

Focus

Glorifying God through our D.A.Y.S.
(Discipleship, the Arts, Young People and Service)

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF HONOLULU | 1020 S. BERETANIA STREET, HONOLULU, HAWAII 96814
SEPTEMBER 2021 – VOLUME LXVIII, ISSUE 9



Volunteers Needed

Mondays and/or Thursdays
1:30 – 4:15 p.m.

The Food Bank needs your help!

Some of our volunteers have gone back to school so we are looking for people to help us in feeding the hungry in our neighborhood. Those interested in a scholarship for next year, your service at the foodbank can help you get a larger scholarship from the church!

No experience necessary! If you would like to volunteer, please contact
kim@firstumchonolulu.org.

Church Events

- ⊕ September 6 – HOLIDAY Facilities, Office and Foodbank CLOSED
- ⊕ September 8th – UMW English Circle at 11:30 a.m.
- ⊕ September 21st – UMW Tongan Circle at 7:30 p.m.
- ⊕ September 29 – College Prep Class at 6:30 p.m. for High School Seniors and College Students

Ministry Musings



Pastor Tom
Choi

PC: Aloha Images & Design

Dear FUMC 'Ohana:

As summer moves into autumn this month, many mark this transition not by the celestial marker of the autumnal equinox (September 22 this year, when the Sun passes the imaginary line extended by the equator and day and night are roughly the same), but by Labor Day - this year it falls on September 6. Originally a celebration and acknowledgement of the labor movement in America in the 19th century, many will have the final barbecues and picnics before colder weather sets in (in Hawaii, of course, we aren't held to that).

This Labor Day, let us also remember the workers who have labored hard and long, often under trying and exhausting conditions. Special acknowledgement is due to the health care workers who are working overtime during this spike in COVID cases. Your work is not unnoticed and we thank you so much for your efforts and service beyond self.

I am reminded of Jesus's words from Matthew 11: 28-30 (NRSV): "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

May all of us experience the comfort and recreation that Christ offers.

COVID RESTRICTIONS AND APPEAL

We are experiencing an alarming spike in COVID cases, due to two primary factors: the Delta Variant; and the approximately 40% or more of the population who have not been vaccinated. As a result, our First UMC Sunday worship services will remain online until further notice (check our website - firstumchonolulu.org - for updates).

With the FDA fully approving the Pfizer vaccine, there is no longer any good reason to refuse immunization. This is our best hope to get control of the pandemic. I urge and plead with you to get the vaccine if you haven't gotten it in addition to masking and socially distancing. It will not only be a blessing to you, but will be a blessing to others.

RIP - BISHOP BEVERLY SHAMANA AND JEFF SWENSON

It is with sadness and gratitude that I share the passing of two special people connected to our Cal-Pac Conference. Bishop Beverly Shamana was a pastor in our annual conference and served several churches and as a conference staff-person before being elected bishop and serving the California-Nevada Conference. I will always remember her for her passion and commitment to justice issues as well as her wonderful musical gifts. Jeff Swenson was the beloved spouse of Bishop Mary Ann Swenson, our bishop from 2000-2012. Jeff was a unique and wonderful soul who absolutely loved Hawaii and nearly always accompanied Bishop Mary Ann on visits to the islands. They both will be missed. As we say in the church, "absent from our midst, present with the Lord."

Grace and aloha,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pastor Tom". The signature is written in black ink on a white rectangular background.

Kim's Korner



Pastor Kim Houff,
Minister of
Discipleship and
Community
Engagement

We are blessed to be a blessing to others, and during the COVID-19 pandemic our church continues to bless others through food. While we had to shut down our Pancakes and Praise service, the Pancakes and Praise meal lives on. Kuenilingi Maka and her crew arrive early on Sunday morning to prepare about eighty meals for the housing challenged in our community. The meals are packaged so that the recipients can grab them and go. They receive a hearty "Good morning!" and a "God bless you" with their meal.



Our foodbank remains open as well, but we have made many changes. The foodbank is open on Mondays and Thursdays from 2-4 PM. The bags are packed upstairs and given out through the gate by the sanctuary. In the past year, we have served an average of 243 households/month which are comprised of an average of 361 adults/month and 243 children/month. Those working the foodbank join before each opening to pray that the food received will be a blessing to each person.

Finally, we provide meals for Family Promise families who are housed in a hotel/dormitory space due to the pandemic. Several members of the congregation and friends of FUMC have prepared meals. Some have gotten hooked on it and sign up for their own slots to provide meals! If you are interested in volunteering for any of these ministries, please contact me at kim@firstumchonolulu.org or call the office at 808-522-9555. You will be blessed in ways you can never imagine! As Proverbs 22:9 says, "The generous will themselves be blessed, for they share their food with the poor."



Sanctuary Renovations

Snapshots into the Sanctuary during the month of August





Sermons for 10 a.m. Online Worship Service on Facebook Live

September 5

“The Church Building,” Pastor Tom Choi preaches in part on the architecture of First UMC sanctuary designer Alfred Preis. Virtual Holy Communion will be celebrated.

September 12

Pastor Tom Choi preaches the sermon “How Will They Know If I’m Dead?”

September 19

Pastor Tom Choi preaches the sermon “Gideon and Samson – to and from God – and Back Again”

September 26

Pastor Tom Choi preaches “How to Forgive (and Be Forgiven)”

Our worship service can also be viewed from our Facebook page or webpage – firstumchonolulu.org and on YouTube. Or if you prefer a printed copy of the worship script, please call 808-522-9555 or email office@firstumchonolulu.org to request one be mailed to you.

DISCIPLESHIP



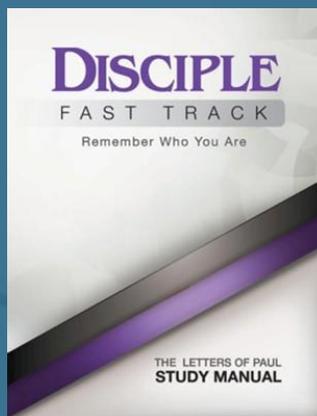
Sunday Bible Study

*Sundays, Following 10:00 AM worship
In person and via Zoom*

Our “The Wired Word” current events Bible study has already generated wide-ranging conversation from mental health to a modern-day Jonah story. All are welcome to join us for this study.

Articles are emailed on Thursday or Friday for Sunday’s discussion.

Please email Kim@firstumchonolulu.org for more information, to register, or to get the Zoom link.



Disciple Bible Study

*Sundays, September 5 –
November 21
8:30 – 9:45 a.m.*

All are welcome to join us in person or via Zoom for our final Disciple Fast Track study: The Letters of Paul. We look forward to a wonderful 12 weeks of delving into Paul’s letters. Books may be picked up in the church office. The first week of lessons starts on August 30. Email Kim@firstumchonolulu.org for more information or to arrange to pick up the book.



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

All women are invited to UMW meetings. The English Circle will meet on **Wednesday, September 8 at 11:30 a.m.** via Zoom. Pastor Kim will lead the program “*Nehemiah’s Party*.” Wear your party clothes and decorate your space for our virtual party! If you would like to join the party, please contact Pastor Kim at kim@firstumchonolulu.org to get the Zoom link.

The Tongan Circle will meet on **Tuesday, September 21 at 7:30 p.m.** via Zoom. Please contact Tupou Seini Kelemeni to get the invitation to the meeting.

The ARTS

ADVENT-CHRISTMAS DEVOTIONAL

I can't believe it is time to write our Advent-Christmas Devotional. Let your creativity loose by writing a devotional, crafting a poem, or drawing a picture related to the scripture for the day. We start this early so that we have plenty of time to translate in English and Tongan. To sign up for a day or for more information, email Pastor Kim at kim@firstumchonolulu.org or call her at 210-837-3313.



Keiki Sign Dance Class via Zoom

Wednesday, September 15 – November 24
5:00-6:00 p.m.

This FREE dance class is open to all K-6 graders. We will use American Sign Language signs put to music to tell a story. It is a fun and creative way to learn a new language as well as express ourselves through dance! We will be learning a Christmas song that can be shared with your loved ones.

Our instructor, Sandi Brekke, has been dancing Creative Sign for over 21 years. She has taught Keiki Sign Dance classes for the past 4 years.

To register and get the Zoom invite, email the office at office@firstumchonolulu.org.



YOUNG PEOPLE

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS

Our youth and young adults once again shared their God given gifts and presented a terrific worship service last week for our Young People's Sunday. We were so proud of them as they all shined the light of Jesus through their individual creative ways. I just love to see how God uses anyone right where they are to lift up His name and draw others to Him.

Through the years we have seen them grow in ways that have inspired and encouraged others. As we share each week, I never cease to be in awe of their wisdom which they continue to gain through reading God's Word. Please pray for them as they all begin new chapters in their lives.

Mark Brekke
Director of Youth

College Prep Class

Wednesday, September 29
6:30 – 8:30 p.m. via Zoom



Calling all high school seniors and college students looking for financial aid for college!

Join us for this FREE College Prep Class where we will focus on the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) application. We will learn what are the new requirements, eligibility, and any other changes to the application process. Remember FAFSA acceptance starts Oct. 1 and the sooner you submit your application the better.

To register for this free class call 808-522-9555 or email office@firstumchonolulu.org.



Kids Church

Sundays, 9-9:30 a.m. via Zoom



All children in K-6 grade are welcome to join us as we continue our series called "BUGS: Little Things Make a Big Difference". Love them or hate them, bugs are a part of God's creation. As small as they are, these little things can give us some direction on how to live a life that glorifies God. This series will help kids make baby steps to grow in their faith!

September 5: Grasshopper

Objective: Kids will state how they will get away when they are tempted to sin.

September 12: Roly Poly

Objective: Kids will state one fear they have that they want to give to Jesus.

September 19: Praying Mantis

Objective: Kids will make a plan to spend time praying every day.

September 26: Mosquito

Objective: Kids will choose one sinful habit they want to get rid of.

Email Office@firstumchonolulu.org to receive the Zoom invitation and have the Kids Church packet of goodies mailed to your child.

SERVICE



AFGHAN REFUGEE SUPPORT

Some Afghan refugees will be coming to the United States. If you would like to support the relocation effort, you can give to the Church World Service Fund through your regular channel of giving: our website --

<https://firstumchonolulu.churchcenter.com/giving> (select **OTHERS**) or mail a check to the church at 1020 S. Beretania Street, Honolulu, HI 96814. Please note on the check that it is for **Advance #982540**.

BACKPACKS FOR PAROLEES

It is time to prepare backpacks for those being released from prison. We are collecting these new or gently used items:



- Shampoo & Conditioner
- Toothbrush & Toothpaste
- Bath Towel & Wash Cloth
- Disposable Razors
- Plastic Forks & Spoons
- Non-liquid Detergent
- Sheets, Pillow & Pillow Case
- Backpacks
- Hairbrush or Comb
- Toilet Paper
- Bar Soap
- Shaving Cream
- Water Bottles
- Antiseptic Cream
- Instant Coffee, Hot Cocoa, Cup Noodles
- Facial Tissue
- Band Aids
- Deodorant
- Body Lotion
- Nail Clippers
- Trail Mix Nuts
- Writing Tablet & Pen/Pencil

Please call the office at 808-522-9555 to make arrangements to drop off donations. Monetary donations are also welcomed, go to firstumchonolulu.org, click on GIVING and select BACKPACKS.



**First
United
Methodist
Church
of Honolulu**

1020 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-1492
(808) 522-9555 Fax (808)
528-3992



Please pray for Pastor Jomesh and his wife, Puja in Nepal as they both have COVID-19.

SEPTEMBER 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><i>All classes and Worship Services are held online.</i></p> <p><i>Check with committee chairs for online committee meeting times.</i></p>			1	2 2-4pm FoodBank	3	4
5 8:30am Pancakes and Praise Breakfast 9am Kids Church via Zoom 10am Online English Worship 11:00 am The Wired Word Study 11:00 Youth & Young Adults 12noon Online Tongan Worship	6 HOLIDAY Facilities and Office CLOSED Foodbank CLOSED	7	8 11:30am UMW English Circle (Zoom)	9 2-4pm FoodBank	10	11
12 8:30am Pancakes and Praise Breakfast 9am Kids Church via Zoom 10am Online English Worship 11:00 am The Wired Word Study 11:00 Youth & Young Adults 12noon Online Tongan Worship	13 2-4pm FoodBank 6:30pm Tongan Bible Study via Zoom	14	15 5-6pm Keiki Sign Dance	16 2-4pm FoodBank	17	18
19 8:30am Pancakes and Praise Breakfast 9am Kids Church via Zoom 10am Online English Worship 11:00 am The Wired Word Study 11:00 Youth & Young Adults 12noon Online Tongan Worship	20 2-4pm FoodBank 6:30pm Tongan Bible Study via Zoom	21 7:30pm UMW Tongan Circle (Zoom)	22 5-6pm Keiki Sign Dance	23 2-4pm FoodBank	24	25
26 8:30am Pancakes and Praise Breakfast 9am Kids Church via Zoom 10am Online English Worship 11:00 am The Wired Word Study 11:00 Youth & Young Adults 12noon Online Tongan Worship	27 2-4pm FoodBank 6:30pm Tongan Bible Study via Zoom	28	29 5-6pm Keiki Sign Dance 6:30-8:30pm College Prep Class	30 2-4pm FoodBank		



First United Methodist Church

1020 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-1492
(808) 522-9555 Fax (808) 528-3992
Website: www.firstumchonolulu.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Church Leaders & Staff

Pastors: The Rev. Dr. Tom Choi
The Rev. Dr. Linita 'U. Moa

Minister of Discipleship & Community Engagement:

Rev. Kim Houff

Office Manager: Sandi Brekke

Facilities Director: Paini Harris

Director of Youth: Mark Brekke

Director of Young People's Ministry:
Mele Pepa Latu

Choir Director: Tupou Seini Kelemen

Accompanist: Jason Eom

Finance Administrator: Ongo Koli

Custodians: Heamasi Koli, Pat Sheppard, Pongi Vehikite, Sia Lolohea

CONNECTIONAL LEADERS:

Resident Bishop:

Bishop Grant Hagiya

District Superintendent:

Rev. Moonyoung Lee



Mahalo First UMC!

Dear Friends,

Thank you!...And through your financial support **you** are serving within a vital web of interactive relationships, partnering to engage globally in direct ministry to people in need.

Together, may we continue to reveal the love of God for men, women, and children of all ethnic, racial, cultural, and national backgrounds and to demonstrate the healing power of the gospel with those who suffer.

Grace and Peace, Roland Fernandes, General

Check out our website: www.firstumchonolulu.org



Email: Office@Firstumchonolulu.org

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Instagram: [firstumchonolulu](https://www.instagram.com/firstumchonolulu)