

The Spire





Pastor's Page

Rev. David Rivers, Senior Minister

Over the past few weeks, each of us have adapted rather quickly to our changing world. With stay-at-home orders and choices to self-quarantine, the hustle and bustle of the 21st century screeched to a halt. For some, this has been a welcome surprise of quiet and rest. For others, fear and uncertainty has created a new anxiety within the soul. Yet for others, they still wrestle with naming what they are feeling and experiencing...and in time they will be able to do so!

Personally, I've enjoyed being home with my family. It has only been on vacations that I have had this much time with them and I'm reminded how blessed I am that God would entrust them to Kate and me! As I've listened to their giggles

and arguments, their questions and perceptions, I've found a space for pondering these gifts in my heart. Through this, I've come to realize that this moment in time is pregnant with possibility.

While I can't control the reopening of society or stop the spread of the virus, I do have a choice in how I live through this moment. I can choose to live in this moment seeking to deepen my faith, examine my priorities, and choose life however this unfolds. Or, I can dig my heels into the inevitable change at hand and try to survive this moment at best, or to find this moment utterly miserable at worst. And this is the choice offered to you as well!

Growth happens most profoundly when we experience suffering and/or change. When we are living beyond our place of comfort (comfort is often routine), we begin asking new questions and seeking new ways. Like the Chambered Nautilus, we grow into a stage of being while keeping all that has come before us. I might dare say our world is living into change that we will only be able to see clearly much later than now.

I hope that you use this time as a gift. Yes, there are real struggles and issues at hand—isolation, unemployment, uncertainty, and the like. Yet this gift doesn't promise ease, it promises transformation. Transformation is always God-directed rather than self-directed. May you create that sacred space, even if 20 minutes a day, for prayer, reflection and invitation that God would be at work within you now and during these COVID-19 days!

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

Council Talking Points

Martha Balkin, Incoming Council Chair

22 The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases,[a]

his mercies never come to an end;

23 they are new every morning;

great is your faithfulness.

Lamentations 3:22-23 New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

May marks the time in our church year where we come together as a congregation to set the course for the future. We pass the torch from the outgoing Council as we vote in a new slate. 2020 is a year unlike any other we have experienced. How we “gather” will be determined by health and safety restrictions. But through all the uncertainty we are comforted by constants in our lives. And so, although it may look a little different this year, the work of your church continues.

There are challenges ahead that we as a Council will need to address. How we have done things in the past will need to be looked at with a critical lens. How will we safely roll out operations? What will we need to do to address inevitable budget shortfalls? Will we “return to normal” or enter a “new normal”?

We are very grateful for the strong foundation put in place by our current leadership. Tom Kiyabu has worked tirelessly the last two years as your council chair, continually reminding us to look for the “why?” in everything we do. Valerie Tanaka, Eppy Kerr and Cara Nakamura are also concluding their terms as council members, having brought invaluable insights to us during their terms. I personally want to thank them for their devotion to Central Union Church. I also want to acknowledge all the staff has done and continues to do to lead us with creativity and grace. Many thanks to all!

As incoming council, we are honored and challenged by the trust and confidence you as a congregation have placed in us. As we move into a new council season, we ask for wisdom in determining the road our church will follow, courage and boldness to seize opportunity and the peace to listen to the still, small voice of God.



NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

In light of the COVID-19 stay at home order, Central Union Church’s Annual Meeting, originally slated for May 3rd, has been postponed. The Annual Meeting will now be hosted on **May 31st**. If we are unable to meet in person, we will hold a virtual annual meeting through Zoom Meetings (instructions to follow) for the sole business of voting the Slate of Council for the 2020/2021 year. We will need 100 members to attend to meet quorum and we hope you will be sure to tune in for this important meeting. We will also share an update of the state of CUC in light of the economic downturn.

Council Slate

Officers:

Chair: **Martha Balkin**

Vice Chair: **Carl Schlack**

Treasurer: **Craig McGinnis**

Secretary: **Bruce Luxton**

At Large Members (3 year term):

Priscilla Kesi-Tiumalu

Maurina Ludwig

(1) Vacant

Congregational Care - Covid 19 Highlights of Serving One Another

Alice Taum, Director of Congregational Care

"God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another." 1Peter 4:10

Thank you to our countless volunteers for engaging in the process of caring for our Kupuna over the past six weeks as new care needs have arisen. Since mid-March, many volunteers have stepped up to help in different ways. At the onset of self-quarantining, a handful of members from our congregation signed up to help with preparing a meal for one of our church members needing support for rest and healing, post-major surgery. Mahalo to each of you for extending your love and sharing your delicious meals.

Others have stepped up and shared their gift of sewing, pulling out dusty machines and becoming "Sewing Angels," making face masks (*pictured below*) for medical workers, as well as for our Kupuna (as of this writing, 4/29, 152 masks have been sewn!). Thank you to each and every one of you, Sewing Angels!

Friends have rummaged through their notions closets and drawers and donated fabric, thread, pipe cleaners, bias/seam tape, and even a sewing machine, delivered to someone who was in search of a machine, to his door step, today! A humble thank you, for all of your generous donations.

In preparation for Easter, Regina and Dick Shimomura assembled 40 beautiful bags filled with practical items (hand sanitizer, Chapstick, pocket tissue and a toothbrush) for our homebound members and others in need. Thank you Regina and Dick for the heartfelt love and prayers that you put in to assembling each bag and to all who shared in distributing them.

To other members who have provided love and support ~ some who are quiet and discreet individual church members who don't want to be recognized, others, serving as diaconate; men from our Wednesday Bible Study Group; women from our Wednesday Prayer Group, and Thrift Shop Volunteers ~ thank you for your many contributions in various ways over these past weeks. Inventorying sewing supplies at the Thrift Shop,

sewing face masks, coordinating face mask logistics, donating essential items, delivering meals, groceries, and necessities to those in need, and writing personal notes ~ this is what "doing life together" is all about. Thank you, all.

Each of these examples serve as wonderful testaments amidst a pandemic, a first for us all, of people serving one another; and not only those who we know, but strangers amongst us in the broader community.

Prayers for God's continued Love, Hope, and Mercy on us all.



AAPR Driving Course

As we continue our precautions against the COVID-19 Coronavirus, we are now extending the cancellation of all in-person AARP Driver Safety events and activities until July 1, 2020. We will continue to reassess plans as this situation evolves. Once we have a new date and time set, we will advertise in the e-blast, Spire, and Sunday Bulletin.

United Church of Christ Board (UCCB) Meets Virtually

Eleanore A. Chong, *UCCB member*

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the order for everyone to “stay home,” the fifty-two member United Church of Christ Board met via Zoom on March 27, 2020. Although board committee meetings are held via Zoom throughout the year, this was the first time that a full board meeting was conducted virtually. Our General Minister and President (GMP) Rev. John Dorhauer, provided us with an overview of the UCC’s robust response to the pandemic. Extensive resources for local churches have been provided by the National Setting and are available on ucc.org

The regular agenda for the meeting included: an ongoing discussion about the General Synod; a presentation by the national staff of a 5-year financial plan which also identified possible sources of revenue; and approval of a resolution commemorating the Bicentennial (200th anniversary) of the arrival of the Pioneer Company of American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) missionaries to Hawaii in 1820.

As many of you know, the Bicentennial activities planned for Hawaii during March, April and May 2020 were cancelled due to the pandemic. However, the UCCB understood the importance of commemorating the Bicentennial especially because the ABCFM is the forerunner of what is today known as Wider Church Ministries of the United Church of Christ.

The next meeting of the UCCB is scheduled for October 2, 2020. Whether it is held virtually, or in-person at the national UCC offices in Cleveland, Ohio, remains to be seen.

LOVE NEVER FAILETH