



MĀNOA VALLEY
CHURCH

Annual Report
2025

United Church of Christ
2728 Huapala Street
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

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Statement of Faith

The following Statement of Faith contains the basic tenets of the Christian beliefs of this church:

We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, who is made known to us in Jesus Christ.
We believe in the divine inspiration and authority of the Holy Bible.

We testify that:

God calls the worlds into being,
creates humankind in the divine image,
and sets before us the ways of life and death.

God seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

God judges all humanity and all nations by that will of righteousness
declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord,

God has come to us
and shared our common lot,
conquering sin and death
and reconciling the whole creation to its Creator.

God bestows upon us the Holy Spirit,
creating and renewing the Church of Jesus Christ,
binding in covenant faithful people of all ages,
tongues, and races.

God calls us into the Church

to accept the cost and joy of discipleship,
to be servants in the service of the whole human family,
to proclaim the gospel to all the world
and resist the powers of evil,
to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table,
to join him in his passion and victory.

God promises to all who trust in the gospel
forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace,
courage in the struggle for justice and peace,
the presence of the Holy Spirit in trial and rejoicing,
and eternal life in that kingdom which has no end.

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto God. Amen.

(Adapted from the Statement of Faith approved by the Second General Synod of the United Church of Christ held in Oberlin, Ohio, July 5-9, 1959 and revised by Robert V. Moss.)

Mission Statement of Manoa Valley Church

We believe that Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, is calling us to obey the commandments to love God and our neighbor and to make disciples in His name.

Therefore, it is our purpose to provide ways through which the people of Manoa Valley and Honolulu can know Christ and make Christ known.

To accomplish this, we will equip people through:

- joyful, Christ-centered worship
- networks of caring and fellowship
- opportunities for spiritual growth and discipleship training.

We will reach out to the world through:

- evangelistic efforts to share the gospel in word and deed with friends, relatives, associates, and neighbors
- programs of service to touch areas of human need with the love of Christ
- support of mission efforts throughout the world.

To God alone be the glory!

The Covenant of Manoa Valley Church

We hereby covenant and commit ourselves to give meaning to the beliefs in the Statement of Faith in the following ways:

We place our lives in God's hands and will strive to give Christ's teachings a practical priority in our lives.

We will strive to become informed, mature, active Christians through regular worship, reading and study of the Bible, prayer, and sharing our faith with others.

We will make the giving of our time, talent, and treasure a responsible, regular, and joyful part of our lives.

We will strive to embody the example of Christ in our attitudes toward and relations with our fellow human beings.

With trust in God's saving grace, we accept this as our covenant of discipleship. Amen.

Vital Statistics

Total Membership, January 1, 2025 **155**

Number received

Confession of Faith	5
Reaffirmation of Faith	0
By transfer	0
Moved to active status1
	+6

Number removed

By death	3
By transfer	0
By resignation	0
Moved to inactive status	0
Record error	0
	-3

Total membership, December 31, 2025 158

Deaths

September 7, 2025	Jean Fumie Yamada
September 23, 2025	Margaret Murakami
December 17, 2025	Beverly Yutaka

Special Offerings for 2025

One Great Hour of Sharing	\$1,761.52
Neighbors in Need	\$1,100.00
Strengthen the Church	\$1,195.00
UCC Christmas Fund	\$1,691.52
UCC Disaster Fund	\$50.00

Senior Pastor Annual Report 2025

Rev. Abraham Han

Dear Mānoa Valley Church ‘Ohana,

As I look back on 2025, the word that keeps coming to mind is gratitude. Gratitude for Jesus’ steady faithfulness, and gratitude for the courage and kindness I see in so many of you. Through joy and loss, new beginnings and hard weeks, Jesus has been present with us. He has continued to form us as His people.

Worship and the Word

Sunday worship remains at the heart of our life together. Week after week, we gather to sing, pray, listen, confess, and receive grace. I’m grateful for everyone who serves so faithfully to make Sunday mornings a place where longtime believers can encounter the living God to be nourished and where those who are spiritually curious can feel welcomed and safe. Special thanks to Ruth Komatsu, Sam Browning, and David Park for all your help with the details for each Sunday.

In preaching, we listened for God’s larger story that holds our smaller stories:

- **“The Story We Live In”** (January to August 2025): the metanarrative of God’s work that gives clarity, meaning, and hope to our lives and our world.
- **“People of a Kingdom on the Way”** (August to November 2025): a 10-week journey through Philippians, learning what it means to live here in Mānoa Valley and also “in Christ,” citizens of His coming Kingdom.
- **Advent:** waiting, longing, and hope in the coming King.

Throughout the year, the invitation was simple and consistent: following Jesus is not only for Sunday, but for the other six days of the week, where faith is tested and formed in ordinary life.

Discipleship, Connection, and Care

MVC’s great strength is that we are genuinely multi-generational. We have kūpuna who have walked with Jesus for decades, families raising children in a complicated world, and people of all ages carrying grief, health concerns, and major transitions. By God’s grace, we are learning to belong to one another in ways that are concrete and compassionate.

Connection Groups continue to be one of the primary ways that belonging becomes tangible. Our Lenten prayer group was a real gift. Thank you to Pastor Evelin and Pastor Gwendolyn for leading us with such care. And thank you to all our Connection Group leaders: Dianne Ishida, Cat

Iwami, Pastor Alan, David Park, Sam Browning, and others who create space for friendship, Scripture, prayer, and honest conversation.

And as we celebrated, we also grieved. We hold close those who lost loved ones this year, and we entrust ourselves to the God who is near to the brokenhearted.

Mission and Our Presence in the Community

Throughout 2025, I sensed the Lord stretching us outward, not by turning us into “more programs,” but by shaping us into a more present, prayerful, relational community for our neighbors. I’m grateful for the ways our partnerships continued to grow, including Be Ready Mānoa, YWAM Mānoa, Keauhou Shelter, and others.

We also saw meaningful outreach through David Park’s ministries: Fit4Life and Hoops4Life (elementary), and the beginning of Athletes4Life (high school). These spaces are more than activities. They are places where people (young and not so young) are seen, trust is built, and the love of Jesus can be encountered through consistency and care.

Leadership, Staffing, and Stewardship

In 2025, we took an important step forward by creating the Pastor of Missions & Community Engagement role, and we are grateful for this new season as Pastor EJ Ravago begins serving with us. We also voted to move forward with the Pastor of Discipleship & Community Life role, formally approved in January 2026, and we eagerly await Ruchama Joël joining our pastoral team. We believe these roles will help us grow deeper in Christ and widen our capacity to love God and our neighbors well.

I’m also grateful for the steady growth of our Preschool and After School Care programs. We continued to strengthen staffing and programming through 2025. Thank you to Pastor Evelin and Trisha Honda for their leadership, and thank you to their teams for the daily work of loving children and supporting families. Looking ahead, we hope to expand care for 2–3 year-olds in 2026.

On the stewardship side, our Council approved a shift that will begin at the start of the 2026 fiscal year: the Building Fund will become the Legacy Fund, helping us hold together care for our campus and new opportunities to serve people in our community.

A Word About the World We Lived In

It would be incomplete to talk about 2025 without acknowledging the wider world’s heaviness. Many of us carried anxiety from conflict and division, while also carrying private burdens: illness, grief, financial stress, and strained relationships.

In that context, the church's calling is not to offer simplistic answers, but to practice hope: to keep worshiping, keep praying, keep showing up for one another, and keep doing the next faithful thing right in front of us. That is not denial. It is Christian realism: Jesus is Lord, love is never wasted, and resurrection means the worst thing is never the last thing.

Looking Ahead to 2026

- Cultivate our missional posture as a church through the Pastor of Missions & Community Engagement role.
- Strengthen discipleship and community life as we step into the Pastor of Discipleship & Community Life role, expanding clearer pathways for formation and belonging.
- Grow our congregational care ministry through Stephen Ministries so that no one feels overlooked or alone.
- Explore thoughtful ways to care for youth, and those in college and early-career seasons.
- Expand Connection Groups and Bible study opportunities, including Men's, Women's, and Youth groups, and explore the possibility of an evening service, while continuing to support families through our Preschool and After School Care programs (including the hoped-for expansion to better care for 2-3 year-olds).

Thank You . . .

Thank you for your prayers, your service, your generosity, and your friendship. I'm grateful for our Sunday worship set-up crew and greeters; our Worship Committee, Praise Band, and A/V tech team; our hospitality teams, a special thank you, Ruth Komatsu, for all the behind the scenes work you and the team do; Harvest Fair volunteers; children's ministry teachers and volunteers (including those who lead Children's Moments); and our Connection Group leaders: Cat Iwami (Art for Fun), David Park (Fit4Life), Sam Browning (Saturday Night Basketball and Friday Night Volleyball), Pastor Alan (Bible Study Connection Group), Dianne Ishida and the Book Club team, and Pastor Gwendolyn and Evelin (Lenten and Advent groups). I'm grateful as well for the Sisters and Brothers in Christ Care Team and the many people who quietly check in, bring meals, and show up with presence and prayer.

Thank you to our committees and leadership teams: Deacons, Child Care Committee, Christian Education Committee, Sisters and Brothers in Christ, Seniors Ministry, Missions Committee, Communications Committee, Finance Committee, Trustees, Worship Committee, Personnel Committee, Pastoral Care Committee, Pastoral Search Committee, Executive Committee, the Church Council, and so many more, for the steady, often unseen work that keeps ministry healthy and faithful.

Special thanks to Bette Uyeda, who served so faithfully and well as our Moderator these past two years, and to Roger Au for stepping in as Moderator for this next season. Thank you to Alan Ito,

our Treasurer, and David Shimabukuro and Warren Kunimoto, for stepping in as acting Treasurer during times of need; Catherine Miyahira, our Secretary; and Kel Hamada, our Trustees Chair.

And thank you to our staff: David Park (Office Manager), Alison Kawamoto (Accountant/HR Specialist), Trisha Honda (Director of After School Care) and her wonderful team, and Pastor Evelin Tai (Preschool Director) and her wonderful team, including Dawn Hamada and Ying Zhang.

It is an honor to be your pastor. May the Lord Jesus Christ continue His good work among us, and may we learn, day by day, to follow Him with humility, courage, and joy.

With love in Christ,

Abe

Moderator

Annual Report 2025

Bette Uyeda

Looking Back at the Year 2025

As I end my four-year service as Moderator of Manoa Valley Church, I look back on this last year of my term with gratitude and joy. 2025 was another eventful year in the life of our Church. With the leadership and hard work of our Pastors, Council members, committee chairs, and our many Church members and friends, we lived out the Christian message and wrapped up another year of service to our community.

Here are some of the events of the past year that we recognize with thanksgiving:

- 1) Initiated the process of *hiring two additional professional staff members* to work with our Pastors and members to develop leaders within our church and to grow our outreach ministry into the community.
- 2) Continued to grow our *Connection Group ministry* which provides our church family with opportunities to learn, develop skills, strengthen their faith, and form relationships with each other. Some of the experiences offered include the study of scripture, a prayer fellowship, a book club, art classes, and fitness classes/activities.
- 3) Organized an *art show at the Church* displaying the original art work of the talented participants in our classes.
- 4) Strengthened our *child care programs* by continuing to develop our curriculum and forming a core of church volunteers to assist teachers and staff in our Preschool, After School Care, and Sunday School programs.
- 5) Offered opportunities for the Church to *connect with families in our child care programs* by carrying out service projects to assist the community; organizing and participating together in activities during Christmas, Easter, Harvest Fair and other special occasions.
- 6) Organized our annual *Harvest Fair* in November for the community. Members and friends, young and old, joined together to carry out this major fundraiser for the Church as we welcomed the community to meet and greet our church family and learn what MVC has to offer in programs and services.
- 7) Continued to educate our members and friends regarding *safety procedures to be followed* when evacuating the sanctuary in the event of an emergency.
- 8) Carried out needed *renovations* to our Church facility to keep it safe.

Preparing for the Year 2026

The Church faces another year with key positions on the Council still unfilled. In particular, we need to identify and recruit individuals willing to serve as our Council Vice-Moderator and Secretary. In the meantime, our current leaders will perform “double duty” as they take on additional responsibilities to keep the Church moving forward. *If any members feel called to serve God and the Church in these key positions or in other areas of need, please contact Roger Au, our newly elected Moderator (roger.mvc.19@gmail.com) or Pastor Abe (pastor@manoavalleychurch.org) to discuss the possibilities.* You will enrich your experience at MVC if you take the step to get involved!

Bette Uyeda
Outgoing Moderator, Church Council

Board of Trustees

Annual Report 2025

Kel Hamada

Introduction

The Trustees of Manoa Valley Church are grateful for the opportunity to serve our congregation through the stewardship of our facilities, resources, and long-term planning. Throughout 2025, we sought to care for the physical and financial well-being of the church so that our ministries can continue to flourish. Guided by prayer, collaboration, and a commitment to responsible leadership, we worked to ensure that our campus remains a safe, welcoming, and functional home for worship, fellowship, and community outreach.

Mission of the Trustees

The Trustees are charged with overseeing the maintenance, preservation, and responsible use of the church's property and assets. Our work this year focused on:

- Maintaining and improving the church campus
- Ensuring financial stewardship of facility-related expenses
- Supporting ministry needs through responsive facility care
- Planning for long-term sustainability and resilience

Highlights of 2025

1. Facilities Care & Improvements

- The Church cottage renovation started. The electrical wiring was upgraded, the interior painted, new cabinets and appliances installed. We are waiting on our permit for the extension of the cottage and installing a new bathroom. This project will be completed in 2026.
- A privacy fence was installed between the cottage and the preschool playground.
- The Upper Room, the Associate Pastors office, and the multi-purpose room had the carpet removed and new vinyl plank flooring installed.
- All fire hoses in gym were replaced.
- Another big Mahalo to David Park for scheduling a lot of the repairs needed to maintain our facility and keep it safe and running.

Financial Stewardship

Another successful Harvest Fair. A big Mahalo to Dianne Ishida, Richelle Fujioka and all the booth chairs for doing an excellent job raising money to support the Building Fund. We

are looking forward to another successful Harvest Fair in 2026.

- Collaborated with the Finance Committee to align facility needs with the church's overall financial health.

2. Sustainability & Long-Term Planning for 2026

- A third-party monitor and contractors are in place for the repainting of the gym ceiling. Work will commence during the summer break.
- Contractors will start the preschool playground equipment upgrade and the installation of Astro Turf during the summer break.
- Strengthened documentation and processes to support continuity and clarity for future trustees.

3. Support for Ministries & Community Use

- Pastor Abe is working hard with the Trustees and Childcare programs to add more classrooms to our Preschool. This project is moving forward slowly as we await another permit for the City & County to complete the expansion.

Challenges & Learnings

Every year brings its own set of challenges, and 2025 was no exception. Aging infrastructure, rising costs, and the ongoing need for preventive maintenance required careful planning and flexibility. Through these challenges, we were reminded of the importance of teamwork, communication, and prayerful discernment. We remain committed to addressing these needs with wisdom and faith.

We look forward to continuing this work in partnership with the congregation, staff, and leadership teams.

Closing Reflection

We are guided by the reminder in **1 Corinthians 4:2**:

“It is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy.” With gratitude for God's provision and the support of our church community, the Trustees remain committed to serving faithfully and responsibly.

Respectfully submitted,

Kel Hamada

Members: Alan Ito, Diane Ito, Catherine Miyahira, Earl Yonehara, Gerald Saito, Mark Au, Roger Au

Ex-Officio: Pastor Abe Han

Communication Committee Annual Report 2025

Richelle Fujioka

In 2025 the major focus of the Communication Committee continued to be the monthly newsletter, *Mānoa Connection*. It was one of MVC's primary modes of communication and consisted of 12 issues published on the first Wednesday of each month. We emailed a PDF of the newsletter to more than 160 friends and members as well as the Preschool and ASC parents. We were integral to the events and efforts that relied upon publicity such as requests for participation in Missions drives and the Harvest Fair.

For the production of the eNewsletter, we were amply served by a small but dedicated staff. Roy Miyahira was the photographer and did the layout for the newsletter. Bette Uyeda, Richelle Fujioka and Louise Yamamoto were responsible for writing, editing and connecting with other members to solicit articles that appeared in the newsletter.

We would like to recognize individuals (outside of our staff) that contributed articles and announcements to the newsletter:

Pastor Abe—pastoral letters

Alisa Au—Missions Committee gift card drive

Roger Au—security at MVC

Sam Browning—Nominations Committee requests/White Elephant needs

Ron Iwami—editorial

Pastor Gwendolyn Kirkland—Lenten and Advent Devotional Discussions/Fitness Class

Ruth Komatsu—Choir and Worship Requests

Inga Park Okuna—Family Promise food drives and Welcome Home Kits

Catherine Miyahira—Special Collections

Lisa Miyamoto—Mānoa Parade

David Park—letter to Congregation

Sue Yamamoto—Missions Committee projects

For the Harvest Fair, we created a flier (thanks to Roy) which was distributed to businesses and two large banners (thanks to Louise) and ran print media promotion in HCUCC's newsletter.

In looking ahead to 2026, we intend to carry on the crucial production of the eNewsletter and expand its coverage and distribution, to make it more available and relevant to the community at large. In this respect, we anticipate working with the two new pastors.

Respectfully submitted,

Richelle Fujioka, Chair

Current Members: Roy Miyahira, Louise Yamamoto

Finance Committee Annual Report 2025

Warren Kunimoto

In 2025, your Finance Committee had 4 members: Alan Ito (Treasurer), Warren Kunimoto (Chr.), David Shimabukuro, and Larry Okinaga. During the later part of the year, Pastor Gwendolyn Kirkland attended the Finance Committee meetings in anticipation of her coming on as a fifth member of our committee beginning in 2026. Pastor Abe and Moderator Bette Uyeda also attended meeting. We are greatly assisted by Alison Kawamoto, the church accountant and HR specialist.

The church currently has bank accounts at First Hawaiian Bank and Central Pacific Bank. We have investment accounts at the Hawaii Conference Foundation and Charles Schwab.

In August 2025, we, the Finance Committee, met on the 2026 church budget for operating expenses. The draft 2025 budget for church operations was made by Alison Kawamoto and Alan Ito based on budgets submitted by the church committees. We also worked on the 2026 Legacy Fund budget which includes expenses for major repairs and improvements. The church is projected to have over \$800,000 in necessary repairs and improvements in 2026. We will start the year with about \$250,000 in the Legacy fund which means a deficit of over \$500,000 which will need to be covered by church reserves (savings). The proposed budgets were reviewed by your Finance Committee, discussed and approved with adjustments. The budgets were then approved by the Council. And the Congregation in November.

In December, we worked on the Child Care program budgets for the Pre-School and After School Care. Those budgets have been submitted to Council.

In November we also supported the Harvest Fair with cash handling, tallying, and depositing.

We have been challenged in 2025 with the absence of our Treasurer for the 4th quarter. Many thanks to David Shimabukuro and Alison Kawamoto for stepping up to assist with fulfilling the Treasurer responsibilities. We are thankful and pleased to welcome back our Treasurer in 2026.

Nominating Committee Annual Report 2025

Sam Browning

In 2025, of the 15 Manoa Valley Church (MVC) committees and the Church Council, there were 49 individuals (48 members and 1 non-member) who served in 70 positions. Out of the 17 members whose term ended at the end of 2025, there are 15 members who will be continuing another term/partial term. There are 8/49 individuals who did not continue another term due to personal reasons.

As of January 30, 2026, there are 46 individuals (44 members and 2 non-members) serving 68 positions on the 2026 slate at MVC. There are 11 individuals serving in two positions, 4 individuals serving in three positions, and one individual serving in four positions. It's great to see a new first-time servant serving this upcoming year!

There are currently two vacancies to fill on the Church Council:

- Secretary
- Vice Moderator

There are three committees in need of more members:

- Child Care
- Christian Education
- Deacons

There are 2 key positions wanting to train for next year:

1. Financial Secretary
2. Treasure

There are currently five non-urgent vacancies to fill on committees:

1. Aloha Programs
2. Christian Education, Young Adult Representative (YAR) under age 30
3. Peace & Justice (2x)
4. Nominating

Here are the last years of slates of elected MVC ministry and committee members:

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>2025</u>	<u>2026</u>
Church Council (1)								
Officers & YAR	5	6	4	4	4	4	4	4
Worship (3)								
Deacons	6	5	5	5	5	5	4	3
Worship	8	7	6	6	6	8	7	8
Sisters & Brothers	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4 (sub committee)
Faith & Develop. (3)								
Child Care	5	7	5	4	4	4	4	4
Christian Ed.	7	6	7	5	5	6	5	4
Senior Ministry	6	7	6	6	7	7	7	7 (sub committee)
Hospit. & Outrea. (3)								
<i>Aloha Programs Co.</i>	1	2	3	3	2	2	2	2
Missions	4	3	3	5	4	5	6	6
<i>Peace & Justice Rep.</i>	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
Admin. & Support (6)								
Communications	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Finance	5	4	4	4	5	5	4	5
<i>Nominating</i>	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Personnel	3	2	3	3	4	5	5	4
Sen. Pastor-Pastoral	5	7	6	6	6	6	5	5
<u>Trustees</u>	5	6	6	6	6	7	7	6
Total:	73	75	71	69	70	75	70	68

I will close with the same statement as that I have stated over the course of my 7-years on the nominating committee, because it is just as heart felt and relevant then as it is today. Thank you to all of you who have served, serve and/or will serve on committees at MVC, to ultimately further God's kingdom on earth-your gift of your time, talent and treasure is greatly appreciated. As we recall the stories of both *The Parable of the Bags of Gold* in Matthew 25:14-30 and *The Parable of the Ten Minas* in Luke 19:12-27, let us serve in a joyful and humble manner, so that one day we will hear those special comforting words, "Well done good and faithful servant. You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!" (Mt. 25:21, Lk. 19:17)

There are 13 members whose term ends at the end of 2026. Please pray for how you and others may best serve in the future at MVC. Sarie and I pray that you live a joyful new year filled with serving the Lord in 2026 and beyond!

Personnel Committee

Annual Report 2025

Earl Yonehara

Current State of Church Affairs. Your Personnel Committee addressed pay and unpaid benefits for our employees and worked with Pastor Abe and the Council to inform the congregation about a strategic plan for growth. We are at a crossroads where we urgently need to decide on the future of Manoa Valley Church. For the past two decades, MVC has been falling into the category of a "dying church". Without change, membership will continue to decline as older members pass away, increasing challenges to meet our tithes and offerings that directly impact the church's financial stability and ability to maintain operations. In the long term and under the worst-case scenario, we risk a takeover by a denomination whose mission and values may not be consistent with what our church has stood for in this community for the past 78 years. Pastor Abe, as senior minister and servant leader, could see the handwriting on the wall. The good news is that our congregation responded to God's call for change. See below for details.

Employee Handbook and Pay Raises. MVC's Employee Handbook was last updated in 2018. This employee guide covers all aspects of employment with the church. Changes needed to be made to comply with updates to our Federal and State labor laws that now cover veterans and pregnant employees. While MVC does not meet the required number of employees to be covered under the Federal and State Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), they can maintain their group health insurance through a combination of leave credits (vacation or sick leave) and leave without pay. There was also a need to tighten the language enforcement governing the use of sick leave, vacation and leave without pay and also clarify MVC's responsibilities in Workers' Compensation and Unemployment claims. A significant addition to the Handbook was made to the Violence Prevention and Reporting Section in response to the growing incidents of random acts of violence. To assure compliance with existing labor laws, ongoing consultation has been maintained with the Hawaii Employers Council (HEC) and the UCC Insurance Board.

The year 2026 also brought mandatory changes to our minimum wage law that increased it from \$14/hour to \$16/hour, effective January 1st. Following a thorough review of the existing pay scales for hourly employees, increases were approved for all After School aides and staff. A decision was made to forego eligibility for COLA increases in January, since the pay increases exceeded the projected COLA increase. For the Preschool teachers and aides, recommended pay increases were deferred to enable a comprehensive study of pay and benefits among other comparable sized Preschool programs. This task is to be carried out by the Child Care Committee in conjunction with our Preschool Director.

New Pastoral Positions. Your committee, along with the Council and Congregation reviewed and unanimously approved the filling of two new pastoral positions: Pastor for Missions and Community Engagement and Pastor of Discipleship and Community Life. It was widely agreed that revitalizing Manoa Valley Church would require substantial funding for the two key positions to support various mission areas. The Senior Pastor will be providing oversight and working in partnership with these positions, along with our Child Care Director to build and strengthen the following ministry areas: 1) Worship; 2) Children's Ministry/Sunday School; 3) Youth and Families; 4) Young Adults and Singles; 5) Small Groups and Discipleship; 6) Mission and Outreach, 7) Bible Study and Education; and 8) Congregational Care. The complexity and breath of these ministry areas cannot be thoroughly addressed by our Senior Pastor alone. Your approval to provide the additional help needed will significantly jump start the earlier steps taken by Pastor Abe to survey the community needs in Manoa and beyond, start the formation of connection groups, and build a comprehensive plan for the future of Manoa Valley Church.

Mahalo to committee members Roger Au, Dianne Ishida, Alan Ito, David Shimabukuro, and Pastor Abe as ex-officio member. Their critical input and insightful comments were instrumental in carrying out the responsibilities of this committee.

Worship Committee

Annual Report 2025

Ruth Komatsu

The 2025 Worship Committee members worked unselfishly “behind the scenes” to provide Sunday service attendees with meaningful, worshipful experiences. They demonstrated hearts of love, service, creativity, and faithfulness through their actions. Committee members were Sam Browning, Jerry Hamada, Karen Hamada, Anita Motte, Inga Park Okuna, Susan Shiraki, and Ruth Komatsu. Sam and Ruth served as Co-chairs and Council representatives.

“Regular” Committee Tasks

Worship Committee members prepared the Sanctuary for weekly in-person worship services. Tasks included folding bulletins, changing and lighting altar candles, bringing in the Areca palms, tidying up, checking that the pew wells are adequately filled with Operational and Legacy Fund envelopes and pens, bringing out the Welcome table, easel, and name tag rack, and setting up the TV and chairs for breezeway viewing of the service. During the service, members were available to greet attendees, distribute bulletins, assist congregants, monitor the breezeway area, and take attendance. After service clean up tasks, including taking out the Areca palms and watering them, were made easier by helpful congregants.

Monthly committee duties included flipping and rotating pew cushions and straightening their covers, allowing for even wear. In addition, the pews were realigned and spaced as they regularly shift and need to be realigned every so often.

Committee members provided adornments for observances of the church’s liturgical seasons (Ordinary Time, Lent, Eastertide, Pentecost, Advent and Christmastide), for special days (Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve Candlelight), and coordinated weekly worship leaders, scripture readers, Children’s Moments presenters and altar flowers providers. Every Sunday, congregants were welcomed with name tags, worship bulletins, copies of the Upper Room, and monthly communion elements (prepared by the Deacons).

Worship Services

Sunday worship services were held in-person and livestreamed on Zoom. Zoom livestreams continued to be offered even though the number of weekly participants has declined. Worshipers were sent the Order of Worship and Zoom link by email on Sunday mornings, allowing them to join the pre-service chat at 9:30 and the worship service at 10:00. On most Sundays, post-service chats were hosted by Melanie Ching from Tennessee. Thanks, Melanie! Special services, such as Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Sunrise,

and Christmas Eve Candlelight were held in-person only (not livestreamed on Zoom). Christmas Eve Candlelight service was recorded and shared online on a later date.

We averaged 100 in-person and 8 Zoom worshipers on Sundays. This was a 6 person in person increase and 4 person online decrease from 2024. Our service with the highest attendance was April 20, Easter (238 - increase of 10) when the ASC, PS and Sunday School students participated in worship. Our Christmas Eve Candlelight service was attended by 164, a decrease of 17 people from 2024.

On Sundays, we continued to offer viewing of the live Zoom broadcast in the breezeway on the 55" TV screen. A handful of people regularly took advantage of this every Sunday.

Video recordings of Sunday and Candlelight in-person services were posted and shared with members and the larger community on Mondays via email, the MVC website and in two Facebook groups. Thank you, Office Manager David Park for preparing the videos! The 53 videos got a total of 2,929 plays (up 26% from 2024), with 2,495 unique viewers (up 155% from 2024!). And the average viewer duration was 17 minutes, 28 seconds, which was down 17% from 2024.

Weekly, Sam and Ruth consulted with Pastor Abe and guest speakers about their themes and scripture in order to select related songs for the Praise Band and congregation to sing. Ruth prepared the presentation screens and pre-recorded videos, and they were inserted into the master Keynote presentation on Sunday mornings by David. The AV Team members, led by David, were Miles Han, Giovani Browning, Ana Tai, Jerry Hamada, and Kel Hamada, with Ama Browning helping occasionally.

We celebrated the purchase of new AV equipment in November 2024, but are still trying to get the best performance out of it. In-person audio was fine. Online, the video was fine, but the audio for **music** still needs to be improved. We hope to make small purchases that will add ambient sanctuary and congregation sounds into the mix for a more realistic sound.

Presenters and Participants

Children's Moments was presented by Sam, Inga and Daniel and Jolie Berger. The regular rotation of Worship Leaders consisted of Inga, Sue Yamamoto, and Carrie Glenn/McBean. The open spot in the rotation (every 4th Sunday) was filled by Ron Hashiro, Bette Uyeda, Sarie Uechi, Earl Yonehara, Richelle Fujioka, Pastor Evelin Tai, and Deloris Hairston. Services on 5th Sundays were led by the Youth. Weekly scripture was read by a 23-person rotation, and 30 different individuals/families provided altar flowers. Pat Seppanen's monetary donation helped with floral purchases by the Committee. Thank you to all!

Music

Reggie Tamashiro provided prelude and offertory music on piano or organ. The Praise Band of Reggie, Sam, Carrie Glenn/McBean, Karen Hamada, Ron Hashiro, Justin Lui, Lisa Miyamoto, Neil Okuna, and occasionally Ruth, led praise and worship singing, sometimes rotating with Michael Thomas.

The MVC Worship Committee members are the many parts of one body, with each member using her special God-given talents and interests to honor our Lord and to help make services meaningful to the worshipers. We strive to give God our best, so that we and those in the congregation and community may experience Jesus together as a family in Christ.

In His service,

Sam Browning, Jerry Hamada, Karen Hamada, Anita Motte, Inga Park Okuna, Susan Shiraki, Ruth Komatsu

MVC Deacons Ministry Annual Report 2025

No report available.

Sisters & Brothers Ministry

Annual Report 2025

One of the roles of the Sisters/Brother Ministry is to listen to prayer requests from MVC members and friends of the S/B ministry. Then these requests are shared with fellow S/B Ministry members for additional prayers. These requests can be acquired via phone calls, emails or in person.

Another role of this ministry is to make visitations to homes or hospitals upon request. This year we were able to visit a member's sister at KALAKAUA GARDENS, where we shared prayers, sang songs and "talked story". As one member always tells others: "We the S/B ministry members gain much more out of these visitations just seeing the happy faces, warm smiles and listening to the happy thoughts expressed by those we visit."

Therefore it has been our pleasure serving in this wonderful ministry started by our mentor and leader, Nobue Izutsu, through the many years.

We welcome anyone who would like to serve in this ministry. Therefore, please approach any of the members listed below for more information.

Respectfully submitted by Alene Nakasone, co-chair

Dianne Ishida

Susanne Shimabukuro, co-chair

Earl Yonehara

Christian Education Committee

Annual Report 2025

The broad goal of the Christian Education Committee has been to bring together the children and families of Manoa Valley Church and the Children Ministries into a loving Jesus-centered Ohana. To do this, the CEC Committee has worked with our Church Council and the Pastor of Children and Family Ministries, Evelin Tai.

The following are the events the CEC jointly coordinated with the MVC Ohana in 2025. The events may have involved the Manoa Valley Church families, as well as the families of the greater Manoa Valley community.

January-May

During this time, Sunday School was conducted on Sunday mornings for children who were of Preschool-Elementary age. These children were who attended Morning Worship Service were dismissed from Worship Service after Children's Moments to go to the ASC room where the Sunday School classes were held. Pastor Evelin Tai and Dawn Hamada coordinated the recruitment of teachers for Sunday School and also selected the curriculum. Many children came by way of the Preschool and Afterschool Care Programs and others came through the Sunday Worship Service. Ruth Komatsu and Karen Hamada led the Praise and Worship activities.

April

One of the events CEC helped to coordinate was the Easter Egg Hunt. This event took place right after Easter Worship Service when participants moved from the Sanctuary into the gym and playground areas which had been prepared to accommodate the children for the hunt.

Many volunteers are needed so a sign-up list was prepared, well in advance of Easter, in the breezeway. Also since this event straddles lunch time, other groups helped with ordering the food and the preparation of hot dogs and chips. Other groups worked on selecting an Easter book to present to each family.

And as tradition follows, there was the beautiful floral cross to decorate by the breezeway.

May-June

The Summer Program is usually coordinated by the ASC leadership. CEC continues to provide Child Care in the gym for children who are excused from Worship Service.

September

Rally Sunday for Sunday School which brings together families and children for the new school year, usually happens on the first Sunday after Labor Day.

Respectfully submitted,

Maizie Okimoto

CEC Members: Dawn Hamada, Wimberly Grove, Carolyn Okinaga, Joanne Funasaki

Child Care Committee Annual Report 2025

In 2025, the Childcare Committee experienced significant changes. In July, the former chairperson, Dawn, stepped down from her role and the committee. Denise then took over as chair, with Soo offering her support. Despite not having set goals for the year, the committee achieved several milestones.

1. They selected and approved the purchase of new playground equipment to be installed in the summer of 2026.
2. They supported the renewal application process for preschool accreditation.
3. They conducted a collaborative budget review with the Finance Committee, leading to changes in how the Preschool and Afterschool Care Budgets are reported.
4. They also collaborated with the Personnel Committee to review and align the total compensation package for all paid childcare program staff with industry standards.

The committee requests the Congregation's prayers as the committee and programs continue to evolve and each member humbly serves these important ministries of Manoa Valley Church.

Members: Dawn Hamada (Chair, January - July)

Denise Au (Chair, August - Present) *

Evie Gallagher *

Soo Benetta Chin *

Jerry Hamada (August - present) *

Erin Tokoro (August - November)

* current members

Manoa Valley Church Preschool

Annual Report 2025

Evelin Tai

For the month of December, during chapel time, the children acted out the Christmas story with costumes and simple props. It was a joyous time as we celebrated Advent and prepared for our Savior's birth. For the Christmas program on Dec 13, 2025, the children sang various Christmas songs to a sanctuary filled with parents, grandparents and many friends. Pastor Abe and Soo passed out freshly popped popcorn to all the happy children. Later that evening, families in our PSC and ASC programs joined the church community for pizza, cookies, hot chocolate and Christmas caroling. We spread cheer to the seniors at the Manoa Care Center and to the Fire Station. About 80-90 people from the Preschool and ASC program attended.

We are thankful for our dedicated team of teachers who pour into our children daily. In addition, we are thankful for our substitute teachers as well as other faithful church volunteers who have provided support during the past year.

Our top ranked curriculum promotes growth and development for the whole child. Field trips, guest speakers, service opportunities and weekly chapel services round out their educational experience. Guru Guru Kitchen provides healthy and delicious lunches for our keiki. Our on-site in-person trainings further equip our teachers. Topics include teamwork, effective communication, managing challenging behaviors in the classroom. These training sessions not only fulfill the mandatory State requirements for teacher training, but also serve to build teamwork and strengthen relationships among staff.

Beyond broad initiatives, we are committed to supporting the varying aspirations of our individual families and students. During parent teacher conferences in October, parents and teachers communicate goals and objectives for the school year as well as future kindergarten plans. While most families choose Manoa Elementary, Noelani or other public schools, each year a couple of students out of our class of 20 apply to Punahou and are accepted.

I would like to thank Pastor Abe, The Child Care Board (Chair Dawn Hamada), The Trustees, Moderator Bette Uyeda, Earl Yonehara, Dawn and Kel Hamada, Alison Kawamoto and David Park and so many faithful volunteers at Manoa Valley Church for supporting the preschool in many ways including in prayer. Our students and families are so precious and we thank God for this opportunity to know and serve them.

School Year: August 2025-July 2025 (closed last two weeks in July)

Hours: 7:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Cost: Application Fee: \$50

Tuition: \$1,250 per month

Staff: Director: Evelin Tai

Teachers: Kelley Martin, Ying Zhang, Wimberly Grove

Assistants: Ai Papalardo, Patricia Murata

Enrollment: 34-40 children (current enrollment is 40 with waitlist)

Manoa Valley Church After-School Care/Summer Fun

Annual Report 2025

Trisha Honda

The Manoa Valley Church After School Care Program continues to provide a safe, caring, and welcoming environment for children after the school day ends. Rooted in Christian values, the program supports families by offering dependable care, academic support, and opportunities for children to grow socially and spiritually. This year, the program served children in grades Kindergarten through fifth and operated Monday through Friday from 1:30-5:30pm.

Throughout the year, approximately 106 children were enrolled, with an average daily attendance of 95. Attendance remained steady, reflecting strong family involvement and trust in the program. The program welcomed children from both the church and the surrounding community.

Each afternoon included time for homework and quiet reading, with staff available to assist students as needed. Children also participated in arts and crafts, group games, outdoor play, and enrichment activities. Age-appropriate devotion time, prayer, or character-building discussions were included to reinforce Christian values such as kindness, respect, gratitude, and cooperation.

The program was led by dedicated staff and volunteers who worked together to create a nurturing and structured environment. All staff members were trained in child supervision, behavior support, and safety procedures, including first aid, CPR and Safe Church. Student safety remained a top priority, with consistent sign-in and sign-out procedures and close supervision at all times.

Families were kept informed through regular communication and had opportunities to share feedback. Parents expressed appreciation for the caring atmosphere, the support their children received, and the faith-based foundation of the program.

Overall, the After School Care Program had a successful year. Children showed growth in responsibility, social skills, and confidence, while families benefited from reliable and faith-centered after-school care. Looking ahead, the program plans to expand enrichment activities, strengthen family engagement, and continue providing a loving, Christ-centered environment for all children served.

Blessings,
Trisha Honda
ASC Director

ASC: AUGUST 2025-MAY 2026
ASC Tuition was \$2550
Manoa School: 78 children
Noelani School: 28 children
All Day Care: 26 children

SUMMER FUN 2025: JUNE-JULY
Summer Fun was a total of 7 weeks
Summer Fun Care: \$1850 (7:30-5:30)
Weekly Rate: \$300 (7:30-5:30)
Total of 65 children

Missions Committee Annual Report 2025

Susan Yamamoto

Missional giving in 2025 was suspended to most of our mission partners so the funds could be focused on hiring a new Pastor of Missions & Community Engagement. A search committee was formed, a job description drafted and recruitment began. As the position was not filled by the end of the year, the budget was not spent but held in reserve.

There were generous donations that allowed us to continue limited giving. We gave monetary support to the Wycliffe Bible Translators (Ray Uehara, Missionary) and to the UCC Our Church's Wider Mission.

We coordinated monthly lunches for the residents at the Keauhou Shelter, delivering 60 nutritious meals in decorated bags. Thank you to the children and staff for making the bags so cute all year!

Holiday gift cards were collected for Catholic Charities and the Waikiki Community Center. These gift cards are distributed to Kupuna in our local communities at Christmastide.

Family Promise of Hawaii received monthly dinners for clients in their transitional housing in Mo'ili'ili through generous donations, coordinated by Inga Park-Okuna. We also put together "Welcome Home" kits for families securing homes. Thank you to the entire congregation for your support for these projects.

The Aloha Committee, with Reggie's leadership, served snacks after worship each month. This will continue on the last Sunday of each month in 2026. Additional special events were enjoyed by the congregation with support from the Aloha Committee. A picnic and canned food drive were enjoyed by all in late summer. Special Mahalo from the St. Pius Food Pantry was received for the van-full of non-perishable food that we collected for their ministry.

The Committee looks forward with joy as we enter a new ministry phase, serving alongside the Pastor of Missions and Community Engagement to strengthen existing relationships and build new opportunities to be the hands and feet of Jesus in this hurting world.

1 Chronicles 29: 14 – “But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from You, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.”

Submitted: Sue Yamamoto, Chairperson

Members: Evie Gallagher, Kathy Lee, Melanie Ching, Alisa Au, Anita Motte

Peace and Justice: Inga Park Okuna

Aloha Committee: Reggie Tamashiro

Senior Ministry Annual Report 2025

Alene Nakasone

Many years ago, the Senior Ministry was established to serve the senior members of MVC. Therefore, it was determined that one of its major roles would be to provide activities for the group. So through the past years field trips, workshops with guest speakers, and Christmas High Teas were planned. Due to different constraints, the number of activities planned and executed yearly has changed.

In 2025, we had a workshop in June with Stacey Hayashi, author of THE STORY OF LUCY, Mascot of the 442nd RCT Medics. Besides telling how she got involved writing this delightful book, she brought along a video of her illustrator, Willie Ito, who shared how he got into the animation business, eventually working with Hanna Barbera, Sanrio, Warner Brothers and Walt Disney [Lady and the Tramp].

In December 2025 we held our annual CHRISTMAS HIGH TEA. We have been so fortunate throughout the years to have the assistance of talented MVC member, Shirley Murakami, sharing her artistic ability teaching the attendees to make either Christmas pins or ornaments.

We welcome any one who would like to serve in this ministry. Therefore, please approach any of the members listed below for more information.

Respectfully submitted by Alene Nakasone, co-chair

Evelyn Chong

Dot Endo

Evie Gallagher

Dianne Ishida, co-chair

Susanne Shimabukuro

Vina Yamashiro