

CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST – CONGREGATIONAL
440 West Lanikaula Street, Hilo, Hawaii
April 21, 2013

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

Responsive Call to Worship

(Psalm 23)

Leader: You, Lord, are our shepherd, we shall not want.

You make us lie down in green pastures;
You lead us beside still and calming waters;
You restore our souls.

People: Lord you lead us on the paths of righteousness;

For your name's sake.

Even though we walk through dark valleys and face death,

We will fear no evil; for you are with us;

And your rod and your staff comfort us.

Leader: You have prepared at table before us with all we need;

Even when we are surrounded by enemies;

You anoint our heads with holy oil;

The cup of your goodness overflows.

ALL: Surely goodness and mercy shall follow us

All the days of our lives,

And we shall dwell in house of the Lord forever. Amen

Invocation: Come Holy God and walk beside us in every twist and turn of our everyday experiences. As the sun breaks open with light cast into the darkness, we see your renewing energy penetrating us with a call to share compassion for any who feel lost and lonely. In your sight there is no one who can cast a shadow across your power to forgive. You redeem all people with the grace of your Son Jesus Christ. Marvelously, you show us that when we have made mistakes and wander from the shelter of your guiding mercy, you call us from our forgetfulness and remind us we belong to each other. We come to lift up any one in need of your spiritual blessings as we enter into service with one another to the glory of Jesus. Amen

WE SHARE THE WORD OF GOD

Gospel Lesson: Scripture – Acts 9:36-43 (ESV) “Now there was in Joppa a disciple named Tabitha. She was full of good works and acts of charity. In those days she became ill and died, and when they had washed her, they laid her in an upper room. Since Lydda was near Joppa, the disciples, hearing that Peter was there, sent two men to him, urging him, “Please come to us without delay.” So Peter rose and went with them. And when he arrived, they took him to the upper room. All the widows stood beside him weeping and showing tunics and other garments that Tabitha made while she was with them. But Peter put them all outside, and knelt down and prayed; and turning to the body the said, “Tabitha, arise.” And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter she sat up. And he gave her his hand and raised her up. Then calling the saints and widows, he presented her alive. And it became known throughout all Joppa, and many believed in the Lord. And he stayed in Joppa for many days with one Simon, a tanner.

Sermon *“Life Commitment and Action”*

WE RESPOND IN WORD AND DEED

Confession (Responsive): (Litany for Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention and the Justice and Witness Ministries United Church of Christ)

Leader: O God, we pray this day: for an end of violence, and for all children and families who live in fear, whose homes are not a place of safety. We pray for all families who seek security for their children.

People: Lord, hear our Prayers for safe streets and children who are neglected, degraded, emotionally abused, rather than loved, honored and cherished. Heal their wounded spirits and bodies.

Leader: Lord, hear our Prayers for children who suffer at the hands of parents and family whom they trust and love;

People: Lord, hear our prayers for all who commit abuse and neglect. May they find healing, peace and forgiveness.

Leader: Lord, hear our prayers for all who witness abuse but are unable to take action. May they find courage to act with mercy for the children in every corner of your world?

ALL: God of grace and love, hear our Prayer. Teach us to be a community of peace and nonviolence. Show us how to overcome aggression with words of kindness and acts of justice. Help us to root out every form of depression, hatred, anger, and violence that has found fertile soil in this and every other community. Grant us patience, understanding, and compassion. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Assurance of Pardon: If in our life we go through hard times and face dangers even then God encourages us to be at our best with every step. Then, we are certainly going to enter good times with God right beside us. Yes, we are reminded "that if God is for us, who could possibly be against us." Amen (Romans 8)

Invitation to the Offering: Love from the center of who you are; don't try to fake your love. Let our generosity abound beyond measure, and surprise even ourselves with overflowing mercy. For God will provide an ever expanding measure of grace to be working through you. Amen

Prayer of Dedication: Lord, embrace us and our gifts in this life to be better able to serve the people of Your world. Help us to answer your call to service with one another. Bless our commitment to end hunger through "Bread for the World." We dedicate ourselves to become people who touch the lives of others with grace, now and in all ways. Amen

Upcoming Events

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 fortunate to have a May Day program performance by the students of E' Maka'ala School. Caregivers and shut-ins are especially invited. Please call the church office (ph: 935-1283) if you're able to attend. (Sign up on sign in sheet on Sr. Ministry bulletin board)

Next Sunday - 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 house-holds. 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 "ono" (yummy) 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.