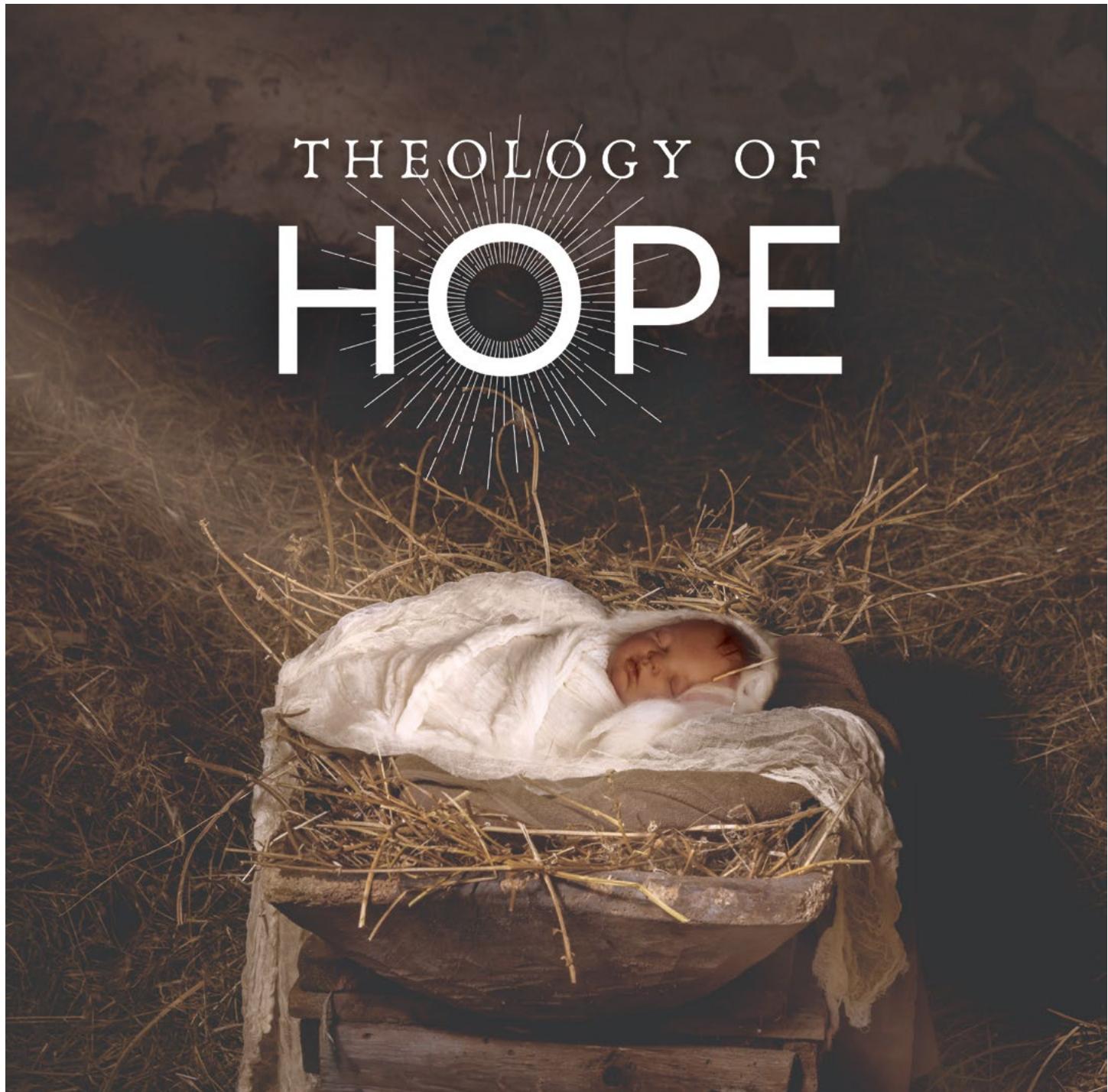




The Friend

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A Theology of Hope

DANIEL KIDDER-MCQUOWN, PASTOR, WAIPAHU UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

As a child, Eddie Uemori's life was centered around the plantation. The O'ahu Sugar Company was the center of life in Waipahu. Eddie's father worked hard for the company. His mother worked hard for the family and their modest home, which had been provided by the company.

People looked out for each other. For example, the owner of the company and the middle school principal checked in with one other to make sure Eddie was doing ok at school and at home.

Eddie was an active kid and liked sports. He gained fame in one of the local Japanese baseball leagues. He remembers the legendary Filipino pitcher, Crispin Mancao. Eddie even played against the Yankees when they came through Honolulu. He didn't go on to the professional teams, but a lot of his friends did in Japan.

For the most part, Eddie's life was good. He still counts his blessings to this day.

There were challenges. The family had a modest lifestyle on the plantation. Perhaps the biggest challenge came in the years following December 7, 1941. Eddie remembers climbing Manager's Row in Waipahu, looking down as the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. Life changed dramatically after that. Bilingual Japanese Americans and community leaders were the first to be interned. Eddie's father, being a leader in the Waipahu Hongwanji Temple, was eventually sent off.

Despite these challenges, Eddie enlisted in the Air Force National Guard at 18. He served all over O'ahu in the radio unit, last serving at Koko Head in supplies.

As a child, Eddie's granddaughter Kristin Suyeyoshi's life was centered around family and school. She grew up in Waipahu and went to school

in Kapolei. The adults in Kristin's life worked hard in their careers and parenting. The extended family had grown since Eddie's childhood, and togetherness was a core value.

People looked out for each other. For example, Kristin's mother spent extra time encouraging Kristin through difficulties with self-esteem. Kristin remembers a lot of encouragement from others as well, at school and in the family.

Kristin found judo, or rather judo found Kristin. Either way, she remembers going to practice with her younger brother. At age 12, Kristin decided to go for it, and has not looked back. In high school, she competed with her team, and they were quite good (one year they placed third in the state). She even went up against someone who is now a professional MMA competitor.

Kristin counts her blessings in life.

There have been challenges. Kristin remembers bullies in school. Some were kids. But there were one or two adult bullies as well. Working through these experiences helped Kristin to develop and deepen her sense of appreciation for how people treat each other. As Kristin is still a young professional (working at Hon Graphics) and recently married, she faces all the challenges of her stage of life.

Kristin kept her love of judo going into adulthood. She continues to this day to serve as coach for Campbell High School's judo team. Her approach is encouraging and nurturing, helping the individuals and the team to relax, enjoy, and support each other.

A Legacy of Hope

There are similarities between Eddie and Kristin. Despite the fact that they were born decades apart, they share many of the same values. They both benefitted from a legacy



Pastor Dan (author), Eddie Uemori, and his granddaughter, Kristin Suyeyoshi
PHOTO CREDIT: CECILE GOO

of hope. Their elders sought a better future for them. And now both are building on that legacy, giving hope to their family and community.

A Theology of Hope

We read in the Epistle to the Hebrews that, "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Heb 11:1). The author is keenly interested in helping Christians understand the basis for their hope—Jesus Christ. The epistle highlights ancestors in faith who serve as role models for us today. The future (where hope resides) is to be trusted because of Jesus Christ, and because of the faith of those who have gone before.

... continued on page 8



God is still speaking

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Theology of the Poor

SAM MASILAMONEY, MINISTER, FIRST UNITED PROTESTANT CHURCH OF HILO

My theology of hope is rooted in a theology of the poor because God has a deep affection for the poor, including the social outcasts and sojourners. The concept of poverty in the Scriptures can be both social and spiritual. As Christians, we care about the poor first and foremost because we serve a God who cares. We see God's love for the poor, desolate, the needy, the outsider, and the castaway all through the pages of Scripture. We see it in the parables and the way Jesus loved Zacchaeus, the women at the well, and those with severe medical conditions. We see the way that Jesus loves us: unconditionally, wholeheartedly, and authentically.

Our social involvement is rooted in these characterizations of God. He is the God who upholds the causes of all the oppressed, who provides for the poor and liberates the prisoner; he sustains the marginalized and the vulnerable. A theology of the poor refers to a set of Christian theological perspectives associated with a theology of liberation, one that centers on the lived experience and struggles of the poor, and this gives me so much hope. The poor are not just recipients of charity but are central to the Gospel and embody God's presence, making them a starting point for theo-

logical reflection. Key concepts include the preferential option for the poor and vulnerable, and a call for conversion to justice and solidarity with the poor and oppressed. Scripture shows us again and again that God is a champion for the poor, and this divine bias is fundamental for the beloved Christian Community.

The Old Testament emphasizes equitable treatment for the poor where justice was never to be withheld from poor (Ex 23:6). Ours is the God of hope who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, who keeps faith forever, who executes justice for the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry. The Lord of hope sets the prisoners free (Ps 146:6-7). The New Testament teaching about the poor occurs in the Gospels. Jesus understood the reality of poverty in the society (Mt 26: 9-11) and the difficulties of the poor (Mk 12:42-44). He stressed the need to give to the poor (Mt 19:21) and to provide for them (Lk 14:13). Jesus himself identified with the poor people and, like many poor persons, Jesus did not have a home (Lk 9:59).

The perspective of the poor is essential for understanding God's hopeful action in the world and for developing theology. Archbishop Oscar

Romero famously said, "it is the poor who tell us what the world is, and what the church's service to the world should be." Theology is not just an academic reflection on human activity; rather, it is particularly the efforts to liberate the poor and oppressed. A genuine conversion to God must include a conversion to the neighbor, especially the poor and marginalized. This involves a commitment to their struggle for justice.

Inspired by Jesus's life, this concept of serving the poor and oppressed emphasizes detaching from material wealth to stand with the poor and critiquing systems that oppress them. It is not about valuing poverty itself but about loving the poor and joining their cause. Many liberation theologies, including Dalit Theology, draw a parallel between the struggle of the oppressed today and the ancient Israelites' experience of liberation from slavery from Egypt (Mt 25: 31-46). Jesus equates caring for the hungry, thirsty, stranger, naked, sick, and imprisoned with caring for Him. This emphasizes that the poor are the concrete way to encounter Jesus and that poverty alleviation is a direct Christian duty. And this is the root of my theology of hope.

Mission Offering

Kalaupapa Sunday

On the fourth Sunday of every January, churches are invited to commemorate the estimated 8,000 people diagnosed with Hansen's Disease who were exiled to Moloka'i's remote Kalaupapa peninsula.

Resources for observing Kalaupapa Sunday are available on the Hawai'i Conference website (www.hcucc.org).



Kanaana Hou Siloama UCC, Kalaupapa

The suggested date for observing Kalaupapa Sunday is January 25, 2026, though churches may honor the patients of Kalaupapa and their families any Sunday in the year.

Henry 'Ōpūkaha'ia Scholarship

Each year on the third Sunday in February (closest to the anniversary of Henry 'Ōpūkaha'ia's death), churches are invited to receive an offering to support scholarships in his name.

Henry 'Ōpūkaha'ia Scholarships, which honor the legacy of the young

Hawaiian credited with inspiring the Sandwich Islands mission that brought Christianity to Hawai'i, are available to candidates for ministry attending an accredited seminary and clergy pursuing continuing education.

Churches are invited to receive an offering to support these scholarships on **Sunday, February 15, 2026**. The offering may also be collected on another date.



Hope Has No Mute Button in God's Kingdom

DAVID K. POPHAM, CONFERENCE MINISTER

Hope is not a virtue for those who are comfortable with life as it presently is. In Christian theology, hope is a deeply rooted transformative force which calls us into the process of becoming citizens of God's coming kingdom: the heavenly kingdom which disrupts the empires of this world.

This kind of hope is fantastically active, singing even when it's silent. It is belting out Whitney Houston's *I Wanna Dance with Somebody* in the face of systems and individuals who declare who is worthy of dancing and who is NOT. Hope becomes our protest and our promise anchored not in systems and personalities of this world (empire), but in the redemptive movement of God's kingdom.

This hope has strong biblical expression, beginning with the Exodus, where God's people walk away from human tyranny. The Israelites leave abusive Egypt, shedding their identity as the cause of Egypt's troubles while stepping into the wilderness in faith. They do not know where they are going, but they know who they are not. This is hope: the courage to walk away from Pharaoh even when the promised land is just a rumor and a new self-identity as God's redeemed people is just emerging.

While the Exodus tells the story of physical departure from bondage, the Psalms give voice to the spiritual longing that accompanies the journey toward God's kingdom. "How long, O Lord?" (Ps. 13:1) is not just a cry of despair but also the voice of every soul awaiting the coming kingdom. The psalmists openly cry and lament the twisting and distorting of God's

presence by human schemes. Yet still, the psalmists pray.

As the Psalms give voice to longing, the Prophets sharpen that longing into vision as they speak with fierce clarity and imagination which names suffering and declares suffering will not have the final word. Isaiah offers visions of hope in the midst of despair: swords beaten into plowshares, deserts bursting into bloom, and a child leading the way to peace.

visible. His love is tender. Divine hope embodied.

These stories are not isolated events but part of a larger truth: that hope is not a destination but a process of becoming citizens of the kingdom of God. The daily process of becoming—of living into the promise of God's kingdom—is articulated by theologians like Ted Peters, who notes, "in the Sermon on the Mount Jesus describes the life of a beatitude as living a blessed life today in light of the coming of God's kingdom *tomorrow*. 'Blessed are the peacemakers,' says Jesus, because 'they will be called children of God.'"^{*}

To embody the coming kingdom of God, as Jesus does, is to trust that the divine is not done with us yet. That God's redemptive story is still being written in our lives as kingdom-hope draws us into the divine promise that transformation is already unfolding in and through us. From Exodus through the Psalms and the Prophets to the redemptive work of Jesus, hope is active, embodied, enacted, and shared.

So let us sing and dance in the face of empire, walk away from the Pharaohs of our time, and stitch joy into the fabric of despair. Let our hope be visible in our living, our prayers, our peacemaking, and our daily acts of becoming. The kingdom is coming—and we are its citizens in the making.



PHOTO CREDIT: SHUTTERSTOCK

Echoing through history, divine hope is ultimately expressed through Jesus as the embodiment of God's redemption. Jesus is the ultimate touch of God's coming kingdom who transforms water into wine and despair into dance. In him God was judged and found wanting, yet Jesus walks out of the tomb not with vengeance but with vulnerability. His wounds are



^{*}Ted Peters, *God – The World's Future: Systematic Theology for a New Era*, second edition, Augsburg Fortress, 2000.

Hope, Governance, and Good Order: Why the Church's Business Responsibilities Matter

ANDREW BUNN, HCF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Congregations tend to associate church life with worship, fellowship, and service. Yet every church also carries a second identity: it is a legal and corporate organization that owns property, employs staff, holds financial assets, and interacts with the public in ways that create business and legal responsibilities. These obligations may feel distant from the spiritual core of ministry, but they form a framework that allows worship and mission to take place.



The Theology of Hope, the theme of this issue of *The Friend*, reminds us that the church lives not only for the present but for what God is bringing in the future. If we expect the church to continue its mission tomorrow, then we must manage it responsibly today.

Legal Responsibilities: Protecting Ministry

Every church operates within a legal environment shaped by nonprofit-corporation statutes, employment laws, building codes, child-safety regulations, and the duties owed by corporate officers and directors (trustees and council members). These requirements exist to protect people and prevent harm, and churches are not exempt from them.

Seen through the lens of hope, legal compliance becomes more than risk avoidance. It is a way of ensuring that future ministry is not undermined by preventable legal issues.

Churches that maintain accurate records, follow their bylaws, comply with tax and employment rules, and keep facilities safe are not simply “being careful.” They are expressing hope by protecting today’s ministry and tomorrow’s as well.

Financial and Business Responsibilities: Protecting Sustainability

While the church’s mission is spiritual, its operations depend on sound financial management. Budgets must be balanced, payroll completed, audits conducted, accounts reconciled, and long-term planning undertaken. Many church challenges arise not from theological disagreements but from governance failures: inadequate oversight, unclear processes, or the absence of sustainable financial planning.

Hope directs the church toward long-term thinking. If we trust that God has ongoing work for our communities, then we must build the financial and organizational structures to support that work. Responsible budgeting, keeping reserve funds for capital needs, transparent reporting, and disciplined financial controls are not corporate burdens, they are expressions of confidence that future ministries will depend on the decisions we make now. Hope, in this sense, becomes the foundation of sustainability.

Risk Management: Protecting the Church’s Capacity to Serve

Churches must manage a broad range of risks: property damage, personal injury, cybersecurity threats, and the safeguarding obligations involved in caring for minors and vulnerable adults. These tasks may feel administrative yet they are deeply tied to the church’s mission.

Hope reframes risk management as the work of safeguarding the church’s

ability to continue serving after unexpected events. Adequate insurance, safety procedures, background

checks, and emergency planning are all expressions of hope that the church will survive and continue its ministry. One incident should never mark the end of a congregation. Hope insists the church will be here tomorrow. Risk management prepares for that tomorrow.

Property Stewardship: Preparing Spaces for the Future Church

Church buildings anchor ministry and community life, but they are also physical structures subject to wear, aging, and unforeseen needs. Responsible stewardship includes routine maintenance, timely repairs, accessibility improvements, code compliance, and long-range planning for capital projects.

Through the framework of hope, property care is preparation not just preservation. We maintain our facilities not for sentiment, but for the future generations who will gather, learn, and serve there. Every repaired roof, every safety upgrade, and every accessible entrance is a tangible investment in the church’s future.

Practical Responsibility: A Reflection of Hope

When the business and legal aspects of church life are viewed through hope, they take on spiritual significance. Good governance, compliance, financial discipline, risk mitigation, and property care are not distractions from ministry, they are ministries in themselves. In this light, practical responsibility reflects hope. The way we manage the church today is one of the clearest signs of how much we trust in its future.



GATHERINGS AROUND THE CONFERENCE

Association of Hawaiian Evangelical Churches 'Aha Hālāwai

PHOTO CREDITS: ANGIE WARREN



Hawai'i Island Association Fall Mokupuni

PHOTO CREDITS: JONATHAN ROACH



Kaua'i Association Fall Mokupuni

Photo Credits: David Popham and Līhu'e United Church



Mokuikaua Ho'olaule'a

PHOTO CREDITS: JOSANN JENKS



PHOTO CREDIT: JONATHAN ROACH



... A Theology of Hope, continued from page 2

All this is fine and good. But I find theology, no matter what topic we are discussing, is best understood at the ground level. Theology is best understood in stories. And hope is always a story.



PHOTO CREDIT: SHUTTERSTOCK

A “hope” is something we believe will happen. It can be a tangible goal, or it can be more of an unstructured dream. Each person carries a unique set of goals and dreams, founded in their particular story. This is why I say hope is always a story. Our hopes and dreams are as unique as our DNA.

As Christians, we are united by hope. We share the same Redeemer, Jesus Christ, who is the “pioneer and perfecter of faith” (Heb 12:2). Through

the Holy Spirit, our individual hopes and dreams can be shaped, as we offer ourselves as a “living sacrifice” (Rom 12:1). Through the Holy Spirit, our own stories are linked to our ancestors in faith, as we see “the great cloud of witnesses” (Heb 12:1).

Christians are called to a special task when it comes to hope. Everyone has hopes and dreams. But Christians are called to *share* hope. In Hawai‘i, this may be considered a *kuleana* in faith, a responsibility and a privilege. Jesus said,

“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. People do not light a lamp and put it under the bushel basket; rather, they put it on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven” (Mt 5:14-16).

There are many gifts, but one spirit, one love shown in many ways (1 Cor 12:4-6). We each share the hope of Christ in unique ways, particular to our context.

Discovering Hope

Many people struggle with hope in our world, even in Hawai‘i nei. The church plays a central role in restoring

hope, but where do church people go to discover hope for themselves?

Especially when the institutional church is faced with a host of current challenges, affecting not just the United Church of Christ, but all traditions? Of course, we continue to depend on our foundation in Jesus Christ.

In my ministry, I find the Holy Spirit bringing hope for the church through the witness of others. Just like the biblical witnesses offer us hope, the people in our lives today provide fresh hope. This is why I highlighted the stories of Eddie and Kristin as examples in faith. Despite radically different origins, there are remarkable “through lines” showing how God is working between the generations and into the future.

If we are listening intentionally, we can see how God is working. We can hear it in the stories of our existing church families. When visitors come to our church, we can offer them the same listening ear, providing them space to express how God is working in their lives. When we meet people in the community, we can invite them into a community of hope. Hope is what they need. Hope is a precious commodity, and our churches can provide them with it. To God be the glory.



What is your hope for the world/your community?



My hope for the people of the world is that they stop living blindly and turn their lives to God and not just show but do. (+Matthew 7:15)

Truedan, Hawai'i Island

My hope for the world is just for everyone to be aware of what's happening and have their voice be heard. I feel like more of the youth should come together on either everyday problems or on current events. No matter who we are or where we come from, our voice matters especially on the well-being of our future. **Carmela, Kaua'i**

I hope our world can learn to work as one to above all else glorify God and then work on improving our lives and the world for future generations.

**Akoni (Makana),
Hawai'i Island**

My hope for the world is that everyone will have a good strong house and food to cover their tables and fill their stomachs.

Grace, Hawai'i Island

My hope that there will be peace in the world and in our community. I pray that there will be no hate or violence. Love should be more common in this world and I hope our community can be an example for people to follow.

Evan, Kaua'i

My hope is that communities embody Christianity by practicing radical compassion, humility, and love in ways that heal divisions and uplift everyone.

Tehani, O'ahu

To always be flourishing.
Nanea, O'ahu

My hope is for everyone to experience love, kindness, and unity. I believe the power of faith, hope, and compassion can bring people together and create happiness.

Javana, O'ahu

To learn more and see more from youth and young adults, or to submit content for consideration for future pages in *The Friend*, visit our webpage at hcucc.org/yz-literature.

YZ [pronounced "wise"] literature is wisdom from the young, Generations Y and Z to be more specific. See how young people are shining, witnessing, and reflecting light.

... How can you be a beacon of hope for others?, continued from page 12

Helping when there are things to do.

- Danielle White

We can be a beacon of hope by building communities where we can tell the truth about injustice.

- Amy Butler

By sharing the love of Christ with all and making each person feel acknowledged, important, and loved.

- Heather Barfield

By inspiring others through your everyday actions, which include being punctual, organized, compassionate, motivating, resilient, confident, and a blessing. **- Rollin Rabara**

Greet everyone with a genuine aloha smile and share the aloha!

- Bill Hā'ole

News from our Associations and Affiliates

AHEC Holds Fall 'Aha Hālāwai

The Association of Hawaiian Evangelical Churches (AHEC) held their fall 'Aha Hālāwai at Ewa Community Church on O'ahu October 24 and 25. Highlights included a unanimous vote by an Ecclesiastical Council to approve Melveen Kaupiko for ordination in the United Church of Christ, the installation of Jocelyn Mokihana Powers and James Kimo McElmurry as Kahu Pono for Ewa Community Church, great worship, a productive business meeting, excellent food, and a wonderful ho'ike by State Sunday School. Mahalo, Ewa Community Church for hosting!



Kaua'i Association Hears Keynote Address on "Theology within Oceania"

The Kaua'i Association held their Fall 'Aha Mokupuni on Sunday, November 16, at Līhu'e United Church. Peasipa Namoa, who is in the United Methodist candidacy process in the United

Church, was the keynote speaker and spoke on "Theology within Oceania." He stated, "I find it very critical to rethink, reimagine, and renew our lens of the Bible and how we do church together."



HIA Approves "Hope for Helani Sunday"

In light of the devastating fire that destroyed the sanctuary of Helani Congregational Church in Hōlualoa on October 3, the Hawai'i Island Association approved a resolution "Hope for Helani," at its fall 'Aha Mokupuni on November 1. This resolution notes that "whereas, the First Sunday of Advent—Sunday, November 30, 2025—is the Sunday of Hope, marking the beginning of a new liturgical year, and offers the opportunity for our churches to unite in prayer, reflection, and tangible action in support of Helani Congregational Church, therefore, be it resolved, that the 'Aha Mokupuni of the Hawai'i Island Association of the United Church of Christ declares Sunday, November 30, 2025, as 'Hope for Helani Sunday.'" Worship materials were also developed for this special Sunday.



Mokuaiakaua Church Celebrates with Ho'olaule'a

After six years of fundraising and renovation, Mokuaiakaua Church in Kona on Hawai'i Island celebrated their grand re-opening of their sanctuary and their 205th anniversary last Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Mokuaiakaua's Ho'olaule'a was an amazing celebration of God, faithfulness, and the hard work of the oldest Christian community of faith in Hawai'i. They honored their past, celebrated their present, and looked to their future.



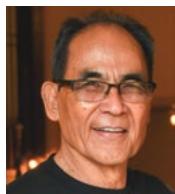
Conference News and Highlights

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

Pastoral Transitions



Barry Mick retired as pastor of Kapa'a First Hawaiian Church on Kaua'i. His last Sunday was October 12.



Tom Fujita, retired pastor who served several churches in Hawai'i, has been awarded a 2025 Lifetime Achievement Award by the Pacific School of Religion (PSR) in Berkeley, CA. The award was presented at the opening night of the Earl Lecture Series on October 17 at PSR.



Melveen Kaupiko was approved for ordination in the United Church of Christ by a unanimous vote at an Ecclesiastical Council of the Association of Hawaiian Evangelical Churches on October 24.

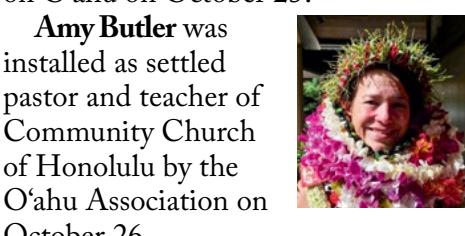


Wayne Ibara has concluded his ministry with Makiki Christian Church in Honolulu. His last Sunday was October 26. Together with his wife, Phyllis, he had served this congregation faithfully for thirty years.

Services of Installation



Jocelyn Mokihana Powers and **James Kimo McElmurry** were installed as Kahu Pono for Ewa Community Church on O'ahu on October 25.



Amy Butler was installed as settled pastor and teacher of Community Church of Honolulu by the O'ahu Association on October 26.

Church News

Community Church of Honolulu is a newly-certified Open and Affirming (ONA) congregation in the United Church of Christ! Derek Terry, ONA Coalition Acting Executive Director writes, "Community Church of Honolulu is now part of the largest and fastest-growing LGBTQ-affirming church movement in the world! We're proud of the congregation and grateful to the church's leadership for the hard work that led to this milestone in their history."

Mokuaikaua Church in Kona celebrated a grand re-opening of their sanctuary and their 205th anniversary of ministry over November 21 – 23 with a ho'olaule'a, celebration dinner, special worship service, and other events as they honored their past, celebrated the present, and looked to their future.



Staff Transitions
Khristine Leonor, part-time Capital Campaign Administrator, has resigned from her position, effective November 14. She played a very pivotal role for the Capital Campaign Team providing essential support to ensure the smooth functioning of the campaign. We thank her for her service and wish her all the best as she starts a new chapter in her journey.

Conference Calendar of Events

JANUARY 1 – 2, 2026

New Year's holiday (Office Closed)

JANUARY 9

Last day to submit OCWM offerings for 2025

JANUARY 19

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (Office Closed)

JANUARY 31

State Council of Hawaiian Congregational Churches

FEBRUARY 14

Conference Council/HCF Board of Directors

FEBRUARY 16

Presidents' Day (Office Closed)

FEBRUARY 20 – 21

AHEC Spring 'Aha Hālāwai



In Memory
Charles Mahina Kaupiko, 41, Kahu of Hau'oli Kamana'o Church in

Miloli'i on Hawai'i Island, passed away on Tuesday, September 9. He is survived by his wife, Kahu Melveen, and their children Ezekiel, Na'alii O Ke Maluhia, Melina, and Moanikeala.

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 \$15 will pay for one person's subscription for one year. Gifts may be sent to the Hawai'i Conference UCC, 700 Bishop Street, Suite 825, Honolulu, HI, 96813.

December 2025

YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

How can you be a beacon of hope for others?

By speaking my truth in a positive and loving manner. **– Joan Sakaba**

“Let Go! & Let God.” Just like magic. **– Joyclyn Costa**

A beacon of hope doesn't have to be loud — it just has to be consistent. It's in your Aloha, encouragement, your willingness to lift others, your smile, and your belief that God still moves mountains.

Your light shines brightest when you remind people that they matter, that they're not alone, and that better days are on the way. **– Angie Warren**

By being open and willing to listen to someone with very different views

without interrupting, arguing or defending my position. Once someone is really listened to and understood, he/she starts to realize that we have so much more in common than previously imagined. **– Lee Takagi**

God whom we serve calls us to use the power of our relationships to make sure our values are lived out in the public sphere. **– Dave Yoshida**

I can be a beacon of hope for others by being available to help family and friends with simple tasks - helping them load and unload groceries. To be present when connecting with others and giving one my full undivided attention. To have a positive outlook, being authentic, and to practice self-care to continue to support others.

– Tiffany Marrotte

For me, being a beacon of hope means choosing to show up with love and steadiness even when the world feels uncertain. Sometimes it's as simple as sitting with someone in their grief, praying with a family after a tragedy, or offering a word of courage to a church that feels tired—reminding them, and myself, that God has not abandoned us. In moments like these, hope becomes more than an idea; it becomes something we can feel, share, and live. **– Keoki Kiwaha**

Keeping calm in the face of adversity. **– Sybil Seto**

To serve the Lord our God, and to serve others. **– Frank Mulec**

By following what Jesus would do or say: listen with your heart and respond with Christ-like truthfulness.

– Roberta Jahrling

... continued on page 9