

# THE SPIRE



WORLD COMMUNION SUNDAY • 10.06.24

At Central Union Church, we practice **open communion** which means that **ALL are welcome** to gather at Christ's table and to share in this meal – a symbol of our connectedness to each other, to all of creation and to God.

At Christ's table, all are welcome and there is enough for everyone. We are nourished and empowered to recommit ourselves to embodying Christ – acting justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with our God.

Central Union Church and Preschool

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

October 2024

Vol. 94 - No. 10





# Come, Let Us Imagine Together!

**Rev. A. Rushan Sinnaduray**  
*Senior Minister*

During October we will be participating in our annual stewardship pledge campaign. This is an opportunity for us to prayerfully reflect on the ways in which we can support the mission and ministry of our church through the sharing of our time, talent, and treasure. Our theme this year is “**Imagine Together**” and as part of our discussion about our stewardship of the resources God has blessed us with, we will be spending a great deal of time reflecting on and praying about our hopes and dreams, our imaginings, for Central Union Church as we move in faith and hope into the future.

During this month and over the next 12 months, we will have several opportunities to meet and share our dreams for the future of Central Union Church and to discern what God is calling us to be and do as Christ’s community in this time and place. I hope that you will accept the invitation to share your thoughts, dreams, and ideas as we imagine together.

Our first opportunity to talk story and share with each other will be at a special **Learning Tree on Sunday, October 27 at 10 AM** in the Women’s Building. I hope you will join us and invite others to join us as we share and listen for the voice of God speaking through the

gathered community. At that gathering, I will also share some of my vision and priorities for Central Union Church for the next 10 years.

In preparation for that Learning Tree, I invite you to reflect on these questions:

- \* What is **one dream** you have for our church for the next five years?
- \* What do you **imagine our worship services** would look like? What could we do to make them more **inclusive, engaging and meaningful**?
- \* What are your dreams for our church’s **physical space and facilities**?
- \* What do you imagine we could do to help **deepen our spiritual growth** as a congregation?
- \* What imaginative and creative ideas do you have to help us **strengthen and build the community** of Central Union Church?

This is an exciting time to be a part of Central Union Church as we “**Imagine Together**” the new things that God is doing in our midst. Can you perceive it?



**Estimate of Giving cards** will be sent out later this month in time for **October 27, Stewardship Sunday**. We hope you will be intentional about being with us this day, not simply to offer your commitment of financial stewardship, but also to join in worship!



# Blessing of Pets

On October 6, pets were invited to church to receive a special blessing! On the Sunday closest to October 4, we acknowledge the life and contributions of St. Francis of Assisi who dedicated his life to God, serving the poor and caring for creation. We give thanks for all God's creatures and the special relationships we share with them!



**To our beloved pets:**  
May you be blessed in the name of God who created you,  
and may the power of this blessing fill you with life,  
bind you to your human friends,  
and lead you to praise your Creator.



# Mahalo, Nurses!

Among the many amazing volunteers that helped with Serving Aloha in the past month were nurses from next door. On September 13, Kapi'olani nurses represented by Hawai'i Nurses Association participated in a one-day strike for safer staffing for quality patient care. In the following days, Kapi'olani Medical Center then locked out the nurses and prevented them from returning to work for 22 days. Despite being locked out, the nurses continued to provide care through volunteering at our weekly food distribution. **Mahalo!** The nurses returned to work on October 6 after union nurses and the hospital officially reached an agreement after a year of negotiations, two strikes, and a lockout.





# Building Our CUPS 'Ohana

**Alana Anderson**, *Advancement & Communications Manager, Central Union Preschool*

September brought many opportunities for Central Union Preschool and our CUPS keiki. We are excited we had the chance to share the fun times and exciting adventures, as well as meet new acquaintances while enjoying what each day brought for the keiki, their 'ohana, and our faculty and staff.

The Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) planned the very first CUPS event of the school year that saw not only our students but also their family members, faculty and staff joining in on the fun. The Back-to-School Family Picnic was held on Friday, September 27, in the Parish Hall and Parish Lawn with over 300 attendees. There were games, activities, arts and crafts, and food for everyone to take part in. Bubbles of all sizes blanketed the sky as Uncle Balloon brought out an array of balloon wands to create any sized bubble one could imagine. There were steppingstones for the keiki to hop from one to the other while inside of Parish Hall, colorful, jeweled animal masks were created, along with animal books to color, and removable jungle tattoos. While families enjoyed dinner from Teruya's Andagi, they relaxed to the soothing sounds of musician Derek Nakamoto. Bingo winners collected popcorn prizes and parents, and even grandparents, uncles, and aunts, watched as friends ran to each station, created their own masterpieces, and enjoyed the atmosphere both inside and outside Parish Hall. Many thanks to the PTO and co-chairs of the picnic for creating a jungle wonderland of fun.



Promoting CUPS to the outside community is essential to building our own special 'ohana. On Saturday, September 28, several of our staff helped to promote CUPS program at the annual Education Fair hosted by the Hawai'i Association of Independent Schools (HAIS) at the Hawai'i Convention Center. This time of year marks the open application season for many private school programs, including CUPS! Applications for the 2025-2026 school year are now being accepted for the preschool program (3-5 year olds) through November 30. Interested families are encouraged to visit [centralunionpreschool.org](https://centralunionpreschool.org) to find information regarding the online application process. Please call our CUPS Office at (808) 946-4025 to schedule a tour and learn more about our preschool program.





# Wondering with Godly Play

**Cayanna Herrera,**  
*Director of Children's Ministries*  
[cayanna-herrera@centralunionchurch.org](mailto:cayanna-herrera@centralunionchurch.org)



For three Saturdays in September, members of Central Union Church, Harris United Methodist Church, Halau Wa'a Episcopal Church, and St. Christopher's Episcopal Church gathered at Central Union for Godly Play Storyteller Training. In a total of 24 training hours, we explored the power of story and wondering and practiced our storytelling skills.

During these training days, I began to wonder. I wonder what it would be like if CUC had 10 or 15 or 20 storytellers who took Godly Play into the wider congregation and into our community. I wonder what it would be like if every ministry at CUC had the opportunity to experience Godly Play regularly through trained storytellers in every ministry. I wonder what it would look like if families could experience Godly Play at home. I wonder what it would look like if CUC held two or more trainings every year and could become a resource for other congregations to incorporate Godly Play into their church as well. I wonder what it would look like if every church had the opportunity to have someone in their congregation trained as a Godly Play Storyteller. I wonder...

As we imagine our future together, I envision Godly Play at Central Union reaching beyond the Children's Ministry and beyond our doors, reaching into the wider community.

Godly Play is currently being used around the world in settings beyond Children's Ministries. Hospitals, long-term care units, memory care, addiction recovery settings, veterans groups, and prison ministries are just a few places where Godly Play can be found. I imagine Godly Play at CUC reaching into some or all of these areas and connecting people to God through the power of story and wondering. I invite you to join me!

## Here's how you can help:

- **Sign up for our next training event.** We are working on holding training again in the spring, so stay tuned!
- **Sponsor a story.** We are working to expand our story collection and create a list of stories still needed. These include the stories of Jacob, Joseph, Esther, Ruth, Abraham, Sarah, Daniel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and others.
- **Invite a storyteller to your gathering.** We love to tell stories and would be so happy to share one with a group outside of our regular Sunday mornings!



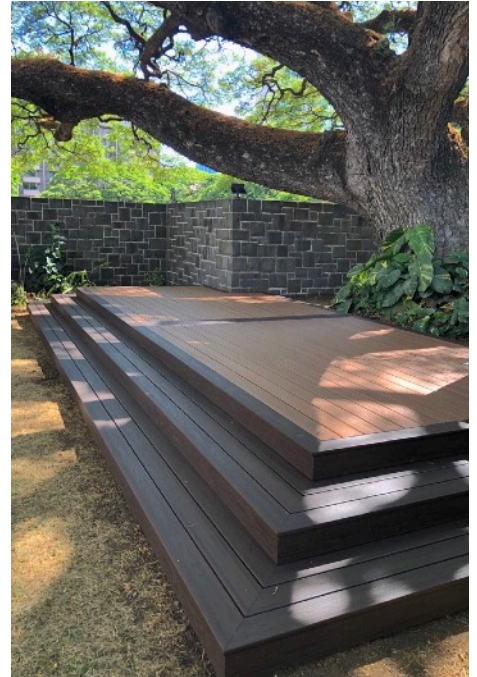
As we concluded our Godly Play Storyteller Training, many of the participants expressed how Godly Play had touched them in profound ways. I too have found this to be true. I may share stories with children every week, but in the story and wondering, I come closer to God as well. And now, I wonder...



# Improvements to Atherton Courtyard

**Dona Hanaike**, Buildings and Grounds Committee

Central Union received a matching grant of \$65,000 from the Atherton Foundation to make needed improvements to our Atherton Memorial Chapel (“AMC”). Repairs included repainted interior trim, walls, exterior doors and windows; fixed leaky roof and exterior wall; upgraded toilets and sink fixtures; and new courtyard decking surrounding The Exceptional Monkeypod Tree. The Buildings and Grounds Committee was able to hire a contractor and a certified arborist who successfully removed the deteriorating cement skirting around the tree and replaced it with a more appropriate decking that is safer to use and better protects our tree. It is a beautiful addition to the AMC courtyard along with the strings of lights that now hang above the space. We would like to thank Martha Balkin for submitting the application that resulted in the \$65,000 grant from the Atherton Foundation.



CENTRAL UNION CHURCH  
YOUR PREMIER DESTINATION FOR EVENTS



## HAVE YOUR NEXT EVENT WITH US!



## Looking for a venue?

Our church's range of facilities can accommodate all kinds of events! By renting out our spaces, we can provide a gathering place for the community and generate revenue to sustain our mission and ministry.

Visit [centralunionchurch.org/events](https://centralunionchurch.org/events) to learn more about our venues and consider hosting your next event at Central Union. Members receive a discount!

- + Banquets
- + Receptions
- + Conferences
- + Concerts
- + Meetings
- + Birthdays
- + Pet Parties
- + Graduation Celebrations
- + Workshops
- + Seminars
- + Movie Night
- + Music/Dance Recitals



# Young(ish) Adults

## Young(ish) Adult Leadership Team

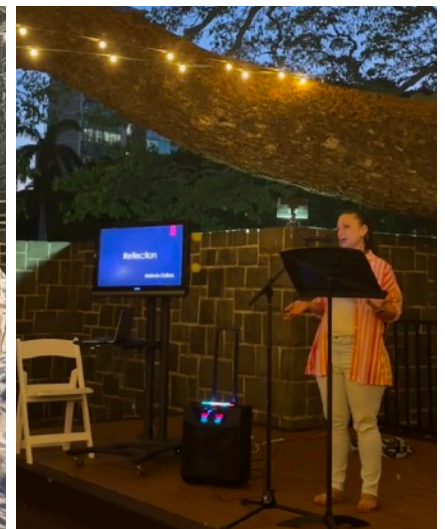
*Melinda Dallass, Lindsey Garnick, Danielle Kim, Rev. Mary Herbig*

Central Union's Young(ish) Adult Ministry is growing and thriving! We seek to provide space where young people can be authentically themselves, create meaningful connection, grow in knowledge and faith, and build deep community. We are meeting monthly for "Brunch Bunch" breakfasts, where young adults and families can gather for food, fellowship, and fun.

We also come together for special events monthly!

Most recently, we held a Dinner Church. Dinner Church is modeled on the gatherings of the early church, where disciples shared meals, discussed the scriptures, supported one another, and shared how they were experiencing the presence of God in their lives. At our Dinner, we prayed, sang, shared a meal, listened deeply to one another, and heard a testimony from one of our members about the gift of belonging and experiencing this Young(ish) Adult community.

We look forward to continuing to grow together!



# Youth Test Their Teamwork

Our youth escaped! In an outing on September 22, youth participated in an escape room challenge —an immersive, 60-minute, adventure game in which players must work together to find clues and solve various puzzles before time runs out. Thanks to the Emma Kim Memorial Fund, our CUC youth are able to enjoy fun activities like this!





## LOOKING AHEAD

### October 11:

**Community Ministry @ National Coming Out Day Fair**, 10 AM - 2 PM, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Campus Center

**Boy Scouts Troop 777 Recruitment Open House**, 6:30 PM, Music Building

**October 13:** Young(ish) Adults **Brunch Bunch**  
10 AM, Rooms 201-202

### Learning Tree Presentations

Sunday, 10 AM, Women's Building

**October 13:** "An Introduction to Meditation"

**October 27:** "Vision 2035 – Discerning Our Calling"

### October 16: Preschool's 96th Birthday

*All welcome to CUPS chapel service!*

8:30 AM, Atherton Memorial Chapel

**October 19:** Young(ish) Adults  
**Halloween Party**, 4-7 PM on campus

### Service of Healing and Prayer

**October 20 & November 17**  
5:30-6:30 PM, Atherton Chapel

**October 24:** Messiah rehearsals begin

**October 27:** Stewardship Sunday  
Theme: "Imagining Together"

### November 1-3: Women's Retreat

*Register online NOW for this 35th retreat!*  
[centralunionchurch.org/womens-retreat](http://centralunionchurch.org/womens-retreat)

## UPCOMING SMALL GROUPS

### **The Questioning Christ** (with Pastor Mary)

**Mondays, 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM**

October 14, 21, 28, November 4

**Tuesdays, 6:00 - 7:30 PM**

October 15, 22, 29, November 5

### **Incarnation: Rediscovering the Significance of Christmas** (with Pastor Rushan)

**Tuesdays, 6:00 - 7:30 PM**

November 19, December 3, 10, 17

**Thursdays, 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM**

November 21, December 5, 12, 19

## Calling All Singers!



**Announcing the 75<sup>th</sup> Annual Central Union Messiah!** Singers, we hope you will join our community ensemble for the 75th presentation of Handel's Messiah on Sunday, December 8, 7 PM. View our invitational letter, rehearsal and performance info, with a link to register online: [bit.ly/sing24messiah](http://bit.ly/sing24messiah). The kickoff rehearsal is Thursday, October 24. Contact Sarah Young, our Director of Choirs with any questions: [sarah-young@centralunionchurch.org](mailto:sarah-young@centralunionchurch.org).

## Small Group Study

### THE QUESTIONING CHRIST

4-SESSION  
SMALL GROUP  
STUDY

**MONDAYS** 10/14 – 11/4  
10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

**TUESDAYS** 10/15 – 11/5  
6:00 PM – 7:30 PM

Where is your faith?  
(Luke 8:25)

What is your name?  
(Luke 8:30)

What do you want?  
(John 1:38)

Why are you sleeping?  
(Luke 22:46)

Who touched me?  
(Luke 8:45)

Do you have  
anything here  
to eat?  
(Luke 24:41)

SIGN UP ONLINE  
[bit.ly/questchrist](http://bit.ly/questchrist)

FAITH  
FORMATION  
OPPORTUNITY

Contrary to our assumptions, Jesus isn't the ultimate "Answer Man" but more like the Great Questioner. In fact, for every question Jesus answers in the Gospels, he asks nearly one hundred! Asking questions was central to Jesus' teachings and faith. Join Pastor Mary to explore some of Jesus' questions and discover how our questions and curiosity draw us closer to God.