

The Spire

Photograph by: Kristen Young

Central Union Church and Preschool

“We Engage and Embrace ALL as we seek to Embody Christ!”

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Pastor's Page

Rev. David Rivers, Senior Minister

It is in a time like this that the essence of who we are and what we believe shines forth. April is our month to celebrate the profound news of an empty tomb—that God has overcome all things! It is the faith in God's resurrection possibilities that we dare to hope when so many have lost hope; we dare to forgive even the unforgiveable; we dare to tap into the power of God and be God's hands and feet, voice and eyes to a world in great need of love!

What might the Easter story mean in light of the COVID-19 pandemic? Where have we seen God at work in our community and around our world? I would dare say that if we slowed down enough, we will see God's work everywhere.

In fact, you might just be a part of this larger story! The moment you called on a neighbor; you shared a meal to one who was at home; prayed for one who is sick; listened to another's story with grace and acceptance. The examples are quite endless.

St. Teresa of Avila is said to have written a poem entitled Christ Has No Body But Yours. In it, she paints the beauty of how God uses each of us as individuals, as well as collectively.

*Christ has no Body now but yours
No hands, no feet on earth but yours
Yours are the eyes through which He looks
Compassion on this world
Yours are the feet with which He walks
To do good
Yours are the hands with which He blesses
All the world*

*Yours are the hands
Yours are the feet
Yours are the eyes
You are His Body*

*Christ has no Body now but yours
No hands, no feet on earth but yours
Yours are the eyes through which He looks
Compassion on this world
Christ has no body now on earth but yours*

Read it again. Ponder its meaning and its invitation. St. Paul named this idea as the 'Body of Christ' in which each of us are a part of this larger body doing the work of God in the world. The church, you see, is the gathering of a people willing to be servants of God to a broken world by being like God in the world. Or, as we say at CUC, "we seek to embody Christ!"

In the days ahead, how might you be an active part of the living body of Christ? How might you serve your fellow humanity, and all of creation, by being a gift to another? The power of our Easter story is that we are enabled, and authorized, to bless this world! So, let's go do it!

Council Talking Points

Tom Kiyabu, Council Chair

News from the Council would normally highlight upcoming actions and events in the life of our congregation. Yet we live in unprecedented times. With the arrival of COVID-19 on our shores, the ground beneath us is shifting hourly, with constant updates as to new cases reported and businesses temporarily shutting their doors.

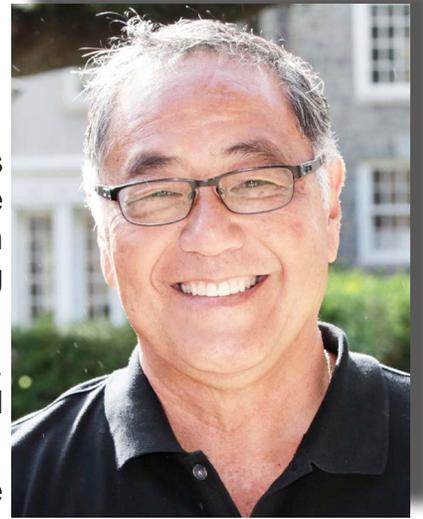
As a Council, we are tasked with leading into an unknown and uncertain future. As of today, the CDC is requesting no gatherings larger than 10 people and “social distancing” and “self-quarantine” have become the guidelines we live by.

This requires us to examine how we as a church respond. How do we continue to be a source of hope and strength during a fearful and frightening time? How do we reach out to those who are lonely and isolated while maintaining health and safety protocols? What can we do to address the inevitable economic impact?

We don't know what lies ahead. But know that your staff and council members are here for you. We are figuring out ways to worship and conduct business remotely. We are utilizing technology to maintain virtual connections.

We want to hear from you. And we encourage you to do likewise. Pick up the phone and check in with each other. Email a friend or your pastoral staff. Pastor David has often said that CUC is a place where we “do life together”. And a reality of life is it sometimes gets hard. But it is with the care and support of each other that we find our path.

In times of great difficulty, it is always helpful to reflect on what has gotten us through tough times before. For us at Central Union Church, it is knowing that we journey under the banner of Love Never Fails. That even when times are dark (and they will be), God's love is steadfast. Our faith assures us there will be an Easter morning.



Meet Our New Controller

By Suzanne Ivey, Administrator



Ashley Cambe joined us as our new Controller on February 24, 2020. Ashley manages the accounting staff and is responsible for providing oversight and direction to CUC's financial operations.

She earned both her Bachelors in Accounting and MBA at Hawaii Pacific University. Prior to joining us Ashley was the Accounting Manager for Helping Hands Hawaii and worked for Salvation Army as a Staff Accountant. She has also held several positions in the private sector. We are blessed to have someone with so much non-profit experience. Ashley is a motivated individual and has jumped right into managing our complex finances.

In her spare time she enjoys Crossfit and traveling. Ashley next goal is to take on the CMA exam. Please join me in welcoming Ashley to the CUC 'ohana.

2020 - 2021 Church Council

Council Approved Nominees:

Vice Chair: Carl Schlack

Treasurer: Marvin Fong

Secretary: Bruce Luxton

At Large: Priscilla Kesi-Tiumalu

At Large: Maurina Ludwig

At Large: Craig McGinnis

Meet Your New Council Nominees

Carl Schlack

Carl first began attending Central Union Church in 1984 and became a member in 1986. He married his wife (Shauna) in the Sanctuary in 1989. His daughters (Emily and Maya) were baptized at Central Union Church in 1993 and 1997, respectively (and each had the honor of playing the part of baby Jesus in the White Gift Pageant). Carl served on the Deacons for a short while in the 1980s, and has since become more active with the Church by serving on the Church Council (where he currently serves as an At Large Member and Chair of the Nominations and Governance Committee), on various Ad Hoc Committees, and by volunteering for Family Promise. Carl is a regular attendee of the 11:00am Contemporary Service.

For his day job, Carl is an attorney who focuses his law practice on real estate and corporate transactions.

Bruce Luxton

Aloha, I am currently the Head Usher. You have probably seen me in front of the sanctuary since the Krenzkis left. I have been the 7:00 am Usher for over 20 years, and more recently at the 9:00 am and the 11:00 am services. I have been a Deacon for many years, and I currently serve as head of the Ushering Committee and recording secretary. I have been at CUC as the Moderator, the Chairman of the Trustees, and many other roles. I also served for a number of years at the Conference as the Conference Treasurer and also as the Foundation Assistant Treasurer.

Marvin A. Fong

Marvin A. Fong serves as Chairman and Treasurer of Market City Limited in Honolulu, Hawaii, a family owned business started by his father, U.S. Senator Hiram Fong, and two other families in 1948. Since joining the corporation as Asset and Property Manager in 1984, Fong has utilized his expansive experience in law, real estate and banking to guide the 70-year-old company. In his present position, his responsibilities include construction management, care and maintenance of the facilities and investments. The first property, Market City Shopping Center, the 87,000 square foot shopping center is 100% leased and serves the Kaimuki-Moiliili-Kapahulu areas. The anchors are Foodland Super Market, Walgreens and Ben Franklin Stores. The center has many excellent restaurants and locals as well as visitors frequent the center.

Among his professional and business associations, Fong is a member of the International Council of Shopping Centers. His past associations were the National Federation of Independent Businesses, Small Business Hawaii and the Chamber of Commerce of Hawaii.

Fong served as Chairman of the Honolulu Advisory Board of the Salvation Army. During his term, Fong initiated three projects, including documenting the Salvation Army's properties on Oahu; creating an information card of human service agencies willing to help those in need; and assisting graduates of the human service organization's Drug Rehabilitation Program with finding employment. Fong served as Chairman of the Arcadia Advisory Board. The Arcadia Retirement Home is owned by Central Union Church. Fong also chaired the Board of Deacons for two years at Central Union Church. He also served as VP of the American Box Car Racing International, a non-profit organization which promotes box car racing in Hawaii. Its annual Mayor's Cup benefit event raises funds toward building a permanent track in Central Oahu.

Following his graduation from Lynchburg College in Virginia with a BA in Philosophy in 1970, Fong worked for Finance Realty Company, Ltd., processing Federal Housing Administration loans for Maka Kilo Development, a community project. He left after four years to broaden his horizons by traveling around the world for six months.

Upon his return to the United States, Fong pursued his Juris Doctor degree at California Western School of Law in San Diego, graduating in 1978. As part of his extracurricular activities in law school, Fong, an avid chess player, organized a school-wide chess tournament. He began his career in law serving as a law clerk for Chief Justice William S. Richardson of the Hawaii Supreme Court and clerked also for Judge Frank T. Takao in the Circuit Court, First Circuit, State of Hawaii, City and County of Honolulu. He joined the law firm of Fong & Miho, Attorneys-At-Law before starting his own private practice in 1982.

Born in Honolulu, Fong is a graduate of University High School. He resides in Honolulu with his wife Sandra and their two sons, Nathan and Timothy. He enjoys swimming, tennis, bicycling and spending time with his family and dog Bella.

Priscilla Kesi-Tiumalu

My name is Priscilla Kesi-Tiumalu and together with my husband, Kalati, and our son Sinuka, we started attending Central Union Church in January of 2017. Shortly after that, we became members and also started singing on the Praise and Worship team for the 11am contemporary service.

I am a School Counselor at Kalihi Elementary and I have been there for three years. I believe that God puts us exactly where He needs us. While I really wanted to work at Farrington High School, God saw that I was needed at Kalihi Elementary. I have learned to truly trust God and lean not on my own understanding, so when I was asked to join the council, I told myself that if this is where God wants and needs me to be, I will follow. Aside from my counseling job and being a wife and mother, I also run a non-profit club for high school students from various private schools. It is called the ILH Poly Club. I started this club back in 2014 to give the private school students an opportunity to learn about the Samoan Culture through the art of dance and music. Many public schools have their own Poly clubs, but the private school students have not had access to one until the ILH Poly Club was started 6 years ago. I believe that this was part of my purpose in life. While I had doubts that I could make it happen, God strongly put it in my heart and so I followed. I am passionate about my job as a Counselor at Kalihi Elementary, and as the Founder/Advisor for the ILH Poly Club, and I truly believe that its because this was God's plan for me.

Although I truly enjoy what I do at school and with my club, I am most thankful that God blessed me with a hard working husband and our miracle son Sinuka. Sinuka is the reason why I want to live my life serving God to the fullest. I hope and pray that I will be of good use to the council and Central Union Church.

Maurina Ludwig

My name is Maurina Ludwig. I was raised on a small island called Pohnpei. One of the four States of the Federated States of Micronesia or F.S.M for short. I come from a big family of 7 sisters and 4 brothers! And I am the second eldest of the 12! I am married to Mark Ludwig and we have three children whom all baptized and members of Central Union Church! Another blessing to our small family is our four month old grand daughter!

I graduated from the Pohnpei Adventist High School in the year 1989. Then got admitted to Community College of Micronesia for 1 and half year before moving to Hawaii in 1992 after my whole family relocated due to my father's career change. Moving to Hawaii in 1992 I applied and got admitted to Honolulu Community College. During the same year I met my husband whom I still married to and had three children. In the year 1994 I had a daughter and ended a staying home mom. When my daughter was at the age of preschool I decided to enroll her in Head Start program. After volunteering everyday at her classroom her teacher encouraged me to become a teacher and I boldly said no I cannot do it. After some repeated encouragement and push from the teacher just to try it out I finally decided to give it a try! In the year 2000 I accepted the offer and never left the company. I started as an assistant teacher working full day and taking classes in the evenings. I was fortunate to be able to continue my education through the company's education funds. After so many semesters of part time night classes I managed to graduate with an A.S in Liberal Arts in the year 2007. I then decided to further my education with the privilege of the program's partnership with Wayland Baptist University. I graduated with my Bachelors of Science in Early Education in 2012. The same year my daughter graduated from Kaimuki High School. In 2013 our program started experiencing some shortage of staff so I became a lead teacher at my center. With the grace of God He led me through this journey! Thanks be to God for His never failing love.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

(COVID-19 Permitting)

The Annual Meeting will be held on **May 3rd**, in the Parish Hall, immediately following the **10:00 AM** service with an all Congregation member catered brunch. Please join us to celebrate CUC Ministries, host our Annual Meeting, and to forge deeper connections through sharing a meal.

There will be no 7:00 or 11:00 AM service that day. A quorum is required for action and every member shall have the right to vote only in person. Please contact the Church Office at 941-0957 for accommodation of special needs. *Please make your attendance a priority.*

Welcome Veronique Braithwaite

Rev. David Rivers, *Senior Minister*

It is with joy that we announce to our community that we have a new Director of Preschool: Mrs. Veronique Braithwaite! After Marie Hook's retirement, Veronique stepped up as the Interim Director of the Preschool for the first quarter of 2020. She has led with grace, with direction and everyone is thrilled with her impact!

Veronique's journey with CUPS started in 2014 as a teacher in the Blue Cottage. After a few years teaching, she worked in the solar field. This past summer, we rehired her as the Assistant Preschool Director in the hopes of having her one day rise to the Director position. She has exceeded all our hopes and expectations and this permanent position will ensure the continuity of the Preschool, building on the 91 years of tradition and impact!

Please lift a special prayer for her as she begins her time as our Director! Good days are ahead for our preschool under her leadership!



Update on Holy Land Trip

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the many concerns regarding international travel at this time, we have canceled the October pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

Please Consider Assisting with a Meal

One of our members who just had surgery, and lives alone, could use one hot meal a day throughout recovery (as soon as possible, through the end of the month). The only dietary restriction is "low sodium." In addition, doctor's recommended a high-protein diet, to promote healing.

If you are interested in helping, please call me and I will coordinate a master list!

Grace and blessings, Alice.

(440-3007 / alice-taum@centralunionchurch.org)

Please visit www.centralunionchurch.org for the latest campus updates concerning COVID-19.

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