All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth." *Matthew 28:18*

2025 ANNUAL MEETING
SPECIAL EDITION

ALL AUTHORITY *in Christ*

pacific connector

Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention

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Building the Kingdom

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About the Cover
Moments of Ministry: A special edition honoring HPBC's 2025 Annual Meeting.

For More Issues
Scan this QR code or visit: hpbaptist.net/pacificconnector

From One Servant Leader to Another

Aloha Hawaii Pacific Baptists,

As we gather at the Outrigger Kona Resort & Spa for our Annual Meeting, our theme is "All Authority in Christ," drawn from the words of Jesus in Matthew 28:18: "Jesus came near and said to them, 'All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth.'" This theme will guide us not only through our Annual Meeting but throughout all of 2026.

Our HPBC President, Brian Frable, our keynote speaker, Mark Clifton, and I will each address this powerful theme, hoping to unpack just part of the beauty of Christ's Great Commission found in Matthew 28:18-20.

We often focus our attention on the command to "go and make disciples." It's the heartbeat of the Great Commission, and rightly so. But we frequently overlook the essential bookends that make our mission possible. Jesus begins with a declaration: "**All authority** has been given to me in heaven and on earth." And He concludes with a promise: "Remember, **I am with you always**, to the end of the age."

Here's the truth we must embrace: We cannot go and make disciples in our own strength. We cannot baptize in His name by our own power. We are **sent** out in **His authority** and **sustained** by **His powerful presence**. Without Christ's authority, our efforts are merely human endeavors. Without His abiding presence, we lose courage, and no matter how hard we work, our labor has no power.

This theme calls us to dependence, to persistent prayer, to trust that transcends our circumstances, and to obedience rooted not in our capability but in His strength. It reminds us that perseverance in ministry comes not from sheer determination but from the One who holds all authority and promises to be with us always.

For 82 years, Hawaii Pacific Baptists have chosen to cooperate and contend together, recognizing that what Christ has commissioned, He also authorizes and empowers. The HPBC provides a vehicle for churches to fulfill the Great Commission together—not in our own authority, but in His. We provide the support, encouragement, challenge, resources, connections, and relationships that help churches go forth in the authority Christ has given.

In this Annual Meeting edition of Pacific Connector, you'll discover how our churches across the Hawaiian Islands and the Pacific are living out this calling, grounded in Christ's authority and sustained by His presence.

Thank you for your faithfulness to the One who holds all authority in heaven and on earth, and who sends us forth in His power.

By His Authority and In His Presence,

Craig Webb
Executive Director-Treasurer
Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention

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The *Pacific Connector* highlights people and churches that work to spread the Good News of Jesus by reaching the Pacific and Asia.

Information
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Hawaii Pacific
Baptist Convention

ANNUAL MEETING 2025

"All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth." Matthew 28:18

ALL AUTHORITY *in Christ*

NOVEMBER 20-21

Outrigger Kona resort & Spa on the Big Island

To download a copy of this schedule, scan the QR code below or go online to:
hpbaptist.net/2025-annual-meeting

SESSION 1

Thursday Evening
November 20

childcare: 5 pm - 8:30 pm

5:00	pm	Registration & Refreshments
6:00	pm	Call to Order
6:05	pm	Worship
6:20	pm	Welcome & Announcements
6:25	pm	Invocation
6:30	pm	Credentials & Resolutions Committee Report
6:40	pm	Introduction of New Pastors, Workers, and Guests
6:50	pm	Church Planting Spotlight
7:00	pm	Regional Spotlight: *Asia*
7:25	pm	Scripture Reading
7:30	pm	Message: *President Brian Frable*
7:50	pm	Closing Worship
7:55	pm	Adjournment/Benediction
8:00	pm	Fellowship & Refreshments

SESSION 2

Friday Morning
November 21

childcare: 7:30 am - 12:00 pm

7:30	am	Registration & Continental Breakfast
8:15	am	Call to Order/Announcements
8:20	am	Worship
8:30	am	Invocation
8:35	am	Greetings from Southern Baptist Agencies: *International Mission Board & North American Mission Board*
8:55	am	Regional Spotlight: *Guam and American Samoa*
9:15	am	Scripture Reading
9:20	am	HPBC Staff Report
9:50	am	Break
10:10	am	Worship
10:20	am	Greetings from Southern Baptist Agencies: *Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission, Guidestone, Financial Resources, Lifeway Christian Resources, and SBC Executive Committee*
10:40	am	Celebration of Tennessee Partnership 2022-2025
10:50	am	Hawaii Baptist Foundation Report
11:00	am	Hawaii Baptist Academy Report
11:10	am	Executive Director-Treasurer's Message: *Craig Webb*
11:30	am	Adjournment/Benediction
12:00	pm	Lunch: *sponsored by the Hawaii Baptist Foundation and Alec & Belle Waterhouse Lecture Series*

SESSION 3

Friday Afternoon
November 21

childcare: 1:30 pm - 4:00 pm

2:00	pm	Call to Order
2:05	pm	Invocation
2:10	pm	Credentials & Resolutions Committee Report
2:20	pm	Convention Arrangements Committee & Order of Business Committee Report
2:25	pm	Executive Board Reports & Recommendations
2:40	pm	New Business
3:10	pm	Committee on Committees & Board Nominations
3:40	pm	Elections of New Officers/Introduction of New Officers
3:55	pm	Adjournment/Benediction

SESSION 4

Friday Evening
November 21

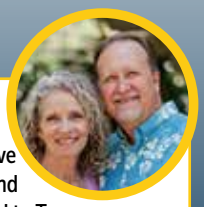
childcare: 6:00 pm - 8:30 pm

6:00	pm	Registration
6:30	pm	Call to Order/Announcements
6:35	pm	Worship
6:50	pm	Invocation
6:55	pm	Acknowledgement of Outgoing Officers
7:00	pm	Gateway Seminary and HPBC Partnership
7:20	pm	Scripture Reading
7:25	pm	Annual Meeting Message: *Mark Clifton*
7:55	pm	Closing Worship
8:00	pm	Credentials Committee Report
8:05	pm	Adjournment/Benediction
8:10	pm	Fellowship & Refreshments

speakers

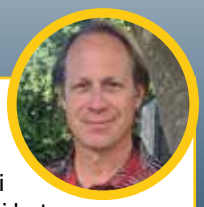
Mark Clifton

Mark is the executive director of church replanting and rural strategy at the North American Mission Board, the teaching pastor at Linwood Baptist Church, and a visiting professor at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. His experience includes serving as the lead mission strategist for the Kansas-Nebraska Convention, leading church planting efforts in the regions of North Metro Atlanta, GA, serving as a church planter in Montreal, Quebec, and as a Southern Baptist National Church Planting Missionary for eastern Canada, and leading Southern Baptist church planting projects west of the Mississippi. Clifton has been planting, replanting, and providing strategic mission leadership since 1978. Mark is the author of Reclaiming Glory: Creating a Gospel Legacy throughout North America (B&H). He cohosts NAMB's Revitalize and Replant podcast and is a regular contributor to several blogs and magazines.



Craig Webb

Craig Webb is our executive director-treasurer. Born and raised in Hawaii, he moved to Tennessee at eleven. He earned his degrees from Samford University (BA), Southern Seminary (MDiv), and New Orleans Seminary (DMin). Craig served churches in Tennessee and Hawaii and worked at Lifeway. Craig is married to Barbara, and they have three grown children and six grandchildren.



Brian Frable

Brian Frable is the pastor of Kona Baptist on Hawaii Island and our HPBC president. He served churches in Oklahoma before moving his family to Hawaii. He is a graduate of Lancaster Bible College and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is married to Amanda, a teacher at Makua Lani Christian Academy, and the mother of their six beautiful children.

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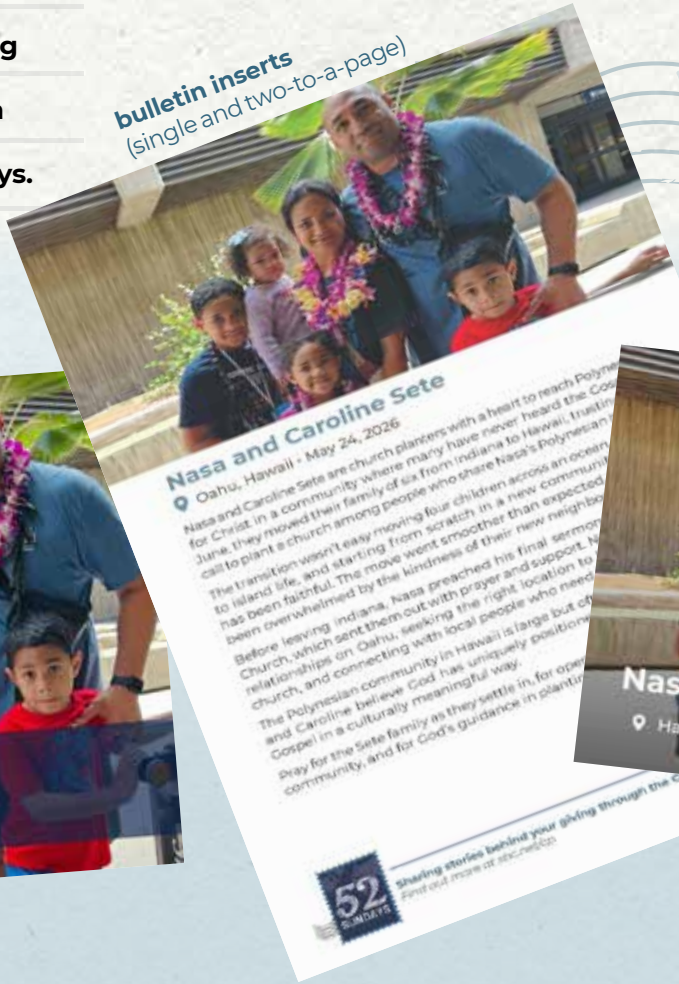
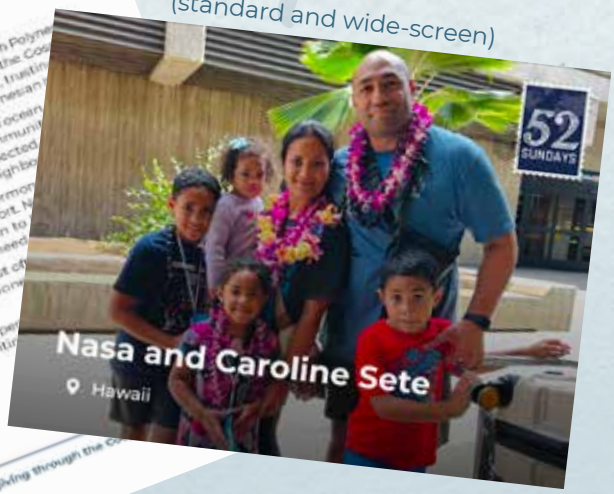


social media graphics

slide graphics
(standard and wide-screen)



Gateway Seminary Partnership Brings *Theological Training* to Hawaii

By Hannah Denney

Hawaii Pacific Baptist School of Theology

Launching in Fall 2026, the Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention (HPBC) is partnering with Gateway Seminary to establish the Hawaii Pacific Campus, bringing accredited theological education to Hawaii and the Pacific region. This initiative will serve HPBC's 129 affiliated churches across Hawaii, Guam, American Samoa, Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, and Thailand.

HPBC will provide classroom and office space, local coordination, and cultural expertise, while Gateway will supply academic oversight, accreditation, faculty, a part-time campus administrator, and administrative support.

Gateway and HPBC will work to help Hawaii Pacific Baptist students find tuition scholarships when possible.

This has recieved HPBC board approval (August 2025), and the next steps are a formal signing at the HPBC's Annual Meeting (November 2025), and the inaugural class launch (Fall 2026).

Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention | Gateway Seminary
Biblical • Missional • Global

Strategically, Hawaii's geographic and cultural position makes it an ideal hub for Pacific ministry training. This partnership will expand access to accredited, contextually relevant theological education, strengthen local leadership, and create a regional pipeline for future pastors and missionaries.

Ultimately, uniting Gateway's academic excellence with HPBC's mission and location will equip leaders to reach Hawaii and beyond. This is the beginning of something remarkable—an opportunity for local leaders to receive accredited seminary training right here in Hawaii, starting in Fall 2026.

Four Degree Tracks Will Be Offered

- **Certificate Program (Advance)**

  Ministry training at multiple levels and languages for local church leaders.

- **Master of Theological Essentials**

  A 36-credit foundational degree covering core biblical and theological studies.

- **Master of Theological Studies**

  A two-year, 49-credit program preparing students for volunteer or academic ministry.

- **Doctor of Ministry Cohort**

  A flexible, professional doctorate for experienced ministers.

Freedom Village Church:
Renovating to Make Room for More

By James Lynch, Pastor

Freedom Village Church, located in the Itaewon district of Seoul, recently began an exciting new season of faith and growth. After years of praying, planning, and saving, the church has launched a full renovation of its Haebangchon building to create a more welcoming, functional, and mission-focused space.

Throughout this season, the church continues to gather with great anticipation, trusting that God will use this project to shape both hearts and a home for ministry in the years ahead. The renovation will transform the existing facility into a multi-purpose ministry hub with expanded worship seating, dedicated children's classrooms, counseling and prayer areas, and a community café space.

More than just updating a building, this project represents Freedom Village's deep desire to see the gospel advance in Seoul and beyond. Pastor James Lynch shares, "Our goal has never been about having a nicer building. It's about creating space for more people to encounter Jesus and be sent out on mission."

Construction is set to finish in mid-2026, and the church family continues to trust God for provision, unity, and joy as they look forward to all He will do in the days ahead.

Freedom Village Church is an Asia Baptist Network/HPBC church. Learn more about this project by scanning this QR code or going to **build.freedomvillage.church.**

Church Planter Update

Valor Church Pearl Harbor Sees Impact After Launching Weekly Services

Since launching weekly services on August 17th, Pastor Craig Coppenbarger and his wife, Maggie Coppenbarger have been overwhelmed with everything God has been doing at Valor Church Pearl Harbor.

Their mission to reach and serve military families is at the heart of everything they do. They have been encouraged to see military families connecting deeply in community, finding hope, and growing in their faith. As a church planted near the base, they believe God has uniquely positioned them to be a home for those who serve.

Please continue to pray for lasting impact, strong relationships, and open doors to reach more military families with the love of Christ. They are excited to see what God does next in and through Valor Church Pearl Harbor.

Pastor Nasa Sete and Family Prepare for Church Launch in Kahuku, Fall 2026

On September 16, Pastor Nasa Sete and his wife Caroline Sete, held their first Church Plant Information Meeting where, after much prayer and discernment, they announced that the new church will be planted in Kahuku, with a target launch in Fall 2026.

At this gathering they shared the next steps which emphasized prayer and community engagement. The immediate plan includes weekly visits to Kahuku and regular prayer meetings, followed by Bible studies, group fellowships, and community outreach.

Please continue to pray for the Sete family and the new church plant in Kahuku as they start to prayerfully engage the community.

Grand Opening of the Hugh and Mary McCormick Innovation & Discovery Center

By Billie Takaki Lueder

Hawai'i Baptist Academy (HBA) celebrated the grand opening of the Hugh and Mary McCormick Innovation & Discovery Center at its Richard Bento Elementary Campus on September 13, 2025. The day included a special blessing and public tours of the 7,000-square-foot facility, designed to inspire innovation, collaboration, and discovery, while equipping students to identify how their passions intersect with God's calling for their lives.

The Innovation & Discovery Center features an Innovation Station, Collab Lab, and Learning Commons, creating a modern environment for research, design, and problem-solving. The center is part of HBA's Campaign for Transformation, an initiative focused on preparing students for the future by providing spaces that foster creativity, leadership, and community service. In addition, are the outdoor spaces for play and learning—the plaza, outdoor wet lab, amphitheater, lower courts, roundabout entryway and rooftop deck.

The project was designed by G70 and built by Allied Builders Systems. Construction began in June 2024 with the opening of the building in fall of 2025 and a covered play court is on schedule to be completed in summer 2026.

The building is named in honor of HBA's founders, Hugh and Mary McCormick, whose vision established the school 75 years ago in 1949.

For more information on the project, visit

hba.net/transformation

Churches to be Affirmed by Messengers

When a church seeks to affiliate with the Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention, the Committee on Credentials and Resolutions walks alongside them to review their beliefs, ministry purpose, and plans for cooperation. This process helps affirm that each congregation shares our mission of advancing the Gospel together across Hawaii and the Pacific. This year, the committee unanimously recommends ***four congregations for affiliation*** with the Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention.

Cross Church Yokosuka, Japan, was started in 2019 to reach the community of 500,000 and the 30,000 military personnel at the Commander Fleet Activities Yokosuka (CFAY), a United States Navy base, and the JMSDF Yokosuka Naval Base, the headquarters for the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force. Pastor Chris (wife, Saiyaka) Thomas and Pastor Hiroyo Abe (wife, Susan) lead this multi-ethnic, multi-lingual congregation. Their sponsoring church was Yokohama International Baptist (Ben Howard).

Chris and Saiyak (Sai) Thomas

Hiroya and Susan Abe

Grace Church Kailua is a new church, pastored by Chris (wife Cathy) Alsup. Grace Church's mission is to reach Kailua with grace and peace, showing God's love and growing together in devotion to Jesus Christ.

Lanakila Baptist Church, Waipahu, Oahu, is a 58-year-old church serving the Waipahu Community. James (wife Gordene) Leverett recently became the senior pastor. James' wife, Gordene, is the Director of Education for Lanakila Baptist's K-12 school ministry.

Pyeongtaek International Community Church, South Korea, was started by Seoul International Baptist Church (now Freedom Village Church). Kerey (wife Bora) Smith is the pastor. The church was planted to reach the Pyeongtaek community of 659,000 people and nearby Camp Humphreys, the largest U.S. overseas military base, with a total population of over 41,000 people, including soldiers, family members, and civilians. Humphrey's is the headquarters for United States Forces Korea (USFK) and the Eighth United States Army.

New Pastors in 2025

Pastor Chris Alsup and his wife, Cathy — *Grace Church Kailua, Oahu*

Taylor Brazil and his wife, Ashley — *Palisades Baptist, Oahu*

Pastor Mike Brennan and his wife, Monica — *Church Plant on Big Island*

Pastor Craig Coppenbarger and his wife, Maggie — *Valor Church Plant, Pearl Harbor/ Hickam*

Associate Pastor Daniel Grewatz and his wife, Belle — *FBC Pearl City, Oahu*

Associate Pastor Jason Hew and his wife, Emily — *University Avenue Baptist, Oahu*

Pastor Jeremy Kaneshiro and his wife, Amy — *Pukalani Baptist, Maui*

Pastor James Leverett and his wife, Gordene — *Lanakila Baptist, Oahu*

Pastor James Mauney and his wife, Stephanie — *Songtan Central, South Korea*

Pastor JT Nichols and his wife, Lynn — *Waianae Baptist, Oahu*

Pastor Monty Pierce and his wife, Lynn — *Kinoole, Hilo, Hawaii Island*

Pastor Spencer Revely and his wife, Sara — *Makakilo Bible, Oahu*

Pastor Ian Richards and his wife, Amanda — *Guam Christian Life Fellowship*

Pastor Nasa Sete and his wife, Caroline — *Church Plant on Oahu*

Pastor Kerey Smith and his wife, Bora — *Pyeongtaek International, South Korea*

Pastor Zeke Tomaselli and his wife, Layne — *Waiakea Uka Bible, Hilo, Hawaii Island*

Pastor Jun Tubana and his wife, Raquel — *Hawaii Christian*

Associate Pastor Phil Kim and his wife, Jimin — *Waialae Baptist, Oahu*

The Foundation & Waterhouse

Thank you to our Hawaii Baptist Foundation and the Alec and Belle Waterhouse Lecture Series for sponsoring the Friday lunch at our annual meeting. We wanted to make sure you knew about them!

HAWAII BAPTIST FOUNDATION

The Hawaii Baptist Foundation (HBF) is a nonprofit organization that manages investments and endowment funds for Southern Baptist churches, ministries, and institutions across the Hawaii Pacific region. It is an entity of the Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention.

The HBF helps churches grow their financial resources through three key areas: ***investments, planned giving, and financial grants***. For example, if a church has money in the bank or tied up in low-interest CDs, the foundation offers investment options that have historically earned around 10% annually, with flexible access to funds when needed.

For church members interested in estate planning, HBF provides education and guidance on how planned giving can support ministry work for future generations. Additionally, HBF offers grants to help churches, ministries, and ministers meet short-term financial needs.

Through these services, HBF equips churches to be better stewards of their resources and to invest in God's kingdom work. For more information, contact: **info@hawaiibaptistfoundation.com** or call **(808) 973-1111**.

Alec & Belle Waterhouse LECTURE SERIES

Whether it's Bible study, apologetics, counseling, marriage, theology, leadership, church health, parenting, or evangelism, the Alec & Belle Waterhouse Lecture Series has provided high-quality, biblically grounded events to Hawai'i Baptists and other believers for 25 years.

There are many ways to access the opportunities and events through the Waterhouse Lecture Series, such as:

- *Past conferences are available to view online on their website.*
- *They help churches and other ministries bring in speakers for their events.*
- *They partner with churches and other ministries to host events that meet specific needs identified by those ministries.*
- *Waterhouse relies largely on volunteers for their events that come from different churches.*
- *Other than the marriage conferences, there is no cost to attend events.*

If you want more information or want to see what opportunities and events are available, visit their website at **waialaebaptist.org/abwls** or contact them at **info@waterhouselecture.org** or **808-732-5561**.

The Waterhouse Lecture Series is a ministry of Wai'alae Baptist Church. It is funded through the estate of Alec and Belle Waterhouse.