



Where Light and Dark Converge

By Pastor Jeannie Thompson

As most of you know, I recently had total knee replacement on my left knee. This caused me to be in a rehab hospital for a little over three weeks. It has been quite an ordeal. As many of you know: knee replacement surgery is painful.

I think, though, that one of the hardest parts of recovery was being in a hospital building for most of those three-and-a-half weeks. It was too hot, most of the time, to go outside—until it got to be too rainy.

What I missed was the passage of time. In the few weeks that I was tucked away at the physical therapy hospital, the seasonal ratio of light to dark changed faster than I was aware of. Even though my bed was beside a window, I did not notice how short the days were becoming.

It was startling to come home and be in my own bed and realize that the light was different. The season had changed from summer to fall, from light to dark.

Light and dark is one of the major themes of the season of Advent. We listen to the prophet Isaiah as he talks about our relationship to the dark. We hear the Gospel writer, John, proclaim that God has sent a light to shine upon us; one that will never be overcome.

Hopefully, we take the wisdom of both to heart—one as a caution, the other as a promise and a description of God’s faithfulness. We need both in the days we live in.

As the world’s stage moves from one war to the next, as political arrangements and arguments grow more strained, as the number of people in need grows, and the resources to care for them continues to diminish, we often find ourselves—our outlook and expectations—growing dark.

Pain does this to us.

(cont’d on pg 3 - Light)

Blessed are you who bear the light

Blessed are you
who bear the light
in unbearable times,
who testify
to its endurance
amid the unendurable,
who bear witness
to its persistence
when everything seems
in shadow
and grief.

Blessed are you
in whom
the light lives,
in whom
the brightness blazes—
your heart
a chapel,
an altar where
in the deepest night
can be seen
the fire that
shines forth in you
in unaccountable faith,
in stubborn hope,
in love that illumines
every broken thing
it finds.

— Jan Richardson, from *Circle of Grace: A Book of Blessings for the Seasons*. www.janrichardson.com

Events for Advent:

The following events are going to be right after service on the following dates:

- December 3 - Advent Wreath Making
- December 10 - Christmas Card Writing

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 3 - School Pride Sunday - Wear your school colors and/or apparel - can be either high school or college.
- December 10 - Christmas Sweater Day - Wear your Christmas sweater. If you choose to wear your "ugliest" Christmas sweater, please make sure no one at church gave you that sweater!
- December 17 - Christmas in Hawaii - Wear your bright colored aloha attire, fake flower lei, straw hat, whatever bright aloha attire you have!
- December 24 - 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!

Scouts Troop 201 Kadomatsu

The Scouts Troop 201 will be doing their yearly Kadomatsu production from Thursday, December 14th through Sunday, December 17th.

If you are planning to come on Campus during those dates, keep in mind that the lower parking lots will be filled with tents and cars. Make plans to come earlier in the week.

Stamps for the Wounded

The stamps go to Stamps For The Wounded & are used by recuperating service personnel for fun & therapy.

They want ALL stamps - Used & Unused; U.S. & Foreign; w/generous paper margins around the stamps (for protection). Postcards & preprinted envelopes are also wanted.

NCC's church office has a collection box right as you walk in. The box is covered in stamps. If you would, please leave your name and address on the bags you drop off, someone from Stamps for the Wounded will send you a thank you note!

Don Ikeda's Chutney

If you are wanting to get more of Don's Chutney, we have quite a few in the office, ranging from \$3.00 to \$13.00. Please call Mairi at (808) 595-3935 or email her at nuuanucongregational@gmail.com.



December

Kalāhikiola Congregational Church
(Hawai'i Island)

Lihu'e United Church (Kaua'i)

Kona Lanakila Congregational Church
(Hawai'i Island)

Kalaiaakamanu Hou Congregational Church
(Moloka'i)

Lihu'e Christian Church (Kaua'i)

Kalanikāhua Hou Church (Maui)

Laupahoehoe Congregational Church
(Hawai'i Island)

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.)

Light

Cont'd from page 1

Not to be too dramatic: the knee surgery and the aftermath has been very difficult. The pain has at times been such that occasionally I have forgotten what it was like to be without pain. It has on occasion become my identity, and it has made me despair of being whole again.

However, I am one of the fortunate ones. I know I do not have to bear this alone or without help. As I was lying in the rehab hospital, my constant companion (other than the pain) was my phone. Almost as soon as I got there, there were texts and emails of encouragement and caring.

There were also cards and flowers—the nurses kept gushing over the flowers and cards that I proudly displayed on the windowsill. There was the pride I felt having all that kindness directed at me. There were also visits (its funny how quickly you get used to people seeing you dressed in a hospital gown!) which were so dear and gracious of you.

Very often, we wonder and worry that the world around us is not going to get better; that the violence and hatred are going to prevail. To this the poet says, “blessed are you who bear the light in unbearable times...” Blessed are you that despite the circumstances that seem to be pointing to destruction and sorrow, you remember simple kindness, and pursue it.

This, I believe, is how the light survives—through simple but doggedly faithful acts of love. Through thoughtfulness and acts of generosity. These are the building blocks of hope.

As for me, I am better every day. Mostly, though, I am grateful for your love and generosity (LOVE the Grubhub). And I look forward to this Christmas season where we will, together, bring light of God’s love *“that illumines every broken thing it finds.”*

Thank you so much for the cards, flowers, visits, and the very generous Grubhub card. May Christmas with your family and friends be filled with blessings.

Merry Christmas,
Jeannie

Quotes About The Spirit Of Christmas

"Remember, if Christmas isn't found in your heart, you won't find it under a tree." —Charlotte Carpenter

"Christmas will always be as long as we stand heart to heart and hand in hand." —Dr. Suess

"Christmas is the spirit of giving without a thought of getting. It is happiness because we see joy in people. It is forgetting self and finding more time for others. It is discarding the meaningless and stressing the true values."—Thomas S. Monson

"This is the message of Christmas: We are never alone." —Taylor Caldwell

"Love the giver more than the gift." – Brigham Young

"Let us keep Christmas beautiful without a thought of greed." —Ann Garnett Schultz

"Every time we love, every time we give, it's Christmas." —Dale Evans

"Christmas Day is in our grasp, as long as we have hands to clasp! Christmas Day will always be, just as long, as we have we! Welcome Christmas while we stand, heart to heart, and hand in hand!" —Dr. Seuss

"To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas." —Calvin Coolidge



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

We have received two new requests for prayers for health reasons. Please pray for Mike Chung and Susan Hirano.

When you pray, remember the following and their caregivers: Ljnda Mau, Kimiko Bristow-Canfield, Marcia Grimsley, Carol Hamada, Preston Iha, Craig Oshiro, Matthew Stucke, Lurline Matsumoto (sister of Masa Taba), 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

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

Dear God, as we journey through the Advent season and prepare our hearts and minds for Christmas we thank you for your gift of unconditional love - the birth of your son, Jesus. Help us to focus on Jesus and the true meaning of Christmas. We will sing carols about peace on earth and goodwill to all, but there is so much strife in our world today and we pray for peace. Watch over and bless those on our prayer list, their caregivers and those confined at home who are unable to attend church services on Sundays. As 2023 comes to an end we thank you for your continued presence and guidance throughout the year. We are grateful for the love and support of family and friends and pray that you will enable us to be patient, kind and loving in all our relationships. Fill our lives with hope, peace, love and joy. Amen.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!



Special Gifts

Give thanks to God whose steadfast love endures forever!

Thank You

Wayne Hamano for Mia Monma's Baptism
Lani Hirohata

Birthday

Shirley Miyamoto
Shirley Yamamoto

In Memory of

Kimie Fujioka IMO Nobu Fujioka
Flora Oshima IMO Thomas T. Oshima
Patricia Katayama IMO Doris Fuchikami
Sybil Seto IMO Howard Ishihara

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 31, 2023.

*We collected 104 pounds of
food in September & October.*

2024 Altar Flower Donations



2024 Altar Sign-up sheet will be done soon. If there
any dates you want to sign up for ahead of time. Please
email the office at nuuanucongregational@gmail.com

*Please have Altar Flowers delivered on Fridays, between
8 am and 4 pm or Sunday mornings at 8:30 am. There will not be
anyone working on Saturday's until further notice.*

Can You Bring A Can - For The Hawaii Foodbank?



The last Sunday of each month is
Missions Sunday. Please bring a canned good or
other non-perishable food on that day. Boxes will
be available to collect them. All gifts will be taken
to the Hawai‘i Foodbank.

Conversation and Tea



This event on Thursday mornings are on hold
until Further notice. Updates will be in the weekly
news and the next Caller issue.

The Missions Committee wants you to know... White Christmas

It's not too early to start picking up gift cards for White
Christmas. Advent is right around the corner. We will be collecting
gift cards to share with Family Promise, River of Life Mission, &
Transition House. Think of places like Foodland, Long's or Ross for
basics or maybe places like McDonald's or Jamba Juice for a treat.

Recycling

By Wayne Kobayashi

Please bring your HI-5
items any day in August.

Leave them outside the
recycling shed behind
Kibo Kan. Please help the
scouts by removing caps
from bottles, rinsing and
making sure the containers
are clean and empty. Keep
labels on. Only HI-5 items
are accepted.



Invitation to Bible Study

Anyone who is wanting to
join the bible study group is
more than welcome to.

Pastor Jeannie will be having
the Bible Study via zoom.

Please let Pastor Jeannie
know if you would like to
join the group.

The In-Person Bible Study is
on hold for now.



Nu'uaniu Congregational Church
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December 2023

To discontinue receiving the
Nu 'uanu Caller, please call the
church office at 595-3935 or email:
nuuanucongregational@gmail.

Lectionary Readings for December

December 3 (Where Are You, God?): Isa 64:1-9 • Ps 80:1-7, 17-19 • 1 Cor 1:3-9 • Mark 13:24-37

December 10 (Messengers of Hope): Isa 40:1-11 • Ps 85:1-2, 8-13 • 2 Peter 3:8-15a • Mark 1:1-8

December 17 (Shouts of Joy): Isa 61:1-4, 8-11 • Ps 126 or *Luke 1:46b-55* • 1 Thess 5:16-24 •
John 1:6-8, 19-28

December 24 (Birthing a Promise): 2 Sam 7:1-11, 16 • Luke 1:46b-55 or *Ps 89:1-4, 19-26* •
Rom 16:25-27 • **Luke 1:26-38**

December 31 (Long-Awaited Gift): Isa 61:10-62:3 • Ps 148 • Gal 4:4-7 • **Luke 2:22-40**