

CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS

December 22, 2013

Fourth Sunday of Advent
Christmas Celebration Sunday

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

Pre-Service Music – Congregational singing together

Words of Greeting

Latai (Nuu) Loa

Pastoral greeting and Sharing Peace and well being of our fellowship

(Gathering of Prayer Concerns will take place at this time)

Pastor Larry Walter

Prelude O Come, All Ye Faithful Arr. Inness

Kayleen Yuda

CALL TO WORSHIP – Advent Reading Latai Loa, Malia Mattos, Swin Loa

Reader 1: Today is a day of love. For generations, Christians have used four candles to represent four great themes that rise from our faith in Jesus: hope, peace, joy, and love. We continue our Advent journey with love, because love never ends.

Everyone: During Advent, we decorate our homes and churches with nativity scenes because they remind us of that even in the rustic, smelly, unclean stables of our lives, love is there.

Reader 1: "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.

Everyone: Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres. Love never fails."

Hymn: # 165 Love came Down at Christmas verses 1 - 3

Reader 1: We light our fourth and final candle [light the final candle], to remind us to live love – patient, generous, forgiving, selfless love like that modeled for us by Jesus.

Prayer/ People: Holy God, lover of our souls, as our Advent pilgrimage draws to completion, grant us the courage to share your love – love for the unexpected challenge, love for the vulnerable ones, love for the presence of God. Amen.

* **Keiki Hymn:** #134 Silent Night verses 1 – 3

WE SHARE THE WORD OF GOD

Sharing with Children

Gloria Kobayashi

Anthem: In the Bleak Mid-Winter

Na Leo Ni'o Lani

WE RESPOND IN WORD AND DEED

Hymn # 135 O Come All Ye Faithful verses 1 – 4

(note: please remain seated as we enter our time of prayer)

The Prayers:

Call to Prayer:

Reader: The sacredness of the season now seeks to capture our hearts and minds. The Spirit of God speaks to us and touches us in the welcome reminder that soon we will once again proclaim the birth of the Lord of Life, the Prince of Peace. It is the Lord who comes with glad tidings into each generation. It is He who binds up our wounds, sets us free from oppression, comforts us and anoints us with gladness. In the quietness of prayer we affirm our faith and open our lives to the miracle and mystery of God.

Unison Sabbath Prayer

Eternal God, we give thanks that soon the miracle of Christmas will embrace us with the warmth of love, faith and expectation. We pray that in these days to come, as we look into the heavens, we shall see the light that has summoned all generations of your people to seek you. May our spirits soar with the angels, may our hearts be filled with peace, may our homes resound with glad tidings and, O Lord we pray, may our lives be renewed as we welcome the Christ once more. In thanksgiving for all that is of Christmas, we come to you in prayer. Heal us, forgive us, embrace us, renew our hope, O Lord.

Our Silent Prayers

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer {you are invited to offer this prayer in the words most familiar to you}

Prayer Response (in unison)

**Come, Thou long expected Jesus
Born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us,
Let us find our rest in Thee.
By Thine own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all sufficient merit,
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.**

Assurance of Pardon:

Reader: Be assured that the God who brings light into the darkness and who becomes known to us in our journeys of faith is the God who brings the light of love and hope into our hearts as we journey in faith through this sacred season. It is the light of God that reveals the Christ to us. Darkness cannot overcome this light.

***Gloria Patri**

Invitation to the Offering:

Reader: In the very depth of our faith we affirm that God provides us with every blessing in abundance. In our sharing of labor, love and faith we are able to do far more than we could ever imagine. In our celebration of the Birth of the Christ we proclaim to the world the unyielding love of God that nurtures, sustains and fills us with hope. Let us rejoice in the goodness of God with thanksgiving in our hearts

Offertory What Child is This Arr. Inness

Kayleen Yuda

Doxology: # 780 or # 781

Blessing and Consecration in Unison:

Eternal God of all light and hope, we ask your blessing upon these gifts of the fruit of our labor and the love of our hearts. We bring our gifts in thanksgiving for all the cherished joys of life which you bestow upon us in this Holy Season. We ask your continued blessing upon our lives that we might always be worthy of the gift of the Christ. Amen

***Hymn:** # 144 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing verses 1 - 3

***Benediction**

*** Choral Benediction Response:** # 580 O Kou Aloha No (Queen’s Prayer)

***Extinguishing Altar Candles**

Postlude Joy to the World -- Arr. John Ritter

Kayleen Yuda

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

Child Care: Lei Jack

Supply Minister: Pastor Larry Walter

Minister Emeritus: Susumu Yamane

Office Manager: Dennis Lin

Choir Director: Pedro Ka’awaloa

Organist: Kayleen Yuda

Choir Accompanist: Katherine Wilson

Childcare Coordinator: Evonne Shioshita

“E Komo Mai/Welcome

We're glad you're here! All are welcome at The Church of the Holy Cross (United Church of Christ)

MESSIAH SING-ALONG today at 3 p.m. in the sanctuary. Concert is free but donations accepted. Donations for food basket on non perishable food will be collected.

Activities

No Sunday School until January 5 - See you then!

MESSIAH SING-ALONG today at 3 p.m. in the sanctuary. Concert is free but donations accepted. Donations for food basket on non perishable food will be collected
IYAA Christmas Celebration – Wednesday December 25

Christmas Worship Wednesday Morning December 25 in BOF meeting room – Pohnpeian Congregation followed by the Chuukese Congregational Church

Next Sunday installation of church officers and boards for 2014.

Pastor Mary Olney-Loyd and her husband, Gary, will arrive on Friday January 3 at 5:19 on Hawaiian flight # 142. If you are able come to the airport to welcome her to Hilo.

Sunday January 5, communion with Reverend Buck preaching and our litany of welcome for our interim pastor Mary Olney-Loyd.

January 15, Pastor Mary's First day on staff.

January 19 Pastor Mary's first Sunday in the pulpit.