A Monthly Newsletter of Iao United Church of Christ

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

May 2019

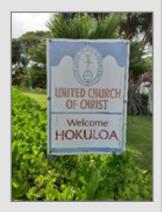
Blessings from Pastor Tino | "Focused on the Future"

So, we're now into the season of Easter and what a Resurrection it has been! I have been elected by my alumni peers from the Pacific School of Religion to represent them in the PSR Alumni Council. It was a great honor to be back in Berkeley, CA where I experienced this great sense of belonging and where my call became more focused. Our task is to bring our "on-the-ground" experience back to PSR so that they can better train future Seminarians, Pastors, Chaplains, and Religious Leaders. As Pastor of this amazing Iao Church, bringing our story to others will be helpful, and as I bring their stories to us as well. I thank my peers for allowing me this great experience and opportunity to represent them as a PSR Alumni Council Member.

While visiting the mainland, I was also able to take a drive to Watsonville, CA where I first served the First Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and visit with my older son Steven, and his family. Was great seeing my grandchildren again – Grampa got some "Grampa" time. They grow so fast – Grampa got exhausted just watching them play with all that energy.

Before traveling to the mainland, I was invited by the faithful community of Hokuloa UCC at the Big Island to preach, followed by a question and answer time as they discern in the process of becoming an open and affirming congregation of the United Church of Christ. Let us hold Pastor Joe and the Beloved Community of Hokuloa UCC as they formalize to welcome ALL people, just as Iao UCC has been doing for many years now. Rong and I had a chance to tour the Big Island and enjoyed our road trip. Times like these is a time he and I get a chance to catch up on life – "how's work, how is it with your soul, etc." After a busy Lent Season, it was a great chance to rest and enjoy our time together.

I would like to give a big shout out and thanks to the many who made our Lenten journey a big success. We thank Kahu Danette Kong and John Rowehl for their willingness to cover for our Choir Director, Karyn Sarring while recouping from her illness. Holy week was amazing as we joined in worship with our sister churches, Ka'ahumanu Church and Wailuku Union Church for Maundy Thursday and Easter Sunrise Worship. Our Good Friday Worship Service brought in a packed house with Kahu Aileen Trout, Kahu Danette Kong, Kahu Jimmy A'arona, our very own Youlida Yoruw, Kahu Wayne Higa and me as we preached on the "Seven Last Sayings of Jesus." A feed back was "Good Friday was a great reflection on how diverse is our Tri-Isle Association – yet how we are all one." We thank them for bringing their gift of preaching to our gathering.





As we move forward on our Easter journey, let us remember to live as resurrected people of God. The next two months will be busy for many of us as we go to 'Aha Pae'aina and elect our next Conference Minister to lead us into the future. I have also been chosen to attend our UCC General Synod in June at which I will be going early to participate with the Open & Affirming Coalition of our denomination. Please hold all of us in your prayers as we travel to and from all of these gatherings.

Live as Resurrected People of God. Blessings with love and appreciation, Pastor Tino

May Lectionary

May. 5 Third Sunday of Easter

Acts 9:1-6 (7-20)
Psalm 30
Revelations 5:11-14
John 21:1-9
The Way Forward

May. 12 Fourth Sunday of Easter Acts 9:36-43

Psalm 23 Revelations 7:9-17 John 10:22-30 *Life-Giving Acts*

May. 19 Fifth Sunday of Easter

Acts 11:1-18 Psalm 148 **Revelations 21:1-6** John 13:31-35 *Imagine*

May. 26 Sixth Sunday of Easter Acts 16:9-15

Psalm 67 Revelations 21:10, 22:5 John 14:23-29 *Life-Giving Acts*

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



JAC Keoni Yoruw came home from college, and the next day came with his faithful family to help with yardwork on the church campus. Mahalo JAC and Yoruws!

(Photo by Youlida Yoruw)



In addition to the floral arrangements in the sanctuary, Aunty Grace Murata also makes leis for Pastor Tino and other guests or celebrants. The above lei was for the Mother's Day service on May 12th. (Photo by Jane Tesoro)

May Worship Responsibilities*

<u>Readers</u>

Emily Joseph & Shannon Ribao

May 5

Greeter: Craig Bode Ushers: Bency Benjamin & John Yoruw Aloha Hour: Kalani Wong & Avis Teshima-Wong

May 12

Aloha Hour: Jackie Murai & Grace Murata

May 19

Aloha Hour: Satsigo Jim & Youlida Yoruw

May 26

Aloha Hour: Maui Kosrae Etawi

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

May Birthdays

5/5 Maybelle Hashizume Alana Fernandez 5/7 Paul Tonnessen 5/8Anna Mayeda 5/9 Thelma Iwami 5/12 Melissa Goulart 5/16 Diana George 5/18 5/20 Michael Kaneshina 5/22 Lyndon Cornelius Carissa Yinmed 5/245/28 Zachary Withrow 5/30 Noah Johannes, Jr. 5/30 Heide Israel

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 Fujitomo 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.

Tim's Mana'o | Moderator's Notes



May this day
offer you just
what you need
in each unfolding
moment...

It's been a very busy time for the Church. This Easter season includes both Mother's Day and Pentecost. From a traditional perspective, Pentecost marks the end of the Easter season. We tend to think of it as a time of remembrance of the day the Holy Spirit descended on the apostles and the Virgin Mary fifty days after the Resurrection of Jesus. That glorious mystery includes the Passion, the Death, the Resurrection, and the Ascension on the disciples. In my childhood it was celebrated by a great feast.

The dictionary notes that the word Pentecost is Greek for *pentecostes* which means fiftieth. Historically Pentecost was also celebrated by Jews. During this time, every male Jew living near Jerusalem was required to go to Jerusalem and celebrate. The feast received this name because it was celebrated fifty days after the Feast of the Passover. It was originally a day of thanksgiving for the completion of the harvest. During Passover, the first bushel of barley was offered to God. At Pentecost, two loaves of bread were offered in gratitude for the harvest.

As we thrive in our open and affirming church, we can see this time as one of the most encouraging pieces in our practice of the Christian faith. We all believe that God lives in us and empowers us through the Holy Spirit. Although we never walked with Jesus and the apostles, we are still accompanied by the same Spirit who is always there for us!

Praying God's Blessings, Timothy Stewart, Moderator

A Note from the Editor

The next issue of *lao Pepa* will be a combined **Summer 2019** issue. After the busy-ness of the season of Lent comes the usual summer lull at lao UCC (as is the case in most churches). But things start heating up again in the late summer and early fall with the church bazaar in August and the Frosty POG booth at the annual Maui Fair, in early October.

However, this does not mean nothing is happening over the summer at lao UCC. In fact, the next issue will cover a number of interesting things taking place this summer:

- Our church will be sending delegates to the 2019 Aha Pae'aina — the annual meeting of all the churches of the Hawaii Conference UCC, held this year at Kaumakapili Church in Honolulu on June 7 and 8;
- Pastor Tino, will be one of the Hawaii Conference's delegates to the UCC General Synod in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on June 21 to 25.

So, look for reports and news items on the above events in the Summer issue. It will also feature the following:

- A remembrance of church elders who have passed away recently: Katsumi Tadakuma, Kats Matsuo, Tom Yamada & Ike Ikeda;
- A photographic look back at our Lenten activities: Taizé, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Mother's Day;
- Veterans of Iao UCC (from WW2 through Korea, Vietnam, and Iraq);
- Upgrades and renovations to Kanda Hall and Fujitomo Hall;
- A regular column on the oral history of lao UCC and Wailuku town — from interviews and conversations (by the editor) with folks like Maybelle Hashizume, Yaeko Mabe Sasaki, Lynette Shiroma, Rena Hayashi, Gail Ideue, Jane Oshiro Tesoro, Howard Ikeda, Mike Takamatsu, David Murata, et al.

So, stay tuned, folks! There's (a lot) more to come for *lao Pepa* this summer. :-)

~ L. Nebres

From noon on, darkness came over the whole land until three in the afternoon. Jesus arrives at his cross and about three o'clock Jesus cried with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" That is, "My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?" When some of the bystanders heard it, they thought he was calling for the prophet Elijah."

It was not difficult to see that he was very near death. Breathing for Jesus had become labored. Each breath was shallow, and each breath was a struggle. Where the strength came from is difficult to say, but somehow, in unspeakable pain, Jesus spat out words which must have ripped at the heart of God. In a loud voice, with much energy, Jesus cried, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani? ... My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" For many centuries, these words have bothered and stirred the souls of many. Had Jesus lost his faith? Or, has he had a lapse in his trust of the Creator? Did Jesus really feel abandoned by God? Or was Jesus just quoting Hebraic poetry from Psalm 22:1

As one looks at this event and hears these particular words, there is but one thing to be said about it. Jesus felt utterly and completely abandoned ultimately alone. He was forsaken. Jesus had never had such a moment in his life before. But now, on the cross, he felt nothing but the darkness. To make it even more frightening, the darkness was not just on the outside. Now the darkness had crawled inside his soul. As he began to feel the weight of the sins of this world – he and he alone had to carry them – carry my sins, your sins, our sins – he was alone and no one was with him.

Alone! It is such a nasty and painful word. To be alone is like being in a room brilliantly lighted, and then suddenly to walk out into the darkness of night. The shock of the darkness brings a feeling of hopelessness. To be alone is to have no one with whom we share our suffering. To be alone is for no one to be aware of our suffering of our pain, our heartache. Alone is to reach out and find that there is no one there to take our hand.

Imagine the many miles Jesus had walked with his disciples to carry the message of our Gospels to the outcasts, the poor, the marginalized of their time. Imagine traveling thousands of miles fleeing from a war-torn and impoverished country. Look for a place of safety — a better place where children do not need to worry or grow up with violence around them or afraid of being killed — seeking a place of compassion of compassionate people where refuge still means something.

Imagine traveling north to a country whose statue still holds up a torch and who is known as the Mother of exiles. This Mother of exiles, crying out from her bosom – "Give me your tired, your poor. Your huddled masses yearning to be free. The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door!" – Only to find themselves, like Jesus, at the end of their journey – screaming – "My God, my God, why have



you forsaken me?" Just as Jesus had arrived at his cross, these families arrive at a border filled with hatred, abuse, dishonesty. Arriving at a border not made of a cross – but it might as well be – hungry, thirsty, yearning to be free.

As we continue on our own life journey, we must remember the cost of this cross – the cost of this Altar Table. We are called to carry our own cross – but not to be crucified or to crucify others who do not look, think, act, or pray like we do – but for us to realize, like Barabbas – "My God, my God, that's MY cross he's dying on!"

Then like Mary, his mother, who has had her son ripped away from her heart – so too have these families at the border have been experiencing the same. Their babies and children ripped away from them – screaming and yelling and crying – "My God, my God, why have your forsaken me?" When the dust settles – as day and night come and go. Babies and children find themselves sitting in locked cages or in our modern "concentration camps" of today – "I thirst." Babies screaming for their mother's milk – "I thirst." Children screaming for the comfort of their parents – "I thirst."

I pray that this night – as we remember the cost of this cross and Altar Table – that Christ was arrested, falsely accused, suffered, crucified, died and rose. That this event might seem like so long ago – but the suffering, dying are still very real and present in our world today. When we thirst – we must thirst for justice, we must thirst that the poor are quenched – we must thirst for women's equality – we must thirst that ALL people are treated with dignity and respect. We must thirst that the Holy Scriptures as told in our Gospels – win out over evil.

So beloved community – let us rise – let us rise to this occasion for justice sake. As we hear the voices crying – "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me" – let us be the ones that come with comfort. Let us quench the thirst of justice.

Amen, Amene, Ashe, A-ho and Alleluia.

(Photo above is from the Good Friday service, with Craig Bode, James Morrison and David Belew reading The Passion from the Gospel of John. Photo by Rev. Tino.)

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May 2019

Iao United Church of Christ

Studay	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
S M T W 1 1 2 3 4 7 8 9 10 1 14 15 16 17 11 21 22 23 24 2 28 29 30	5 6 1 12 13 2 3 8 19 20 9 10 5 26 27 16 17	Jun 2019 T W T F S 1 4 5 6 7 8 11 12 13 14 15 18 19 20 21 22 25 26 27 28 29	9:00AM AI Anon 1:30 PM Tutoring (F) 6:00 PM Etawi Prayer Fellowship (S) (Pastor Ti	2 6:30 AM -8:15 AM Rotary of Maui (Sanctuary) 6:15 PM -7:45 PM Choir (S)	3 6:00 PM Kosraen Women's Fellowship (S) Pastor's Day Of (Office Open)	4 1:00 FM Rosis Johnson Posno Recital (5) 7:30 PM AA (S)
5 11:00 AM Youth Meet with Pastor Tino (Fujitomo) 5:00 PM Maui Kosrae Etawi (S)	6 2:00 PM -4:00 PM Maeda Academy (K)	7	9:00 AM Al Anon 1:30 PM Tutoring (F) 5:30 PM Worshiping (Maul Beach Hotel) 6:00 PM Etawi Prayer Fellowship (5)	9 6:30 AM -8:15 AM Rotary of Maui (Sanctuary) 6:15 PM -7:45 PM Choir (S)	4:30 PM Iao Youth Night (Parsonage) 6:00 PM Kosraen Women's Fellowship (S) Pastor's Day Off (Office Open)	7:30 PM AA (S)
12 11:00 AM Stewarding (F) 5:00 PM Maui Kosrae Etawi (S) Mother's Day	2:00 PM -4:00 PM Maeda Academy (K)	14 Tino off)	9:00 AM AI Anon 1:30 PM Tutoring (F) 6:00 PM Etawi Prayer Fellowship (S)	16 6:30 AM -8:15 AM Rotary of Maui (Sanctuary) 6:15 PM -7:45 PM Choir (S)	17 11:00 AM Ladies' Lunch Bunch (Sanctuary) 6:00 PM Kosraen Women's Fellowship (S) Pastor's Day Off (Office Open)	18 7:30 PM AA (S)
19 5:00 PM Maui Kosrae Etawi (S)	20 2:00 PM -4:00 PM Maeda Academy (K)	21	9:00 AM AI Anon 1:30 PM Tutoring (F) 6:00 PM Etawi Prayer Fellowship (S)	23 6:30 AM -8:15 AM Rotary of Maui (Sanctuary) 6:15 PM -7:45 PM Choir (S)	24 6:00 PM Kosraen Women's Fellowship (S) Pastor's Day Of (Office Open)	25 8:00 AM Kosrae EtawiYard Cleanup 7:30 PM AA (S)
26 11:00 AM 2019 Graduate Luncheon (K) 5:00 PM Maui Kosrae Etawi (S)	27 Memorial Day (office closed)	28	9:00 AM AI Anon 1:30 PM Tutoring (F) 5:30 PM COUNCIL (F) 6:00 PM Etawi Prayer Fellowship (S)	3 () 6:30 AM -8:15 AM Rotary of Maui (Sanctuary) 6:15 PM -7:45 PM Choir (S)	3 / 6:00 PM Kosraen Women's Fellowship (S) Pastor's Day Of (Office Open)	



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The church's dedicated Support Group Visitation team meets every 2nd Tuesday of the month. Pictured here (L-R): Jane Tesoro, David Murata, Lee Murakami, Heide Israel, Maybelle Hashizume and Lynette Shiroma.

Mailed May 15, 2019 Address Services Requested

What's inside . . .

If you no longer wish to
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lao United Church of Christ

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SUNDAY WORSHIP 9:30 A.M.

Pastor Florentino Cordova

Moderator Tim Stewart
Church Admin./Pepa Editor Lloyd Nebres
Choir Director & Pianist Karyn Sarring
lao Preschool Director Flerida Iniba

You are always welcome at Iao UCC.