

Iao Pepa

Na Makani

A Monthly Newsletter of Iao United Church of Christ

2371 W. Vineyard St., Wailuku, HI 96793-1626

December 2017

Blessings from Pastor Tino | *“Prepare Ye The Way”*

Peace of Advent Fall Upon Our Community!

It was a time of humbleness, blessedness, great joy, and so much more. We made it Iao UCC—the Tri-Isle Association of the Hawaii Conference has officially installed me as your Pastor and what better way to celebrate such a momentous occasion than to bring new members, baptize my grandson, have my sons here with us, listen to the inspiring words from Rev. Danette Kong, and our celebration at the parsonage. {Ed.: see photo spread on pages 4-5}

Nothing could have dampened this great time of history making we have shared together with our supporting community agencies, interfaith communities, and our sister churches. I offer a special “thank you” to the many who made the installation possible.

As we begin with Advent and move into Year B in our liturgical calendar, I am excited with the anticipation of what Christmas means. Advent is a time of preparing to celebrate the birth of Jesus. But I offer this thought – let us not rush to December 25th. I walked into some of the local stores and, I kid you not, shouted “NO – it’s not Christmas yet” as a kind woman behind me shouted “amen.” Allow ourselves some time to reflect and celebrate what we are thankful for first. Let us prepare ye the way of our hearts – what the seasons of Advent and Christmas are all about. Reflecting on what we are called to be at a time when children are hungry and hurting, the houseless on our streets, our *kupuna* who are lonely, and the traps of consumerism (me included). I offer this in anticipation as we light each Advent candle and what to expect from our Advent liturgy:

Hope is our assurance that God will finish all God has started.

He is the Prince of peace, and the fruit of His presence is peace.

When Christ comes into our lives, He brings the fullness of joy.

A new command I give you: Love one another, As I have loved you, so you must love one another.

This year’s journey will also include another Blue Christmas as we have done in the past. I offer this in anticipation as we light all the advent candles on December 21st at 6pm: “In the spirit of this season let us now confidently ask our God for all the good things we need: For ourselves as we participate in this Christmas as special people coping with our many different losses. God, hear our prayer.”

I would encourage us then to journey together, as we anticipate the celebration of the birth of Jesus, when we will sing our songs of hope, peace, joy, and love. As we journey, let us remember to get extra cans for our Maui Food Bank barrel, a toy for our youth and children on our beautiful island. As we journey, let us journey to visit our beloved shut-ins who need to feel Christ’s presence in and through us. As we journey, let us not walk over our houseless on our streets, but offer a meal or a cup of water. This is who we are, Iao UCC – a church that continues to make a difference out in our communities.

I offer my prayers to each and every one of you and hope that this will be a time of preparation of and renewal, but let us not rush to December 25th.

Advent Blessings, my extended ‘ohana...
Pastor Tino



December Lectionary

- Dec 3 1st Sunday of Advent**
Isaiah 64:1-9
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19
1 Corinthians 1:3-9
Mark 13:24-37
Where Are You, God?
- Dec 10 2nd Sunday of Advent**
Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13
2 Peter 3:8-15a
Mark 1:1-8
Messengers of Hope
- Dec 17 3rd Sunday of Advent**
Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
Psalm 126
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28
Shouts of Joy
- Dec 24 4th Sunday of Advent**
2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16
Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26
Romans 16:25-27
Luke 1:26-38
Birthing A Promise
- Dec 24 Christmas Eve**
Isaiah 62:6-12
Psalm 97
Titus 3:4-7
Luke 2:(1-7), 8-20
- Dec 25 Christmas Day**
Isaiah 9:2-7
Psalm 96
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-14, (15-20)
- Dec 31 1st Sunday after X'mas**
Isaiah 61:10-62:3
Psalm 148
Galatians 4:4-7
Luke 2:22-40
Long-Awaited Gift

The lesson in **bold** is the focus of both the message of the day and any Sunday School lesson; and the italicized title is the theme for the Sunday service. •



*The sanctuary in readiness for Advent.
(Not a trick photo... the piano's shiny
surface is providing the reflective effect.)*

December Worship Readers:
Joshlyn Miteg & Timothy Stewart

Dec. Worship Responsibilities*

Dec. 3

Greeter: Susan King
Head Usher: Daniel Kamidoi
Usher: Jayven Bathin
Hostess: Carolyn Kamidoi
Aloha Hour:
Jane Akitake & Anne Hill

Dec. 10

Aloha Hour:
Lee Murakami & Lynette Shiroma

Dec. 17

Aloha Hour:
Linda Johannes & Yulida Yoruw

Dec. 24

Aloha Hour:
Gail Ideue & Jennifer Saito

Dec. 31

Aloha Hour:
Maui Kosrae Etawi

* (same greeter, ushers and
hostess for the whole month)

December Birthdays

- 12.01 Alice Inouye
12.03 Timothy Stewart
12.05 Betsy Scheller
12.06 Maylani Hadley
12.07 Jane Akitake
12.08 Lynn Krieg
12.09 Richard Inouye
12.10 Vida Falan
12.11 Mark Mayeda
12.12 Karen Moody
12.18 Barbara Wimberley
12.20 Robynne Klein
Jaymina Bathin
12.21 Johnalyne Yinmed
12.25 Wallace Yanagi
12.26 Gloria Nakama



*...mid-afternoon sunlight on the
lawn between "Lillian's lanai"
and Fujitomo Hall.*

Aloha Hour Supplies

*For Aloha Hour, the Buildings
and Grounds Team will have a
plastic tub set up with supplies
used. There will be supplies
such as plates, cups, utensils,
and napkins. This plastic tub
will be located in
Fujitomo Hall.*

*On Sundays, Aloha Hour
hosts/hostesses are asked to
bring the tub down from Fujito-
mo Hall and returned to the
same location after. Please list
on the tub any items needing
re-stocking and the Team will
make every effort to keep up
with the inventory.*

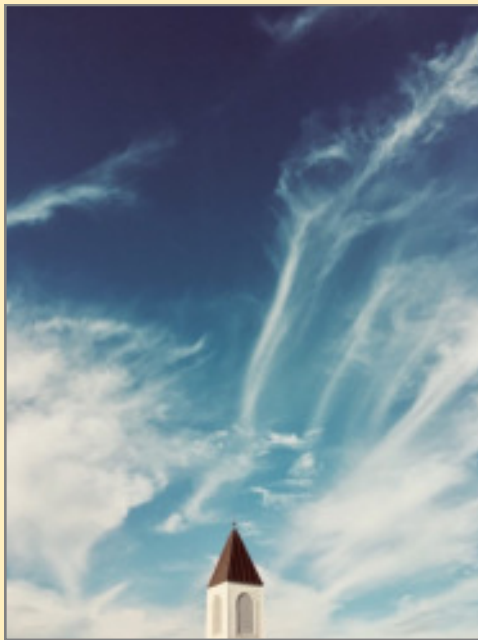
*Is there something—
or someone—missing from your
experience of Christmas?*

*Is your heart somehow not into
the frivolity and gaiety of the
season? Have you recently suffered
loss of one kind or another...
and find it impossible to enjoy this
festive time of year?*

*Do you wish to have a quiet,
more reflective service as a way
to experience Christmas?*

**If so, Iao UCC's
Blue Christmas service
may be for you.**

*Please come, and bring a friend
or family member you know
who would appreciate such
a service and light a candle
for your loss.*



Come and welcome the Christ-Child on...

Blue Christmas

...at Iao United Church of Christ

6:00 p.m.
Thursday, Dec. 21st
Winter Solstice
(the longest night of the year)

Upcoming Noteworthy Events for your Calendar

Tuesday, December 5

Blessing of the Watanabe Hall sign & plaque

11:30 a.m. at Watanabe Hall (Iao Preschool)

Friday, December 15

Iao Preschool Christmas Program

6:00 p.m. in the sanctuary — Annual Iao Preschool event

Sunday, December 17

Congregational Meeting

Immediately after the 9:30 worship service

Caroling

Meet at 5:30 p.m. at the upper parking lot

Thursday, December 21

Blue Christmas Service

6:00 p.m. at the church sanctuary

Saturday, December 23

Youth Christmas Party

Hosted by the Case-Tapia Family; 12 noon

Sunday, December 24

Christmas Eve Service

7:00 p.m. at the church sanctuary

Monday, December 25

Christmas Day Service

All-day Christmas celebration with the Maui Kosrae Etawi
'ohana, at the church sanctuary and Kanda Hall

Sunday, January 28

Annual Meeting

Immediately after the 9:30 worship service

Directory Update 2018

As the Iao UCC Church Directory has not been updated since 2012, we will finally be working to bring it up-to-date, with the dawning of New Year 2018. The Iao church family has experienced much change over the last half dozen years, with folks moving away or changing addresses; and many of our beloved elders and kupuna have passed on. However, we have also had a number of new members join the church community, by member transference, or baptisms. Watch your e-mail inbox or mailboxes for information and data gathering!

~ LN @ the Church Office

Nov. 12, 2017 | Rev. Floren“Tino” C. Cordova Installed at Iao UCC



The very eventful Sunday began with a protest before the morning service (see article next page), which left the congregation and its new pastor entirely undeterred — as Pastor Tino baptized his grandson, Cody Guy Cordova II, and welcomed 7 new members into the fold: Brit-ley Case, Linda Case-Tapia, Percival Tapia, Heide Israel, Diana George, Jamie Ribao, and Shannon Furumoto (see photo below).



Among the gifts Pastor Tino received was a Jewish prayer shawl from Linda Case-Tapia, who got it during a recent trip to Israel.

Rev. Robb Kojima of the The Tri-Isle Association of the Hawaii Conference, officiated at Pastor Tino's installation, with Warren Orikasa and Tim Greathouse representing the church congregation and Council.



The climax of the very moving ceremony of installation was when the kneeling pastor was surrounded by his family, fellow Kahu, UCC/HCUCC colleagues, friends, and parishioners—each touching and connected to everyone else in the sanctuary.

The service was a blessed moment of words, music, meditation, prayer, and grace. The rest of the afternoon and early evening was a celebration at the parsonage Open House and lu'au across the street from the church.

(See photos next page.)

Love Trumps Bigotry in Wailuku

This article was submitted to the Maui News in response to a news report published in the Nov. 17 issue of the newspaper, concerning an incident at church on the morning of Sunday, Nov. 12th. (As far as we know, they did not publish this follow-up article.) The original news item is linked below, with a screenshot of the web page.

Sunday, November 12th, 2017 was a day of celebration, remembrance, and justice that lao United Church of Christ's members, friends and community will remember for a lifetime.

As it was Consecration Sunday, congregants offered their pledges in support of the church's ministries in the coming year. It was also a Sunday to remember and honor the veterans who have served and protected the nation, from the church's oldest members—Nisei soldiers in the legendary Japanese-American battalions in WW2—to the new pastor, himself a US Army veteran. A Sunday when Rev. Floren "Tino" C. Cordova had the honor to baptize his grandson, Cody Guy into the Christian faith and tradition. A Sunday in which six new people were brought into membership of the lao UCC family. A Sunday in which the church was blessed to hear Rev. Danette Kong, its Guest Steward, preach about the importance of being a church of justice and *aloha* as part of consecrating its gifts.

As it happens, the church service that morning was disrupted with a very loud protest by a few individuals objecting to the Open and Affirming nature of lao UCC—where everyone is welcome. For half an hour, much hateful homophobic rhetoric towards the church and the LGBTQ members of its *'ohana* was spewed via bullhorn from the sidewalk along Main Street; but this did not deter the faith community as they sat in the sanctuary with such joy for a momentous day of celebration. At one point, Pastor Cordova walked outside and up to the protestors, offering them bottled water,

which they refused; some of the church's neighbors came outside their homes to see what the fuss was about, and objected pointedly to the protestors' hateful words and behavior.

Rev. Tino has these words to share: "We at lao UCC would like to thank all those who came out in support of us while hate was being spewed. We unite now and pray for those who despise us, that God will touch their hearts with love. No, Mr. Hall—you did not scare or intimidate our faith community. On the contrary, you have united us even more with our neighbors and with our wider community on Maui."

If the morning had not proven it was already a Christ-filled day for the church, the installation of its new pastor took place at 3 p.m. that afternoon, officiated by the Tri-Isle Association of the Hawaii Conference of the United Church of Christ. It was an *aloha*-filled ceremony in which the covenantal relationship between Rev. Tino as Pastor/Teacher and the faith community of lao UCC was formalized. Many *kahu* and lay people from the UCC on Maui and other evangelical faith denominations took part in this momentous occasion. Very specially, Rev. Tino was able to bring his partner Rong Chao; his two sons, Steven and Cody; and his grandsons Steven Alexander and Cody Guy to Maui to attend his installation. Pastor Cordova comes as an ordained minister with the Metropolitan Community Church, with standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and has now transferred standing to the Tri-Isle Association of the Hawaii Conference UCC.



<http://www.mauinews.com/news/local-news/2017/11/man-spewing-hateful-things-leads-protest-outside-church/>



Nov. 12, 2017 | Consecration Sunday at Iao UCC

"Thank you for Being Good Stewards of Iao UCC"

The Stewarding Community of Iao United Church of Christ sincerely thanks all of you who have generously pledged financially for 2018 on Consecration Sunday, November 12. It is your sharing of your everlasting time and talents that helps to form our church into the loving and supportive community that God intends us to be.

If you haven't turned in your pledge, you may still do so by placing the pink and blue slips into the offering plates during church service or you may drop or mail them to the church office.

We also express thanks to our wonderful members of Iao UCC who were so willing to be our witnessing stewards during our campaign. Much mahalo to Tim Greathouse, Bert Akitake and Joshlyn Miteg for sharing a part of your life's journey and story within the church.

Last but not least, we give deepest thanks and appreciation to our very inspiring guest steward, Danette Kong. Her compelling message left many of us with goose bumps and tears as she encouraged us with her words and chant to rise above forces that prevent us to be God's stewards of the church and environment, "E Ala E"—we rise. Mahalo, Danette for motivating us.

Again, thank you all for making our stewarding campaign for 2018 a successful one.

Mahalo from the Stewarding Community!

*Arigato, mahalo, kulo, gracias.
Thank you to Lloyd
Nebres for taking on the
challenge of Rev. Tina's
installation. From sending
out invitations to preparing
the installation bulletin,
ordering the food, tents,
tables, chairs... too many
to list. You are a blessing
to Iao UCC.*

*The Stewarding +
Worshipping
Communities*

2017 | Christmas Fund

For 116 years, the Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund has been a tangible expression of God's love and light in the world. One of the four Special Mission Offerings of the United Church of Christ, the Christmas Fund provides UCC congregations and members an opportunity to reach out in kindheartedness to those who have faithfully shepherded our churches and who now find themselves facing unexpected financial needs.

The theme of the 2017 Christmas Fund offering is "Shepherding the Light" and UCC's goal is to raise \$1.7 million to help support retired ministers who have faithfully served the church and now, in their time of need, we can be the church to them. We invite and encourage you to shepherd God's light and support this year's appeal.

We will receive the Christmas Fund envelopes on December 24. We sincerely thank you for your generosity.

The Stewarding Community

apologia...

This December 2017 issue of Iao Pepa has obviously broken all records for epic lateness. ::chuckle::

But, as the cliché has it, better late than never, yes? The church secretary ruefully acknowledges responsibility here, but will say that it was due to having fallen ill at just the wrong time of year for church administrators—the week before Christmas, with effects lingering on through almost New Year's Eve.

With apologies, but also with heartfelt wishes for a great 2018 for Iao UCC...

~ L. Nebres

Dec. 5, 2017 | Blessing of Watanabe Hall sign and plaque

The building that houses Iao Preschool is called Watanabe Hall, but until recently there wasn't any sign indicating its name.

It is named for **The Rev. Tamasaku Watanabe**, who served as pastor of Wailuku Japanese Christian Church (which became Iao Congregational Church, and finally Iao UCC) from 1923 to 1935.

Sometime in the summer of 2016, Rev. Watanabe's granddaughter, Gail Okawa, was on Maui and visited the church. An academic and historian by profession, Prof. Okawa shared with us the extraordinary story of what happened to her grandfather after his tenure here at the church. As it happened, Rev. Watanabe was among the several hundred Americans of Japanese ancestry from Hawaii who were detained and imprisoned at a camp on the mainland, in New Mexico—ironically, where Iao's new pastor was born and raised!—during World War 2.

Over the following year, Gail kept in touch with Lloyd and the Buildings and Grounds folks who, after their encounter with Prof. Okawa, determined that it would only be fitting to have a proper sign adorn the building named for Rev. Watanabe (as is the case with both Kanda and Endo Halls; although Fujitomo Hall, where the church office is, doesn't have a sign and perhaps it, too, may be graced with one in the future).

As Prof. Okawa was scheduled to be back on Maui for a visit to the Nisei Veterans Memorial Center in early December, B&G and Pastor Tino decided to have a blessing of the new Watanabe Hall sign, as well as a plaque with a little bit of history on it, that now is affixed on a wall at Iao Preschool

On Tuesday, December 5th, just a couple of days before the 76th anniversary of the bombing at Pearl Harbor, Gail told the story of her grandfather to the Preschool children, all of whom may not have had the foggiest idea of what "World War 2" meant, but greeted their revered guest anyway with the warmth and *aloha* that preschoolers always have aplenty.



2017 | Ladies' Lunch Bunch



The **Ladies' Lunch Bunch** continues to meet on the 2nd or 3rd Friday of every month (depending on whether a month has 4 or 5 weeks).

They usually meet at Kanda Hall, but sometimes will plan on getting together at a nice restaurant or other watering hole in town. Photos here are from their gathering last Halloween, when they made masks.

2017 | Iao Preschool

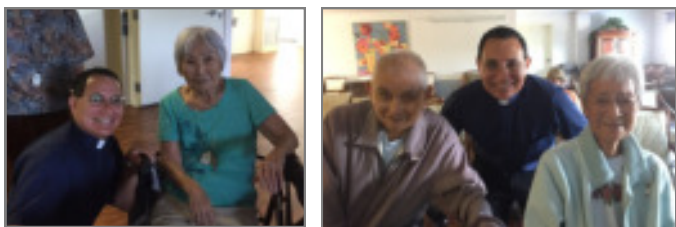


Iao Preschool class photo (left) and staff photo (above). The Preschool continues to do very well, under the professional and compassionate care of its Director, Fley Iniba, and the staff—Estrellita Laloulu, Golanda Albert, Amber Johnston, Michelle Evans, Melanie Patao, and Sarah Belbot.



These pictures are from last Halloween, when the Preschool children went on their usual parade around the campus and neighborhood; here, they are shown visiting with Pastor Tino, bringing him a present of Halloween cookies, wrapped in orange tissue paper.

Christmas 2017 | Images of the community in the season of Advent...



Photos from the Support Group Visitation the week before Christmas; Pastor Tino with (above left) Yukie Emoto, Warren Orikasa's mom and James & Gladys Itamura (above right), Mike Yamashiro's uncle and aunt.



Iao Preschool's Christmas program, Dec. 15th

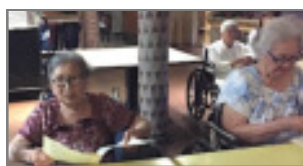


Photo credits:

Jane Tesoro
Pastor Tino
Carolyn Kamidoi
Katherine Hashiro



Scenes from Blue Christmas service on Dec. 21st (photo to the left), and Christmas Eve service on Sunday, Dec. 24th (the two photos immediately above, and the three to the right).



Caroling at Hale Makua (in Kahului & Wailuku) and Roselani Place, on Dec. 17th



Fall • Winter | After-school tutoring program...

After a few months away (at Wailuku Union Church), the Lillian Maeda Academic Enhancement Program—Iao UCC's after-school tutoring program that takes place on Monday and Wednesday afternoons from 2 to 4 p.m.—is back on campus, at Kanda Hall, more vibrant than ever before, thanks to a corps of faithful and expert volunteer tutors, including: Lynette Shiroma, Youlda Yoruw, Jane Tesoro, Grace Murata, Jody Singsank, Carolyn Kamidoi, Katherine Hashiro, Joy Yamane, Anna Mayeda, Kathy Pang, Lisa Louie, Maybelle Hashizume, and Heide Israel. Thank you to Kathy Stout of Wailuku Union Church for taking on program coordination last fall, and to Anne Troy, also of WUC, for writing grant proposals for the program.



In Memoriam 2017



Betty Yamashiro | 92

January 16, 2017

Jane Nakama | 89

April 1, 2017

Masanobu Yamashiro | 93

April 30, 2017

Umeko Oura | 100

August 21, 2017

Gladys Fujii | 81

September 14, 2017

Tsugio Sakurada | 92

September 21, 2017

Angelina Guchol | 34

October 6, 2017

Kiichi Takahama | 99

November 29, 2017

George Matsuo | 90

December 13, 2017

Miyoji Kaya | 94

December 19, 2017

December 2017

Iao United Church of Christ

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																				
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24 7:00 PM Christmas Eve Service	25 Christmas Etawi Christmas Day Celebration	26 7:00 PM -8:30 PM Maui Choral Arts	27 9:15 AM -10:30 AM AI Anon (K)	28 6:15 PM -7:45 PM Choir (S)	29 6:00 PM Kosraen Women's Fellowship (S)	30 7:30 PM AA (K)																																																																																				
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Blue skies above Kanda Hall and Iao Valley, early December...

Mailed Jan. 2, 2018.
Address Services Requested.

☐ If you no longer wish to
receive this newsletter,
check this box to mark as:
"Return to Sender."

What's inside . . .

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Sunday Worship	9:30 A.M.
Pastor	Florentino Cordova
Moderator	Gail Ideue
Secretary/Iao Pepa Editor	Lloyd Nebres
Preschool Director	Flerida Iniba
Choir Director & Pianist	Karyn Sarring

You are always welcome at
Iao United Church of Christ.