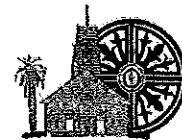


T h e C o n n e c t i o n

A publication of the Waimea United Church of Christ
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NUMBER I

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Shortly after we arrived in Waimea so many years ago, I was at a store's garden department where I happened to notice some rose starters on a discount table. They were only ninety-nine cents. I looked more closely at them. Wow, they were Armstrong hybrids. Some did not seem to be quick anymore. I squinted to check along the stems for the telltale little green bumps of life. Hmmm, they were not as lifeless as I had first thought. They could be saved.

I bought three, not knowing exactly where I would plant them at the parsonage. I had just slashed-and-burned a section where I would eventually plant the vegetable garden. Perhaps along the path down to the vegetables? Yes, that would do. The three rose starters were different sorts: amarillo, magenta, and Tahitian sunrise. The last mentioned, the Tahitian sunrise, produced the most gorgeous rose. The colors were variegated soft yellows and pinks that seemed indeed to mimic a sunrise over the ocean.

That Tahitian sunrise bush was also the most prolific. At one point, I recall having some thirty roses blooming simultaneously. The scent was amazing, too. The bush fell victim to its own fantastic growth when after a rain with heavy winds I discovered the bush fallen sideways half uprooted. I set it back straight again and staked it with a heavy metal post. I was not sure it was going to come back to life, but since I had brought it back to life once before, I hoped that it would make it back to full bloom again. Right away the bush recovered.

Three months ago, my wife mentioned to me that the Tahitian sunrise roses were all gone and the bush looked as if it were dying. Later when I went down to water it, I was shocked to discover that all of the leaves had turned brown overnight. I had never seen anything like it. The other two rose bushes were fine. I looked for insects or some other explanation. I could find none. It seemed that it was just time for that beautiful rose bush to die.

I found it hard to accept the loss of the Tahitian sunrise roses. You know how it feels when you care for something a long time—or in this case seemingly bring a plant back to life twice! I was quite forlorn. I inspected what was left of the bush for any sign of life using a magnifying glass. I found only one small green bump. I trimmed all of the dead twigs above that bump and prayed over the bush.

Alas, that bush never came back to life. However, out of the ground in front of that stumped elder bush, a brand new rose stalk had pierced the earth sprouting off the erstwhile root. I had been looking for life on the exhausted bush, when in fact new life was growing just before it. I did not even notice it until it was already six inches tall!

The old German Christmas carol rings true "Er ist ein Ros Entsprungen," "He is a rosebush springing up!" I cannot wait until the fresh new blossoms are seen again. God gives us all new life—look hard in that unexpected place. Praise God!

Happy New Year, Pastor Olaf

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.



Sermon Scripture Passages

January 1	Genesis 1:26-31, 2:18-24 "Good"
January 8	Genesis 12:10-20 "Beautiful"
January 15	Genesis 29:15-20 "Worthy"
January 22	Exodus 2:1-10 "Sacrificial"
January 29	Judges 4:4-10 "Judging"

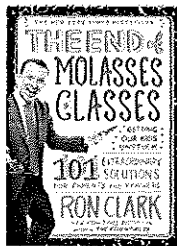
This new sermon series is focused on the women of the Bible! If you be of one particular gender, or the other, you may find the sermons to be spiritually uplifting as well as mildly jarring. The women of the Bible are truly a special lot!



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.

B The January Book Club meeting
O will be in the home of Debbie
O Santmyer. We will discuss the
K book, "The Molasses Classes," by
C Ron Clark.
L Everyone is welcome to join us
U for discussion.
B



LETTER FROM A VISITOR

Dear Rev. Dr. Hoeckmann-Percival & Members of Waimea UCC,

We attended your church service this past Sunday and were so delighted by your warm welcome--and the wonderful Christmas Cantata. Thank you for everything and for the friendliness that you showed to us and our friends Paul & Audrey. I'm going to make a few suggestions to our church council--Lutherans could use some help in this area!

Thanks again for a truly spiritual worship experience.

Delpha & George Harris
Minneapolis, Minnesota

YOUR CHURCH COUNCIL AT WORK... December 2011 Meeting

Church Leadership: nominees are still needed for several positions—*Music & Worship, Stewardship, Treasurer, Buildings & Grounds, Deacons*; **Support for Youth:** \$850 will be given to the Kauai Association Youth Fund, to show our support for church youth on island; **Aha Pae'aina:** the Council was disappointed to hear that the regular Youth Event preceding the annual Aha Pae'aina was cancelled for 2012; **Young Life:** first meeting on Friday, 12/16, at the Ed Center; **Pastor's Vacation:** Council granted Pastor's request for ten days leave in March to visit his uncle in Germany; **Budget 2012:** proposed budget was presented for comment and changes. The final budget will be approved at the January meeting.

These past years we have had wonderful people who have been willing to put in time and effort into serving the church. We appeal to anyone who is willing and able to step into the positions being vacated to come forward, so that the church can continue its work. Please talk to Margaret if you feel called to serve and please pray for the church leadership as we head into the new year.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR
CHURCH ANNUAL MEETING
SUNDAY, JANUARY 29TH
IMMEDIATELY AFTER WORSHIP
POTBLESS LUNCH TO FOLLOW

A Christmas Story

Already the folks were lining up at 7am at the Food Pantry at the Ed Center on the Wednesday morning before Christmas. Pastor Olaf and Mike Vidinha arrived with a pick-up truck full of chicken and eggs. Mike joked that the chickens were forced to lay the eggs before they gave their lives for Christmas dinner. The day before, the pantry was stocked with bread, rice, orange juice, and canned goods. Lucia and Bill Laidlaw, Grace, Felicia, Nora, Helen H-P sorted the food out on tables and started the long process of portioning. Would there be enough? Everytime they looked out the door the line was getting longer. As a special Christmas surprise, gift cards to Ishihara Market were being given away. We started counting heads to see if all would suffice. Soon the chicken was all gone--substituted with canned meats. The bread was gone--dry noodles were added. Young families at the end of line were beginning to look a bit worried if they would be served. In twenty-four-minutes time, sixty-four families were helped. That must be some kind of a record! Well, "Merry Christmas to all, and to all, a good night."

It was great to find a full huge box of donated food last month for our Food Pantry, Nana's House and the Salvation Army. Your help is greatly appreciated!



The Hand Prayer



Start with a fist, to remind you of God's power. Thank Him for all that He has done and continues to do.

Open your hand. Your **thumb** is closest to you, so pray for those closest to you—family and friends. Unbend your thumb.

Now unbend your **pointing finger**. Pray for those who 'point' us in the right direction—teachers, doctors, ministers. They need support and wisdom.

Next, unbend the **middle finger**. This is the tallest finger, so pray for those in leadership—the President, leaders in the church and community, near and far.

Now unbend your **ring finger**. This is the weakest finger, so pray for those in need—the sick, the troubled, and the needy. They need our constant prayer.

Lastly, unbend your **pinkie**. This smallest finger reminds us where we are in relation to God and others. Pray for yourself. After praying for everyone else, our personal needs will be put in its proper perspective.

I found this in an article entitled "The Power of Prayer" by Lori Erickson, in the December issue of Woman's Day magazine.

"The purpose of prayer, in many respects, is to have a conversation with God, one that gets you more in alignment with His view," says Dr. Koenig. "That, in turn, will change your own perspective." Simply put, if you turn to God more for guidance than a specific outcome, you'll likely find a way to answer your own prayers."

Make 2012 a year of constant and fervent prayer.



The Church's Ministries

JANUARY 2012

Lay Reader: Winona Steed

Deacon: Helen H-P

Food Pantry Distribution:

Wednesday, January 25th, 9:00 a.m.

Rummage Sale:

Saturday, January 14th, 8:30-11:30 a.m.

Quilting Group:

No meeting in January

Church Council Meeting:

Sunday, January 8th, 11:30 a.m.

Finance Committee Meeting:

Sunday, January 15th, 11:30 a.m.

The Power of Prayer

"Physicists have proven that particles can be connected even if they are separated by distance, so that changing one alters the other... People are interconnected too, and when influence is sent out in the form of prayer, it may have a physical effect on the person who is being prayed for."

-Larry Dossey, MD

Our Prayers: For Kathy Uyeda and the family of her brother, Dan Suga (his passing on December 25); continued healing prayers for Lynn, Susie Somers' sister; Robbie (Nora's son-in-law); Beth Hanashiro, Jean Thompson, Wayne (Lyndel Erdmann's brother), Satoe Oyama, Tomie Watanabe, Kikui Yamamoto, Mary Watanabe, Gladys Okada, Catherine Wilson, Nancy Jones, Jane Matsukawa, Sue Metivier, Jim Kimoto, Nelson Keller, Frank Watanabe, Nora Vidinha, Michael, Lance; Michael Nizo, Veronica Botelho, Sosei Chinen, Selden Burtch, Verna Kauahi, Desiree Kamai-Santos; prayers of support for our graduates, the youth in Waimea, our local, state and national leaders and our troops overseas, our church leaders and programs.

This one's for Tom: A minister in Florida lamented that it was difficult to get his message across to his congregation. "It's so beautiful here in the winter," he said, "that heaven doesn't interest them. And it's so hot here in the summer that hell doesn't scare them!"

We miss you, Tom. Come back soon!



**JESUS IN THE
HOOD
MINISTRY
SUNDAY, JANUARY 15TH,
AFTER SERVICE**

**Leave your car hood open, if
you want Pastor to check
and/or bless your vehicle!**

CALLING ALL SENIORS

The \$1,000 *Grace Scholarship* is awarded to two Waimea High School graduates every year. If you are interested in this financial aid for post-high school education, log on to www.waimeachurch.org, and look under "Links" for an application form and more information.



Shelly, Suzie, and David, you were so wonderful to hand out all that candy (600 pieces) during the Waimea Light Parade! The candy was stickered with "Merry Christmas from Waimea United Church."

Thank you to Helen H-P for designing the float and lending her SUV.

Ω

The Waimea UCC keiki Christmas presentation on December 18th was marvelous. Thank you to Lissa and the kids (and so many adult helpers) for leading in the Sunday School version of Handel's *Hallelujah Chorus*. If you would like to see it again, go to the church website at waimeachurch.org, click "Worship" and "Videos" on the navigation bars. Thank you, Mike Matutino for filming the kids, and Pastor Olaf for putting the video together.

Ω

Thank you to Ken and Teri Sakai for stringing Christmas lights on the back fence of the Ed Center for the town to enjoy from the main road. It looked great.

Ω

Thank you Chancel Choir for the incredible Celtic Christmas Cantata, "*A Tapestry of Light*." CD's of the cantata are available in the narthex. Please make a donation to the music fund. The cantata was also shown during Christmas week on television.

**► VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED
FOR CHURCH CLEANING.
PLEASE SIGN UP IN THE
NARTHEX.
► PASTOR IS LOOKING FOR
VOLUNTEERS TO COME TO
THE ED CENTER AFTER
SCHOOL FOR AN HOUR OR
SO, TO HANG OUT WITH KIDS.**

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