

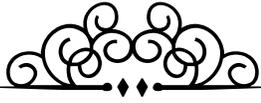


# Nu 'Oli

# GLAD TIDINGS WAIOLA CHURCH'S Pastoral Letter

Kekemapa 2016

December 2016



## WAIOLA CHURCH

(United Church of Christ)

535 Wainee Street  
Lahaina, HI 96761

Phone/ Fax: 808.661.4349  
waiolaucc@waiolachurch.com

**Interim Minister:**  
Kahu Dennis Alger

**Lay Minister:**  
Kahu Anela Rosa

**Moderator:**  
Grale Lorenzo-Chong

**Weekly Worship:**  
Sundays @ 9am

**Sunday School:**  
Sundays @ 9:15am

**Office Hours:**  
M, W-F 8am - 2pm



Nu 'Oli / Glad Tidings *FROM* Kahu Dennis

### YEAR END GREETINGS WITH THOUGHTS OF THE YEAR TO COME

By now, Christmas will have come to our homes, communities, churches—even our world. While we hope that joy has been felt among earth's people, we know that all is not well among the most vulnerable. This fact reminds us that Christmas is not the end; it is the beginning. A song we used to sing years ago is "I Am the Light of the World." It proclaims that, after all the busy and exciting times/events (feasting, gifting, worshiping) we must engage the "work of Christmas." We are called to activate and live into the promise of the Prince of Peace. Because we have received the gift of divine presence, we are given the kuleana of furthering the endeavors of peace and safeguarding the light which has come among us.

One Sunday recently I spoke about Mary as a bold and reverent witness to God's new creation. We need to remember that she is not a docile 13 year-old; according to Luke's portrayal, Mary is an astute, mature, and eloquent proclaimer of God's work to subvert the powerful and privileged. I asked if we can still hear her voice today, and what her message might be for the church. At brunch an odd but welcome conversation took place. It was odd, because many persons do not give feedback regarding the homily, at least in a manner inviting discussion. Rather, this insight was shared: Do not Mary and Joseph deserve credit for the compassion of Jesus? I hadn't thought of it that way, yet this sentiment upholds the value of positive family relationships and the nurturing of ethical/moral development. This is of a piece with "It takes a village" understanding of contextual maturity.

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As noted before, the church exists within a context, as does the biblical witness. We cannot ignore what is going on, what anxiety is being either addressed or exploited, and still be church. Our “salvation” is tied up in our participation in the work of the Suffering Servant—which looks like the Magnificat in action.

Publisher of the Christian Century, Peter W. Marty writes, in the December 7<sup>th</sup> edition, “...*Does racism or ‘celebrated whiteness’ still linger as our nation’s original sin? In The End of White Christian America, Robert P. Jones names the anxieties felt by a majority of white Americans who believe that our nation’s culture and way of life have changed for the worse over the last 60 years. In the minds of many, America’s whiteness is worrisomely slipping away.* (p.3) This anxiety is recognized all too clearly through recent events—events which reveal the animosity of our time toward “those not like us.” Ours is the mandate to speak truth in a society preferring falsehood; someone writing in Sojourners articulates the need to speak truth in a post-truth society. Invented “facts” continue to sway opinion and thereby benefit the already powerful. The spirit of Herod has not yet been vanquished. Rather, societies succumb to decency-challenged mirages in anticipation of the clean water of the New Creation proclaimed at Christmas.

Authentic faith recognizes charlatanry in its various guises and holds fast to the three moral foundations of the universe—the mercy of God, the justice of God, the love of God. Authentic faith is not passive; authentic faith is active, traveling with Jesus into territories familiar as well as new; authentic faith finds us on the line of witness rooted in courage—the biblical story.

Each congregation has its unique context and its own set of opportunities. Each congregation needs faithful participants—especially new ones. Can you imagine a church with too many ready and willing disciples? Can you imagine Waiola with 5-10 new members? Oh, more than that, you say? Ok then. Let’s be about some gentle recruiting.

I’m a dues-paying member of the Interim Ministry Network. Each edition of their on-line newsletter says, “It’s an exciting time to become a member...” What if we demonstrate that enthusiasm of intention regarding membership at Waiola?

Years ago at Eagle Creek Presbyterian Church (Eagle Creek, OR) I was serving as Stated Supply Pastor (for 13 years). I started asking regular participants about membership; though many of these folks had been active for years, several had never been asked! So, I encouraged them to consider it. At Easter, 12 persons became members, joining the 30 or so already on the rolls (yeah, small church).

Some at Waiola are considering membership; let’s encourage them. I’m suggesting we meet on two Saturday mornings, such as January 7 and 14, in order to talk about faith journeys, this congregation’s covenant, the UCC, and so on. Let’s talk.

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Let's talk about the Interim Process as well. A team has been appointed to assist in the very practical matters of the transitional time; that team will also be the one to conduct the search for your next settled pastor. We have a lot of work to do before that person is called.

We need some in-depth and unhurried group conversations. I'm suggesting a Board retreat in early February as well as processing with the Transition Team. My lengthy report is not one a person simply mails out. It needs serious consideration by the leadership in various gatherings. More about this during the Annual Meeting.

As I've often said, my role is not one of starting any programs. Rather, I'm happy to encourage creativity regarding new programs or projects. The Homeless Coalition has been one of those good ideas. Another is in formative stages and has great potential for both serving and creating community. Consider this idea:

*A community garden on church-owned property which is currently a vacant lot.*

As you walk along Luakini Street, you'll notice on the mauka side a lot on which is parked numerous vehicles flowing over from an auto repair business. There was once a house there. In the midst is a huge mango tree. Other scrub plants have sprung up. There is water service on site. And there is a pile of wood chips from the recent tree trimming operation at Campbell Park. Picture the site with volunteers and other community members developing beds, planting, tending and, ultimately, harvesting vegetables. This idea has been generated by Na Kia'i in order to improve the site in ways which will support the community. So, pass by and entertain visions of good food growing under ka la Lahaina.

Speaking of mission, because the church was created for mission each congregation has a mandate to consider ways in which to be active in the local and global community—in addition to holding worship services. So, some thoughts.

It has been my privilege, as some of you know, to have been involved in partnerships over the years. First is the Presbytery of the Cascades partnership with the Central Presbytery of Cuba; I visited our sisters and brothers there in 2001 and 2005, and a few friends have travelled to the US. Second is the Central Pacific Conference partnership with the Northwest Mindanao Jurisdiction, United Church of Christ in the Philippines; I visited pinoy and pinay friends in 2011 and 2013, and some of them visited the CPC. Third is the Gresham UCC and Gingoog UCCP, Gingoog City, Mindanao. We all learned a lot through these relationships and, because travel is expensive and complicated, we found ways of engaging in mutual support. What would it be like for Waiola to develop a partnership with a congregation far away? How might that enrich the real-life awareness between the congregations? Fourth is the Kokokahi Hunger Mission which was developed in 1976 on the leased church property in Kane'ohe. Cross-cultural training took place there until the late 1980's when the lease was lost. Currently, Melinda Ahn keeps the endeavor going. While Kokokahi Church no longer exists, long-time member Melinda remains in contact with two of the former trainees who are engaged in community development: Daulat in Indonesia and Roger Butlig in Cagayan de Oro, Mindanao.

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I suggest looking at the website ([globalministries.org](http://globalministries.org)) for our Common Global Ministries (UCC & Disciples), signing up for the weekly email, and consider becoming a Global Mission Congregation. Again, we can only learn about others through such connections; we can pray for them AND they can pray for us.

I further suggest consideration of studying to become an Open & Affirming Congregation, and possibly a Just Peace Congregation ([ucc.org](http://ucc.org)). These modes of identification speak to the ways in which faith is lived out; these identities serve to attract potential members.

Here is a suggestion for your New Year's Resolution list: Active Church Membership. According to the materials we provide to potential members ("What the church expects of you"), and consistent with the covenant we embrace through the format for receiving new members, *Negligence in church attendance [among those physically able] can be nothing other than a sign of insincerity or of failure to comprehend the meaning and the purpose of the church.*

■ *Raku Dennis*



# The HAPS at WAIOLA

## FIRST ANNUAL LAHAINA TOWN CHRISTMAS PARADE

Waiola Church member Elle Cochran organized a little brigade to march in the first Christmas parade on Front Street on the morning of Christmas Eve. Waiola Church and Save Honolua Coalition walked together with first responders and other community organizations to help celebrate the various Lahaina athletic programs of distinction and spread some holiday cheer to locals and visitors, alike!



Photo Credits: Elle Cochran & Jen Mather

# Christmas @ WAIOLA



**Na Leo O Waiola**



**Sunday School Teachers Lighting Advent Candles**

Photo Credit: MaryAnn Alger

# Waiola History

From The Maui News, October 30, 1909

Last week Thursday a committee of Ministers met at the home of Rev. Mr. Dodge to discuss the possibility of publishing a simple catechism in both English and Hawaiian for the Sunday Schools of Maui. Rev. Collins G. Burnham of Lahaina has been working on such a catechism for the past few months and his questions and answers were submitted to the last Ministers' School at Paia with the result that a committee was appointed consisting of himself as chairman with Revs. Kaunehiwa, Waltrip, Turner and Dodge. The purpose of the committee is to issue enough copies so that each Sunday School may be supplied with a few free of charge, so that the catechism can be thoroughly learned for Sunday School celebrations and in the regular work of the Hawaiian and Union churches.

The bell tower of Hale Aloha, Lahaina, is nearly completed under the direction of Rev. D. W. K. White. Mr. White designed the plan of the tower which is one of the handsomest on Maui. It is built on the Olowalu mauka end of the building, and can be seen from above the trees from many parts of Lahaina. The large bell which the tower supports has a clear strong tone and can be heard a long distance. The lower part of the tower is fitted up with rooms for dishes and an equipment for the parish needs of the Wainee Church. It is hoped that the hall can soon be equipped with a better lighting plant.

Aloha! Mahalo to you all for your feedback about the Waiola History snapshots.

As some of our readers have asked where I find these items, I've added the link to the Library Of Congress's Digitized Newspaper archive. Many more articles mention Wainee Church in passing.

Also try searching for your family names or other items of interest! And don't forget about our Hawaiian Nupepa archives on the internet, too!

Mahalo and hau'oli makahiki hou!

Jen

Library of Congress: <http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/newspapers/>



**Waiola Church**  
**PO Box 455**  
**Lahaina, HI 96767**

# *Nu 'Oli FROM Waiola*

<b>CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS</b>	
January 1	New Year's Day - Communion
January 6	Ephiphany
January 8	Special Guest: Papa Makua Kenneth Makukane
January 15	Special Guest: Rev. Tino Cordova
January 22	Kalaupapa Sunday
January 29	Music Sunday

**Want to see the newsletter in full color?**

Visit: <http://www.waiolachurch.org/newsletters/nuoli1216.pdf>