

December 1, 2023

Beloved friends of Christ Memorial Episcopal Church, Kilauea,

A winding and gracious path has brought us to this moment. I write to you with a sense of awe, as the newly arrived vicar, for the faithful journey that has brought us together and the one that lies before us. We are somehow swept up with wind and water, land and sea, spirit and love, within this our tender island home of Kaua'i.

In this past year, an extraordinary achievement in our journey has been the completion of the new vicarage, which will provide stable clergy housing for the first time ever and for generations to come. Bishop Fitzpatrick provided his blessing in October, and it is a gift beyond words for me to settle in as the first resident. I am discovering a beautiful home, a peaceful refuge, and the sanctity of the adjacent church and memorial grounds.

We celebrate the end of our successful Clergy in Residence program, which for 3 years provided Christ Memorial with the experienced spiritual leadership and wisdom of 16 visiting priests. It also led to an unexpected introduction, as I arrived last June simply to fill in and then discovered with you a sense of mutual calling.

It is this calling that is both a great blessing and a serious undertaking. Christ Memorial, I have learned, is a community that realizes faithful visions with compassion, care, and hard work. We are embarking now on a stable, shared, and faithful path, with a full-time vicar, dedicated Bishop's Committee, inspirational and hard-working Thrift Shop Steering Committee, strong lay leadership, and a vibrant community that embraces those also on the mainland.

We are poised to share the Gospel message of God's love within creative and expansive ministries. In this time of profound turmoil and transformation in our world, we invite you to walk faithfully alongside us. Within our discernment, in 2024, we feel called to:

- build upon our community connections to support and network with local and regional social services so that we can better serve the most vulnerable
- develop creative and welcoming spaces for local children, youth, and their families
- establish a local music program for all ages that celebrates Hawaiian music, language, dance and culture
- enhance our Sunday worship with a robust technological platform for hybrid services in order to welcome, support, and keep in touch with our diverse members and visitors from near and far

Christ Memorial is already joyfully engaged in the ministries of serving others in our Northshore community. At the Helen Mitsui Shared Blessings Thrift Shop, neighbors, visitors, volunteers, and community members offer a warm welcome to 1000 shoppers every week, helping them in practical ways and always with joy and compassion. I am personally amazed by the many small moments of profound connection that happen there all the time. We also continue to be the largest recycling center on the North shore and prevent tons of items from entering the landfill. Our parish hall provides a beautiful, spacious, and contemplative space for diverse gatherings including AA, hula, ukulele, yoga, martial arts, and the Community Christmas Choir.

As we open our lives and hearts faithfully to Kilauea, Kaua'i, Hawai'i, and across the world, and as we discover our kinship with one another and all the Earth, it is a blessing to invite your time, talent, and financial contribution as your heart inspires you. I look forward to getting to know you. Please reach out and let us know how we can build beloved community with you, across time and space, for we are bound together beyond our imagination.

I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth; do you not perceive it? (Isaiah 43:19)

Blessings, Aloha,

Catherine Amy⁺

The Rev. Catherine Amy Kropp, Vicar



A Sanctuary for the Spirit