

## Allan Boesak to Keynote 'Aha Pae'aina

Former anti-apartheid activist Allan Boesak will keynote the 191st 'Aha Pae'aina to be held in June in Kailua-Kona on Hawai'i Island.



Allan Boesak

Allan, a native of South Africa, served as President of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches from 1982 to 1991, becoming the first from the global South and youngest ever to be elected into the position at age 37. He later called for the formation of the United Democratic Front, the largest organized, non-racial anti-apartheid movement in the history of the country. He became its most visible

leader and spokesperson until the African National Congress closed the organization in 1991.

A lifelong humanitarian, Allan has received numerous honors including the Robert Kennedy Human Rights Award, Martin Luther King Jr. Peace Award, and the King Hintsa Bravery Award from the Royal Xhosa House in South Africa.

He is the author of 17 books, including the 2005 book *Die Vlug van Gods Verbeelding, Bybelverhale van die Onderkant (The Flight of God's Imagination: Biblical Stories from the Underside)*, which received the Andrew Murray/Desmond Tutu

*(continued on page 7)*

## The Friend Celebrates 170 Years

This month *The Friend*, the oldest newspaper west of the Rocky Mountains, celebrates 170 years of publication.

Founded in 1843 by missionary Samuel C. Damon, *The Friend* originated as *The Temperance Advocate*. Serving as the missionary's "second pulpit," the eight-page monthly was a life raft for sailors and had even been renamed *Seamen's Friend* before settling on its final banner.

In the mid-1800s, whaling vessels docked at Honolulu Harbor by the dozens. Enduring miserable and perilous lives at sea, sailors were plagued by rats, insects, pirates, and scurvy, a debilitating disease caused by vitamin deficiency. Many died on the job and earnings were meager. The result was notoriously rough men, often engaged in drunken debauchery.

"What these men need—what any Yankee must have—is a newspaper!" declared Samuel, who arrived in Honolulu from Massachusetts to serve as a chaplain to the seamen in 1842.

Samuel, who preached at Seamen's Bethel Church (now Central Union Church) from 1842 to 1884, dedicated *The Friend* to the welfare and sobriety of seamen. Under Samuel's editorship, *The Friend* helped to mold public opinion, especially since there were no other newspapers published until 1856. In *The Friend's* earliest years, any item benefiting sailors went to print—even if it was a request from a mother for news about her long-missing son. About five hundred copies were printed every month, circulating worldwide among seamen wherever they touched shore.

In 1844 Brewer & Co. requested use of *The Friend* for advertising—likely the first offer of its kind in Hawai'i. Samuel enlisted ads in 1847, "admitting none conflicting with the principals advocated in the columns of *The Friend*." Strictly a temperance publication at first, *The Friend* evolved into a general newspaper with stories from America, England, and Hawai'i. Editorials and sermons became regular features, as did marine intelligence, marriages, and deaths. Circulation reached 1,000 by the 1850s.



*The first issue of the Temperance Advocate, later to be known as The Friend, was published in 1843.*

## What's Inside

- 2 Real Response by Charles C. Buck
- 3 Chaplain Shares Tips for Visitation Celebrating Four Decades of Ministry
- 4 Faces around the Conference: Year in Review
- 5 UCC Lent Resources Now Available Two New Books Shed Light on Kalaupapa
- 6 UCC News
- 7 Transforming Lives through OGHS Highlights from the Website
- 8 Conference Calendar of Events Tips for Pastoral Visitations

*(continued on page 7)*

## Real Response

by Charles C. Buck, Conference Minister

It seems like in the last decade or dozen years tragic events—the senseless attacks that take many lives—have occurred with greater frequency. At least when I think about terrorist attacks beginning with 9/11 and mass shootings at malls, theaters and schools, all between 2001 and 2012, it seems to me that there's something “above average” going on here.



If tragic events are not happening more frequently, then I am certain that they are affecting us more intensely. Perhaps the Internet, instant messaging or Twitter have something to do with it, but there is now a regularity with which we are made to feel shock, horror, disbelief, sadness, anger, and other similar strong emotions. We felt these again most recently with the surreal killings of first graders and educators in Newtown, Connecticut, this last month before Christmas.

Tragic events arouse not just our reaction, but our response. In public, sometimes legal, and almost always political, discourse, we respond by asking why did it happen and what can we do to prevent it from happening again? Most recently, again at Newtown, the responses came very quickly and various ideas were floated: That teachers should have guns in the classroom. That police should be stationed in schools across the country. That a registry should be created of persons with mental disorders.

Are these responses the right answers? I worry that answering violence with potential violence has a reverse effect and can incite greater violence—and more frequent tragedy. That is arguably what happened in the nation's response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The Iraqi invasion and the hunt for Osama Bin Laden in Afghanistan and Pakistan did not, in the end, make the world all that much safer from terrorism.

But neither do I think that the answer is a total ban on guns or even just assault weapons. As we've seen in other past tragedies, crazed killers have used knives, poison and improvised explosive devices.

So what kind of response is needed to stem the frequent tide of tragedy? Clearly, this is a complex question. And the answer may be that our response must be equally complex, addressing the root causes that lead people to act violently. Instead, we put forth simplistic responses, focusing narrowly on a single issue or perspective. This is exactly what has happened one month after Newtown as the discussion about what happened has been diverted by—or distilled down into—a national and political debate about gun control. This is not really responding.

Real response, one that matters or makes a difference, has to be broader than the sound byte, more far-reaching than a

single issue. Martin Luther King, Jr., realized this as he sought to dismantle a complex system of segregation and racism. In one of his last speeches, “Where Do We Go from Here?” he illustrated this point by retelling the biblical story of Nicodemus (John 3), who came to Jesus one night and asked how he might be saved. King described what happened next.

Jesus didn't get bogged down in the kind of isolated approach of what he shouldn't do. Jesus didn't say, “Now Nicodemus, you must stop lying.” He didn't say, “Nicodemus, you must stop cheating if you are doing that”...He didn't say, “Nicodemus, you must stop drinking liquor if you are doing that excessively”...He said something altogether different, because Jesus realized something basic—that if a man will lie, he will steal. And if a man will steal, he will kill. So instead of just getting bogged down in one thing, Jesus looked at him and said, “Nicodemus, you must be born again.” He said, in other words, “Your whole structure must be changed.”

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*Real response, one that matters or makes a difference, has to be broader than the sound byte, more far-reaching than a single issue.*

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Real response to the complexities of tragedies like Newtown must examine our “whole structure” if we expect any real results. But if we continue to narrow our responses down to single issues, as easy as they are to sell to the public and score political points, they will only make tragedies more regular occurrences.

One of the parents whose child was killed in Newtown put it both succinctly and poignantly when asked what families would like to see happen.

“What we desire and deeply pray for is real change...and we stand alongside the folks...who say real change doesn't happen when we immediately take sides and get ready to fight the other side. Real change happens when we come together on issues that are not political but that are, above all, human issues that affect us all as human beings” (“Private Pain and Public Debate Take Toll on Newtown Parents,” New York Times, January 20, 2013).



God is still speaking

**The Friend** is published eight times a year by the Hawai'i Conference of the United Church of Christ, 1848 Nu'uauu Avenue, Honolulu, HI 96817.

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## Chaplain Shares Tips for Visitation



**J**P Sabbithi, a United Church of Christ minister and full-time chaplain at Kaiser Permanente's Moanalua Hospital, has encountered death, life, and God almost every day for 25 years. His experience in the hospital setting can be of benefit to both pastors and lay leaders.

"The hospital is like church," he said. "The bedside is the altar where I see the face of God. The hospital is a place where death meets life."

As crucial as JP's ministry is at the hospital, a visit by the chaplain is not intended to replace that of a patient's pastor. Chaplains expect pastors to visit members and will offer to call them on a patient's behalf. Amid pain, fear, anxiety, and frustrations, patients require a "non-anxious" presence to lean on. Here, chaplains and clergy are not so much preachers, but listeners.

"Consider whether it is an improvement upon your silence before speaking," advised JP, who cautioned against sharing about one's self with patients. "That's the number one consideration for chaplains in my personal opinion: listen, listen, and listen."

Spending between five minutes and two hours with each patient, JP visits an average of 25 patients each day and is on call 24 hours a day. When a patient declines his services, JP practices the art of "gracefully being dismissed." Never taking it personally, he only ministers in rooms where a Christian chaplain is needed. And whether making random visits to patients or visiting someone who has specifically requested a visit from the chaplain, JP asks questions out of concern, never curiosity.

"When someone says, 'My husband died,' the last thing you want to ask is, 'When?' or 'Why?'" said JP. "You say, 'I'm sorry your husband died,' and provide emotional and spiritual comfort."

A hand placed on a shoulder can speak a thousand words, providing a presence of compassion during a difficult time. One responsibility for clergy is to stand with a patient's family during the bleak early hours of death. JP masks his emotions in front of patients, but admits chaplaincy can feel overwhelming at times.

"There is no such thing as not being affected emotionally and spiritually," he said. "I have to draw constant resources from my faith to cope with the losses I encounter with people. This is not my work, it is God's work."

Although his job is to console others, patients inspire the veteran chaplain daily.

"There was one patient who went through so many losses in one year—his son died, brother died—you name it," said JP. "I asked him, 'Where is God in your life right now?' He said, 'Fear knocked on the door, faith answered, [and] no one was there.' I thought that was a very profound experience."

Visit [www.hcucc.org](http://www.hcucc.org) for the complete story and see page 8 for a list of helpful tips from JP to assist during hospital visitations.

## Celebrating Four Decades of Ministry

**G**rowing up in a home where both her mother and father were very involved in ministry in the United Church of Christ and its predecessor denominations, Dorothy Lester often speaks of how the Church has been part of her life since birth. After 37 years serving in various roles within the UCC, the last twelve as a member of the Hawai'i Conference staff, Dorothy officially retired on December 31, 2012.

Having first joined the Hawai'i Conference staff as the Interim Placement Coordinator in 2001, Dorothy has worked for the past eight years as an Associate Conference Minister with responsibility for Search and Call, as staff to the Tri-Isle Association and as the Conference Ethics Officer. In addition to her work with the Hawai'i Conference, Dorothy has served since 2010 as Co-Pastor of Lana'i Union Church along with her husband Bob.

Given her family's deep involvement in the Church, Dorothy spent some time prior to her retirement reflecting on the closing of this chapter in her life. Her father was an ordained minister for 75 years and her mother an active lay leader.

"When I retire it will be the first time since 1916 that someone in the Lester family is not in ministry," she said.

In the early 1970s, Dorothy attended meetings of the UCC Council for Lay Life and Work (CLLW), which later became the Office for Church Life and Leadership (OCLL), to assist her ailing mother. After her mother's death in 1975, Dorothy was asked to join the OCLL staff in an official capacity where she worked for the next 25 years. She was the administrator for the 1990 Faith Works event, an editor for the UCC *Book of Worship*, and a member of the hymnal committee responsible for creating the *New Century Hymnal*.

"Being able to be on both the *New Century Hymnal* and *Book of Worship* committees made me realize that I was able to participate in two things that were going to impact the UCC for a long time," said Dorothy.

When the Tri-Isle Association licensed her in 2010 to serve Lana'i Union Church, this was an opportunity for Dorothy to minister in one role that was completely new to her—serving as Pastor of a local church.

"I never expected to like being a Pastor," she said. "I was always very proud to be able to do ministry out of my baptism by working with words on paper until I was a pastor and experienced that side of ministry."

Dorothy and Bob moved to a retirement community in Hendersonville, North Carolina.

"I will miss the diversity of cultures but am looking forward to returning to my roots in North Carolina," she said.



Photo courtesy of Dwight Morita

# Faces around the Conference

## Year in Review: Faces of Ministry throughout the Hawai'i Conference in 2012



# resource List

## UCC Lent Resources Now Available

Visit UCC Resources at [www.uccresources.org](http://www.uccresources.org) for information on these and other resources for Lent and Easter:

*Spring Cleaning* is the title of the new 2013 United Church of Christ Lenten devotional. Some of the best pastors, writers, and teachers in the denomination have written devotions for this book, focusing on questions such as: "Just how big is heaven?" and "How would you sum up the Gospel in seven words?" The book costs \$6 and includes free shipping and handling when purchased through UCC Resources.

*Give Up Something Bad for Lent: A Lenten Study for Adults* challenges participants to give up one spiritual habit that is destructive, such as envy, jealousy, self-pity, apathy or gossip, in order to prepare to fully embrace the Good News of Easter. Written by James W. Moore, this study includes seven sessions, one for each Sunday in Lent and Easter Sunday. It can be purchased for \$9.99.

*Worship in a Flash for Lent and Easter: Everything You Need for a Season of Inviting and Inspiring Worship* is a collection of prayers, music, sermon ideas, projection images, and everything else needed for an authentic encounter with God in worship. Compiled by Robert Ratcliff, the documents are all saved to a flash drive that is compatible with both Windows and Mac computers. Liturgies, prayers, sermon outlines, and other text materials are in PDF format. Images are in JPEG format. The drive is available for \$32.99.

## Two New Books Shed Light on Kalaupapa

### *Kalaupapa: A Collective Memory*

On January 6, 1866, the first of an estimated 8,000 people diagnosed with Hansen's Disease—90 percent of whom were Hawaiian—were exiled to Moloka'i's remote Kalaupapa Peninsula. This much of their story is recorded in many history books, but not until recently, from their own perspective.



*Kalaupapa: A Collective Memory*, written by Anwei Skinsnes Law and published in 2012, reveals Kalaupapa's history in a new way. Combining more than 200 hours of transcribed interviews with archival documents, including over 300 letters and petitions written by the earliest residents translated from Hawaiian, Anwei's work is an in-depth account of Kalaupapa as told by its people.

Despite being hungry, cold, and, at times, neglected, the people of Kalawao worked hard from the very beginning to

build their own community, establishing a church the very first year. Siloama Church—the Church of the Healing Spring—gave residents something to cling to, a refuge in God.

In 1969, after a long and arduous struggle, the government ended its isolation policy and allowed the people of Kalaupapa to depart. But for many Kalaupapa was home, and they chose to stay. Their touching and heartbreaking stories are told through the pages of this book.

Anwei, who first visited Kalaupapa in 1968 as a teenager, has produced several documentaries and written books on different aspects of Kalaupapa's history. Since 1994 Anwei has served as the international coordinator of the International Association of Integration, Dignity and Economic Advancement (IDEA), the largest international human rights organization by and for people who have experienced Hansen's Disease.

*Kalaupapa: A Collective Memory* presents the story of Kalaupapa as told by its people, preserving their place in history and keeping Kalaupapa sacred. Published by University of Hawai'i Press, the book (575 pages, illustrated) is available for purchase at [www.uhpress.hawaii.edu](http://www.uhpress.hawaii.edu) and commercial retailers.

### *Ili Na Ho'omana'o o Kalaupapa: Casting Remembrances of Kalaupapa*

Imagine losing your land, family, human rights, and dignity all at once and being exiled from society with a disease thought to be incurable.

This begins to describe the lives of an estimated 8,000 residents of Kalaupapa, whose stories are told in the new book *Ili Na Ho'omana'o o Kalaupapa: Casting Remembrances of Kalaupapa*, which recounts the settlement's history in detail.

Written by Anwei Skinsnes Law and Valerie Monson, the book presents a continuous history of Kalaupapa, from the first people sent to this remote Moloka'i peninsula with Hansen's Disease to modern day residents and families who carry on its legacy.

Featuring stunning images by renowned photographer Wayne Levin from the 1980s to the present, the book sheds new light on the history of Kalaupapa through the remembrances of patients. Research into letters from Kalaupapa's earliest residents, translated from Hawaiian, and information from family members are presented in the book.

"The important thing for us is to remember our 'ohana who have passed on," wrote Kuulei Bell, a Kalaupapa patient who died in 2009. "We're the last of the legacy. We need to let people know we existed."

Published by Pacific Historic Parks, *Ili Na Ho'omana'o o Kalaupapa: Casting Remembrances of Kalaupapa* (144 pages, hardcover) is priced at \$24.95 and available for purchase at [www.pacifichistoricparksbookstore.org](http://www.pacifichistoricparksbookstore.org).



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](http://www.ucc.org/news).

## **UCC Signs Interfaith Call to Action for Gun Violence Prevention** by Emily Mullins, adapted

UCC General Minister and President Geoffrey A. Black is one of 47 faith leaders calling for increased gun violence prevention measures. Letters from these leaders were sent to President Obama, Vice President Biden and the U.S. Congress on behalf of Faiths United to Prevent Gun Violence, a coalition representing more than 40 denominations and 80 million members of the faith community across the United States.

The action comes as President Obama announces his new gun control initiative, spurred by last month's mass shooting in a Newtown, Connecticut, elementary school. The coalition's letter calls for similar measures as those called for by the President, including increased criminal background checks on all gun sales, a ban on high-capacity weapons and ammunition magazines, and tougher federal gun trafficking laws.

Faiths United to Prevent Gun Violence was founded in 2011 to confront America's gun violence epidemic and to rally support for policies that reduce death and injury from gunfire. Since its founding, the coalition has grown from 24 to 40 faith groups representing religious communities across the nation, including the United Church of Christ, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, African Methodist Episcopal Church, Sikh Council on Religion and Education, Islamic Society of North America, Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, and others. For the full text of the letter, visit <http://faithsagainstgunviolence.org/>.

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## **Connecticut Community to Name School after Fallen Teacher** by Anthony Moujaes, adapted

Victoria Soto, the Connecticut teacher who gave her life for her students when she was gunned down last December, is being honored for her sacrifice by the Stratford Town Council, which voted to name a school after her. Victoria was a member of Lordship Community UCC.

The decision at the January 14 Council Meeting was unanimous and met with applause. Victoria has been hailed a hero for saving several children from a gunman's bullets during the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary School on December 14. Victoria hid her first-grade students in a closet and died trying to shield them from the gunman. She was 27 years old and in her fifth year teaching at the school. Construction for the new elementary school for grades K-2 on the Stratford Academy campus will break ground this summer.

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## **Millions from UCC Help Haiti Rebuild** by Anthony Moujaes, adapted

When the United Church of Christ asked for donations in 2010 for earthquake relief in Haiti, the denomination's members responded with a generous \$4.5 million to help a struggling people. In the

three years since, those gifts have allowed Haiti to begin its recovery from the second deadliest earthquake on record.

On January 12, 2010, an earthquake shook the tiny nation, killing more than 316,000 people and injuring 300,000 more. There were 250,000 homes and 30,000 commercial buildings destroyed by the quake or the dozens of aftershocks in the weeks after, and one million people were left homeless.

Susan Sanders, the UCC Minister for Global Sharing of Resources, said that as the denomination reflects on the earthquake, "it is also thankful for its partners in Haiti who worked non-stop to provide emergency relief and are now engaged in the long journey of recovery and rebuilding. We are grateful for the generosity of UCC congregations, members and friends which is supporting life-sustaining ministry across Haiti."

Wider Church Ministries plans to continue funding the recovery effort through 2015, Susan said.

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## **Wilmington Ten Pardons Celebrated at North Carolina UCC** by Anthony Moujaes, adapted

Hundreds joined a congregation of the United Church of Christ in eastern North Carolina to celebrate with a group of justice advocates receiving their pardons, removing a false conviction after nearly 40 years of protests and appeals. The pardons for the Wilmington Ten were presented January 5 at a ceremony at Gregory Congregational UCC.

The Wilmington Ten, the name by which the group of nine black men and one white woman became known, were wrongly convicted four decades ago in a Civil Rights-era case of firebombing a Wilmington, North Carolina, grocery store in 1971. One of the members, Benjamin F. Chavis, was a UCC justice worker at the time.

"It's been a long, arduous—and at times, torturous—40 years. But this is a joyous day," said Ben Chavis. At the time, he was a civil rights community organizer for the UCC's Commission for Racial Justice sent to help leaders meeting at Gregory Congregational in Wilmington to organize and to ensure the area's schools were desegregated fairly.

The UCC came to the defense of the Wilmington Ten by raising money and investing its own staff in the case. Attorneys for the Wilmington Ten petitioned the state May 17 asking for a full pardon from then-Governor Beverly Perdue. The Governor said in a statement that she decided to grant the pardons "because the more facts I have learned about the Wilmington Ten, the more appalled I have become about the manner in which their convictions were obtained."

The Governor issued the pardons on December 31 in her final days of office, citing new evidence in the case. The Ten, ages 19 to 35 at the time of the trial, were sentenced to a combined 282 years in prison in 1972. Their sentences were commuted in 1978 by then-Governor Jim Hunt, but he withheld a pardon.

Governor Perdue's "pardon of innocence" means the state no longer considers the Wilmington Ten criminals.

*(The Friend Celebrates 170 Years, continued from page 1)*

Over the next twenty years, *The Friend* reported many changes. When the Pacific whaling industry declined, readership “essentially diminished” among seamen.

As the industry faded, so did Samuel's health. Suffering a stroke with paralysis in 1861, the chaplain-editor discontinued *The Friend* for three months. “We are not weary of our work, displeased with our friends, or dissatisfied with Honolulu, but our brain, nerves, hands, feet, mind, ask for REST,” reads the year's May edition.



Samuel Damon

On New Year's Day 1885 Samuel resigned his editorship of 42 years. He died a month later, one week before his seventieth birthday. Samuel's passing marked the end of an era for *The Friend*.

Notable successors included S.E. Bishop (1887-1902), who helmed the paper during the overthrow of Hawai'i's monarchy, and Doremus Scudder (1904-1917), who

for thirteen years published *The Friend* in four languages—English, Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino.

*The Friend* prospered in the 20th century, published by the Board of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association, now the Hawai'i Conference United Church of Christ. Happy Birthday, *The Friend*!

## Transforming Lives through One Great Hour of Sharing

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS), the refugee, relief and development offering of the United Church of Christ, transforms lives through health, education, agricultural and emergency relief initiatives in 138 countries.

Each year UCC congregations across the United States collect an offering, typically during Lent, to support OGHS. The suggested date to collect the offering in 2013 is March 10, but churches are invited to choose the date that best fits with their schedule.

Resources for promoting this offering can be found at [www.ucc.org/OGHS](http://www.ucc.org/OGHS). In addition to resources there is a list of 2012 projects supported by OGHS dollars around the world.

For iPhone users, you can also download the OGHS App, which allows you to view projects and read stories about how OGHS is changing lives.



## 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.

The O'ahu Association installed **Iese Tuuao** (pictured right) as Pastor and Teacher of Samoan Church of Hawai'i LMS in Nanakuli on Sunday, December 2.



The Tri-Isle Association installed **Jori Lokboj** (pictured left) as Pastor of Maui Marshallese Ministry on Sunday, January 20 at Kahului Union Church.

**Clara Denise Priester** was named Executive Director of the Woman's Board of Missions for the Pacific Islands at its meeting on November 29, 2012. Clara had been serving as interim Executive Director since November 18, 2011.



*(Allan Boesak to Keynote, continued from page 1)*

Prize, South Africa's highest award for theological publications. He is currently serving as Visiting Professor at Butler University and Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis.

The 2013 'Aha Pae'aina is scheduled for June 5-8 at the Courtyard King Kamehameha's Kona Beach Hotel. The 'Aha Iki, on June 5. The 'Aha Makua, the gathering of all Hawai'i Conference Churches, will begin on June 6 in the evening with a lu'au. Registration forms and information about events will be mailed to churches in early March. Online registration will be made available at that time at [www.hcucc.org](http://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'uuanu Ave., Honolulu 96817.



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February 2013

# *Around the Conference*

## Conference Calendar of Events

February 9	Conference Council
February 18	President's Day (Office Closed)
February 27	Stewardship Missional Team
March 4-6	Clergy Retreat
March 10	One Great Hour of Sharing Offering (Suggested Date)
March 20	Hawaii Conference Foundation Board of Trustees
March 26	Prince Kuhio Day (Office Closed)
March 27	Stewardship Missional Team
March 28	Maundy Thursday (Office Closed)
March 29	Good Friday (Office Closed)
April 24	Stewardship Missional Team
April 26	Formation Missional Team

## **Tips For Pastoral Visitations**

### Do's:

- Practice listening over speaking
- Spend as much time with each patient as needed
- Be "gracefully dismissed" if not needed
- Ask questions out of concern, not curiosity
- Be a calm, non-anxious presence
- Remain non-judgmental in every situation

### Don'ts:

- Never proselytize patients
- Do not touch patients unless asked (e.g., holding hands in prayer)
- Avoid passing judgments
- Do not share too much about yourself with patients
- Do not enter or leave rooms without washing hands
- Never break professional boundaries