

NU‘UANU CALLER

A monthly newsletter of Nu‘uanu Congregational Church
2651 Pali Highway * Honolulu, HI 96817



VOL. 65, NO. 12

DECEMBER 2022



Comes the Light

By Pastor Jeannie Thompson

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

John 1:1-9

Light and life.

This is the way the Gospel of John begins his story of Christ. He does not tell us about shepherds or angels. We do not get to travel with Joseph and Mary as they make their way in the jostling throng to Bethlehem. We are not asked to remember that Bethlehem means “house of bread,” an allusion to the notion that this child is going to feed his people in ways that are even now greater than our comprehension.

John even refuses to paint us a portrait of a baby lying in a manger—an image that tugs at our heart-strings and makes us want to shelter and nurture this child whose divinity somehow makes even a rough and dirty barn look beautiful and blessed.

Instead of any of this, John takes us back, even before the beginning of time. He takes us back to a place of formless void. In that place of nothingness a light shines through. Suddenly, we see. The shadows are lifted and God reveals God’s self. Further, we are made to “see” ourselves, and one another.

God’s revelation is that God is life, and that this life God brings is embedded in light.

All life—*our life*—is rooted in this light which is God. This light, this ability to “see,” is the ability, and God’s call, for us to observe, to understand, to meet, to visit, to imagine. All of these things are rooted in the light that God gives us that we might “see.”

We are also promised that the light God brings will not be overcome. Given the world we live in (and especially recent events) this is an especially important promise, one that I pray we will remember and hold close. I pray we will also remember the urgent mission this light has given us to carry out: we are to be like the first human being John mentions in his Gospel. We are to be like John the Baptist. Like John, we are called to “testify to this light.”

(cont’d on page 4 - Light)

Nu‘uanu Caller is a monthly publication of Nu‘uanu Congregational Church, founded in 1885 and organized in 1892 (United Church of Christ, a 1957 union of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Congregational Churches). Rev. Jeannie Thompson, *Pastor*; Mairi Manley, *Administrative Coordinator*; Nelson Fujinaga, *Custodian*; Le Huynh, *Groundskeeper & Security*.

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Light

cont'd from pg 1

As we journey through Advent, there will be a variety of opportunities to testify to the light and life of Christ. There will be song and prayer. There will be gestures of grace to receive and to offer. There will be time to ponder God's ways of "hope," "peace," "joy," and "love."

I pray that they will ignite in us a life-long desire to carry God's light, to bask in it and to share it with others.

May God give you and your family blessing-upon-blessing, this Christmas and always.

Grace and Peace, Jeannie

Family Promise - White Christmas

By Judy Keith

The Missions Committee will be collecting gift cards over Advent, as we have in recent years, which will be shared with various non-profits on the island. A collection box will be placed on the table at the entrance to the sanctuary for you to place your donations. Suggested locations for gift cards include places like Long's, Foodland, Ross, Target, and Walmart.

Our Thanksgiving meal drive was so successful that we were able to purchase a gift card for each of the three families currently living on campus. These were shared with the families at the Thanksgiving Eve dinner, so that the families could use them for Christmas shopping. Thank you for your continued generosity in support of the missions of NCC.

November 24, 2022

NOMINATIONS NEEDED!! WE NEED YOU!

With Thanksgiving already behind us much planning needs to be happening. **The Council needs volunteers for two important positions on Council 1) Secretary and 2) Board of Trustees Chair.**

Please contact Pastor Jeannie Thompson at # (808) 353-1387 or Laurie Hamano at (808) 256-0204 should you know of members of our congregation who have the talents for these positions and Laurie and or Pastor Jeannie will contact them.

Moderator's Desk

As I sit writing my column for the Caller, I believe that a "look back" at how our church has changed over the years is so important. In 2015 we completed the *New Beginnings* process where we looked at where our church wanted to be in the future. At that time, we met in family homes and at church in small groups and we concluded we wanted our church to be "missional".

The Council moved further and realized that bold steps were needed. The Strategic Plan was planned with a consultant in 2020, after many hours of research, discussions as well as meeting with community leaders despite COVID-19 on our heels. The Strategic Plan and Vision was born. Decision making occurred and the congregation again met and reviewed and approved the plan in 2021.

(Cont'd on pg 3)

NCC's Vision Statement

Nu‘uanu Congregational Church is a diverse, open congregation of faithful Christians who seek to:

- *affirm all persons as children of God;*
- *respond to the needs of the community and congregation;*
- *respect all views and ideas;*
- *make and nurture disciples; and*
- *spread God's word using our talents and resources.*

(Approved September 16, 2007 at the Special Congregational Meeting.)

Moderator's Desk

Cont'd from page 2

We researched and identified some serious concerns for this community that we have taken on as our mission such as homelessness, the need for preschools for the thousands of children, as well as our congregation's desire to provide a safe community resource and "gathering place" for our families and kupuna.

How have we taken these goals on paper and made it real?

1. Community Partnerships reinvented and created:

A. Family Promise Reinvention: With the help of the Board of Trustees creating a safe environment for the new families in need of emergency shelter, three rooms were prepared for use. Currently, 3 families are utilizing the rooms. **The Council has moved to continue this for another 6 months to a year and are currently working on a new contract. We are currently the only church working in partnership with Family Promise at this time with families living on campus.**

B. YMCA Updates: The Children Center will finally close their doors and as of November 28, 2022 as the **Kids Prep Preschool, Pali Site** has received the Department of Human Services licensing and will open for business.

This is a momentous time. We are the first off site preschool that will be run by the YMCA of Honolulu!!! Once again, NCC took the bold step and asked the YMCA to partner in the community with us.

Intersessions: The Holiday Intersession with the YMCA will occur from December 19 - 23 and December 27 - 30. These much-needed programs utilize our gym and provide programs to elementary school children in our community during their holiday breaks.

2. Capital Campaign

A. Ms. Jill White of the Church Building and Loan Fund (UCC) completed the Feasibility Study and the Council has unanimously approved moving forward with the Capital Campaign. A new task team has been formed with Pastor Neal MacPherson, Pastor Jane Ryan Kuroiwa and Pastor Jeannie Thompson to work on the process by which the Capital Campaign will take.

As we move forward through the holidays, please take a moment to thank our God for the many people who serve as our leadership at NCC and consider joining this bold and courageous leadership by volunteering. We need you. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all.

Sincerely and always with Faith,

Laurie Hamano, A Grateful Moderator

YMCA Winter Intersession

The YMCA will be having their Winter Day Camp at NCC. It will be held from December 19-23 and 27-30, 2022.

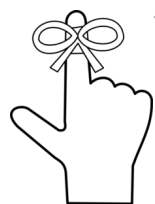
People may register their children for elementary & Middle school Students (K-8) at ymcahonolulu.org or call (808) 678-4296. They are offering 20% off youth programs, swim lessons, and more with a Y membership!

Give Aloha



Mahalo to all who participated in Foodland's Give Aloha Program! We received \$9,490.00 in customer donations and \$2,322.44 from Foodland and Western Union Foundation for a total of \$11,812.44. Your support is greatly appreciated! If you haven't already done so, please turn in your Foodland receipt so we may properly credit your giving statement. Mahalo!

2022 Contributions and 2023 Pledges



Just a reminder....in order for contributions to be credited for the 2022 tax year, they must be either mailed to the church with a USPS postmark not later than December 31, 2022, or received by the church office before 12:00 p.m. Friday, December 30, 2022. Contributions received after that will be credited to 2023.

Also, please remember to send your 2023 Pledge cards in to the office. You should have received your pledge cards in the mail. If you need another card, please contact Mairi at nuuanucongregational@gmail.com or (808) 595-3935

Planning for December services

As we patiently await the birth of the Christ Child, we will engage in a little merry making by observing the following Sundays:

- December 4 - School Pride Sunday - Wear your school colors and/or apparel - can be either high school or college.
- December 11 - Christmas Sweater Day - Wear your best/ugliest Christmas sweater. If you choose to wear your ugliest Christmas sweater, please make sure no one at church gave you that sweater!
- December 18 - Birthday Celebration - Wear bright colors - stay after service for cake, ice cream and soda floats. For those of us who are lactose intolerant, we'll just eat and run.
- December 25 - Christmas Day - Wear green, white and/or red

Hope you will join us each Sunday, whether you dress up or not, for this special Advent season!

Board of Christian Nurture

by Becky Kanenaka

As friends, members and family of Nuuanu Congregational Church prepare for the season of Advent, which begins Sunday, November 27 and ends Saturday, December 24, 2022. It's a season of candlelight, reflection, and expectation—a chance to get ready for Christmas and most importantly, the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ.

The Origins of Advent

Advent gets its name from *adventus*, the Latin word for “arrival.” As the Christian church solidified in the fifth century A.D., so did traditions around December 25. Historians have tracked the first formal Advent celebrations to northern Italy, where churchgoers observed a weeks-long preparation for Christmas that involved fasting, prayer, and reflection on Christian values.

Eventually, that preparation became known as Advent. By the sixth century, Christians in France celebrated a five-week “St. Martin’s Lent” that included fasts leading up to Christmas.

Advent is now considered the first season of the liturgical year, the church’s annual cycle of feast days and Scripture readings. Much like their ancestors, modern Christians see it as a season of preparation in honor of Christ.

Each Sunday has a traditional meaning and prayers and readings assigned to it; they represent, in order, the Christian virtues of love, joy, hope, and peace. For believers, Advent represents a multi-faceted period during which to prepare for the birth of Christ, celebrate faith in and conversion to Christianity, and anticipate the eventual resurrection of the son of God.

The Advent Wreath

Considered a season of light in the dark apex of winter, Advent is symbolized in the church by a candlelit evergreen wreath.

(Con'd on pg 7 - Advent)

NCC Database

We are currently updating the church database. Please help us update your personal file and return it to the church office. Please print legibly. Return to the office by December 16, 2022, either at church service on Sunday's, by mail, or email to nuuanucongregational@gmail.com. Mahalo.

Today's Date: _____

Household Mailing Name (i.e., Manley Family): _____

Household Address: _____

Phone: _____ Unlisted? Y/N

May we include your name, address, and phone in the church directory (unlisted phone numbers excluded)? Y/N

Adult #1

Title (Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr., etc.): _____

First Name: _____

Middle Name: _____

Last Name: _____ Suffix (Jr., Sr., II, etc.): _____

Preferred Name (Nickname): _____ Use Preferred Name on Reports: Y/N

Gender: _____ Birth Date: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

NCC Member: Y/N Membership Date: _____

Baptism Date: _____ Confirmation Date: _____

Marriage Date: _____ Marital Status: _____

Occupation/Profession: _____ Work Phone: _____

Skills/Interests: _____

Shut in: Y/N

(continue on other side)

Adult #2

Relationship: _____

Title (Mr., Mrs., Ms., Dr., etc.): _____

First Name: _____

Middle Name: _____

Last Name: _____ Suffix (Jr., Sr., II, etc.): _____

Preferred Name (Nickname): _____ Use Preferred Name on Reports: Y/N

Gender: _____ Birth Date: _____

Cell Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

NCC Member: Y/N Membership Date: _____

Baptism Date: _____ Confirmation Date: _____

Marriage Date: _____ Marital Status: _____

Occupation/Profession: _____ Work Phone: _____

Skills/Interests: _____

Shut in: Y/N

Children:	Birth Date:	Baptism Date:	Confirmation
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Date:

Advent

Cont'd from pg 4

In 1838 Johann Wichern, a German Lutheran pastor, began using this wreath to help his congregation count down the days until Christmas.

The modern Advent wreath has five candles. The first two and the fourth are purple, Advent's traditional color. The third candle is pink, representing the halfway point of Advent and the joy of the coming holiday.

Christians traditionally pray, sing, and light an additional candle on each Advent Sunday until all of the candles are lit on the fourth Sunday. A fifth, white candle known as the Christ candle sometimes sits unlit in the center of the wreath; it is only lit on Christmas Eve.

Members and friends of NCC may make their own advent wreaths on November 27, 2022 after worship on the friendship lanai.

Advent Calendars

Another German Advent tradition is the Advent calendar. During the 19th century, adults began helping children count down the days until Christmas. Beginning on December 1, some German Lutherans made chalk marks on doors in anticipation of the entry of the Christ child, and other parents created homemade ways to count down involving snacks and Bible verses.

In 1908 German printer Gerhard Lang produced the first printed Advent calendar. In his childhood, his mother had handcrafted a calendar with cardboard doors and candy inside. Lang adapted the idea for the printing press, and his wares became extremely popular in Germany. But World War II-related shortages and Nazi Germany's secular rebranding of Christmas almost killed off the printed Advent calendar.

After the war, another German printer, Richard Sellmer, obtained permission from American occupying forces to print a 1946

Advent calendar. He used his contacts with Americans to introduce the Advent calendar in the United States, and with the help of President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who was photographed opening one with his grandchildren in 1953, they became increasingly popular in the U.S.

Even though Advent technically begins in late November, modern Advent calendars typically start on December 1 and have small doors or boxes containing pictures, trinkets, or food like chocolate to be opened and consumed in the lead-up to Christmas. Retailers have invested big in the Advent calendar game, and consumers can choose Advent calendars centered around beauty, popular characters, or even consumption.

The Sunday school children created their own Advent calendars. Each day in December, they will hang a sock filled with a scripture and a little surprise. The children will gather all the empty socks after Christmas and donate the pairs of socks to people who need socks.

In addition to the Advent calendars and wreaths, to help everyone prepare for the Advent season, December 4, 2022, people will be able to write Christmas cards to family and friends who no longer are able to worship with us in the sanctuary; December 11, 2022, the Sunday School children will be making Christmons; and December 18, 2022, the Sunday School children will be making Gingerbread houses. All the activities will be right after worship on the Friendship Lanai.

2022 Pictures for Annual Report

by Mairi Manley

If you have any pictures of church events throughout the year, Please give them to Darwin Ing by December 18.

The pictures will be used for this year's annual report cover and collage. Mahalo in advance!



Ohana Ministry

By Mae Au

If there are needs that Ohana Ministry can help you with, call one of the coordinators:

Ohana Ministry Coordinators

*Mae Au, 988-4802
Marge Honjiyo, 550-3075
Mary Ann Saito, 839-0895
Joyce Uyehara, 523-3483
Sybil Seto, 550-3068
Lori Yamashiro, 292-5249*

When you pray, remember the following and their caregivers: Kimiko Bristow-Canfield, Marcia Grimsley, Carol Hamada, Preston Iha,

Howard Ishihara, Leslie Lum, Craig Oshiro, Matthew Stucke, Lurline Matsumoto (sister of Masa Tabe), Rick Au, Stephen Crosier, Fay Matsuura (Friend of Clifford Lum), Barbara Pierce, Ray Miyamoto, Cindy Taketa.

Reminder: Names are added or deleted in the Prayer Corner by individuals, family members or friends. Please inform the Ohana Ministry coordinators if you want your name included or deleted in the Prayer Corner.

Prayer Corner

By Mary Ann Saito

Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger because there was no place for them in the inn. Luke 2:4-8

Dear God, in this Advent season of preparation and anticipation of the celebration of Jesus Christ's birth, we thank you for your most precious gift to us. As we traditionally make advent wreaths, light advent candles and check off days on advent calendars help us to remember the true meaning of Christmas. We look forward to celebrating this season together at NCC and pray that you will continue to watch over those who are unable to attend our worship services. Help us to live with hope, love, joy and peace throughout the Advent season and into the new year. Amen.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!



Special Gifts

Give thanks to God whose steadfast love endures forever!

Memorial

Kimie Fujioka
Albert Matsumoto IMO nakamura Family-Ethel, Donald, Julie
Fran Miyamoto IMO Kenneth Miyamoto, Natsue Suzuki, Sachiko Monzen
Dorothy Kusumoto IMO Bill Kusumoto, Kiyoshi Yoshida, Doris Tagami

Birthday Offering

Shirley Yamamoto

Thanks Offering

Susan Yokomoto
Susan Yokomoto for Ken Yokomoto
Claire Furukawa
Dorothy Kusumoto

Deadline for Articles

Nu‘uanu Caller (monthly)
20th of each month.

NCC News (weekly)
Wednesday noon.

Articles will be edited on a
space available basis.



Hawaii Foodbank

The collection date is the for
December is on the 25th.

Recycling

By Wayne Kobayashi

Bring your items on
Sunday, December 25

Please help our volunteers
by removing caps from
bottles, rinsing and
separating all containers.

Keep labels on. Only
HI-5¢ items are accepted.

Proceeds go toward
Hui Malama.



Golden Rules for Living

If you open it, close it.

If you turn it on, turn it off.

If you unlock it, lock it up.

If you break it, admit it.

If you can't fix it, call in someone who can.

If you borrow it, return it.

If you value it, take care of it.

If you make a mess, clean it up.

If you move it, put it back.

*If it belongs to someone else and you want to use it, get
permission.*

If you don't know how to operate it, leave it alone.

If it's none of your business, don't ask questions.

If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

If it will brighten someone's day, say it.

If it will tarnish someone's reputation, keep it to yourself.

Author Unknown



Merry
Christmas

Wear a mask!

Cover your nose and mouth



Wait 6 feet apart!

Avoid close contact



Wash your hands!

Or use hand sanitizer





Nu‘uanu Congregational Church
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December 2022

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church office at 595-3935 or email:
nccadmin@hawaiiantel.net.

Lectionary Readings for December

December 4 (Vision of Peace): Isa 11:1-10 • Ps 72:1-7, 18-19 • Rom 15:4-13 • Matt 3:1-12

December 11 (Heartbeat of Justice): Isa 35:1-10 • Ps 146:5-10 or **Luke 1:46b-55** • James 5:7-10 •
Matt 11:2-11

December 18 (God With Us): Isa 7:10-16 • Ps 80:1-7, 17-19 • Rom 1:1-7 • **Matt 1:18-25**

December 25: Isa 52:7-10 • Ps 98 • Heb1:1-4, (5-12) • John 1:1-14