

# Iao Pepa

Na Makani

*A Monthly Newsletter of Iao United Church of Christ*

2371 W. Vineyard Street, Wailuku | (808) 244-7353 | Email: [office@iaoucc.org](mailto:office@iaoucc.org)

Iao Beloveds,  
A New Year! A new pastor! A new church office!  
Three children newly baptized!  
Six new members welcomed (including ME!)  
A new energy and enthusiasm is permeating our life as a body of Christ in this place... Are we having fun yet?



As I write this note for our February Pepa, I am filled with gratitude and hope. I'm filled with confidence and determination... Are you experiencing some of these emotions as well?

But in reality, all is not as rosy as the Valentine cards we may be crafting for loved ones – or as sparkly as the Lunar New Year celebrations we may experience welcoming the year of the wood snake...

Hmmmm, reminds me of the scripture in Matthew 10: 16 when Jesus sent out his followers, “like sheep surrounded by wolves” — urging them to be “as shrewd as snakes, and as innocent as doves.”

So, beloveds, we can be realistic AND resourceful.  
We can be concerned AND compassionate.  
We can be aware of the “wolves” in the world around us, but not give up a gentle spirit.  
We can be shrewd and strategic as we advocate for those in precarious positions.  
We can BE the change we wish to see in our world.  
Hope is a radical act of resistance.  
We can be vigilant and valiant.  
We can help each other to nurture a positive spirit, even in the midst of struggle.  
This is the BEAUTY of being part of a community of faith!  
We can take turns supporting and being supported.  
The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice!  
After all, the JOY of the Lord is our strength!

See you in church or online!  
Pastor Lauren



## February Sermon Text



### February

2/2 - Epiphany 4 –Green

Communion Sunday

Sermon Title: “New Every Morning”

Text: Lamentations 3: 19-24

2/9- Epiphany 5 - Green

Sermon Title: “Slippery Slopes and Firm Foundations”

Text: Matthew 7:24-28

2/16- Epiphany 6 - Green

(‘Ōpūkaha’ia Sunday)

Sermon Title: “Remembering Ōpūkaha’ia”

Texts: OT: Isaiah 6:8; NT: Romans 12:12-18

2/23- Epiphany 7 - Violet

Sermon Title: “Rock Talk and Pohaku Pondering”

Text: 1 Peter 2:5-10



2/4	Edna Hadley
2/6	Lewis Hadley
2/8	Pastor Lauren
2/11	Rena Hayashi
2/11	Cheryl Hadley
2/13	Annette Matsushima
2/13	Suzette Robinson
2/14	Richard Carr
2/15	Danny Johannes
2/18	John Yoruw
2/20	Jim Robinson



Minister	Pastor Lauren Buck Medeiros
Greeter	Anna Mayeda
Youth Reader	Joyleen Phillip
Adult Reader	Gerald Montano
Technicians	Sonny Yoruw / Jay-Dee Hadley
Aloha Hour-	2/2 Sunday School Parents
	2/9 Jane Akitake
	2/16 Kathrine & Carolyn
	2/23 Maui Etawi

*Prayer List: Gail Ideue, Jan Saiki, the California Wildfires, wars occurring around the world, political decisions being made, all your joys and all that is weighing heavy on your heart*



**Mission Statement of Iao UCC:**

*We are a people of God, living and sharing the love of Christ and reflecting that love in words and actions."*

**Vision of Iao UCC:**  
*We will be a more inclusive and faithful community learning:*

- to give voice to the silenced,
- to celebrate our commonalities,
- to use God's gifts (not just ours!),
- to bridge differences, and
- to practice reconciliation

Tyson is 10 years old and a 5th grader from SF. He was on Christmas vacation with his mom Deann Mayeda and family, staying with his "Granna" Anna Mayeda. Tyson was a great help in the Pantry, reminding his Granna what was needed and worked tirelessly for over 2 hours.



A number of ladies of Iao UCC attended "Saturday with Sondheim" a fundraiser for Maui Onstage on January 25. It was an introduction to Maui's talented community theater for Pastor Lauren which included Lynn Krieg's daughter Lia, Rita Whitford's son Kalani as the show director and grandson Cullen as the announcer. Luana Whitford Mitchell is the executive director of Maui Onstage.



Pastor Lauren and Auntie Dawna spend Thursday mornings with the preschool children. They share stories, songs, dances and lots and lots of questions



First Friday Ladies Lunch Bunch always have a wonderful time in fellowship and (of course) food! Join them February 7 at 11:30.



Watch your Iao Pepa and listen for announcements in church as to how our music at Iao is headed in lots of different directions!

## Buildings and Grounds

Dennis Hashiro, Daniel Kamidoi, Howard Ikeda, Paul Lackey

1. Endo Hall office renovation is almost complete, except for some upgrades and improvements:

- a. Security cameras still need to be installed
- b. Handicap access to Endo Hall which is a small ramp at the back door. Also the kitchen door will need to be widened to 36".
- c. Lighting fixtures for the front lanai and back kitchen door will be installed.
- d. Front screen door needs to be secured.



2. Endo Hall is scheduled to be fumigated for termites on Thursday 2/6/25 - Friday 2/7/25. Endo Hall office will be closed .

3. Still working on Fujitomo Hall.

Respectfully, Dennis Hashiro

(Editors note: Please don't let this short list doesn't even start to cover all that this community does. )

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## Learning Community

Dawna Krueger, Coreen Matsui-Lackey, Youlida Yoruw, Anela Awai-Stewart



Sunday School times have been adjusted. Due to the low attendance when held before church, the community decided to return to having it during service. Every one will start in the sanctuary and then following Keiki Time, the children will exit and go to Kanda Hall. We will need an additional adult to help each week. With the projected increase in attendance extra help is needed. Please prayerfully consider if you could miss the service and watch it later on Facebook. There will be a sign-up on the (new) bulletin board.

We also reviewed the responsibilities as per the bylaws. We have lots of work ahead of. If you would like to help with the Learning Community, please see Dawna. There is much more to us than Sunday School!

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## Iao UCC Financial Summary Watch for the next month Iao Pepa for the year end financial report

**Financial Community:** Warren Orikasa, Gail Ideue, Shrue Sigrah

The latest financial report is available upon request from the office.  
Questions may be addressed to Warren Orikasa

Donations may be made thru PayPal. Visit [iaoucc.org](http://iaoucc.org) and click on "donate". You may make aa one time gift or set-up your regular offering<sub>4</sub> to be sent on a regular basis.





### **Iao Preschool Community**

Tim Stewart, Bert Akitake, Sanoë Awai, Susan King, Director Fley Iniba

Business at the preschool for this first month of 2025 has been ramps, and ramps, and ramps! Everyone, well almost everyone, was happy to return to school and their friends after Christmas break. Lots on new toys, equipment and new learning opportunities arrived during the break. Fley (preschool director) and Shannon (Iao UCC moderator) have been writing grants and being awardee incentives from the state and county for staff retention and program upgrades.



**Stewarding Community** Carley Defang, Rena Hayashi, Gail Ideue, Anna Mayeda, Jane Tesoro, Youlida Yoruw and Katherine Hashiro

### **Stewarding Happenings**

Thank you, mahalo, arigato, kulo Iao UCC for your generous donations to The Christmas Fund (Veterans of the Cross). Together you have donated \$890.00 to the Christmas Fund. It will be very much appreciated by those who receive your kindness.



Also in December donations from Iao UCC were made to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) - \$300.00, Pacific School of Religion - \$100.00 and Habitat for Humanity Maui - \$100.00. We have been supporting Pacific School of Religion and Habitat for Humanity Maui for many years and hope we can continue to support them.

The third Sunday in February is Opukaha'ia Sunday. It is to honor the legacy of Henry Opukaha'ia who is credited with inspiring the Sandwich Islands Mission that brought Christianity to Hawaii. The donations received for Opukaha'ia Sunday are for the Henry Opukaha'ia Scholarship Fund. The scholarship supports the training of clergy by providing financial aid to seminary students and clergy pursuing continuing education. Although Opukaha'ia Sunday is the third Sunday of the month we will accept donations throughout February.

## Worshipping Community

Submitted by  
Carolyn Kamidoi

Worship Community: Shannon Ribao, Jaime Ribao, Mayleen Phillip, Katherine Hashiro,  
Susan King, Carolyn Kamidoi



We welcomed Rev. Lauren Buck Medeiros our settled pastor on January 1, 2025 and she has been on the go ever since.

Thank you to all who answered the call for help to take down and store the Advent/Christmas decorations.

Baptism – On January 12 three little children,

Soveia Hadley Yoruw, Taj Kion Calep-Henry and Azleiyana Wanalynn Hadley were baptized.

Six new members were received and welcomed to Lao UCC's family on January 19.



Pastor Lauren, Ruth Murata John and Mayleen Phillip, Lynsen Monkeya Skilling, and Edna Hadley.

Thank you to January Worship Leaders: Greeter - Shannon Ribao

Readers – Makelyn Johannes, Jennalyn Johannes and Linda Johannes

February Worship Leaders: Greeter/Liturgist– Anna Mayeda

Readers. – Joyleen Phillip and Gerald Montano

The worship community welcomes Mayleen Phillip and Katherine Hashiro to the team!

Worship meeting with Pastor Lauren - January 26 after worship; Endo Hall



Respectfully submitted by  
Carolyn Kamidoi

## Lao Food Pantry Report 1.23.25

January was a hectic month for the food pantry. Every January we update our list of families who utilize our food pantry regardless of it's a single visit or every week. Not an easy task when you suddenly realize that we have over 225 families documented and more families signing up each week. We normally serve between 70-80 families each week. Our volunteers are indispensable! Our "white truck gang" has added some new faces from our Pacific Island Community as well as our food distribution group. Between our volunteers and those who come in need of food, many languages can be heard inside Kanda Hall! So it was decided that we (I) thought everyone should get to know some common phrases in our different languages! Our January word was "Kulo". (That is the Kosraean word for "thank you") Just another way to say how happy we are to see you when you stop by on Mondays!



### Dry Mein

- 1 bag Iwamoto saimin noodles
- 1 bag bean sprouts (optional)
- 1 kamaboko, sliced
- Char siu, diced
- Chopped green onions
- 2 Tablespoons oyster sauce
- 1/4 cup shoyu (less salt is better)
- 1 Tablespoon veg or olive oil
- 1/4 tsp pepper

Mix oyster sauce, shoyu, oil, pepper. Set aside. Bring to boil water in pot, add noodles and stir so noodles won't stick, 1-2 minutes only. Do not overcook. Strain noodles, do not rinse noodles. Toss right away with sauce and sprouts, char siu, kamaboko. Top with green onions.

Hint: I set aside some char siu and kamaboko for topping.

Enjoy! Submitted by Katherine Hashiro

### Food For Thought.

#### Easy Dry Mein

If you have joined us at our last potlucks and like the drymein now you can enjoy it at home!



No prayer request is too small!

Emma was never shy with her prayer requests.

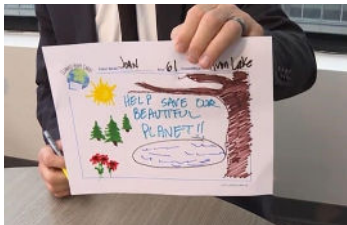
# IMPORTANT DATE: March 2, 2025

This the call for our annual congregational meeting. We will meet in the sanctuary right after our worship service. Agenda items include: Election of officers, Bylaw considerations, Budget approval, and plans for our future! Join us to let your voice be heard. Please keep this gathering in prayer as God guides our plans for 2025!



**UCC Launches Climate Hope Art Contest (C, A, E, S)** For the third straight year, the UCC is conducting a Climate Hope Art Contest. The theme this year is “Planting Seeds of Hope.” UCC children and youth are invited to draw, paint, or color works of art that bring this theme to life.

A fitting scripture to spark the imagination is Matthew 13:31-32 in which Jesus declares, “The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in the field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”



We'll accept art submissions from February 2nd to March 14th. An online award ceremony for finalists will be held on April 5<sup>th</sup>. In the ceremony, we will have winners for different age groups and an overall winner who will receive an all-expense paid trip to visit Washington, DC with a parent or guardian. The winner will advocate with the offices of their congress members, tour the Capitol, and learn how they can bring their faith values to life in the halls of power. The winning art will additionally serve as the logo for UCC Climate Hope advocacy work throughout 2025. See Auntie Dawna for more information.



## Henry 'Ōpūkaha'ia Sunday (and Special Offering)



During the month of February, the Stewarding Community will collect a special offering to honor Henry 'Ōpūkaha'ia (1772-1818), the young Hawaiian who swam out Kealakekua bay to the Connecticut-based merchant ship anchored near his village. His journey took him to New Haven, Connecticut, where he became a devout Christian, eager to share the Good News with the people of Hawai'i.

Sadly, Henry died of typhoid fever at age 26. His memoirs were published posthumously and were the inspiration for the first company of missionaries who arrived in Hawaii in 1820. Among the New Englanders were 4 Hawaiians, friends of 'Ōpūkaha'ia, who joined the missionaries in becoming the spiritual founders of Hawaiian Christianity.

The Henry 'Ōpūkaha'ia Scholarship Fund supports the training of clergy, providing financial aid for seminary students and continuing education funds for active ministers. Our church will remember the story of 'Ōpūkaha'ia in worship on February 16.



# California Wildfires 2025

On January 7, 2025, wildfire activity began in Los Angeles County, California. Immediate reports indicate that this fire has caused substantial damage throughout LA County, making this event the largest fire disaster in the county's history. At the time of this writing, nearly 30,000 acres have been consumed by the blazes. One hundred eighty thousand people are currently displaced from their homes due to devastation or evacuation orders, and these fires continue to spread, causing additional destruction.

Since the onset of this disaster, the [Global HOPE](#) team has communicated with the Southern California and Nevada Conference Minister. The team will coordinate with ecumenical partners and a national network of voluntary organizations active in disasters (VOAD) as it shapes our long-term response.

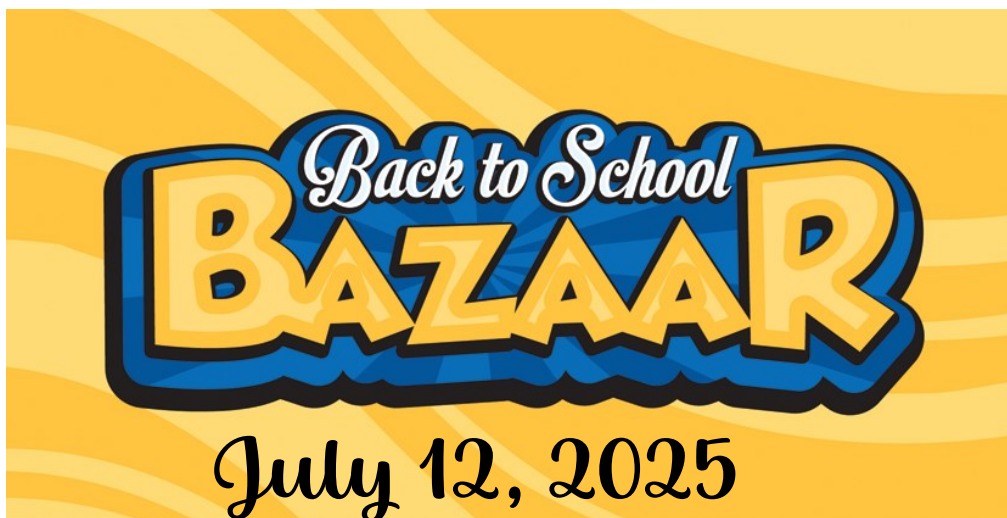
We received confirmation that the fires destroyed the Altadena Community Church, United Church of Christ. They posted an update on their [Facebook page](#).

The [Global HOPE](#) team is helping to connect Southern California and Nevada Conference staff, churches, and others affected by the wildfires with immediate resources while also preparing to support long-term recovery efforts.

As we continue to pray for and support those who experienced unimaginable loss, we invite you to support the UCC's recovery efforts in the following ways:

**Donate** to the UCC's California Wildfires 2025 Appeal below. Your gifts will support the community's immediate needs and long-term recovery efforts as we work with local communities to ensure an equitable approach to their long-term recovery. **You can also mail a check payable to the United Church of Christ, PO Box 71957, Cleveland, OH 44194. Please be sure to note "California Wildfires 2025" in the memo section of your check. Our EIN: 34-1927041**

Pray for those who have been impacted.



Hope you've been saving all those treasures. The longer you can hold them, the better. If you feel you just **MUST** get it out of your space, we have limited space to hold items until July.

The sign-up will go up shortly. Announcements will be on Sunday Mornings, by emails and in the Iao Pepa. Let's make this the biggest and the best.! With all participating it will be!

## 2025 Back to School Bazaar

Date: July 12, 2025

Time: TBA

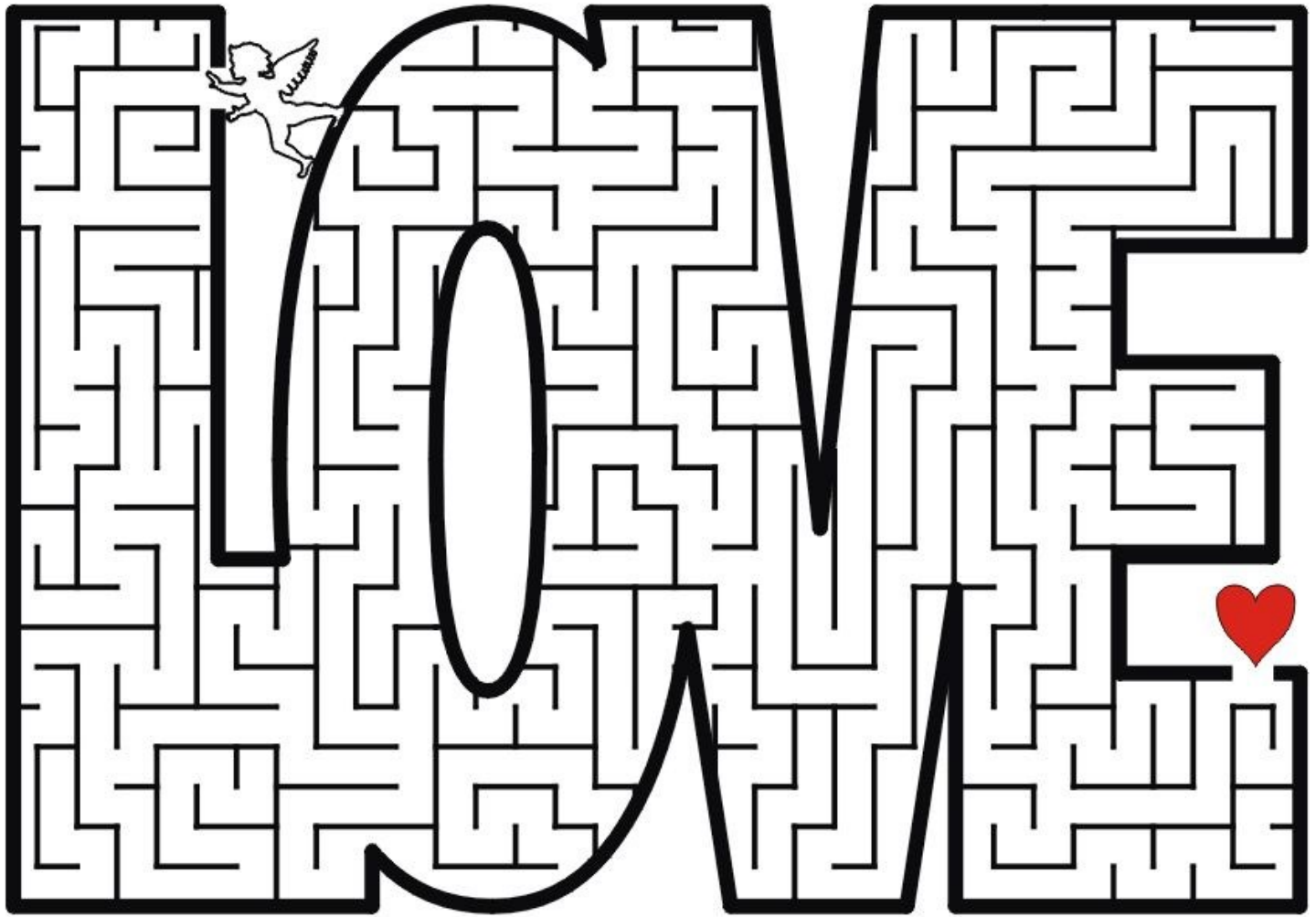
Place: The grounds of Iao United Church of Christ.

Please hold on to those rummage items—there will be a rummage sale.

Be ready to bake up a storm—there will be a bake sale.

Get working on those craft—there will be a craft sale.

Get your green thumb growing: there will be a plant sale.



### February 2025 Calendar

- \*[Office hours](#): 9 am-3 pm (808)244-7353 email: office@iaoucc.org
- \*[Pastor Lauren's Contact/Hours](#): email: pastor@iaoucc.org Phone: (808)244-7353
- \*[Office Hours](#): Monday-Thursday or by appointment 9am-3pm
- \*[Ladies Lunch Bunch](#): First Friday of the month. 11:30 am-till pau on the church lanai.
- \*[Member Visitation](#): Second Tuesday of the month at 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.
- \*[Micronesia Women](#): Friday 6-7 pm Contact Youlida Yoruw
- \*[Council Meeting](#): Last Wednesday of the month, 5:30 pm on zoom. Contact office for link
- \*[Kosrae Maui Church/ Etawi](#): Sunday at 3-5 pm
- \*[Kosrae Campus Workday](#): 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of month. Contact Jeromy Palik

# February 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1  AA Speaker 7-8 K
2 Communion Sunday  	3 Food Pantry K	4	5 Happy Day AFG 9-10 K  Kosrae Etawi Mtg. 6-7 K	6  Fumigation OFFICE  AA Wailuku 7-8	7 Ladies Lunch Bunch 11:30 Endo Hall CLOSED  Micronesian Women 6-7	8  AA Speaker 7-8 K
9	10 Food Pantry K	11  MFG District 5:30-7:30 K	12 Happy Day AFG 9-10 K	13  AA Wailuku 7-8	14   Micronesian Women 6-7	15  AA Speaker 7-8 K
16	17 Office Closed 	18	19 Happy Day AFG 9-10 S  Food Pantry K	20  AA Wailuku 7-8	21  Micronesian Women 6-7	22
23	24 Food Pantry K  Cub Scouts 7-8 K	25	26 Happy Day AFG 9-10 K	27  AA Wailuku 7-8	28  Micronesian Women 6-7	

\*\*K" Kanda Hall

"S" Sanctuary

"E" Endo Hall

"W" Watanabe Hall



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Website: [iaoucc.org](http://iaoucc.org)

[facebook.com/groups/iaoucc/](https://facebook.com/groups/iaoucc/)

**IN PERSON/VIRTUAL SUNDAY WORSHIP 10:00 A.M.**

Pastor	Pastor Lauren Buck Medeiros
Moderator	Shannon Ribao
Office Volunteer	Dawna Krueger
Pianist	Ruth Murata
Newsletter	Dawna Krueger
Iao Preschool Director	Flerida Iniba

*You are always welcome at Iao UCC.*  
**We are a people of God living and sharing  
 the love of Christ through words  
 and actions.**