



Ka Hā A Ke Akua

The Breath of God

***‘Aukake
2023***

Exciting Time as Pastoral Search Process Moves Forward

I have now served as your interim transitional pastor for over 3 ½ years. It has, indeed, been a time of transition for us all. The pandemic forced us to deal with the most unusual and unfortunate circumstances imaginable in our search process resulting in a decision to suspend the process until a more opportune moment. Our current search committee consisting of Joe McDermott (chair), Dian Gruber (recording secretary), Sue Nygren and Linda Somera (corresponding secretaries), and Nathan Moore (chaplain) have been hard at work for the past several months updating our Local Church Profile and gaining the requisite skills needed to read and rate ministerial profiles, as well as interview prospective candidates.

Now the real work begins. The committee has received a few profiles, and more are expected in the coming weeks. The committee will prayerfully read the profiles received to determine whether the candidate is a good fit for our congregation and, if so, schedule an interview. Initial interviews will be conducted on Zoom after which the committee will decide whether to invite a candidate to Maui for a site visit.

As you might imagine, there is a great deal of responsibility in the hands of the search committee. They are prayerfully engaged in a very spiritual process seeking the wisdom of God as critical decisions are made for the long-term benefit of Keawala'i. Here is where you can help. PRAY! Each and every day:

Pray for each member of the search team – for their ability to discern God's will for Keawala'i, for their ability to be patient and listen carefully to God's direction, and for their physical strength since this process is a marathon and not a sprint.

Pray especially for our chairperson Joe as he now assumes responsibility for the overall search process. I have been guiding the committee until the time they began receiving profiles. I must now step aside so there is no conflict of interest in the selection process. I am available for consultation, but I will no longer attend search committee meetings and will honor the confidentiality the process requires.

Pray for the candidates applying and for the one God is nudging to lead our congregation. The right person is being called. That individual simply needs to be open to God's leading.

Periodic updates on the search process will be given by Joe or a member of the search team prior to worship. However, they will never reveal the names of candidates who have applied. That must be kept confidential for the sake of the candidates. These updates are intended to inform the congregation on where the team is in the process and what we might expect in the future. Please do not ask committee members about any details of the search as it pertains to candidates. They are not at liberty to discuss this information with anyone.

As I mentioned earlier, this is a highly spiritual process. It must be bathed in prayer. I will do so in my weekly pastoral prayers in worship and invite you to do the same in your daily prayers. It is the best gift you can give to the committee along with your own personal encouragement. When the time comes, the finalist candidate will be revealed to you. You will be given ample opportunity to meet him/her, to participate in worship under his/her leadership, and to vote on calling the right person to serve Keawala'i for the future.

This is a very exciting time for our church. Please participate through your prayer and encouragement. In this way you become an active participant in calling the next *kahu* for our church.

*Me ke aloha o ke Akua,
Kahu Scott*



FUTURE NEWSLETTERS — UPDATE

Due to increasing postage costs, we have begun limiting our mailings to countries outside the United States to electronic only.

We are also moving toward electronic distribution as much as possible for all other locations. If you received the August Newsletter by email, we have a current and accurate email address for you. Otherwise, we ask you to send us your correct email address so that you will not miss any Keawala'i news in the future.

Please email keawalaichurch@gmail.com or call (808) 879-5557 to update your current contact information. Mahalo!

Roof Replacement on Hale Pule is Complete

What had turned into a marathon task has finally been completed. It has been known for some time that pieces of shingle have been falling off of the *Hale Pule* roof. A drone inspection confirmed that shingles were wearing out and being displaced. The Board of Trustees decided to pursue roof replacement. A request for bids was sent out in the Spring of 2018 and only one bidder responded. At that point, it was anticipated that additional surveys might be required to get a Special Management Area Permit, so we postponed making a decision to accept the bid. The bid seemed high and was just for labor; materials were not included.

The first option considered was asphalt shingles which would require the addition of a plywood underlayment, both of which would add weight to the roof structure. A Structural Engineer was hired at the end of 2018 to evaluate if the roof had sufficient strength to support this type of roofing. The December 12th report indicated that the roof structure was sufficient and recommended some repairs to fix damaged or missing members and tie-downs to tie the roof to the walls.

Subsequently, other options were investigated such as using material like the original roof, cedar shake. Also, investigations into survey options were started. Then COVID hit. Eventually, the cedar shake option was adopted, and JDC Design and Consultant Services was engaged to prepare the plans which were completed in December of 2021. We applied for the permit later that month, found out that surveys were not needed and the SMA approval was granted in May of 2022. The final Building Permit was issued in November of 2022. Three bids were submitted out of 8 bids solicited. The lowest bidder who could complete the job was ADX Construction, with a final contract price of \$223,665. The Roofer was RAM Pacific and work started on March 13, 2023. The final inspection was June 2, 2023. There were some delays as the contractor worked with the Church to allow weddings and services to continue during the construction.

I should note that ADX first bid to complete all the recommendations of the Structural Engineer which came to over \$300,000. We scaled back some of the items resulting in the lower bid. However, when I inspected the repairs in the attic, all of the recommended items had been completed, including plywood underlayment (Bonus!).

We should be able to enjoy our weather-proof roof for many years to come.

Tom Nelson, Chair, Board of Trustees



Outreach Golf Tournament Fundraiser July 23, 2023



Mākena Golf & Beach Club hosted Keawala'i Church for a fundraising golf tournament on July 23, 2023. Seventy two golfers helped raise \$18,000 for the Church's Outreach Program that assists needy people throughout Maui County. It was a spectacular day, the course was magnificent and a good time was had by all. Mākena Golf & Beach Club is extremely gracious in their hosting and being a good neighbor. The Outreach Committee extends their *aloha* and appreciation to all the participants and to Bruce Burkitt for chairing the event.



Rest in Aloha



This past July we lost two very special Aunties of our congregation. They could not have been more different, and yet they were very much alike. Both had huge hearts full of *aloha*. Both loved this church deeply. Both were regular participants in worship. And both contributed greatly to our *‘ohana*. Auntie Pauline Mitterhammer (left) proudly claimed Vienna, Austria as her homeland but fully adopted Maui which stole her heart. She loved the ocean, walks on the beach, and life here that was filled with opportunities to embrace Hawaiian culture. Auntie Laurie Chang (right) was fully a part of Hawai'i having lived here most of her life, but also claimed another home – Okinawa. While she resisted coming to live in Mākena – a place she thought was “backwards,” she eventually loved living here and taught many of us what only a long-time resident could offer. We will deeply miss these two beloveds of our community and bless God for giving them long and productive lives and their many gifts to Keawala'i.



May they rest in *aloha* as we mourn their passing.



A Word from our Treasurer

Aloha Members, Associate Members & Friends of Keawala'i!

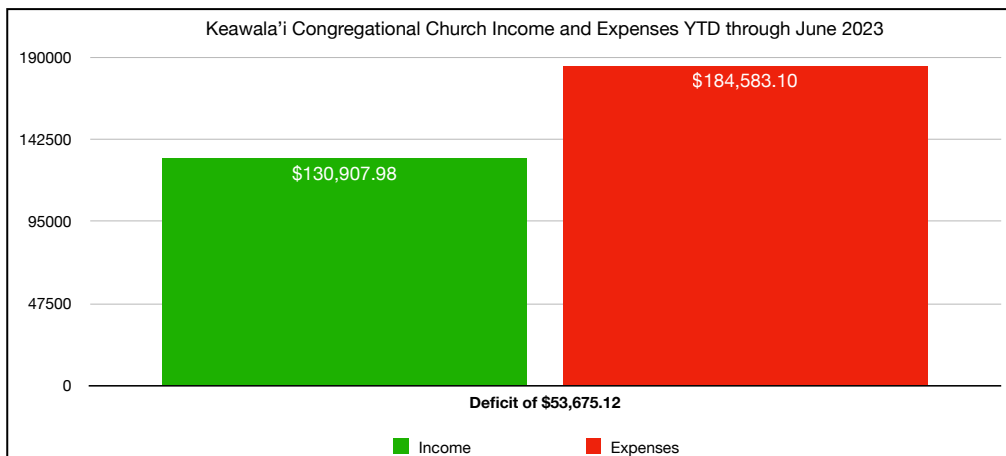
The purpose of this letter is to provide you with an update on the financial health of our church. But first, I have some wonderful news to share! We had a very successful Summer Appeal! A warm “mahalo” to all who have contributed – your donations are not only appreciated but necessary to continue the mission of our church. As of the writing of this letter, the Summer Appeal has produced over \$36,000 in contributions! If you have not yet contributed, I ask that you consider giving in a manner you are able – the Summer Appeal is still open and we appreciate your support.

Now to the “health” of our church... unfortunately we continue to operate at a deficit due to lower attendance and tithing, post the COVID pandemic. The current, annual operating costs to sustain Keawala'i's mission are close to \$390,000, or \$32,500 per month. In years past, weekly contributions and an Annual Appeal provided enough to sustain our operating budget. However, like many individuals, families, and businesses, inflation has also had a huge impact on our bottom line. Our operating loss for 2022 was approximately \$183,000, so the combination of lower attendance/tithing and inflation caused us to draw on our savings/reserves – something we try hard to avoid since reserves are earmarked for those more unanticipated costs.

In considering ways to increase contributions on a consistent basis, the congregation decided to implement a “pledge” program to ask members, associate members, and friends to pledge a certain amount on an annual basis. Currently, only about 30% of members are donating to the church. The decision was made at our annual meeting in March of this year. This will provide our church the opportunity to have a level of contributions it can count on. The program will be implemented in October for the 2024 calendar year. A pledge card will be mailed to those on our mailing list and cards will also be available at church each Sunday.

We humbly ask that you pledge to contribute an amount that is comfortable for 2024. You may complete your card and return in an envelope provided, or simply drop in the *lulu* on Sunday. We request all pledge cards be returned to the church by November 26th, the Sunday following Thanksgiving. I will begin making announcements at services in October and November to familiarize those in attendance with our pledge program and process. Of course, if you have any questions at all, you are welcome to contact me at amcdchurch@gmail.com. As your new Treasurer, I look forward to working with you and our Board of Trustees toward a path of success and financial sustainability for many years to come!

Mahalo, Alice McDermott, Treasurer



Donating to Keawala'i using a Qualified Charitable Distribution

Individuals with Individual Retirement Accounts (IRA) who must take a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) may receive a tax benefit by making a charitable donation to Keawala'i using a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD). Pre-tax money in an IRA is reported as income when distributed. A QCD is not reported as income and may be used to satisfy all or part of an RMD. This makes the distribution tax free, even if you are claiming a standard deduction when filing your federal tax return. The following IRS link provides more information.

<https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/reminder-to-ira-owners-age-70-and-a-half-or-over-qualified-charitable-distributions-are-great-options-for-making-tax-free-gifts-to-charity>

As always, you should consult a certified financial planner or CPA to determine if this is an option for you.

A Wedding Blessing Reflection - Coral: The Giver of Life

by Tammy Jacobson for Jenni Davis and Bill Dresser



The longest recorded traditional Hawaiian Chant, the Kumulipo, conveys the story of the creation and evolutions of life in the sea and on land. In this cherished oral tradition passed from generation to generation for centuries, the Hawaiian culture attributes the coral polyps as the beginning of life, and thus the most ancient ancestors of all living things in Hawaii. Corals are known as an *akua*, a form of deity, and possess *mana* the essence of inner strength and spirituality.

The Hawaiian tradition is compatible with the description of the creation as recorded in the Book of Genesis, wherein the seas and the creatures therein preceded many other creations. The scripture states that God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures... so Great created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems - and that moves about in it, according to their kinds..." "And God saw that it was good. God blessed them and said, 'be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas.'"

The subtle and yet profound insights in these parallel accounts of 'the beginning' convey the power and significance of honoring our Creator, acknowledging our beginnings, and having a role in our own physical and spiritual evolution. As you and I have been created in the image of God, we have inherited divine characteristics - one of which is the capacity to create. Of all the amazing creatures on the earth, none are as endowed as we are with the ability to contemplate and internalize their pasts, evaluate their current state

of being, and use their imagination to create a new future. Start anew. Begin again with a new perspective.

Yet as children of God, the Great Creator, we have inherited this divine gift of creativity. We can think deeply and use inspiration, innovation and imagination to further our development and to enrich our relationships. This gift is best appreciated and expanded when we seek intently, not passively, to find our purpose and fulfill the measure of our creation. The Apostle Paul taught the Galatians that the traditions and behaviors of the past had little impact if they would turn their hearts to Christ, "because", Paul said, "what counts is whether we have been transformed into a new creation."

The event that brought us together in this beautiful church, with local coral in its structure, celebrates and acknowledges the Giver of Life. We similarly celebrate the beginning of - and the perhaps a transformation of love anew for this couple whom we love and cherish. I don't pretend to know a lot about the culture of Hawaii, but what little I know, I surely love. The culture espouses so many values that can aid us on our spiritual journey and increase the quality of our relationships. Hawaiian values are often congruent with the teachings of our Savior. A few examples that we might ponder as an invitation to better ourselves:

<i>Ahonui:</i>	Patience – not just long suffering, patience expressed with tenderness
<i>Akahai:</i>	Speak from a gentle heart, be kind, pleasant
<i>Ha'aha'a:</i>	Be humble, meek, unpretentious, modest – and grateful for what we have
<i>Aloha:</i>	Not just a greeting of love, but an expression of peace and compassion for others

It is my prayer for each of us that we reflect on and cherish our beginnings - honor our Creator – and actively seek the transformations we need to fulfill the measure of our creation.

An unknown author penned it this way:
We have tomorrow, bright before us, like a flame
Yesterday, a night-gone thing, a sun-down name
And dawn-today, a rainbow above, the road we came.

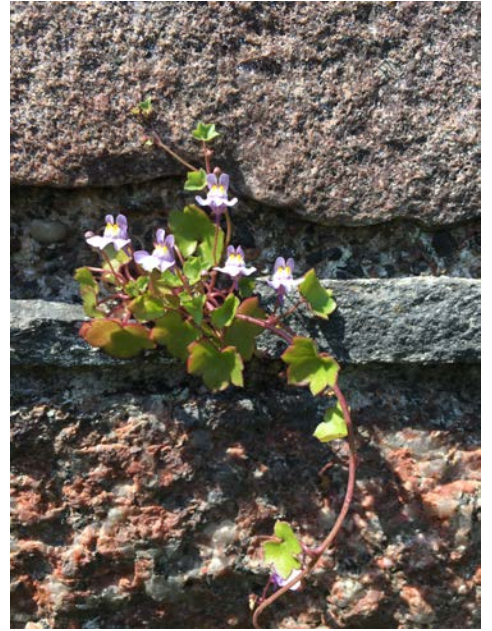
It is also my prayer that the Giver of Life will bless each of us with His spirit, and fill our hearts and minds with the things we stand in need of, on this day and always.



A Prayer

*O Lord, grant that we meet the coming day in peace.
Help us in all things to rely upon Your holy will.
In each hour of the day, reveal Your will to us.
Bless our dealings with all who surround us.
Teach us to treat all that shall come to us throughout the day
with peace of soul,
and with the firm conviction that Your will governs all.
In all our deeds and words, guide our thoughts and feelings.
In unforeseen events, let us not forget that all are sent by You.
Teach us to act firmly and wisely,
without embittering and embarrassing others.
Give us the strength to bear the fatigue of the coming day,
with all that it shall bring.*

*Direct our wills.
Teach us to pray.
Pray within us. Amen.*



Keawala'i Church Book Club

The Keawala'i Church Book Club recently had Melinda Clarke of Maui, author of "Waymakers for Peace" (Hiroshima and Nagasaki Survivors Speak)" as their guest. The book hopes the stories enable the survivors to replace their "Victim" status and claim, instead, the title of WAYMAKERS for Peace.

The picture was taken at the meeting. Attending were (starting from the top left): Sue Johnson, Barbara Gadwood, Kate Acks, Vollie Scott, Sandy Cale, Colleen Curran DeLima, Eleanor Persian, Linda Somera, Wanda Walker, Renee Riley, Cindy Mead, Melinda Clarke, Laurie Beitler and Victoria Smith.

The Book Club will read "The Dutch House" by Ann Patchett in August, followed in September with Trevor Noah's book "Born a Crime". The Book club meets on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 10am outside the church. If you would like to join us, please let the office know.



Ben Verdery Guitar Class & Concert

July 2023



As always, I had such a marvelous experience teaching my annual summer master class at the glorious Keawala'i church. Entering the church each day is like coming home. For so many of us it is home!

The students and guest teacher loved learning and teaching in such a sacred and inspiring place. So often the voice of the ocean and song of birds would instruct my teaching and inspire the students.

Of course we all absolutely loved performing our final concert at the church. How lucky are we to have an audience who truly appreciates our performances. In addition we adore the hospitality of the parishioners presenting such a wonderful spread of cookies, fruit and drink at intermission!!

In closing we have to thank Andrea for being so accommodating and just plain wonderful!!

I know I speak for all of us when I extend a huge mahalo!

Keawala'i will always hold a most dear place in our hearts.

Sending much peace and love.
Ben



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Ka Hā A Ke Akua: The Breath of God is a newsletter of Keawala'i Congregational Church. Opinions expressed in this publication are those of the writer(s). Unless otherwise noted, such opinions are not to be construed as the position taken by any of the boards, committees, or council of the church.

Regular Online Meetings

Sundays at 10:00 a.m.

Livestream Worship Service on Vimeo
<https://www.keawalai.org>

Wednesdays at 11 a.m.

KCC Zoom Room

FIRST SUNDAY MEDITATIONS

Every first Sunday of the month

The meditations will begin at approximately 6:30 p.m. in person and live on the Keawala'i Group Facebook Page. For Sunday Meditations you do not have to be a Facebook subscriber to click and join us. You can also join us in person. We begin each evening with a brief spiritual practice, an explanation of the weekly theme, periods of silence, and conclude with the joy of watching the setting sun over the Pacific Ocean.



Bruce Burkitt, Moderator
Thom. Probst, Vice-Moderator
Linda Somera, Secretary
Alice McDermott, Treasurer
Edie Kapiko, Assistant Treasurer
Andrea Yepez, Administrative Coordinator
Edie Kapiko, *Hui Mālama* Intake
Andrea Yepez, Outreach Committee Intake
Cameron Keys, Choir Director
Danette Kong, Pianist
The Rev. Dr. Scott Landis, Transitional Pastor



Sermon: 10:00 a.m. Sunday sermon text is posted at www.keawalai.org under [Kahu's Mana'o](#)

Worship: Sunday services are in person and available on Vimeo at www.keawalai.org.

