

The United Church of Christ responds to a disaster roughly every 2.5 seconds, providing immediate and long-term emergency relief in more than 140 countries.

When Nepal was struck by a 7.8-magnitude earthquake in April, thousands of people died and more than 500,000 became homeless. UCC Disaster Ministries donated \$40,000, which helped response teams provide food, water, medicine and shelter.

"People feel overwhelmed by our support and ask God to bless the UCC as we continue to serve," said Zachary Wolgemuth, Executive for UCC Disaster Ministries. "We hear that time and again."

Since 2014, the UCC has launched 26 relief efforts in fifteen countries. When churches give to OCWM, one hundred percent of donations intended for disaster relief are used for disaster relief, and every dollar received for UCC special mission offerings directly funds the intended mission.

### Search and Call

Search and Call, the process by which authorized ministers and churches come together for shared ministry, changes the lives of congregations and pastors.

*(continued on page 7)*

## Long-time UCC Workers Give, and Receive

Our Church's Wider Mission changes lives across the years. That's the case for two long-time employees in UCC settings, who shared stories of their service to the church and how they felt loved by their church families.



Joyce Agsalda has been pianist at Waialua United Church of Christ for over fifty years. She began at age 15, when the previous pianist graduated and moved to the mainland. Her family and church recognized God's gift in her and called her into service.

Vivian Maunakea started working at the Hawai'i Conference Office in 1989 and has served with four conference ministers and two interim conference ministers during her 26-year tenure. She has been a member of Kaunakapili Church for sixty years, and her family has been in the UCC since before the denomination's inception. "My years with the Hawai'i Conference have been awesome. I see my work as being a big part of helping our pastors and churches with Ke Akua's support and direction, but the best experience is being one with them." Vivian knows hundreds of people by name and makes an effort to befriend everyone she meets.



These two women of faith demonstrate the many ways of giving. In addition to being church pianist, Joyce taught Sunday school and vacation Bible school, and served stints as youth leader, Christian education chair, deacon, and chair of the pastoral relations committee. Vivian has been dubbed "Ambassador of Aloha" for the warm greeting she gives everyone who comes to the Conference Office or calls on the phone. She says she's at the "seat of friendship," sitting with people, listening to them and offering support.

Both affirm that the church has been their family. Joyce recalled her church family's visits after recent cancer surgery. "I've had so much support from friends who have encouraged me to not lose faith. The prayers have been so powerful. I've just been so blessed to have people surround me with love and prayer and encouragement. They come to visit, come to pray, bring me snacks to help my appetite. They've just been wonderful."

For Vivian, serving in the Conference Office is more than just a job. "It's a calling, to help people and our churches....We are a unit, a family, doing God's work."

## What's Inside

- 2 Partners in God's Work, by Charles C. Buck
- 3 Associations Raise Funds for National Youth Event  
Electronic Options Offer New Ways to Give
- 4 Faces Around the Conference
- 5 'Aha Pae'aina Hears Stories of Transformation  
Resource Box: Neighbors in Need
- 6 UCCers Converge in Cleveland  
Hawai'i Shares Synod Reflections
- 7 Resources Help Stewardship Campaigns  
Highlights from the Website  
In Memory
- 8 Conference Calendar  
OCWM giving

## Partners in God's Mission

by Charles C. Buck, Conference Minister

A city filled with sparkling new condominium and office buildings is an impressive sight—a sign of a healthy economy, growing population, and rising real estate values. It's every urban planner's dream, a source of pride and joy for its citizenry, and an attraction for both residents and visitors.

But in the shadows of these buildings dwells a population that does not share in the benefit, a segment of society left out of participation in the economic boom and left outside to seek shelter in streets and the parks. They are often invisible, shamed into hiding and forced to be ever on the move by property owners and city authorities.

This is the situation in cities around the world, even Honolulu. It also describes Seoul, Korea, especially Gangnam, the southern part of that megacity. That's what struck some visitors from Gangnam a few months ago. They came to Hawai'i as representatives of the South Seoul Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of the Republic of Korea (PROK).



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*Partnerships offer a way to live out God's intention for us: to care about and care for the whole creation, not just our own Gardens of Eden.*

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One of the visitors, the moderator of the Presbytery (a position similar to the Chair of our Conference Council), said that amidst the glitter, opulence and wealth of Gangnam and its residents—symbolized and spoofed a few years ago in the hit song and music video, "Gangnam Style," by Korean singer Psy—is a growing, nomadic population of the poor, from infants to elderly, who live in and off the streets.

Parallels like this between Gangnam and Hawai'i are why the South Seoul Presbytery is interested in a mission partnership with the Hawai'i Conference. To explore how this relationship might play out, the Conference Council established a Mission Partner Committee and authorized a delegation from Hawai'i to visit the South Seoul Presbytery in mid-September of this year. The Hawai'i delegation will include myself, Iese Tuuao, Chair of the Conference Council, and Joanne Nakashima,

a member of the Mission Partner Committee. (Separately, because PROK youth may attend the UCC National Youth Event, or NYE, next summer, we also have going Joan Sakaba and Lori Yamashiro, who are on the planning team for O'ahu youth headed to NYE, to discuss the possibility that these youth may join those from Hawai'i.)

This is not the first mission partnership for Hawai'i. Longstanding has been one with the Micronesian Council United Church of Christ, or MCUCC, which includes churches in the Marshall Islands, Kosrae, Pohnpei and Chuuk. Neither will this be the last: At the encouragement of UCC/Disciples Global Ministries, we are starting to consider a relationship with the Protestant Church in East Timor, or IPTL. Surely there will be others, and there will be much to say, explain and understand about each of these partnerships, particularly what are the value, purpose and goals for us in Hawai'i. For now, I offer these general thoughts about why we should forge partnerships around the world.

- Partnerships offer a way to live out God's intention for us: to care about and care for the whole creation, not just our own Gardens of Eden such as our own lives, our own churches or our own nations (Genesis 2-3).
- Partnerships enable us to live out Christ's call as disciples who go out, offer good news, and bring peace (Luke 10:2-6).
- Partnerships remind us that we need partners to accomplish God's mission, that we cannot and were never meant to do it alone or in isolation (Genesis 2:18, Luke 10:1).
- Partnerships stimulate each of us, as individuals and churches, to creating, participating in and supporting ministries that matter.

Ultimately, partnerships with others beget yet more partnerships. And in the process, we are extending ever more widely the love and grace, and the peace and justice of God—hope for a world that so desperately needs them, especially the outcast in our city streets.



God is still speaking

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## Associations Raise Funds for National Youth Event

Every four years, the United Church of Christ sponsors the National Youth Event, or NYE, a denomination-wide gathering of youth. The next NYE will take place in July 2016 in Orlando, Florida.

For youth coming from Hawai'i, one of the first considerations is the huge cost, estimated at \$2,000 per person. The O'ahu Association hopes to send around 45 participants, and the Tri-Isle Association may have over twenty interested in going. (Hawai'i Island and Kaua'i Associations are also talking about gathering youth to go.) So fundraising is a high priority, and both O'ahu and Tri-Isle have already begun.



Youth planning to attend the National Youth Event in July 2016 sold baked goods at the O'ahu Association Spring 'Aha Moku-puni.

On Maui and Lana'i, local churches are spearheading their own fundraising with youth taking the lead. They anticipate holding a number of sales and car washes in coming months.

O'ahu youth benefited from a donation of \$5,000 "seed money" from the Association. A plate lunch sale netted over \$5,000, and a bake sale held at the Spring 'Aha Moku-puni (with leftovers sold at local churches the next day) raised about \$2,000. Other ideas are in the works, as the goal is to raise half of the needed money, estimated at \$50,000.

"Believe," the theme of NYE in 2016 is fitting, explains Joan Sakaba, one of the adult organizers for the O'ahu Association, because their efforts to get there are "a charge, a responsibility, a call to action by developing young visionaries. The youth will be asked to see themselves as leaders of faith, sharing in the work of the Lord, boldly and with faith."

Such a huge undertaking requires many hands. Joan is quick to point out that a large number of youth and adults have been involved in the planning and fundraising so far. "So many of us in our church meetings talk about our youth," she added. "This is the time for us to put our hearts and support behind our O'ahu Association UCC youth."

To follow the progress of O'ahu youth, go to [www.hi2nye.org](http://www.hi2nye.org).

## Electronic Options Offer New Ways to Give

How people have donated to churches has changed across time. Chickens and produce were replaced by cash, and then by checks. These days people want to donate electronically. But is it safe and secure? How is it done? How do we account for those donations and appropriately acknowledge them? If a fee is incurred, do we charge the donor?

These and other questions are arising as people's giving patterns and assumptions change. Do you know where your checkbook is? Chances are you do if you're a Baby Boomer or older (born before the early 1960s). Yet more and more GenXers are moving over to electronic financial transactions, and Millennials may not even have a checkbook! And when it comes to giving, they prefer to do it online (70% according to one study of donation practices). That's why some churches are accepting more than cash and checks in the plate on Sunday.



Another reason churches are moving toward online giving is to take advantage of the moment: If your website describes the vibrant ministry and hope-filled future of your church, visitors may contribute right then and there—as they read it online—to support your ongoing ministry. A "Donate Here" button has helped some churches receive donations from miles and oceans away.

How can your church benefit from or put in place an Electronic Giving Program? The UCC has a resource, "UCC e-giving," that explains how it works and the choices you have (order online at [www.ucc.org/stewardship\\_electronic-giving](http://www.ucc.org/stewardship_electronic-giving)). *The Parish Paper* also gives good insight and ideas in "eGiving: It's about More Than Money" (April 2014; download at [www.hcucc.org](http://www.hcucc.org)).

Churches can find help setting up an e-giving system. One provider that works with UCC churches is Vanco Services. Find out more by calling (800) 774-9355.

And this is just the tip of the new iceberg for "regular" giving to the church. Have a special project or mission trip? Consider crowdfunding! Websites abound where you can tell your mission story and invite people the world over to make small to large donations for your good work or project. Ask Conference Staff member Ken Makuakane about how he raised funding for the Christmas Special video in 2012. You can read more about the appeal to churches of crowdfunding in the May 2015 issue of *The Christian Century*.

More avenues for receiving monetary gifts can also be a gift to the giver—ease, speed, and familiarity—and to the church—funds for expanded ministries. And that means more funds to spread the Gospel of God's Love.



## Conference Gathers in June for 'Aha Pae'aina on O'ahu



## Hawai'i Delegates Attend General Synod 30 in Cleveland





## 'Aha Pae'aina Hears Powerful Stories of Transformation

Nearly two hundred people stood hand-in-hand singing "Hawai'i Aloha" during an emotional conclusion to the keynote address at the 193rd 'Aha Pae'aina held on O'ahu from June 10 to 13.

This year's keynote presenter, the Pū'ā Foundation, involved current and former female prisoners sharing music, hula, poetry and stories of personal transformation. Pū'ā Foundation is a non-profit organization birthed out of the UCC's 1993 apology to the Hawaiian people for the church's complicity in the overthrow of the Hawaiian kingdom one hundred years earlier.

A current focus of Pū'ā is identifying the "historical trauma" that lingers in individuals, families and communities as a result of the overthrow and seeking ways to healing and wholeness.

Commenting on the work with female prisoners, Pū'ā Executive Director Toni Bissen said, "The pathway to prison is rife with trauma, but there is a larger vision that we can create places of healing within these facilities. It is about creating a pu'uhonua (sanctuary)—a place to live a forgiven life."

The 'Aha Pae'aina opened with the 'Aha Iki at Kawaiaha'o Church from June 10-11 and was attended by nearly ninety people from Hawaiian churches. The 'Aha Makua followed, June 12-13, at the Pagoda Hotel with participation from nearly two hundred delegates and visitors.



*Pū'ā Foundation's Toni Bissen addresses the 'Aha Pae'aina*



*Laura Young, youth from UCC—Judd Street, reads scripture.*

Workshops at the 'Aha Pae'aina included topics such as supporting financial health in churches; inspiring people to "do justice"; installing photovoltaic systems at churches; basket weaving; planned giving; and recovering from trauma.

During the business session, delegates approved the Conference budget for the fiscal year beginning July 2015 and elected new Conference Council members and Foundation trustees. Receipts for special offerings included \$1,684 for the Vesper Maile Ito Fund and \$1,583 for Our Church's Wider Mission. Visit [www.hcucc.org](http://www.hcucc.org) for more 'Aha highlights, including photos, workshop handouts, reflections from youth, and a full list of Conference Council members and Foundation Trustees.

## resource List

### NIN Offering Supports Justice Work

Neighbors In Need (NIN), a special mission offering supporting works of justice and compassion throughout the United States, has helped churches transform lives for fifteen years.

Received by most churches on World Communion Sunday, one-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministry (CAIM) while two-thirds support program initiatives and supply grants of up to \$3,000 to UCC churches and qualifying organizations.

This year, Waialua Congregational Church on Moloka'i was awarded \$1,250 for its Monthly Family Movie Night. The program is bringing together communities on an island devoid of theaters while offering church as a spiritual resource.

"Thank you to everyone who contributed to Neighbors In Need because without your help we could not provide this service to east Moloka'i," said Pastor Napua Burke.

World Communion Sunday is October 4, 2015, but churches may receive the offering on any Sunday. Resources for promoting NIN and information about applying for grants are available at [www.ucc.org/nin](http://www.ucc.org/nin).



*A mass choir from various churches sings an anthem during worship.*

The 'Aha Youth Event, held June 11-13, left a lasting impression on the youth who attended the 'Aha Makua. They volunteered at UCC Transition House, received special offerings, and assisted in worship and communion.

"The youth program at the 'Aha Pae'aina was life-changing for me," said one youth. "Thank you to the Conference for giving my friends and me this opportunity that showed us another perspective on life."

## UCCers Converge in Cleveland for General Synod

Many people go to Cleveland to visit the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame or to attend sports and cultural events. But over 3,000 people gathered in late June for a different reason: to attend the Thirtieth General Synod of the United Church of Christ.

Like all Synods, this one was filled with dynamic worship, inspiring speakers, spirited debate, and lots of cookies—several thousand dozen, at last report—including the famous Ohio buckeyes (chocolate peanut butter balls).

Synod delegates, including thirteen from Hawai'i Conference, elected a new General Minister and President, John Dorhauer; re-elected James Moos as Executive Minister for Wider Church Ministries; and grappled with a number of resolutions speaking to important national and world issues.



*Hawai'i delegates prepare for a General Synod plenary.*

Among the resolutions generating considerable discussion were those related to ending the Israeli occupation of Palestinian lands, the labeling of genetically modified foods (which did not pass), the changing of the name and mascot of the Washington, D.C., national league football team, and the expression of support for peace and reunification of the Korean peninsula.

Much less contentious, but highly significant and historic, was approval of "full communion relationship" between the United Church of Christ and the United Church of Canada. The same resolution will be considered by the Canadian church's General Council in August. If approved, the two churches will move toward mutual recognition of ministry and seek other ways of serving in God's mission together.

Read more about what happened at Synod at [www.ucc.org/general\\_synod\\_news](http://www.ucc.org/general_synod_news). You can also view pictures of Hawai'i participants on the Hawai'i Conference website. Videos of Synod worship services, keynote addresses and speeches are available online at [synod.uccpages.org/video.html](http://synod.uccpages.org/video.html).

## Hawai'i Shares Synod Reflections

*Hawai'i Conference delegates to General Synod kept a "real-time" on-line blog of their experiences. Below are some excerpts. Read all the blog posts at [hawaii2synod.wordpress.com](http://hawaii2synod.wordpress.com).*

I deeply appreciated soft contemplative worship and prayerful time with my family of the UCC. *Glenn Frazier, Kaua'i*

I am very interested in seeing the course of changes over these next few years that our new [General Minister and President] will lead us in. *Welina Tong, Hawai'i Island*

The morning's session that included the Apartheid resolution and the bylaws changes were sobering reminders of the endless amount of work that lies ahead for each Conference, each Association, each church, and each individual. *Ken Makuakane, Conference Staff*

The simple act of standing demonstrates our appreciation for the great work of the one we honor. We stand to give our voices to those who have been silenced for all too long. We stand to make a difference and because of that, we got out of our seats a number of times each day. *Kalani Wong, Maui*

I don't expect Synod's decisions to affect the way congregation, Association or Conference priorities get set. But one speaker for the resolution calling for a reunification of North and South Korea spoke so eloquently he changed my mind. *Jayne Ryan Kuroiwa, O'ahu*

With the many different intimidating and challenging resolutions presented before us, I then knew that the UCC was a denomination that cares a whole lot for its people in our country, and our brothers and sisters outside our country. *Erica Mae Bonilla, O'ahu*

While at our table before the last plenary, a delegate from the Southeast Conference came over and asked me who organized our table and all the goodies, candies that we shared. I told her that it was mainly our staff and some who were able to contribute. She said that we are so generous and that when they go to Synod in Baltimore, they will follow our good example. *Iese Tuuao, Conference Council Chair*

I'm continuing to learn a lot about the perspectives that we bring from Hawai'i to the General Synod, and I'm so grateful to serve in the Hawai'i Conference! *Sarah Jones, Lana'i*

It's so easy for me to think about the things I cannot do. Yesterday's sermon challenged me to get involved in the things that we can do together. *Donald Schmidt, Conference Staff*

This was the first and best General Synod I have attended... Thank you and I can't wait for the next General Synod! *Joshua Weible, O'ahu*



## Resources Help Churches with Stewardship Campaigns

Looking for new ways to talk about giving? Try these:

- For thoughts and ideas on the general concept of stewardship, visit [the-stewardship.org/main.htm](http://the-stewardship.org/main.htm).
- Resources from the UCC can be found at [www.ucc.org/stewardship\\_stewardship-resources](http://www.ucc.org/stewardship_stewardship-resources).
- "Asking for Support" ([uccfiles.com/pdf/Asking-For-Support.pdf](http://uccfiles.com/pdf/Asking-For-Support.pdf)) offers suggestions and ideas for carrying out stewardship drives and programs.
- "Lay Testimonials Strengthen Financial Giving" from *The Parish Paper* (July 2009, download at [www.hcucc.org](http://www.hcucc.org) and click on "The Parish Paper") helps prepare members to share their testimonies.
- *Stewardship for Vital Congregations*, by UCC minister Tony Robinson, helps churches create a culture of giving and generosity (order at [www.uccresources.com/products/stewardship-for-vital-congregations-robinson](http://www.uccresources.com/products/stewardship-for-vital-congregations-robinson)).
- Images, worship resources and reflective devotional materials can be downloaded from [www.logosproductions.com/content/stewardship](http://www.logosproductions.com/content/stewardship).

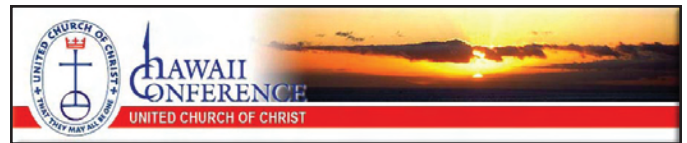
*(Giving Changes Lives, continued from page 1)*

Throughout the Search and Call journey, OCWM dollars are at work. Ministers seeking a call have available to them a wealth of resources including the UCC Ministerial Profiles Portal—an online database empowering clergy to review pastoral vacancies nationwide.

"The freedom to explore ministry opportunities on a database was a very positive experience," said Central Union Church's Senior Minister, David Rivers. "Other denominations don't have that luxury and ministers end up throwing darts at a board with no idea where it's going to hit."

It is estimated that the average pastoral search in the Hawai'i Conference costs about \$10,000 when materials, personnel and travel costs are considered. This year alone, twelve Hawai'i Conference churches and hundreds of UCC ministers have used Search and Call to find God's calling for their future.

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'uuanu Ave., Honolulu, HI 96817.



## 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.

### Service of Installation

The Kaua'i Association installed Barry Mick as Pastor of Kapa'a First Hawaiian Church on Sunday, July 12.

### Pastoral Changes

**Wesley Elmore**, a United Methodist pastor, was appointed to a new call in California and ended his ministry at Lihu'e United Church on June 14.

**James Fung** began as Interim Pastor of Church of the Crossroads on June 15.

**Grant Lee** retired as Pastor of Waialua UCC on June 30.

**Brian Boshard** was appointed Chaplain at Kamehameha Schools Hawai'i beginning July 14.

**Jack Belsom** retired as Pastor of Iao UCC on July 31.

**Chris Eng** retired as Pastor of Waikeola Church on July 31.

## In Memory:



**Kathleen "Kay" Connor**, a former associate conference minister from 1988 to 1992, died May 20 in Peabody, Massachusetts. She was also an interim pastor at Kapa'a UCC and pastor of Iao UCC, and later served churches in Wisconsin, California and Massachusetts. Her family includes children Michael, Colleen, and Shawn.

Word comes from the family of **Ewyn Adams** that this retired missionary, college professor, and minister died March 5 in Tacoma, Washington, at the age of 95. The Rev. Adams, who taught religion for 22 years at the University of Hawai'i in Hilo, was also pastor of Puula UCC and Lanakila Congregational Church before he retired in 1993. Memorial service will be held at a later date.





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August 2015

## Around the Conference

### Conference Calendar of Events

August 1	State Council of Hawaiian Congregational Churches Board
August 8	Conference Council
August 20	New Clergy Orientation
August 21	Admissions Day Holiday (Office Closed)
August 26	Church Administrators Gathering
August 29	AHEC Board of Directors
September 7	Labor Day Holiday (Office Closed)
October 4-7	Fall Youth Camp
November 14	Conference Council

### **This Event Brought to You by OCWM!**

OCWM funds many ministries. Here are just ten:

1. Missionary Support
2. 'Aha Pae'aina
3. Fall Youth Camp
4. Search and Call
5. UCC Disaster Ministries
6. General Synod
7. New Church Starts
8. Seminary Scholarships
9. Church Leaders Event
10. Global Ministries

To see a list of many more, visit <http://tinyurl.com/os42p77>.