

CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST – CONGREGATIONAL
440 West Lanikaula Street, Hilo, Hawai`i
Service of Worship March 23, 2025
Third Sunday in Lent

Rev. Eric S. Anderson, Pastor
Rev. Dr. Diane Weible, Sabbatical Interim Pastor

WE GATHER TO WORSHIP GOD

Please note that audio and video of this service are being live streamed on the Internet and will be recorded. The right rear section of the sanctuary will not be captured by any cameras. Please be aware that in other sections you may be visible at times.

Prelude: Prelude on “Cleansing Fountain” Kayleen Yuda

Lighting of the Candles

Ringing of the Bell

Welcome Rev. Dr. Diane Weible

*** Call to Worship** Mace Peng

Leader: We’ve come to offer our praise to God, whose steadfast love is better than life.

People: Let our voices bless the Lord our God!

Leader: God is our help.

People: God shelters us; today we sing our joy.

Leader: We seek God, like desert plants seek water.

People: So we pray, praise, and proclaim the mighty power of God!

*** Hymn #43:** Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

*** Invocation** Mace Peng

Holy God, your steadfast love holds us, even in challenging times. Like a mother hen, you draw us close and cover us. May this hour provide us strength and courage to step out into the demands of our lives, confident that we do not go alone. Thank you for your Spirit, which abides with us, and for this congregation, which is one part of the Body of Christ. Amen.

Please be seated

WE SHARE THE WORD OF GOD

Anthem: Canon in D

Paul Arceo, trumpet
Andy Arceo, trumpet
Kayleen Yuda, pianist

Time with the Children

Rev. Dr. Diane Weible

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 Mace Peng

I do not want you to be unaware, brothers and sisters, that our ancestors were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, and all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ. Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them, and they were struck down in the wilderness.

Now these things occurred as examples for us, so that we might not desire evil as they did. Do not become idolaters as some of them did; as it is written, ‘The people sat down to eat and drink, and they rose up to play.’ We must not indulge in sexual immorality as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in a single day. We must not put Christ^[b] to the test, as some of them did, and were destroyed by serpents. And do not complain as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come. So if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall. No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

Luke 13:1-9

At that very time there were some present who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. He asked them, ‘Do you think that because these Galileans suffered in this way they were worse sinners than all other Galileans? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as they did. Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower of Siloam fell on them—do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others living in Jerusalem? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish just as they did.’ Then he told this parable: ‘A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and found none. So he said to the gardener, “See here! For three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree, and still I find none. Cut it down! Why should it be wasting the soil?” He replied, “Sir, let it alone for one more year, until I dig round it and put manure on it. If it bears fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.”’

Sermon: No One is Immune

Rev. Dr. Diane Weible

WE RESPOND IN WORD AND DEED

Pastoral Prayer

Rev. Dr. Diane Weible

Please join me in the Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever.
Amen**

* **Hymn #586:** Come to Tend God's Garden

Call to Offering

Mace Peng

As we come to our time of receiving all we are prepared to give, let us remember the appeal of the gardener: "Let me work with it for a year, and then decide." With your gifts today, may our work allow God's love to thrive like a well-cared for plant.

Offertory: According to Thy Gracious Word Kayleen Yuda

* **Doxology**

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow,
Praise Him all creatures here below
Praise Him above ye heavenly host
Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost - Amen**

* **Offertory Prayer**

Mace Peng

For all that has been given this day, we give you thanks, Generous God.
For the ways you are working with each of us through your Spirit, through this congregation, and through the parables of Jesus, thank you.
Receive these gifts and the commitments we make to share not only our treasure, but our time and our talents, as offerings of our lives.
In Jesus' name, Amen.

* **Hymn #423:** Great Is Your Faithfulness

Please be seated

Announcements

Rev. Dr. Diane Weible

Benediction

Rev. Dr. Diane Weible

Postlude: Come, Ye Faithful

* **Please stand if you are able.**

Permissions

Liturgical elements from **Worship Resources for the Center for Faith and Giving for Lent 3, March 23, 2025**,
<https://centerforfaithandgiving.org/2025/03/march-23-2025/>

Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
Charles Wesley, 1747, alt.
John Zundel, 1855
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Prelude on “Cleansing Fountain”
James Mansfield
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Canon in D
Johann Pachelbel
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Come to Tend God’s Garden
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Come, Ye Faithful
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Special Announcement

Easter lily sign up for Easter Sunday chapel decorations is located in the breezeway and are available for \$12.99 per plant. Please issue checks to Cynthia Debus; last day to order is today, Sunday, March 23rd.

Important Dates

Today, March 23 – J's Mini-Mart

Mondays, 11:30 a.m. –Pickleball lessons; contact Connie 808-936-7534 or Ruth 808-938-3858 to sign up.

Tuesday, March 25, 3 p.m. -- Bible Study, Pastor's Study and online:

- ◆ 2 Corinthians 5:16-21
- ◆ Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32

Wednesdays, 12 noon –Pickleball lessons; contact Connie 808-936-7534 or Ruth 808-938-3858 to sign up.

Wednesdays, 5-6:30 p.m. - Lenten Conversation Series in the Meeting Room

Other Faith Groups that meet at Church of the Holy Cross

- **The United Church of Christ, Pohnpei** – Sanctuary, 12 noon
Rev. Bensis Henry
- **Congregational Christian Church of American Samoa** – Sanctuary, 2:00 p.m.
Rev. Sitau Ofoia, Jr.
- **The Bedesta Church** – Sanctuary, 4 p.m.
Rev. Edmes Edwin

Lenten Conversation Series

We invite you to a Lenten Conversation Series to take place each week in Lent, from 5-6:30 p.m. in the Meeting Room. Each week you will find a prompt such as an article or video along with some reflection questions. When we gather we will use the prompt and questions as the starting part for a rich conversation with the goal of offering insight into our personal and communal lives together. Below is the prompt and questions for March 26. I look forward to seeing you at church!

March 26

Read:

Psalm 1

By Tim Ehrhardt

From Faith Forward's *Daily Lenten Devotionals: Anatomy of the Soul*

<https://www.faithward.org/daily-lent-devotions-based-on-the-psalms/>

Near my home is a small grove of oak trees. Every chance I get, I stroll through the little forest of majestic trees with their strong trunks, thick bark, and gnarled branches. I must confess that there are four particular trees that I talk to on a regular basis. I call them "Mama Oak," "Papa Oak," "Grandfather Oak," and "Elmer" ("Young Oak") because they stand together looking like a family. I speak to them for the primary reason that they are good listeners. I also speak to them because, as God's creation, I have this intuition that they can actually hear me.

In his book *The Hidden Life of Trees*, veteran forester Peter Wohlleben has written a winsome and fascinating account of what he has learned about trees. His primary thesis is that trees are social—they communicate with and care for each other. Trees planted by streams of water are not a group of individual trees. Rather, through their extensive root system in the ground, they share vital nutrients with each other when one of them is sick; send something akin to electrical impulses with one another to warn of danger; and take ownership of helping the entire forest grow together in health and strength. And they are not in a hurry. Their slow growth is deliberate and careful, a testament to their resilience and longevity. Wohlleben describes this intricate care and communication system as "the wood-wide web."

As we move through the season of Lent, we are not alone. We do not attempt to shed the old sinful nature by ourselves through sheer willpower. We assist one another. We depend upon the Holy Spirit through the Word of God. We embrace the slow, patient, and deliberate work of soul-craft as we anticipate meeting Jesus.

Questions:

- Who are the trees that surround you and help you when you need it?
- What does resilience look like to you and what are the resources that support a resilient life?
- *The Hidden Life of Trees* talks about the root systems of trees seek one another out, intertwine and help one another receive the nourishment each needs so there is always enough. And, says the author, when a tree dies, new sprouts grow at its base, carrying on that tree's life. How does this speak to you in this present moment?

Pastor
Interim Sabbatical Pastor

Rev. Eric S. Anderson
Rev. Dr. Diane Weible

Moderator	Stefan Tanouye
Lay Reader	Mace Peng
Organist/Pianist	Kayleen Yuda
Guest Trumpeter	Paul Arceo
Guest Trumpeter	Andy Arceo
Hand Bell Director	Anna Kennedy
Chapel Decorations	Beverly Dodo
Hymn Leader	Chandra Oshima
Sunday School Teacher	Gloria Kobayashi
Sunday School Aide	Johanna Narruhn
Projected Imagery	Sue Smith
Web Master	Ruth Niino-DuPonte
Videographers	Eric Tanouye, Eli Yamaki, Mace Peng Ruth Niino-DuPonte, Bob Smith

We welcome you to worship this day. Church of the Holy Cross seeks to help its members, friends, and visitors follow the guidance of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, encouraging all people to love one another according to the teachings of Jesus. We live and teach the faith, speak good news, minister to people near and far, and work with other households of faith and helping agencies to improve our community and our world. To learn more visit our website at holycrosshilo.com.



If you wish to donate to the church electronically, please scan this QR code.