

Pacific CONNECTOR

HAWAII PACIFIC BAPTIST CONVENTION

Hawaii Pacific Baptist Churches Working Together to Be Leaders in Impacting
God's Kingdom Throughout the Pacific & Asia

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For more issues, scan this QR code or
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Building the Kingdom

I pray that this edition of the Pacific Connector finds you well and blessed, pursuing the will of our Father."

Who Are We? (part 3)



Chris Martin

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In the last two editions and upcoming editions of The Pacific Connector, I am highlighting elements of the HPBC of which you may not be aware. These articles originate from questions I hear from Hawaii Pacific Baptist pastors and leaders. I pray this will help you know more about the fantastic opportunities available to you and your ministry.

While some pastors may comment about the theology of other pastors or the practices of other churches, I can assure you that Hawaii Pacific Baptist churches stand firmly upon the gospel of Jesus Christ. Your HPBC staff team and I regularly and intentionally interact with all of our churches. As a team, we also monitor our churches' faithfulness in theology and practice. This watchfulness provides an accountable networking system among our churches to ensure biblical integrity, proper doctrinal adherence, and the overall focus on living and sharing the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Our team can assure you that we address issues that we find to provide accountability to our mutual

commitment to serve Christ together. Our churches proclaim the gospel's accuracy, preach God's Word thoroughly, and strive to communicate salvation through Christ alone faithfully. We praise the Lord for this level of integrity.

In the next edition, we will address your church's role and how we partner together to accomplish God's purposes. Continue to pray and strive for ways to serve God in obedience together.

As always, your HPBC staff team is ready to provide for you in any way that we can to advance and support your ministry. If we can serve you, please call us at (808) 946-9581 or email us at info@hpbaptist.net.

Mahalo,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Chris Martin". The script is fluid and cursive.

Dr. Chris Martin,
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The Pacific Connector highlights people and churches that work to spread the Good News of Jesus Christ by reaching the Pacific and Asia. For information about Pacific Connector or the Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention:

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ABOUT THE COVER

Photograph, courtesy of Bobby Puffenburger, was taken at a beach on the North Shore of Oahu near Haleiwa.



We are
**HAWAII
PACIFIC**
Missions.

JUL AUG 2021



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Hawaii Pacific Churches Give Generously

During the First Five Months of 2021

ACCORDING TO MIKE MARTIN, HPBC Assistant Executive Director for Business and Finance, during the first five months of 2021, Hawaii Pacific Baptists gave \$800,581 through the Cooperative Program and special offerings. This was up from \$738,711 given in Jan-May 2020.

This includes the following receipts in the first five months of 2021...

\$800,581

Up from
\$738,711
given in
Jan-May
2020

\$512,090

Given through the Cooperative Program (sbc.net/cp). This is a **15% increase** over CP giving the same period in 2020!

\$156,630

Given through the Lottie Moon Offering for International Missions (imb.org).

\$100,773

Given through the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering for North American Missions (namb.net). This represents the second highest April/May offering given by Hawaii Pacific Baptists in the past decade and a **60% increase** over giving in the first five months of 2020.

\$27,558

Given through the Sue Nishikawa Offering for Hawaii Pacific Missions (hpbaptist.net/suenishikawa).

\$3,530

Given through the Global Hunger Relief ministry (globalhunger.org).

Thank you Hawaii Pacific Baptists for your generosity. We pray God will be glorified as we work together for the advance of His kingdom.

HOW TO Launch or Relaunch Small Groups/Sunday School THIS FALL

On Tuesday, May 18, 2021, Ken Braddy led a group of pastors and other church leaders from around Hawaii, the Pacific, and Asia in a one-and-a-half-hour seminar to help churches launch or re-launch groups.

We've been encouraging all churches with the following, "If your church paused small groups for preschool, kids, students, and adults, September is an ideal time to relaunch your groups! If your church doesn't have Sunday school or small groups, September 2021 is also a great time to launch them. July and August are your key months for developing a strategy and training your leaders."

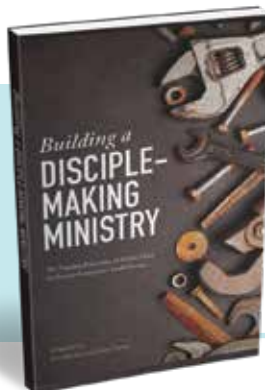
Ken Braddy, Director of Sunday School for Lifeway Christian Resources, shared from his broad experience on key considerations for the successful launch or relaunch.

Braddy shared recent Lifeway research which reported that 91% of churchgoers are planning on returning to their pre-pandemic attendance levels. He said, "As we emerge from the pandemic, churches are reopening their Bible study groups again. Now is the time for churches to rediscover Flake's Formula. In a post-pandemic world, this simple 5-step formula can help churches get back to the essentials that grow a Bible-teaching ministry.

- Step 1: Know your Possibilities
- Step 2: Enlarge the Organization
- Step 3: Enlist and Train Workers
- Step 4: Provide the Space
- Step 5: Go After the People



To purchase a copy of Ken Braddy's book, scan this QR code or visit tinyurl.com/book-braddy.



If you are not familiar with Flake's Formula, you can read about it in greater detail in a new book Ken Braddy and Alan Taylor compiled last year titled "Building A Disciplemaking Ministry: The Timeless Principles of Arthur Flake for Sunday School and Small Groups."

LIFE Christian Moves Food Distribution to Nu'uano Elementary



On Saturday, June 5, LIFE Christian Church served over 100 families in need as they distributed food at Nu'uano Elementary School. They are doing this in conjunction with the Hawaii Foodbank. Shaw Okawara is the pastor of LIFE Christian.

Daniel Rich, director of Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA) in Hawai'i, is leading a 6-week leadership training course at Mililani Baptist during June and early July. The course is open to coaches, athletes, parents, and anyone else in a team oriented context. Dennis Andrews is senior pastor.

photo: prayer meeting to prepare for the outreach and training



Mililani Baptist and FCA Seek to Reach Students

Serving, Ministry, Outreach

"Who's Your One?" Focus at Pearl City

who's your 1ONE?

Every Tuesday night in June, FBC Pearl City has been gathering to be equipped to share the gospel with the "Who's Your One?" strategy. Sterling Lee is the Pastor at FBC Pearl City. To learn more, visit whosyourone.com



Lihue Baptist Holds Month-Long Summer SONsation VBS

From June 1 to July 2, Monday-Friday from 8:00 to noon, Lihue

Baptist on Kauai held Vacation Bible School for ages 3 thru completed 7th Grade. Activities included worship, Bible study, music, art, missions, games, snacks, excursions, and more. Christopher Metcalf is the pastor of Lihue Baptist.



Elele Baptist Church celebrated having exceeded their Annie Armstrong goal. "We're thanking God for everyone who prayed for or gave to this offering."

Annie Armstrong goal reached!

\$3,337
COLLECTED
from **24**
FAMILIES

Wives in Ministry Gather Online

FOR ENCOURAGEMENT AND EQUIPPING

On May 14, 2021, Hawaii Pacific Baptist Wives in Ministry gathered online for another evening of fellowship and for encouragement and equipping from Patti Webb. Patti is a retired wife in ministry who served in Hawaii for many years, author, speaker, and most importantly, a woman who loves the Lord.

Patti and her husband, Henry, served in Collegiate Ministry in Hawaii from 1964-1968 and Henry was pastor of Kalihi Baptist from 1968-1977. Craig Webb, HPBC Assistant Executive Director, is their son.

In her message for wives in ministry, Patti shared her journey of coming to Christ and becoming a pastor's wife. In part of her message, she said, "... each time we have served a church, God has used that time to help me learn more about Him and being His servant. He grew me to

have joy in the hard times, such as when a church member would announce to Henry that he and his family would not be back to our church. Or when I sensed or heard there was disagreement in how Henry had handled a difficult situation."

"There were also times when we were stretched financially. I truly thought we would not survive. My faith faltered often. But God would send someone to give us a monetary gift or a free night of babysitting. These were hard and struggling times. But God grew me. As I grew in Christ and a confidence in Him and not my husband's abilities nor my abilities, God taught me about Himself as we walked through valleys of despair, and through mountains of great success."

Diana Ventura, HPBC Director of Women's Ministry, hosted this event along with the Wives in Ministry Team which includes Wendy Martin, Noe Okawara, and Barbara Webb.



You may watch the entire session by scanning the QR code above or by going online to vimeo.com/551677652

Wives in Ministry GET TOGETHER at National Gathering

On June 15, 2021, several Hawaii Wives in Ministry women gathered at one of the Music City Center ballrooms in Nashville, Tennessee for the annual Wives in Ministry National Gathering. HPBC Women's Ministry sponsored two tables. Jen Wilkin was the keynote speaker.

Diana Ventura, HPBC Director of Women's Ministry shared, "We had a sweet time! It was the most attended Wives in Ministry luncheon in years."



Patti Webb, Barbara Webb, Cindy Crim, Wendy Martin, Robin Covington, Debi Buchholz, and Debbi Priest



Vicky Kawamae, Lia Yahn, Mayra Macal, Diana Ventura, Sarahn DeLoach, Melanie Hom, and Gail Gierhart



A True Work of God: Changed Hearts

In what many consider to be a true work of God, Cornerstone Fellowship and The Gathering merged to become one church. Its new name is **GracePoint Church**. The merged church met together for the first time on May 23, 2021.

"Merging was not even on my radar last fall," said James Shiroma, who pastored The Gathering prior to the merge and is now the lead pastor of GracePoint Church. Shiroma said that both churches were doing well on their own and did not need to merge.

"However, over the last few months, we have seen God change people's hearts, including mine," Shiroma said. "What we thought were barriers were really not barriers. God revealed through people and circumstances that He is directing this merge. Because God is bringing two significant churches together like this, it is becoming more evident that He has a great purpose for GracePoint Church."

Shiroma who is the founding pastor of both Cornerstone Fellowship and The Gathering credits Pastor Travis Laney (Cornerstone's interim pastor at the time) for being the catalyst for this merge. Shiroma said that Pastor Laney first approached him last summer about Cornerstone and The Gathering merging.

"I did not think it was a good idea when Travis first brought up the idea to me," Shiroma said. "But Travis was very persistent because he strongly believed that merging was part of God's plan."

"I have never seen anyone so selfless and sacrificial like Travis. It would have been easy for Travis to have seen all that he did leading Cornerstone forward and decide to stay. Instead, Travis worked hard to make sure the merge happened and that the church was in good shape for me to take over."

This past February, Shiroma entered a series of many discussions with Cornerstone leaders, leaders from The



Gathering, and members from both churches. These discussions led to the eventual merge between the two churches.

Shiroma said that the process has been exciting and refreshing for people from both churches as leaders are working well together, people from both churches are building relationships, and that there is an even stronger vision

to reach the community, reach Hawaii, and reach the nations with the gospel.

"My prayer is for God to use GracePoint Church in a powerful way," Shiroma said, "Besides reaching our community and the nations, my prayer is also that we teach the Bible well, raise disciples, and raise up leaders to be sent out to make a gospel impact in Hawaii and around the world."



Because attendance at GracePoint's first Sunday was over capacity, seating was setup just outside the doors



Spotlight

on ASIA & the PACIFIC

BAM Churches Gather for Fellowship

The Baptist Association of Micronesia (BAM) met at Tamuning Christian Fellowship on the Island of Guam at the end of May for “Come Together,” an evening of praise, prayer, and testimony.



Samoa Baptist Academy Celebrates Graduations



Pastor Saufoi Tavete of Happy Valley Baptist, speaks at one of the graduation celebrations.



Men's Ministry Golf Scramble

Koza Baptist Church In Okinawa Japan recently held a Men's Ministry Golf Scramble. Pastor Chris Eyre said, "We fielded 7 teams on a blustery Spring morning at Taiyo golf course for some fun and fellowship. Prizes were awarded for first, second, and last place. Everyone won though because Christian fellowship is always a win."



Himeji Baptist Outdoor Worship

Himeji Baptist Church, Japan, had an outdoor worship service in mid-May. Toshikazu Haruta is the lead pastor.



Celebrate

Gimmen Serves as Interim at Calvary Guam



Pastor Jimmy Gimmen has served as Chairman of Deacons and as Outreach Pastor since 2016 of Calvary Baptist in Guam. In July 2020, his position was adjusted to be the Associate Pastor, with the expectation that he would serve as Interim Pastor upon the retirement of the previous Senior Pastor. In November 2020, Pastor Rob Puckett advanced his retirement date to the end of November because of a family emergency. On December 1, 2020, Pastor Jimmy became the Interim Pastor of Calvary and will provide leadership through the time of transition after the two previous pastors served a total of over 15.5 years. Pastor Jimmy and his wife, Teresa, have three children, Jordan, Megan, and Abigail.

Jay Parks to Mississippi



In June 2021, Pastor Jay Parks, his wife, April, and their two children moved back to Mississippi after planting New Life Kona in 2015. Please pray for the Parks family and their transition and for the New Life Kona church family as they seek a new pastor.

Chris Irving to Serve in Rockport, Texas



Chris Irving has served as senior pastor at University Avenue Baptist since 2019. He recently accepted the call to serve at Coastal Oaks Church in Rockport, Texas. Please pray for the Irvings as they make this transition and for University Avenue as they seek their new pastor.

Nu'uaniu Ordains Deacons



On May 16, Nu'uaniu Baptist Church ordained Ross Harada and Kaleo Salazar as deacons. Trevor Duarte also joined their active deacon fellowship having been previously ordained. HPBC Director of Regional Ministry, Dr. Robert Miller, preached and brought a challenge to the church and to the deacons. Bob Gierhart is the pastor of Nu'uaniu.

OlaNui! Moves to New Location for Worship and Ministry



OlaNui! is a Hawaii Pacific Baptist Church in Honolulu that has met in six different locations in Kaka'ako over the years. On Easter Sunday 2021, they began gathering for worship on the 2nd floor of a building at 620 Waipa Lane. Their location gives them more space for worship and fellowship as well as opportunities to minister to the underserved in the Palama community. Walt Agena, Rick Lazor, and Ron Shiira are elders.

Pahala Celebrates 10 Years



On Sunday, May 16, Pahala Baptist Church on Hawaii Island, celebrated 10 Years of Ministry. Marino Ramones is their pastor.

Pearl City Commissions Strategic Planning Team



On May 30, First Baptist Church, Pearl City commissioned a Strategic Planning Team. Pastor Sterling Lee shared that the church operates under the work that a strategic planning team did in 2013. "The past 15 months," Lee says, "have shown that we are headed in the right direction, but there are areas we must adjust. In some areas, we have had to take a hard look at how we adapt to meet the changing environment that COVID has handed us." "In the next three months, this team will work together to expand on the 2013 strategic plan to help us fulfill the Great Commission. This includes helping us explore how we continue to maneuver through the obstacles that this pandemic has thrown at us as well as prayerfully mapping out a plan for post-pandemic ministry."

Celebrate

Abagon, Doctor of Ministry Program



Pastor Bong, his wife Tina, and their sons

Bong Abagon began a Doctor of Ministry Program through Gateway Seminary in January 2020. The focus is on helping churches reengage the world. Abagon said, "What has been a tremendous blessing is the 360-degree approach of the program where it allows doctoral candidates like me to be encouraged and connected with mentors, cohorts, and local lay leaders."

Morikawa, Historical & Theological Studies Program



Todd Morikawa, pastor at Kailua Baptist, began a Ph.D. in the Historical and Theological Studies program at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in January 2021. His focus will be English Baptist church history roots. Todd is thankful to have Dr. Michael Haykin as his advisor. He is also thankful for the support and financial help of his church and the Shiraki Foundation.

Hom, Doctor of Ministry in Applied Theology Program



Johnny and Melanie Hom and their family.

Johnny Hom, pastor of discipleship and administration at Nu'uuanu Baptist, started work on a Doctor of Ministry in Applied Theology at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in May 2021.

Currently going through his first doctoral seminar, Pastor Hom has grown in his appreciation for the theological heritage left to us by the early church and sees the need for modern Christians to be grounded in the rich, historical lineage of our faith. Through his studies and project report, he hopes to serve God's church in equipping disciples to grasp and articulate the truth of his Word; that they may more confidently contend for the faith and proclaim the gospel of salvation in Jesus Christ.

Gao Completes MTS through Southwestern



Matt Gao, a member of Pawa'a Community Church, graduated from Southwestern with a Masters of Theological Studies. Matt leads Men's Ministry at Pawa'a and assists his wife Katie with directing their Children's Ministry. Matt's plans are to continue leadership development for ministry at Pawa'a for future ministry. Arjay Gruspe is the pastor of Pawa'a Community Church.

The Gathering



The Gathering celebrated several baptisms on April 18. James Shiroma is the pastor. The Gathering and Cornerstone Fellowship Mililani Mauka are in the process of merging to become GracePoint Church.

Pawa'a Community Church



Pawa'a Community celebrated ocean baptisms in May. Aja Beckham (center) is pictured with Pastor Arjay Gruspe and his wife Tara. Jarrod Alejo was also baptized.

Waianae Baptist



Waianae Baptist celebrated several baptisms on April 25. Michael Brooks is the new pastor at Waianae (pictured left).

Yokohama Baptist



Senior Pastor Ben Howard shared that Yokohama Baptist Church held its second baptism service of 2021 on May 30 when he baptized five new believers. Three of them were a father and two children, for whom a Christian wife and mother had prayed for many years.

Celebrate

52 SUNDAYS

Share the stories behind
each dollar given through
your church.

A SUNDAY
HIGHLIGHT:

July 25

Edward & Terri

JANKLOW*

SOUTHEAST ASIA

* Not their real names
because they serve in
Southeast Asia, where
missionaries are not
welcome.

Share these stories

with your congregation in 2021!

Visit hpbaptist.net/52sundays to get started.



Pictured is a representation
of a missionary family who
has been able to share
the Gospel through the
generous support given
through your Cooperative
Program giving.



**52 Sundays is a powerful missions
resource filled with weekly highlights
of missionaries connected to our SBC
Great Commission Partners.**