



# THE SPIRE

## ***May Day is Lei Day!***

Inspired by the Hōkūle'a, the traditional Polynesian voyaging canoe, our Central Union Preschool keiki took us on a voyage of song and dance to celebrate! As always, they packed the house!

Central Union Church and Preschool

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

May 2025

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# A community set apart for God's mission

Rev. A. Rushan Sinnaduray, *Senior Minister*

**"I AM THE CHURCH! YOU ARE THE CHURCH!**

**WE ARE THE CHURCH TOGETHER!**

**ALL WHO FOLLOW JESUS, ALL AROUND THE WORLD!**

**YES, WE'RE THE CHURCH TOGETHER!**

Have you ever wondered what we are called to do as the Church? The church is more than a building, more than a weekly gathering—it's a living, breathing community of people called by God to reflect God's love and truth in the world. At its core, the church is **the people of God, the body of Christ, and the family of faith**—united not by location but by mission and purpose.

The word *church* comes from the Greek *ekklesia*, meaning "called-out ones." The church isn't just a group of people who share beliefs—it's a **community set apart for God's mission**. From the earliest days, followers of Jesus gathered not just for worship but for encouragement, teaching, and service. They did life together, supporting one another, praying together, and growing in faith.

Unlike a lecture hall or a performance venue, the church is meant to be **active and engaged**. It's not a place where a few speak and many listen—it's where every member has a role in the unfolding story of God's kingdom.

So, what are we called to do as the church? The Bible gives us a clear picture of our mission. We are called to **worship and glorify God**—our church exists to honor God. Worship isn't just about singing on Sundays; it's about living lives that reflect His goodness in everything we do.

We are also called to **help grow in faith and in our relationship with God**—Jesus instructed His followers to **make disciples**—helping others grow in faith and understanding of God's word.

We are called to **serve and love others**—As the church, we are not meant to be inward-focused; we are called to **care for the poor, comfort the hurting, and uplift those in need**.

And finally, we are called to **share the Good News**—We are entrusted with **spreading the message of Christ**, inviting others into a life of faith, hope and healing.

The church is called to be a community of transformation. Think of the church like a rock tumbler—a place where individuals, each with their rough edges, come together and, through faith and fellowship, are shaped into something beautiful. It's not always easy, but it's how God grows and refines God's people.

The church isn't just an institution—it is God's family, called to love, serve, and live with purpose. It's where we find belonging, strength, and a shared mission. So let's embrace our calling—to be the hands and feet of Jesus in the world and continue to do the work of transforming lives, our community and our world.







## Getting Messy

All were welcome to our first “**Messy Church**” gathering on April 23. It was an intergenerational opportunity to come together and explore faith and God’s love in a fun and engaging way. There were a variety of crafts and activities, a yummy spaghetti supper prepared by the youth, songs to sing, and a lesson to remind us of our call to care for all of creation, us included. As part of our celebration of creation, we used our creativity to make paper plants and animals to add to a mural.

➡ *Check out the mural hanging in the Parish Hall throughout the month of May!*





# Message from Our Church Council Chair

Aloha Central Union Church!

As reported in the April 2025 Spire under Church Council Meeting Highlights, the Arcadia Family of Companies is reworking its organizational structure. Under the leadership of Suzie Schulberg, President & CEO, Arcadia is seeking our approval to reorganize as a non-member corporation as opposed to the current sole member organization. This would allow Arcadia to be governed solely by its board of directors and not by any other entity.

In recognition of Central Union Church's (CUC) historical connection to Arcadia and the Punahou Street campus, Arcadia would retain the Articles of Incorporations' provisions that distribute that campus to CUC upon the dissolution of Arcadia. They would also reduce the number of board seats held by CUC to one.

Meetings and discussions have gone on since January and after a significant period of careful thought, we have reached a decision. The Church Council voted in favor of the resolution which follows for your information:

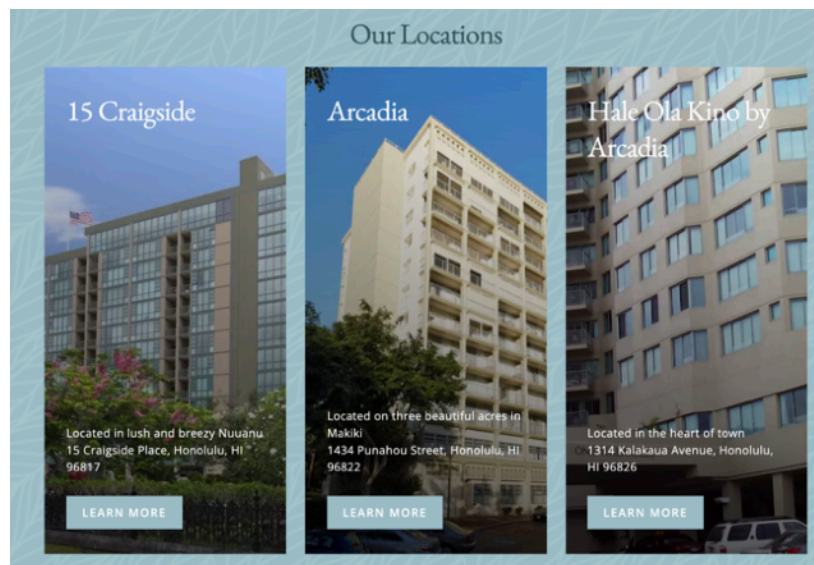
❖ Whereas, Arcadia Retirement Residence ("Arcadia") was founded in 1967 as a mission and program of Central Union Church (CUC);

❖ Whereas, in the 1970's relations between the residents and CUC Board of Trustees became strained. The residents objected to the transfer of some of the excess revenue over expenses to CUC. There were several lawsuits filed by residents in connection with the transfers; however, all their lawsuits were dismissed. In 1975, it was determined that Arcadia would not require support from CUC, nor would it be a source of financial revenues for the CUC;

- ❖ Whereas, in 1987, Arcadia incorporated as a stand-alone nonprofit corporation and subsequently sought and received recognition as a tax-exempt organization from the IRS. This required it to serve the greater community to maintain its tax-exempt status;
- ❖ Whereas, in recognition of the role played by CUC in Arcadia's history, Arcadia was formed as a membership organization with the CUC as the sole member:
  - ▶ "Sole member" status gave CUC final authority over certain corporate actions of Arcadia including asset sales, mergers, and liquidations.
  - ▶ The Arcadia Articles of Incorporation further provide that, upon dissolution, all Arcadia assets shall be distributed to CUC.
  - ▶ Currently three CUC members serve on the Arcadia board;



ARCADIA  
FAMILY OF COMPANIES



❖ Whereas, since 1987, Arcadia has grown from a single entity at Punahou Street to a family of companies at multiple locations. With this growth has come complexity, including the formation of numerous nonprofit corporations and the management of several boards of directors. Arcadia is considering ways to streamline their operations, including the consolidation of various corporate entities, including Arcadia. Arcadia believes consolidation plans are complicated by Arcadia's structure

as a membership corporation, as well as the CUC's role as sole member. CUC has been asked to assist Arcadia in carrying out its mission by agreeing to the amendment of the Arcadia Articles of Incorporation to become a non-member organization, governed only by its board of directors and not by any other entity. By agreeing to their proposal, CUC would in effect: *(see next page)*

(continued from previous page)

- ▶ Give up our sole member status thus relinquishing the right to approve board decisions related to asset sales, mergers, liquidations and changes to the Articles of Incorporation.
- ▶ Retain the “dissolution cause”, to permit the distribution of all remaining net assets from the Punahou Street facility to be distributed to CUC.
- ▶ Maintain representation on Arcadia’s Board but change from the current three board members to one; Whereas, on discussion with legal counsel, CUC is not entitled to share in any proceeds from a sale of assets or a mortgage or Arcadia’s operating surplus, as all proceeds go towards Arcadia’s mission in serving the greater community, not the sole member; and

❖ Whereas, in 1987, a seminal decision to forgo a fair market value sale to a for-profit organization and instead embrace Arcadia as CUC's contribution to the community is the foundation of our deep and enduring relationship. Clearly CUC viewed Arcadia as a nonprofit program and not an investment of the Church; now, therefore be it

**RESOLVED WE RELINQUISH OUR SOLE MEMBER STATUS SUBJECT TO OUR ACCEPTANCE OF THE REVISED ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION WHICH NEEDS TO BE DRAFTED BY ARCADIA RETIREMENT RESIDENCE.**

Should you have any questions or wish to contact me, you can reach me by email at [council-chair@centralunionchurch.org](mailto:council-chair@centralunionchurch.org).

Mahalo,  
**David Yee**  
Council Chair

## Together, we filled the ark!

### World Mission Ministry

Joyful, joyful – the World Mission Ministry would like to thank the entire Central Union Church congregation, the Preschool, and the Children’s and Youth ministries for their generosity in supporting our Lenten Heifer Project.

We collected \$5,960.46 and filled the Ark! \$3,210 went to purchasing the following: 1 heifer, 2 clean water access, 1 fish farm, 1 water buffalo, 3 goats, 1 sheep, 2 pigs, 5 garden seeds, 6 honeybees, 18 flocks of chicks. The remaining \$2,750.46 went to Heifer International’s general fund.

In filling the Ark, [Heifer International](https://www.heiferinternational.org/) will provide animals and training to help smallholder farmers to sustainably address hunger and poverty in their communities while caring for the Earth. Your support is giving living gifts along with training to families so that they can develop their own source of income. Thank you so much for your help.



L to R: Janice Trubitt, Koby Berrington, Jodee Farm



# Young Adults gather for Dinner Church



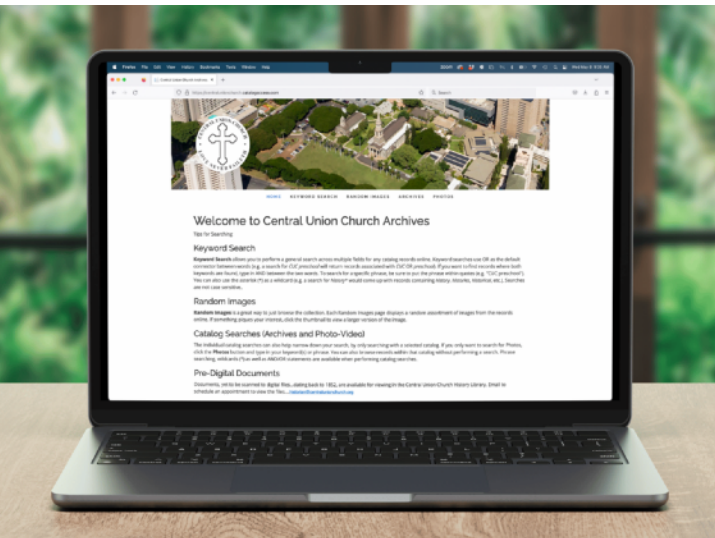
Danielle Kim shared a personal reflection based on Philippians 4:6-7 at the May 7th Dinner Church gathering for young adults. Around tables, we shared a meal and also engaged in listening to one another as we responded to questions: What does worry look like in your life right now? What does it really mean to trust in God? What helps you remember you're not alone when you're feeling overwhelmed?

## CUC Digital Archives

Do you enjoy history? At over a century old, our church has lots of it! Thanks to historians over the years, we have much archived that tells the story of our church. Since 2021, Karl Hedberg, current CUC historian, has been digitizing the archives and you can view our ever-changing digital archive online at:

[centralunionchurch.catalogaccess.com](http://centralunionchurch.catalogaccess.com).

Take some time to browse and learn about Central Union Church!



## HIGHLIGHTS from the ARCHIVE

- ◆ [A video history beginning from when the first missionaries came to Hawai'i](#) (narrated by Marion Lyman-Mersereau, made for the church's 130th anniversary in 2017)
- ◆ [Resolution to open Central Union's facilities to both opposite and same sex wedding ceremonies + minutes of meeting where resolution was adopted](#)

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](mailto:historian@centralunionchurch.org).



# Cross-Cultural Sharing at the Women's Retreat



May is Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) Heritage Month. At CUC, Pacific Islanders are most represented within our Pohnpei Ministry. In our continued sharing about the Women's Retreat this month, we wanted to especially highlight our Pohnpeian women in relation to the Women's Retreat which has become a significant event of the church where sharing across cultures is beautifully displayed!



**Maurina Ludwig,**  
*Member of CUC and  
Pohnpei Ministry, Women's  
Retreat participant:*

The CUC Women's Retreat offers a unique combination of personal reflection, community connection, and empowerment bringing various benefits to our Pohnpeian ladies! It provides a space for us to step away from daily pressures and focus on self care, spiritual growth, and deepening relationships amongst ourselves and with our *mehn Wai* (non-Pohnpeian) sisters! It allows us to share our culture and tradition through singing, sharing food, and sharing gifts to show our love and care towards others!



**Lisa Buck Haley,**  
*Member of CUC, Women's Retreat  
participant:*

The CUC Women's Retreat has become a wonderful opportunity for cross-cultural sharing at Central Union. The opportunity to relax, laugh, sing, dance and worship together are all ways that bridge our cultural differences. The Pohnpeian women bring their joy and their music and the Retreat is enriched by their presence. We find our differences melting away and God's beautiful Spirit shining through each other. In Pohnpeian culture, having time away from childcare, cooking and taking care of the home is very rare. The Pohnpeian women are always so happy to be there and spend significant time with their own Pohnpeian sisters. They bring extra food and enjoy late night visiting and hilarity, feeling like they can be kids again. They gift that special flavor to the entire Retreat.

Both Maurina and Lisa share that among the most memorable moments at the Retreat is the time of sharing during the worship service on the last day, Sunday. The appreciation, gratitude and insights shared by all women are deeply moving, bringing tears of joy and happiness and strengthening the bond of sisterhood between all. Lisa shares, "Back at CUC, women are able to see and recognize each other with a deeper connection because of what we shared out in the sun and sand and sea of the Retreat."



Left:  
Women wearing *urohs*  
(traditional Pohnpeian  
skirt) gifted to them at  
the Women's Retreat.

Right:  
Women around a  
campfire where they  
sing, dance, laugh,  
share together!



## 2025 WOMEN'S RETREAT

As we look ahead to the future of the Women's Retreat, after celebrating 35 years in 2024, we reflect on past Women's Retreats. We'll hold it again this year *if enough women sign up*. This year's Women's Retreat is planned for October 17-19 at Camp Mokule'ia. **The Women's Retreat is for ALL women.** If that's you, look out for more info about the Women's Retreat and be ready to sign up early!



## LOOKING AHEAD

**MAY 2025 - Sermon Series: LIMITLESS —>**

**May 31: [Godly Play Storyteller Training](#)**

8:30 AM - 5:30 PM, Epiphany Episcopal Church

For more information, contact Cayanna Herrera at:

[cayanna-herrera@centralunionchurch.org](mailto:cayanna-herrera@centralunionchurch.org)

**May 18: Graduate Recognition Sunday in worship**

5:30 PM - **Service of Healing & Prayer**

**June 1: ONE worship service** - 10 AM, Sanctuary

Celebrating confirmation of youth

**June 8: Pentecost Sunday**

Collect Strengthen the Church UCC offering

**June 15: Trinity Sunday** (Fathers' Day, Juneteenth)

**June 12-14: Hawai'i Conference 'Aha Pae'āina**

annual meeting on Kaua'i

**June 22 – August 31: Sermon Series**

*"Human & Holy: Influencers of Our Faith"*

**June 28: Young(ish) Adult Ministry service day**

**July 21-25: Compassion Camp** (Children's Ministry)

• For children ages 3-11

• FREE, \$40 suggested donation

Register online:

[bit.ly/cuc2025compassion](http://bit.ly/cuc2025compassion)



**August 31: Laity Sunday** - 7 AM, 9 AM, 11 AM

## VITAL STATS

**Remembering our Saints ~**

Please pray for the family of **Joy Marshall**, who died on May 7, 2025. A private service is pending.

**Baptisms ~**

Recently Baptized into the universal church and the body of Christ on April 12, 2025: **Landon David O'Connor**



## SERMON SERIES

# LIMITLESS

Living the Extravagant,  
Unconditional and Transforming  
Love of God in our Lives

5.04 GRACE

5.11 LOVE

5.18 WISDOM

5.25 FAITH

## CONFIRMATION

## CELEBRATION

Support our youth who  
are taking a new step  
in their faith journey!

ONE WORSHIP SERVICE

**Sunday, June 1, 2025**

10 AM in the Sanctuary

Live on YouTube



Confirmation is an important rite of passage in the United Church of Christ. It is a time when young people have the opportunity to affirm the vows made during their baptism and to declare publicly that they are ready to take responsibility for their own journey of faith. Please join us on **Sunday, June 1, 2025**, to celebrate our youth who will be confirmed this year. There will be **one worship service at 10 AM in the Sanctuary**. Following the service, we will gather in the Women's Building to visit with the confirmands and enjoy some refreshments.