

First United Protestant Church-UCC

1350 Waianuenue Ave.

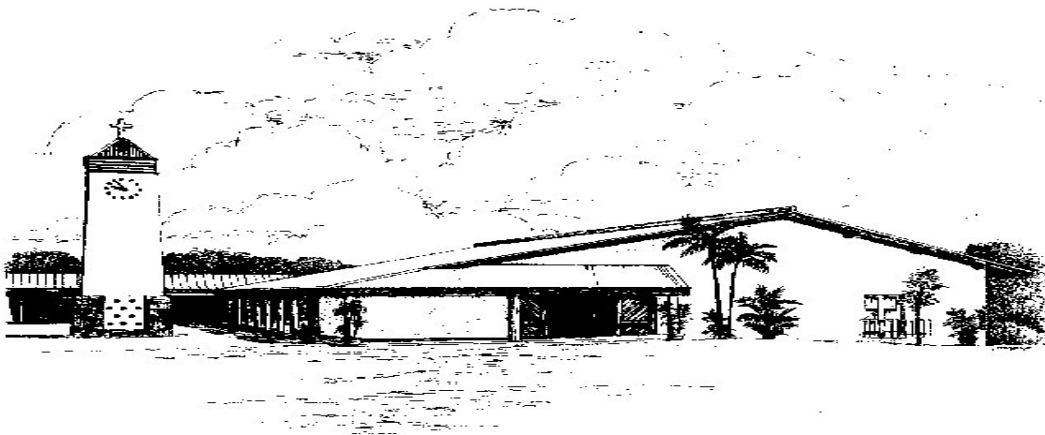
Hilo, HI 96720

808/935-5914

fupchilo@hawaiiintel.net

www.fupchurch.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Welcome to First United Protestant Church Hilo, Hawaii

As we enter this season between Ash Wednesday and Easter, we welcome you and your loved ones (including children) to join us as we grow in faith, hope, and love. We are a part of the United Church of Christ and affiliated with the Hawai'i Conference of the UCC. Our roots in Hawai'i are the congregational church of the early missionaries. First United Protestant Church was organized as The First Foreign Church and Society in 1868.

Sunday Worship Service

10:00 am

Communion

First Sunday of the Month

Kosraean Language Bible Study

7:30 pm Wednesdays

Kosraean Language Service

1:30 pm Sundays

Children's Ministry offered during worship Service

Other education, youth programs, and activities offered throughout the week.

Weekly schedules are listed in the Sunday worship bulletin.

**Our faith is over two thousand years old...Our thinking is not !
No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here**

March, 2014

Themes for Upcoming Sundays

March 2 Exodus 3.1-15 “Moses Moments”

God had a job for Moses to do and Moses said, “No God. I’m too old.” “No God. I’m not qualified.” “No God, it won’t work.” The impossible job was to lead the Israelites out of Egypt and Moses was saying “No” to God. Have you ever had a “Moses moment” when you wanted to run the other direction... but God wouldn’t let you?

March 9 Lent 1 Matthew 4.1-11 “A Wilderness Experience With Jesus”

The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness at the beginning of his ministry was a “fork in the road” moment when his response to the voices of power, ease, and success were calling him away from what God sent him to do. In the wilderness, we come face to face with our own vulnerabilities and discover the deep resources of God’s Spirit that keep us true and strong to live with integrity and courage.

March 16 Lent 2 John 3.1-17 “God Welcomes Night Visitors”

He was the secret admirer, the religious leader who had a reputation to uphold, and yet who was captured by the life and teachings of this simple, itinerant preacher named Jesus from Nazareth. Nicodemus had a lot to lose by becoming a follower of Jesus. So he came at night. He is the patron saint of all who seek God in the shadows, coming with questions, full of doubt, wanting to believe.

March 23 Lent 3 John 4.5-42 “God of the Unexpected”

A thirsty woman comes to draw water at high noon from the well where Jesus sits. The conversation that occurs breaks so many cultural rules and taboos, but in the end she finds God and then she finds herself. God cannot be put into our small boxes that limit how our Creator should act. God is not always attached to the “respectable” rules and regulations we think are so important.

March 30 Lent 4 John 9.1-41 “A Gathering of Blind Men”

Three blind men have a conversation about how Jesus healed them. Each had a different story to tell. Each was convinced that his healing was the “right way” to be cured of blindness. The only common experience was that they had been blind and now they could see. Jesus treated them each uniquely but with the same transforming love. God’s ways with us are fashioned by who we are and how we learn.

April 6 Lent 5 John 11.1-45 “God of the Impossible”

Jesus’ closest friends were in mourning – Mary & Martha’s brother Lazarus had died. Jesus was absent. Martha was angry. Mary grieved quietly. In a prelude to Easter, Jesus arrives on the scene shedding his own tears, sharing their pain and grief. Then he calls for Lazarus to come out. No loss, no grief is so deep that God is not greater still and able to bring forth new life where we think there is no hope.

Thinking Out Loud...

A stress fracture is supposed to be very painful. It happens when a bone has been subjected to repeated stress and develops a hairline fracture. Did you know that your body is no different than a single bone? If subjected to enough stress, your body will break down and you could experience physical, mental, emotional pain or even disease and death.

Webster's defines stress as "a state of bodily or mental tension resulting from factors that tend to alter existent equilibrium". In other words, if your tension level gets out of balance, you could suffer a stress fracture of the body and spirit.

Frankly, a stress-free life is idealistic and would be boring. On the other hand, a stressed-out life can lead to burn out, which is the extinguishing of your spiritual, mental, physical and emotional enthusiasm. When we live edge to edge, we leave no room for margins in our life. The margin is where we can breathe, do nothing, sleep, meditate, pray, be still, find our center. It's the margins that help to keep us centered and sane.

Between boring and burnout, there's a balance based on managing stress by making time for serenity. And to do it without feeling guilty! The world will keep spinning, the sun will rise and set as usual, rain will fall, grass will grow, birds will sing and the stars will keep shining. Let it go... its OK.

Jesus seemed to have a good handle on this balance between boredom and burnout. The rhythms of his life included time to be with people and time alone. Engaging with the needs of the lame, deaf, blind, and tormented must have drained him when the line was all the way out the front door and down the street. Religious leaders were always on hand, trying to figure out how to trap him with his own words so that they could accuse him of heresy and do away with him. Hardly a boring life!

And then he would disappear before sunrise... climb up into the hills to be alone, away from his disciples, the crowds, his enemies. He needed time alone, time to pray, to think, to meditate, to be renewed in mind and spirit. This rhythm marked the cadence of his serenity in the midst of pressure.

How do you achieve this balance in your own life? Sabbath is more than the seventh day of the week. It's a place and a space in which we stop. Just stop what we're doing. Then we can breathe deeply, clear our minds, renew our hearts, refresh our spirit, care for our bodies. Sabbath can occur anytime, any place we step aside from the moving stream and sit down for awhile.

During the coming Lenten / Easter season, I invite you to be mindful of the stress fractures that may be developing in your life and world. It could be a time of healing if we make intentional choices that build in the space and time to be still, and to know that we are not God... and to let God be God.

Enjoy the Margins,

Pastor Ron

Did You Know...

~That our church has been asked to host the 2014 Thanksgiving Celebration sponsored by the Interfaith Communities in Action (ICIA) next November. The church council has agreed and invited ICIA to use our facilities for this community wide event.

~ That a new washer was purchased for the manse this past week when the old washer became unrepairable. Thanks to Bob Ahia and Nixon Jack who took care of this need quickly and capably.

~ That our church has entered an agreement with Theresa Ten Eyck, CPA to help establish sound financial procedures in the installation and operation of our accounting software on the new computer. She met with the church council in February.

~That our Administrative Assistant, Glenda Van Domburg, has submitted her resignation effective the end of February. Glenda has helped us through a transition from our old computer system to the new one, and has been a steady and positive presence in our church office during her time with us. She will be returning to a former position that requires her unique expertise and she is thankful for friendships made while serving with us.

~That Fay Jack has graciously stepped in to provide office services until a new Admin. Assistant is hired. Continue to pray for Fay's health and strength as she also serves as the clerk for the church council and is on the pastoral search committee.

~ That these winter months we have enjoyed hosting visitors from Minnesota, Maine, Pennsylvania, Iowa, Washington, D.C., Japan and Korea. These "winter" friends have added a special warmth to our Sunday services.

~ That we send postage stamps to an organization that works with handicapped people in sheltered workshops and received the following thank you: "Dear Glenda, Thank you so very much for the stamps you sent. On Monday I mailed a full box of stamps off to Germany and have begun a new box which your stamps will go into. Please continue your saving activities to help the handicapped people in shelter workshops. Happy Year of the Horse, Carol"

Our Sympathy...

On Sunday, February 9, Elizabeth Frendo passed from this life at around 9:00 a.m. at Hilo Medical Center. She had faced severe health challenges for most of the year. She was grateful for everyone's love and prayers through the difficult days. Her memorial service is at Hilo Coast United Church of Christ in Honomu on Saturday, March 1. Visitation is at 10:00 a.m. with the service at 11:00 a.m.

On Saturday, Feb. 8, a graveside service was held for Mr. Harvey Hoffman at Homelani Cemetery. Harvey was a well-known and beloved member of the church for many years, taking care of property with great love and skill.

Are Your Church Records Up To Date?

Recently a gentleman came to our church office asking if we had his baptismal records. He was baptized in 1941, 73 years ago. Fortunately because of the great attention to detail and careful record keeping that has been a part of this church's DNA through the years, we were able to locate the information he requested.

Periodically, we ask members and friends of the church to update any information that may have changed recently. This includes addresses, phone numbers, email addresses and emergency contacts. If you could let us know of any changes it would be very much appreciated. A form for this purpose is included in the Sunday bulletin.

For anyone who would like to receive an Annual Report for 2013, please contact the church office.

Pastoral Search Committee

The Pastoral Search Committee was affirmed and formally recognized by those present at the Annual Meeting on February 9. Members include June Dela Cruz, Karena Asejo, Jeremy Agag, Betty Nekoba and Fay Jack. The committee may be adding another member or two as their work load increases in the future. Currently, they are completing the Church Profile for circulation to pastors seeking a new assignment. Please hold them in your prayers as they fulfill their important responsibilities.

Happy March Birthday to the Following Friends and Members

McCharles Tumaneng (1), Jodie Payao (10), Jonathan Payao (10), Pedro Queja (13, 93 years old), Priscilla Kent (15), Heather Padilla (20), Rowena Tumaneng (21), Gabriel Benjamin (21), Kaylana Alokua (27)

Servant Leadership in March

Ushers & Greeters	Debbie Sasan & McArthur Tumaneng
Acolyte	Drenzen Queddeng
Communion Prep	Youth
Communion Servers	Jeremy, Karisa, Royalyn & Sali

	March 2	9	16	23	30
Lay Readers	Bob	Crystal	Betty	Joanne	Danny
Coffee Hour	Debbie	Jeremy	Sali	Women's Fellowship	Kosraeans Fellowship
Flowers	Margo	Bob		Jane	
Children's SS	Karena	Open	Open	Open	Open

Lent and Easter Services

On Wednesday, March 5, Lent begins with Ash Wednesday. We will have two brief Ash Wednesday services on that day, one at 12:00 p.m. and one at 6:00 p.m. Later, we will observe a Maundy Thursday service on April 17 at 7:00 p.m. Easter Sunday will be our regular worship at 10:00 a.m.

As in the past we will be decorating the sanctuary with Easter Lilies. These may be reserved for \$15. each and given in memory or in honor of loved ones. Reservation forms are available in the church bulletin or at the church office and on the last page of this newsletter. Lily reservations must be completed and paid for by March 30.

**Church Work Day is Saturday, March 8, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.
Your help and support will be greatly appreciated!!**

Keeping It Clean – Together We Can

The buildings that are home to First United Protestant Church are well-used every week. Sunday worship services for two congregations are just the beginning. Each night of the week, various groups use our facilities for meetings and services. There are the AA and NA groups that meet nearly every night. The Kosraean Fellowship prayer service meets on Wednesday evenings. Through the week in the afternoons Michael Russell teaches violin/cello in our church sanctuary. Add to this the Kamehameha Pre-School that meets every weekday and then there are the community concerts with their rehearsals and performances.

Praise God for such a wonderful venue in which so many good things can take place each week. But the reality is that with all that use, cleaning becomes an important issue. The church council has contracted with Personal Touch Janitorial Services to do basic cleaning in the bathrooms, sanctuary and office areas, including disinfecting bathroom areas and vacuuming the carpets. This is an added expense but worth the cost if it helps to keep the church facilities in good shape.

But it is also true that there may be individuals and/or families who are willing to help share this responsibility and thereby reduce the cost of such services while adding to the overall cleanliness and beauty of the property. The Kosraean Fellowship volunteers in cleaning the sanctuary and other areas of the church on the last Sunday of the month. But that leaves three additional Sundays. If you and/or your family are willing to sign up for a given week, please do so on the sign-up sheet posted on the bulletin board in the Narthex or speak to Bob Ahia about the services you are able to provide.

Our Church Is ONLINE!

Check it out! The church website is up and running, though there are still additions and adjustments to make. Regardless, we are discoverable on the Internet. You can check it out at www.fupchurch.org ***An important request: If you do not wish to have your photo appear on the website, please make this known to Pastor Ron.*** It is important that everyone be at peace with the fact that with today's easy digital photography, their photo may turn up on the Internet without them realizing it. No identifying names are used. This is also true for photos that are placed in newsletters, flyers, and other promotional pieces. If you have feedback, suggestions, insights and a wish list for the website, please let Pastor Ron know.

Kosraean Families Receive Blankets

Recently, ten Kosraean families received blankets for children born during the year. These blankets were prepared by First United Protestant Church under the leadership of Carlene Wolf for new additions to the church Ohana. The following children received the blankets:

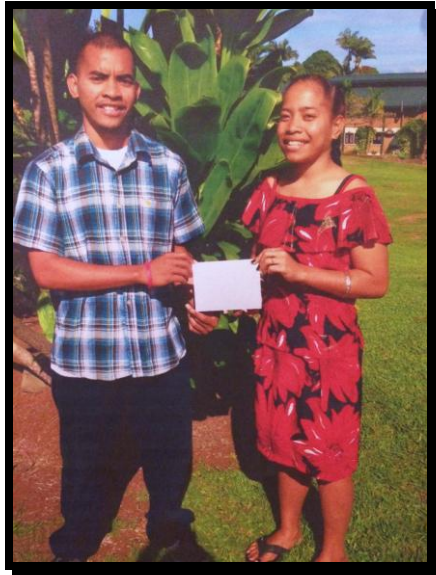
Paulina Alokoa, Cyrus Barton Melsemai, Kishaun Esau, Maichi Asher, Coal Mattos, Jan Ann Tosie, BJ Jun Bell Tosie, Widdy Abraham, Lei`alani Jackson, Mercy Ann Abraham

From Pastor Nixon:

"How do we thank you for such a wonderful gift? We feel so blessed to be touched by your kindness. As each child got a hold of their blanket, it reminded me of them being wrapped in God's love and comfort. We thank you again and may God bless First United Protestant Church for making something that brought so much comfort and joy." Pastor Nixon Jack

From Keslyn & Kesson Tulensru – recipients of Christmas offerings in 2013:

I hope that this letter finds you in good health and spirit. My brother Kesson Tulensru and I, Kesllyn Tulensru would like to extend our greatest appreciation to you for your kindness and support during the time that we had lost one of the most important persons in our lives, Mr. Espil Tulensru. We truly appreciated all that you did and if there is other words than "Thank you" we would surely used it. God Bless. Keslyn Tulensru & Kesson Tulensru



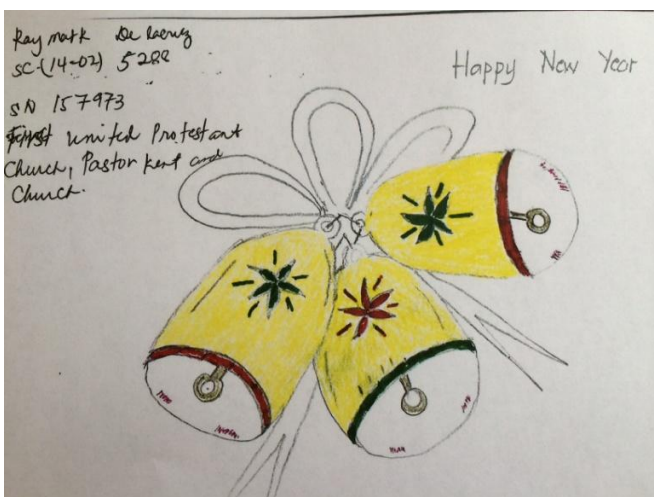
A Big Mahalo to the Kosraean Work Crew who are working very hard to keep our grounds looking beautiful. They have cut a lot of trees and brush behind our education building & library. In addition, they have cleaned all the ginger along the makai side of the church because the foliage was providing an easy way for rats to enter our sanctuary.

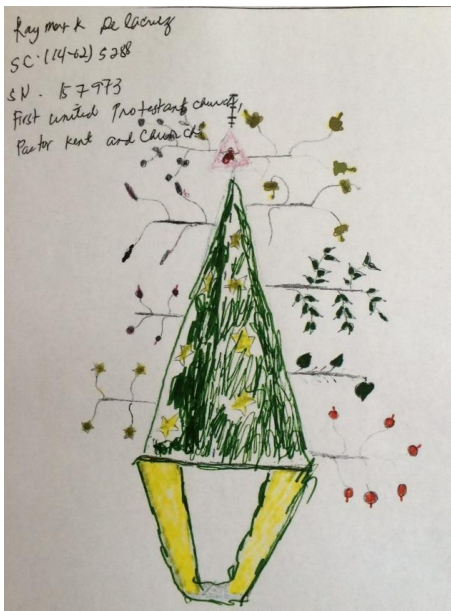
Thank you very much!



Kosraean Work Crew Mahalo to you all!!

Pictures from Raymark – our young student in the Philippines





One Great Hour of Sharing – Sunday, March 30

The United Church of Christ has at its core transforming lives! Why? Because we are all one in Christ. Through One Great Hour of Sharing, lives are transformed through support that provides clean water, food, medicines, shelter, healthcare, education and disaster relief in the U.S. and Internationally.

In 2012, the OGHS offering reached \$2,504,369. An additional \$935,161 was received to support specific disaster efforts with one third designated to the Hurricane Sandy relief fund. We will receive this offering in our morning worship service on Sunday, March 30. Offering envelopes can be found in the hymnal racks in the pews. This is one of the “five for five” offerings we participate in during the year.



Our Keiki share their singing talents in worship!



Thank You to all the Aunties & Uncles who teach us each Sunday: Gail Kagawa, Carlene Wolf, Laurel Luth, Priscilla Kent, Karena Asejo, Joanne Pocsidio, Streisand Galdones & Brian Padilla. Mahalo! Mahalo! Mahalo!



Easter Lilies

We will be using Lilies to decorate the sanctuary for Easter. If you wish to purchase a lily for yourself or in memory and/or honor of a loved one please fill in the information below along with your check or cash for the lily/s. The names of those being remembered or honored will be printed in the worship bulletin on Easter Sunday April 20th 2014

Name: _____

Phone #: _____ *Quantity:* _____

Name/s of people in whose memory and/or honor these are being placed in our beautiful sanctuary for this very special time of year.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4.-----

5.-----

The cost is \$15.00 each. The deadline to make your purchase will be March 30th, 2014.

This is a wonderful time to give back to our church and ourselves by being a part of the decorating.