

FROM PASTOR TOM

Where are you, Jesus?

In the course of my ministry I have found I needed to go to some unexpected areas in a variety of different communities where people with good and caring advice have told me, “*You don’t really want to go into that neighborhood! It is not as safe as you think!*”

Once, it was a police officer I had stopped for directions. He told me he would not give me directions. Why? Because he did not want me in that run-down neighborhood where I was trying to visit a friend who was hospitalized.

Another time, on a snowy Christmas Eve, I was carrying food to a desperate family. The security guard at that public housing complex insisted he accompany me to their door.

Yet another occasion, my daughter was with me and we located an address in one of two remaining houses on a nearly abandoned street on a dark evening. All the other houses had been boarded up, including the front door of the house we were looking for. She stayed in the car while I went to the back door and found the family who had called for help.

When someone asks me, “Where is Jesus?” John 14:1-7 comes to mind:

“Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. My father’s house has many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you. Even now, I am going there to prepare a place for you, so that where I am you may be also. And I will welcome you unto myself...”

I think of this promise when I face a difficult task. I think of this when the anesthetist is preparing me for surgery. I think of this when I have deep grief and sadness as well as when I have great joy. I believe in the presence of Christ with us in all things and events.

Jesus has gone ahead of us to prepare a place for us so that he can welcome us with hospitality – so that wherever he is we may be also. He invites us to extend his hospitality to others. “Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am with them also.” (Mt. 18:20)

There is not a place (any where), or event, or circumstance that we will enter or find ourselves alone or with others that Jesus has

not already been present and prepared for our arrival with hospitality (grace and blessing). He will be present with us as we arrive in each situation and relationship. When we encounter despair or injustice, he confronts us. When we sense love, forgiveness, and compassion, he celebrates with us. We are always in his presence.

When we have gone and moved on, or left, he will remain there - Perhaps to pick up the pieces or to establish a sense of completeness.

Yet, at the same time he also moves with us! And he also moves ahead of us to greet us in all our future encounters. Some may not recognize or acknowledge his presence, but he is with us in all we experience.

He is the unseen living presence (here and now!) which always awaits us in all that is – having prepared for us a welcome so that he can greet us in each person and every event.

“Where are you, Jesus?”

Why, Jesus is right beside you – in you, through you, and around you, filling your every experience with God’s abundant hospitality and grace – greeting you and sending you to your next appointment.

However, it always helps us to recognize and thank him for joining us and to follow his courage and compassion in everything we do! Or else, it might seem to us like he is absent because we have missed hearing and accepting his encouragement and guiding voice.

*Warmest blessings,
Pastor Tom*

THE DEUPREES ARE ALMOST HERE!

On Tuesday evening at 5:00 PM on Oct 16 at Hilo Airport Pastor Neil and Kay Deupree will arrive in Hilo to begin their ministry with us as Pastor Neil becomes our new Visiting Associate. Their first Sunday with us will be October 21 where you will have the opportunity to greet them in person.

Of course you can meet them ahead of time by stopping by our Parsonage to bring your “ALOHA WELCOME.” While the Deuprees are with us, we are sure they would like invitations to join you at your home, or for a meal, or for opportunities to explore our Big Island. Pastor

Neil is somewhat familiar with Hilo having trained here with the Peace Corps. However, Kay will be experiencing our Aloha for the first time in Hilo.

Welcome – E Komo Mai

CHC MEETING CHANGE

There will be a general membership meeting on Sunday, Oct 21 following worship to act on the proposed 2013 CHC Budget and a proposed Bylaw amendment concerning term limits on Boards. Copies of the proposed budget were mailed out last month and extra copies are available in the back of the sanctuary. Please make the effort to attend this important meeting.

ALL SAINTS DAY

Invitations have already been sent out, but as a gentle reminder: CHC All Saints Remembrance Worship will be held on **Sunday, Oct 28 at 10 am**. A church potluck luncheon will follow in the Building of Faith.

ALZHEIMER'S WALK

A big mahalo to the 15 participants and the many donors who supported our walkers in the "Walk to End Alzheimer's" held on Saturday, October 6th. The turn out was good as we walked in beautiful, but vogy, weather.

Chris Ridley of the Alzheimer's Association was very appreciative of our help in raising funds to be used on our island to assist families and to provide education for the community. Those who walked enjoyed the fellowship and the gratification of helping an important cause. Getting good exercise was an added benefit! We raised \$1,590 and came in third for the teams. Thank you all!

SENIOR MINISTRY

Our next Senior Ministry gathering will be on **Thursday, October 25th, 10am** in the Building of Faith. Our program topic will be about Medicare fraud.....a subject very important for seniors. As usual we will have a brief meditation and a delicious lunch too! You can sign up by calling the church office or by signing your name on our SENIORS BULLETIN BOARD.....it will help us with our lunch count. See you there!

DRESSES FOR GIRLS

Transforming any un-used PILLOW-CASES

Several of the congregations that join us as part of Interfaith Communities in Action (ICIA) are involved in a special project where they take donated PILLOW CASES and sew them with Spaghetti String Ties and add some decorative bric-a-brac / appliqué and transform these chic PILLOW CASES into sheath dresses for young girls around the world.

Some children's mission programs have reported these are the first "new" dresses the girls have ever received. The dresses go to refugee centers, orphanages, disaster locations, and poverty stricken areas. Some centers have report the dresses help the girls with self-esteem. Sometimes the mere fact the girl is wearing the dress and is cared for protects the girl from the abuse of sex-trafficking.

Our Stewardship and Mission Board invites your donation of any un-used Pillow CASES you might have so that we can bring them to local church sewing groups where the dresses will be transformed and re-styled into beautiful new dresses to be sent where they are needed through "Dresses for Girls." You can donate your un-used pillow cases at the back of the sanctuary on Sunday mornings before worship or drop them off at the church office.

We think you will be sleeping better when you know your un-used PILLOW CASES are transformed into beautiful dresses for girls in need around the world. Only pillow case (no un-sewn materials) are accepted for this project.

Mahalo – and sweet dreams!

ANNUAL THANKSGIVING SERVICE

Please save the date, **Tuesday, November 20th**, for the Interfaith Communities in Action (ICIA) annual Thanksgiving Service to be held at the Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin at 7:00 pm. Everyone is invited to attend this service of shared music with members of many faith groups in Hilo. Our Chancel choir and the IYAA choir will each share one song during the service. We are asked to help donate finger foods for refreshments. More information will be provided later.

NEIGHBORS IN NEED

NEIGHBORS IN NEED SPECIAL MISSION OFFERING

Neighbors in Need (NIN) is a special mission offering of the UCC that supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of NIN funds support the Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM). Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC's Justice and Witness Ministries to support a variety of justice initiatives, advocacy efforts and direct service projects.

As a 2010 Neighbors in Need grant recipient, Dismas House of Burlington, Vermont, is a supportive community for former prisoners transitioning from incarceration and for college students who are also in transition with their lives. Living in community accomplishes the Dismas mission of reconciliation with an eye toward deeper harmony. Over 80 volunteers participate each month at the two Dismas Houses in Burlington by preparing and sharing the evening meal with residents. Volunteer involvement includes cooking dinner and repairing the house as well as supporting and advising residents and staff.

Dismas House bears witness to the core values of the UCC changing lives, continuing testament and extravagant welcome. With your support, Neighbors in Need is imagining a world without violence.

Offering envelopes were included in the last mailing and were dedicated last Sunday. Thank you to all who participated already, but gifts are still being honored.

VOLUNTEERS FOR OCTOBER

USHERS: Ben Masutomi, Reiko Masutomi, Tammy Nagami, Sets Takemoto, Dorothy Matsui

FLOWERS:

10/14: Miyeko Yamane
10/21: M/M Mark Sakumoto (Mem)
10/28: M/M Richard Miyake

CHILDCARE:

10/14: Anne Sadayasu
10/21: Merle Okabe
10/28: Lolita Tanouye

LAYREADERS:

10/14: Barbara Iwami
10/21: Lei Cruz
10/28: Woody Kita

REFRESHMENTS:

10/14: Mae Kawahara, Esther Kodani, Moira Tanaka
10/28: ALL SAINTS DAY – Homecoming Potluck

MISSION MOMENT

Shared on September 16, 2012

Brazilian theologian Leonardo Boff had the honor of participating in a table discussion with the Dalai Lama about religion and freedom. During a break, Boff asked the Dalai Lama, what is the best religion? His answer surprised the theologian. The Dalai Lama replied: "The best religion is the one that gets you closest to God. It is the one that makes you a better person." Boff pressed further; "What is it that makes me better?" In his wisdom, the holy man responded: "Whatever makes you more compassionate, more sensible, more detached, more loving, more humanitarian, more responsible, more ethical." The Dalai Lama continued by saying that his concern was not with religion or with whether people are religious, but rather with, "behavior in front of your peers, family, work, community, and in front of the world."

Remember, the universe is the echo of our actions and our thoughts. The law of action and reaction is not exclusively for physics. It is also of human relations. If I act with goodness, I will receive goodness. If I act with evil, I will get evil. "What our elders taught is as true today as it will be in the future, he said. "You will always have what you desire for others. Being happy is not a matter of destiny. It is a matter of options. And finally, Boff said, the Dalai Lama had this advice: "Take care of your Thoughts before they become Words. Take care of your Words before they become Actions. Take care of your Actions because they become Habits. Take care of your Habits because they will form your Character. Take care of your Character because it will form your Destiny, and your Destiny will be your Life... and... There is no religion higher than the Truth."

PERSONALS:

A note from **Pastor Jim and Shirley Erickson:**

Aloha,

...thanks for the hospice flyer., It was indeed an excellent course. I was just about to email you

about the good visit we had with Neil and Kay (Deupree). You'll like them....We have now decided where to "settle": Geneva Place, an ECC rental retirement community in Geneva, IL - about an hour west of Chicago and a half hour east of DeKalb, where our daughter, Ingrid, and family live. Our new address is **27 North Bennett Street, Apt. 304, Geneva, IL 60134**. Geneva is a delightful small city on the Fox River (which we will be able to see from our corner apt!)... Greetings to the congregation; we sure do have fond memories of our sojourn with you and them!! Also, greetings to the monthly ministers' gathering. Not teaching this term, but may Spring term - gotta keep active. Aloha from Shirl and me to you and your family, and to Take and Lele and Henry and his family, and mahalo for the experience you so graciously provided! Peace and every blessing - Jim

THE PALACE THEATHER

Presents the 11th Annual Fall Musical

Jesus Christ Superstar

Oct. 12,13, 19&20 @ 7 pm

Sunday Oct 14 & 21 @ 2:30

Tickets on sale now.

Pedro Kaawaloa is one of the performers.

\$15 in advance / \$20 at the door

On sale at the Palace box office 10-3 pm

Call 934-7010 to purchase by phone with a credit card

Reprinted from Home Touch

Sunday, October 21, 2012

Scripture Reading: Mark 10:35-45

THOUGHT: *In our prayers, we talk to God; in our Bible study, God talks to us, and we had better let God do most of the talking*

D.L. Moody

The Bible tells us to "cast all our cares upon him for he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7). Shortly after reading this, I had to call a company with a certain problem and got an automated voice with a myriad of suggestions. Then I thought, "Wow, what if God used an answering service? What if God decided to install voice mail?" Imagine praying then hearing this.

"Thank you for calling Many Mansions. Please select one of the following options: Press 1 for requests; Press 2 for thanksgiving; Press 3 for complaints; Press 4 for all other inquiries."

What if God used the familiar excuse – "I'm sorry, all of our angels are busy helping other needy people right now. However, your prayer is important to us and will be answered in the order it was received. Please stay on the line."

Wow! That would be awful, wouldn't it? What if your heard – "Our computers show that you have already prayed once today. Please hang up and try again tomorrow."

How about – "This office is closed for the weekend, please call during normal business hours," or – "We are closed to observe a religious holiday. Please pray again tomorrow after 9:30 a.m. If you need emergency assistance when this office is closed, please contact your local pastor."

That would be fine, but the pastor probably has voice mail, too!!

Oh well... Fortunately God is available 24 hours a day. Isn't that wonderful?

Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Wonderful, listening God! Thank you for hearing my prayers. Thank you for being constantly with me so that I am not alone. For this I give you praise. In Jesus' name. Amen.