

CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST – CONGREGATIONAL
440 West Lanikaula Street, Hilo, Hawaii
September 2, 2012
COMMUNION • Labor Day Sunday

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

Call to Worship

Those who trust in God are like Mauna Kea and Mauna Loa. Nothing can overcome the power of rock-solid mountains of energy. Even lava flowing tells us creation is always on the move; you can always depend on God renewing the whole of creation as well as the hearts of people..

When we live on the slopes of such mountains, we are encircled by God's grace. We are standing on majestic beauty. We always will have the Lord's guidance. We need not fear any wickedness. We will never violate the honor which is due the righteous, nor shall we provoke wrongful violence. Let us embrace the love of God in Jesus Christ.

Be good to your laboring people, God, to those whose hearts are right! May the work of our hands and hearts become a blessing for all your people.

Lord, protect Your people by holding them in your arms of peace. Let us ask the LORD to be kind to everyone who calls out from tears of anguish, or who celebrates with songs of laughter, or who dances with the grace of movement. May we encourage every one to seek to completely embrace the challenges of love by following the voice of Jesus. Amen.

(Adapted from Psalm 107:1-9 & 43)

Invocation: God of grace and glory, we call to you from the places where we work and rest. We call to you from farms, businesses, homes, and class rooms. We greet you from playing fields, and from libraries of learning, and hospitals of healing. Come and speak of truth with mercy and compassion. We praise the life and words of Jesus! We bless You across all eternity and in the gentleness of sleep. We bless You when our eyes are opening and when food touches our tongue. As water splashes our face, we wake up to Your call to be alert. We see Your skill as healer and friend when we share nourishment and work together. You speak to our souls. We come having faithfully chosen to worship joyously as Your people gathered in the community of this Church of the Holy Cross. Amen.

WE SHARE THE WORD OF GOD

Scripture: (James 1:17-27 NRSV): Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. {18}In fulfillment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures. {19} You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger;{20}for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. {21}Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls.

{22} But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. {23}For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; {24}for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like.{25}But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing. {26} If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. {27}Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

Sermon: "Be Love As The Way To Love"

WE RESPOND IN WORD AND DEED

Call to Confession: "A good name and a faithful heart are to be chosen above riches or fame. The favor of forgiveness is better than silver or gold. We have this in common: the Lord is the maker of us all." (Proverbs 22:1-2)

Confession: God, of our birth, our life, our sorrow and our joy. We trust you beyond any pain or disappointment so there can be healing within us. We trust you beyond the brokenness within our hearts, our families and our community, so there can be reconciliation to overcome grief. We trust you, God, beyond any anger, so there can be peace, and compassion. Challenge us to work with your Holy Spirit every day with faith and love as we embrace the welcome hospitality of Jesus Christ... Amen.

(Adapted from In God's Hands)

Assurance of Pardon: "I am with you all the way no matter what! I have in fact the greatest confidence in you. If only you knew how proud I am of you - through the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen." (Adapted II Cor. 7:4)

Invitation to the Offering: “Those who are generous are blessed, for they share their bread with the poor. (Proverbs 22:9)

Prayer of Dedication: Almighty God, here we pray as Your faithful workers. Enable us to be eager, alert, and ready for your service! Guide our commitments and relationships wherever we are. Receive our gifts in thanksgiving to do Your work with integrity. We pray that our life and worship as members of churches worshiping together will honor You with compassionate energy and hospitality. Let us bless all neighborhoods across our Big Island community and around the world. In Jesus’ name. Amen