

Unitarian Universalists of West Hawaii – Jan. 2015 Newsletter (page 1 of 2)

A free and responsible search for truth and meaning

Usual Sunday Services: 2nd & 4th Sundays @ 4 pm Kona Outdoor Circle, 76-6280 Kuakini Highway
www.uuwesthawaii.org P.O. Box 3433, Kailua-Kona 96745 Newsletter Editor: Linda Olsen

UPCOMING SERVICES:

SPEAKER/LEADER from the UUA

Sunday, Jan. 11 -- 4 pm “What’s the Point, Anyway?” by speaker Dr. Josh Searle-White. It used to be that going to church was just something that people did on Sundays. Now, though, we have many other opportunities to see friends, to contribute to the betterment of the world, and to talk about interesting subjects. So why go to church at all? What can happen there that doesn’t happen in the rest of our lives? This service will offer an answer to that question. Come join us, and you might have an experience you won’t forget!”



Dr. Joshua Searle-White is a Congregational Life staff member for the Pacific Western Region of the UUA. He is best known in UU circles for his storytelling and is the author of *Magic Wanda’s Travel Emporium: Tales of Love, Hate, and Things in between*, published by Skinner House Books. Before joining the UUA he was Professor of Psychology and Chair of the Psychology Dept. at Allegheny College in Meadville, PA. He currently lives in Santa Cruz, CA.

After the service, we will join Josh for an interactive **workshop** to explore what’s possible for UUWH. We can always find real-world constraints that we think limit our future. But underlying all that is usually something much more important: a limitation of our imagination. This workshop (concluding by 6:15) will focus on broadening our thinking and exploring the possibilities that we might create.

And after the workshop, everyone is invited to join us at Akule Supply Co. (a new-ish restaurant at the Keauhou Harbor) for more conversation, considering our future, & social time. RSVP asap to Linda, linda-o@audioeditions.com.

Sunday, Jan. 25, 4 pm “Science and Religion: The Biblical Flood,” presented by member Lee Meyerson. The flood described in Genesis was of such great magnitude that evidence for it should be worldwide. Does such evidence exist? If the evidence is not present perhaps that is because our interpretation of the story is not what was intended by the writer. Theological interpretation of biblical stories has changed throughout history and the pendulum has swung back and forth between extremes.

BEHIND THE SCENES:

Friday, Jan. 2 – 1 pm Sunday Services Committee meeting, Mary’s home, open to anyone who would like to contribute. Call 808- 640-4483 for directions.

Monday, Jan. 12 -- 8:30 am UUWH Board Special Meeting with Dr. Josh Searle-White. Open to all members, as always. Location: Linda&Grady’s home, call for directions, 530-368-0079.

Thursday, Jan. 15 – 1:00 pm Regular Board Meeting. Location: Maiden’s home. Open to all members. Need directions? Call 808-325-6775.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE – Members Mary Garris and Grady Hesters were elected at the last congregational meeting to be on the nominating committee. Our by-laws specify that the Board will appoint one more member to the committee. This committee will begin its work by mid-January and nominees for Board officers and a trustee-at-large will be listed in the March newsletter in preparation for the March 22nd congregational meeting. Please think about what role you will volunteer for during this upcoming year... remember, “it takes a village.”

GRATITUDE to NANCY & PAT CALLAHAN

for volunteering their home as the meeting place for Rev. Cat Ishida’s 4-part series on “Peace.”

And a Big Mahalo to Cat for leading this series.

Ten of our members were able to attend 1 or more of the classes.

hip-hip hooray!

Rev. Cat will lead a 3-part follow-up series in Feb/March. It will meet **on either Tuesday or Wednesday evenings** based on when the most people can attend. Thus we need to know if **YOU** are interested and which dates are best for you (no need to have attended the first series).

Reply to Linda at linda-o@audioeditions.com.

The options are either

Feb. 10 or 11, 24 or 25, and March 10 or 11.



THANK YOU, MARY! The Hawaii Food Basket program was the recipient of canned goods collected by Mary Garris from various businesses in which she placed collection boxes. Gail and John Dawrs delivered the donations to the Food Basket.



**“Where there is love
there is life.”
-- Mahatma Gandhi**

**WONDERING WHAT WAS REVEALED BY THE
NOVEMBER SURVEY OF OUR MEMBERS?**

First, fewer than half the members returned the survey. When this happens, the general wisdom is that people are relatively satisfied with the status quo. If there are strongly held feelings, a survey is a good chance to let them be known – for those who didn't reply, we can only surmise there are no strongly held feelings or suggestions. Board VP Alvis reports that those who did reply indicated

- more social time wanted
- deeper thoughts on sermons
- hope for a larger group

The Board will evaluate the survey further as a source of future guidance.

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On Dec. 4, 2014, the **Honolulu StarAdvertiser** printed a letter from the Rev. Dr. Jonipher Kuponon Kwong , now excerpted here. We really appreciate your thoughts on this, Jonipher. [Additional developments since Dec. 4 leave me feeling heart-sick. – The Editor]

**“Every Person Deserves  
Compassion & Equal Treatment”**

Trayvon Martin. Tamir Rice. Michael Brown. It has become far too easy to name black teenage boys these days who have been shot to death simply because of the color of their skin.

The worst part is that justice is not served. The death of these children has not brought redemption to our racially polarized society. ...Lately, I have become disinterested in the conflicting stories of who said what and who did what when.... I am more interested in how the story began. What kind of a reaction does one expect when one begins an encounter with the words, "Get the f\*#@# on the sidewalk?"

And what kind of outcome could there possibly be when an officer of the law already decides these must be the cigar thieves even before the case has been tried in court?.... At the First Unitarian Church of Honolulu, we have what we call a "Covenant of Right Relations." It

asks us to "Create openness by actively listening and check assumptions by asking questions and verifying facts." Clearly, this was not done in this instance.

Contrast this to the recent story about Lt. Jerry Lohr, another white police officer from St. Louis County whose first words to a black teenager were, "How've you been? How's your mom doing? I saw her out here earlier." Notice the difference when we treat someone like a human being? We get treated like one in return and we earn other people's trust.

Words and relationships do matter. That is why as a person of faith, I consider racism to be a sin. It is a violation of right relations. As a Unitarian Universalist, I am called to promote and affirm justice, compassion and equity in human relations.

We are all made in God's image and possess the divine breath or "ha" within us. We cannot pick whom we practice compassion to based on their race, class, gender identity or sexual orientation. Justice means black lives do matter.

Racism is a societal sin and it is an "original sin" because as Americans, we have all inherited it from our ancestors who had the repugnancy to sell and trade people based on their skin color. But we do not have to continue sinning and missing the mark. We can end it now. It begins with how we treat each other. It begins with what words we choose to put together.

What happened in Ferguson, Mo., affects us all, even here in Hawaii. The next time I open a newspaper, I hope I don't have to read yet another similar plot to the same old story. [yet the tragic story continues...]

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**OUR NEW YEARS' CHALLENGE**

from Rev. Kathleen McTigue (UU minister, director of the UU College of Social Justice)

What shall we do with this great gift of Time this year? Let us begin by remembering that whatever justice, Whatever peace and wholeness might bloom in our world this year,

We are the hearts and minds, the hands and feet, the embodiment of all the best visions of our people.

The New Year can be new ground for the seeds of our dreams.

Let us take the step forward together, onto new ground, Planting our dreams well, faithfully, and in joy.