

**CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS**  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST – CONGREGATIONAL  
440 West Lanikaula Street, Hilo, Hawaii  
March 10, 2013 - Fourth Sunday of Lent

**WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD**

**Responsive Call to Worship**

Leader: I lift up my eyes to the hills. From whence does my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.

**People: He will not let your foot be moved, he who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, he who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.**

Leader: The LORD is your keeper; the LORD is your shade on your right hand. The sun shall not smite you by day, nor the moon by night.

**All: The LORD will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.**

**The LORD will preserve your going out and your coming in from this time forth and for evermore.**

**Invocation:** Lord Jesus, enter the hearts of your people; receive all of us there is! Here is our willfulness, bless us with your guidance. His are our thinking minds; fill us with heavenly wisdom and justice. Here are our actions; steer us toward compassionate living. Here are our tempers; grant us patience, forgiveness, and understanding. Here is our Church of the Holy Cross; build us into a community of caring friendship with all people. Lord, kindle within our souls a desire for merciful and courageous integrity for the fulfillment of each and every day, by the power of your Holy Spirit. Amen

**WE SHARE THE WORD OF GOD**

**Scripture:** (Luke 15:1-3 and 11b-32) Now all the tax-collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. <sup>2</sup>And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, 'This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them.'<sup>3</sup> So he told them this parable: <sup>11</sup>Then Jesus said, 'There was a man who had two sons. <sup>12</sup>The younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me." So he divided his property between them. <sup>13</sup>A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and travelled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. <sup>14</sup>When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. <sup>15</sup>So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. <sup>16</sup>He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. <sup>17</sup>But when he came to himself he said, "How

many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger!<sup>18</sup> I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; <sup>19</sup>I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.' " <sup>20</sup>So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. <sup>21</sup>Then the son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son." <sup>22</sup>But the father said to his slaves, "Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. <sup>23</sup>And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate;<sup>24</sup> for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!" And they began to celebrate.

25 'Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. <sup>26</sup>He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. <sup>27</sup>He replied, "Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound." <sup>28</sup>Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. <sup>29</sup>But he answered his father, "Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends.<sup>30</sup> But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!" <sup>31</sup>Then the father said to him, "Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. <sup>32</sup>But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found."

**Sermon:** "Embracing Love From Every Angle "

## WE RESPOND IN WORD AND DEED

**Call to Confession:** O Lord, if you kept a record of sins, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness, therefore we worship you in awe! Amen (Psalm 130: 3-4)

**Confession:** Lord Jesus, help me figure out when I have betrayed and misjudged your presence working in the lives of the people all around me. Have I assumed too much or trusted your mercy only half-way? Help me not to criticize the faith of others or to scorn their deeds of service and compassion. Penetrate my soul to encourage me always to speak with integrity and appreciation. Before I utter one word of doubt, help me to speak and act with abundant generosity in place of my foolishness. Let me offer Your forgiveness as an expression of my love for your grace. Amen

**Assurance of Pardon:** Put your hope in the Lord, for the Lord is filled with unfailing love and with him is our full redemption. Believe the scripture and the words Jesus has spoken.  
Amen

**Invitation to the Offering:** All our works shall give thanks to you, O Lord. May all our faithfulness be a blessing to honor you? You open your hand with overflowing grace and satisfy the needs of every living thing. Let our hands and our hearts bring glory to God, our souls and everything we do. Amen

**Prayer of Dedication:** O Lord, your Holy Spirit is at work among us and you know us. You see when we sit down and when we stand up. You see our thoughts. You call us to walk with you, to pick up our cross, and trust ourselves to travel with you by faith. Guide us through this Lenten season to grow in spiritual wisdom. Receive the gifts of our labor. Receive the days of our lives. Bless us to fulfill your service and ministry in the world wherever there is need. Consecrate each of us for your work, by the power of Jesus' love. Amen