

Robinson Fredrick directs the Pohnpei Ministry Choir and Ke Aloha Pau 'Ole singing "Kasapwilda Krai Aht Nanmwarki" on May 5, Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries Sunday.

THE SPIRE



Central Union Church and Preschool
"We Engage and Embrace ALL as we seek to Embody Christ!"

May 2024
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Pastor's Page: The God We Share



Rev. Rushan Sinnaduray,
Senior Minister

On Pentecost Sunday, May 19, we will be celebrating an important anniversary – 100 years since our beautiful

sanctuary was dedicated for use for the worship of God. On that Sunday, we will begin a year of celebrations to commemorate this important milestone in the life of our church. We will look back to celebrate the faith and hope of our ancestors in the faith who brought us to this time. More importantly, however, we will use this as an opportunity to look forward in

excitement and anticipation to God's dream for Central Union Church for the next 100 years. We will also spend time during this year ahead reflecting on who and what we are called to be as a Church in Honolulu in the year 2024 and beyond.



Photo: Jon Fujita

One of my favorite stories in the Gospels is the Parable of the Banquet as found in the Gospel of Luke (14:16-24). The God of Luke 14 is a God of radical hospitality that does not worry about who doesn't accept the invitation – they are just left to their own devices. This is a God of radical hospitality that does not worry about what the guests are wearing. This is a God who isn't interested in exercising power so people will know who's in charge, but rather is a God who is interested in giving away power so people will know they are loved.

My realization, without being too simplistic, is that my calling as a preacher and teacher is to always present this God of love and compassion, inclusion and extravagant welcome.

In our world today, there are many who understand and experience God differently. For them, God is the violent, judgmental, lawgiver. It is true that this warrior God is in the Bible. Unfortunately, in a number of guises this God still wields power today.

However, if this Judgmental God were the only God the Bible contained, we would have given up long ago and the Christian enterprise would have failed before it even started. But it isn't. Right from the earliest days there have been people who believed differently. They were people who believed that God was far greater than our violent, judgmental projections. When a baby smiled they saw the smile of God. When a person reached out their hand to a stranger or enemy, the pleasure of God erupted. When power was shared, when acceptance was more valued than being right, when giving was preferable to getting, when people were allowed the space to have dialog and conversation in the face of challenging situations, God was being incarnated in their midst.

This is the God our world needs to know. This is the God we need to paint boldly and proclaim in bright colors. This is the God we celebrate, and to whom we give our allegiance. This is the God that we at Central Union Church are called to share with a world that is desperate for love, compassion, hope, healing and acceptance. This is the God of redemptive, embracing, Christian Community. This is our God. We are God's people.

Blessings,

Pastor Rushan

Pastor Rushan Installed by O'ahu Association



Photo: Alexa Zen

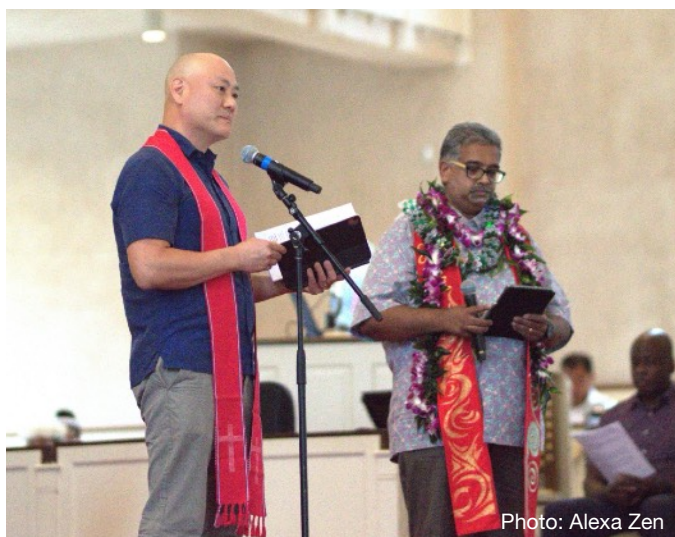


Photo: Alexa Zen

On April 14, 2024, we celebrated the installation of Rev. A. Rushan Sinnaduray as our Senior Minister! While Pastor Rushan has been serving at Central Union since September, it was not until this service that we became formal partners in covenanted ministry together, through installation by the O'ahu Association of the United Church of Christ.

Installation is the action of an association of the United Church of Christ (UCC) in cooperation with the local church (Central Union). Installation confirms and celebrates the covenantal relationship among a local church, its pastor and teacher, and the UCC. Installation is a sign that these covenantal partners are committed to share mutually in the mission of the UCC and of the ecumenical church.

The congregation gathered, along with representatives and witnesses from sister UCC churches on O'ahu. Pastor Rushan committed himself to the church, promising to care for the people, lead by example, and follow faithfully and prayerfully in Christ's way of compassion. Likewise, the congregation made similar promises to him – to accept and love him, to support his decisions and ministry, and to pray for him and his family.

A video of the service can be viewed online: centralunionchurch.org/service-of-installation-pastor-rushan/



CUC Digital Archives

Karl Hedberg, Historian

January 1, 2021 was the start of the CUC Digital Archives. Up until that date, all documents were in paper form, bound in books... Church Council minutes, worship bulletins, etc. One had to schedule a time to visit the History Room on the second floor of the Family Life Center building. Now there is online access, not only to (previously paper) documents but also videos of church history and past sermons.



View the **CUC Digital Archives** online at: centralunionchurch.catalogaccess.com

Here are a few examples of what you can find...

[2008 CUC Pictorial Directory](#) | [1986 CUC Pictorial Directory](#) | [Central Union Church Bylaws](#)

[A video history beginning when the first missionary came to Hawai'i in 1832](#)

To learn more about the Digital Archives or schedule an in-person visit to the History Room, contact our Historian at 808-440-3021 or historian@centralunionchurch.org.

Responding to the Ongoing Crisis in Gaza

World Mission Ministry

Our World Mission Ministry is deeply concerned about the unfolding crisis in Gaza. We have been praying and invite you to join us in prayers for peace, justice, and safety for our siblings. Our faith calls us to not only lift our hearts in prayer, but to find ways to support those who are suffering. In light of this call, our Ministry has committed to give \$3000 to the [Department of Service for Palestinian Refugees](#) (DSPR) of the Middle East Council of Churches, which is a partner of our denomination, the United Church of Christ, through Global Ministries. This donation will help Palestinians manage the severe water shortage.

Palestinians living throughout the occupied Palestinian territories suffer repeated denials of their right to water and sanitation, and water sources are often diverted to Israeli settlements. This is exacerbated by the fact that there has been a 30% decrease in rainfall in the last 10 years due to climate change. The goal of the DSPR's project is to support Palestinian communities in the West Bank through providing reliable sources of water for domestic and agricultural use. They are doing this by installing pipeline, some running from nearby water sources (rather than relying on pipes controlled by Israel) and others creating internal networks to extend into unserved communities. DSPR is also installing water cisterns and replacing old, leaking pipes which are wasting this valuable resource.

Unfortunately, pipelines are unable to be laid in Gaza at this time until the violence is halted. Still, we are glad to be able to support our Palestinian siblings by working to provide them with this critical human essential. You can learn more about the project online at www.globalministries.org/project/water-project-of-the-dspr.

New Beginnings for Young(ish) Adults

Melinda Dallass, Lindsey Garnick, and Rev. Mary Herbig, *Young(ish) Adult Leadership Team*

Our Young(ish) Adults (who span Generations X, Y, Z) gathered for "New Beginnings" at Ala Moana Beach Park. This was the first event planned by the recently-formed Young(ish) Adult Leadership Team and we'd say it was a success! There were 44 people that came out including new faces, some young adults' children, and friends from two of our sister UCC churches. We shared in delicious food, games, conversation, and look forward to growing our connections with each other!



CU Youth

Melissa Thach, *Youth Director*

Our youth put their teamwork to the test at an escape room – and they aced it! An escape room is an immersive, 60-minute, make-believe, adventure game in which players must find clues and solve various puzzles before time runs out. The theme for this particular escape room was "Playground" which brought us back to an elementary school setting with the mission of finishing all our assignments before the end of the day – or we could forget about summer break! Though designed for up to 12 players, our four youth (and two chaperones) completed the mission and escaped with just under five minutes to spare. Thanks to the Emma Kim Memorial Fund, which supports CUC youth, we are able to enjoy fun activities like this! Please keep all our youth in prayer as they finish the school year.

COMING UP THIS SUMMER:

- **Wednesdays:** Volunteer at Serving Aloha food distribution
- **June 13-16:** Hawai'i Conference UCC 'Aha Youth Event



Children's Ministry

Cayanna Herrera, Director of Children's Ministries



Teacher Appreciation Day

We took a moment during worship to celebrate and recognize our Children's Ministry teachers who help our keiki learn more about God and grow in their faith and love for others!

Mahalo to our teachers: Dacyleen Amond, Darla Amond, Daphne Anson, Crystal Fredrick, Robyn Gerell, Mario Herrera, Pauli Tashima, and Haydé Villafuerte Palacios.

Diaper Drive Update

We dropped off the donations of diapers, wipes, and money that came in over Lent at the Aloha Diaper Bank who expressed their thanks and shared that they have distributed our donations to 50 children in need. One of their current key objectives is to establish a student-parent diaper assistance program to support Hawai'i college students facing diaper insecurity. Learn more: alohadiaperbank.org.



COMPASSION CAMP

SUMMER 2024

July 22-26

9 AM - 12 PM

Central Union Church



- Age 3 – grade 5 welcome!
- \$40 donation suggested

THIS SUMMER:

Children's Ministry will offer **Compassion Camp** again this summer for kids ages 3 through grade 5. Sign up your keiki for a week of fun and growth as "**God's Global Kids: Learning to Love the World.**"

Limited space available!

Registration will close on **June 15** or once capacity is reached.

Our goal is to make this accessible for as many families as possible! There is a *suggested* donation of \$40 for the whole week. Donate what you can.



Register online: bit.ly/compassioncamp2024cuc

DAZZLE 2024



The preschool's annual Dazzle fundraiser was an enjoyable evening with fifteen local chefs and delicious dishes, close to 200 guests, and over 100 items up for auction in person and online!

CUPS Lei Day



On May 3, CUPS celebrated Lei Day with their annual program entitled "Hapa Haole Hula." We're so proud of our keiki's hard work! Watching and hearing them dance and sing filled us with joy!

LOOKING AHEAD

May 19: Pentecost Sunday & Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of the Dedication of Our Sanctuary

10 AM – One in-person service, Sanctuary
Potluck to follow

June 13-15: 'Aha Pae'āina
CUC to host Hawai'i Conference gathering

June 22: E-waste Collection
9-11 AM, Punahou Parking Lot

July 14: Christmas in July
10 AM – One in-person service, Sanctuary

July 22-26: Compassion Camp

July 26-28: Youth Retreat on Kaua'i

July 28: Concert – Nā Wai Chamber Choir

August 11: Back to School Sunday

September 1: Laity Sunday

September 8
10 AM – One in-person service, Sanctuary
11 AM – Annual Meeting

September 15: Aloha Sunday

Remembering Our Saints

Please hold in prayer the family of **Douglas Lee**, who died on March 26, 2024. Services were held on May 2 at 12:30 PM in the Atherton Memorial Chapel.

Please also pray for the family of **Geraldine Scott**. She died on March 29, 2024.



PENTECOST SUNDAY

May 19, 2024

Central Union Church



Celebrating 100th Anniversary of Worshiping in the Sanctuary



10 AM Worship
Sanctuary / Online

Wear red!



After Worship
Pentecost Potluck



HO'ĀLA HOU

God is making all things new

Isaiah 43:18-19

Photo: Hawai'i Island, Kalani Wong

Central Union will be hosting the **202nd 'Aha Pae'āina of the Hawai'i Conference United Church of Christ** from **June 13-15**. This is the annual gathering of the wider church to which we belong. There will be worship, workshops, business sessions, and the body will vote on "[A Call to Education and Action Regarding the Crisis in Gaza](#)" – the resolution co-sponsored by CUC. The 'Aha is an opportunity to gather with our UCC siblings here in Hawai'i and learn more about our Conference and participate in our shared work. ALL are invited to attend. Register online at hcucc.org/aha-paeaina by May 13.