

CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST – CONGREGATIONAL
440 West Lanikaula Street, Hilo, Hawaii
September 16, 2012

Many members of our Church are also gathered in worship
at a retreat at KMC, Volcano

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

Call to Worship

We pray to you, LORD! Please listen. Send us into every day as instruments of hope and peace. We ask you to bless our members who are on retreat at KMC Volcano this weekend. Inspire us to offer your hospitality to everyone where there is need.

We sing to God with praise. God loves us! God sends us with the spirit of peace to embrace anyone who feels forgotten. Let all hearts bless the Lord and rejoice.

You are God's people. Let us open our eyes to see the needs of the world. Let every fiber of our being become a life line of abundant compassion and harmony. Let us reach beyond ourselves and share with the whole people of God.

God you transcend and transform the space around us. You are in the air we breathe. You search and know the depth of our souls. Inspire us to welcome the fullness of Your grace – Let our daily choices honor your glory. AMEN.

Invocation: O God of all that is and is to be, our Guide and Teacher, whose eye is even on the sparrow. You care with tenderness for this world you have shaped. We come to take hold of our personal desire to share your presence with those who are around us every day. Your loving Spirit seeks to redeem any lost and grieving people from loneliness of any despair. You provide nourishment for body and soul. You sent Christ as a servant to bind up our wounded brokenness and heal our pain of suffering. You call us to care for our community. Grant that in this hour of sacred worship we will respond to your call for discipleship. Lead us to confess our need for love; and let us find the courage and freedom to discover your amazing grace. In Jesus' name, Amen.

WE SHARE THE WORD OF GOD

Scripture: (Mark 8:27-38 NRSV): Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that I am?' {28}And they

answered him, 'John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.' {29}He asked them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Peter answered him, 'You are the Messiah.' {30}And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.{31} Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. {32}He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. {33}But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, 'Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.' {34} He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. {35}For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. {36}For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? {37}Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? {38}Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.'

Sermon: "Who ARE you Jesus? Yes, you are! And, HOW are you Jesus?"

WE RESPOND IN WORD AND DEED

Call to Confession: "Let your compassion come speedily to meet us...deliver us and forgive our sins for your name's sake." (Based on Ps. 79:8-9)

Confession: "God of grace, sometimes we want to have everything flow gently according to our own way. We want to define the world on our terms! But as we go, sometimes grudges of anger cloud our vision. We may even grumble as we trip over our expectations even when someone unexpectedly offers us hope and kindness when we anticipated rejection. We can not understand how our own hardship continues to encourage us to seek faith. Help us find mercy for ourselves and others when we share disappointment. Guide us away from cynicism, contempt, or boredom. Energize us to let our attitudes shine as searchlights of companionship giving support to those we will meet this week. Inspire us to love family, friends, neighbors, and strangers... as You love... with the forgiveness of Jesus." Amen.

Assurance of Pardon: "For the hurt of my people I ache!" says the Lord. Amen.

Invitation to the Offering: "Whoever is faithful in little is also faithful in much – So come now and share blessings from within your heart and soul."

Prayer of Dedication: Holy Lord, Thank You for the morning breeze, for the noon day sun, for the cool of night, and for refreshing rain. Thank you for blessing our members on retreat at KMC Volcano. Thank You for knowing us in all our relationships as You travel with us every day. Thank You for blessing us with abilities and inviting us to make choices about values that let us breath the Spirit of Your sacred presence. Thank You for letting us walk and serve with humble compassion here in Your Church of the Holy Cross. May Your name be glorified. Receive our commitment to build our lives in mutual service as the whole people of God. In Christ's name - Amen.