



MĀNOA VALLEY  
CHURCH

# Mānoa Connection

*Connecting our 'ohana*

e-Newsletter

Date: July 7, 2021

## ● Pastor Abe's Message

Dear Mānoa Valley Church,



You may know that our church has been actively engaged in a strategic planning process to discern God's will for our congregation in this next season. An integral part of this process has been providing opportunities for people to share their thoughts, ideas, and input with us. Though there are many important voices that we have heard, we have focused on three primary groups that impact our future: the MVC congregation, the MVC leadership, and the Mānoa Valley community. This, of course, is in the larger context of seeking the main voice our community longs to listen to—voice of the Triune God.

Three main sources of information and data in this process include:

- a congregational survey (administered at the end of 2020 - 57 participants),
- notes from discussions that occurred amongst MVC leaders during the 2021 MVC Leadership Retreat (January 2021 - 25+ participants),
- and a community needs assessment survey of Mānoa Valley and beyond (administered by The Mānoa Stakeholders and SMS Consulting - 1300+ participants).

The hope is that this information will help our congregation listen and become more informed in at least the following areas:

- **The Church Community** - Who is Mānoa Valley Church? Who are the people who make up our congregation? What do we see God doing in our community?
- **The Community of Mānoa Valley and Our Neighborhood** - Who are the people in our neighborhood? What are their needs?
- **MVC's Missional Call** - Where does Mānoa Valley Church's deep gladness intersect with the world's deep hunger? (Frederick Buechner)



**Open forum**  
**Wed. 7/21**

The data collected has been compiled into a final assessment report that is now available to the MVC congregation. On behalf of the MVC leadership, I would like to invite you to read and reflect on [this report](#) and join us on Wednesday, July 21 for an open forum via Zoom video conference call. Through prayer, discussion, and dependence on the Holy Spirit, we will review and reflect on the information from this report to help inform our

ongoing Strategic Planning Process. We will be exploring key elements of Mānoa Valley Church (e.g. identity, purpose, mission, vision, values) and how they impact our church and its future direction and call.



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We have faith and hope that God will speak to us during our time together. As we listen, share, and learn from one another, we hope to be better informed about the context Jesus has called us into in this season, so that people would encounter Jesus Christ, experience His love, and grow in their relationship with Him through Mānoa Valley Church.

What an exciting time and season in the life of Mānoa Valley Church. Thank you for considering this request and for all for your participation and prayer through this process.

## ● Be Prepared: Hurricane Season is Here

Hurricane season in Hawaii lasts through November 30<sup>th</sup>. Although the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration predicts a 'near-or-below-normal' hurricane season, advance preparation will give us peace of mind and safety should disaster strike.



Proverbs 21:20 The wise store up choice food and olive oil, but fools gulp theirs down.

Now is the time to review your personal preparations highlighted in two previous newsletters [e-newsletterfinal-8-26-2020.pdf \(manoavalleychurch.org\)](#) and [e-newsletter-9-16-20-final.pdf \(manoavalleychurch.org\)](#)

- Prepare a Go-Kit with important items and documents. Keep a minimum of one gallon per person per day of water.
- Additionally, you need water for cleaning, bathing, and sanitation. A simple method is to use a stopper in your bath tub or laundry sink.
- Keep a three day supply of non-perishable food that does not need preparation.

Please also check our [“Are You Prepared for a Disaster?”](#) page on the church website.

## ● News from the Council



Despite the limitations the pandemic has placed on the Church, our ministry is alive and well. Here's the latest news as reported at our Council meeting held on June 21.

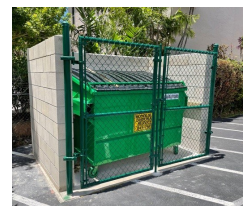
- The *Missions Committee* has provided lunches twice this year for needy families in the Next Step Shelter program. In August we will be offering meals to families in the Family Promise program who are in need of housing. See page 4 for more information. The Committee and

the Council also approved a gift of \$10,000 from our Pandemic Relief Fund to assist families in the Family Promise program.

- The *Worship Committee* is working on improving and upgrading our AV system for our worship services. They recently met with consultants to discuss this project.
- The *Child Care and Christian Education Committees* are discussing the possibility of integrating our child care programs (Preschool and After School Care) with our Sunday School program. A lot of dialogue and research must happen but the process has started. The committees are working on a summer project, involving children in our Church families and those in our Child Care families, which centers on the message of being thankful to God for our many blessings.
- The *Nominations Committee* is on the move to fill many positions on our Church Council and Committees that will be available next year. God calls each of us to serve in some way. Contact **Sam Browning** at [mrsammyjb@gmail.com](mailto:mrsammyjb@gmail.com) if you feel God calling you.
- Good news from the *Deacons Committee*! All current members have offered to continue their positions for next year.
- The *Communication Committee* welcomes ideas and stories from our members and friends for the e-Newsletter, which is published once a month. Contact **Richelle Fujioka** at [rfujioka@punahou.edu](mailto:rfujioka@punahou.edu) for more information.
- The *Trustees* are busy keeping our buildings and grounds safe. For information on their latest projects, check out the story on pages 2 and 3.

## ● Trustees Report

At long last a four-year project has been completed. A trash enclosure has been constructed in the parking lot enabling the church to use a trash bin which will be serviced weekly by Honolulu Disposal Service. This service will start on Wednesday, July 7<sup>th</sup>.



The Reserve Study originally scheduled the repair of the Preschool roof for 2024. Due to concerns of excessive rainwater ponding on the walkway leading into the classrooms, the work has been moved up. The existing roofing material will be removed and a new design will direct the flow of the water toward larger drains. If materials can be obtained, the work will be done July 21-31.

The sanctuary will be fumigated for termites July 29-30. Due to safety concerns, the entire church campus will be closed.

## ● Keiki Enjoy Our Summer Fun Program

Children enrolled in our Summer Fun program don't have a chance to get bored. Director **Trisha Honda**, along with her 6 leaders and 8 junior leaders, has planned an exciting summer for the 55 children taking part in this year's program. After a somewhat confusing year of dealing with the pandemic, the keiki are enjoying activities such as cooking, art classes, crafts, table games, and blowing bubbles outside on the playground. Later this summer the keiki will have a guest speaker from the Hawaiian Humane Society to talk about caring for animals. To show their support of the animals the children are donating old towels to the HHS. They are also collecting canned goods to share with the food pantry at St Pius Church in Manoa for those in need.

Oh, these are the wonderful days of summer that provide a needed break from school and a time to have fun, try different activities, and make new friends. Take a look at these pictures and see what the children are doing to enjoy their summer at MVC.

MVC member **Cat Iwami** shares her knowledge of art with the children as she guides them through a drawing lesson.



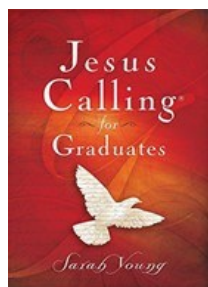
Who doesn't remember the joy of blowing bubbles when we were kids? We don't need high tech devices to enjoy ourselves!



Children learn the fun of making bread as well as how to follow recipes and understand measurements. It's a learning experience with a yummy reward at the end.

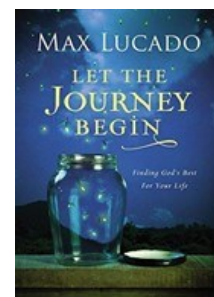


## ● MVC Gives Meaningful Gifts to Graduates



In our past e-Newsletter dated June 2, MVC's high school and college graduates were featured. As a follow up, the Christian Education Committee deemed it important that members know that the graduates were given very special gifts. Besides a heartfelt prayer composed by youth teacher **Kel Hamada**, high school graduates received the book *Jesus Calling for Graduates* with Scripture references by Sarah Young and college graduates received *Let the Journey Begin: Finding God's Best for your Life* by Max Lucado. In addition to the books, grads received a pen that a church member handcrafted using olive wood

from Bethlehem. We hope these items will remind our youngsters of God's love and the support of their church family wherever they may be.





## ● Preschool News



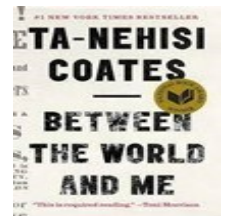
Congratulations to the 2021 graduating class of Mānoa Valley Church Preschool. Their final day is July 16<sup>th</sup>. We wish them many happy moments and lots of learning as they move on to kindergarten.



Appreciative students surround Ms. Chris Ching on her last day as a teacher at Mānoa Valley Church Preschool. She will be greatly missed!

## ● Book Club Selection

The MVC Book Club has selected *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates, a short work that presents a father's honest conversation with his son about what he will face growing up as a black person in America. This book won the 2015 National Book Award for nonfiction and was a finalist for the 2016 Pulitzer Prize for general non-fiction. It reveals the complexity and depth of issues concerning race, providing important insight during this time of Black Lives Matter. The meeting to discuss this work will be Sunday, July 25<sup>th</sup> at noon. Please email **Dianne Ishida** at [dianne@hawaii.edu](mailto:dianne@hawaii.edu) to receive the Zoom link.



## ● Feed the Hungry: Family Promise Dinners in August



Jesus instructed us to feed the hungry and we have taken that to heart. MVC has had the privilege of sharing Jesus' love and care, especially with those who have been houseless. On Monday, August 2 and Wednesday, August 4, 2021 we will once again be providing dinners to the families in the Family Promise Program. MVC has partnered with this organization for several years to support families transitioning out of houselessness. Due to the pandemic, they no longer stay at the church, but instead temporarily live in a dormitory type of hotel. This means more children have a safe living situation and more families are able to find long term housing. It's exciting that MVC is a part of this community service!

We are asking those who are able to share a dish, multiple dishes, fruits, veggies, or even an entire meal, to please sign up using the links below. The number of guests can change quickly as families find housing or new families move in, so please recheck the sign up list prior to preparing your food. Pack your food in baggies or containers and label them with the matching room number. The families have microwaves and rice cookers so we are only providing the main dish, veggies, fruit and dessert (optional). Families can warm up their meals so you can pack the food cold if that's more convenient.

Monday 8/2 [LINK](#)

Wednesday 8/4 [LINK](#)

Thank you all for sharing God's and MVC's radical hospitality!  
Questions? Need help signing up. Contact [lngapark@mac.com](mailto:lngapark@mac.com)

## ● All in the 'Ohana

Look at who is now a regular attendee at in-person worship! **Aunty Jane Nakabayashi** is shown in this photo taken May 30th with her daughter Anne and Worship Committee volunteers **Karen Hamada** and **Susan Shiraki**. It's so nice to see our centenarian returning to the place that brings her an abiding sense of peace and joy. She is an inspiration to us all.



Rejoice! Not only does this message greet participants as they enter the sanctuary, but it also reflects the jubilation felt by **Ruth Komatsu** that our church is open for worship and also that she is newly-retired after her many years of teaching music at Kalihi Kai Elementary. Congratulations, Ruth! She received a wonderful gift from her students in a video which you can view if you click [HERE](#).

**Karina Park Okuna** is still hard at work collecting HI-5 recyclable beverage containers on the last Sunday of each month, immediately following worship service. The money raised goes to support MVC's outreach programs with Next Step Shelter and Family Promise. She asks that the items are rinsed out and that cans, bottles and glass are bagged separately. Thank you!



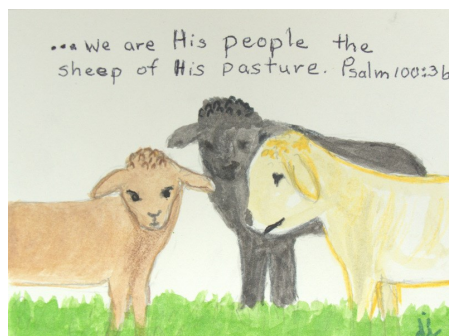
## ● MVC Gallery—Art Connection Members share their artwork

"This is such an inspiring group. We have been meeting continuously since November 2020 as a means of connecting with each other during the pandemic. I truly enjoy our time together. I am amazed at everyone's weekly commitment to learn and grow through the arts. I believe it has brought us closer together as members of MVC. We've created these greeting cards using inspirational scriptures which are close to our hearts; enjoy."

Cat Iwami, leader of Art Connection Group



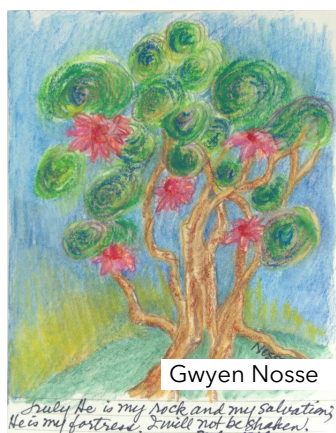
Melanie Ching



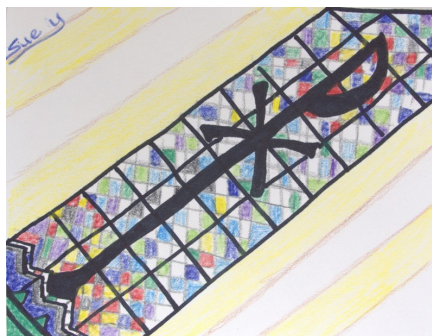
Dianne Ishida



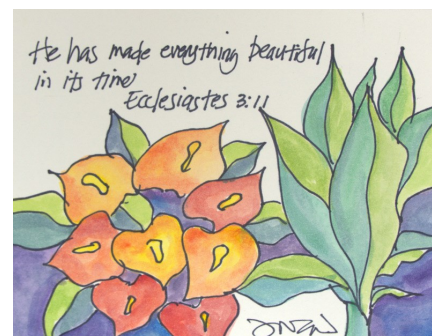
Inga Park Okuna



Gwyen Nosse



Sue Yamamoto



Cat Iwami