

‘Īao Pepa

NA MAKANI

A Monthly Newsletter of ‘Īao United Church of Christ

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

September 2025



Pastor Lauren's Rainbow Connections



HAPPY NEW YEAR! No, not the calendar year—the school year! :-)

Whether you're diving into an advanced degree (like Jaime and Keola), heading off for her first year in college (like Anela), or gearing up for another exciting year in elementary, middle, high school, or college (lots of names!), there's a fresh spirit of possibility and new beginnings in the air when Fall comes around!

I was so proud of our congregation's generous outpouring of school supplies for our **Back-to-School Sunday** on August 17! Weren't you smiling as our young people chose notebooks, crayons, glue, markers, pencils—and even a few backpacks? Thanks to your generosity, we also had extra supplies to share with our very own 'Īao Preschool, which began its new school year on August 4 with 39 eager students and an incredible team of dedicated staff.

On behalf of our Preschool Community: Sanoe Awai-Stewart, Bert Akitake, Susan King, Tim Stewart, Fley Iniba (our fearless director), AND our newest community member and current parent representative, Simiko Yoruw—I want to devote this "Rainbow Connections" column to introducing our preschool team. Please keep the staff, the children, and their families in your thoughts and prayers—for safety and joy, for curiosity and growth, for friendships and discoveries.

Let's pray for a year filled with love and laughter, as these little ones learn about the world around them—and about the God who made them and the Savior who joyfully said:

"Let the little children come to me, for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 19:14)

Mark your calendars: October 19 is Children's Sabbath, and we'll be inviting the preschool children, their families, and staff to join us in worship! Until then, take a moment to meet the people who live out our church's commitment in this life-giving mission to serve our wider community with care and love.

Continued on next page



Top row, L to R: Uncle Lewis, Auntie Amber, Auntie Mila, and Auntie Esther,
Bottom row: Auntie Haley, Auntie Ali, Auntie Fley, and Auntie Michelle!



September 7- 13th Sunday after Pentecost – Communion (No Sunday School)

Sermon Title: Choose Life!

Text: Deuteronomy 30:15-20

Keiro no Hi and Honoring our kūpuna:

Ruth Mukai, Grace Saito, Yaeko Sasaki,
Lynette Shiroma, and Mike Yamashiro.

Musician: Maki Rickard

Greeter: Shannon Ribao

Readers: Makelyn Johannes, Cynthia Snell

Aloha Hour: Jane Tesoro

September 14- 14th Sunday after Pentecost – RENEWAL Sunday!

Sermon Title: Woe to Whoa

Text: Isaiah 6:1-8

Time and Talent Surveys will be distributed

Sunday School: Samuel

Musicians: Dale Schwarz, Ann Barclay Rover

Greeter: Shannon Ribao

Readers: Makelyn Johannes, Cynthia Snell

Aloha Hour: Gail Ideue, Jan Saiki

September 21 15th Sunday after Pentecost – United Nations Peace Day

Sermon Title: Blessed are the Peacemakers

Text: Phil. 4:4-9

Peace Pole "Blessing"

Sunday School: Miriam

Musician: Niko Nemoto

Greeter: Shannon Ribao

Readers: Makelyn Johannes, Rena Hayashi

Aloha Hour: (tbd)

September 28- 16th Sunday after Pentecost – Blessing our Time and Talents

Sermon Title: It's Too Easy

Text: II Kings 5:1-14

Musician: Maki Rickard

Sunday School: Namaan

Greeter: Shannon Ribao

Readers: Makelyn Johannes, Rena Hayashi

Aloha Hour: Kosrae Etawi

Pastor's column continued from page 1...

Meet our Preschool Staff!



Auntie Fley (Fley Iniba) - Our Director!

She started as an Assistant teacher in 1998, then became a lead teacher, and is NOW our Director/Teacher. With a degree in Human Services (emphasis in Early Childhood Ed) , Fley leads with creativity and so much patience!

Auntie Michelle (Michelle Evans) - Lead Teacher

Michelle has been with us for 17 years! She loves the outdoors and camping... and remembers that Auntie Dawna (former IPS director!) was HER preschool teacher!

Auntie Haley (Haley Shimada) - Teacher

Haley has been with us for 5 years, came with a degree in Early Childhood Education, and is also a dance instructor at Waikapū Danceworks!)

Auntie Ali (Ali Costa) Assistant Teacher

Ali has been with us for 5 years and is the teacher for our oldest students, the "Butterflies." Ali also enjoys creating beauty with her crochet hobby!

Auntie Amber (Amber Johnston) Teacher's Aide

Amber recently came back to us (yay) after a time away raising her family. She loves hiking and spending time at the beach with her family and friends!

Auntie Mila (Mila Patao) Teacher's Aide, Cook

The children LOVE her grilled cheese sandwiches, chicken nuggets and her generous hugs just when you need it!

Auntie Esther (Esther Loloulu) Kitchen Helper and Morning Custodian : It's wonderful to have Auntie Esther doing so much for us, including bringing her strong Christian faith to every task and interaction with our keiki.

Uncle Lewis (Lewis Ruffin) Afternoon Custodian

We so appreciate the good work Uncle Lewis provides with all kinds of projects! Did you know he also works for Safeway stocking your groceries?



Want to put support of our Preschool into action?

Our Preschool would LOVE some guest "readers" during nap time from Sept. 15 - 30, 12:30 - 1:30. Two of our staff will be on vacation and you will be providing support for staff as they take turns taking their lunch breaks.

Please let Aunty Fley know your availability by emailing her at iaopreschool808@gmail.com or calling 808-242-1995.

Come and spend an hour with our preschool keiki!

Buildings and Grounds Community

Dennis Hashiro, Daniel Kamidoi, Howard Ikeda, Paul Lackey, Danny Johannes
Meetings are held on as needed basis and mostly on Monday Mornings.
NEXT MEETING: September 15 at 10:00 am



Learning Community

Dawna Krueger, Coreen Matsui-Lackey, Youlida Yoruw, Srue Sigrav,
Linda Johannes and Anela Awai-Stewart (off at college!)

ATTENTION KEIKI (AND PARENTS/GUARDIANS!)

**** NEW TIME FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL! ****

We have some exciting new developments in our plans for our beloved keiki! BEGINNING September 14, Sunday School will have a new start time! Instead of heading to the church sanctuary at 10:00, head on up to Kanda Hall for a time of learning, laughing and experiencing God's love! Tell your parents (and drivers!) to be here on time, so that we can get our full lesson in ... with games and crafts (that you love!) and songs and the scriptures we're memorizing. Hey! Have you been practicing the Books of the Bible with your families? Just look at some of the amazing Bible stories we'll be exploring this fall:

- Samuel's night voices!
- Miriam's big sis duties!
- Namaan and a strange cure!
- Feeding a crowd with a few loaves and fishes!
- Jesus "schooling" the temple priests (and his parents)...
- and so much more!

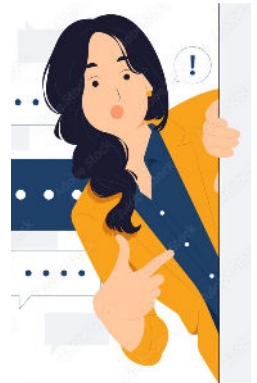


SO, bring a friend and your wide-open heart! Auntie Coreen, Auntie Youlida, Auntie Shrue and some of our amazing young adults are going to be ready for YOU! (if you are reading this... and you are an adult... please share with our younger church peeps! mahalo, kulo and thanks!)

In Other Learning Community News:

Our fearless leader, Dawna, will be returning soon (yay!) and we're gearing up for the fall. We had 11 from our church and preschool attending the conference zoom training "Church Safety for Children, Minors, and Vulnerable Adults" - great information and good conversations about this important topic!

Fall Considerations! Are you interested in a mid-week Bible study or Book study? Do you have a young person (or adult) interested in Confirmation or Church Membership? The Learning Community wants to hear from you! (we are also looking forward to the Time and Talent survey results - so be sure to fill in your ideas and preferences! Reminder: Time & Talent surveys will be introduced in worship on September 14, 21 & 28).



**SOME ARE POSTING ON SOCIAL MEDIA
SOME ARE PROTESTING IN THE STREETS
SOME ARE DONATING SILENTLY
SOME ARE EDUCATING THEMSELVES
SOME ARE HAVING TOUGH CONVERSATIONS
WITH FRIENDS & FAMILY** @lgbtqyrocuse

**A REVOLUTION HAS MANY LAYERS
BE KIND TO YOURSELF AND TO OTHERS
WHO ARE TRAVELING IN THE SAME DIRECTION**

JUST KEEP YOUR FOOT ON THE GAS.

From Justice & Witnessing Community

Gerald Montano, Shannon Ribao, Jaime Ribao, Cheryl Matsui
Meeting date: TBA

** As our church strives to be a light for justice, mercy and peace in our community and beyond.. we are living out the Gospel's call to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with our God! Join us as we prayerfully join in this vital work together!*

Mahalo to all who showed up for the "Billionaires Off Our Beaches" Event on Aug. 30

COMING UP:

- Postcard writing campaign on September 7 after worship!
- Do you have an issue or concern for us to consider?

Life at 'Īao UCC during the Week

Our worship may end on Sunday but the SERVICE continues. Here's a glimpse of what goes on around here during the week...



Jireh starts Preschool!



Church Safety Zoom conference



Visitation Team visits Rita!



Treasurer Warren leads us in understanding financial reports!



Seen at 'Īao Theatre ...



Kosraean children share a song!

Worshipping Community:

Shannon Ribao, Jaime Ribao, Susan King, Rena Hayashi,
Mayleen Phillip, Katherine Hashiro, Carolyn Kamidoi
Meeting date: First Sunday of the Month @ 11:15, Endo Hall



As September unfolds, our focus shifts to **Kūpuna Sunday** on September 7, where we will honor Lynette Shiroma, Mike Yamashiro and others for their gifts to our church. The month continues with **Renewal Sunday** on September 14 and **International Peace Day** on September 21—a perfect opportunity to remember and honor our Peace Pole.

The spirit of **music** is thriving at 'Īao UCC, thanks to our gifted accompanists. Each Sunday, Christophe Javon, Dale Schwarz & Ann Barclay Rover, Niko Nemoto and Maki Rickard offer beautiful music that enriches our worship. And also, our fabulous ukulele players, Anela, Kahu Dennis, Bryn, and Pastor Lauren! We are deeply thankful for their dedication and talent.

All are welcome to worship with us every Sunday at 10:00 AM, either in person or virtually.

Experience our meaningful services and be part of our vibrant community.



Stewarding Community

Anna Mayeda, Carley Defang, Gail Ideue, Jane Tesoro and Youlida Yoruw
Next Meeting: September 21 @ 11:30, Endo Hall

September 7 is **Kūpuna Sunday**. Along with recognizing our revered kūpuna, there will be a special tribute to Mike Yamashiro, who turned 80 years old this year. He lives on O'ahu but we will recognize his many contributions to 'Īao UCC. Lynette Shiroma is another special member who continues to inspire everyone with her faithful devotion.

Starting in September, please consider donating to the last special offering for this year. The **Neighbors in Need (NIN)** offering supports ministries of justice and compassion, with one-third of the offering given to the Council for American Indian Ministries and two-thirds supporting UCC justice ministries. October 5 is the suggested donation date, but it's not too early to make your contribution. Special envelopes designated for the NIN offering will be in the pews. In 2025 the NIN offering supported 26 grant recipients across the UCC who were engaged in projects of direct service and advocacy.



To prepare for October's Stewardship Season, the newly revised Time & Talent form will be distributed September 14th. (We are actively recruiting some "Stewarding Supporters" who can devote some time to a specific task or event that needs shared input from others. Please let any of the current Stewarding Community members know if you are willing to help. Our names are listed at the beginning of this article.

Thank you for your ongoing support and generosity!



We will again take part in Give Aloha to support the Learning Community in their growing vision. Past funding has provided Sunday School materials (including curriculum), educational scholarships, youth and adult programs, preschool welcome gifts, and attendance at the 'Aha youth conference.

Here's how you can support 'Īao UCC with Give Aloha:

- Shop at any Foodland, Sack N-Save , and Foodland Farms stores statewide during the month of September
- Use our code at checkout: 78972
- Make a monetary donation up to \$249. A portion of each gift will be matched by Foodland.

Other ways to support the program:

- Round up your purchase
- Donate spare change
- Donate 250 Maika'i = \$5 donation
- Purchase Give Aloha merchandise

MAHALO!

(see Dawna if you have questions)

Monthly Recurring Events

*Office hours: 9 am-3 pm (808)244-7353 email: office@iaoucc.org or by appointment.

Closed Fridays & Saturdays

*Ladies Lunch Bunch: First Friday of the month. 11:30 am-2:00 pm on the church lanai.

*Member Visitation: Second Wednesday of the month at 1:00pm.

Call/text Jane Tesoro @ (808) 276-2663.

*Food Pantry: Mondays 11:00 am-2:00 pm. (Help is always welcome!)

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

*Kosraean Women (WCA): Friday 5:30-6:30 pm Contact Youlida Yoruw/Carley Defang

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

*Kosrae Maui Church: Sundays at 3 pm

*Kosrae Maui Etawi Fellowship: Sundays at 4 pm

*Campus Workday: 4th Saturday of month. Contact Dennis (B & G) or Paul (Kosraean president)

September 2025

Happy Birthday this Month to:

2-Shannielle Alik, 5-Bert Akitake, 6-Avis Teshima-Wong,
6-Carley Defang, 11-Dawna Krueger,
12-Shelton Warren, 15-Erin Hashiro, 19-Jaime Ribao,
20-Winford Ideue, 22-Emily Murai, 23-Pancy Kurr,
25 Shannon Ribao, 29-Srue Sigrah

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Labor Day Holiday (office closed) NO Food Pantry	2 4:30p IPS Community E (tent) 5:30p-7:30p Al Anon District K	3 9a-10a Al Anon S 11a-2p Food Pantry K	4 9:30a IPS Chapel S 1p Bylaws Mtg E 7p-8p AA K	5 11:30a Lunch Bunch L 6p-7p Kosrae Women's Fellowship S	6 7p-8p AA K
7 10a Worship Communion Kupuna Sunday 3p-6p Kosrae Worship/Etawi S,K	8 Pastoral Retreat (Pastor to Oahu) 11a-2p Food Pantry K IPS Grandparent Day Snack IPS	9 Pastoral Retreat (Pastor to Oahu)	10 Pastoral Retreat (Pastor to Oahu) 9a-10a Al Anon K 1p Visitation	11 9:30a IPS Chapel S 7p-8p AA K	12 6p-7p Kosrae Women's Fellowship S 7p-9p- Kosraean Meeting S	13 7p-8p AA K
14 10a Worship Renewal Sunday 11:30a Worshipping Community E 3p-6p Kosrae Worship/Etawi S,K	15 10a B&G mtg E 11a-2p Food Pantry K 1:30p Learning Community mtg E	16 4p Niko/Pastor Rehearse S 5:30p-6:30p Micronesian Council K	17 9a-10a Al Anon K 10a PF Reunion Mtg E Īao Pepa Articles/Council Reports Due	18 9:30a IPS Chapel S 5:45p Pastoral Relations Committee ZOOM 7p-8p AA K	19 6p-7p Kosrae Women's Fellowship S	20 Interfaith Peace Day 7p-8p AA K
21 10a Worship Peace Sunday 11:30a Stewarding Community mtg E 3p-6p Kosrae Worship/Etawi S,K	22 11a-2p Food Pantry K	23	24 9a-10a Al Anon K 5:45p Council Meeting via ZOOM	25 9:30a IPS Chapel S 7p-8p AA K	26 6p-7p Kosrae Women's Fellowship S	27 8a Yard Maintenance/ Work Day 7p-8p AA K
28 10a Worship Time and Talent Sunday 3p-6p Kosrae Worship/Etawi S,K	29 11a-2p Food Pantry K	30			Building Key S- Sanctuary K- Kanda Hall E- Endo Hall L- Lanai	*TBA 5:30p Micronesian Council w/Pastor Lauren



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Website: iaoucc.org
facebook.com/groups/iaoucc/

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

Pastor	Lauren Buck Medeiros
Moderator	Shannon Ribao
Office Volunteer	Dawna Krueger, on vacation
MAHALO Avis/Kalani/others!	
Sept. Newsletter	(Mahalo: Kahu Kalani Wong!!)
Iao Preschool Director	Flerida Iniba
Pianist	(various)
Custodial Help	Youlida and John Yoruw

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