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Building the Kingdom



Craig Webb

Executive Director/Treasurer

808-946-9581

craig@hpbaptist.net



About the Cover

O Le Pupu-Pue National Park, American Samoa (licensed Adobe Stock photo).



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From One Servant Leader to Another

Honor Your Pastor

I'm delighted to report that several churches that have been without a pastor have recently called one. I'm honored to attend installations and either lead a prayer, or bring a challenge to the congregation or a challenge to the pastor. I'm attending three in the month of March and getting to do one of each! In my challenge to the church, I've adapted a message that my dad, Henry Webb, shared with me on how to honor your pastor.

“The elders (pastors, overseers) who are good leaders are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard at preaching and teaching.” 1 Timothy 5:17

1. Pray for your pastor to have ...

- **Acceptance.** That your pastor, “*may be acceptable to the saints*” (Romans 15:31). The saints are believers in your community.
- **Boldness.** “... *that the message may be given to me when I open my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel.*” Ephesians 6:19
- **Clarity.** “... *that I may make [the message] known as I should.*” Colossians 4:4.
- **Deliverance.** “... *that I may be rescued from the unbelievers in Judea.*” Romans 15:31.
- **Extension.** “... *that God may open a door to us for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ.*” Colossians 4:3.
- **Fruitfulness.** “... *that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you.*” 2 Thessalonians 3:1 *

2. Encourage your pastor by ...

- **Loving** your pastor and his family. John 13:34-35
- **Affirming** your pastor and his family. 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13
- **Following** his leadership. Hebrews 13:17
- Being willing to **serve**. 1 Peter 4:10.
- Having **realistic expectations** of your pastor.

3. Honor Each Other.

In Romans 12:10 – “*Love one another deeply as brothers and sisters. Take the lead in honoring one another.*”

Philippians in 2:3-4 – “*Do nothing out of selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility consider others as more important than yourselves. Everyone should look not only to his own interests, but rather to the interests of others.*”

For the Sake of the Gospel!

Craig Webb
HPBC executive director-treasurer

* Adapted from a tool by TW Hunt to pray for missionaries

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Pacific Connector

2042 Vancouver Dr, Honolulu
HI 96822 • 808-946-9581

Executive Director, Editor:
Craig Webb
craig@hpbaptist.net
808-946-9581

Associate Editor:
Dawn Akutagawa
dawn@hpbaptist.net
808-946-9581

Contributing Editor:
Brandon Pickett

Designer:
Patti Spencer

Contributing Writers:

Phillip Barr, John Blackmon,
Brian Frable, Robert Miller,
Brandon Porter, James Shiroma,
Shane Tanigawa, Craig Webb

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Information about the *Pacific Connector* or the Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention is available by emailing info@hpbaptist.net, or calling 808-946-9581. You may also write to *Pacific Connector*, Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention, 2042 Vancouver Drive, Honolulu HI 96822.

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Asia Baptist Network in Bangkok



*By John Blackmon, Associate
Pastor, Calvary International,
Bangkok, Thailand*



Conference attendees lauded the choice for the relevance, transparency, and personal testimonies of the speakers.

The Asia Baptist Network (ABN) gathered March 12-14 in Bangkok, Thailand. While the gathering had lower attendance than in previous years, the participants were encouraged by the intimacy and camaraderie experienced in the setting. ABN moderator Chris Eyre recruited speakers from ABN churches and HPBC. Conference attendees lauded the choice for the relevance, transparency, and personal testimonies of the speakers.

The theme this year was “Church Health.” HPBC executive director-treasurer Craig Webb spoke specifically to churches in transition and noted this has been a major season of transition for both the HPBC and ABN member churches (including the host church’s longtime senior pastor, Martin Chappell, who retires at the end of 2024).

Pastor Butch Tanner of Hong Kong shared that he was at first hesitant to attend but was delighted to find that ...

“ this meeting was a breath of fresh air. It was much smaller than previous meetings, but ... that gave it its special character. **There seemed to be a lot more interaction between church leaders.** ”

Benjamin Howard of Yokohama Baptist Church pointed specifically to a testimony shared by Chris Eyre, “We heard an honest pastor who wrestled with grief and hurt, but at the same time was clearly grounded in the hope he received through Christ.” Howard said having ABN members speak “... made the sessions even better, hearing from our own.”

Throughout the few days, participants enjoyed meals, relevant sessions, musical worship, touring Bangkok, serving alongside Calvary International Baptist Church’s (CIBC) ministry to refugees, making food deliveries, and visiting detainees at an Immigration Detention Center (IDC).

Masahiro Harta reflected on his visit to IDC: “... it was a good opportunity to consider my faith in Christ. I met a Pakistani Christian man and he said ‘because I believed in Christ I had to



leave the homeland.’ When I preached in youth worship service right after I returned to Japan, I shared about him ... [the students] were crying with tears and impressed how God is working ... even through the tough situations. Then we prayed for the ministry that CIBC has for the immigrants.”

The Network’s fellowship predated their joining the HPBC. The Foreign Mission Board of the SBC (now IMB) planted most of these churches in previous decades. In 2017, they were invited under the leadership of Chris Martin to join the HPBC. Some are in majority military communities, while others are in dual or multi-ethnic settings in city centers.

While much of church life is similar to New Testament churches worldwide, these congregations face distinct advantages and challenges. Parker Windle, the new lead pastor of the International Baptist Church in Manila, remarked, “International churches are unique. Having other pastors challenged by the same particularities to discuss these with is an important resource.”

In our year and a half of service, my family and I have realized that we could not do what we are doing here without the encouragement and support we have received from the Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention and the fellowship we enjoy with the Asia Baptist Network.



Living Faith Holds Easter in the Park

By Philip Barr

On March 30th, the day before Easter, **Living Faith Baptist Church** hosted our "Easter In The Park" event. At Easter in the Park, we connected with our community to let them know there is a church here that cares. It also gave us the opportunity to be seen as a leader in our community as we invited performing groups from our local schools to come and present during the event. Most importantly, it gave us the opportunity to present the gospel to everyone who attended.

This year, Kauluwela Elementary's hip-hop dance club, Cub Crew, came and performed for us. We also had two rounds of Easter Egg

Hunts and several booths with various games, crafts, and Bible Story Telling. Last year, around 200 people from the community participated. This year, we had over 300! Nu'uuanu Baptist and Hawaii Chinese Baptist helped support our event this year. Fifty volunteers worked together to help make this event happen.

Your gifts through the Sue Nishikawa Offering for Hawaii Pacific Missions helped fund this event.



**Sue Nishikawa
Offering**
for Hawaii Pacific Missions



BAM Community Easter Worship

The **Baptist Association of Micronesia (BAM)** held an Easter Sunrise Service at Jimmy Dee's Paradise Beach Resort. They followed the worship time with baptism fellowship. Guam Christian Life Fellowship, Calvary Baptist, and Tamuning Baptist participated.



Koza Outdoor Easter Service

Koza Baptist Church, Okinawa, held an outdoor Easter Sunday Worship service at the Araha Beach Stage. Nine people were to be baptized in

the Ocean next to the park, but the rain arrived at the end of the service, and the baptisms were postponed. Chris Eyre is the pastor.



South Pacific Baptists Celebrate Joint Sunrise Service

The **South Pacific Baptist Association (SPBA)** in Samoa held a joint Easter Sunrise Service on Sunday, March 31.



SPBA Pastors and Wives



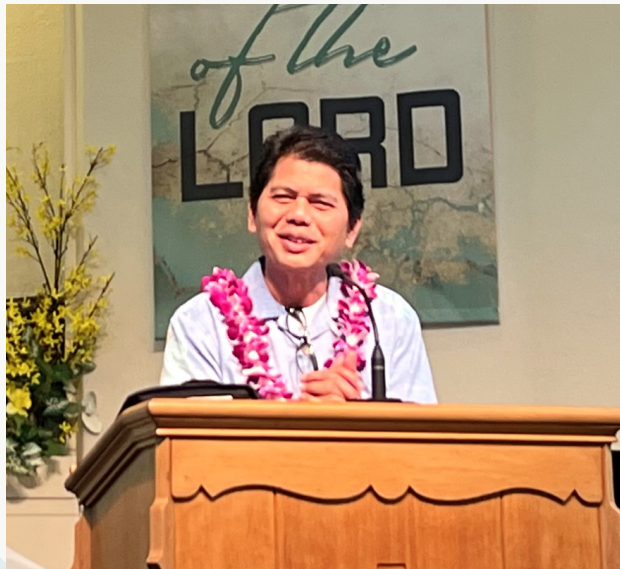
"Bong" Abagon Installed as Pastor of FBC Wahiawa

By Robert Miller, director of regional ministries, Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention

Michael "Bong" Abagon was installed as pastor of **First Baptist Church of Wahiawa** on April 7, 2024. He became FBC of Wahiawa's 20th pastor. Pastor Abagon returned to this church as pastor after serving this congregation from 2003 to 2010. Pastor Abagon also serves as Pastor of Mililani Fil-Am Baptist Church and Oahu Baptist Network Moderator. Pastor Bong is married to Cristina. Together they have three grown boys. First Baptist Church of Wahiawa

has a noteworthy history among Hawaii Pacific Baptists. In 1926, Baptist work in Hawaii started in Wahiawa as a Sunday school class, which eventually became FBC of Wahiawa.

Representatives of the Oahu Baptist Network, Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention, Mililani Fil-Am Baptist Church, Wahiawa Christian Ministers Association, and Filipino Southern Baptist Fellowship of the Pacific were in attendance.



Pastor Abagon delivers the pastor's response



Pastor Michael "Bong" Abagon and his wife Cristina



Chaplain Major Archer "Glen" Basuel, pastor of Waipahu Community Christian Church, brought final encouragements and the closing prayer.



The FBC Wahiawa Worship Team



First Baptist Haleiwa Celebrates 60 Years of Ministry

By Robert Miller, director of regional ministries, Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention

On February 18, 2024, **First Baptist Church of Haleiwa** (FBCH) on the North Shore of Oahu celebrated its 60th Anniversary. From around the island, 150 gathered to celebrate 60 years of God's faithfulness. Members of FBCH, pastors and members of Hawaii

leaders representing the Oahu Baptist Network and the Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention.

According to Pastor Amel Dominguez, the members of FBCH were very encouraged by the support they received from partner churches and friends who attended the event. Pastor Amel, who has been serving as pastor for three years, shared in his sermon how God has displayed his faithfulness in the past and present. Members and guests remained after service to enjoy a catered meal and to take group photos. Pastor Amel, who lives on the church property with his wife Vangie and four children, is the full-time pastor. He previously served at Island Grace and Hawaii Kai Church.



God has displayed His faithfulness in the past and present.

Kai Church, Island Grace, and First Baptist Church of Wahiawa joined together to celebrate this special occasion. FBC of Wahiawa was recognized as the church that sponsored the planting of FBCH. During the service, FBCH's long-standing preschool participated in the service along with



Malama Christian Fellowship Spring Break Outreach

By James Shiroma, pastor,
GracePoint Church, Oahu



Malama Christian Fellowship (formerly First Baptist Church of Nanakuli) hosted a youth camp on its church property from March 20-22, 2024. About 80 youth participated in three days filled with fun, fellowship, good food, worship, and learning God's word.

"We believe that the future of this community will come from these children," said Eddie Hunt, senior pastor of Malama Christian Fellowship. "We just want to impart on them God's word and let them know the simple stuff about Jesus loving them and dying on the cross for them for their salvation. Kids are grasping it. They are loving it and taking it back home to their parents."

Volunteers from Malama Christian Fellowship, other churches from the Leeward Coast, and a mission team from River Community Church in Cookeville, Tennessee, served as "camp staff" to ensure all campers heard and understood the gospel.

In addition, Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention's Sue Nishikawa Offering, Oahu Baptist Network, individuals, and organizations helped support this camp financially and with donated items.

Hunt's wife, Faleiva, said reaching the community through this camp challenges people to look beyond what they can see.

"We see these children and we just think that they can handle it and they are okay," Faleiva said. "But when we see them and things happen and we don't understand why they are behaving and acting that way, we realize it's more than just what we see. It's a heart issue."

"It causes us to come out of our comfort zone. Just sometimes sitting with them and allowing them to be heard (and) at the same time letting them know you can hurt with me because you can hurt with Christ."

God is using Hunt, who became pastor nearly two years ago, to revitalize the church. Hunt said the church had 10 people on his first Sunday. Today, Hunt said the church averages 50 people each Sunday. Part of the vision in this revitalization is to reach the next generation.

"It's good to see that the kids are finding Jesus in all that we're doing," Hunt said.





Third Deaf Camp Hawaii Held in March

*By Shane Tanigawa, pastor,
University Avenue Baptist*

The third **Deaf Camp Hawaii** was held on Oahu from March 19 to 22, 2024. The camp was conducted entirely in American Sign Language (ASL); eleven kids participated, thirty-four volunteers from five Oahu churches

ties as the desire is to raise up a generation of deaf believers who can also be leaders in the deaf community.

Kids Deaf Camp is an outcome of the partnership between the Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention (HPBC) and the Tennessee Baptist Mission Board. Tennessee mission team members represent the ministries of Brentwood Baptist Deaf Church (Pastor Aric Randolph), Memphis Deaf Church (Pastor Larry White), and Deaf Church Knoxville (Pastor Arthur Clayton). Partnering HPBC churches are First Baptist Church of Pearl City (Pastor Sterling Lee), University Avenue Baptist Church (Pastor Shane Tanigawa), and Nu'uaniu Baptist Church (Pastor Bob Gierhart).

helped, eleven missionaries from Tennessee provided leadership, and eleven Hawaii ASL signers assisted.

Like any camp, the kids play games and have fun, hear Bible stories, learn about Jesus, and hear the Gospel. During this camp, a deaf professional cook taught a cooking class, and the campers were gifted with a cooking kit containing recipes, so they were inspired to cook at home. Through camp, kids are presented with deaf role models.

An impact is being made as the kids are requesting more camps or activities, since waiting until March 2025 for the next camp is too long of a wait. The Hawaii volunteers are exploring possibili-

Financial assistance for camp is generously provided through the Sue Nishikawa Missions Offering. This assistance allows the deaf to "hear" the Gospel in ASL, potentially for the first time and helps the hearing church continue its mission of presenting the Gospel to the deaf community, who still need to be seen and heard.



Jeff Iorg

Elected to Lead SBC Executive Committee

By Brandon Porter

DALLAS (BP) – Jeff Iorg will become the eighth leader of the SBC Executive Committee. Iorg received a unanimous vote from 60 EC members at a special-called EC meeting on March 21, 2024.

Iorg, 65, will serve as president-elect until his tenure as president of Gateway Seminary officially concludes with graduation on May 11. His first official day as EC president/CEO will be May 13.

“Today’s unanimous vote marks a significant turning point for the SBC Executive Committee and the SBC as a whole,” said EC Chairman Philip Robertson. “You cannot overstate the importance of leadership, and Jeff Iorg is a leader among leaders. The way Southern Baptists have united around this nomination is something we haven’t seen in a long time. I am extremely grateful to God for that. It’s a new day at the EC.”

Iorg has led Gateway Seminary since 2004. The seminary announced a leadership succession plan in October that would culminate in Iorg’s retirement.

During his tenure at Gateway, he led the school to relocate its primary campus to Southern California and to change the school’s name from Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary to Gateway Seminary of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Gateway serves 2,000 students, including a current enrollment of 1,000 students studying in 15 languages through its Advance Program. The school also has formal partnerships with seminaries in Mexico, Korea, Singapore, Taiwan, Nigeria and the Ivory Coast.

The seminary’s endowments grew from \$16 million to \$60 million under Iorg’s leadership.

Search Team Chairman Neal Hughes told Baptist Press he believes the SBC “is going to see a strong leader, a kind leader, an effective leader, an administrative leader and a spirit-filled leader.”

“We’ve come now to this moment where we say like Psalms, the Lord has done this and this is marvelous,” Hughes said.

Prior to coming to Gateway, Iorg led the Northwest Baptist Convention for nearly a decade. He helped the con-



vention grow its Cooperative Program income from \$4 million to \$5 million.

He also oversaw the completion of the Northwest Baptist Center and led the staff to relocate to Vancouver, Wash.

“Jeff Iorg has already brought unity to the Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention and to the Southern Baptist Convention, as evidenced by the acclaim from far and wide in response to the initial announcement and by today’s unanimous vote,” said SBC President Bart Barber. “Jeff Iorg has said today that the SBC is a force for good. I believe that God will use Jeff Iorg as a force for good, and I will cheer him on and pray toward that end.”

Iorg first trusted in Christ in 1972. He was led to faith by an associate pastor at Elmcrest Baptist Church in Abilene, Texas, who was serving in an evangelism booth at the West Texas Regional Fair. He was called to ministry during his senior year of high school in 1977.

He went on to serve as a children’s minister at Elmcrest Baptist Church before becoming pastor at Green Valley Baptist Church in St. Joseph, Mo., and Pathway Church in Gresham, Ore.

A magna cum laude graduate from Hardin-Simmons University with a Bachelor of Arts in Bible and a minor in psychology, Iorg continued his education at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, earning a Master of Divinity degree. He received a Doctor of Ministry degree from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, with a dissertation focused on developing effective listening skills for evangelism.

He and his wife Ann married in 1980 and have three children and five grandchildren. He is the author of eight books on biblical leadership, character development, evangelism, marriage and leading through change.

Iorg hosts a podcast called *Lead On!* which is available on all major podcast platforms.

Yokohama International, Kona Baptist, and IMB **Partner for Impact**

Yokohama International Baptist Church (YIBC) (Asia Baptist Network/HPBC), **Kona Baptist Church** (Big Island Baptist Association/HPBC), three members of the International Mission Board (IMB) Yokohama team, and members of other local Japanese churches worked together in the second week of April to hold an "English Bible Camp" and support the YIBC bi-monthly "English Café" Ministry.

English Bible Camp

The "English Bible Camp" was held for 150 8th-grade girls from a local school. YIBC pastor Ben Howard said, "I am beyond grateful for our partnership with like-minded churches and missionaries to proclaim the Gospel and shine light into the lostness of this country of Japan." He added, "This is a missionary school founded in 1886. Only about twenty percent of the teachers claim to be Christian, and far fewer students do."

Natalie Nation, an IMB missionary sent from Pawa'a Community Church (Oahu), said, "The most impactful thing was that at the end of the weekend, we asked if anyone was interested in knowing more about God, and at least half raised their hands." The girls were given a simple Japanese book about God's love for them, QR codes with access to free bible resources

in Japanese, and information about YIBC. Natalie added, "It was an absolute privilege to spend the weekend teaching about Jesus, praying for these girls, and serving alongside amazing people with hearts to see God moving in Japan."

Pastor Howard said, "Reina Yamada, YIBC missions and outreach coordinator, did a wonderful job coordinating a team effort involving the multiple churches to train and help us prepare for the event. Due to God using Reina's efforts, we truly had a unified team right from the beginning when we all met in person for the first time." He added, "The 8th-grade girls told the school they really enjoyed it, and the principal and vice principal have already asked us to make it an annual event."



Bi-monthly English Café

Kona Baptist was also able to help with a Hawaii-themed English Café. YIBC's Reina Yamada shared that "Forty-five participants, including eighteen from Yokohama International Baptist, nine from Kona

Baptist, and eighteen non-believers, participated." English Café is a bi-monthly event where YIBC members connect with the local neighborhood through English.



13-15

MAY

Pu'u Kahea Camp and
Conference Center

Pastors Retreat

Recapturing the **Glory of Christ**

Pray for our HPBC pastors to rest, refresh, be equipped, and fellowship with other pastors. Your gifts through the Cooperative Program and the Sue Nishikawa Offering for Hawaii Pacific Missions support this camp, including travel scholarships for neighbor island pastors.

Our guest speaker is Dr. Ryan Rippee, pastor, professor, and seminary president. Ryan is the pastor of Trinity Church of Benicia in Benicia, CA, and president of The Cornerstone Bible College and Seminary. He has a Ph.D. from Southern Seminary with an emphasis in Biblical Spirituality and a minor in Church History. Ryan is the author of *Preaching that Exalts Christ: The Pulpit Ministry of Steve Fernandez* and *That God May Be All in All*.

For more information, contact:
Robert Miller at robert@hpbaptist.net
or visit: tinyurl.com/hpbc-pr



This retreat is sponsored by a grant from your North American Mission Board. Thank you for giving through the Cooperative Program and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering.

Dr. Ryan Rippee
Guest Speaker

 North American
Mission Board



Move: Evangelism Conference

Stepping Out to Share the Gospel

Romans 10:14-15

July
19 & 20

I. We Must Trust God

Dr. JJ Washington

Director of Personal Evangelism
North American Mission Board

**Hawaii Baptist Academy
(HBA) Middle Campus in
Nu'uano Valley**



**North American
Mission Board**

This event is sponsored by the North American Mission Board, funded by your Church's gifts through the Cooperative Program and the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering.

Join us at the 2024 HPBC Evangelism Conference on July 19th and 20th! This two-day event will feature keynote speaker Dr. JJ Washington, Director of Personal Evangelism at the North American Mission Board.

The conference will be held at the beautiful **Hawaii Baptist Academy (HBA) Middle Campus in Nu'uano Valley**. Friday from 5:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. and Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to noon.

Participants can look forward to **large group worship and teaching** and **eight breakout groups** spread across three sessions. Dinner on Friday and breakfast on Saturday are provided.

This is an excellent opportunity for anyone interested in personal evangelism to learn from leaders who live out personal evangelism. Don't miss out on this exciting event!

Watch for registration and more information soon.

2024 First and Second Quarter Executive Board Updates

By HPBC President Brian Frable

In January 2024, the Programs Committee requested that the following motions regarding scholarships be approved through an email vote. These scholarships for Theological Initiative were approved: New applicants Cody Rogers, Shaw Okawara, David Kuraya, Fusako Takada, and Jesse Macabasco have been awarded scholarships ranging from \$625 to \$1,250 for the 2024 spring semester. Renewing applicants David McElrath, Noah Denney, Jeff Buchholz, Gay Williams, Todd Morikawa, Kerey Smith, and Sara Shin have also been awarded scholarships ranging from \$625 to \$1,250 for the 2024 spring semester.

At the February 23, 2024, Executive Board meeting, the board unanimously approved the provisional appointment of the following new board members: Neil Nakama (Valley Isle Fellowship, Maui), Matt Gao (Pawa'a Community Church, Oahu), and Johnny Lau (Living Faith Baptist Church, Oahu). They will fill vacancies on the Executive Board for 2024.

The Executive Board, as recommended by the Operations Committee, voted to appropriate \$150,000 of operational funds from the Hawaii Baptist Foundation to the Pu'u Kahea Designated Fund for improvements to the Pu'u Kahea Conference Center in order to prepare the grounds for guests this spring and approved a recommendation to continue discussions with Hawaii Baptist Academy regarding the transfer of the Pu'u Kahea Conference Center property. The Operations Committee is committed to having all permanent Board recommendations concerning the Pu'u Kahea Conference Center be presented to the messengers of the Annual Meeting in 2024.

The Programs Committee recommended, and the board approved, a Leadership Development Initiative grant to Yokohama International Baptist Church of \$10,000 for a one-year appointment for Reina Yamada. The Programs Committee also recommended, and the board approved to offer only one grant opportunity under the HPBC Leadership Development Initiative to assist HPBC churches with the creation of new ministry leadership positions. They recommended, and the board approved the creation of a new "First Year Leadership Subsidy" as the only Leadership Development Initiative grant. The Programs Committee has created documentation for the grant opportunity and these are available on our website at hpbaptist.net/initiatives.



Left to right: Craig Webb, executive director-treasurer; Brian Frable, president; Larry Hale, 1st vice president; Naomi Ashman, 2nd vice president; Grace Poei, recording secretary

The Programs Committee recommended, and the board approved, that the "New Mission Effort Support Scholarships (church/members)" and "Mission Trip Coordination (with HPBC staff team) Scholarships (HPBC pastors)" from the HPBC Missional Development Initiative are recommended to be discontinued, and any public-facing information regarding these scholarships should be removed.

The Communications Committee brought two recommendations, and the board approved both. First, the Executive Director-Treasurer will be directed to hire a designated, trained staff person or independent contractor to receive calls regarding allegations of sexual abuse and provide initial guidance. The committee noted that this person should be trained in trauma to assist survivors and churches and help submitters file an allegation report with the appropriate party. They also tasked the Executive Director-Treasurer to compile a list of professionally trained, licensed, trauma-informed Christian and/or biblical counselors to assist HPBC churches in ministering to survivors of sexual abuse.

Our next Executive Board Meeting will be held on Friday, May 10, 2024, at the Hawaii Baptist Academy Administrative Offices.