



# *The Spire*

Photograph by: Kristen Young

Central Union Church and Preschool – March 2022  
“We Engage and Embrace ALL as we seek to Embody Christ!” Vol. 92 - No. 3





# Pastor's Page

**Rev. Brandon Durán, Acting Senior Minister**

**H**ow do you enter a holy place? Do you imbue your steps with a slow sense of reverence or do you move quickly, propelled by a desire to experience the wonder within?

How do you find your way into a sacred conversation? If loved ones are discussing matters of heart, do silently await an invitation to join or do you speak out with a deferential request to add your voice?

How do you begin a spiritual journey?

The beginning of March brings us to Ash Wednesday and the start of Lent. Lent is our journey to the cross of Good Friday and the tomb of Resurrection Sunday. As I reflect on the beginning of our upcoming journey, I am reminded of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. The entryway to this sacred site is less the 4.5 feet high. Most adults would have to crouch in order to enter the space. I was told this was done intentionally so that all who visited would have to bow as they entered the site where Christ was said to have been born.

It is good to begin with humility.

It is for this reason that for centuries, the church has incorporated the prayer of confession into the liturgy. The act of confession is not perfunctory. It is not meant to lead us and leave us in the muck of guilt. The prayer of confession is not about belittlement or shame, it is about authenticity and hope. The act of confession invites us to enter spaces, conversations, and relationships without pretense. It calls us to lower our walls so that our hopes, our hubris, and our hurts are exposed to the light of grace.

As we enter into the season of Lent, we will

incorporate the Unison Prayer of Confession into our Sunday services. There are two parts to this prayer.

The first part is the communal prayer we say as one. The language of the prayer may connect with your personal life situation or it may not. Either way, the point of a communal prayer is the emphasis on a shared reality. The world we know is not as it should be; it is not as it could be. And on some level we have all played a part in its wounds. Absolutely none of us can say, that the problems of our work, our school, our island, or our world exist wholly outside of us. We cannot say with authenticity, *"If everyone would just be more like me, then we'd all be fine."* As such, we say the prayer together because we share a hope for a better tomorrow for all.

The second part of the prayer is the time of silence. It is in the quiet that we dare to hide nothing from ourselves or from God. It is a time of transparency wherein the Psalmist's simple prayer guides us, *"Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."*

It is into this silence that the words of assurance; the words of God's unfailing love cover us.

The Unison Prayer of Confession leads us directly into the healing and empowering love of God. This is a great way to begin. Let us pray.



# Council Talking Points

Martha Balkin, Council Chair

*I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth.*

Genesis 9:13

The news this week has been grim. Just as it appeared the Covid pandemic was loosening its stranglehold on humanity, news of war being waged against Ukraine has shocked us all. The world has watched in horror as acts of violence and aggression have streamed across our screens.

I had difficulty sleeping and when I did wake up, I felt pretty despondent. But as I walked out of my house, there it was – the rainbow, God’s sign of hope for our world. And I was reminded of the angels proclaiming, “This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger”.

It’s as if God keeps saying, “Look – I’m still with you. You will find me in the awe-inspiring and in the ordinary”. I was reminded that even in the darkest times to hold on to hope and that more than ever, we as a people of God need to keep proclaiming his message that Love Never Fails. May we keep our eyes, ears and hearts open for signs of God’s hope for the world. May we continue to wage acts of peace and love.

## Here are some notes from the Council:

**Buildings and Grounds** - Hot water repairs have been completed in the Parish Hall Kitchen and we are waiting on Department of Health to ok so we can reopen. Work is in progress in receiving quotes and/or materials for various projects throughout the Honolulu campus including the Women’s Building restrooms, Adult Daycare Center and Preschool. At CUW, Wi-Fi was installed in the Sanctuary. The system is being bundled and upgraded to save approximately \$700.00 annually. Plumbing repairs to the men’s restroom, future office bathroom and removal of water fountain have been made. Screen repairs and wood replacement are in the process and should be complete by the end of next month.

The **Youth** held a parking fundraiser for a modified Punahou Carnival on February 4 with the funds raised to go to a community organization that the youth will choose. A group of youth attended “Eddie Wen’ Go” (a play by Marion Lyman-Mersereau) at Kennedy Theatre on February 6.

**Central Union Preschool Update** - The Preschool celebrated Chinese New Year, the year of the tiger and a Staff Appreciation Day was held in February. The Preschool finalized the first round of acceptances for new admissions and reenrollment for current keiki is underway. The financial aid open application period has ended and the applicant pool has increased from the previous year. CUPS is intending to provide a Summer program from June 20- July 29, 2022 for current CUPS children and new accepts for the 22-23 school year. The Preschool Committee met on January 26, 2022 to discuss the Preschool budget for 2022- 2023 and decide on the tuition increase for the upcoming school year. An e-vote was conducted, and the Committee members voted and approved a 2% tuition increase for the 22- 23 school year.

The **ad-hoc Revenue Generation** committee presented ideas for the Council to consider, which ranged from maximizing rental opportunities for the church’s facilities to, creating an annual music festival and annual art exhibition. The Council will be evaluating these proposals based on which ideas could yield the biggest impact on the church’s revenues and which ideas are feasible from a resource perspective.

The Council also began review of the **Wedding** ministry and contracts currently in place for destination and local weddings. The Council will continue to examine this as well as the other revenue generating ideas mentioned above in the coming months.

**Pay Off the Debt** – the existing mortgage from the construction of the Parish Hall and Family Life buildings many years ago has been paid off. A finance subcommittee of the Council, as well as the Investment committee, weighed the implications of using unrestricted endowed funds to pay off the mortgage, thus eliminating the monthly debt service payment being made by the church and relieving the church of this financial burden.





# Parked Cars and Full Hearts

Kristen Young, Youth Director

For years, Central Union's Great Lawn has been turned into a parking lot in conjunction with the annual Punahou Carnival just down the road. People would come from near and far needing a place to park while attending the carnival, and the church's Youth Ministry would provide that for a small donation. These proceeds would go to a special fund, which has enabled the church's youth to participate in mission trips over the years.

The pandemic gave us a 'break' in 2021 (carnival parking was not needed) and we were expecting the same for 2022 until just two weeks before the modified Punahou Carnival. When we found out that some extra parking would be needed, we quickly jumped into action to make arrangements, acquire the necessary materials, mark the lawn, and seek volunteers. Up until about the middle of the 12-hour parking period, we did not know if we'd have enough volunteers to pull it off smoothly.

We ended up with an abundance of volunteers. We made significantly less money than previous years, as Carnival admission was limited, but the priceless conversations, smiles, and laughs shared among volunteers, between selling tickets and directing cars, were absolutely the primary goal and highlight. Because of the late notice about the carnival, we didn't have all our normal volunteers so we reached out a little farther and were joined by other friends from the church and community. During the ongoing pandemic which has kept many of us distant, this event provided an opportunity to come together.

This year, unlike years prior, the proceeds will be used toward mission in a different way. Youth will learn about several different organizations' work to address some of the needs in our community and they will choose where they'd like the money to go.

***Many, many thanks to all who came out!!***



# CUC Historical Tours Return!

**Rosemary Eberhardt**, *Central Union Church Archivist and Historian*

Historical tours on CUC will commence March 24, 2022. The tour will begin on the steps of the Sanctuary at 9:30 a.m., the fourth Saturday of each month, unless notified. If you are interested in taking the 45 minute tour, reserve a space through [events@centralunionchurch.org](mailto:events@centralunionchurch.org). When you submit your tour request via e-mail, please add in the Subject Line: "HISTORICAL TOUR REQUEST" for ease of identification. You will receive confirmation from historian, Rosemary Eberhardt.



## Children's Ministry Update

**Cayanna Herrera**, *Director of Children's Ministry*

In mid-March, 2020, like everyone else, Central Union Church's Children's Ministry closed our doors to in person classes and activities, believing it would only be a few weeks or perhaps months until we resumed business as usual. Now almost exactly two years later, we are making final preparations to return to in-person Sunday school. On March 13, 2022, children will once again gather in person for Sunday school. This initial trial reopening will require families to preregister for a limited number of spaces. Please contact Cayanna Herrera at: [cayanna-herrera@centralunionchurch.org](mailto:cayanna-herrera@centralunionchurch.org) or 808-440-3006 to request preregistration information and to receive our full reopening policies and procedures. As we move forward, we covet your prayers and support. Stay tuned for updates on our progress!

## Council Nominees for Approval at Annual Meeting

In accordance with our Bylaws, the Nominations and Governance Committee has nominated, and the Council has unanimously approved, the following members to serve on the Council in the positions designated below if elected by the Congregation at our Annual Meeting on **Sunday, May 1, 2022**:

Officers:

Vice Chair (2-year Term): **Greg Sato**

Treasurer (2-year Term): **David Yee**

Secretary (2-year Term): **Reem Bassous**

At Large Members:

Class of 2024 (2-year Term): **Miguel Asuncion** and **Mary Calantoc**

Class of 2025 (3-year Term): **Janice Wakamatsu**, **Nathan Wong** and **Austen Cook**

Note that all other Officers and At-Large Members of the Council are serving existing terms that do not expire in May. Mahalo to those members of the Congregation that suggested candidates for service on the Council. All suggestions were thoughtfully and prayerfully considered.



American Guild of Organists  
Hawaii Chapter  
presents

# *Celebrating the Pipe Organ in Hawaii*



**Katelyn Emerson**  
Sunday, March 13 • 2 pm

With her busy concertizing and teaching schedule throughout the United States, Europe, and Asia, Katelyn Emerson is known as both “a star of the first rank, and an ambassador for the organ” (Orgue Canada). A prizewinner of competitions on three continents, Katelyn’s stellar performances and warm personality garner acclaim from listeners new to classical music and organ aficionados alike.

Katelyn will play music by Bach, Howells, Parry, Buxtehude, Langlais and Widor.

*... Katelyn Emerson has taken the organ world by storm. I do not know anyone, myself included, who has heard her play and has not been impressed...*  
(The Diapason)



**Alcee Chriss III**  
Sunday, March 20 • 2 pm

First-prize and Bach prize winner at the 2017 Canadian International Organ Competition, Alcee Chriss III is widely regarded as one of the leading young organists of our time, known for incorporating jazz and gospel influences into his performances. Mr. Chriss serves as University Organist and Artist-in-Residence at Wesleyan University. He will perform works by Bach, Dupré, Reger and arrangements of popular songs.

*“The 24-year-old Texas-born Chriss has quickly emerged as a ‘rising star’ among young organists in the course of multiple top-prize competition wins over the last few years ...”* ARTSATL.COM

*“...this is not the usual competition-winner playing. He plays with clarity, imagination, musicality, virtuosity, and yes, personality.”*  
-Delcamp, American Record Guide

**Central Union Church**  
1660 So. Beretania Street, Honolulu

Suggested Donation \$25  
[www.agohawaii.org](http://www.agohawaii.org)

Attendees must be masked and present either a vaccination card or proof of negative COVID test.



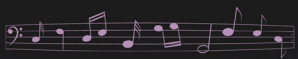
CENTRAL UNION CHURCH

# Lent, Holy Week & Easter 2022

## Devotional Discussion Group

**The Poetry of Lent** - Mary Oliver  
Tuesdays at 6:30pm HST on Zoom  
(March 8, 15, 22, 29, April 5)

## CONCERTS



American Guild of Organists

### • Organ - Katelyn Emerson

Sunday, March 13, 2pm, Sanctuary

### • Hawaii's Choral Legacy

Wednesday, March 16, 7pm, Sanctuary

### • Organ - Alcee Chris III

Sunday, March 20, 2pm, Sanctuary

## Lyrics of Lent

Wednesday, March 30, 6:30pm, Sanctuary

## Spring Choral Concert

Sunday, April 3, 4pm, Sanctuary

## HOLY WEEK



### Palm Sunday • April 10

9am Sanctuary, 10am Online, 10am CUW,  
11am Parish Hall, 11am Pohnpeian Service

### Maundy Thursday • April 14

5:30pm Women's Building Lanai

### Good Friday • April 15

Tenebrae Service  
7pm Sanctuary & Online

### Easter Sunday • April 17

9am Sanctuary, 10am CUW, 10am Online,  
**10am Easter Egg Hunt**, 11am Parish Hall

*ALL ARE  
WELCOME!*



808-941-0957 • [info@centralunionchurch.org](mailto:info@centralunionchurch.org)

## Easter Flower - \$10.00 each

Name (donor) \_\_\_\_\_

Number of plants \_\_\_\_\_

☐ To the Glory of Easter.

☐ In honor of \_\_\_\_\_

☐ In loving memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Please print legibly.

Please make check(s) payable to "CENTRAL UNION CHURCH" with the words,  
"Easter Flower" in the memo line. Please mail or bring checks to the church office.

*Thank you for your donation!*

*Please mail or submit  
checks to the church  
office by Sunday, April  
10 to be included in the  
bulletin and May Spire.*

## Remembering Our Saints

Please hold the family of **Myron Nakata**, who died on Monday, January 24, 2022, in your prayers. A service is scheduled for 11:30 am, on March 5, at St. Peter & St. Paul Catholic Church.