

*The Town Hall concept of congregational gathering was adopted as part of the overall "Plan for Moving Forward as a United Church" at a special congregational meeting in November 2015. This is the second Town Hall meeting summary on the Town Hall meeting held on May 22, 2016. This is part of the effort to provide different opportunities to communicate with the congregation as well as to provide congregants and friends an opportunity to give and receive feedback, Facilitator Elizabeth Kent and Mr. Arthur Goto have assisted and collaborated with the summary below as part of this process of informing the congregation of this meeting. It is hoped that with these efforts in this process that more will feel ready to attend one of these meetings to provide their opinions and feel that they have been heard.*                      --Laurie Hamano, Moderator

Meeting Summary (Town Hall)  
Nuuanu Congregational Church  
Sunday, May 22, 2016, 10:30 am - Noon

Summary Submitted by Facilitator: Elizabeth Kent and  
Reviewed, revised, concurred by Moderator Laurie Hamano,  
Presenter Paul Yamamoto, Arthur K. Goto

The meeting opened with a prayer by Pastor Mary. Approximately 25 people attended the Town Hall meeting.

**The first subject attendees discussed was providing for a senior day care facility at NCC.**

Paul Yamamoto shared that:

- there have been meetings with representatives from Arcadia and some NCC representatives have toured centers at Kilohana United Methodist Church and Central Union Church, and the NCC representatives were impressed
- there is a difference between day care and day health facilities
- there are minimum requirements for facilities, including 50 square feet per participant; 1 toilet per 10 participants, per gender; office space; a toilet for staff; 1 staff person for each 6 participants; an observation room; a kitchen to serve prepared meals; a shaded outside area; facilities for cleaning such as a sink to wash mops in; and a shower
- the Arcadia representatives believe NCC is situated in a perfect location and would provide a convenient drop off place
- the charge is \$85 per participant, per day
- the breakeven point is 65 participants, would would require 5800 square feet (in comparison, the gym is 5200 square feet); the cost for a building that is 5800 square feet is approximately \$2.5 million
- if NCC is serious about moving forward than serious questions need to be asked and answered about how this would affect the Children's Center
- there is a big difference between the facilities at Kilohana (retrofitted) and Central Union (new), and this is the time to "dream big"
- Central Union is making money with its program while Kilohana is losing money with its program
- NCC would be responsible to construct the space and Arcadia would manage it
- there are zoning issues

- Cornerstone is an organization that lends money to churches and will work with churches on debt servicing

Comments included:

- Waipahu Church of Christ recently started a program like this and we should check with them to find out how it is working and get more information
- 5800 square feet is the amount of space that is required to host 65 participants
- in the past we considered having an underground parking garage and so we can look at other options to find the space we need
- we need to be clear what our purpose is in having a senior day care facility -- is it to provide a service or to raise money or something else?
- we need to understand what our liability might be and look at ways to limit NCC's liability
- why was only Arcadia consulted for this project, why weren't others considered?
- discussion is very preliminary and much needs to be done before any commitments are made by the planning group
- **AGREED--invite representatives from Arcadia to the next town hall meeting for further discussion**

**The next item of discussion was "What can the congregation find consensus on regarding conducting worship in Japanese?"** The vote at the November 22, 2015 congregational meeting when action on the Mediation Plan was taken showed what was not acceptable, and individual's reasons for that vote were discussed at the last Town Hall meeting. Several ideas were suggested:

- Japanese only worship service, held at a separate time from the main service
- have a joint service, and then have a Japanese service following the joint service (when all interest groups meet), from 10:30 - 11:30 am
- restore the Japanese Speaking Department
- hire a Japanese speaking minister

There was discussion on these ideas. One person said that it would be most convenient for the Japanese speaking service to be at 9:00 am. Another said that both the Nichigobu and the Eigobu have good points but they cannot work together because of personality issues and that it is time to act like one church and bridge these gaps and come together. The friction is splitting the church and the church needs to be healed. This could be done if a few members from each group and the Council come together in a sane and rational manner.

**The next subject attendees discussed was the Obata Fund.** Questions were raised about the funds that the Nichigobu Support Group applied for. One member said there was no communication about the funds after the Obata Endowment Committee awarded funds to the NSG and they don't know what happened to the money.

The response was that the application was not sufficiently detailed and that the Council holds all groups to the same standard. Additionally, it looked like the application covered services that were covered by Christian Nurture and the Diaconate, so it appeared they were duplicative. Thus the funds were never released from the Obata Fund and that is why they were not transferred.

A council member encouraged the NSG to submit a request earlier so that it could be previewed and input could be given for suggested changes. Another member said that the failure to transfer the funds showed a lack of trust in the NSG and also a negative way of addressing the Nichigobu.

**The next subject attendees discussed was the situation involving the library** (where the NSG and Nichigobu meet), and an investigation that was done about an incident in the library, and the final decision. The investigation and the way it was handled was threatening to some people and it had a negative impact on their view of the way the NCC feels about them.

Moderator Laurie Hamano said it was clear after the conclusion of the investigation that there was miscommunication among the parties that were present. Some understood word for word what was being stated in Japanese. Others did not. She explained briefly about the situation that led to the investigation. Several attendees said that this is a confidential matter and that it should be discussed in a different forum than a town meeting.

The group then talked about the office located immediately to the left of the entrance to the Church Office (on the ground floor) that was previously used as office space by the Japanese speaking minister. The room is currently being used for storage and visitors and others cannot go in the office. There were differences of opinion about the funding for the room and whether the funds that were used to build it required dedication for specific usage.

A statement was made that if others want to use the room or change its current use, then a member should submit to the NCC office a formal request, in writing, to use the room. Other ideas for the room include using it for Japanese worship and letting the NSG use it to store their books.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Moderator Laurie Hamano thanked everyone for attending and participating and closed the session with a prayer.

**Facilitator's note:** At times there was a lot of emotion during this meeting. At times attendees reminded each other about the code of conduct. Mostly this happened during discussion of the last four issues.