



"The Messenger of Love"

Ka Elele Aloha

January 2008

Volume 12 Issue 1

Christ Church, Uniting Disciples and Presbyterians Worship—Sundays 10 am
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This issue of Ka Elele Aloha runs through January The February 2008 newsletter information deadline is January 25th.



New Year's Blessings!

As I sat in Starbucks with my walking partner on January 1st, I had the overwhelming feeling that this is going to be a very good year. While it may have been the caffeine, it could also have been the feeling that change is in the air—a feeling colored by a gospel grounded hope that it will be good change.

The Jabbok River Reflections have been having a cumulative effect. And not just upon me as the preacher. One of our members said the other day, "I'm starting to get kind of excited about the renewal that CCU is going to experience." And in a way, I was thinking, that enthusiasm is the beginning, isn't it?

Council met on December 19th with 100% attendance including the five elders-elect. Time was taken for each person to share a perspective upon the challenge ahead and how we might proceed. Two Saturday All-Church Retreat/Workshop days have been scheduled (January 26 and February 16).

The Annual Meeting (which in recent years has been held in February) will this year be held following worship on March 16th. Council's goal is to have ready for that meeting a congregationally developed short and long term plan for the rebirth and growth of CCU.

To evoke your creativity, I'm inviting members and friends to email, fax or mail me one or both of the following: a graphic logo design for CCU and a short phrase or saying that "says it all" or, at least, "says a lot" about us, or at least what we hope would be true for us.

I'll post the submissions that I receive by January 18th. Thanks in advance.

More later, Buddy

Course Change

What I'm Thinking

Buddy Summers, Pastor

It's Indicated

An unmistakable sign of the need for a CCU course correction is that this has become a reasonable question: Is CCU viable?

CCU is currently unable to fund a 2008 Operating Budget based upon the usual assumption: that there will be sufficient anticipated income to designate at least 10% for mission, provide cost of living raises for current staff, and keep the campus operating in good order. The presenting problem? There is not sufficient anticipated income.

The question of CCU's vulnerability has been easy to ignore as year after year we finished in the black, engaged in creative community service ministries (e.g. from Snow Day to Family Promise), enjoyed worship, each other's company and welcomed annually at least a few new members, each of whom have infused CCU with wonderful energy.

On the other hand, there has been a multi-year net downward trend in the number of active members, the steady erosion of children's Sunday School attendance followed by the elimination of children's Sunday School, steady reduction of funds for membership oriented programs, and an increasing dependence upon income from rental use of the campus.

Finally, like numerous small churches our situation has manifest itself as somewhat analogous to that of many families on the island (and the mainland)—just one paycheck away from homelessness. Well not quite that, hardly— but you get the point, I hope.

Whether or not our circumstances of decline and aging mirror that of our parent

All Church Retreat and Workshop

January 26th 9 am - 3 pm
on the **CCU** Campus
making time for
reflection and collaboration
rethinking evangelism
exploring **CCU's** future
the kingdom of **God**
is justice and peace
and joy in a holy spirit
Lunch together: Potluck!

CCU Adult Study Jan. 6 - Feb. 10 . . .

“Listening for God through Contemporary Literature”

Facilitators: Leilani Madison
& Paul Haring
Location: Church Sanctuary
Time: 8:30 - 9:30 am

Where do you listen for God? Can it be found in the reading of contemporary literature? Contemporary literature may not be the most predictable place to listen for God, but it may turn out to be amongst the most rewarding as the reader may discover how life and faith merge in surprising ways and places.

This adult study will involve the participants in reading excerpts of writings, both fiction and non-fiction, of several contemporary authors, followed by group discussion of those writings and responses to reflective questions.

Authors will include Garrison Keillor, Frederick Buechner, Patricia Hampl, John Updike, Allegra Goodman, Alice Walker and, if time and interest permit, others.

“The Jabbok River Reflections” neither a new book nor a television series it is...



Jabbok River in Gilead

This sermon series will continue through March 16th when **CCU** will meet following worship to embrace the congregationally developed long and short term plan for the rebirth and growth of **CCU**.

The series title refers to Jacob's long night beside the Jabbok River where while he was between a rock and a hard place he wrestled with **God** never giving up, never letting go. With the dawn came blessings. **CCU** is similarly engaged with **God**.

Each week, the sermon explores how a certain portion of scripture illumi-

Potluck/Film Series . . .

Come join us & bring a friend to view & discuss

“God’s Warriors”

- 1/15, 6:30-9pm, Christian Warriors
- 1/22, 6:30-9pm, Moslem Warriors
- 1/29, 6:30-9pm, Jewish Warriors
- 2/5, 6:30-9pm, Wrap Up Discussion

Each session begins with a potluck supper.
Come and bring a food item to share.

January Event Schedule:

Key: K = Kitchen L = Lanai PS = Pastor's Study S = Sanctuary

| | |
|---|--|
| 1/3, 6:30 & 7:30pm (S) & succeeding Thursdays | Chancel Ringers & Chancel Choir, respectively |
| 1/5, 8am | Men's Breakfast @ Honey's @ Koolau Golf Club |
| 1/6, 13, 10 & 27, 8:30am | Adult Study/"Listening for God thru Contemporary Literature" |
| 1/9, 7-9pm | Council Stated Meeting |
| 1/12, 10:30am | Women's Aloha Fellowship Brunch @ Cinnamon's in Kailua |
| 1/12, 7pm (S) | Taizé-style worship |
| 1/15, 22 & 29 6:30-9pm | Potluck/Film Series: God's Warriors: 1) Christian, 2) Moslem, 3) Jewish |
| 1/20, 10am worship | Ordination and Installation of newly elected Elders & Deacons |
| 1/26, 9am-3pm (CCU) | Church Retreat and Workshop |

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Course Change (What I'm Thinking)
by Buddy Summers

denominations, or main line churches, or Kailua demographics generally—none of this really matters. It doesn't even matter what we did in the past that was either wonderful or unfortunate.

What matters is what we decide to do now. What matters is that we recognize that course changes are needed and that we begin to make them. And (the old sayings still have power to inform us) what matters most of all: *that we glorify God and enjoy God forever.*

For Example

One course change that I think needs to be made concerns our church's attitude toward evangelism.

There are many definitions of this word "evangelism", but, in our context, we might experiment with this: "evangelism is bearing in word and deed the good news of God's love as it is manifest in Jesus" or perhaps simply "evangelism is being good news in Jesus' name."

In reaction to the way we perceive others approach evangelism or, perhaps, because we were taught not to appear self-important or prideful, we tend to respond to Jesus' call to *bring good news to the poor, sight to the blind, release to the captives*, and so on (and to do so in partnership, wherever possible, with people of good will) without wearing our Christian or CCU identities on our sleeves.

This needs to change. If we do incognito whatever good work it is that we do, at least two unwelcome things can happen. One, the beneficiary

needs to know whom to thank. If we have hidden the fact of our Christian motivation (and I can think of no simpler way to put this), we deprive God of the glory, the gratitude due God.

The other unhappy thing that can happen is that the beneficiary of God's love may not hear the divine invitation not only to give God the glory (and the thanks) but to do so in company with other beneficiaries—i.e. as part of a worshipping, working and winsome congregation.

So, the way in which our approach to evangelism needs, I think, to change is that our life and work together (grounded as it is in God's inclusive love, informed by Jesus' life and teachings, and empowered in a community of holy spirit) needs to become more overt, more public.

In this way, we put our lamp on a mountaintop. Openness. Let this become our response to Good News.

Investments Will Be Required

While it's too early to predict precisely what will be included in a CCU Action Plan for survival, rebirth and growth, it's a good bet that some sort of serious investment will be needed. To me "investment" refers to a new expenditure of energy (in our case, time and money) in order to change course.

The Campus, the CCU Fund, the Faith. These things have been passed on to us by those who went before, who invested themselves for the glory of God. We need to do the same in gratitude, not just for our own spiritual health, but for the sake of those who will follow.

That's what I think.



The Messiah Afterglow

Well, another Messiah Sing Along is over. As Buddy and I were discussing this year's presentation, it became obvious that we are reaching people new to our church.

By my very unscientific observations, in addition to our own core group of 15 singers, we hosted three or four neighbors, one faculty member at IPA (where I teach), six to eight Symphony Chorus singers, six to eight Central Union singers, a couple of local Methodists, a couple of the next door Baptists and at least one local Lutheran.

I was informed that the banner drew maybe a half dozen curious Kailua locals and I was thrilled to see more people up front singing than were in the audience section (though I did hear singers behind me).

As our outward ministry focus expands (evangelism? missions?), I am so very grateful to the singers and ringers who, week after week, are diligent in learning new pieces and creating a musical atmosphere at our church.

Congratulations on a job well done and, as always, we have more music to learn—yes, Schubert's Mass in G is coming.

Peace,

Doc



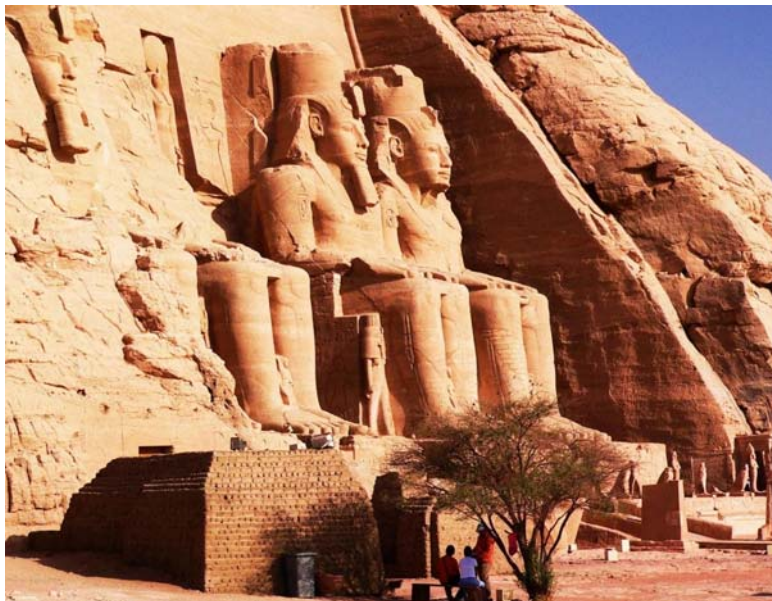
To date \$1528 has been received for our Special Christmas Offerings! One-half will be forwarded to the Presbyterian Church (USA) for its Christmas Joy Offering and one-half to the Disciples of Christ for its Special Christmas Offering.



Jerash, 1st century Roman city north of Amman, Jordan



Rila monastery, founded 10th century, Bulgaria



Temple of Ramses II at Abu Simbel, Egypt

Study Leave/ Renewal Leave

from Buddy Summers

Many people asked if I was renewed. The answer is unequivocally "yes." Only recently did someone ask "What did you learn?" Good question. Not easy to answer.

Not in the sense that I didn't learn anything, but in the sense that through four months of intense travel, conversation and exploration, the exposure to culture, history, people and place was nearly overwhelming. It will be months, if not years, unpacking the experiences, connecting the dots and framing the moments into perspectives and insights that I can communicate as needed.

Here are just a few of the places/moments where learning happened. We spent days in museums: including The British, The Cairo, The Archeological Museum of Athens. And days visiting archeological sites: in Egypt, Jordan, Greece, Turkey, Bulgaria, Ireland. There were many intense conversations: a Presbyterian Minister peacemaker in Belfast, an Irish peacemaker from the Corrymeela Community in Northern Ireland, a Bulgarian retired pediatrician, a Bulgarian Roma (gypsy) Minister, several Scots: a minister, a bookseller, a writer, a photographer, a sculptor. A Serbian artist, an Irish villager at a gravesite, an Egyptian Christian, a Jordanian Muslim woman. I saw some of the Dead Sea Scrolls and stood in the Dead Sea (not at the same time.) I rode a donkey into The Valley of the Kings and camels near the pyramids in Giza and part way up Mt Sinai at sunset and walked down in the dark.

Well, you get the idea. There are thousands of photos waiting to be catalogued, captioned, printed, displayed. Please feel free to ask if any of this grabs your interest. Also, I'll prepare presentations to share with the church over the next months/years.

Anyway, thanks for asking.

**Presbytery of the Pacific
to meet in Hawaii May 17, 2008
from Peter & Cynthia Tchou . . .**

You may not know this, but our church is one of five Presbyterian churches on Oahu. There are no Presbyterian churches on the neighbor islands. The five churches are Christ Church Uniting in Kailua, First Presbyterian at Ko'olau, Korean Presbyterian Church near the University of Hawaii, Mililani Presbyterian Church, and the Taiwanese Hawaii Church in Nuuanu.

We are members of the Presbytery of the Pacific with office located in Los Angeles, California. There are 54 congregations in the Presbytery. The Presbytery meets six times a year and each congregation is entitled to send to meetings two lay elder commissioners or more depending on congregational size and the pastor(s).

Prior to 2006 we had a sort of mini Presbytery in Hawaii named Hawaii Presbyterian Council (HPC) which met six times a year—usually before the Presbytery meetings. The purpose was to share and discuss common concerns and missions of our denomination in Hawaii. To keep all the churches connected, the Moderator of HPC was a member of the General Mission Council of the Presbytery. I was involved with HPC since its inception in early 1980 and served as its moderator several times until it was dissolved in 2006.

Individual congregations host Presbytery meetings. Churches on Oahu had never hosted a Presbytery meeting until 1998. A proposal was made at the General Mission Council meeting that a Presbytery meeting be held in Hawaii at least every five years. This proposal was adopted by the Presbytery in 1996. The first meeting was held in Honolulu at First Presbyterian Church in 1998. It was again held in 2003 and we are scheduled to have another one in 2008. The meetings in the past were hosted by First Presbyterian Church but planned and carried out by all five churches in Hawaii.

We are involved in the planning of the coming 2008 Presbytery meeting. Cynthia and I were asked again to sit on the planning committee since both of us were involved in the planning of the past two Presbytery meetings. It would be very good if at least one additional member of our church could join us on the planning committee.

Our members are encouraged to participate in this event. Most importantly it is an opportunity for our members to attend a Presbytery meeting. The meeting is scheduled for May 17, 2008 at First Presbyterian Church at Ko'olau.

We also need help in several areas such as making leis, providing transportation, and hosting guests from our Presbytery. More information will be forthcoming; please stay tuned. And please contact one of us or Buddy if you would be available for the planning committee.



Memories

By Rosemary Allen

Another page from the Advent Devotions booklet we made some years ago is a special poem from the late David

Steele. Dave & his family were active in this church for several years while he served as a chaplain at Punahou School. During that time & continuing after they moved to San Rafael, CA, Dave wrote several books, columns & articles—including this lovely Christmas poem. I think it speaks to us on into the new year.

CHRISTMAS

We place the precious Christmas manger
Upon the mantel . . . out of danger.
Hand-painted Kings from Hummel lands
Are putty in young, chubby hands;
And glass-blown sheep are so exquisite,
Too fragile for a child to visit.
So, while we like them very much
We ask the kids to look . . . Don't Touch!

But, once, I saw on a low table
Mary, Joseph, star and stable,
The Babe, some sheep, and several kings . . .
Heavy, sturdy, rough-hewn things.
Here children dawdled—took their ease,
Read the sign: "Come, touch us, please."
And every child produced a fresh
Arrangement of that Christmas Creche.

While donkeys watched the Baby sleep,
Angels petted woolly sheep.
And Mary rested from the noise
As Joseph chatted with the boys.
Each child knew to some degree
Just how that scene was meant to be.
I watched with quite a little mirth
Them orchestrate the Holy Birth.

So God, for him who understands
Entrusts His coming to our hands.
He urges us now to begin
To place ourselves, our kith and kin,
And choose, among the many choices
Where best we'll hear those angel voices.
So . . . friends, with bright and shiny faces,
The King is coming! Take your places!

Lay worship assignments for January

If you are not able to fill your assignment, please try trading with someone and/or notify the church office.

| Date | Name | Duty |
|------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1/6 | E. K. Whiting & Wendy Teixeira | Ushers/Greeters |
| | Paul Snipes | Morning Prayer |
| | Cheryl Renfro | Time with the Younger Church |
| | Loren Wilson | Scripture Reader |
| | Marian Heidel | People Prayers & Communion Server |
| | Dianne Brookins | Communion Server w/ Table Prayer |
| | Bob Grantham | Additional Communion server (silver) |
| | Paul Belanger | Additional Communion server (silver) |
| | 1/13 | Loren Wilson & Cathy Lyman |
| Estelle Codier | | Morning Prayer |
| Heather Barnhill | | Time with the Younger Church |
| Jon Davidann | | Scripture Reader |
| Beth Davidann | | People Prayers |
| Jim Burgoyne | | Communion Server w/Table Prayer |
| 1/20 | Keith & Peggy Zeilinger | Usher/Greeters |
| | Mary Ann Wyman | Morning Prayer |
| | Rosemary Allen | Time with the Younger Church |
| | Dennis Peters | Scripture Reading |
| | Paul Belanger | People Prayers & Communion Server |
| | Temmie Shade | Communion Server w/Table Prayer |
| 1/27 | Charlene Hosenfeld & Rollo Scheurenbrand | Usher/Greeters |
| | Corky Sorensen | Morning Prayer |
| | Kalia Medeiros | Time with the Younger Church |
| | Jan Stiles | Scripture Reading |
| | Marian Heidel | People Prayers & Communion Server |
| | Bob Grantham | Communion Server w/Table Prayer |

January Birthdays

| | |
|---------------------|----|
| Jim Sorensen | 3 |
| Marian Heidel | 4 |
| Rollo Scheurenbrand | 4 |
| Wendy Teixeira | 7 |
| Mindy Gilbert | 11 |
| Victoria Lansdown | 20 |
| Iris Lozier | 22 |
| Bill Muench | 24 |
| Donna Bean | 31 |

January Flower Calendar

| | |
|------------|--------------------|
| January 6 | Mitchell |
| January 13 | Codier/ Summers |
| January 20 | Belanger |
| January 27 | Lyman |

Children in Worship: Bible Stories

Children love stories! A new series begins December 2 and runs through Eastertime, titled: **"Who is Jesus? Let me tell you a story!"** December story selections follow:

| | |
|------------|----------------|
| January 6 | Matthew 2:1-12 |
| January 13 | Luke 2:41-52 |
| January 20 | Luke 3: 1-14 |
| January 27 | Luke 3:15-22 |

Child Safety Policy: It is the intention of CCU to provide a space safe from child abuse. Staff and lay leaders are screened and educated about child abuse in general and both Hawaii Law and CCU policies in particular regarding prevention and reporting of suspected abuse. A copy of the CCU Child Abuse Policy is available from the church office upon request.

*Christ Church Uniting ...
"providing practical support for
social justice actions,
community building,
and spiritual growth."*

CHRIST CHURCH UNITING

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CCU gratefully
receives donations
each Sunday
for the
Kailua Food Pantry.

*Christ Church Uniting ...
"providing practical support for
social justice actions,
community building,
and spiritual growth."*

