



# The Friend

The Oldest Newspaper West Of The Rocky Mountains | Founded 1843 | Volume 41, Issue 1 | February 2025



## The Friend: A Vision for 2025

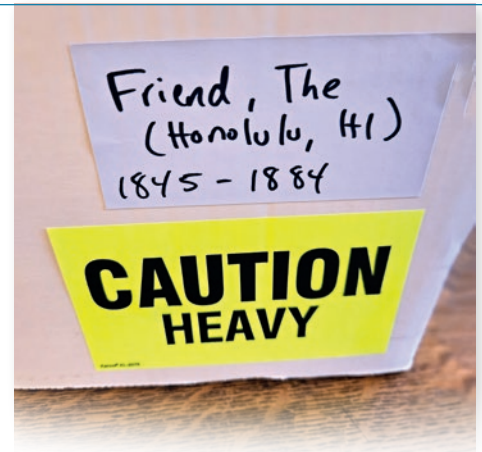
As we kick off our 182nd year of publishing *The Friend*, the editorial team wants this year's issues to dig deep into our everyday, lived theology as followers of Christ living in Hawai'i in 2025. Each issue this year will explore a different theological subject and the subject we asked our writers to explore in this issue is a theology of failure.

Theology can be a confusing term, and the academic study of theology sometimes produces text that is abstract, dense, and dull, to put it bluntly. But in these issues of *The Friend*, we are attempting to listen to our God and our neighbors as our faith seeks understanding. And "faith seeking understanding" is a classical definition of theology that was coined by the great theologian Anselm of Canterbury around the year 1077.

This approach to theology asks, "how does our faith understand this subject in this time and in this place?" Our faith infused with scripture, the living wisdom of our ancestors in the faith, our experiences through the

spiritual practices of listening to our still-speaking God, and the faithful study of the world seek to understand this world around us. Our faith seeking understanding. How is God speaking to us about this subject? What does God want or need us to consider about this?

The first issue of *The Friend* was published in January 1843 under the title *The Temperance Advocate*. Its name was later changed to *The Seamen's Friend*, which was eventually shortened to *The Friend*. And over the last 181 years, *The Friend* has had some amazing high points of living into Jesus' Greatest Commandment to love God and love neighbor. But *The Friend* has also had times of great failure when we have not embodied the love of God and love neighbor at all. In fact, there have been times when *The Friend* has published racist, colonial words of occupation that failed God, neighbor, and Hawai'i. We are ashamed of those words and hope to learn from those failures, so they are never repeated.



Failure can be an important teacher that empowers us to grow into a deeper and stronger faith with our relational God even through tears. And for this issue, we didn't give our writers a lot of direction; rather we just opened the door for them to consider, to pray, to struggle as they sought understanding of the all too human reality of failure. We hope this issue invites our faith to seek a more God-centered and faithful understanding of our role and call in this world as followers of Jesus the Christ, and we hope it whets your appetite, because our next issue will explore a theology of food. Blessings and Hau'oli Makahiki Hou!

## A Theology of Failure

ERIC ANDERSON, PASTOR, CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS, HILO

Christian thinking has its foundation in failure. We assert that the Holy One became human and was born on Earth not because humanity had achieved something wondrous, something God wanted to participate in, but because human beings had persisted in living sinfully and needed a Divine Savior. Or in short, God's response to human failure was Jesus.

Jesus was not the first, and please God not the last, of Ke Akua's attempts to direct or redirect us. Most of them, regrettably, have also failed. The Ten Commandments were violated within days of their delivery. Scholars debate whether the Jubilee Year, which freed

all slaves and reallocated the land, was ever enacted. The prophet Samuel warned against the excesses of a monarchy to no avail.

God sent prophets like Elijah, Amos, Isaiah, Hosea, and Jeremiah to reform the peoples and governments of the divided nations of Israel and Judah. They, too, failed. Both nations succumbed to the twin pressures of internal injustice and international imperialism.

Hundreds of years later, Jesus of Nazareth died on a Roman cross in Jerusalem and rose three days later.



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God is still speaking

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The views expressed belong to the authors and do not necessarily represent the Hawai'i Conference.



# Failing Forward

PHIWA LANGENI, AMBASSADOR FOR INNOVATION AND ENGAGEMENT, UCC NATIONAL OFFICE



Nobody likes to fail. It's frustrating, embarrassing, and sometimes even painful. We do everything we can to avoid it—plan better, work harder, pray more. But no matter how careful we are, failure still finds us. In all my experiences, both in the church and beyond, I've learned some purpose-shaping truths about failure.

## Failure is essential for success.

Success cannot be achieved without failure. Think about all the things we take for granted today: transportation, running water, electricity, farming tools, medicine, and even buttons and zippers. How many failures are behind each? Every great invention, breakthrough, and discovery exists because someone refused to let failure have the final word.

## Failure is inevitable.

It's a part of being human. Yet many of us carry shame for past mistakes and live in fear of making new ones. We exhaust ourselves trying to escape what cannot be avoided. But here's a hard truth: sometimes what appears to be a failure in our own lives ends up being a success in someone else's.

That's why we must step out and try anyway. If we don't, we may be preventing others from their own breakthroughs. When we look closely at our own successes, we'll often find that someone else's setbacks were a key ingredient in our wins.

## Failure is a gift.

That's probably

not what you want to hear, but it's true. Without failure, we wouldn't learn. We wouldn't grow. We wouldn't need grace. The world tells us to fear failure, but God invites us to see it differently—not as an ending but as the first step toward something greater.

**Failure is faithful.** As Christians, we're called to reframe failure—not as a source of shame, but as a place

With Lent approaching, I can think of no better example than Jesus, who embodies the paradox of failure and faith. We have the benefit of history, but for those who journeyed with him in person, that gruesome Friday did not feel "good" as it unfolded. From a human standpoint, Jesus's crucifixion was a complete failure.

I can't fully imagine the weight of failure his disciples must have carried with them after watching their beloved teacher die on the cross. If they were anything like me, they would've replayed every pivotal moment, searching for things they could've done differently to change the outcome.

Yet, what looked like utter defeat became the greatest victory. The cross was not the end of the story. It was the doorway to resurrection.

Our Christian journey invites us to boldly embrace failure, trusting that our shortcomings don't have the final say. When surrendered to God, failure is not wasted. It becomes the very place where renewal is born.

Ultimately, failure does not define us; what we do with it does.

The question is not **if** we fail. *Spoiler alert: we will!*

The question is: **when** we fail, will we trust God enough to get back up?



PHOTO CREDIT: SHUTTERSTOCK

where God's grace meets us. If we allow fear of failure to control us, we are no longer serving God; we are serving fear. When viewed through the lens of faith, failure is not a detour from God's plan. It's an essential part of the journey.

**Failure builds resistance.** We don't just survive failure. It shapes us. Every setback is an opportunity to strengthen our faith, deepen our trust in God, and build the resilience we need to keep moving toward God's vision for the world. Resilience is not about avoiding failure but about learning to rise again.

# Failure Is the Basis of Christian Identity

DAVID K. POPHAM, CONFERENCE MINISTER

In a society which praises the self-made individual and successful entrepreneur, what can be more humiliating than failure? However, theologians of failure such as Marika Rose, John Navone, and Adam Cooper remind us that failure is the natural arena for Christian identity.<sup>1</sup> According to these theologians the whole Christian enterprise is based on the failure of Jesus. They note that when Jesus died, he did so not knowing if his faith in God would prove trustworthy. His last moments were filled with thoughts of brokenness and human failure. Navone comments, “humanly speaking, Jesus had miserably failed to convert his beloved people. He died a total reject.”<sup>2</sup>

Following on Rose and Navone’s understanding of the failure of Jesus, Cooper writes of the failure of the Christ’s followers as demonstrated throughout our history of nefarious actions such as blessing uncountable wars, condoning human slavery, legitimizing the colonization of indigenous and aboriginal peoples, and persecuting heretics. Yet, Cooper notes, it is through the death of Jesus that these moments of weakness and failure are “permanently constituted as the normal sites in which God our Savior wants to meet and find us.”<sup>3</sup>

It is only in the light of the resurrection of Jesus that we understand that what fails by human standards succeeds by God’s standards. As the Apostle Paul discerned, God takes what is foolish and weak and counts them as points of wisdom and strength (1 Cor. 1:27). The cross

of Jesus challenges all the dominant forms of human success: power, confidence, vision, growth, strength, etc. In essence the cross tells us that God meets us in our foibles.

In the novel *Silence*, Shūsaku Endō relates the story of two Portuguese missionaries in Japan in the early 1600s who witness the systemic persecution of the faithful in the face of God’s silence. One of the priests, Fr. Rodrigues, is finally worn down as he is forced to watch the torture of his parishioners until he recants his faith. To demonstrate his apostasy, he must step on a bronze icon of Christ, a *fumie* as it is known in Japanese. As the priest stares down at the *fumie* in his raised foot he “feels a dull, heavy pain” for he is about to “trample on what he has considered the most beautiful thing in his life, on what he believed most pure.” Breaking the silence at last, “the Christ in bronze speaks to the priest: ‘Trample! Trample! I more than anyone know the pain in your foot. Trample! It was to be trampled on by men that I was born into this world. It was to share men’s pain that I carried my cross.’”

Failure is the place of redemption and resurrection. Maybe if the church is deemed irrelevant by our neighbors, it is because in our want to be associated with human definitions of success our sanctuaries ceased to be places where God’s redemption dwells with human failure.

Christian hope raises out of the desire of God to meet us in our most desperate places and restore us. It is in this hope that we bring our failure and our humiliation and trust that God will redeem and restore. While it can be truthfully said that human history is just one long story of failure, it can also be truthfully said that human history is one long encounter with the redeeming love of God.



<sup>1</sup> Marika Rose, *Theology of Failure: Žižek Against Christian Innocence*

<sup>2</sup> John J. Navone, S.J., *A Theology of Failure*

<sup>3</sup> Adam Cooper, “Failure in the Christian Life,” *Homiletic & Pastoral Review* (April 2024)



# Warning Signs of a Failing Church Board

ANDREW BUNN, HCF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A church's board of directors (in some of our churches referred to as the church council or trustees), plays a crucial role in maintaining financial integrity, ethical leadership, and long-term sustainability of the church. When functioning properly, the board ensures that the church stays true to its mission while upholding transparency and accountability. However, when a church board starts to decline, it can lead to financial instability, leadership conflicts, and ultimately, a loss of trust within the congregation. The signs of this decline often emerge gradually, but if left unaddressed, they can be devastating. Some warning signs to consider:

One of the first indicators of a struggling church board is a **lack of accountability and oversight**. Instead of fostering meaningful discussions, meetings become mere formalities where decisions are approved without question. Financial reports may go unchecked, and leadership operates without genuine scrutiny. This rubber-stamp mentality paves the way for poor decision-making, unchecked spending, and, in extreme cases, financial mismanagement or fraud.

Compounding this problem is **inconsistent board participation**. If meetings are frequently canceled due to uncertainty about attaining quorum, or if board members are absent or disengaged, it signals deeper governance issues. A healthy board thrives on active participation, but when attendance dwindles or discussions feel rushed, decision-making suffers. Additionally, when key conversations go in circles without resolution, it indicates a lack of direction. Rather than addressing critical church matters, meetings become repetitive and ineffective.

Another sign of decline is the **overuse of the executive committee**, or a small group of officers, at the expense of the full board. While executive committees serve an important purpose in handling urgent matters and providing efficiencies, they should not become the default decision-making body. When too much power is concentrated in a small group, other board members may feel disconnected and uninformed, which leads to further disengagement. Over time, this erodes trust and transparency within the church leadership.

**Power imbalances** also emerge when the interests of a small group or an individual dominate the board's direction. Instead of making decisions that reflect the broader mission of the church, discussions may cater to personal agendas. When dissenting voices are silenced or ignored, the board loses its diversity of thought, which can lead to bad decisions, mismanagement, as well as ethical and financial risks. Leadership scandals and financial abuses often arise in environments where there is unchecked authority or significant barriers to full board participation.

The health of a church board can also be measured by its **ability to attract and retain new members**. A board that struggles to recruit fresh talent is a board that risks stagnation. Without new perspectives and leadership renewal, the same individuals remain in power indefinitely, leading to resistance to change. Similarly, when there is no board succession plan, leadership transitions become chaotic, which leaves the church unprepared for future challenges. Many churches have faced internal turmoil when longtime leaders step down without a clear plan for their replacement.

Another warning sign is when board meetings **focus on formalities rather than substance**. If discussions are centered solely on approving motions rather than engaging in strategic planning or addressing pressing concerns, the board is no longer serving its intended function. Procedure is at times helpful and important, but if it comes at the expense of never having thoughtful dialogue and discussion—procedure just for the sake of procedure—it is not healthy.

Finally, one of the most damaging consequences of a failing church board is a **loss of trust from the congregation**. When church members feel excluded from decision-making or suspect that leadership lacks transparency, rumors and dissatisfaction spread. A disengaged congregation results in declining attendance, reduced financial support, and a weakened church community.

A declining church board doesn't collapse overnight—it deteriorates slowly, often unnoticed until the damage is severe. Regrettably, these concerns are not limited to churches outside the UCC or our Conference. We have witnessed examples where some or all of these concerns have led to the loss or collapse of a local church. These days, there are many outside challenges that churches cannot control, but good governance is something that can be controlled. By being aware of these governance challenges, churches can take measures to avoid them and keep their leadership structure healthy and productive.





WHERE IN THE HAWAI'I CONFERENCE ARE DAVID AND JONATHAN?

David Popham and Jonathan Roach have been visiting and preaching at churches around the conference. Can you guess where they have been these past few months from the following photos?



Ewa Community Church



Church of the Holy Cross



Nu'uaniu Congregational Church



United Church of Pohnpei Hilo



Waimea UCC



Haili Congregational Church



United Community Church



'Opihikao Congregational Church



Kōloa Union Church





Hokuloa UCC



Puka'ana Congregational Church



Kalapana Mauna Kea First Hawaiian Congregational Church



United Church of Christ – Judd Street



Kauaha'ao Congregational Church



Pearl City Community Church



First United Protestant Church



Pu'ula UCC



lao UCC



Henry 'Henry' Ōpūkaha'ia Chapel



Church of the Crossroads



From UCC News Digest, January 31, 2025:

# Faith Expressed Freely: Statement on Congressional Response to Bishop Budde's Sermon



*In the wake of the House of Representatives drafting legislation condemning the message of Bishop Mariann Edgar Budde at the National Prayer Service, where she spoke directly to newly inaugurated President Donald Trump, the United Church of Christ General Minister and President Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson offers the following statement.*

**Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow. Isaiah 1:17**

Preaching at the National Prayer Service, the Right Reverend Mariann Budde offered a sermon that was timely and prophetic following the inauguration of the 47th president. Her message offered a vision of hope and unity that is not easily lived and is needed now.

Unity is not partisan. Rather, unity is a way of being with one another that encompasses and respects differences, that teaches us to hold multiple perspectives and life experiences as valid and worthy of respect; that enables us, in our communities and in the halls of power, to genuinely care for one another even when we disagree.

Bishop Budde also warned about the normalization of a culture of contempt, of purposeful polarization manufactured to benefit a few while

threatening to tear our country apart. The entirety of her message was lost in the response of the president of the United States, which focused on vilifying Bishop Budde's appeal for mercy on the oppressed of our day. The prophetic plea was weaponized, and the message of unity presented went unheard.

Bishop Budde's words and actions are consistent with many faith leaders over the centuries and today who have provided voice in the call for justice. The voice of faith leaders must be heard in the public square calling truth to power in all times. We commend the courage and wisdom of Bishop Budde and other faith leaders who bring a message of justice and hope for the oppressed.

The introduction of H. Res.

59 — “Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the sermon given by the Right Reverend Mariann Edgar Budde at the National Prayer Service on January 21st, 2025, at the National Cathedral was a display of political activism and condemning its distorted message” — is problematic as is the condemnation of the Bishop by the President. Our country's rich history of religious freedom prohibits elected officials from dictating the message of religious communities, so their characterization of her sermon as “distorted” is deeply troubling.

Faith leaders must be able to speak freely from the convictions of their faith, uncensored by threats of political retribution, following in the prophetic tradition, calling for justice in their communities. People of all faiths must be able to express their faith without fear of government harassment, coercion, or duress.

As ministers of word and sacrament, we have a responsibility to seek justice for all. Our voices join with Bishop Budde and others defending the oppressed. This is a time to learn to do right, as the prophet Isaiah exhorts. The call for unity is before us. For the sake of the vulnerable with whom we are called to care and for the free expression of our faith, may we continue to center Jesus' work and God's vision for a just world for all.

Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson



PHOTO CREDIT: SHUTTERSTOCK



## Promoting Health Equity Through EnhanceFitness at Church

MYLENE IBERA (PEARL CITY COMMUNITY CHURCH), JENNY OSTLIND (YMCA OF HONOLULU), MICHIO TOMIOKA (UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII CENTER ON THE FAMILY)

Many kupuna in Hawai'i are blessed with longevity and good health. Yet, some elders in marginalized communities do not enjoy the same benefits and face health inequities.

To promote health equity, Pearl City Community Church (PCCC) has partnered with the YMCA of Honolulu (YMCA) and the University of Hawai'i Center on the Family (UHCOF) to offer EnhanceFitness (EF), an evidence-based fall prevention group exercise program on the church campus. This collaboration is rooted in the shared belief that every kupuna, regardless of their background or circumstances, should have access to opportunities that promote health and well-being.

EF has been well-received by church and community members, who praise its positive impact on their physical health. Regular attendees report significant improvements in their upper and lower body strength and balance. These outcomes are critical, especially for kupuna at higher risk of falls and related injuries. By enhancing physical strength and stability, EF helps participants maintain their independence and quality of life.

Beyond physical health, EF fosters social interaction and community building. It provides a space for participants to socialize and engage in "talk story." This aspect of the program is invaluable, as social connections are a key determinant of mental health and well-being. Many



participants feel more connected to their community and less isolated, contributing to their overall happiness and quality of life.

Our commitment to health equity drives us to ensure that programs like EF are accessible to all, especially those facing barriers to participation. By partnering with organizations like YMCA and UHCOF, we can leverage resources and expertise to reach a broader audience and make a meaningful impact. Together, we are working towards a future where every kupuna has the support and opportunities they need to lead a healthy, fulfilling life.

As we look to the future, we are excited to continue expanding our efforts and exploring new ways to promote health equity in our community. The success of EF demonstrates the power of collaboration and the importance of



(Top): Enjoying Exercising Monday, Wednesday, Friday  
(Bottom): Advocating at the State Capitol

addressing both physical and social determinants of health. By creating inclusive programs that cater to the diverse needs of our community, we can build a healthier, more equitable future for all.

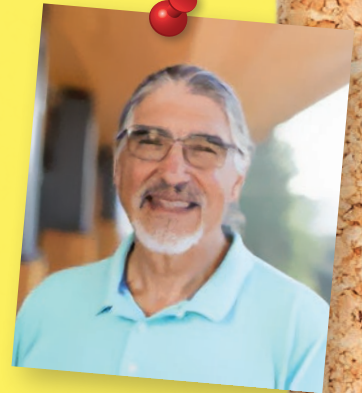
PCCC, YMCA and UHCOF invite you to learn more about our work. If we can provide additional information please contact us at: [mylene@pccc-hi.org](mailto:mylene@pccc-hi.org), [jostlind@ymcahonolulu.org](mailto:jostlind@ymcahonolulu.org), or [mtomioka@hawaii.edu](mailto:mtomioka@hawaii.edu).



## News from our Associations and Affiliates

The Association of Hawaiian Evangelical Churches (AHEC) held their 'Aha O Nā Kahu on January 9 and 10, at Kalapana Mauna Kea First Hawaiian Congregational Church. Raymond Aldred, Director of the Indigenous Studies Program at the Vancouver School of Theology, provided a dynamic two-day class on Indigenous Church History.

Both days started with a deep engagement of the Gospel, reading from the lectionary and then exploring the indigenous experiences of the Christian churches in various contexts, including those experiences that caused great intergenerational trauma and suffering such as boarding schools and the destruction of sacred objects. Aldred drew heavily and powerfully from his personal experiences and the realities of indigenous church history in Canada to empower us to better understand and engage the experience in Hawai'i.



... A Theology of Failure, continued from page 2

His friends proclaimed him the Anointed One (Hebrew Messiah, Greek Christ) who had come to free not just the people of Israel, but all people. The claim contradicted the plain sense of a Messiah who they thought, as an Anointed One, should also have been a royal figure, a military leader. Yes, the Messiah should reform the faith, but first of all he should have reestablished the nation. Jesus did none of those things. By such expectations, he had failed.

Jesus himself and those who followed him gave "Messiah" a new definition and redefined a Messiah's success. Freedom from foreign domination became freedom from the burdens of guilt. Triumph over outside enemies became victory over one's own worst impulses. "We proclaim Christ crucified," wrote Paul, "a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles." He knew that in cultures that revered power and might, the picture of an executed Anointed One made no sense. It might look like failure, he said,

but it is the ultimate success.

From my perspective, the Church has been (you guessed it) a failure. Despite our founding as a reform movement within the power-mad culture of Rome, Christians welcomed temporal power when they achieved it from Emperor Theodosius. We welcomed it, and history tells us we abused it. We have failed to embody the example of Jesus.

How will we understand, cope with, learn from, and reimagine our failures? Over the centuries, Christians have dealt with failure by redefining success. When we found the depth of God's love in a crucified Messiah, this has been profound. When we adopted the

identity of "persecuted" despite tangible evidence of our power, it has been self-serving. A theology of failure must consider how it benefits the theologian. Does it flatter and excuse us? Or does it call us to extend ourselves? Who gains from our revised theologies? Those who already revel in wealth? Or the resource-deprived at the margins?

Christians have faced the impossibility of perfection in faith and action. We often do not know enough to choose the best course; even with full knowledge, we may not select it. "I do not do the good I want," wrote Paul, "but the evil I do not want is what I do." Failure may not be inevitable in every situation, but it is always a possibility.

The Gospel offers healing to the risk and reality of failure. God's response to human sin has been the offer of forgiveness. At our best, we reply with repentance. At our best, we strive to do well.

Even at our best we may fail, and failing, turn once more to God.





# Conference News and Highlights

Go to [www.hcucc.org](http://www.hcucc.org) to learn more about these and many more stories from around the Conference.

## Pastoral Transitions



**Darren Galindo** retired from his ministry as pastor and teacher of United Church of Christ – Judd Street. He conducted his last worship service there on Christmas Day, 2024.

**Lauren Buck Medeiros** was called by Iao United Church of Christ to be their settled pastor and teacher. She began her ministry on January 1, 2025.



The Association of Hawaiian Evangelical Churches (AHEC)



held a Service of Recognition and Installation for **Diane Hultman** on January 11. She serves as the licensed minister of

Pu'ula United Church of Christ.

**Pat Dunham** was granted lay ministerial standing at Hokuloa United Church of Christ. Her first Sunday was January 12.



**Debbie Wong Yuen** has been reauthorized as the licensed minister of Kauaha'ao Congregational Church. Her first Sunday back in the pulpit was January 12.

**Daniel Kidder-McQuown** was called to serve as designated term pastor and teacher of Waipahu United Church of Christ. He began his ministry there on February 1.



**N. Stan Hankins** has ended his ministry as the settled pastor of Wai'oli Hui'ia Church. His last Sunday was February 2.

**Cara Ann Maeda** will be ordained by the O'ahu Association on February 16 at Makiki Christian Church.



## Conference Calendar of Events

### FEBRUARY 17

Presidents' Day (Office Closed)

### FEBRUARY 22

HCF Board of Directors/Conference Council

### FEBRUARY 28 - MARCH 1

AHEC Spring 'Aha Halāwai

### MARCH 26

Prince Kuhio Day (Office Closed)

### APRIL 17, 18

Maundy Thursday/Good Friday (Office Closed)

Thanks to our friends, *The Friend* is free of charge to anyone who requests it. We offer our sincere mahalo to those who have generously given a monetary gift to help defray publication costs. A gift of \$15 will pay for one person's subscription for one year. Gifts may be sent to the Hawai'i Conference UCC, 700 Bishop Street, Suite 825, Honolulu, HI, 96813.

## Mission Offering: One Great Hour of Sharing

One Great Hour of Sharing® (OGHS) is one of four special mission offerings of the United Church of Christ. The theme for this year's offering is, "**Be the Light**," based on Matthew 5:14-15.

Because the UCC relates in mutual partnership to churches and organizations through Global Ministries and worldwide response & recovery networks, your contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing put you in the right place at the right time for the relief, accompaniment, and recovery of the most vulnerable. You meet

immediate needs, and you address the underlying causes that create those needs in the first place.

Gifts to OGHS are the promise of a better future. The suggested OGHS offering date is Sunday, March 30, 2025, although churches may choose to receive this offering any time during the year. For more information, go to <https://www.ucc.org/giving/ways-to-give/our-churchs-wider-mission/one-great-hour-of-sharing/>.





February 2025

NAUPAKA RETOLD

## Naupaka Retold

ORIGINAL SHORT FICTION BY LINDA PETRUCELLI, RETIRED ORDAINED  
MINISTER AND MEMBER OF HOKULOA UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Dear Auntie,

We are writing about our daughter, Naupaka. We strongly disapprove of her boyfriend Kau'i. Her mother and I fear the relationship is getting serious. He seems nice enough, but we wonder what he does all day, hanging out at the beach. She says Kau'i makes her whole. That he completes her. Who in their right mind says something like this? We fear that expressing our true opinions will only drive them closer.

Please advise, Worried Parents

Dear Worried Parents,

Before you tell Naupaka how you feel about Kau'i, a more akamai approach would be to find out why she likes him so much in the first place. Remember, you aren't dating the guy—she is.

Dear Auntie,

I'm a nineteen-year-old wahine in love with Kau'i, a fantastic guy. There's just one problem. We had a silly

fight and now he's not talking to me.

Something has come between us, and to tell you the truth, I can't even remember what we fought about. I'd apologize, but he's ghosted me. Vanished into cyber space. I don't know what's happened; it's like I'm only half there! Is there any hope to get back together with Kau'i?

Please respond as soon as you can, Naupaka Up Mauka



Dear Naupaka Up Mauka,

It saddens me to say I see little hope for you and Kau'i ever being reunited. For whatever reason, you two have become irreversibly separated. Maybe he was in love, but not with you. How sad that your affection has been torn apart as easily as a flower, but you must try to remove yourself from this negative space. As my dear tutu once told me when I was your age and my young heart was broken in two—*Sometimes the half is just as beautiful as the whole.*