



A Monthly Newsletter of 'Īao United Church of Christ

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

April 2026

Kahu Kalani's Connection

These recent Kona storms have felt relentless. For weeks, they've disrupted daily life across our islands. Just when a bit of sunlight breaks through, another downpour arrives. The flooding has damaged homes, destroyed crops, and weighed heavily on people's spirits. Social media is filled with images and videos showing the extent of the destruction. The 50-year storm basin on Waiale Road—across from Maui Memorial Park's Garden of Meditation and just north of the correctional center—was filled to the brim and close to overflowing. The walkway to the pavilion at Kanahā Pond disappeared underwater. Mudslides blocked roads. Our own preschool had an awning pole ripped out and an impromptu waterfall from the gutter captivated the children. Many of us found ourselves asking, "When will this end?" I know I've said it more than once. In moments like these, where do we find hope?



Our first instinct in times of crisis is often fear. But these moments can also teach us to turn our eyes toward faith. Instead of focusing solely on the problem, we can look to the One who offers strength and support. Psalm 121 reminds us:

Psalm 121:1–2

- 1 I lift up my eyes to the mountains—
where does my help come from?
- 2 My help comes from the Lord,
the Maker of heaven and earth.

God, the Creator of heaven and earth, promised never again to flood the whole world and placed the rainbow in the sky as a sign of that covenant. His faithfulness remains constant.

It isn't only during natural disasters that we should cry out to God. Every challenge—big or small—is an invitation to lean on Him. Job, who lost everything and faced immense pressure to abandon his faith, declared with confidence: *"I know that my redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand on the earth."* (Job 19:25). His hope remained unshaken.

Easter is a reminder that hope is alive because Jesus lives. Though He died, He rose again—and through Him, we share in that promise of life. As we hold onto this hope, we begin to understand that nothing "will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:39).

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WORSHIP

April 2: Maundy Thursday, 6pm at 'Āo UCC

Title: *"He Pule I ka Pō - A Prayer in the Night"*

Preacher: Kahu Wayne Higa

Scripture: Hebrews 5:7-9

Readers: Kahu Kalani and Pastor Robb Kojima

Musician: Ruth Murata

April 5: Easter Sunrise Service, 6am at Ka'ahumanu Church

April 5: Easter Sunday (Communion)

Title: *He WHAT?!?*

Preacher: Kahu Kalani

Scripture: Matthew 28:1-10

Greeter: Jackie Murai

Readers: Darcean Phillip, Cynthia Snell

Musician: Maki Rickard

Aloha Hour: Office Volunteers

April 12: 2nd Sunday of Easter

Title: *Ho'oponopono 'Ia*

Preacher: Kahu Kalani

Scripture: John 20:19-31

Greeter: Jackie Murai

Readers: Darcean Phillip, Cynthia Snell

Musician: Niko Nemoto

Aloha Hour: Shruie Sigrah and Family

April 19: 3rd Sunday of Easter

Title: *On the Road Again*

Preacher: Kahu Kalani

Scripture: Luke 24:13-35

Greeter: Jackie Murai

Readers: Darcean Phillip, Cynthia Snell

Musician: Maki Rickard

Aloha Hour: Jane Akitake and Family

April 26: 4th Sunday of Easter

Title: *One for All and All for One*

Preacher: Pastor Kalani

Scripture: Acts 2:42-47

Greeter: Jackie Murai

Readers: Darcean Phillip, Cynthia Snell

Musician: Christophe Javon

Aloha Hour: Kosrae Etawi

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Storms—literal and figurative—will come. But when they do, we can lean on the strength of Christ. His peace surpasses understanding, and His hope carries us through even the darkest clouds.

On this journey with you,
Kahu Kalani

Building and Grounds Community

We thank God that we survived the back-to-back storms! No leaks were found inside any of our buildings. The preschool suffered some damage (see their article coming up) which will be taken care of at an upcoming workday.

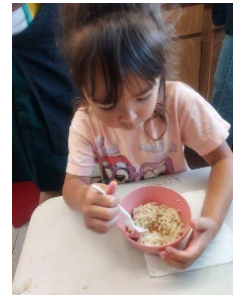


On February's Workday, we grinded the sanctuary lanai floor down to bare concrete in preparation for Epoxy coating. The epoxy was donated and will be applied after we get some warm, sunny days.

'Āo Preschool Community

'Āo Preschool is busy with activities, providing our keiki with new skills and experiences.

We did a cooking activity on February 24 for Chinese New Year. The students made saimin for long noodles and long life. They cut up spam and added fish cake to their noodles and ate it up!



On March 6, we enjoyed a performance called "Birds of a Feather" by MAPA at our preschool. They will be performing at schools around Maui over the next month!

As we were experiencing the arrival of the Kona Storm on March 12, Pastor Kalani came to our preschool to conduct chapel instead of us going to the sanctuary. Post Kona

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Storm, the staff came back to school on Monday, March 16 of Spring Break and found that the rain uprooted one of our Pergola Poles.

April is Month of the Young Child, and we have a number of activities to celebrate it.

- April 6 is 'Āao Preschool Easter party at school.
- April 12-18 is week of The Young Child.
 - 4/13 is Music Monday
 - 4/14 is Tasty Tuesday
 - 4/15 is Work Together Wednesday
 - 4/16 is Artsy Thursday
 - 4/17 is Family Picnic
- April 22nd is Earth Day!



Justice and Witnessing Community

The Justice & Witnessing Community is working hard to live out the Gospel's call to justice! Our own Cheryl Matsui testified against Bill 92 at the Maui County Council meeting on March 6th, 2026. Bill 92 would expand the Maui Police Department contract with the FBI's Joint Terrorism Task Form (JTTF). Groups like Maui Indivisible are concerned that such a collaboration would expand unlawful deportation operations on Maui. The bill was ultimately defeated with a unanimous vote.



Mahalo plenty to Cheryl Matsui for her bravery in testifying! Members of the community also submitted testimony in support for HB 1875, the gender-affirming care and reproductive health care shield law. This law protects medically necessary healthcare from outside political interference, such as malicious lawsuits. It has passed out of the Hawai'i State House and is now in the Hawai'i State Senate. Many thanks to those who submitted testimony!"

Learning Community

With the help of Kahu Kalani we have set up a new schedule for Sunday School. The children will remain in the worship service for communion Sunday and when there is a fifth Sunday-Youth Sunday -they will participate in worship.

The children have been working hard to learn all 66 books of the Bible. Auntie Youlida has found a song that has been very helpful. They are hoping the congregation is doing the same. Watch for the challenge in next month's 'Āao Pepa.

April 5, there will be an Easter Egg Hunt after the worship service. The Kosraean ladies will be providing all the goodies with the older youth hiding the eggs and staffing the gift tables. A yearly event looked forward to by everyone.

This month we will of course do a lot of reflecting on The Easter Story. Hope you are able to visit the sanctuary during April to see the "He is Risen" art the children have created. On April 12 we will also have a class where the main point is that we were made to live with God forever. We will look at Lazarus & the Rich Man from Luke 16:19-31. Then the following week, we will focus on Heaven is greater than we can even imagine with lessons coming from John 14:1-3 and John 3:16. Then from

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Mark 8:34-48 and Mathew 6:25-34 we learn about carrying our cross. A busy month for sure which will end up with the children taking part in Youth Sunday on April 26.

Worshipping Community

April's here, and we're jumping right into Maundy Thursday, 4/2 and Easter, 4/5. It's a great time for our community to come together, reflect, and enjoy the spirit of renewal these special days bring.

Oh, and don't forget the Bible memorization challenge from our Sunday School kids! Memorizing all the books is definitely not easy—but, it's a fun way to dive into Scripture and cheer each other on as we grow in faith.

As spring gets going, we can't help but notice how everything around us feels new again—just like the ways our faith can recharge us. This month, take a moment to think about how believing can spark some energy and purpose in your life. So come hang out, join in, and help keep our community vibe strong! Here's hoping April brings tons of joyful worship and real connections for everyone.

We want to give a big mahalo to everyone who helped with our services! Whether you greeted folks at the door, been our greeter at the pulpit, read Scripture, or brought tasty treats for Aloha Hour, we really appreciate you. Thanks for pitching in and making our community awesome—you all are the best!

Food Pantry

Our 'Īao UCC Food Pantry operated on four (4) days in February and served 205 (non-duplicated) households. Sixty-eight new families registered to receive food assistance. A big MAHALO for our 12 volunteers who worked 38 hours. The rains hampered the March food distribution. We still have one more Monday in the month so the report of numbers will be presented in the next newsletter. An extra special mahalo goes out to the children and grandchildren who came out during their spring break to lend a hand with the preparation of the fresh vegetable packages, distributing the boxes of canned goods, and collecting the shopping carts.



Pictures left to right:

- Javiohn Yoruw and Gergley Phillip bring back the shopping carts used by our clients.
- Leila Mayeda (Anna's granddaughter), Kazuko Teshima (Kalani's and Avis's granddaughter) bag fresh veggies and fruits.
- Dominick and Darson Defang do their share of bagging.
- JD Mayeda (Anna's grandson) restocks the pantry shelves.
- Mila Yokouchi (Howard's and Pam's granddaughter) helps with organizing the fresh veggie bags and distributing the boxes for the clients).

All in the Family



The Visitation Team (Jane Tesoro, Joy Yamane, Heidi Israel, and Kahu Kalani) had a chance to visit with Rita Whitford and share communion with her. Always an enjoyable time learning of Rita and her “exploits” as a young wahine.

Joyce McKay, Tadashi Fujitomo’s niece, visited us March 11-25 and jumped in to help in the Food Pantry, weeding the church yard with Dennis Hashiro, and reading to the preschool keiki while they napped. Mahalo Joyce for your servant heart.



Muhtacn Kosrae Women’s Day Celebration

March is Women’s Month and the Kosraen community marks this time with a day full of cultural and educational presentations, along with a market showcasing the talents and traditions of the community. This year’s event was held on March 8 at Pālama Settlement on O’ahu. Our own Pastor Lauren Buck Medeiros was a guest speaker and got to reunite with her beloved women.



Notes to the 'Ohana



CITRUS CITY BRASS 2026 HAWAII TOUR PERFORMANCE

THIS EVENT IS FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
DOORS OPEN AT 12:30PM

03 MAY 2026 1:00PM

IAO UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
2371 W VINYARD ST.
WAILUKU, HI 96793

Contact us
ctruscycitybrass@gmail.com

Visit our website
www.citruscycitybrass.com

CITRUS CITY BRASS

Mark your calendar for the return visit of the Citrus City Brass Band. They will be holding a concert on Sunday, May 3rd in our sanctuary. The artistic director and resident trumpet, Kenley Nakao, is the grandson of Maybelle Hashizume.



The Voices of Micronesians of Maui event, which was originally scheduled for March 21, has been rescheduled to May 30. 'Āao UCC will be hosting a table at this event in support of our Micronesian neighbors. We need volunteers to help staff our table. Please contact Dawna Krueger if you would like to kōkua.



A TRIBUTE TO BELOVED COUNCILMEMBER TASHA KAMA

NAVIGATING THE ISLANDS: CULTURE, HEALTH, AND COMMUNITY

HOSTED BY:
VOICES OF MICRONESIANS OF MAUI
Saturday, May 30, 2026 2:00PM-5:00PM
Queen Ka'ahumanu Shopping Center



COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS:

- MUA
- Roots Reborn
- WAO WE ARE OCEANIA
- KEIKI
- YES YOU CAN!
- MAUI COLLEGE
- HAWAII Job Center

FREE EVENT FOR EVERYONE!

- Kids Area
- Wellness Stations
- Giveaways and Prizes
- Entertainment-Cultural Showcase, Demos, & more!

Questions? Contact Youlida at (808) 298-1441 or Delta at (808) 264-1213

SERVICES AND RESOURCES:

- Enrollment for health insurance
- FREE health screenings
- Support for job opportunities
- FREE resources for the household
- Immigrant services
- 'Know your Rights' education

KKL COLLECTIVE

April 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Happy Birthday This Month to: 1-Dennis Hashiro, 2-Junior Kurr, 7-Jena-Lynn Johannes, Tim Greathouse, Anne Hill, 14-Bojay Petrus, Daecen Defang, Joy Yamane, 21 Susan King, 23-Joshua Yoruw, Kimberly Hadley, 24-Cynthia Snell, 26-Pam Ikeda, Jefferson Yinmed, 29-J. A. C. Yowur, Mike Yamashiro, 30 Warren Orikasa			1	2	3	4
			7p-8p 'Ukulele Hui S	9:30 IPS Chapel S 6p Maundy Thursday S	11:30a Ladies Lunch Bunch- L 6p-7p Kosrae Women's Fellowship S	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
6a. Sunrise Service Ka'ahumanu 10a-Easter Worship Communion Easter Egg Hunt 3p-6p Kosrae/Etawi S/K	9a-2p Food Pantry K 6:30-9:30 AA K	5:30-7:30 AI Anon District -K	6-7 Etawi K 7p-8p 'Ukulele Hui S	9:30 IPS Chapel S	6p-7p Kosrae Women's Fellowship S	
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
2 nd of Easter 10a-Worship 11:30 Learning K Worshipping E 3p-6p Kosrae/Etawi S/K	9a-2p Food Pantry K 6:30-9:30 AA K	12:45 Visitation	7p-8p 'Ukulele Hui S	9:30 IPS Chapel S	6p-7p Kosrae Women's Fellowship S	
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
3 rd Sunday of Easter 10a-Worship 3p-6p Kosrae/Etawi S/K	9a-2p Food Pantry K 6:30-9:30 AA K		lao Pepa/Council Reports Due 7p-8p 'Ukulele Hui S	9:30 IPS Chapel S	6p-7p Kosrae Women's Fellowship S	8a Workday
926	27	28	29	30	Location Key S - Sanctuary K - Kanda Hall E - Endo Hall L - Lanai Z - Zoom	
4 th Sunday of Easter 10a-Worship 3p-6p Kosrae/Etawi S/K	9a-2p Food Pantry K 6:30-9:30 AA K		5:45 Council- Z 7p-8p 'Ukulele Hui S	9a Shelter Dinner Preparation K 9:30 IPS Chapel S		



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"Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other." – 1 John 4:11

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Wailuku, HI 96793-1626

Office/Food Pantry (808) 244-7353
Office hours: **Mon. to Thurs., 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.**
or by appointment
Food Pantry Monday 11a-2p

Email: office@iaoucc.org
Website: iaoucc.org
facebook.com/groups/iaoucc/

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

Bridge Pastor	Kahu Kalani Wong
Moderator	Shannon Ribao and Suzette Robinson
Office Volunteers	Various Faithful Individuals
Pianist	Various Gifted Individuals
Newsletter	Kalani Wong, editor
'Īao Preschool Director	Flerida Iniba

You are always welcome at 'Īao UCC.

We are a people of God living and sharing the love of Christ through words and actions