

✠ ✠ **THE MESSENGER** ✠ ✠

The Church of the Holy Cross, United Church of Christ
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April 16, 2013

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The Miracles of Passing Moments

I know a man who loves to follow train schedules so he can race to a rail road crossing as a famous numbered engine is about to approach. He gets there about ten minutes ahead of schedule. Sets up his camera - and - "CLICK!" He has captured a passing power house of energy in a moment of time. His goal is to be on time, see the arrival, and capture the image just before it zooms away. He had a collection of a hundred plus images.

There is another train story that appeared in a Midwest paper. An inebriated soul was wandering home from a night of celebration. Instead of turning down his street, he turned left and wandered down the railroad tracks. He was content enough to decide one place was as good as another to lie down for the night. As he slept on the tracks, a passing freight train, unaware of his presence, sped over his place of rest. He woke to the roar of the engines and the passing freight cars - frozen in fear that any movement on his part would bring his demise. He survived the passing train. The news head line read something like: "SLEEPING MAN RUN OVER BY TRAIN - LIVES TO TELL THE STORY!"

Now, I ask you, "Does either of these two individuals have a better story to tell?" One was asleep and woke to his crisis and managed to keep his calm and cool. The other rushes to record a moment as it passes by.

One person looks at life with anticipation of scheduled events. The other looked up and saw his mortality at risk and settled back to embrace the inevitable and lived to tell the story of his own human frailty and marvel at the miracle of survival against the odds.

Faith looks for things unseen - expecting these will arrive, and if we keep our eyes ready we may participate in or capture a fleeting moment of amazement greater than ourselves - maybe "more powerful than a locomotive."

Faith also knows it can relax in the presence of something far greater than

itself. We might cherish such moments when we can speak about a courage we never suspected would give us the resources needed to celebrate life for yet another day.

You and I can have a taste of the faith of both these individuals when we trust ourselves to God's presence and anticipate whatever is coming our way. We can still marvel that such moments drive home the promise and experiences that each and everyday of our lives we are always in the presence of something greater than our own abilities. While we also trust, God engages us not just in special and unusual moments but in every day events. Even an ordinary day for us is a special time to honor God's presence with us whatever happens.

Warmest Blessings,

Pastor Tom

Notes from Pastor John . . .

In another article in this newsletter, you will read of an ad hoc committee the Council has endorsed to look at ways to enhance the *vitality and vibrancy* of the congregation.

I urge you to keep the folks on that committee in your thoughts and prayers. You may want to share your own ideas with one or more of the committee members that you believe could contribute to the vitality of our congregation. One of the tenets of churches like ours, grounded in the Congregational tradition, is that Spirit moves through all of us rather than just a few of us. The more voices that contribute, the more likely we will discern Spirit's call and leading.

This reminds me of the story in John's gospel where two disciples of John the Baptist leave his side and tag along behind Jesus. When Jesus sees them, he asks "what are you looking for?" When they then ask Jesus where he will be staying, Jesus says: "come and see!"

"Come and see" is not the same as "wait and see." "Wait and see" remains on the sidelines, spectating (and often judging) the moves and decisions of others to see if they measure up. "Come and see" requires involvement and



**Notes from Pastor John . . .
Continued**

participation. "Come and see" understands that community (and church) is a group activity and not a spectator sport.

Consider that story in the light of what may arise from this new committee. What directions will our congregation take? What programs will be added, or perhaps done in a different way? Don't wait and see. Come and see. You are needed. You are invited.

John Indermark

YOUR MESSENGER'S

Changing FORMAT AND DELIVERY:

The US Postal Service issued new guidelines for bulk mail at the end of January, 2013. These regulations mean we will now be sending the "MESSENGER" by first class regular mail. "Bulk mail" is no longer cost effective for us. As we adjust to these changes there are sure to be some delays in printing and delivery while we accustom the preparation to a new schedule. However, we believe this will deliver the "MESSENGER" Please be patient as we adjust. We also invite you to register your E-Mail and receive the Messenger in this alternative format.

Building of Faith RESERVATIONS, APPLICATIONS AND KEY PICK-UP as well as other church facilities will only be received **ON FRIDAY MORNINGS FROM 9:00-11:30 am**. Please call the Church office to schedule an appointment (935-1283) between 9:00 and 11:30 AM with Pastor Tom.

He will receive, discuss availability, and review all request only during these Friday hours. This will avoid the many interruptions in his Pastoral ministry. Mahalo for respecting these Friday appointment hours.

SENIOR MINISTRY

Thursday April 25, 10 to 12

Everyone's invited to our April 25th Senior Ministry session sponsored by the Women's and Men's Fellowships. Communion will be served and Sachi Fukuda has a delicious lunch planned. Lunch is FREE. We are again fortunate to have a May Day program performance by students of E Makaala School. Caregivers and shut-ins are especially invited. Please call the church office (ph: 935-1283) if you're able to attend. (For bulletin: sign up on sign in sheet on Sr. Ministry bulletin board)

**Bread for the World -
Have Faith**

End Hunger! April 28th

"A Place at the Table": Church of the Holy Cross will join in the fight against hunger for the 50 million people in the United States who live in food insecure households. Food insecure households are those that struggle to put food on the table at some point during the year. You can help end hunger by:

* Writing a letter to our members serving in Congress to support programs such as the Food Stamps program (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Poverty-Focused Development Assistance, the Earned Income Tax Credit, and Child Tax Credit.

* Sign a petition to President Obama to work with Congress on hunger issues.

* Bake or create at home items for sale at Holy Cross's Bread For the World Bake Sale.

* Come ready to purchase one or interesting homemade items.

Letter writing materials and the petition to our president will be available in the back of the Sanctuary on April 28th. **The Bake Sale** will be in the lanai area following worship service. All income from the Bake Sale will be sent to Bread for the World.

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Thank you to all who sewed the pillowcase shift dresses. These dresses will be delivered to the Woman's Board of Missions (Hawaii Conference UCC) and will be taken to the Philippines by a member of the WBM.

We also sent a package of cancelled postage stamps. Collecting stamps is an ongoing mission project of the woman's board. The stamps are sent to Germany and to New York to assist the community of disabled individuals.

Big Island WBM Meet

The Women's Board of Mission will have a meet on Saturday April 27th , 11am to 1pm at 45 Kapaa St (off Ainako Ave). Bring a lunch to share.....call Moira Tanaka (959 8679) or Karen Welsh 96407318) if you're able to attend.

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***From the Board of
 Stewardship and
 Mission***

On Pentecost Sunday, May 19th, we will be preparing "Disaster Response Cleaning Buckets" to be kept in our storeroom in case of an emergency. We will be filling 14 five-gallon buckets with re-sealable lids with the following items:

- >5 scouring pads
- >1 scrub brush
- >Handiwipes
- >1 (12 oz.) bottle of liquid concentrated household cleaner (like Lysol)
- >1 (25 oz.) bottle of liquid disinfectant dish soap (like Dawn)
- >1 tarp (small size)
- >Clotheslines,
two 50 feet or one 100 feet
- >5 dust masks
- >2 pairs latex gloves (like Playtex)
- >1 pair work gloves (heavy duty)
- >28 bag roll of heavy duty trash bags (30-45 gallon size)

We are asking for your donations of these items so we may fill the buckets in preparation for any disaster in our community. We are also suggesting that each family prepare a bucket for your home so you will be prepared, too.

Sign-up sheets for you to list your donations will be available in the back of the church so we will know what will need to be purchased to complete the buckets. Please bring your donations to church by May 19th. Thank you!

If you have any questions, please ask any of the Board members – Woody, Bob, Bev, Barbara, Merle or Anne.

The CARE GIVERS SUPPORT GROUP will meet in the Building of Faith from 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon on Tuesday, April 9. Support group for Caregivers who provide assistance to anyone. Support from knowledgeable community members as well as the Alzheimer's Association. Helpful tips and opportunity to network. If you help someone then come and be helped. Your Caregiving peers welcome your questions and share their experiences.

Monday Night Bible Study 6:30 PM - Pastor Tom's office.

Wednesday Morning Bible Study 9:30 -11:00 AM Pastor Tom's office.

Wednesday IYAA Bible Study in the Lounge 7:30 PM

MERRIE MONARCH PARADE HELPERS MAHALO – Another BIG THANK YOU!
 Many helped decorate the Parade Float and also contributed flowers. The IYAA men followed the float with "stick dancing" and a huge outpouring of enthusiasm and energy. Bubbles drifted along the parade route and pleased the crowds along the streets of Hilo. Riders braved the rain at first and then basked and waived to all from the flat bed of the truck. Moderator Sue Smith along with Malia Loa proudly carried the Holy Cross identification banner.

Mahalo – Thank You!

Have you ever felt it was time for a Vitality tune up?

In the past few years as a congregation we have held work sessions on future goals for our church. We outlined where we wanted to be but the path to get there was not always clear or seemed too large to take on. There were good suggestions and ideas many but they remain on paper.

We are like a car running and going somewhere we have an idea of the destination but we need a bit of a tune up to get us moving better and put more detail on the map. To give our congregation a Vitality tune up, I have called an ad hoc committee of people from different boards, age groups and backgrounds to make recommendations to the council for simple, achievable first steps. This committee will be short term and then hand off to another group to create the next steps. This way we can get many ideas from different people and provide the next small steps, built on the previous work. This is a time to try new ideas. Some will work some will not, and we will learn much those that do not succeed and from those that do. All are valued and valuable in our journey. Some steps may be one time activities, others long term we will see as time progresses.

Ongoing new small steps build a Vital, Vibrant and Dynamic congregation built on the foundation of a welcoming and affirming congregation with a strong faith traditions.

I am looking forward to actions and activities from our first tune up.

*Mahalo for your support,
 Sue Smith Moderator*

"E Komo Mai"

All people are welcome here at Church of the Holy Cross. We greet all visitors, guests, and friends and invite you to participate in our Holy Cross Church family.

† **THE MESSENGER** †

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**Activities at Your
Church of the Holy Cross**

- **Choir Rehearsal** Sunday at 8:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary
- **Sunday School** for all ages at 8:45 a.m.
 - Pre-school to 2nd grade with Moira Tanaka and Eileen Shiraishi in rm. 5
 - 3rd-5th grade with Jeanne Hernandez and Eric Tanouye in the nursery
 - 6th-8th grade with James Yoshiyama in the library
 - 9:00 a.m. Adult class in the lounge

Worship & Scripture for April

Ushers: Karl and Mae Kawahara, Moira Tanaka, Esther Kodani, and Newton Chu

Sunday, April 21: Acts 9:36-43

Sermon: "Life Commitment and Action"

Pastor Tom Olcott

Lay Reader: Bob Smith

Flowers: Michi Koizumi

Child Care: Clarice Suzuki

Sunday April 28:

BREAD FOR THE WORLD SUNDAY

Revelations 21:1-6 (NRSV)

Sermon: Pastor John Indermark

"The God Who Makes All Things New:

Ah-ha or Oh-oh!"

Lay Reader: MaryAnn Katayama

Child Care: Jennifer Tanouye

**HABITAT FOR
HUMANITY**

Dear Holy Cross Members –

We would like to thank the church for the very generous donation to Hale Aloha O Hilo Habitat for Humanity in the amount of \$500.00.

We are grateful to you for thinking of us and the needs of our community. Without your support and caring we would be unable to do the important work of building affordable housing for families in need in the Hilo area.

Eliminating poverty is a process that takes a whole community, and your donation will help us move one step closer to accomplishing that goal. We are dependent on the groups and individuals who volunteer their time and skills, as well as the generous donations we receive from donors like you. Mahalo!...

Thank you again for your generosity and caring. You are helping to build community in East Hawai'i.

Aloha, Julie Hugo, President

Esther Suyama's Care Giver, Pastor Edmund K Pali, Jr., will celebrate his 70th Birthday and invites our members to come and celebrate God's grace with him at the Church of the Living God, 75 Todd Ave., Hilo (Keaukaha) on June 15 at 12:00 Noon – rsvp 345-5837 by 5/15/13.