

May 8, 2012

FROM PASTOR TOM

THANK YOU – MAHALO TO THE ERICKSONS:

Our Appreciation with warmest Aloha to Pastor Jim and Shirley Erickson for sharing with us over the past seven months as our Visiting Associate. We have benefited in friendship, wisdom, and faithfulness from their ministry with us. Mahalo for joining us in ministry and mission together at our Church of the Holy Cross.

FILLING OUR LIVES WITH HOSPITALITY

IMAGINE - we are the welcoming hosts of all the space around us. You are a host who provides hospitality setting the tone and attitude of the area in which you live and dwell and have your being.

So of course to welcome others we have to be at home with ourselves. Comfortable and at ease... eager to extend our hand of assurance,.. our ear of listening,.. as well as our voice of acceptance.

As we encounter, we can also embrace differences of preference, focus, faith, philosophy, politics, and life experiences. We are not here to judge others! However, we do hope to share in a partnership of common respect.

The values we discover through diversity of outlooks and interests – may actually enrich our capacity to grow and learn beyond the limits of our expectations. Perhaps we will overflow with an abundance of surprises! Just imagine:

“Wow, I had no idea of the scope of your interest! Tell me more!”

“Gives me chicken skin when I think about the abilities you have, which I never imagined! What else might be possible?”

“The way you go about things shows sensitivity and an artistry giving unusual balance, and truthfully shatters some of my pre-conceptions. Dig a little deeper and help me see your concept?”

“As I spend time with you, I see you piecing together an unusual assortment of treasured values. Could you guide me through a process to unravel the things I may have missed?”

“I see you taking on a whole new approach to some ideas. I quite frankly never gave much thought to! Shed a little more light, so I get a better idea of where you are headed.”

You can get some notion of how such hospitality can invite another person to “open the windows and bring in the refreshing air” of interchange and maybe even some unexpected cooperation.

I am reminded that Ben Franklin is reputed to have turned his adversaries into his supporters by asking for their help to get him over and beyond areas over which they disagreed and were beginning to experience some confrontational objections. He is also rumored to have asked if there were alternative options which may not have yet been considered by thoughtful people.

Sounds to me like Ben opened the door of hospitality by appreciating differences and being willing to entertain the wisdom of those who disagreed or were likely to disengage. Together they could dig into and un-earth common ground where they might actually come to respect the values of their differences.

Now, we turn to Jesus, who engaged his opponents and spoke with a love for truth and for people. He planted seeds of reconciliation as viable options when faced with violence. He allowed his enemies to choose for themselves, but he did not back away from his personal integrity. Jesus reminded people they were actually called to a greater good, when they wanted to settle for rigid rejections and judgments. Jesus was not the focus of the space around himself. He was a host who welcomed thoughtful and faithful relationships allowing people to come to grips with their own limits and opportunities by trusting in God to transform their outlook and their lives.

With such trust we can welcome anyone into our space and celebrate the growth we find our lives opening up with.

Warmest Blessings,
Pastor Tom

FROM PASTOR JIM

The writer of the Book of Ecclesiastes states that "There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven" (Eccl. 3:1). He then lists several "times" for a variety of actions. Although he does not say so specifically, one could infer that there is a time to come and a time to leave. So it is with all of us at one time or another, and soon it will be Shirley's and my time to leave Hilo and the wonderful congregation at the Church of the Holy Cross. We are going to miss you!

It had been a dream of mine for quite some time to serve in a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, intergenerational church. The past seven months has fulfilled that dream! To serve alongside Pastor Tom among you has indeed been a rich blessing. Your love and concern for us is unmatched.

God has gifted us through you in many ways: your friendship, your gifts of food and fellowship, opportunities for ministry in a variety of ways - worship, preaching, Bible studies, home, hospital, and nursing home visitation, council and committee meetings, Sunday School, IYAA, concerts, discussions, special events - the list could go on and on! Even in my advanced age, I have learned much for which to be thankful.

The opportunity to participate in wider church activities, such as the Fall and Spring Aha Mokupuni gatherings, Hawaii Conference Ministers' Retreat, the clergy exploration conference, the Interfaith Thanksgiving Service, pastors' training conference at Tripler Army Medical Center, Caregivers, Hilo Hospice, and others have been helpful, not the least of which was getting to know many other clergy and lay people.

The opportunity to be "more than simply a tourist" and see a variety of people and places on the Big Island has been definitely culturally rewarding. For a former anthropology student, this has been great.

Many thanks to Pastor Tom and the Council for their confidence in calling me to serve as Visiting Associate, and then extending the call

for a second term. I trust my ministry has been fruitful.

The Apostle Paul, in his first letter to the church in Thessalonika, writes this: "We always thank God for all of you, mentioning you in our prayers. We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord, Jesus Christ" (I Thess. 1:3). This is how Shirley and I will remember you, and our continual prayer for you will be for continued fruitful ministry for God's Kingdom.

Mahalo nui loa and Aloha ke akua,
Pastor Jim

From the Board of Stewardship and Mission

A big mahalo for the wonderful participation in our annual "Offering of Letters" campaign and the Bake Sale for "Bread for the World". We are happy to report that we raised \$647.20 through the generous donations and purchases made on Sunday which will be sent to "Bread for the World". We also mailed 67 letters to our members of Congress, Senator Inouye, Senator Akaka, and Representative Hirono. Hopefully, all of our efforts will enable the Circle of Protection to surround the programs that are vital for hungry and poor people at home and abroad. Thank you very much!

CHURCH SERVICE DAY

May 12 from 8:30 am : Weeding the yard, painting the curbing on the upper parking lot, and general cleaning. Donations of refreshments are welcomed.

FAMILY THANK OFFERING

The Family Thank Offering is an annual project of the Woman's Board of Missions and our church's Women's Fellowship. The FTO helps many people and families with special financial needs, plus helps small struggling UCC churches in the state of Hawaii. Many have received help from this project over the years, including our own church members.

Our church ohana has always contributed generously to this special project and we

again ask that you open your hearts to share God's love with those in need. FTO envelopes are attached to this week's newsletter. Extra envelopes are also available on the table in the back of the church. Dedication of our offerings will be on Sunday, May 13th.

Thank you for your faithfulness and caring concern,
From the CHC Women's Fellowship

BREAD FOR THE WORLD

On Sunday, April 29, the Board of Stewardship and Mission sponsored our annual Bread for the World Bake Sale and Letter Writing campaign.

The bake sale raised \$697.20 to help end hunger in the US and abroad. Thank you for your participation in this worthy event.

VOLUNTEERS FOR MAY 13, 20

USHERS: Eric Tanouye & Family

FLOWERS:

5/13: Millie Uchima (Mem), Millie Uchima

5/20: Jay Yokoyama

CHILDCARE:

5/13: Teddi Mukai

5/20: Dorothy Matsui

LAYREADERS:

5/13: Carolyn Lum-Bellem

5/20: Newton Chu

REFRESHMENT:

5/13: Board of Deacons, Gloria Annes, Malia Mattos

5/20: Sunday school parents

PERSONAL:

TESSIE KAMI, 85, passed away on April 26 at the Life Care Restorative Center of Hilo. She was a retired secretary for the State of Hawaii Department of Health. She is survived by: 4 Sons: Kent, Bert (Karen), Kelvin and Paul Kami; brother: Masao Chinen of Honolulu; five grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews. Private service was held at the church on May 3. Our deepest condolence to the Kami family and relatives.

BLOOD DRIVE

Tuesday May 22, 7:30am - 4:45pm
Aunty Sally Kaleohano's Luau Hale
Hosted by Church of the Holy Cross
For appt call 1-800-372-9966

MDA – Thank You

Dear my Hilo ohana,

Thanks to your support, I was able to raise \$1,363 this year for the Muscular Dystrophy Association. WOW!!!

It is just so amazing! With one or two emails to my ohana and two flyers at my work place, there is this tremendous response this year, and I can bet that you are thinking about supporting this good cause again next year. Let me repeat what I said. Your heart goes long way toward much needed support for people living with Muscular Dystrophy.

Why I say "living"? Because the Muscular Dystrophy is not a death sentence. With proper care, people with this condition can live as long as any of us, and can contribute to the community as much as any of us does.

Why I say "your heart"? Your message saying "Hey buddy, let's work together to find cures for the Muscular Dystrophy, and until they are found, still there are many ways that we can enjoy being together" – this makes Hilo a very special place.

When I went to the so-called "jail" this past Thursday, by the way, it is kind of an analogy to the confinement that the MD-afflicted friends feel, I was surprised to see many people in the community who are helping this fundraise event. Not to mention my outgoing friends in wheelchairs or walkers showing off their "abilities".

Thank you very much, mahalo nui loa, domo arigato gozaimasu, for supporting MDA this year and in the future.

With best wishes,
Saeko Hayashi

PSR Offers Summer Courses

Pacific School of Religion offers laypersons, clergy and seminarians over twenty summer courses on subjects such as spirituality, theology and leadership. These courses, scheduled at various times between July 2 and August 10, can be taken online or at the Berkeley, California, campus, and may be audited or taken for academic or continuing education credit. Look for Pacific School of Religion on the web.

IYAA Car Wash

Saturday May 19 from 8:00 am – 2:30 pm

Reprinted from Simple Truths

First Thing Every Moring

By Lewis Timberlake

Turn your life around one day at a time. When you woke up this morning were you happy or sad? It's a CHOICE you must make every single day... and how you begin the day, controls the day. So use the chance to lift your spirits and lighted the load... to turn your life around one day at a time. Here are some thoughts to get you started:

About ATTITUDE:

"The greatest discovery of my generation is that a human being can alter his life by altering his attitudes of mind."

- William James

About CHANGING YOUR LIFE – TODAY

"See everything. Overlook a great deal. Improve a little."

- Pope John XXIII

About LOVE:

"The grand essentials to happiness in this life are something to do, someone to love, and something to hope for."

- Joseph Addison

About AGE:

"It's never too late to be who you might have been!"

- George Elliot

About ADVERSITY

"In the middle of adversity, lies opportunity."

- Albert Einstein

About ENTHUSIAM:

"Joy is not in things, it is in us."

- Richard Wagner

About GIVING THANKS

"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them."

- John F Kennedy

About TIME:

"A year from now, you may wish you had started today."

- Karen Lamb

About HAPPINESS:

"It's so important to know that you can choose to feel good. Most people don't think they have that choice."

- Neil Simon

About LIVING YOUR BEST LIFE:

"Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you have imagined."

- Henry David Thoueau

It's not the outlook, but the up look that matters. Start the day right!

Meet Jean Pierre Thoma!



His beautiful flute music adds a special touch to our worship services. He's a brand new Deacon who is working on becoming a commissioned Minister of Music with the United Church of Christ. John Pierre Thoma moved to Hilo recently and immediately joined our church. He knows Reverend Susumu and Miyeko Yamane from their church work in Kona and is a member of the Sakura Ensemble, which has performed several times at our church.

John Pierre is originally from Wisconsin and has two masters degrees in music from Washington University in St. Louis and Holy Names College in Oakland, California. He has taught music and band in high schools around the world, including in France and Israel, and lived on Maui for 15 years before moving to Kona. He also has experience in the mortgage business and real estate development.

He is currently affiliated with the Pacific Academy of Music, where he provides private instruction in flute, saxophone and clarinet. Welcome J.P.!

Bibles Needed!

During our Sunday worship service, I like to use the Bible to read the scripture passage before the sermon. I also like to find scripture passages that many of our hymns are based on. Do you have an extra Bible that you'd like to share with our congregation? There should be one Bible at every pew in the sanctuary. Some pews are missing ones. Please bring your Bibles to the church office or leave them at the back of the sanctuary. Thank you in advance for adding to our worship experience.

---Gloria Kobayashi