

Winter 2012

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# Koinonia

West Oahu Christian Church  
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## Pastor's Corner

### Worship Services:

Japanese Worship /  
Bible Study

9:15 AM – 10:15 AM

English Worship

10:45 AM – 12:00 PM

### Sunday School:

English Adult Sunday  
School

9:15 AM – 10:15 AM

### Children's Ministry:

Breakfast Program

8:45 AM – 9:15 AM

Children's Church

9:15 AM – 10:30 AM

Children's Activities  
Program/Child Care:

10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

### Upcoming Events:

Christmas Program

December 23

## Hidden Blessings

*"She wrapped him in strips of cloth and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." - Luke 2:7b*

During Christmas parties we often play different types of trivia games about the nativity story. One time a particular multiple-choice question that stumped quite a number of us had to do with what the innkeeper said to Joseph and Mary – was it A, B, C, or D? Do you know? As it turns out, the Bible says nothing at all about an innkeeper, much less what he said! You should hear how many at the party said, "Oh, yeah" or, "Interesting" or just plain, "Hahaha!"

During our trip to the Holy Land, one such "hmmm, interesting" moment happened while visiting the birthplace of Jesus in Bethlehem. I wasn't sure what I was supposed to expect, but whatever it was, what I saw did *not* match it! (virtually nothing did.) While in my mind I typically think of an inn as a small version of the Holiday Inn, I knew it wasn't going to be like *that*. As it turns out, the inn that had no room for the expecting couple was just a single room; maybe 20ft. x 20ft. Forget the private room! In this inn, travelers would come enter, find a place on the floor between other travelers, and put their things down to rest.

Well, Joseph and Mary had to go to another place to rest, and while there, the time came for baby Jesus to be born. The inn being full was actually a *blessing in disguise*, leading to a much more private place to give birth. Moms, how would you like to have given birth in the hospital's lobby?!?! The other blessing - the other travelers wouldn't have to put up with a crying baby next to them!

Have you ever had a plan, only to find your plan blocked, but then to find an alternate route to be even better? The story of Jesus' human existence begins by demonstrating God's providential guidance. The Roman Emperor issuing a census for people to return to their hometown – such an inconvenience ... but a mere coincidence? So risky a trip from Nazareth to Bethlehem, but Mary not going into labor until arriving at Bethlehem ... a mere coincidence? Of course not. It is God's Providence.

Likewise, God's Providential guidance is upon our lives. Inconveniences and course corrections are hidden blessings. His loving hand quietly but surely goes before us to calm our fears and assure us that He is still in control. Is He there when you can't find parking? Of course. Is He there when the store has run out of the item you rushed there for? Definitely. Is He there when your party plans

*(continued on next page ...)*

***Hidden Blessings (continued)***

don't go as expected? Absolutely. How about a flat tire, or the dreaded notice from work, or the anticipated call from the doctor? Yes, He is there.

This Christmas season, may we be granted the grace to perceive the hidden blessings and know that He is near and guiding us every step of the way. That's what the nativity is all about isn't it? Merry Christmas!

In His Love, Stan

***WOCC Intentional Discipleship Church Initiative*** by Donna Kranz

We desire to be a church where we are intentionally helping people become whole hearted followers of Jesus. About a year ago Pastor Stan and Steve Kranz along with Navigator consultant Dennis Blevins invited us to be a part of a series of monthly meetings where we together learned how we can become an Intentional Discipleship Church. We learned that we can live the great commission right where we live, work, and worship. It was reassuring to know that God is looking for amateurs, ordinary people like you and me to fulfill His great commission. Trainings are held on a monthly basis; our next meeting will be held on Sat.

January 12, 2013 at West Oahu Christian Church from 8:30 am to 11:00 am. Come join us and learn how we can engage in the great commission one conversation, one relationship at a time. For more information please contact Steve or Donna Kranz at [donnakranz@gmail.com](mailto:donnakranz@gmail.com).

***Christmas Angel Project*** by Joyce Tanji

Christmas is a time of joy and celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ. It is also a time when people exchange cards and gifts with those they care about. However, in some families it is a less than joyous occasion especially for some of our children who tend to receive very little gifts (if at all) during this time of celebration.

It is with this concern in mind that the CE Committee launched this project to provide an opportunity for our members to reach out to a child in a loving and prayerful way. The response to this project has been overwhelming. Several members of our congregation opted to sponsor more than one child and now over 40 children are participating in this project. Photo frame ornaments have been constructed by "Martha and friends" and have been decorated by each child and will be distributed to their secret Christmas Angel. We are asking that these sponsors pray for their "child" and family throughout the year and especially when they view their photo.

## Spring Banquet 2013 by Tena Ponder Thacker

I know that this will seem quite a bit early, but I'll ask you to join me in thinking about the Spring Banquet for 2013. This is December ... I know ... and I haven't even had my first cup of eggnog! However, I'm on a quest to come up with new and fresh activities for our springtime fun. As you attend parties, banquets and soirées this holiday season remember those fun ice breakers and party games that you enjoy perhaps we can adapt them for our use. Feel free to give me suggestions if there is anything that you would like to add or change for our next banquet. The silent auction and country store are mainstays every year but we can incorporate new activities. I have received one suggestion for a WOCC cookbook which would include many of the scrumptious dishes that we have enjoyed during our potluck luncheons. What say the wonderful cooks among you? Are you game to write down those recipes that live only in your heads?! Elaine Nagasako recently held a nishime cooking class for one to share her mother's wonderful recipe. Consider sharing those family treasures with your church family. In the meantime .....



I hope that everyone is having an Advent season revelatory of the true reason that we as Christians celebrate Christmas. May we all remember to keep CHRISTmas well. Merry Christmas one and all!

## Christmas Caroling by Tena Ponder Thacker



Caroling came early to Waipahu Hall Elderly this year! First we sang Christmas carols to usher in the Christmas spirit. It is such a blessing each year to spend time with these precious seniors. I think that we all look for the senior that we visited with last year so that we can have a little special time with them. As Pastor Stan noted, and we agree, we are not sure who started this

WOCC tradition but we are ever thankful that they did. What better way is there to show the love of Christ?



Friends and families of WOCC brought a potluck feast for all to enjoy. The food was fabulous as always. And although we were concerned that we might not have brought enough, God took what we brought and blessed it. Praise God there was plenty! Something special happens when we sit down to enjoy a meal prepared with love, the importance shifts from the food to the fellowship. So if you have never come to carol



with us before don your jingle bells and follow us next year. Join in as we make a joyful noise unto The Lord!

Editorial Staff: Jennifer Duldulao, Neal Takamoto, Nancy Shimokawa & Joyce Tanji  
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### Christmas Program



On Sunday, December 23, the keikis from our Children Church will be presenting a musical skit entitled, "The Best Gift," during the morning worship service. Please join us in this celebration of the reason for this season.

A light lunch will be served after the service.

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*From all of us at WOCC,  
Have a Very Merry Christmas  
and a  
Wonderful New Year!*

We're on the Web!  
See us at:  
[www.wocc-hi.org](http://www.wocc-hi.org)