

## Deputies' Corner – Submission, Kim Arakawa (09/20/2022)

**How does General Convention benefit you, and how can you get involved?** These are essential questions – ones we hope to address in this new addition to *The Hawaiian Church Chronicle* through regular articles written by your elected deputies to General Convention. We intend to provide general updates and, more significantly, a deeper dive into the legislation process, the stories behind the experience, and the impact on our diocese. In the coming weeks, deputies who attended July's 80th General Convention in Baltimore, Maryland, will share their insights.

As an introduction to this newly created Deputies' *General Convention Connection*, and because I have the honor of being Chair of the current team, I would like to take this opportunity to publicly express my gratitude for the substantial time, and dedication given by your deputies to best represent the Diocese of Hawai'i. As you may know, GC80 was initially slated to occur in 2021. However, due to the global pandemic, it was delayed a year. The current slate of deputies, elected to their seats at Diocesan Convention 2020, met online monthly for over two years to learn about the legislative process and build community. Several folks on the team, myself included, were first-time deputies. So, we were incredibly fortunate to benefit from the wisdom of deeply experienced members like Ryan Kusumoto (lay) and Paul Lillie (clergy), who broke down the complexities of the convention process, ensuring our team was as prepared as possible before traveling to Baltimore.

That preparation was not only key to our team's ability to write and submit a resolution in support of Queen Lili'uokalani's inclusion in Lesser Feasts and Fasts (see [resolution D025](#)) but also integral to managing the unforeseen challenges that Covid-19 presented on the ground during convention week 2022, as lay deputies 1 and 2, myself and Ryan, contracted Covid, and were subsequently quarantined to our hotel rooms. Paul graciously stepped into my role as chair on the floor, while Faye Hee and Mary Carpenter, the last lay standing, held space with grace and stamina.

While it was deeply disappointing for me to miss participating on the floor of the convention, it was profoundly heartbreaking to see Ryan, who, as Chair of Dispatch (*the group that oversees the orderly flow of resolutions from committees to the full House of Bishops and House of Deputies for debates and votes*) and candidate for President to the House of Deputies (*receiving the most votes after President Harris*), get relegated to watching the live-stream after the first legislative day. Ryan still found ways to support his teams via email/text/phone, all while suffering Covid symptoms. I want to let you know how proud our Hawai'i deputation is of Ryan and how grateful we are for his humble leadership.

As we near this year's diocesan convention, we hope that those elected to the 81st GC will continue to contribute to this Chronicle feature – *the General Convention Connection* – may it be a source of connection, education, and inspiration as we seek to build beloved community throughout the diocese.

*\*Big Mahalo to the hard-working deputies active on the floor of GC#80 – Clergy: Steve Costa, Paul Lillie, Hau'oli Tomoso, Keleawe Hee, and Jenn Latham; Lay: Faye Hee and Mary Carpenter.*