

Kōloa Union Church

Hawaiian Identity • Island Hospitality

DECEMBER 2018

A NOTE FROM KAHU AKANA

“Stories of Heaviness and Hope”

As we enter the Season of Advent, my heart is heavy; and it is hopeful. It is heavy because I woke up this morning to images of women and small children at the U.S.-Mexico border running between canisters of teargas. As I felt great sadness and shame, I wondered what their stories were. Were they fleeing abuse or death threats in Central America? How bad were their lives for them to walk so many miles in search of something new? What horrors would compel a young mother with two very small children to approach the U.S. border without knowing what lies on the other side? It is hard for me to imagine the fear and anxiety people must feel in order to travel many miles on foot and then find not a single person to welcome them at the destination, but rather teargas and rifles.

I read this morning in Matthew’s Gospel about the Holy Family fleeing to Egypt because their lives were in danger. I wonder what our response would be if they fled to the United States today. Imagine an uneducated man from the Middle East who worked with his hands for a living. Imagine his teenage wife. Imagine their small child conceived out of wedlock. Would we see the potential that compassion and grace might mean for them, or would we throw teargas and point rifles at them? My heaviness of heart grows deeper because I know that many people would choose the second option.

However, I am also hopeful because the beautiful and painful stories of Advent, Christmas and Epiphany continue to be told; and the stories soften the hearts of many who hear them. The Gospels remind us that Jesus’

first coming to the Earth was surrounded by great danger, anxiety and fear. Perhaps every time Jesus comes to us, he does so in the midst of such things. Yet Jesus comes, just like he did 2,000 years ago, with compassion, kindness and peace, reminding us that such things are far greater and stronger than any acts of hatred, fear and violence.

Advent means “coming,” and we are invited in the following weeks to open our very lives to the many ways Jesus comes to us in surprising ways, even as a stranger, a refugee, and an immigrant. Let’s continue to tell the stories of Christ’s coming and welcome Christ in whatever form he takes. Come to church and listen to the stories told once more. Invite your friends who are especially in need of hearing them. Most importantly, pay attention to where you fit into the stories as you listen to them yet again.

May the hope, peace, joy and love of Advent bring light to our lives and to all the people we encounter along the way!

Aloha nui loa!
Kahu Alan Akana



CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

December 7: Annual Potluck Christmas Party at the parsonage, 6 p.m.

Good food, singing Christmas carols.

December 16: Sunday Service, Children's Play during service, 10:30 a.m.

December 23: Sunday Service, 10:30 a.m. Collecting the Christmas Fund which provides direct financial assistance to retired and active UCC ministers and lay employees and their surviving spouses, including pension and health premium supplementation, emergency assistance.

December 24: Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 7:30 p.m., Christmas Fund.

December 25: Christmas Day Service, 10:30 a.m., Christmas Fund.

Watch for Christmas caroling dates.



ALOHA HOUR

December 02—Ramos Baptiste Stoner

December 09—Giovanni Osuga Strong

December 16—Odo Honjo Dunas

December 23—Ito Rebb Shim

December 30—Smythe Foley McCoubrey

January 06—Sakimae Kakinami Gunning Mares

January 13—Ramos Baptiste Stoner

January 20—Giovanni Osuga Strong

CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

The church youth is practicing for the Christmas Program to be presented on Sunday, December 16. Practice will be during Sunday School. Please let Tiffany know if you are coming. And don't forget to come to church on December 16 to enjoy our talented youth!!



USHERS

DECEMBER

Virginia Dunas

Doug Duvauchalle

JANUARY

JoRae Baptiste

Debbie Gunning

LAYREADERS

December 09—Kerry Mori

December 16—Debbie Gunning

December 23—Kaylee Alapai

December 30—Graceleanor Baird

January 06—Kei Osuga

January 13—Michael Horning

January 20—Angela Dressel

January 27—Doug Duvauchelle

February 03—Suzanne Pearson

February 10—Jean Odo

Prayers for comfort and strength for victims of natural disasters; prayers of comfort and healing for Gary Struwe, Lizzie Macaninch, Betty Bell, Karen Johnson, Kai Johnson, Betty Kataoka, Rick, Danny Finnigan, Casey Moody, Kitty Tyler, Judyth Foley, Charlotte, Suellen Nesbit, Jane, Mark Schory, Skip Hance, Jean Semph, Kilane, Sherri Mudd, Judy Hunt, Galen Kaohi, Steve Sparks, Mahina Anguay, Bobbie Bulatao-Franklin, Van Pribilovics, Scott Coffey, John Pekoe, Rowan, Cori Swanson, Rochelle Lorenzo, David Vitt, Francisca Padua, Kanaina Smythe, Jose Bulatao, Ella Batalucco, Barbara Johnson, Steven, Vernon Fu, Joseph Alapai, Brenda, Jo Duvauchelle, Ted Asahi, Tiff & Kimo Marrotte; prayers of comfort and peace for the families of Alison Koepfgen, Bob Hammerquist, Paul Parongao; prayers of peace and comfort for Shyrl's daughter Margo, Emiko Akana and Miyeko Yamane.



CHRISTMAS FUND OFFERING

This special offering, administered by the United Church of Christ Pension Boards, provides direct financial assistance to retired and active UCC authorized ministers and lay employees and their surviving spouses, including pension and health premium supplementation, emergency assistance, and Christmas "thank you" checks. Each year, UCC congregations throughout the country collect this offering to assist faithful servants of God who are facing financial difficulties. We not only share hope, peace, joy and love with them; but they, in turn, pass these things along to others in their communities and in the world. We will collect the Christmas Fund offering on December 23, 24, 25.



CHRISTMAS OUTREACH

Spare Change to Help Needy Families

We will be giving gift cards to families in our community before Christmas so they can have food and gifts for their children. Bring your spare change to church, place it in the Spare Change Jar as you enter or leave the church. We will add up our change and purchase gift cards from local stores. We will also put together 10 Christmas food boxes. If you know any families we can help, have any questions, or wish to volunteer, please contact Judyth Foley at 818-726-1344.



CHRISTMAS PARTY December 7, 6 p.m.

Join us at our annual Christmas party at Kahu's home—the Smith Memorial Parsonage (3281 Waikomo Road). Bring a dish to share for a potluck dinner and your singing voices, as we always sing Christmas carols!



LECTIO DIVINA December 12, 7-8:30 p.m.

Join us at the Parsonage for a time to quietly reflect on the Scriptures. We will meet for Lectio Divina at the Smith Memorial Parsonage (3281 Waikomo Road). In Christianity, Lectio Divina is a traditional practice of scriptural reading, meditation and prayer intended to promote communion with God and to increase the knowledge of God's word.



PRAYERS & SQUARES

Prayers and Squares meetings are currently on hold and are scheduled to resume on Tuesday, January 8, 2019. If you know of a church member who is in need of a Prayer Quilt, please contact Angela Dressel, 808-332-7371.



OFFICE CLOSED

The church office will be closed December 25, December 26 and January 1 for the holidays.



AUNTY NIELE'S NEWSY NOTES

By Penny Osuga

NOTE: Penny Osuga is Aunty Niele, our reporter for this column. Niele is the Hawaiian word for "nosy." If you have any news to share in this column, please contact Aunty Ni`ele at the church office @ 742-6622 or through her church email address: kucpenny@gmail.com.

Yikes...the year is winding down, holidays are looming ahead. If you would like any changes in the church directory, please let **Penny** know. **Spencer** was in church joining in our 'praise song.' Had a great "Holiday Sale" at the Alan



Penny (gallery mgr), Sharon, Kahu

Aka a Gallery!



Fab art, plantation tea, sweet treats. **Santa's** helper:

Lee Bowen!!!



Thx **Missy,**

Judyth, Suzanne, Sharon for putting together & delivering 10

Thanksgiving food boxes to families in need. We have received "thank you cards" expressing much



appreciation. Our building & grounds *volunteer* chairman, **Dan**, is always working on a project or two or three! He & **Naomi** spent more than 6 hours of



volunteer time cleaning up the yard and front berms! Check out these 3 cuties playing tee ball: **Nolan, Kron, Ezra. Miss Ella:** Hoike 2018 in Kokee. Our church friend, **Rev. Dr. Janet Long**, retired after

40 years of congregational ministry! She and **Dan** plan longer Kauai vacations. Enjoyed the November church breakfast (Kalapaki Joe's Poipu). Nine of us attended. Check out **Dan & Joy King**—Santa's helpers??? Our church's **Prayers & Squares** latest beautiful creation.



Krayson giving **Ezra** a boost to ring the bell. Always wonderful having **Rev. Caroline Miura** fill our pulpit.



Kanikapila/BBQ pick-a-party, thanks to **Peter** and **Becky**.



Fun having our son.in.law & dtr {**Chris/Tara**} home for 2 weeks AND **JoAnne** here on an extended vacation!!!



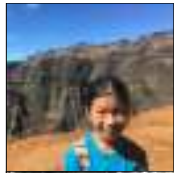
Kahu @ Parliament of Worlds Religions in Toronto. Thanks to everyone for another delicious Thanksgiving luncheon. Thanks to **Ellen Hicks-Rhoda** for sharing her beautiful voice with us. Look who went zip-lining!!!



Sydney & Isaiah spent two nights in Kokee with their 5th grade class: learned about Kokee forests, native and non-



native plants, self reflection, building friendships, hiked Waip'o Falls. Congratulations, **Skylar**, on being an important part of Hawaii Children's Theatre "Newsies"—the award winning Broadway Musical!!! It was amazing!!! **Committee Chairs:** need your "end of the year" reports. Annual Meeting on January 27. Thanks to **Rodney** for getting and setting up our beautiful Christmas tree. Thanks to **Rosemary** for creating the Advent wreath/candles. Great news!!! **Belinda Bartels** has retired and moved to Kauai!!! **Kimo** celebrated his 51st birthday at the Oahu **Bruno Mars** concert! So many attended: **Tiffany, Owen** and **Amber Strong, Mo** and **Lynn Mori, Paul** and **Joni Ito** & friends, **Sheri Fu** & **Candace**. **Owen & Amber Strong** then spent time in California with friends. *Kindness and compassion make a huge difference; one will never see the entire ripple effect; one single act of kindness can circle the entire globe!* The world is celebrating the 200th anniversary of "Silent Night" — a song that promises consolation and gives hope. Thanks to our Music Director, **Kathleen Dahill**, **Koloa Union's** choir recorded and sent a Hawaiian rendition to an Austrian museum, one of several museums on the "Silent Night" route. Our fabulous choir is the 1st Kauai choir, maybe the 1st Hawaii choir to contribute to this anniversary, and is among more than 4,000 renditions!



Caleb's class went on a walking field trip around Koloa town, stopped at the church to enjoy our beautiful front lawn and walk under the arbor. **Tom & Lynda Armbruster** are always on the move—this time hiking Weir Canyon/ Canyon of the Oxen. **Judyth** put up her Nativity scene. Bringing forth the spirit of the holiday season—**Becky** brought in these fun plaques—love Hobby Lobby!! Always good to hear from former members: **Uncle Tommy & Aunty Sue Yamasaki**. They send their "aloha" to all.



Also chatted with church friends, **Duane & Ida Verschoof**, who are hunkered down for the Michigan winter. **Ida** still sings in two choirs!!! **Cathy Evans** was in my favorite city, San Francisco, eating crab at Fisherman's Wharf with friends!!! Thanks to our four elves (**Skylar, Caleb, Rory, Sydney**), who decorated our beautiful Christmas tree!! Congratulations to **Ernest Sueoka** who was inducted into the Hawaii Restaurant Association's Hall of Fame "Chefs of Aloha." He certainly is a fabulous chef—love his lemon chicken, clams,



hekka, etc. Thanks again to artistic **Joey Rebb**, for the beautiful Christmas wreath displayed on the front bulletin board.



KOLOA UNION CHURCH
P.O. BOX 536
3289 POIPU ROAD
KOLOA, HAWAII 96756

DECEMBER 2018 NEWSLETTER



SUNDAY EVENTS

**10:30 a.m. Sunday School and
Worship Service**

STAFF

Rev. Dr. Alan Akana, Pastor
revdocakana@gmail.com

Penny Osuga
Administrative Assistant
kucpenny@gmail.com

Kathleen Dahill
Director of Music
Kathleen@WildwdStudios.com

Phone: (808) 742-6622
www.koloaunionchurch.org

KOLOA UNION CHURCH NEWSLETTER

December 2018

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