

Views of the Vision

The Ministry of Gay and Andrew Hongo
and Janete Fujiki

December 2024



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Hongo Music Center Christmas Concert

*"Make a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands.
Serve the Lord with gladness: come before
His presence with singing."
~ Psalm 100:1-2 ~*



The Hongo Music Center has prospered under the Lord's blessing this year with four music ministries that reach out to the Kalihi community: our adult choir, ukulele ensemble, bell choir, and children's choir. We were able to gather all these groups together for our first ever Christian Vision Thanksgiving/Early Christmas Celebration at Kalihi Union Church this past November 16th. All the groups enjoyed performing unto God's glory and seeing each others' growth.



The adult choir was directed by John Kim with Janete Fujiki at the piano.



The handbell choir was led by April Ikeda.



Our ukulele ensemble was led by Sharon Darapiza who will be with us until the end of December. We're currently looking for another person to help lead this group - let us know if you are interested!



Caytlynn and Cody Ikeda spoke very well

Our children's choir this decided to do a fun and inspirational Christmas skit led by Kellyn Zimmermann. They spoke from their seats, pretending to be in a math class.



Aydn Ikeda and Khloe Zimmerman are full of potential!

Also joining us were the Manna Ministry praise team



as well as the KUC hula ministry, performing "It's Christmas in the Islands Again," with Gay Hongo singing.



We praise God for Janete's leadership, as well as the numerous volunteers who are giving of their time and talent to serve the Lord, and we thank you for your support that made this long-time dream a reality. We pray that God would continue using the Hongo Music Center to help many to develop their gifts in the performing arts for His glory!

CHRISTIAN
VISION

Christian Vision Inc. Founded in 1982
Executive Director: Janete Fujiki • Board of Directors: Gay Hongo, President
Chris Aliipule, Vice President • Kathleen Kawazoe Taua, Secretary • Daniel Miyamoto, Treasurer
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Mission Trip to Japan - From Janete

The purpose of our mission trip to Japan this past October was to assist The Neighborhood with their Halloween outreach. As many know, Halloween is not traditionally a holiday that Christians celebrate, so our goal was to provide a safe, welcoming environment for the children while also introducing them to the church.



Halloween Festivities in Japan at The Neighborhood.

I wanted to participate because I saw it as an opportunity to build connections with the families involved and to strengthen the relationship between Christian Vision and The Neighborhood. Although I had a general idea of what the event would be like, I didn't have any specific expectations going in.

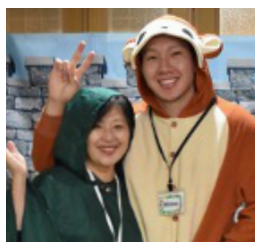


At The Neighborhood in Japan - Medieval Madness!

My favorite part of the trip was interacting with the children and some of the parents during dinner time. It was a joy to connect with them, even in small ways, and I could see how moments like that could help build trust and open doors for deeper relationships.

Every mission trip or ministry opportunity I'm a part of helps me grow closer to God. I am constantly reminded of His presence and faithfulness in every step of the journey.

Ultimately, God was glorified because He is the one who makes all things happen! We were also able to distribute pamphlets inviting people to New Hope Church, which felt like a small but meaningful step in reaching out to those who may not know Christ.



Janete and son Winton

Knowing that Japan is a country where the majority of people are not yet familiar with Jesus, it was humbling to be part of a mission trip there. I believe the trip was an important step in building relationships with both the children and their parents, and I pray it opens doors for continued outreach and ministry in the future.

Improv Drama Workshop



Participants act out "Taxi Weirdos" at the Hongo Music Center's improv workshop.

Chey Sanders was the director for our last production of "Glory In His Soul" in 2018. At that time she led the cast and crew in a workshop on improv drama. Now, 6 years later, it was a joy for some of the Glory In His Soul cast as well as some new participants to reunite with Chey in a workshop on Improv Drama held on July 7 in the Hongo Music Center at KUC.

Chey describes improv (improvisational) drama as "learning to perform without a script and developing listening skills and following directions." One of my favorite exercises from the workshop was called "Taxi Weirdos." The stage was set with 2 chairs in front and 3 chairs in back. Whenever the actor playing the taxi driver picked up a new passenger, the passenger would display some kind of weird behavior and the rest of the passengers would mimic that person. After a few seconds, the driver would leave and everyone would move one seat over. Then the process would start all over again.

Some of the scenarios thought up by the participants were:

- A lovable but simple-minded lady, smiling and gently slapping the passengers.
- Someone shouting, "Help I'm in labor! My water just broke."
- Someone sobbing, "I just got dumped by my boyfriend."
- Someone yelling, "I'm so angry I'm about to explode."

It was so funny to see how the actors played out these different scenarios.

For Chey, this workshop isn't just about developing acting skills; it's also a ministry. She prays for every person who comes to participate, that whatever burdens they're carrying – whether depression, grief, or some other heaviness – the Lord would use the improv workshop to lift their hearts and bring joy into their spirit. She explained to me that improv can be a form of therapy, helping people to turn from the negativity they may be feeling to instead do something creative, spontaneous, and fun that helps them to feel good about themselves.



Naomi Pualani Hongo (from Andrew)



On November 6 at 11:39pm, my beautiful wife, Meaghan, gave birth to our beautiful daughter, Naomi Pualani Hongo. This labor and delivery was much easier than with our son, Paul; he took an exhausting 36 hours, while Naomi took only 7 – and once Meaghan started pushing, the baby was out within 7 minutes! We were happily surprised at how quickly it all happened (note from Meaghan: Praise Jesus!).

My first thought when seeing our daughter's beautiful face was: Wow, she looks really Asian! Meaghan and I both thought she looked more like Grandma Gay than either of us, and we told Grandma, "The baby looks really Japanese, and she even has your nose." Grandma said, "Oh no!" (I guess Grandma Gay never liked her nose.) But we think both our daughter and her grandmother are absolutely beautiful.

Meaghan and I chose the name Naomi because we liked the Biblical character of Naomi, who was a model of faith, resourcefulness, and from whose line came the Messiah; but we also liked that Naomi had meanings both in Hebrew (Meaghan has Jewish heritage) and Japanese (from my side). In Hebrew, Naomi means pleasant and beloved, while in Japanese, it can mean honest and beautiful.

Her Hawaiian name, Pualani, means "heavenly flower" or "heavenly child." We pray our daughter will always know that she is the most beautiful flower, created by the God of the Universe for His pleasure and glory. Actually, we decided on her Hawaiian name first, and started calling her Pualani before she was born, and that's the name Paul has learned – so at home, we refer to her as Pualani. We know Grandpa Randy is smiling down from heaven at his Hawaiian granddaughter.

Just in the three weeks we've gotten to know her, we can already tell that Pualani has a sweet, gentle, calm spirit. She doesn't cry all that much, and while she feeds frequently (right now it's every couple hours), she's not nearly as voracious an eater as her brother was. She does spit up quite a bit (the volume she produces is quite impressive), and she also has a tough side to her – she has to, with a brother like Paul. While he's been great overall at adjusting to being a big brother, helping us get diapers for her when she needs a change and telling us when she's hungry, he does have his moments of being... unloving (as all siblings do). But it seems Pualani can take a hit and keep on nursing as if nothing happened.

So we're trying to help Paul with the adjustment, lavishing him with as much attention and affection as we can. The day Pualani came home from the hospital, we had a "Big Brother Party," complete with balloons and party hats and a strawberry cupcake just for Paul. I put a couple candles in the cupcake, lit them, and we sang, "Happy Big Brother Day to You!" It's become somewhat of a tradition... Paul will ask for candles and the big brother day song almost every night, and whenever we can, we accommodate him.

But there's no doubt that it has, at times, proved a difficult adjustment for Paul, his whole world having been turned upside-down. I've found that as a father, my instinct is to try to shield Paul from anything negative or painful at any cost; so much of me wants him only to experience joy and happiness all his days. Of course, we know that's not possible, but as a parent, that desire is still there.

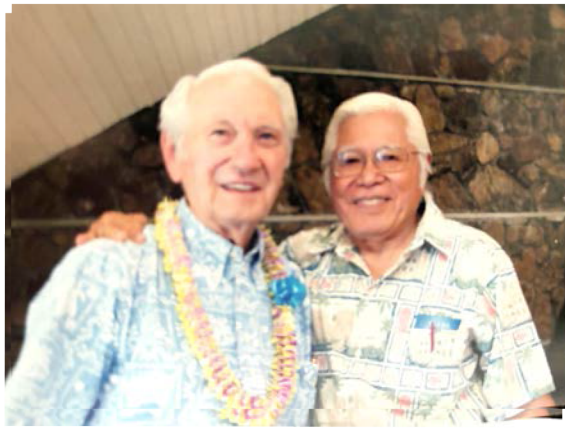
My pastor's wife gave me some good advice: She said, as much as we try, we can't be all things to our kids. We can't be everything to them. But that's a good thing, because that can open them up to the One who is all things, who is everything to them: Jesus Christ. It reminded me of one of my favorite verses, II Corinthians 12:9: "But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.'"

I know that there are some disappointments in this for Paul; he's no longer the sole object of both his parents' affection, and our world no longer revolves only around him. But I also know that life is full of disappointments, and part of growing up is learning to deal with those disappointments, to ride them out, to trust God through them. I know it's something I'm still learning myself.

And I also know that as hard as it is to adjust to change, this change is going to bring him one of the greatest gifts of his life: a sister, who will be his constant companion as they grow together, play together, laugh together, and, we pray, follow God together. We trust that our little boy and baby girl will, even beginning now, encourage each other to love God more and more with each passing day.



Aloha to Reverend David Yamashiro - from Gay



Pastor David Yamashiro (right) with Pastor Stan Johnson at Kalihi Union Church's 100th Anniversary service on August 23, 2013. (Photo by Millie Yoshimoto)

Our dear friend and beloved pastor David Yamashiro recently went home to be with the Lord. Many people know of David as the father of the famous evangelist, Danny Yamashiro, but Randy and I got to know David and his first wife, Eva, many years ago when we were first starting out at Kalihi Union Church. I'd like to share some of my fond memories here.

In the 1970's when Randy and I were newlyweds, we met David, who was an elder and one of the pillars of Kalihi Union Church. Back then, Campus Crusade for Christ had a summer program where students from Japan would come to study English at the University of Hawaii, and Randy was recruited as one of the teachers for that program. At the end of the summer, all of the teachers would invite the students to a dinner party where they would hear testimonies and a presentation of the Gospel. Randy and I had no idea where we could hold this dinner party, since we lived with my parents in their downstairs apartment. David heard about our need and opened his home to us and our 25 students. His wife cooked a delicious shoyu chicken dinner for us. They even had a swimming pool the students were able to enjoy. Then Randy and I sang and shared our testimonies of how we came to know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. We were so grateful for how David and Eva opened their home to show these students the love of God.

On another occasion, Randy was hanging out at David's home, and Eva (who worked at Sears) told him about a sale they were having on suitcases - a set for only \$100. At that time, we had started traveling all over the world for music missions trips, and the suitcases we had were old and, as we say in Hawaii, "boro-boro" (broken down). So Randy called me on the phone to ask if we could purchase these discounted suitcases, and I said, "Forget it! We don't have \$100. We can still use our old ones." David saw Randy's disappointment and wrote him a check for \$100. He said, "This is from the Lord. Go buy the suitcases and use them for your ministry trips."

After David's beloved wife, Eva, passed away, God blessed him with another companion - his beautiful second wife, Alice. Eventually they moved to Maui, and when Randy and I went to Maui to sing in Wailuku, I invited them. They came to our concert at Faith in Jesus Church and liked the pastor, Barbara Tengan, and continued going to services there.

A few weeks ago David's health began to decline. Unfortunately, this turn of events coincided with the wedding of David's granddaughter, Allie, which was to be held in Boston, which meant that almost all of David's family would be traveling to the mainland for the wedding. Alice was left to care for David alone. But in God's providence, He had already arranged for help: Pastor Barbara and her assistant, Carol, moved in with Alice to help care for David. I'm so grateful God used our introduction to provide for their time of need.

At the Celebration of Life service, David's son, Danny, described how he flew from his daughter's wedding in Boston back to Maui, only to find his dad, lying still and unable to speak. Danny leaned down and put his arms around him and said "I love you, Dad." Danny felt a touch on his back and realized that his dad had put his arms around him to give him one last hug.

Aloha to Alice Newman



Gay with Alice Newman at the Valentine's Day Luncheon on February 12, 2019.

We bid a fond aloha to Alice Newman, who supported Christian Vision for many years and was a dear sister in Christ to Randy and me.

Our friendship dates back to the late 70s, when Randy was studying at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. While we were there, we had a fellow Hawaiian in the school, classmate Danette Kong. Whenever we returned to Hawai'i, Danette would schedule us to minister in various churches where she had connections.

One of our favorite churches to visit was Hawaii Kai Baptist Church. Pastor Ken Newman and his wife, Alice, always welcomed us. Alice often recalled the time when Andrew was a toddler and refused to stay in the nursery, so Randy and I sang the entire concert with Andrew perched on top of the piano. Almost every Christmas, Alice asked us to sing for "Joybreak," a special gathering sponsored by the Woman's Missionary Union at Olivet Baptist Church. The last events she invited us to were Pau Hana Time and for the Hawaii Kai Retirement Home services.

When Randy was undergoing cancer treatment in 2012, his voice was not strong enough to sing, but he could still play the piano. He produced a CD of piano music of his favorite Christmas songs, titled "O Come O Come Emmanuel." Alice was our biggest cheerleader for this project and bought and sold dozens of copies for her friends and family.

After Randy's passing, I thought I would never perform again. But Alice encouraged me to continue on and asked me to do a Valentine's Luncheon at Olivet Baptist Church. By God's grace, and with the help of the Christian hula halau, Master's Touch, and Chey, Cheryl, and Matt Sanders, I was able to sing my Valentine tribute to Randy and testify to God's faithfulness even through the hard times. It was the last time I got to see our dear friends, Stan and Joan Togikawa, who attended the event. The Lord used Alice to give me precious, joy-filled experiences that I will cherish forever.

Aloha to Karen Yamamoto



Our longtime friend Karen Yamamoto recently passed away into the arms of her Heavenly Father. Randy and I first met Karen in 1985, when her daughter, Kelly, and Andrew were classmates at Punahou School. By God's divine appointment, I was able to reconnect with Kelly for the first time in years and minister at Karen's Celebration of Life service at Kalihi Union Church.

Karen actually had some longtime connections with KUC: her mom, Ethel Kina, had been good friends with Libby Steeper. Karen recalled babysitting the Steeper's children, Jonathan being the youngest. What a small world!

Karen Yamamoto worked for the Department of Education and authored textbooks on Science. In 1996, Karen attended Stanford University and received a doctorate in Science Education. In 2005, Karen and her husband, Mike, published a book: "Waipahu... Recollections from a Sugar Plantation Community in Hawaii."

While going through Randy's piles of papers and correspondence recently, I came across this letter from Karen Yamamoto, written in 1985:

Karen N. Yamamoto
3723 Anuhua Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96816
15 Oct 85

Dear Randy and Gay,

Just a note to thank you so much for inviting us to your concert. It seems that the Lord works in mysterious and wonderful ways - our children are in the same class by ^{His} plan and not by coincidence!

Your ministry of music has really been a blessing to me and an inspiration to get on with my work and use the talents that the Lord has provided.

God's love really shines through your music and is showing me the way back to His service. It has been almost 20 years away from the church but I'm ready to return. (over)

The message through the words and melodies of the songs are powerful. May God continue to use your family to share His love with others. I am truly grateful for your service and ministry.

Love in Christ,
Karen

P.S. Kelly knows the words to all of the songs on the "When Two Become One" album. The title song is also her favorite.

I was so moved as I read this letter. How gracious of our Lord to bless me with a reminder of how He used our ministry through all these years. And it was God's perfect timing that shortly after finding this, I was asked to sing and was able to share this letter at Karen's memorial service. God, in His infinite wisdom, had preserved this letter so that I could read it at the service as a testimony to His faithfulness.



From Taylor

Dear friends, I hope you are doing well! It was nice to be able to spend a couple months back in the States with family, and to be able to reconnect with some of you and visit your churches this summer.

I spent August in Hawaii and was blessed to be able to catch up with Auntie Gay briefly in person while she was visiting as well. I was so encouraged in spending time with you all at Kalihi Union Church, West Oahu Christian Church, Honolulu Christian Church, and with various small groups and individuals. I was also able to spend some time on the mainland and made stops in Washington, Alaska, and California. I send my love to Japanese Christian Church of Walnut Creek, Haven Christian Church and Granite Bay Japanese Church for welcoming my family so warmly in California, and a special thank you to Walnut Creek for not only giving us the opportunity to share with them music and updates, but also providing us accommodations and meals during our visit! It was also such an encouragement to visit with Haven Christian Church (formerly Fremont Asian Christian Church), and to see their commitment to supporting the missions throughout the world, and especially in Japan, even as their church has evolved and grown.

Unfortunately, the very day we arrived in the US, I had some health complications which continued throughout my two months there. I believe my family's physical health has been under a spiritual attack as it has been over a year since our whole family has been healthy and functioning like normal at the same time. We would appreciate your prayers for healing and strength.

It has started to cool down here in Tokyo, Japan and with winter fast approaching, our events and ministries always start ramping up even more! We've had guests come to stay with us from only a few days after we landed, and we are welcoming several more groups and families every month this year and continuing through next. This is along with our monthly English Outreach Events and homestays for our Japanese students and families!

I have continued to serve on both our main service and young adults worship team & the young adults leadership team at my church in Tokyo, and I am excited to be partnering with my church to start expanding our young women's fellowship here at The Neighborhood. We already have one large gathering planned in which we expect over 20 young ladies. This is in addition to our Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's event in which we are expecting over a hundred people cycling through!

This year at The Neighborhood Student & Ministry Center has been one of overflow in relationships. The lack of community and relational support in Japan is one of its GREATEST needs, and we at The Neighborhood are specially equipped to fill that need by the many, MANY guests that come to visit, the friends new and old, and of course, through the love poured out by our Heavenly Father. If you would like to support our ministry here, learn more, or would like to come visit us in Tokyo, please feel free to reach out at taylorasami.p@gmail.com.

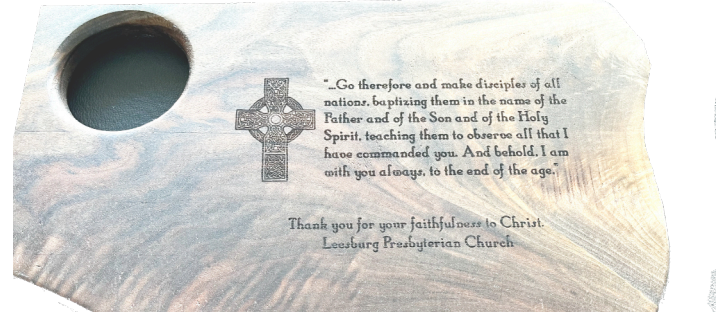
Gratefully Yours,

Taylor Asami Pagaragan

Jon and Karen Stewart - from Gay



Left to right: Harold and Lynne Newton, Gay, Karen and Jon Stewart. The Stewarts presented Gay with a charcuterie board, handmade by the pastor of their church in Grove City, PA.



Christian Endeavor is a Christian organization that trains youth for service in their churches and beyond. Hawaiian churches in particular remain active and have yearly gatherings. The first CE convention that Randy and I attended was with our Haili youth group, held at Kawaiaha'o Church in Honolulu. The first International CE Convention we attended was hosted by Mokuaiakaua Church in Kailua-Kona on Hawai'i Island. That was where we met CE leaders from the mainland and England, many of whom invited us to come and minister at their home churches.

It was through CE that we first met John and Karen Stewart four decades ago. The Stewarts and their church in Pennsylvania have been longtime monthly supporters of Christian Vision, and have hosted us many times in their home and in their church. So I was honored to be able to host them on their recent visit to Hawai'i, en route to an International CE Convention in American Samoa.

PHOTO GALLERY



Luncheon Following Chapel Service at Kahala Nui

Reuniting With Friends in Oceanside



Reverend David and Anita Shaw (left side), Gay, and Nancy Ogomori.



First row, left to right: Sepe, Paul and Alma Yamashita, Rowena. Second row, left to right: Lisa, Gay, Janete, and Winton.



Left to right: Kristin, Lisa, Kevin, Gay, and Aunt Betsy Sekiya.



Gay, Nancy, and Daryl Jean Nakata.



Left to right: Vernon, Billy, Marion, Gay, and Myrna Takakuwa.



Nancy with grandson, Mele, and his wife, Aimee, and their children, Koa and Kaia.



Christmas Concert at One Kalakaua



Front row, Lum Family – Dickie, Carolaine, Ada, Ginny Lum. Second row, left to right: Vernon, Gay, Marion, Rowena, U'ilani.



Christmas In The Islands Again



Our team with Nancy and Bob Okuda

CHRISTIAN VISION
P.O. Box 31124
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Return service requested

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Merry Christmas

Naomi Pualani Hongo
3 days old



Paul Imaikalani
Torakiyo Hongo
2 ½ years old



To view our newsletters in color go to **www.rghongo.com**. Let us know if you would like to transition to e-newsletter by emailing us at **gayhongo47@gmail.com**.

We would appreciate a year-end donation.

1. General Fund. This will go towards the operational expenses of the ministry (salaries, technical support, office administration) as well as a pension for me.

2. Hongo Music Center. We have completed raising funds for the building, so further gifts are now being used for programs and scholarships.

3. Japan outreach by Taylor Pagaragan

Thank you so much for your support and prayers. It is a joy partnering with you in serving our Lord through Christian Vision.

Warmest Aloha, Gay Hongo



& A Blessed New Year!