



MĀNOA VALLEY
CHURCH

Mānoa Connection

Connecting our 'ohana

e-Newsletter

Date: May 20, 2020

● Message From Pastor Tom



Dear Members and Friends of Mānoa Valley Church,

Each church I have served has left an indelible mark on my heart and soul. This often happens, without our permission.

I am glad for this.

Pastor Tom Fujita Yes, there is a deep heartache when it is time to say “Good-bye” but it is also within this heartache there lives a deep abiding faith which says we will meet again, if not in this lifetime, then, in the life beyond our days. All of this comes out of my deep reflections of late as I realize this will probably be the last church I will serve as Pastor, and it will be good to end one’s career with Mānoa Valley Church, United Church of Christ.

And to add to this sadness, is the realization that we will not be able to say our good-byes in our church of such memories and beauty. It is a gorgeous edifice built in adoration of our God who gives us all that we need...most deeply felt in the human and divine presence reflected in each loving person of the church! This

beauty is seen in your praise band and choral voices, and in the care with which Sunday is presented with our best effort to be present to God in Christ Jesus and to each other. It was such a pleasure to work with your members, Moderator, Organist, Choir Director, worship leaders, office personnel, and Preschool Director. We seemed to be in harmony with each other.

Thank you for allowing me to be part of your family. It truly has been my honor to serve among you and to be so fully accepted! You are each such a blessing!

In prayerful thanksgiving for life, and for each of you!

PS: I have been asked to continue as your “Pastor on Call” until such time as Pastor Han is able to move to Hawaii (which is being delayed because of restricted travel). He will be giving the Sunday video messages from June onward.

● Moderator’s Message to Pastor Tom



Thank you, Pastor Tom! You have been my earthly rock during this period of transition without a full-time senior pastor at Mānoa Valley Church. I always knew I could call you whenever I needed to talk with someone. You were there to listen to me and offer support and I always felt better after our interactions, whether they were face to face, on email, or on the phone.

Dianne Ishida Thank you for your steadfastness! You were able to put me and everyone who met you at ease. This is one of your special abilities. Another is being able to convey your uplifting messages through your stories. I love your stories! You will always be in my heart and spirit. Thank you so much, Pastor Tom!



Links

[Online Donations](#)
[Lectionary](#)
[Thought For The Day](#)



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● Council and Committee News

The Council held its first Zoom meeting since MVC closed its doors. It was a lively discussion including Pastor Abe who joined us from Canada. Here is important news from the meeting.

► Although the State is beginning to relax stay at home requirements, there are still many concerns about how to implement governmental requirements to open our Church and child care programs. Vice-Moderator **Roger Au** is compiling a spreadsheet listing reopening guidelines from the government and reputable agencies to assist us in developing our procedures. The **Trustees** and **Child Care Committees** are meeting with staff to work on these procedures to ensure the health and safety of all. We will keep you posted about plans to open our doors to the community.

► Here's the latest update on **Pastor Han**. He and his family plan to arrive in Hawaii in late June or early July depending on the availability of flights. Although they will be in quarantine for the required period, Pastor Abe plans to provide sermons on our worship video, attend our various meetings on Zoom, and be available for pastoral support. He has already participated in various Zoom meetings so he can be prepared to join us in the summer.

► The **Worship Committee** will continue to provide online worship services until the Church reopens the sanctuary and procedures have been finalized. Other committees meet on Zoom to take care of needed business and plan for our reopening.

► We are not attending MVC for our weekly worship service, but our offerings and donations have remained strong. Many of you have been mailing in, dropping off, or using online PayPal to meet your pledge commitments and support MVC. Although we are closed, we must still pay our fixed costs and also our employees who are working at home. Your continued giving is vital to reopening MVC as soon as it is deemed safe. **Thank you for your faithful support!**



Pastor Abraham, Soo Miles and Rory

● Hurrah to the Worship Committee!

Committee members have been working as a team to bring the MVC worship services into our homes. *We want to recognize and thank the following people for their faithful service:*

- Coordinator/Editor **Ruth Komatsu** collects, edits, and compiles all the video segments of the worship service (Call to Worship, Children's Moments, Sharing Christ's Peace, Scripture reading, Sermon) that are sent in to her. Ruth also interfaces the music into the service, creates the different visual effects and types the subtitles.

- Each worship video is introduced with a letter by **Bette Uyeda**, which encourages you to take part in the service and leave with God at your side as you enter the new week.

- With the help of his wife Sachi, **Pastor Tom** records and submits his sermon, prayer and benediction for every service. They have comforted and motivated us every week.

- Music for the first six services was recorded by **Ruth Komatsu** and **Catherine Miyahira**, with **Roy Miyahira** adding brass instruments for Easter. **Ron Hashiro** and Praise Band members **Reggie Tamashiro**, **Lisa Miyamoto**, **Roger Au**, **Neil Okuna**, **Shayna Doi** and **Ruth Komatsu** have been contributing to the effort since then. What would our service be without the power of music!

- Researcher **Dawn Hamada** selects the appropriate Call to Worship and prayer for the service based on the Scripture.

- **David Hirao**, **Les Miyamoto**, **Inga Park Okuna**, and **Sue Yamamoto** alternate and serve as worship leaders. Inga also recruits people for Sharing of Christ's Peace videos.

- Our service is not complete without our Children's Moments creatively offered by **Sam Browning**, **Kristen Kawachi**, and **Inga Park Okuna**. They reinforce the Pastor's sermon with their message.

- Reading the Scripture is carried out by a group of 25 youth and adults who rotate the responsibility of bringing God's word into the worship service.

- Transcribers **Karen Hamada** and **Susan Shiraki** perform the important job of listening to and transcribing the sermon for all video sections. Then subtitles are posted so you can read as well as listen to what is said.



**MVC'S
ALL STAR TEAM**

- To verify the accuracy of the subtitles **Richelle Fujioka, Catherine Miyahira, Susan Shiraki, and Bette Uyeda** proofread the draft of the script for accuracy and clarity.
- Finally, to email the worship videos to our MVC family and post it on our website and social media sites, we rely on **Catherine and Roy Miyahira**.

As you can see, there are many moving parts to creating our weekly worship videos. Kudos and thanks to this team of dedicated volunteers. *We are each a part of the body of Christ, working together in one Spirit!*

● We Value our Health Care Workers



Sue Yamamoto continues to report daily to work at Shriners Hospitals for Children Honolulu and has come to the forefront in her job as coordinator of telehealth services. Since the COVID-19 shutdown, teleconferencing with doctors has become very popular with patients and healthcare providers alike. While telehealth has been around for over 20 years, the pandemic has propelled the practice forward, keeping Sue very busy! “It has

been wonderful to be able to bring virtual care to our pediatric patients and to reassure their parents during this fearful time. Shriners Hospital, like many places, is opening up again in a careful, safe manner for surgical and clinic patients but telehealth is here to stay.” For more information, check out the Pacific Basin Telehealth Resource Center at this [Link](#) or just ask Sue!

During the pandemic, **Dorothy (Dot) Endo** is putting her years of experience as a registered nurse to good use at an assisted living facility where she takes care of the elderly residents by monitoring their vital signs and tending to those with Alzheimer’s Disease. While this is a far cry from her previous stints in the ER, ICU and anesthesia recovery unit, she is an asset to the facility, especially during these difficult times. As with all senior care homes, they have instituted strict rules for social distancing.



As part of his duty in the Air Force Reserves, Dr. **Nathan Kwon** was called up to provide medical support for the people in New York, which suffered the largest number of COVID-19 cases and deaths. He’s working as an Emergency Room physician at Lincoln Hospital, located in the Bronx. Nathan says that he’s grateful for all the prayers and support he’s received while on this mission.

● Caring for the Homeless



An abundant amount of food for residents of Next Step Shelter in Kaka’ako was delivered on Sunday, May 17th by members of the Missions Committee, which includes **David Hirao** (chair), **Inga Park-Okuna, Kathy Lee, and Sue Yamamoto**. Accompanying them were **Karina and Neil Okuna**. A special thank you to all who donated and delivered the food!



● Life during the pandemic

► Since they can’t travel right now, **Alan and Diane Ito** have discovered a unique way to connect with family members on the mainland. Every Saturday they gather at their computers and other devices to play Trivial Pursuit and other board games, enjoy good food, laugh, and talk story. They use an application called House Party, which offers party games that we’ve played in person that we can now play long distance. It’s a wonderful way to interact with family and friends although far apart.

► **Alisa and Roger Au** have literally been getting back to their roots while they’re staying at home. They are spending time in their garden, nurturing their plants. Their efforts have been rewarded because they now have fresh spinach, watercress, sage, mint, and basil to use in their cooking. They also enjoy the beauty and fragrance of their roses and gardenias.

►While sheltering at home, **Shirley Murakami** has been busy trying different recipes. Here's one she says is easy to make and very tasty.

Hamburger Macaroni Casserole from the Hawaiian Electric Cookbook

- 1) Brown 1 lb of hamburger with ½ cup of chopped onions (you can also add similar amounts of bell peppers and celery).
- 2) Add one can each of cream corn, tomato soup, and cream of mushroom soup and then season with 2 Tb ketchup, 2 Tb mayo, 1 tsp sugar, and salt and pepper to taste.
- 3) Bring to a boil and simmer for 5 minutes.
- 4) Remove from heat and mix in 8 oz of cooked macaroni.
- 5) Pour into 9x13 pan, top with cheddar or other cheese and bake for 30 minutes at 350 degrees. *Then sit back and enjoy!*



● “Together, We Grow Stronger”

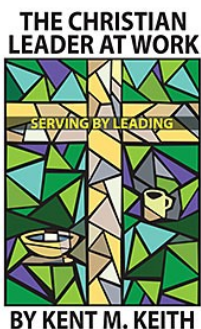


Please note that there is currently an opportunity to support the United Church of Christ, both locally and nationally. Money received from **Strengthen the Church Offering**, according to the HCUCC newsletter, “is split evenly between the Hawai’i Conference and UCC national ministries, and largely supports youth ministries and invests in new ministries and practices that meet the emerging needs of local congregations.” Consider donating by writing a check to Manoa Valley Church and on the memo line of your check write “Strengthen the Church”. Mail in your check or drop it in the mail slot near the glass entry door to the gym by June 1st.

● Cancellations:

The produce box giveaway scheduled for May 23 at Church of the Crossroads has been cancelled. Thank you to those who stepped up to offer their help.

● Servant Leadership Series:



Being in charge of a committee, class, family, or group can be challenging. Many people refrain from accepting positions of authority because of doubts, inexperience, or fears. However, consider taking a fresh look at leadership with **Kent Keith**. His weekly video and discussion on servant leadership offers thought-provoking ideas and Biblical references on the topic. Twelve people gathered for the first session and found it very helpful! You are invited to join the video meeting every Wednesday at 7:00 pm. Email Kent at drkentkeith@hotmail.com for more information and to receive the meeting link.

● MVC Book Club:

Their current selection is the bestseller [This Tender Land by William Kent Krueger](#) which is available on Kindle and other apps. It is about four orphans who flee an oppressive school and make their way during the hardships of the Great Depression. The Zoom meeting to discuss it will be held May 31 at 11:00 a.m. If interested, please email Dianne at dianne.ishida@gmail.com or call her at (808) 425-1729.

