

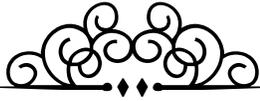


Nu 'Oli

GLAD TIDINGS WAIOLA CHURCH'S Pastoral Letter

Apelila/Mei 2017

April/May 2017



WAIOLA CHURCH

(United Church of Christ)

535 Wainee Street
Lahaina, HI 96761

Phone/ Fax: 808.661.4349
waiolaucc@waiolachurch.com

Interim Minister:
Kahu Dennis Alger

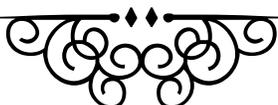
Lay Minister:
Kahu Anela Rosa

Moderator:
Jeannie Brew

Weekly Worship:
Sundays @ 9am

Sunday School:
Sundays @ 9:15am
(Focusing on Bible Stories)

Office Hours:
M, W-F 8am - 2pm



Nu 'Oli / Glad Tidings *FROM* Kahu Dennis

May Greetings to Members and Friends of Waiola!!

I started writing this on Easter afternoon, hoping we'd get this in your hands in advance of the Quarterly Congregational Meeting. Nevermind, then. However, formal meeting or not, your mana'o and participation continue to matter to the Transition/Search Committee, and me; please keep sharing your thoughts and visions with me/us.

Speaking of Easter, I want to thank all the helpers who continue to show up, even way before dawn, to prepare for and participate in events of Holy Week. We had meaningful services on Maundy Thursday, our ecumenical gathering on Good Friday, as well as the Sunrise and Regular Easter observances. Many hands did make the tasks easier, and thereby added to the meaningfulness of each gathering. I think we all recognize how being overextended tends to detract from enjoyment. So it is that I'm very grateful for everyone's help.

Speaking of meaningful services, I was reading a few moments ago Craig A. Satterlee's When God Speaks through Change: Preaching in Times of Congregational Transition, about a congregation which decided that, in order to really "keep the Sabbath," they discontinued all business/committee meetings on Sunday. This decision emerged out of a sense that Sunday had become just another day for meetings; the richness of worship and community sharing, as well as rest, was diminished by the rush of decision-making. Many of us have hit the default key in scheduling meetings "when everyone is here anyway." And yet, is this good for us in the long term? Let's talk about this.

We need always to be willing to evaluate how we "do church," including business. Your Board of Trustees is endeavoring to streamline its work; I continue in my role as change agent (goes with the territory of interim kahu) to suggest other ways of approaching tasks and necessary decision-making, NOT because I know better, but because there are new ideas emerging, new persons to carry out responsibilities, even new objectives to define and communicate as the Spirit continues nudging us. I feel nudged right now to ask, do you know the financial commitments Waiola needs to fulfill every week? Would it be helpful to know? Possibly sharing this burden helps us carry it together (so the treasurer doesn't lose sleep). There are no secrets; there are matters we need to communicate better.

Kahu Dennis

So... the story continues...

So, there I was, minding my own business in the Pasadena (CA) Church World Service clothing processing center, “workin’ for the Lord,” as we said of our volunteer work. In the midst of sorting donated clothing (soap [really], toiletries, medical supplies, blankets, etc) in preparation for shipment to the Modesto center (and from there to the piers at San Francisco), I received a phone call. It was from the director of the CWS west coast operation, asking me, “Has anyone talked with you about a change in your responsibilities?” He informed me that “they” wanted to send me to Hawai’i to work with the Hawai’i Council of Churches and the Woman’s Board of Missions of the Hawai’i Conference in order to develop a clothing processing center. It was April 7, 1967, my 21st birthday.

After running around the block a couple times, I was able to share this birthday gift news with my fellow volunteers. So began my sojourn of spiritual and physical connection with this ‘aina and its kama’aina—most of whom no longer walk this earth. Edith Wolfe—remember her?—took me under her wing for the WB; Seido Ogawa assisted me for the Council; but mostly it was the small group at Kokokahi Church, Kane’ohe, who hanaied me all summer & early fall. Bert & Arleen Colburn & girls treated me like family; Olin & Betsy Pendleton mentored me in matters of faith in a multicultural context; families Torigoe, Takeuchi, Toguchi, Hee, Higashida, Fujikawa, Evensen, Agcaoli, Yoshida, Ing, Shiroma, Moffett, and others of the congregation welcomed/taught/nurtured (and fed) me.

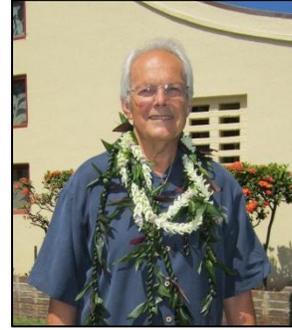
A couple years later, I was able to return. I lived on the church grounds, participated in all things church, attended gatherings of the wider church, was active at the association level, and knew so many of the saints Kawata, Chenoweth, Yamadas, Annie Kanahale, Martha Hohu, Akaka, Richard Wong, Keanu and many more. Another person I met was Mary Parker—she now goes by the name MaryAnn, and some of you call her Mama Kahu. Our anniversary is April 6; our outdoor wedding at the church in 1974 was blessed by a sudden downpour. We’ve been blessed ever since...

Although we left Hawai’i in 1984 so that I could finally accept my calling and go to seminary, this has been the home of our spirit—beckoning us to return somehow. Mahalo piha; I thank you Waiola folks for inviting us to renew, for a time, life among you. Aloha pumehana pau ‘ole.



PRAAYER IN THE NEW TRADITION

By Kahu Dennis Alger



As promised last time (and you remembered) here is a brief reflection on preaching in the Reformed Tradition—from my perspective.

In the Roman Catholic mass, it is the Eucharist which is the focus of the service. For Protestants, the homily/sermon is considered the main point of the gathering. This is because the preacher expands upon the Scripture of the day; the sacrament(s), music, and prayers lend authenticity to the endeavor. It is the responsibility of the preacher to study the Scripture, consider the historic, cultural, and religious context—an activity termed “exegesis.” Theologian Karl Barth once noted that the preacher holds the Bible in one hand and the newspaper in the other; it is the situations of modern life which the eternal Word addresses. We recognize the Bible as, in my words, faith seeking understanding or, the insights about the Realm of God gleaned over the centuries, inspired by the Spirit. So it is that, often, prior to reading the Scripture, the liturgist says, “Listen for what the Spirit is saying to the church,” as we trust the Spirit to open our minds to God’s relentless engagement of us in our time and place.

The preacher has a lot of room for exposition, or speaking a certain hermeneutic, that is, a point of view underlying the spoken word. Some of us use a lot of personal experience; others of us are cautious about making it about our own journey—although sometimes doing so helps congregations understand us. The period in which we went to seminary influences our degree of self-revelation; reflecting upon our own journey comes and goes. Yet, the responsibility of proclaiming the gospel in the face of the Powers of our time must be at the center. And this does not change during times of transition—such as right now. It matters to speak of God’s presence and direction throughout unfamiliar journeys together.

Finally, styles or presentation vary. You’ve noticed my fondness for walking and talking, moving away from the podium, thereby feeling more connected. In a larger congregation that style doesn’t work, obviously. The preacher must resist ways through which she/he might put undue distance between speaker and audience. Feedback? We can talk, anytime.

Waiola Church SPOTLIGHTS

New Graveyard Signs

Jen Mather

Pictures by Tamalani Kalele'iki

Our beloved Waine'e Graveyard/Cemetery is a place where our community comes to gather plumeria, crown flower, ti, and various other botanical treasures. We have been blessed by the abundance of this campus and the dedicated volunteers of Na Kia'i o Waine'e and the Grounds Committee of the board. Without their tireless efforts, the beauty we see every day (for myself) and every Sunday for our congregation, would simply not be. Our community members are, for the most part, respectful of our grounds and ask permission before coming to gather. For them we are grateful and appreciate their interaction with Waiola Church.



Unfortunately, we do have members of our community who have been damaging our walls, trees, and cutting our ti plants. With this in mind, and to ensure our campus resources are maintained as best we can, NKOW/Grounds member, Nalani Smythe, has created and gifted the graveyard with new signs that remind visitors that our private cemetery is a sacred place and should be treated with respect and deference.



If you notice anyone climbing on the walls, trees, or treating our campus in anyway other than with respect, please, kindly ask them if they have permission and to be more careful! It is up to all of us to make sure we are creating a safe place for not only our floral but ourselves!

KOKUA NEEDED

With summer approaching, we are more acutely aware of the need for our air conditioning units in Keopuolani to be replaced. The units that have failed are the original ones from 20 years ago. Although our Buildings Committee has done an excellent job at extending their life, we have two units that will need to be replaced as soon as possible. We humbly ask for donations for this project.

Also, our community garden that will be blossoming at our empty lot at 642 Luakini could do with love! We need tools, soil, helping hands, and ideas! We already have many community members interested in starting this with us, we just need the tools to help! Also, the trees at this lot and all of the church's properties need trimming and monthly/quarterly maintenance to ensure we are doing what is best for our tenants, properties, and our trees!

If you'd like to donate funds toward any of these very important projects, you can send directly through our paypal on the church website at www.waiolachurch.com and designate where you would like your money to help the most.

Waiola Church is continually blessed by the generous giving of our membership and community. We would not be able to offer the programs and outreach for our community without your help! MAHALO!

In the interest of a more substantive citizenship, I offer this excerpt from an article in *Christian Century*, March 1, 2017, pp. 28-31, "Becoming America," by Philip Gorski, who teaches sociology and religious studies at Yale. Copies of the article are available in the Hale Pule.

"Let America be great again," wrote Langston Hughes. "Let it be the dream it used to be.../O, let America be America again--/The land that never has been yet--/And yet must be.../America never was America to me,/ And yet I swear this oath--/America will be!..."

For America to be America again, Hughes believed, Americans must do four things. They must remember the dream that used to be—and remember it rightly. They must understand that the dream has never been fully realized—and never can be. They must acknowledge that many have been excluded from that dream—and still are. They must try to redeem the dream for themselves and their posterity—knowing full well that they are ultimately destined to fail. About all this, Hughes was right.

The dream of the righteous republic is the dream of a free people....

A righteous republic is based on a certain vision of the common good...a dream that draws deeply on a prophetic religion. That is what makes us "righteous" rather than just "moral." The prophetic ethic of righteousness is a social as well as an individual ethic. It demands that the political community protect the weak and downtrodden from the high and mighty. The prophetic ethic is also an egalitarian ethic. It insists that there are no gods among us, nothing human or material that deserves our worship; all are equal before God and one another. At the core of prophetic religion, then, is an ethic of social justice and human equality that requires that we will be willing to abridge ourselves for the sake of others.

A righteous republic is also based on a certain vision of the political community....

Many Americans misunderstand the values of the republic...Equality is especially prominent in the nation's values....Also important are national solidarity....Civic inclusion and recognition should perhaps be added to our national creed as well....

Republican freedom also means being master of one's passions. People who cannot order and govern their own desires are not in control of themselves. They are dominated—tyrannized—by their own passions....[it] also involves active participation in collective self-government...[as in] national politics...communities or churches or schools.

....A free society is one that affords its citizens opportunities and resources to discover and develop their talents.

...[T]he corruption of the American understanding of freedom has taken several forms. In the first, private interests are dressed up as the public good....

The second and more subtle form of corruption of the American understanding of freedom...occurs when a historical particular is mistaken for a political universal [e.g., the American Revolution was not about state power but arbitrary power]....

[T]he state constituted one potential means of counterbalancing the power of the few....churches, unions, and other forms of civic association provided other potential sources of balancing.... What looked like a defense of freedom was actually an attack on freedom. The freedom of the many was being sacrificed for the freedom of the few.

The republican tradition has also fallen prey to another corrupting influence: viciousness....civic virtue is morally demanding. It involves self-discipline and self-sacrifice....

One of the great attractions of libertarian liberty is that it is morally undemanding....it is a lazy person's freedom....

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from previous page)

...Popular government must be defended....Often enough, its real enemies are draped in the flag and carry a briefcase....

The fourth and final form of corruption is forgetfulness....Machiavelli believed that civic decay could be halted if the spirit of the citizenry was periodically nourished with the waters of memory. The fountains of memory were to be refilled through civic education and civic ritual.

In the United States, these fountains have run dry—or, rather, they have been plugged up with the detritus from the culture wars....

Meanwhile, America's civic holidays, like so much of its public life, have been gradually colonized by consumer capitalism.

...[T]he source of our ills is easily diagnosed: American democracy is suffering from a severe case of oligarchy, the principal symptom of which is corruption. More and more, the many are being dominated by the arbitrary power of the few, who rail against the state while quietly using it to protect their own interests.

The political corruption that has infected the United States is more than a few bad apples that can be pruned from a tree; it is a sign that the tree itself is badly diseased. Remedying these ills will require more than a little trimming; it will require replenishing the republic's taproots. Here are a few possible antidotes to contemporary corruption.

Banish big money from the political process.

Make civic holidays into holidays again.

Make character education a part of civic education.

Establish a universal system of national service.

...The best foundation for republican government has always been a large and frugal middle class....

...Economic prosperity and military strength have not usually been seen as the key indicators of civic health. Rather, republican theorists have emphasized public spiritedness and political participation....

...Properly understood, they would also include many organizations and activities that take place within civil society, the whole range of "voluntary associations" and "intermediate institutions..."

Another measure of civic health might be the density and accessibility of public spaces, modern-day forums where citizens can meet and deliberate....the advent of social media means that public spaces need not be physical places in the traditional sense. At the same time, the commercialization and securitization of physical and virtual spaces must be regarded as a serious threat to civic health....

For many today, the American dream is nothing more than property and prosperity. A renewal of the republic would put freedom and equality back into that dream.

That leaves the rest of us: those of us who don't confuse democracy with empire, who don't think we have a monopoly on truth or morality, who don't believe that religion is always a source of oppression, and who don't think that science has all the answers. Or, in positive terms, those of us who are committed enough to the dream of the righteous republic to talk and maybe even walk across the deep trenches that were dug during the culture wars.

The vital center must be rebuilt from within civil society....we cannot rely on professional politicians to do the job. We must do it ourselves.

(Langston Hughes, Black/White/First Nations poet, playwright, activist, 1902-1967)

How Church Can Help A Senior's Well-Being

Submitted by Jason Lewis of strongwell.org
Reprinted with Permission



Photo via Pixabay by [James Jester](#)

For many seniors, growing older is an overwhelming process. Some choose to age-in-place and stay in their own homes for as long as possible, but for others, this isn't practical due to safety concerns or financial issues. Still others battle illness, loneliness, or substance abuse and don't have family nearby to help with support.

For seniors from all walks of life, belonging to a church can provide a system of relationships and support, boost self-esteem, and help with everyday tasks such as transportation, cleaning, grocery shopping, and acquiring medication.

Here are a few of the best ways church can help seniors stay active, vital, and healthy during their golden years.

Education

Many churches offer classes on how to handle finances and health issues as well as enrichment, such as learning a foreign language and how to use new technology. These continued education classes are invaluable to most seniors, some of whom wouldn't have the opportunity to learn about those topics anywhere else.

Nutrition and wellness

Many churches offer help with nutrition and wellness, giving seniors the chance to learn about the right foods, vitamins, medications, and exercise for their needs. These are all extremely important for a senior's daily life, but sadly, many people over the age of 55 don't take adequate care of themselves until they have a major health scare.

Outreach programs

For those seniors who are confined to their homes or are unable to drive themselves, many churches offer services wherein members of the congregation will make visits to check on the individual, bring them necessities, or even hold group meetings so that the senior won't feel excluded. Some pastors and priests will also make "house calls".

Getting social

Staying social and active is a vital part of being a senior, and many churches have activities and programs for adults, including choir, charity events, and adult day care that provide ample opportunity to socialize and stay active.

Respite care

For those seniors who have caretakers or live-in help, many churches offer respite care, which involves a member coming to relieve the caregiver for a short break. A lot of organizations also offer counseling for these caregivers or for family members who are feeling overwhelmed with the daily care of their loved one.



Waiola Church
PO Box 455
Lahaina, HI 96767

Nu 'Oli *FROM* Waiola

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS	
May 7	Communion
May 14	Mother's Day
May 21	Mental Health Sunday
May 25	Ascension Day
May 29	Memorial Day

Want to see the newsletter in full color?

Visit: <http://www.waiolachurch.org/newsletters/nuoli0517.pdf>