

VOLUME XXXIII
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January 2026

The mission of the Waimea United Church of Christ is to provide, through Jesus Christ, the means by which people grow spiritually, thereby preparing and empowering them to witness to God's love, to identify the needs of the community, and to minister to them.

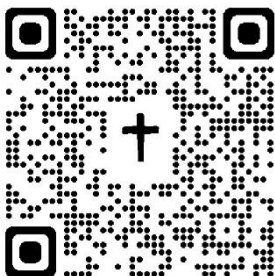
**Waimea United Church
of Christ**

Located at the corner of
Makeke and Tsuchiya
Roads, Waimea, Kaua'i.

Rev. Dr. Olaf Hoeckmann-
Percival, Pastor

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PO Box 457
Waimea, HI 96796

Sunday Morning Worship,
10 am
Tuesday Morning Bible
Study, 9 am



THE CONNECTION

A Publication of Waimea UCC

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Let me share one more little Christmas miracle with you. When the Christmas tree was brought down from its box in the attic of the Sanctuary, I noticed that one red ornament was still clinging to its branches. When the tree was put away the previous season, this one little red ball was apparently overlooked before the branches were bent up and compressed roughly into the original shipping carton. More to my surprise was that the ornament was an older glass style.

Every year we lose one or two of these kinds as they drop from the branches and smash to the floor. How could such a delicate piece of glass survive being tossed into a crate without breaking?

On the Sunday that we decorated the Christmas tree, nobody noticed that the red glass ornament was already hanging there right in the heart of the tree. My eye kept moving to it wondering if it would now drop and break as the branches were jostled and bent. The tree was wrapped by youthful hands with ribbon and two more strands of lights. Yet, the ornament stayed in place, delicate, braced and unbested.

I believe that our faith in Christ is very much like that ornament. It is beautiful to behold, seemingly fragile, yet amazingly shatterproof. I heard from an online viewer of our worship how beautiful it is to see the inside of the Victorian-style church with warm sunlight and moving shadows on their computer screen. How much it is like going to a beautiful place with people you love. One person mentioned that it was hard to fathom that what they see is right in the heart of dusty, dirty, old Waimea. When I compare our worship reel to others on the internet, I begin to see their point. Our worship of God is truly beautiful to behold.

I imagine myself shut up in a small apartment space somewhere in the ice and snow, turning on our church video to see the warm colors and palm trees! Outside it might be cold and foggy, but for a short time every week I can be in paradise and be in the beautiful presence of God once more.

Please look for God's beauty where it can be found in your life. See the delicate heart of your faith hanging on despite the crush of this world. Your shining love can mean so much to others who are embittered and cold. Look for the delicate miracles that God is doing every day. See the glint of glory that Jesus brings!

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Scriptures and Sermons for January

Jan 4th Exodus 20:1-12

“Resolved by God”

Jan 11th Exodus 20:13-17

“Don’t Do That”

Jan 18th Deuteronomy 6:4-9

“Hear Love”

Jan 25th Matthew 5:23-24

“Reconcile First”

Feb 1st Matthew 5:33-37

“Yes Be Yes”

We will be spending some time reviewing the specific commandments of God as they are found in the Bible, starting with the well-known Ten Commandments right up to “Love thy enemy”!



The **Tuesday morning Bible Study** group meets in Baird Hall at 9 am to discuss the Scripture for the upcoming Sunday sermon. Come share your inspirations and insights with the Pastor. Everyone is welcome



Mahalo:

- ♥ Thank you Merrick and Hana for doing such a great job setting up the model trains in Baird Hall, placing all of the buildings and cars around the tracks with such precision.
- ♥ Thank you Kim for painting everyone’s faces just like reindeer at the last Pseghetti Night!
- ♥ Thank you Jared, Olaf and Helen for putting lights on the Norfolk Pine as one enters the driveway to the church. Thankfully a power lift was used for safety.
- ♥ Thank you Janice and Irwin O. for the beautiful Christmas poinsettias for the altar!



Worship Leaders

Lay Readers: Margarete Kagawa & Helen Hoeckmann-Percival

Deacon: Marlene Matutino

January Deacons: Jared Morsey, Kevin Christian

Church Council Meeting: January 11, 2026, at 11:30 am via hybrid Zoom

Please pray for these members and friends:

David Somers, hip surgery;
Bradford Afong; Gia, recovering from broken neck; Natalie for bone marrow match, cancer; Marilyn Ueno, surgery; Helen Masaki; Irwin Oyama, back pain; Robert Medieros surgery recovery;

Susie Somers, cancer recovery; Ruth's daughter, Carol Alvesos (brain tumor); Mike Matutino, cancer recovery; Leinani Springer, cancer recovery; Galen Kaohi, cancer recovery; Norma Watanabe cancer recovery; Sue's friend Martha for Cancer recovery; Jared's father (stroke); Lucia's son Michael for healing; Mahea's mother (stroke); Helen's mother (heart); Kristen to fight infection; Rob Carlson; Beth Hanashiro (ulcer); An end finally to the pandemic; Healthcare workers; Those suffering from spiritual distress; Our local, state, and national leaders, our men and women in the military fighting terrorism, and a speedy end to wars everywhere.

Calendar Notes:

Annual Meeting of the Congregation will be the 1st of February 2026. Please get your reports into Jackie M. as soon as possible. Also, if you are asked to serve an office of the church, please consider a positive and prayerful response.

Please inform the church office if you have not received your 2025 annual giving statement by Jan 31st.

Hau'oli la Hanau!

- 4th Janice Oyama
- 4th Kathy Uyeda
- 6th Skyler Kagawa
- 7th Kairren Park
- 8th Happy Synder
- 9th Clint Synder
- 9th Kara Hegwood
- 12th Jonathan Galiza
- 14th Shelbi Kealohakuupuuwai
- 15th Elyse Dufour-Collins
- 17th Crystal (Whitehill) Park
- 18th Kevin Christian
- 26th Emily Evans
- 26th Ruby Doi
- 29th Barbara Burtch



Talk Stories

January's selection is *Frozen River* by Ariel Lawhon. Lucia Laidlaw will host on January 18, 2026. A novel based on a real 18th century midwife with the added twist of a murder mystery. When a man is found dead in the Kennebec River, midwife Martha Balard is asked to examine the body. She realizes that this is one of the men accused of raping a woman in her community. His death is suspicious but uncovering the truth in the eerily American justice system is difficult. Many were illiterate. Only men who owned property could vote. Judges were not necessarily trained in the law. Midwives were also key figures in health care and often called to handle more than births.

Helen Hoeckmann-Percival will host February's selection: *Yellow Face* by R.F. Kuang.

News From the Pews

- Kingston was christened November 30th. Mahea and Jared are the happy godparents.
- Luke Kevin Christian was christened on Christmas Eve. (Can you say that three times fast?)
- Merrick and his mother Melissa B. made it through a week in Wisconsin weather to visit family! Merrick ate a cheeseburger in Denver, too!
- Condolences to Robert M. and Family on the loss of his mother just before Christmas. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.
- Elyse and Lily also spent time on the mainland in the cold visiting family!
- Congrats to Clint and Elie Snyder on the birth of the new baby boy: Azariah Phinehas Snyder, "Azzy" for short.
- Was it a bird? Was it a plane? Actually, it was a pigeon that was being chased by a calico cat that flew into the dominos game on December 9th! Pastor called the bird "Fred" –
- Kealana at the after-school gym skipped going to work one afternoon because, as she put it, "There is too much drama!" So, her mother TOLD her to go hang out with the pastors at the gym to go get her heart right again.
- What a great "Persian Christmas Tea" was held last month. Everybody got to sniff tea bags to determine the flavors. Jeopardy was fun and informative. The ukulele choir led the Christmas carols too. Good job organizing it Margaret and Helen H-P.
- The "Aloha" sign in the driveway entrance has crumbled apart, but we have Adam the woodworker who has volunteered to replace it! Super blessing!
- Yeah, the steeple project is complete! Thank God for Alex and Mitch hanging around 85 feet up. With a little bit of aging on the new cedar shingles, the church will look just like old again! All that trouble just to stay the same—that be the nature of historic preservation work! Thank you to the Vidinha Trust Foundation for the grant to help pay for the restoration, too.
- What a glorious and full Christmas Eve! Thanks go to the Niihau Kumu Ola keiki (Helen H-P, directing) for the incredible Christmas pageant. Karen Dickinson's "What Child is This?" solo was so powerful and heartfelt. Cindy Combs was extraordinary as she accompanied on the piano with Ross Barker on guitar. Vicar Kerry of our sister Episcopal Church attended and gave the beautiful benediction as we all sang "Silent Night" holding our candles in the dark, bringing Christ's light out into the world



(L) Christmas tea was held December 14, 2025. The theme was a Persian Tea. Special rugs were rolled out in Baird Hall, fancy tea cups were placed on the tables. Everyone brought cookies and treats to share. A guess the tea contest was held and a jeopardy game was played. It was a wonderful fellowship time

(R) Luke Kevin Christian is christened on Christmas Eve. Congratulations to parents Kay and Kevin and sisters Hannah and Abby.



(L) Karen Dickinson wows us with her performance of "What Child is This."



(L and Below) The Kumu Ola Choir performs "Voyages: A Hawaiian Christmas Pageant." Students from the choir read passages from Matthew in both Hawaiian and English. A hula was performed and songs were sung. The three wise men entered with canoe paddles.



Annual Congregational Meeting—February 1st, 2026

Every year we are obligated to hold an annual meeting and to elect people to serve in various positions. These positions collectively ensure the vitality and growth of the church. Please consider participating in the governance of the church. These are the positions with a brief summary of their duties:

Moderator (Currently held by Kay Lim-Christian)—this will be open for 2026-2027 years. Moderators serve for two years. Their duties are to conduct council meetings and congregational meetings. Moderators often post an agenda before meetings if there is new business.

Vice-Moderator—(2 year position) currently vacant—the vice moderator conducts meetings if moderator is unable to. The vice-moderator conducts nominations before the congregational meetings. The vice-moderator may also maintain a calendar of events.

Secretary—(2-year position) currently held by Jackie Matsumura—the secretary takes notes and prepares the minutes for each council and congregational meeting. The secretary also creates/assembles the annual report ahead of the congregational meeting.

Treasurer—(2-year position) currently held by Margarete Kagawa—maintains the financial records of the church and ensures that the bills are paid. The treasurer prepares monthly financial reports and a final yearly report for the congregational meeting. The treasurer also creates a yearly budget.

Assistant Treasurer(2-year position) currently held by Marlene Matutino. The assistant treasurer assists the Treasurer as needed. Currently offerings are recorded and deposited in the bank account. Each member receives an annual accounting of his or her donation to the church.

Board of Finance-(2-year positions)—consists of 7 members:

Treasurer

Assistant Treasurer

Buildings and Grounds

Stewardship-currently held by Sue Carlson-encourages active congregational participation in the church through tithes, time commitments, pledges, and prayer

Cemetery—currently vacant—oversees the maintenance of grounds and records of the cemetery

At-Large—currently Diane Foulks and Susie Somers. They attend any meeting of the board of finance.

Missions (1 year position) currently held by Phoebe Liu-Eng—helps to extend the mission of the church into the wider community through congregational participation in national mission drives and in local community events.

Fellowship (1 year position) currently held by Kathy Uyeda and Shelly Pascua-supports the congregation in social activities such as providing refreshments after worship, recruiting volunteers to provide refreshments, and setting up for potlucks.

Music & Worship (1 Year position)-currently held by Helen Hoeckmann-Percival-help plan the music and worship in coordination with the pastor. Arrange childcare, help ensure that the sanctuary is ready for worship service, provide opportunities for sharing of musical talents.

Christian Education (1 year position)-currently vacant--select materials appropriate for the education of the youth, find teachers for the curriculum

Deacons(3-year position)-there are nine deacons. At each congregational meeting 3 deacons retire and 3 new deacons are elected. (Of course, deacons may opt to take on another three-year term.

Kevin Christian, Jared Morsey, Helen Hoeckmann-Percival are retiring in 2026

Deacons assist the pastor, serve communion, help open and close the church building, pass the collection plate and assist in the spiritual needs of the congregation. (Deacons who will continue to serve:(term expiration (2027) Mary Hayes, Marlene Matutino, Joy Whitehill (term expiration 2028):David Somers, Jackie Matsumura, Marsha Kiest

Personnel-(1 year position) currently vacant-maintains and reviews the policy manual, conducts reviews of each employee.

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When your own soul needs to see a miracle of
God, just remember the perfect glass ornament
on the tree that hung on despite being crushed
into the box for a year
Blessed New Year, Pastor Olaf

◆
DOMINOES
TUESDAY, 7-9 PM
AT BAIRD HALL
◆

Waimea United Church of
Christ
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