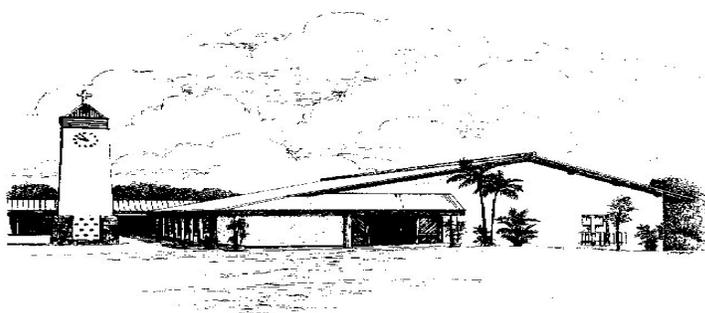


## First United Protestant Church-UCC

1350 Waianuenue Avenue  
Hilo, HI 96720  
808/935-5914  
fupchilo@hawaiiantel.net  
www.fupchurch.org

**Return Service Requested**



# Welcome to First United Protestant Church Hilo, Hawaii

In this season of Epiphany 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 Mid-Week Service	7:30 pm Wednesdays
Kosraean WCA Service	7:00 pm Fridays
Kosraean Sunday Worship 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.

*This is a place to BELONG... We're all in this together. No matter our history, circumstances, or goals, we're all human and all need love and acceptance. That's why the church exists and why you belong.*

JANUARY 2016

## **Sermon Themes for January**

**January 3, 2016**

**Holy Epiphany!!**

**John 1.1-18**

"What's an Epiphany?" you might ask. An epiphany is a revelation, light suddenly streaming into a darkened room. An epiphany is a new understanding about something that makes you say, "Oh Wow! Now I understand!" Its an "Aha" moment in which we comprehend something for the first time that has always remained a mystery up to this point. In the Christian church year, we begin the season of Epiphany on January 6 – a season when Jesus reveals himself through word and deed as the Son of God as he teaches and preaches, and gathers his followers to be with him. There were many "Aha" moments that may help us to understand ourselves and our God in a deeper way.

**Jan. 10**

**Breathing Lessons**

**Mark 12.28-34**

Inhaling and Exhaling are opposites that need each other. We can't do just one. We have to do them both. There is a parallel truth in our spiritual lives when we seek spiritual nourishment for our spirits through worship, prayer, meditation and fellowship – "loving God with all our hearts, souls, spirits, and minds." That would be Inhaling. The other side of the truth is when we engage in acts of mercy and generous giving for those in need... as Jesus calls us to our Mission of "loving others as we love ourselves." Inhaling and Exhaling. Can't do just one. Gotta do them both!

**Jan. 17**

**Guest Speaker Rev. Richard Alger**

**Jan. 24**

**Mercy, Mercy, Mercy**

**Matthew 9.9-13**

Matthew's call to follow Jesus is a story about Mercy and Grace. The Pharisees possessed neither. Jesus overflowed with both. The heart of God was filled with these dispossessed people, the marginalized, the condemned, the "losers" of their day. Given a choice between attending a party at a Pharisee's house and Matthew's house, Jesus would always choose Matthew's party. Maybe the food was better. Probably the conversation was livelier and louder, certainly more fun. It was real people talking about real problems, sharing their real failures, indentifying with each other's real loneliness and isolation. They found solace in each other's presence. It was a company of the wounded. It's where Jesus always wanted to be.

**Jan. 31**

**The Rude Host and the Gracious Sinner**

**Luke 7.36-50**

The woman who washed Jesus' feet and dried them with her hair was an outcast in her society. The Pharisee, the "righteous" religious leader hosting the dinner did not extend the normal courtesy of welcome to Jesus but the woman did. It's a story about the relationship between grace and hospitality. Being gracious and welcoming to others arises out of our own sense of having received grace and being grateful for it.

**Feb. 7**

**What Are You Saving it For?**

**John 2.1-11**

The scene is a wedding and the embarrassing problem is that there's no more wine. Jesus saves the day by providing the "best wine" anyone had ever tasted! It's a story about scarcity and abundance. We can live with a fear that there's only a limited supply and hoard what we have lest we lose it all. Once its gone there isn't any more. OR we can live with the joy of abundance... God blesses and promises that all our needs will be met and tells us that the more we give away, the more we will find comes back to us. Therefore we can live with open hearted generosity and unbounded love.

## THINKING OUT LOUD.....

[A few weeks ago in a sermon entitled "It's Just a Room," I shared the following conversation with one of the leaders in a Narcotics Anonymous group that meets in our church. As requested by many in attendance, the full sermon may be found at our church website. But I include here excerpts for those who may not have Internet access.]

*"Do you know how many lives have been changed in this room?" the woman asked. I was in the Sunday School room unpacking the new chairs and tables purchased by the church as part of the renovation for that space. She had led one of the Narcotics Anonymous groups that meet in our church for twenty two years. She began to share some of the stories of the people whose lives had been changed over the years through the meetings that were held in that room.*

*"It is hard for me to write about the little room at First United Protestant Church without a big lump in my throat and tears of gratitude coming to my eyes. For the past twenty-two years I have been helping to open the Narcotics Anonymous meeting in your church Sunday School room and during that time I'd estimate I've seen over two thousand individuals seeking help for Addiction come to our meetings. Some people come and never return and others come and return years later to try again, often in much more dire circumstances, and others come and stay. I can't ever predict who that may be but I want anyone to have a chance. When people stay and give the program a try, I see lives change. Not just the life of the individual but change for the better in their families, and in our community. This is thanks to your trust and generosity.*

*Many lives have been saved and I have witnessed many miracles as people's lives are transformed by recovery.*

*Here are just a few examples out of the countless stories I have witnessed.*

*-I have seen a young Desert Storm Veteran with his hoodie pulled over his face, heavily traumatized, addicted, and antisocial, become a community honored Counselor himself and marry his sweet heart and become a dedicated Father of two beautiful children.*

*-I have seen a Prostitute who had 38 prior arrests, whom the local Police had just given up on, become the Director of a Women and Children's Shelter.*

*-I have seen a 3 time Prison sentenced Drug Dealer go on to work for the State as a "Mentor" for at risk Youth and create an annual Surf Event for children in our community.*

*-I have seen a homemaker - a seemingly happily married Mother of 4 - who was terrified she was putting her children's lives in danger regularly driving while intoxicated and unable to stop using, surrender her fear of exposure and find recovery in the safety of this anonymous program. I also saw this same woman go back to college and earn a degree and graduate with her 3rd eldest child from UH!*

*-I have seen a Nurse and a Doctor who lost their licenses due to drug addiction recover and practice medicine again, opening a meeting for others in their profession.*

*-I have seen hundreds of men and women be reunited with their children who were taken from them, able to provide a healthy home and stop the cycle of abuse.*

*-I have seen a girl who was a chronic addict and juvenile delinquent from a "broken home" become a Lawyer for Children's Justice.*

*-I have seen a former athlete that couldn't stop using drugs get clean and become a Little League Coach and open a Fitness Center and become a Church leader.*

## THINKING OUT LOUD (CONT).....

*—I have seen a young Mother and Father bring their 5 day old child up to the meeting from the Hospital to get a 'celebratory cake' for the young Mother's 5th Anniversary clean.*

*--I have seen a Judge and a Lawyer with tears in their eyes give a cake to a former Inmate who had appeared in Court so many times they couldn't count, for 10 years clean and sober, now a respected Restaurant owner and (prominent Community Service Club) member.*

*-I have seen children hug the parents returned to them by a life that was clean and parents hug the children they knew they had surely lost to drug addiction.*

*-I have seen people walk in that room looking as if they were on death's door and I have seen them restored to health; mental, physical, and spiritual. The light comes back into their eyes and old dreams awaken. They leave behind a marginal existence and begin to live the life story god meant for them to. This has come from your trust and generosity."*

*Since 1987 here in Hilo we were meeting in pavilions or covered picnic tables often in the rain and dark of Wailoa Park or at the beach. In 1993 we took a chance and asked First United Protestant Church if we could hold meetings on a few week nights in your rear classrooms and gratefully, you said yes. There are many hundreds of individuals in our community who came to their first Narcotics Anonymous meeting at your church who remain clean today and are living a new way of life. To be in the sunlight of the spirit is truly to be alive and we can feel the love of a Higher Power and live a life with health and dignity. We are so grateful to you all for your trust and generosity for those suffering who may find us in the evening meetings and for those of us who dedicate our own lives to service so that we also may continue to live clean and carry the message to the still suffering addict. No one need ever live the degradation and dereliction of a life of addiction. The ends are always the same: jails, institutions, or death. There is hope for a different way of life and addicts can recover thanks to the Program of Narcotics Anonymous and to your compassion and faith in allowing us to hold meetings at your facility."*

It's just a room. But when God enters a room, everything changes. A room blessed by God and filled with Spirit's presence is a place of miracles. We just pay the utility bills, refurbish and paint it from time to time... and God does the rest. God uses rooms... and we have the privilege and responsibility of providing important rooms every day of the week to our children, neighbors, friends and family members who rely on us to make those rooms available... a lifeline to education, learning about our faith, transforming ugliness to beauty, finding sanity, embracing freedom, finding healing and discovering hope.

Expecting more miracles in 2016!



Pastor Ron

# Kosraean News

A Calling to **LOVE GOD** with all their **HEART**  
Our new Kosrae Hilo Lay Ministers

## Kosrae Hilo 2015 Christmas



LM Andy Robert



LM Tulensa Freddy



LM Joab Welly



## A DAILY MEASURED LIFE!

The Christian life is not lived out on a playground, but rather on a battlefield! Yes, we are Saved, which means we are Safe and Secure, which also means we are Soldiers! And being soldiers, this New Year will bring with it many spiritual battles and we need to make sure we're prepared not only for battle, but for VICTORY!

With a new season, it is an opportunity to make things better. There are opportunities for families who can look back to see things didn't go too well. We have an opportunity to be better husbands, wives, fathers and mothers.

The New Year also is a time to improve as an individual and as a church family. There are many "what else" opportunities.

Don't focus on failures but on the opportunities to make things better in your life through God. If we don't feel like we've been as good to the community as we need to be, we must look at it and be better.

Forgive Yourself. Get yesterday off your back and realize the purpose of forgiveness. If we are to experience that freedom of God's forgiveness and know His peace in our life, then we have to right those things that were wrong in our past. We have to get them off our back, because if we don't they will weigh us down and keep us from moving forward and becoming what God wants us to be.

We believe that every year that God gives us on this earth is to be a year where we are as productive as we can be for His work and as pleasing as we can be for His glory. The longer you live the more you realize just how fleeting these years are and just how important it is to maximize the potential of each year for being what we ought to be and doing what we ought to do.

He reminds us that we don't even know what tomorrow holds, much less a year. Let us say that even though we may not know what we face in the future, we should know how to face the future.

One of the ways to face the New Year is to settle certain things in our heart and life. There are certain spiritual resolutions we should make about how we are going to approach and face the New Year.  
**PRODUCTIVE, CONSISTENT, SUSTAINABLE, GOALS ACHIEVED.**

Blessings,

Pastu Nixon and Nipastu Fay

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## Did You Know...

- that our Annual Meeting will take place on Sunday, Feb. 14th following the morning service? If you are responsible for a report for the Annual Report handout, please make sure that it is received in the church office by Sunday, January 24th. Mahalo!
- that we will be installing new Officers and Council Members in a Service of Dedication on Sunday, January 9th in the morning worship service?
- that we will welcome new Members into the fellowship of the church on Sunday, January 24th? If you would like to unite with First United Protestant Church as a member, please speak to Pastor Ron as soon as possible. Mahalo!
- that we are fortunate to have talented artists among our Members and friends? We are thankful for the beautiful quilt displayed in the church Sanctuary created by Barbara Hanenberg. Many Thanks Barbara!
- that the Sunday School room continues to take on a new look with the addition of new chairs and conference tables, new carpet and soon to come new blinds for the windows?
- that our young people are continuing their fund-raising efforts toward the Summer trip to the National Youth event in Florida? Mahalo to all who contributed during the Christmas season when the gift wrapping service was offered. They raised \$162! Look for more fund-raising projects in the months to come.
- that Kindermusik will start their Spring Session on January 6th thru May 16th? Please contact our church office or Roni Koscik at 938-540 for more information regarding these classes.
- that Chieko Garrett will be holding a concert for her students in the Sanctuary on January 9th at 2:00pm



*Welcome  
to this Sacred  
Prayer Corner*

Light a candle  
to make your prayers  
visible and real.  
Behold the Light and Believe!  
Written prayer requests will be lifted  
in prayer by this Church Ohana.  
May all who hold a prayer in their  
heart find Comfort and Peace!



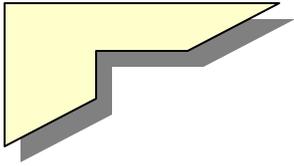
Please include the following people and situations in your prayers:

- |              |                   |
|--------------|-------------------|
| Fay Jack     | Agnes Perreira    |
| Joe Wahl     | Song Soon Lee     |
| Dennis Salmo | Pedro Queja       |
| Doris Toma   | Ray Stewart       |
| Eric Wyatt   | Geronima Solmerin |

**Happy January Birthday to the following Friends and Members**



Letti Agag (1st)  
Jane McLean (6th)  
Sheycie Asejo (16th)  
Carlene Wolf (18th)  
Anuheka Kaupu (21st)  
Alissa Wasserman (25th)  
Lisa Taylor (25th)  
Krizha Tumaneng (26th)

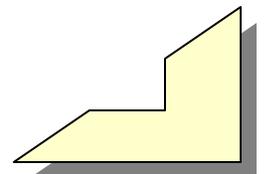


COUNCIL KORNER

*The First United Protestant Church Council  
would like to wish you all a very....*



*God Bless You,  
Debbie Sasan,  
Moderator*





**SERVANT LEADERSHIP PARTICIPATION**

**JANUARY 2016**

**USHERS/GREETERS**

*Kristel Tumaneng & Royalyn Solmerin*

**COMMUNION PREP**

*Joanne Pocsidio*

**LITURGISTS/LAY READERS**

*Jan. 3 Ray Stewart*  
*Jan. 10 FayMae Queja*  
*Jan. 17 Jeremy Agag*  
*Jan. 24 Danny Dizon*  
*Jan. 31 Bill Yang*

**COMMUNION SERVERS**

*Betty, Joanne, Zandrix & McCharles*

**COFFEE HOUR**

*Jan. 3 Bob Ahia*  
*Jan. 10 Jane Mclean*  
*Jan. 17 Betty Nekoba*  
*Jan. 24 Kosraean Fellowship*  
*Jan. 31 Jeremy Agag*

**FLOWERS**

**ACOLYTE**

*Kamaile Kaupu*