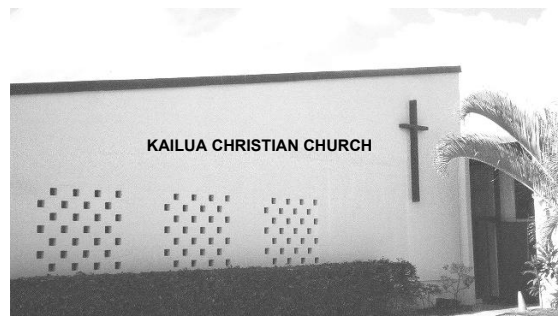


Waves of Faith

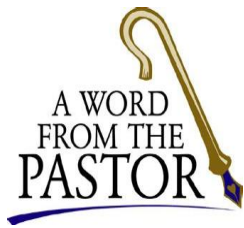
Kailua Christian Church (United Church of Christ)
317 Manono Street, Kailua, HI 96734-2211
Chartered 1959 –



DECEMBER 2024

Volume 39

Issue 12



Christmas in September? A Reflection on Hope, Patience, and Perseverance**

Have you noticed it? Christmas decorations seem to appear earlier every year. By September or October, the aisles are already glittering with ornaments and glowing with lights. It's like the world just can't wait for Christmas—as if we're all desperate for the joy and hope it brings.

For a church like ours, this longing for Christmas feels especially real this year. It's been a tough season. We've faced significant budget cuts, difficult decisions, and uncertainties about what the future holds. Despite our congregation growing and filling with the laughter of children and passions of young people again, our finances remain in a difficult state. It's easy to feel anxious, to want to rush to the part where everything feels joyful and whole again.

But Advent, the season of waiting, reminds us that there's beauty in patience, even when the waiting is hard. Romans 8:24-25 says, *"For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience."*

Hope isn't about having everything figured out—it's about trusting that God is at work, even when we can't see the full picture. It's what allows us to press on when times are tough. Without hope, we could accomplish nothing. But with

it, we find the strength to face challenges and believe in what's possible.

This year, as we prepare for Christmas, we're also preparing for a new chapter as a church. We're learning to do more with less, to rely on each other in deeper ways, and to trust God to provide. It's not an easy journey, but it's one filled with opportunities to rediscover what truly matters: our faith, our community, and our hope in Christ.

So as the Christmas lights start to twinkle earlier and earlier, let's take a moment to reflect—*not* just on what's ahead, but on what God is doing here and now. Let's embrace the waiting, the hard work, and the faith it takes to keep moving forward. Because the hope we have in Christ is not just for December—it's for every day, every challenge, and every step we take together.

May this season of waiting fill us with the courage to hope and the patience to trust in God's plan for our future.

Blessings,

Pastor Irene

Advent is the period of four weeks leading up to Christmas. It's a time of anticipation and preparation for the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ on Christmas day.



DEACONS CORNER**A SIMPLE GIFT**

Lillian Saldana (Havana, Cuba),
November-December 2024 The Upper Room

This story reminds me of how we can show God's love in simple ways. Might you want to serve as a deacon and show God's love in simple ways like offering communion bread and grape juice on the first Sunday of the month, providing rides, calling or writing and sending get well, thinking of you cards, coordinating potlucks, bringing flowers or small gifts for hospitalizations or celebrating our centenarians. These simple yet heartfelt actions bring God's love and cheer to our members and friends.

Jesus said, "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you." (NIV)

"One afternoon I was walking through a park when I saw a woman sitting on a bench. Her hair was in disarray, her face bore a sad expression, and her eyes were downcast. In the center of the park stood a hibiscus tree overflowing with large red flowers. Some of the flowers had fallen on the pavement, so I decided to gather a few and give them to the woman.

I saw an immediate change in her demeanor. She said to me: "Thank you, kind lady, it has been quite a while since someone gave me flowers." She got up from the bench with a smile on her face as she smelled the flower and walked away.

After this experience, I could not help but think of the powerful message in **John 15:12**. **Jesus** was the greatest example of love, and he invites us to love one another in words and actions. **Simple gestures** like a gift of flowers, a kind word, a helping hand, or breaking bread with someone can brighten others' spirits. May we never hesitate to be messengers of God's powerful love.

Thought for the Day: My words and actions can show **God's love** to those around me.

Prayer: Thank you, God, for your extraordinary love for us. Inspire us to love our neighbors as

you have loved us. In the name of **Jesus**, Amen."

Note: *The Upper Room booklets have been provided free to members and friends. Located on the desk as you enter the sanctuary, be sure to pick one up – the stories will inspire you in many different ways!*

Love and Blessings,
Deacon Myra

✠We Are✠ ✠We Are✠ ✠We Are✠ ✠We Are✠
BLESSED BLESSED BLESSED BLESSED

PRAYERS & PRAISES**Please keep in your prayers**

~ Julia and her family, Lori's friend who has cancer
~ Mike, a friend of the Grables in the hospital
~ Terumi and Rev. Howard Yoshida
~ Nathan Kohashi ~ Jean Kanazawa
~ Claire Steele ~ Diane Lee's step-mom
~ Harrison Lum ~ Pie Pie's healing
~ Gary & Susan Morita ~ Larry Au
~ Mai's mom w/cancer & father w/ dementia
~ Jennie Lee ~ Joy, (2nd heart attack)
~ Noe's daughter, Paige who has Leukemia
~ The family of Jordan Kagehiro
~ Bill Cunningham ~ Joel & Stacey Vega
~ Joe w/ brain tumor, cancer & Sue w/ cancer
~ John Sakamoto's grandson and son-in-law
~ Myrtle & Lowell Terada ~ Saeko Yoshida
~ Heather, Jake, & family for healing
~ Dean's friends, Gary & Greg's recoveries
~ Kathy Warner ~ Dee Willis (Stroke)
~ Sharon Nishihira ~ Steve Hammann
~ Larry & Sandra Siu ~ Dennis Jinnohara
~ Lisa battling cancer ~ Duane Miyashiro
~ Winchell & Lily Lee ~ Richard Texiera
~ Bobby Morris ~ Yeda Ohana
~ Jean Miyaji, Alice Esaki, Stella Wakamatsu, Nani Oda, Nancy Arakaki, Brian Nakashima, Harry Imai, Carl Nemoto, Dot Suzuki, Sharon Mon, and all our high risked families
~ Traveling mercies for all traveling this season; Diane Lee Pilla, the Yoneshiges, Jolene C., and Joe Bailey. Also, for Pastor Irene and her family, as she drives her father back to Ohio from Tennessee after a stroke on Thanksgiving Eve.

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Myra Yamada Sandra Siu
 Myrtle Terada Carol Soma
 Paul Grable Pat Oyama
 Michelle Morikawa



Dean & Maureen
 Wakuzawa



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Jean Kanazawa
 Lucy & Miley Khem Nathan Nemoto
 Judy Yoshioka Jo Ann Komori
 Susan Stewart Mary Watanabe
 Hazel Masuda Nathan Ching
 Randy Imai Brian Nakashima



Terry & Joan Gerber
 Robert & Mona Maeshiro

O HOLY NIGHT – A CHRISTMAS CAROL ABOUT WORTHINESS & LOVE



O Holy Night is my new favorite Christmas Carol. It’s not only a beautiful song about Jesus and Christmas, but it is also a song about our worth to God and each other. It outlines the job description of each one of us as human beings. The song is about us remembering that we belong to one another. Letting each soul feel its worth by saying, you are exactly the person God wants you to be—and God is not disappointed. God is telling us remember who you really are.

This is the first verse:

*O holy night, the stars are brightly shining. It is the night of the dear Savior’s birth. Long lay the world in sin and error pining. **Til He appeared and the soul felt its worth.** A thrill of hope, the weary world rejoices, for yonder breaks a new and glorious morn...*

Till he appeared and the soul felt its worth. The goal of this carol is for us to set aside the skewed image of God that you and I have been carrying. We need to make room for the God who is love

without conditions and values us. If we can, then our souls will feel their actual worth.

We all have the feeling of not being good enough or effective enough. We are acting as if the world is still laying in sin and error pining. God is not raising the issue of worthiness. He is telling us that our souls are worthy and that we should feel that now that Jesus has appeared to us. We need to go back to the image of God that we hold and ask God to help us heal. Pay attention to where he’s been in your day. Get to know Him. As you get to know the creator, you will come to know his creation—you. We are the mirror in which God sees God’s self.

This is the second verse:

Truly He taught us to love one another. His law is love and His gospel is peace. Chains He shall break for the slave is our brother, and in His name all oppression shall cease ...

Once we feel our worth and the worth of our brothers and sisters, the instructions from God are clear and they make sense. The result of us following these instructions will be His kingdom coming on earth as it is in heaven.

May God bless you and your family during this holiday season. May you grow in love and understanding. May your family heal as you do your work.

Reasons to celebrate!

Happy 1st Birthday to Eliana. She has been a Joy to the Nemoto and Vance Ohanas and we thank God for her.



Jonathan Fong receives Bowling award at the Special Olympics event in November. Congratulations John John!

TRUSTEES NOTES

Members and Friends of KCC,

Status of KCC Finances as of October 2024:

Income: \$116,301.42

Expenses: \$198,700.14

As the financial status shows, Expenses exceed Income by \$82,398.72. To date in 2024, KCC has been operating at an average monthly deficit of \$8,239.87. As of October 31 st , KCC has \$105,100.31 in savings and checking accounts (total resources) which include special funds and grants. The available resources (less the special funds and grants) to cover the operating expenses is \$99,559.23. Therefore, if we continue with the monthly deficit, KCC's resources will be depleted in approximately twelve months, October 2025.

An informational meeting was held on November 17 after the worship service to discuss: (1) Nominating Committee Progress (slate of officers and committee members for 2025); (2) Strategic Plan for 2024-2027; (3) Pastoral Development Service-Learning Program (SLP); and (4) Recommended Budget for 2025. The meeting was attended by members and friends (in person and on Zoom). In efforts to reduce the deficit, the proposed Recommended Budget includes substantial budget cuts (e.g., converting the Administrative Assistance position to part-time, deleting medical benefits, terminating the Janitorial and Yard service agreements, reducing the Board/Committee budgets), but efforts were made to minimize the impacts on KCC church operations. The Recommended Budget for 2025 will be presented at the annual Congregation Meeting, scheduled for December 1 after the worship service, for discussion and approval.

Another means of reducing the deficit is to increase income. The primary source of income for KCC is from tithes and offerings. As mentioned in the November newsletter, pledge cards will be mailed to you, and we ask for your support in completing the pledge cards. Your contribution will ensure that church operations will continue. We always appreciate your generosity.

As mentioned above, the janitorial and yard service agreements have been terminated and the Board/Committee budgets have been reduced. However, the work still needs to be done, and we will need to rely on volunteers to perform the work. You will be receiving the Time and Talent forms in the mail, and we ask for your support by completing the form, identifying the areas where you could provide volunteer services. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation. Your service and dedication to KCC are always appreciated.

Thanksgiving:

During this time of Thanksgiving, we reflect on the year and the people who stepped up and volunteered their services and monetary donations in time of need. We give a big Mahalo to:

1. All those who contributed to the Continuous Building Maintenance Fund. Thank you!
2. All those who participated in preparing the facilities for the Interns, from clearing out the classrooms (Matt Wong and his youth group), to cleaning the classrooms and installing the security system (Aaron Tanaka and his team), to furnishing the classrooms and renovating the Transition Housing (Pastor Irene, Hamza and their volunteers). Special thank you to Aianna "Pie-Pie" Wong for cleaning and setting up the classroom for the Kings Company and to Marie Young, Aaron's daughter, for her generous donation to purchase the security system.
3. All those who volunteered to help with the yard and janitorial work. Thank you, Barney Pilla, Florence Miyashiro and Myra Yamada, for watering the plants/lawn, and Susan Morita, and Maureen and Dean Wakuzawa for cleaning the office and library.
4. Paul Grable for acquiring yard equipment (gas weed whacker and a backpack leaf blower) from his yardman, Mel Plan.
5. John Sakamoto for donating his yard equipment (2 gas weed whackers, 2 leaf blowers, 3 hedge cutters, 2 tree trimmers, and equipment supplies). Also, thank you for your donation to cover purchases of additional equipment and/or supplies.

6. Susan Morita and Lynne Nakano for their generous donations to purchase 2 desktop computers for the Administrative Assistant and Zoom.

7. All the volunteers that turned out for the Building Work Day, including church members from East Shore Church and Grace Christian Community Church. Thank you, Pastor Glenn and Lynne Nakano, for your support. Kudos to Susan Morita for coordinating this event and providing bentos for everyone.

8. All those “unsung heroes” of KCC who continue to provide their time and effort and donations without any fanfare and/or recognition. Thank you!

We are indeed blessed and grateful to have such a dedicated and caring community as KCC.

Happy Holidays:

The holiday season is fast approaching, a time of reflection, a time with family, and a special time to focus on our Lord and Savior. The Trustees would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. May next year bring good health and prosperity to all of you.

God Bless You All!
Trustees

Missions Update

Mahalo KCC ohana, our Neighbors in Need special offering donations totaled \$440. We are happy we could participate in the UCC Five for Five Special Giving for 2024.



FOOD DRIVE 2024

Big Mahalo for your generous food donations that were taken to the St. Anthony’s Church outreach center. Donations were distributed to those having a hard time.



NA ANELA I KA HANA A KE AKUA
(Angels in the Works for God)
Wellness Support Group

LEARNING IS LIFELONG!

Home Modifications That Are Critical For Aging In Place, Nov 15, 10-11 am, Sanctuary& Zoom.

Catia (Cat) Garell, an Occupational Therapist and co-founder of Thrive for Life, a home modification consulting firm that serves the entire state of Hawaii, provided an excellent presentation on small, medium, and large-scale examples of home modifications, funding resources, and Fall Prevention/Aging in Place approaches and resources to improve Safety and Independence in the home setting from an occupational therapist’s perspective.

Twenty one (21) members and friends of Kailua Christian Church and East Shore Church picked up valuable information for their current and future modifications. Catia also provided her YouTube Thrive for Life videos and CDC video on Fall Prevention and several websites. If any of you want her links, brochure or newsletter, please contact Kammy Grable or Myra Yamada or go to: www.thriveforlife.com

Mahalos to Pastor Irene (Jan – Trauma-Informed Care), Joel Acevedo (Mar - CPR/AED), Dennis Jinnohara (May - Safe Falling for Kūpuna), Aaron Tanaka (Aug - Cyber Security for Seniors), Pie Pie Wong (Sep – Joy Amidst Chronic Pain) and Catia Garell (Nov - Home Modifications for Aging in Place). Mahalo to the

team members (Aaron, Reggie & Barney) for Audio Visual/Zoom, refreshments (Jennie, Kammy and others), printing of guides (Kammy) and prayers (Susan & Kammy). Mahalo goodie basket contributors: Higas, Pat, Susan, Johnny, Jennie, Pastor Chris & Yamadas.

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St. Francis Healthcare System's Caregiver Education and Wellness Classes continue to provide excellent caregiving and health/wellness classes for the community.

St. Francis Healthcare System of Hawaii's Caregiver Education and Wellness Calendar.

December 2024 classes can be found at: <https://www.stfrancishawaii.org/classes>. Register directly online. **For questions, please contact the Call Center (808) 547-6500.**

Individual Free Classes:

Dec 13: Fri, 10 – 11:30 am; Hands-on Bathing for the Family Caregivers (in-person class)

Weekly Free Classes:

Dec 03 & 17: Tue, 9 – 10 am; **Body and Brain Yoga Tai Chi** (on-line via Zoom)

Dec 07 – 21: Sat, 8 – 9 am; **Zumba Gold by Francis** (in-person)

Note: *In-person sessions will be held at Senior Community Center at the Kūpuna Village in Liliha.*

Contact me at yamadamyra@hawaii.rr.com if you have questions.

Please invest your time and energy in any one of these free and informative classes.

Thank you for participating in a variety of “wellness” classes to enhance your health journey. See you in 2025! God Bless you all, Myra

Mahalo Catia



MODERATOR'S MESSAGE

Merry Christmas Kailua Christian Church. It's time to celebrate the coming of our Lord. As I think about Christmas, I'm drawn to my favorite New Testament passages and decided to share them with you without any comment or interpretation. Enjoy.

Fruit of the Spirit: Galatians 5: 22-23

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

I am the Vine: John 15: 5-8

5 “I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. 6 If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. 7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

Love: 1 Corinthians 13: 4-13

4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5 It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. 6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. 7 It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

8 Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part, 10 but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. 11 When I was a child,

I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me. 12 For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known.

13 And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Great Commandment: Matthew 22: 37-40

37 Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ [a] 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ [b] 40 All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

Beatitudes: Matthew 5: 3-12

- Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- 4 Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.
- 5 Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.
- 6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst
for righteousness,
for they will be filled.
- 7 Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.
- 8 Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.
- 9 Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.
- 10 Blessed are those who are persecuted
because of righteousness, for theirs is
the kingdom of heaven.
- 11 “Blessed are you when people insult
you, persecute you and falsely say all
kinds of evil against you because of
me. 12 Rejoice and be glad, because
great is your reward in heaven, for in
the same way they persecuted the
prophets who were before you.

The Great Commission: Matthew 28:18-20

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

The Prodigal Son at Luke 15: 11-32

Please also read The Prodigal Son at Luke 15: 11-32. It’s a little long to reprint here, but it is my favorite parable. It illustrates how much God loves us and how there is virtually nothing we can do the alienate ourselves from His love.

Merry Christmas all.

HOLIDAY SCHEDULE FOR DECEMBER

Sunday, December 1, 2024

*First Sunday in Advent.
Communion Sunday
Congregational Meeting following the
worship service.*

Saturday, Dec. 21, 2024

*Blue Christmas Worship Service at
Kaumakapili Church 6 p.m.*

Sunday, Dec. 22, 2024

*Children’s Christmas Pageant during
worship and bring your favorite dish for
the potluck lunch. Free Wreath making
event for all to enjoy. Steff Moderow and
Keith Shultz once again has graciously of-
fered to provide this fun activity with help
from their Bonsai club.*

Sunday, Dec. 29, 2024

*Installation Service of Officers for 2025
during the morning worship at 10:00 a.m.*



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Website: www.kailuachristianchurch.org
Rev. Irene Willis Hassan, Senior Pastor



Special
thanks to
the
following
KCC family
members



who have donated the beautiful poinsettia plants that decorate our sanctuary and invites our loved ones and friends to be a special part of this holiday season with us. May it remind us of those who are honored and cherished for the persons that they were and are in our lives today.

In Honor & In Memory of

Mrs. Mildred Sakamoto

With love from her husband John Sakamoto

**Mr. Richard Miyashiro &
Cheryl Miyashiro**

With love from Florence Miyashiro

Mr. Mutt Oda

With love from his wife, Natsuko Oda

**Mr. Jiggs Tamashiro
Pastor Warren Nakano
& Mr. Walter Yeda**

*With warm regards,
Reggie & Myra Yamada*

**Mrs. Evelyn Austin
Grandpa & Grandma Morita
Grandpa & Grandma Nishida**

With love from Gary & Susan Morita

Mr. Jordan Kagehiro

*With warm aloha, your friends
Matt & Pie Pie Wong*

**Mr. Herbert & Mrs. Nora Chun
Zeilyn Zakahi**

With warm regards, Dennis & Debbie Fong