

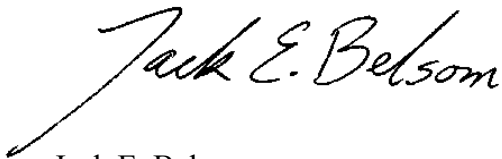
Christmas Eve

Christmas Eve falls on a Sunday this year. At the 10:00 a.m. service, we will still be in Advent—the season that celebrates Christ’s coming among us. The Fourth Advent Candle will be lit, and there will still be a sense of expectancy. “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” will be the first thing we sing and will set the tone of that service. However, by the end of the service, we will cross over into the celebration of the birth of Christ.

By 7:00 p.m., the colors in the sanctuary will change from purple—the color for Advent—to white—the color for Christmas. Yes, there will be candlelight for part of the service, and we will sing “Silent Night” in many languages. The Kosrae Maui Etawi will offer some music, and our group of singers should have two songs to offer. Of course, we all get to sing Christmas Carols.

There will NOT be a service on Christmas Day. I pray that the joy and love of Christmas will not only continue to fill that day but throughout 2023 and well into 2024. There WILL BE a service December 31 at 10:00 a.m. The lesson for that Sunday (Luke 2:22–40) continues the story with Mary and Joseph taking the Baby to the Temple where they are greeted by Anna and Simeon—two older Jews who had waited their whole lives hoping to see the messiah. Perhaps, Christmas is for the old as much as it is for the young!

May the wonder, the laughter, the surprise, the joy, and the love of Christmas fill our hearts and the entire world.



Jack E. Belsom
Interim Pastor

Our Witnessing Stewards for 2023:

Youth Steward



Makelynn Johannes

Consecration Steward



Dr. Rev. Jack Belsom

Tribute to our Adult Steward



Robert Hartman

SHANNON'S SCOOPS

Aloha Iao UCC Families and Friends,

Wishing a Happy December to all of you!!!

Hope this newsletter finds you in good health and great spirits. As always, if you or your family needs anything, please call our office at (808) 244-7353.

I have been thinking of what I could possibly write to inspire our congregation and our community. I decided to just write from my heart and if any of you can relate and it touches your heart, then that is a blessing.

It has been a rough couple of months for our family as well as for our Maui community.



LE'AH NOA RIBAO

On October 5th we lost our beautiful golden retriever, Le'ahi suddenly and unexpectedly. Some people will say oh but she was just a dog, but for us she was so much more than that. She was our child, our fur baby, and an example of unconditional love. If any of you have had a "heart dog" then you may understand our pain and broken hearts.

I have been struggling with my grief and the ebbs and flows of all that it brings. I have come to realize that a lot of people do not like sadness and are very uncomfortable being around people who are sad. However, I choose to embrace my sadness and know that I cannot have happiness without it. I also realize that where there is great love, there is great pain. I appreciate the moments of joy and the pockets of peace amongst the grief.

I am truly grateful that Jaime and I have been able to lean on one another and able to grow stronger in our Faith and in our relationship with our God. These moments of grief and all the changes in life can truly test you. This time of grief is an opportunity for us to look at the world differently. There is a new appreciation for life. In a world that seems to constantly rush forward, there is a quiet beauty in allowing ourselves to slow down, to savor the simple pleasures, and to honor our grief and feel our feelings.



JAIME & SHANNON RIBAO

I have witnessed the same strong Faith and resilience in our Maui community. Despite the challenges and all the losses due to the Maui Wildfires, our communities have stepped up to help one another. This is a marathon, not a sprint and we need to continue to support one another and our island during the months and years to come. It truly takes a village and we are stronger together.

These are challenging times and I wanted to reassure everyone that we are not alone and that we are in this together. Pain is inevitable but suffering is optional. Please reach out to someone today and let them know that they are not alone. Let us continue to be the church, in words and in actions.

With the Holidays here, let us remain focused on the Reason for the Season. If you are feeling festive

and joyful, we celebrate with you. If you are feeling sad and grieving. We see you; we feel you and we are praying with you.



LIAM, JAIME, SHANNON, CODY & KELSEY

I am truly grateful to God for all my blessings, for all of you and for lao UCC.

No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!!!

"The lord is near to the broken-hearted and saves the crushed in spirit."

- Psalm 34:18

When the peace of Christ rules in our hearts, thankfulness overflows. Even in the darkest of times, we can praise God for his love, his sovereignty, and his promise to be near us when we call (Psalm 145:18).

"Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is Gods will for you in Christ Jesus."

- 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Safe New Year. May God Bless Us All!!!

With Love and Aloha,
Your grateful moderator
Shannon Ribao

From the editor. Please forgive me if this is politically incorrect or if it's an old joke. However, sitting in my home, in N.C., from every room in the house you can see the squirrels (white and brown) playing, foraging, jumping from one tree to another. I just had to share and ask you to think about "What kind of "squirrels" (or mongoose) do we have at lao."



Squirrels

A small town had four churches: Presbyterian, Methodist, Catholic and Baptist.

All four had a serious problem with squirrels in the church. Each church in its own fashion had a meeting to deal with the problem.

The Presbyterians decided that it was predestined that squirrels be in the church and that they would just have to live with them.

The Methodists decided they should deal with the squirrels lovingly in the style of Charles Wesley. They humanely trapped them and released them in a park at the edge of town. Within 3 days, they were all back in the church.

The Catholics also humanely trapped them and attempted to teach them the "rhythm" method which of course did not work.

The Baptists had the best solution. They voted the squirrels in as members Now they only see them at Christmas and Easter.



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Liturgy

Dec. 3 1st Sunday of Advent (Year B)

Isa 64:1-9

Ps 80:1-7, 17-19

1 Cor 1:3-9

Mark 13:24-37

Where Are You God?

Dec. 10 2nd Sunday of Advent

Isa 40:1-11

Ps 85:1-2,8-13

2Peter 3:8-15a

Mark 1:1-8

Messengers of Hope

Human Right Day

Dec. 17 3rd Sunday of Advent

Isa 61:1-4, 8-11

Ps 126 or Like 1:46b-55

1 Thess 5:16-24

John 1:6-8, 19-28

Shouts of Joy

Dec. 24 4th Sunday of Advent

2 Sam 7:1-11, 16

Luke 1:46b-55 or Ps 89:1-4,19-26

Rom 16:25-38

Luke 1:26-38

Birthing a Promise

Christmas Fund Offering

Dec. 31 1st Sunday after Christmas

Isa 61:10-62:3

Ps 148

Gal 4:4-7

Luke 2:22-40

Long-Awaited Gift

Watch Night



**Prayers for you, us,
our church and beyond.**



Dec. 3 Timothy Stewart

Dec. 4 Betsy Scheller

Dec. 6 Jane Akitake

Dec 8 Lynn Krieg

Dec. 10 Vida Falan

Dec.12 Karen Moody

Dec 18 Jaymina Bathin

Dec. 18 Barbara Wimberley

Dec. 20 Robynne Kein

Dec. 26 Gloria Nakama

Sunday Morning Worship Team

Filling the Pulpit:

Dec. 3,10,24,31 Jack Belsom

Dec. 17 Tim Greathouse

Greeter: Warren Orikasa

Music: Jack Belsom

Youth Reader: Jaydee Hadely

Adult Reader:

Dec. 3 & 10 James Morrison

Dec. 17,4,31 Shreu Sigrah

Aloha Hour:

Dec. 3&10 Anne Hill/Jane Akitake

Dec. 17 & 24

Dec.31 Etwei

Remembering a Loving and Faithful Servant



Robert Hartman died peacefully in his sleep on August 27th, 2023, at home in Keokea, Maui, Hawaii having lived an enriched life of 70 years. He was born on September 27th, 1952, in Manila, Philippines. At the age of four he immigrated on a boat to the United States with his mother, Francisca Hartman, and his five siblings. They settled in Seattle, Washington.

He spent his formative years in the historic neighborhood of Queen Anne. As a young boy he excelled in baseball and football. After graduating from Queen Anne High School, he attended the University of Washington and met the love of his life, Barbara Wimberley, while working at Skipper's Fish and Chips. He graduated with a degree in

Architecture and a die-hard devotion to the Washington Huskies.

He was a devoted husband, father, "Popie," and community member. During his down time, he was fixing, building, painting, designing, and helping others at school/parent organizations, school bands, dance programs, and of course watching football. Most recently he collaborated with members of Iao United Church of Christ on multiple church projects including the steeple, the retaining wall, the parking lot, ADA access and to his final day, was actively redesigning the vestibule door.

His professional career blossomed in 1988 when he was offered a position in Maui, Hawaii at Riecke Sunland Kono Architects. This transition inspired a new creative perspective of architecture for him. He was given artistic freedom to explore the interplay of nature, culture and design which stayed with him throughout his entire career. While at RSK Architects he was honored to work with Roy Yamaguchi to design his original Roy's Restaurant in both Kahana Gateway, Maui and Waikaloa Village, Oahu.

After serving as partner at RSK Architects he opened his own firm, R. Hartman Architect LLC in 2001. His projects ranged from Kaahumanu Center, Whalers Village, medical offices to multiple Kaiser Permanente Clinics throughout the state of Hawaii. His attention to design detail is exemplified in Kaiser Maui Lani where he honors the multicultural heritage of Hawaii, the local landscapes and design. The roof line blends seamlessly into the backdrop of the West Maui Mountains, while the interior highlights the aloha spirit through color, local artists, and the hand painted maile lei. The building will always remind us of his creative spirit.

He is survived by his wife Barbara Wimberley, his two daughters; Naomi Wimberley-Hartman and Gabriella Withrow, five grandchildren; Arianna, Henri, Paloma, Zoe and Wilson, and five siblings; Johnny, Judie, Kathy, Eddie, and Lisa.

To honor his memory, the family is requesting that in lieu of flowers, donations can be sent to Iao United Church of Christ to contribute to the stained-glass surround of Robert's final project. Donations can be sent to 2371 W. Vineyard Street, Wailuku, HI 96793 or via Iao United Church of Christ [paypal](#) account found at iao.org. Personal condolences can be mailed to Barbara Wimberley at 7 Highview Terrace, Ledyard CT, 06339.



Each year at Christmas, members and congregations of the United Church of Christ express gratitude to the pastors and church workers who have graced their lives by giving to the **Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross**.

Your gifts to the Christmas Fund allow the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance to provide grace, hope, and joy through financial relief to UCC pastors, lay church leaders, and their families. Your graceful response to this appeal ensures the flow of loving support will not be interrupted and assures our retired pastors and church workers that they are not forgotten.

When giving mark on your check "Christmas Fund" or if using PayPal on our web site, iaoucc.org. Be sure to mark the proper section.

- **Attention Lunch Bunch Ladies:** Joy Yamane has graciously offered an invitation to all ladies as she hosts the lunch bunch at her home for the December get together. The date will be December 8th as on Dec. 1 you might still be full from Thanksgiving. Last get together of the year. Join us if you can!



"Blue Christmas Service, Thursday, December 21, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. at Iao UCC. This is a service for those who are not 'in the holiday mood,' and there are plenty of reasons for that. It is a time to come as you are and let the darkest night of the year provide comfort. There will be readings, centering, prayers, and music (not Christmas Carols). This is a shared service for the community."

Caroling at Roselani

Would you like to celebrate Christmas with the residents of Roselani Place? Tuesday, December 12 at 1:00 p.m., we will provide books of carols to use and piano accompaniment for many of the beloved carols. This is one of the times when we know the words and the melodies to the songs. Plan to join the Support Group, who will turn their regular visit to a few residents into a musical celebration.



Calling All Thespians

A masked drama on December 24! Are you serious? Of course! The fourth Sunday of Advent crosses easily into the birth of the child, and what better way to communicate the message to young and old than a drama?

“Michael Mouse” is from *Cloth for the Cradle: Worship resources and readings for Advent, Christmas and Epiphany* © 1997 by Wild Goose Resource Group. The authors explain:

MICHAEL MOUSE moved from being a children’s story to a radio play to a script for voices and optional action. Sometimes it has been presented with children playing in full costume, sometimes in darkness with the characters wearing masks appropriate to the animals they represent and the nativity scene momentarily lit from behind a screen so that shadows of Mary and Joseph are seen by the audience. Users of this script should feel free to be flexible.

The Cast of Characters:

Narrator

Michael Mouse

Owl

Sheep

Cow

Hen

Cat

Joseph, *off-stage*

Chorus of the above characters or other voices to hum carols



We will probably do this with masks and scripts as a bit of readers’ theatre. Do you want a part? You can be young, old, or anywhere in between if you are willing to work on your part and to make at least one Saturday practice. Please see, Carolyn Kamidoi or Jack Belsom if you are interested.

A few photos from the Aha Mokupuni held Saturday, November 18 at Wailuku Union Church. Check in with Warren Orikasa for the events that affect the UCC congregations that make up the Aha Mokupuni



Spinach Tortellini Salad

Author: The Crafting Chicks

INGREDIENTS

- 1 pkg Fresh Baby Spinach
- Canned Mandarin Oranges
- Cheese tortellini, cooked & chilled (I like the refrigerated tortellini best)
- 5 Slices Bacon, cooked, cooled & broken into pieces
- ½ c. sugar
- ¼ c. red wine vinegar
- ¼ c. extra virgin olive oil (or canola oil)
- ¼ tsp. Paprika
- 1 T. grated onion
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1 T. toasted sesame seeds (just lightly brown the sesame seeds in a frying pan)



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Toss together baby spinach, mandarin oranges, cheese tortellini, bacon.
2. Combine sugar and red wine vinegar in a pan on the stove. Stir to mix in the sugar and once it comes to a boil turn off the heat and add the remaining ingredients.
3. Pour dressing over the mixed salad.

THE PROMISE OF CHRISTMAS

Help Mary and Joseph escape.



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CHRISTMAS WORD SEARCH

N M E R R Y P K L T A K W M K P W K N G
D O P H V P R L H O L L Y L H I T Q K E
H R E L G Q E L N Q I Z D E Q P V U N Q
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BRIGHT
FESTIVE
HOLLY
MERRY

CAROLS
GARLAND
JINGLE
MISTLETOE

PRESENTS
SANTA
REINDEER
SNOWFLAKES

CHIMNEY
HOLIDAY
JOLLY
NOEL

ORNAMENTS
RUDOLPH
SNOWMAN
STOCKINGS

December 2023 Calendar

*Office hours: 9 am-3 pm (808)244-7353 **Closed Dec. 25.**

*Pastor Jack's Contact/Hours: email: jack.belsom@gmail.com Phone: (808)283-7900
Office Hours: Monday: 9:00 am-11:00 am Tuesday & Thursday 9:00 am-12 noon (on call for emergencies)

*Ladies Lunch Bunch **Second Friday of Dec.** 11:30 am-2:00 pm **Home of Joy Yamane (lunch provided)**

*Member Visitation Caroling @ Roselani, Tuesday, Dec.12 1:00pm. Call/text Jane Tesoro @ (808)276-2663.

*Food Pantry: (808) 446-7537 Monday ONLY 11:00 am-3:30 pm.

*AA/Al-Anon meetings: Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday assorted hours.

*Micronesian Youth: Wednesday 5:00 pm Contact Youlida Yurow

*Micronesian Women: Friday 6-7 pm Contact Youlida Yurow

*Council Meeting: Last Wednesday of the month, 5:30 pm on zoom. Contact office for link

*Kosrae Maui Church Sunday at 4 pm Contact Danny Johannes

*Kosrae Campus Workday 4th Saturday of month. Contact Danny Johannes

December 2023

Calendar

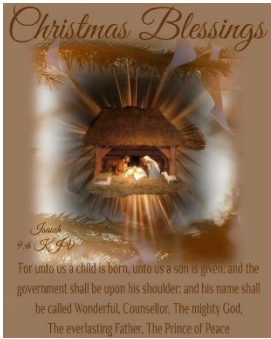
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Your source for calendars

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
	Christmas Day					
31	1					
	New Year's Day					



lao United Church of Christ (lao UCC)
2371 W. Vineyard Street
Wailuku, HI 96793



☐ If you no longer wish to receive this news letter, please check this box.

Address Correction Requested

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lao United Church of Christ
Sunday Worship 10

Part-time Interim Minister.....Rev. Jack Belsom
Office Manager..... Theresa Supera
Moderator.....Shannon Ribao
Preschool Director.....Fley Iniba
Newsletter Editor..... Dawna Krueger

Please join us every Sunday in our Sanctuary
at 10:00 am or for Virtual Worship:

Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/iaoucc.maui>

Web Page: <https://www.iaoucc.org>

88.1 FM Radio Station (within 1-mile radius of
the church campus)

**No matter who you are or where you are on
life’s journey, you are welcome here.**