

Manoa Valley Church
(United Church of Christ)
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Kahu Anne Findlay-Chamberlain
Senior Minister

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Mission Statement

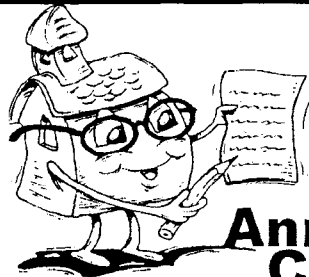
*Equipping—through worship, care,
fellowship, spiritual growth
and discipleship training.*

*Reaching the world—through sharing
the gospel in word and deed, serving
human needs with the love of Christ,
supporting world missions.*

For God's Glory

Calendar Highlights

- January 1
New Year's Day
- January 4
Epiphany
- January 6
Trustees Meeting
- January 14
Council Meeting
- January 25
Congregational Meeting



**Annual
Congregational
Meeting**

**Sunday, January 25, 2009
11:45 A.M., MVC Sanctuary**

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Agenda includes approval of 2009 budget, installation of 2009 officer/ministry members and other church business. Details will be mailed to members.

Please join us for Aloha luncheon following the 10:00 a.m. worship, and stay for the Congregational Meeting. Please plan to attend so we will have a quorum.



New Year's Message

FROM THE PASTOR

Manoa Manao

New Year's Day was first celebrated over 4,000 years ago in Babylon, and the tradition of the New Year's resolutions goes all the way back to 153 B.C. when Romans placed Janus, a mythical king of early Rome at the head of the calendar (thus the month January). With two faces, Janus could look back on past events and forward to the future. Janus became the ancient symbol for resolutions and many Romans looked for forgiveness from their enemies and also exchanged gifts before the beginning of each year.

Health clubs and weight loss programs bank on increases in membership when January 1 rolls around as people make the New Year's resolution to lose weight and get in shape. Perhaps you resolve to read through the Bible in a year, only to get bogged down around February 1, somewhere in the book of Leviticus. Resolutions are often easier made than kept.

A different definition of resolution is to make distinguishable, as in the measure of the sharpness of an image. Think of how an image when viewed through binoculars finally comes into focus as you adjust the knobs.

The days from All Saints day, through Advent, to Christmas are the busiest days of the year, and it is easy to lose our focus in all the hustle and bustle. It is significant that the next liturgical event is Epiphany - the day when we recall the visit of the wise men. As they journeyed from the east following the star, the end of their journey was not clear. There were no doubt wonderful and frightening sights along the way that could have distracted them. But they stayed on-task and their goal came into sharp focus when they saw the child, born to be Savior and Lord.

We are told in Luke 9 that Jesus "set his face to go to Jerusalem." While there were many people

with legitimate needs that could have distracted him from his vision and purpose, he chose to focus on what was most important. That is resolution!

It is easy for us to get so busy doing good things that we lose sight of what is best. So this year, rather than make a list of resolutions of more things to do, let us resolve to do less better. Let us resolve to look for Christ each day in nature and in others. Let us resolve to spend five minutes each day simply listening to God. Let us resolve to take on fewer projects - and to do those with excellence. Let us resolve to find something each day for which we give thanks. Let us refine our vision so that it is sharp and clear, articulated and lived out each and every day.

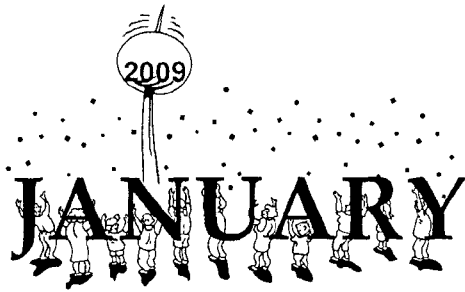
"To this end we always pray for you, asking that our God will make you worthy of his call and will fulfill by his power every good resolve and work of faith, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ."
(2 Thessalonians 1:11-12).

To God Alone Be The Glory!
Pastor Anne

Music Minister

We have all been blessed by the volunteer work of Leah Young for the past 2 years as Music Minister. After turning down repeated offers by the Council to provide some compensation for her generous gifts of time and talents to keep our worship full of music, in October, we were able to convince her to accept a small stipend. We worked together to develop a job description and employment agreement. We are grateful to have Leah serving in this position. Any thoughts about music at MVC should be addressed to Leah, who works in cooperation with Pastor Anne to plan our worship music ministry.





Lectionary & Worship

January 4, 2009

2nd Sunday After Christmas

Rev. Anne Findlay-Chamberlain, preaching

Readings: Jeremiah 31:7-14; Psalm 147:12-20
Ephesians 1:3-14; John 1:(1-9), 10-18

January 11, 2009

The Baptism of Christ-First Sunday After Epiphany

Rev. Scott Hirano, preaching

Readings: Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 129
Acts 19:1-7; Mark 1:4-11

January 18, 2009

Second Sunday After Epiphany

Rev. Anne Findlay-Chamberlain, preaching

Readings: 1 Samuel 3:1-10; Psalm 139:1-6,
13-18; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20
John 1:43-5

January 25, 2009

Third Sunday After Epiphany

Rev. Anne Findlay-Chamberlain, preaching

Readings: Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62:5-12
1 Corinthians 7:29-31; Mark 1:14-20

Worship Helpers

Song Leader: Leah Young

Sound Ministers: Adam, Clinton, Jerry, Kel

Communion: Deacons

January 4

Worship Leader: Ron Hashiro

Ushers: Kathy Payne & Dianne Ishida

Greeter: Aki Williams

Reader: Kristen Kawachi

Accompanist: Reggie Tamashiro

Child Care: Les & Lisa Miyamoto, Mae & Megan Saito

Children's Moments: Sam Browning

Bell Ringer/Acolyte: Keoni Williams/Lahela Naki

January 11

Worship Leader: Youth

Ushers: Kathy Payne & Dianne Ishida

Greeter: Aki Williams

Reader: Youth

Accompanist: Catherine Miyahira

Child Care: Jean Endo, Amy Matsuno, Leatrice

Yukinaga, Edith Abe

Children's Moments: Pastor Scott

Bell Ringer/Acolyte: Keoni Williams/Lahela Naki

January 18

Worship Leader: Laura Glenn

Ushers: Sue Akau-Naki & Aki Williams

Greeter: Aki Williams

Reader: Lois Kwon

Accompanist: Reggie Tamashiro

Child Care: Maizie Okimoto, Sarie & Steven Uechi

Children's Moments: Pastor Anne

Bell Ringer/Acolyte: Keoni Williams/Lahela Naki

January 25

Worship Leader: Les Miyamoto

Ushers: Sue Akau-Naki & Aki Williams

Greeter: Aki Williams

Reader: Porfirio Guerra

Accompanist: Catherine Miyahira

Child Care: Evie Gallagher, Gwyen Nosse,

Carolyn Okinaga, Pam Kutara

Children's Moments: Laura Glenn

Bell Ringer/Acolyte: Keoni Williams/Lahela Naki

Congregational Meeting

The early followers of Jesus gathered together to make decisions about the day-to-day needs of the church as well as to discern the vision of where God was calling them to go. As a congregational church, we make decisions as a community of believers gathered together and empowered and enlightened by the Holy Spirit. Every member is an important and necessary part of this body of believers. You are needed at the congregational meeting on Sunday, January 25, 2009 to be held at 11:45. Please be there! The Body needs you!

The Church That Gives An Offering

Our standing-room only crowd on Christmas Eve was blessed with more than music, Scripture, a sermon, and candle-lighting. We had a Reverse Offering in which each person/family group was instructed to take an envelope containing \$3.00 out of the offering plate when it was passed. After the offering was given, our prayer of dedication was that God would bless these gifts and multiply them for joyful ministry to others. Please write, email, or call the office with stories of how you used this Christmas gift.

Worship Retreat

The Worship Ministry will participate in a mini-retreat on Monday, January 12th, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. in the Upper Room. A light dinner will be provided. If you have interest in worship at MVC, please call Pastor Anne to register by Wednesday, January 7th.

To God Alone Be The Glory!

Pastor Anne

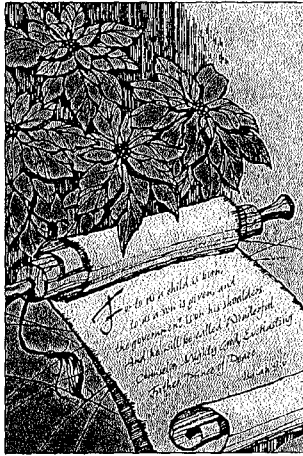


*Happy New Year
Manoa Valley Church!*



Grace Tsutaoka	01/01
Bryan Izumoto	01/01
Darren Torii	01/02
Hatsuko Nakasone	01/04
Logan Uechi	01/05
Jane Okubo	01/08
Yoshinori Tanaka	01/10
Teron Funasaki	01/11
Nobue Izutsu	01/12
Agnes Hirotsu	01/12
Aki Williams	01/13
Betty Mark	01/15
Edward Cup Choy	01/19
Jocelyn Kasamoto	01/20
Malcolm Koga	01/21
Ronald Lee	01/22
Mildred Arita	01/24
Evie Gallagher	01/25
Cindy-leigh Oki	01/28
Sandy Nip	01/30





15th Christmas Outreach

Friday, December 12, 2008, turned out to be a beautiful day for the Sisters and Brothers-in-Christ Ministry's 15th Christmas Outreach, despite the torrential rains and stormy weather of the day prior. December 12th also happened to be National Poinsettia Day, an official day set aside to enjoy this symbol of holiday cheer. It was established upon the death of Mr. Joel Poinsett, (United States's first ambassador to Mexico, who had introduced the plant through cuttings which he propagated at his home in South Carolina), to honor him and the plant that he made famous.

The legend dates back several centuries to a Christmas Eve in Mexico, when a little girl named Pepita, on the urging of her cousin Pedro, gifted the Christ child with some weeds that she had found along the road. However, as she approached the altar, a miracle happened. The weeds turned into beautiful flowers (Flores de Noche Buena-Flowers of the Holy Night), now called poinsettias, which are the holy flowers of the season, flowers of love which reach out to the needy, and to remember: "When you have done to the least of my brothers, you have done it unto me."

Eighteen holiday revelers gathered at Nobue Izutsu's festively-decorated home for fellowship, singing, games and food.

Keynote speaker was Wally Amos, all bedecked in his famous "Watermelon motif" hat, aloha shirt, and shoes. Known for his "Famous Amos"

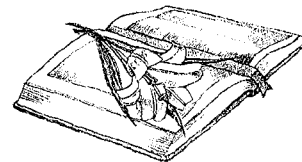
Cookies, and Uncle Noname Cookie Company, Mr. Amos is a nationally sought inspirational author of six books and lecturer. He has received the Horatio Alger Award, the Presidential Award for Entrepreneurial Excellence, and the National Literary Honors Award.

Wally Amos, a master storyteller, used his book, Watermelon Magic, to give the Christmas message for the day. The audience sat spellbound as he read passages from the book about his personal life, citing how he never lost his humor, joy, and positive outlook on life despite facing many adversities. He mentioned influences in his life, such as his Aunt Della, who baked him his first chocolate chip cookies. Throughout his presentation, he shared how we can overcome adversity, make healthy choices, and rethink challenging situations, turning positive and optimistic.

Mr. Amos believes that we all have a choice in our own happiness no matter what we've been through. But it's all up to us. After listening to him, one can't help but be inspired, thinking and being positive; in this way obtaining an abundant life in the name of our Lord.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Alene Nakasone



Bible Institute of Hawaii

**Encouragement Inspired
In the Book of Hosea
Manoa Valley Church, 2nd Floor
Upper Room**

Thursday, 9:00-11:00 a.m. Jan. 15-Mar 5 (8 wks.)

Register now for the Winter 2009 quarter (Jan.-Mar. 2009) courses at Bible Institute of Hawaii! Sign up with a friend and you each will get 50% off your administrative fees. Register on-line at www.biblehawaii.org or call B.I.H. at 595-4700.



HAPPY NEW YEAR! *Moderator's Message*

I would like to thank all of you at Manoa Valley Church for your support and encouragement during my year as the Moderator for the church.

May I continue to ask for your support for the year, 2009; a year with a lot of economic issues for our nation and world? We must trust our leaders, and most of all, trust in God. We pray for peace and prosperity.

"Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord, peace in heaven and glory in the highest."

Luke 19:38

Dot Endo
Moderator



Journey to the Son

God must have been smiling as Journey to the Son and other MVC "players" presented the premier showing of Charlotte Walter's original Christmas play, "Joy for All People", on Sunday, December 14th during worship service.

After many hours of preparation, practice, prayers, and more practice, the Christmas play somehow pulled together and was truly a "joy for people."

We wish to thank Charlotte for writing the play especially for MVC, and to our Sue Yamamoto, who portrayed Zippie, the lead character in the play.

There were many others involved in the production, from the littlest preschoolers, who joyfully rang Christmas bells, serene Mary (Emma Kojima) and Joseph (Teron Funasaki), the crazy "cleaners" from Middle School youth group, the graceful angels (Jan Khil, Inga Park) signing "Silent Night", the eloquent scripture readers (Marissa Kwon, Matthew Lau, Carter Uechi, Jalvin Sato), the small angel (Mari Kunihisa) delivering Baby Jesus via a "special ballerina express", to the oh-so-cute angels and shepherds from grades 1-3. And what would we do without Ruth "Pied Piper" Komatsu, Reggie "Nimble Fingers" Tamashiro and Leah "Golden Lark" Young?

Thank you everyone who had a part—big or small, on the stage or behind the scenes—in making the Christmas play special! Praise God!

Journey to the Son resumes on Sunday, January 4th, at 8:30 a.m. with stories about Jesus. Have a safe and Happy New Year!



As we begin a new year of service to Christ and His congregation, the Deacons extend the hand of friendship and discipleship to you. The economic downturn has hurt many of us financially, and may be causing hardship to some. I imagine that everyone has tightened their spending in one way or another, while we await further developments on the national and world political scenes.

The Good News is unchanged, and we can keep our hope in Christ as we go forward in our ministries.

The Board of Deacons is committed to offering assistance to our members and friends. If you know of someone who needs help in some tangible way, we want to know.

(continued on page 7)

Deacon's Doings

(Continued from Page 6)

While the church can not pay your bills, there are ways that we can and will help you manage any difficulty. Requests for assistance will be held in absolute confidence. We will be working with the Pastoral staff on delivering help, advice and/or referrals. Please speak to a Deacon, Pastor Anne, or Pastor Scott if you or someone you know, needs assistance.

You can contact me by leaving a message on my home phone (ph. 944-4769), or at the church office. Email the pastoral staff at pastor@manoavalleychurch.org, pastor-scott@manoavalleychurch.org or myself at susan-yamamoto@hawaiiantel.net.

Dear friends, know that you are remembered in our prayers, and that the Deacon's Ministry is working to strengthen the church through caring for the membership.

God bless you through 2009! Happy New Year!

Sue Yamamoto
Chairperson



*Reflections by Rev. Scott Hirano,
Acting Associate Minister for Children, Families and
Youth*
"Now What Do I Do?"

After the season of giving and receiving, the holiday meals and celebrating the New Year I discover myself asking, "Now what do I do?" 2009 is filled with potential to share life together. I have just realized that Martin Luther King Jr. Day is on January 19th. On January 20, the day after Martin Luther King, Jr. is remembered; the first African-American President, Barack Obama will be inaugurated.

This will be a special day for all people who live in the world. The Glory of God is revealed to us through these times of celebration as American

people. I find myself answering the question, "Now What Do I Do?" I am praying for all the leaders of the world, so that God can be revealed to them as they make difficult decisions and have heavy tasks before them.

I discover myself praying for Manoa Valley Church, that we will continue to discover the glory of God revealed to us. We will discover the glory of God together in our worships, retreats, Discipleship Classes, Bible Studies, Friday Night Youth activities and the Annual Meeting. These are just some of the ministries we provide and I am sure you can think of more. The Glory of God will continue to be revealed in the After School Care, Pre-School, and all other ministries Manoa Valley Church does here in Honolulu as we reach out to the rest of the world.

The season of Epiphany celebrates God's glory revealed in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. During Epiphany, I sometimes catch myself singing or whistling *Joy to the World*. I think it is because the love of God continues to be a joyful light that shines in the times of darkness and despair. In the past, I have surprised congregations in the season of Epiphany by singing *Joy to the World*.

People would say to me: "Christmas time is over, why did you have us sing, *Joy to the World*?" I asked the people, "As Christian people, don't we have a responsibility to celebrate the wonders of God's love every day? As ministers of the church of Jesus Christ, isn't this part of our mission to do?"

People would answer, "Yes, we do have a responsibility to tell the story of God's wondrous love." As 2009, comes upon us, take some time and reflect upon the words of *Joy to the World*, verse 4.

"He rules the world with truth and grace, and makes the nations prove the glories of his righteousness and wonders of his love." (#125, The Hymnal for Worship and Celebration)

When you find yourself saying, "It is 2009, Now What Do I Do?" Continue to celebrate the wonders of God's love by coming to worship and experience the Glory of God here at Manoa Valley Church.

May the Glory of God always been known to you in 2009!

Pastor Scott