

# Building the Kingdom



Dr. Chris Martin Executive Director/Treasurer 808-946-9581

chris@hpbaptist.net

our HPBC staff team is delighted to bring you this update on God's Kingdom activities across our convention. In this edition of Pacific Connector, you will find articles and photos representing the incredible ways God works through our network of churches across the Pacific and Asia. From VBS and mission teams, to virtual training and simulcast events, and more, Hawaii Pacific Baptist churches are moving forward.

Be encouraged as you turn each page, knowing that God has plans for your ministry as we serve Him together. In today's world, the news media can bring us down, focusing on division, turmoil, and hardship. But God has much greater intentions for our days as we focus on Christ and His Kingdom.

Mahalo for the opportunity to share in your ministry. United by the gospel, we can stand firm on God's word, learn from His goodness in our past, and rise to impact His purposes in our future. We have much to celebrate and engage together.

Also, thank you for your partnership through the Cooperative Program. Your contributions empower an unbelievable amount of ministry across the HPBC, the Southern Baptist Convention, and worldwide. As we strive to share Christ within our communities, you are also deeply involved in a tremendous global impact. Even in the challenging economic season, remain faithful to see God work in our collaborative efforts through the Cooperative

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

Mahalo,

Chris Martin

Executive Director/Treasurer Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention



**About the Cover** A young mangrove growing in the mud of Okinawa, Japan's mangrove reforestation project.



For more issues, scan this QR code or visit: hpbaptist.net/pacificconnector

#### Pacific Connector — 2042 Vancouver Dr, Honolulu HI 96822 ● 808-946-9581

Executive Director, Publisher: Dr. Chris Martin · chris@hpbaptist.net · 808-946-9581 Assistant Executive Director, Editor: Dr. Craiq Webb · craiq@hpbaptist.net · 808-946-9581 Associate Editor: Dawn Akutagawa · dawn@hpbaptist.net · 808-946-9581 Contributing Editor: Brandon Pickett | Designer: Patti Spencer Contributing Writers: Dani Beth Crosby, Pancho Madrid, Chris Martin, Ken Reyes, Craig Webb

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, email: info@hpbaptist.net. or call: (808) 946-9581. or write: Pacific Connector, Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention, 2042 Vancouver Drive, Honolulu HI 96822.

This publication is provided online free of charge and is available by visiting our website: hpbaptist.net/pacificconnector.

Designed by Innovative Faith Resources, a non-profit media firm specializing in helping churches and non-profits with graphic design, video, branding, and financial services. Visit Innovative Faith Resources at: innovativefaith.org.

# ontents 4

### Vacation Bible School —

Highlights from thirteen Vacation Bible Schools involving nineteen churches





### Hawaii Pacific **Baptists Working** Together

**Hawaii Pacific Baptists** Serve in Arizona —

Seven persons participated, representing three churches and BCM.

### Sue Nishikawa Offering for Hawaii Pacific Missions — A

week of prayer focuses on Hawaii Pacific Baptists working together. Plus. five videos to share with your church family

# Something to Celebrate

#### 9 Missions

Nehemiah Team serves in Guam for 52 days

10 Baptisms, Ordinations. and a Church **Picnic** 

### 11 Equipping

Sue Nishikawa Offering

Maui ladies gathered for a simulcast of The Gospel Coalition's Women's Conference. And, Small Groups Training took place via Zoom with over 100 Hawaii Pacific Baptists participating in 6 different time zones

### 13 Outreach

Churches distribute school supplies through backpacks and community events with games, dinner, free Bibles, and sharing the good news about Jesus

# **Departments**

### 2 Building the Kingdom

Executive Director's update from Dr. Chris Martin

### 16 HPBC Annual Meeting

For the first time in three vears. Hawaii Pacific Baptists will gather in person



### Hawaii Kai Church Serves 100 Children

Hawaii Kai Church held VBS from July 18th to July 22nd. Their theme was "Jerusalem Marketplace!" Fifty volunteers served 100 children. Each day was filled with games, singing, crafts, dinner, and most importantly, a time to hear the gospel! Dan Wong is the senior pastor.

### Connections Church Kapolei Holds VBS at Indoor Soccer Facility

Earlier this year, when the Connections Church could no longer meet at the Water Park for their services and activities, they found a new home at the 808Futsal Indoor Soccer Facility in the middle of the Kapolei Community. This year the church held its VBS at the new location from June 27-July 1. They enrolled 69 kids with a high attendance of 49 kids (66 including workers) on Friday. Eleven children professed Christ as Lord and Savior, and four rededicated their lives to Christ.

At VBS Ohana Day on Sunday (July 3), 73 persons were present. Kids who had participated in VBS made presentations and leaders recognized the many VBS workers. Connections Church pastor, David Whitehead, reported that several adults decided to follow or recommit their lives to Christ.



Kids performing Sunday morning, Ohana day.



This year, GracePoint Church did a one-day VBS on Saturday, June 18, from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. There were 37 children (from Pre-K to Gr. 5) and 47 youth and adult volunteers who participated. The theme was Misson: Deep Sea.

James Shiroma is the pastor.





### Cornerstone Kona Holds VBS for Community

Cornerstone Fellowship, Kona, held a VBS for community children on the last week of July. The week's highlight was twelve children praying to receive Jesus Christ as their Savior! Jeff Buchholz is the pastor.



Over three hundred children were in attendance (participants and volunteers) from August 1-5 at Koza Okinawa's VBS. It was 5 nights of VBS with rotations that included games, missions, music, dinner, Bible Study, and opening and closing rallies. Children learned about our amazing creator God who created us to know Him and share Him with others.

Koza Okinawa was blessed to see 30 children make first-time professions of faith in Christ—now the fun and important work of discipleship begins for mom and dad, as the church partners with them as a church family. Chris Eyre is the pastor.

### Tokyo Baptist Holds VBS, First Major Gathering Since Covid Restrictions

Tokyo Baptist Church's 2022 VBS was a blast! Its theme was "Destination Dig" with the motto, "Seek Truth! Find Jesus!" Over a hundred kids and sixty workers participated in the church's first major event since COVID-19 restrictions went into place for Tokyo. So far, this VBS has had eleven decisions for Christ, eight who want to know more, and twenty-five reconfirmations.

Two baptisms (a niece and uncle) in connection with VBS were done by TBC's family pastor, Dale Johnson. It was noted by maturity pastor Jesse Cesario that this was Pastor Dale's last VBS as he will leave the staff at TBC to plant Emerge Church in Los Angeles. He will missed. Please pray for a smooth transition. Pastor Takeshi Yozawa is the senior pastor of Tokyo Baptist.









### Yokohama International Holds VBS August 1-5

For this year's VBS, Yokohama International Baptist chose the theme from Isaiah 43:4, "You are precious in my eyes." The children learned how much God loved them and how they could know Him through Jesus Christ. Yokohama connected with several new families and prays that God will continue to develop long-term opportunities from this year's VBS. Ben Howard is the pastor.

### Mililani Baptist VBS, \$3000 Given to Missions

From June 26 through July 1, MBC hosted its VBS. They had over 60 children registered and saw over \$3000. raised for its Missions Offering! One child prayed to receive Christ and many more asked great questions. It's clear that God is stirring the children's hearts, and MBC will continue to follow up with their parents. This VBS would not have been possible without the fantastic support of the HPBC and Mililani's amazing volunteers. Dennis Andrews is the pastor.



### International Baptist Fellowship and Agape Mission Baptist Church Partner for VBS

IBF and Agape Mission BC partnered to hold a VBS July 27-29 with 8 volunteers and 18 children. One child made a profession of faith in Christ and the child's dad also responded! Con Wilson is pastor of International Baptist and Calvin Kim is pastor of Agape Mission Baptist.



### VBS at Valley Isle Fellowship

VIF on Maui held VBS July 18-22 with 62 kids and 36 volunteers, including a team of three from Central Baptist, Honolulu. Kenneth Priest is transitional pastor.





# FBC Pearl City Held Super Summer Challenge on Friday Nights in July

FBCPC held a "Super Summer Challenge" for children 4 thru 12 yrs. old, on July 15, 22, and 29 from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. Thirty children attended this event involving a scavenger hunt, water games, and an obstacle course. Each night's activity was tied into a devotional time followed by a time of fellowship and snacks. Families invited some of their friends, neighbors, and relatives to join in the fun. Sterling Lee is the pastor.



### Six Oahu Churches Work Together in a Week of VBS

Waipahu Community Christian Church joined forces with Word of Truth, Hawaii Christian Baptist Church, Mililani Fil-Am Baptist Church, FBC of Wahiawa, and Aloha Christian Fellowship for this year's Vacation Bible School. They celebrate nine salvation decisions. Also, four children and three students made a water baptism decision and were baptized at VBS. We thank God for blessing this outreach with 142 students and volunteers.

### Songtan Central, Korea, Held VBS

Songtan Central, Korea, held their VBS in the evenings of July 18-22. Steve Houser is pastor.







Watch Video

# something to (elebrate

# Spotlight on Missions

### **UABC Sends 14 to** Alaska, Partners with GraceWorks

by Dani Beth Crosby Family & Communications Minister

University Avenue Baptist Church (UABC) sent a multigenerational team of 14 to Anchorage, Alaska, for a week this June to lead Bible clubs at two neighborhood parks with GraceWorks Alaska.

In addition to leading daily Bible clubs, the UABC team partnered with local churches and mission groups from around the country in serving 15 low-income neighborhoods in the Anchorage area by serving a daily meal for kids and hosting evening park parties for families.

GraceWorks Alaska hosts teams from around the country for eight weeks each summer to serve these 15 neighborhoods and empower local churches to reach families around Anchorage with the good news of Jesus.



### Hawaii Pacific Baptists Serve in Northern Arizona

by Ken Reyes, BCM O'ahu Staff

For ten years, Christian Challenge Northern Arizona University (CCNAU) has flown across the ocean to meet us. This summer, it was our turn. For 10 days in July, seven of us representing Baptist Collegiate Ministries (BCM) Oʻahu, Pawaʻa Community Church, Restoration Community Church, and Hāmama Community Church traveled to Flagstaff, AZ, to serve alongside Arizona Baptists doing various disaster relief and communitybuilding work.

Lainee Pegelow, CCNAU's director, graciously welcomed us and first directed our efforts towards flooding relief in the Coney Park district. When our team arrived at East Valley Baptist Church to meet with Pastor Daryl Bennett and other members of the AZ Baptist Disaster



Abelle Tejada, Lindsey (homeowner), and Arjay Gruspe

Relief team, the work before us was evident. We helped with sandbagging and picking up debris while others visited neighboring houses to assist with any cleanup. Through it, we met Lindsey—we cleaned her garage, sandbagged around her house, and encouraged her in her faith.

Towards the end of the week, our team assisted Lauren Belcher, the Northern Director of Foster Care at Arizona Baptist Children's Services, in her ministry with foster families. We also visited Challenge Church, did a prayer walk on Northern Arizona University's beautiful campus, and had a Mexican fiesta dinner with Pastor Tomas Angulo and members of Sunnyside Baptist Church.

On our last day, we drove into Najavo land to visit First Southern Baptist Tuba City and Atsa Bit'oh Baptist Church, both of which are led by indigenous leaders Pastor Jesse Billy and Pastor Jack Colorado. We sat earnestly to hear their stories, sing hymns in English, Hawaiian, and Najavo, pray together for the Gospel to reach their people, and share Najavo tacos during lunch. Our time with them was incredibly precious and humbling.

Our team felt so blessed to have this partnership with Christian Challenge NAU and Arizona Baptists, and we hope to continue working alongside them in the future.

BCM is supported through your church's gifts through the Cooperative Program.



# Nehemiah Team Completes 52 Days of Partnership with Guam Churches



This summer, a Nehemiah Team (NT) of four college students (Noah Aylor, Danelle Sewell, Micah Simpson, and Jeremiah Worten) served alongside students and adults from Guam Christian Life Fellowship (GCLF) and other Baptist Association of Micronesia (BAM) churches.

The Bible verse that best describes their work is Acts. 28:31, when Luke describes Paul's work, "proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord

Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance."

Noah, Danelle, Jeremiah, and Micah spent 52 days on the island of Guam leading, following, participating, and making an impact in the life of our church, the association (BAM), and the communities the team ministered to.

They affected all walks of life, from the poor and the needy to the homeless to the broken homes to the island leaders who promise that there is hope for a better life. Summer 2022 was a pivotal time for those whom the team rubbed shoulders with. The churches, whom the team worked closely with, will never be the same—hearts were revitalized, existing ministries reenergized, and new ministries will be started.

We also made sure they had fun. Noah, Danelle, Jeremiah, and Micah saw that island life is not so bad. Hikes through the boonies, snorkeling in 100-feet visibility water, cliff jumping, and learning that God actually made other food besides burgers and fries. They also realized that a tiny island in the Pacific is where America's day begins.

top: The Nehemiah Team and other GCLF members deliver backpacks of supplies to neighborhood kids

left (I-r): Nehemiah Team members, Micah Simpson, Danelle Sewell, Jeremiah Worten, Noah Aylor



Christians make up less than 1 percent of the population of Japan. Himeji Baptist, an Asia Baptist Network and Hawaii Pacific Baptist Church, has been making a significant impact in their community through evangelism, outreach, disciple-making, and Christian education. These are bearing fruit as they baptized 11 persons in early July. Toshikazu Haruta is the pastor.

# Connections Church Baptized Seven at Koolina Lagoon at the End of July



Connections Church Kapolei gathered at Lagoon #4 in Ko'olina to baptize seven new believers on July 31. David Whitehead is the pastor. Connections Church is a church plant partly supported by your church's gifts through the Cooperative Program.

# Norman Manzon Ordained on Big Island

Norman Manzon was ordained to the gospel ministry on May 21, 2022. Pastor Jeff Buchholz from Cornerstone in Kona and other Big Island Baptist pastors were part of the ordination council. Norman is a member of Cornerstone and fills the pulpit there and at other Kona area churches. God has used Norman greatly in his Bible Study Project ministry.



### Songtan Central, Korea, Holds 4th of July Picnic

Songtan Central, Korea, celebrates July 4th with a picnic. This was one of the first times they have been able to gather together after Covid restrictions. The day was highlighted with a devotional brought by a lay leader.









# Spotlight on Equipping

### Maui Ladies Gather to Participate in **Women's Gospel Coalition Simulcast**

Sue Nishikawa Offering

Kahului Baptist Church, Maui, hosted a simulcast viewing of The Gospel Coalition's Women's Conference on July 22-23. The conference theme was based on remembering the joy of our salvation through Old Testament stories. Fifty women from four Maui churches participated.

Women feasted on God's word together, were led in worship through music by Shawna Komatsu, shared in fellowship over meals, and heard live testimonies from a few women who attended the conference. Paula Higuchi, director of the Biblical Counseling Center of Maui, coordinated the event.

This event was supported by your gifts to the Sue Nishikawa Offering for Hawaii Pacific Missions.



### Over 100 Hawaii Pacific Baptists in 6 Time Zones Participate in Small Groups Training via Zoom

On August 5, 2022, over 100 Hawaii Pacific Baptists from Bangkok, Manila, Hong Kong, Japan, Guam, Kauai, Oahu, Molokai, Maui, and Hawaii Island participated in a 2-hour training in Small Groups and Sunday School Ministry via Zoom. The expert trainers, courtesy of Lifeway Christian Resources, joined us from Texas, Oklahoma, and Tennessee.

Ken Braddy, Lifeway's Director of Sunday School, led an opening session on "Creating a New Scorecard for Group Ministry Success." Ken and four other expert trainers led 90-minute breakouts.

- Lifeway Kids Ministry specialist Delaney Williams led a breakout for Preschool leaders on "Does Your Teaching Connect?"
- Lifeway Director of Kids Ministry Chuck Peters led a breakout for Kids leaders on "10 Attributes of an Unshakable Kids Ministry."
- Lifeway Student Ministry specialist, Zac Workun, led a breakout for student leaders on "How to Lead Student Ministry in a Screen Addicted and Apathetic
- Lifeway Director of Sunday School, Ken Braddy led a breakout for pastors and adult Sunday school leaders on "Seeing Around Corners: What's Next for Groups in a Post-COVID World?"
- Chris Surratt, Executive Pastor of Discipleship and Groups at Harvest Church in Southern California, led a breakout for small group leaders on "5 Things Every Small Group Meeting Has to Have."

This training event was co-sponsored by the Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention and Lifeway Christian Resources. Your HPBC staff team, who organized this event, is supported by your church's gifts through the Cooperative Program.





The opening session and four breakouts are available by scanning the QR code below or by going online to: hpbaptist.net/groups-training









**Connections Church Distributes Backbacks** 

with School Supplies

Connections Church, Kapolei, gave away 130 backpacks filled with school supplies to children in their community this fall. The gospel message was in each backpack, along with invitations to upcoming church events. Please pray that God uses these backpacks for His honor and glory.

David Whitehead is the pastor. Connections Church is a church plant supported partly by your church's gifts through the Cooperative Program.

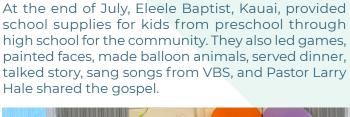


### **Eleele Baptist, Kauai, Shares School Supplies for Kids** in Their Community

Pastor Larry Hale shares the good news of Jesus Christ



Lisa Hale leads games







## **Cornerstone Fellowship in Kailua-Kona Shares Backpacks and the Gospel**

In July, Cornerstone Christian Fellowship of Kona gave over 130 backpacks filled with school supplies to the neighbors from government housing projects. We also shared the gospel and offered free Bibles. It was great to have a few attend church the following Sunday. Jeff Buchholz is the pastor.



# **Maui County Baptists Reach Students Share School Supplies**

Valley Isle Fellowship, Maui, hosted a student outreach event for Maui County Baptist Association students. Twenty-five students participated, and ten students made decisions to follow Christ. Gabriel Miller provided worship leadership, Felisha Miller shared a testimony, and FCA's Kevin Inafuku spoke. There was also a school supply backpack distribution. Kenneth Priest is the Transitional Pastor of Valley Isle Fellowship.



# Sue Nishikawa Offering for Hawaii Pacific Missions

# Hawaii Pacific **Baptists Working** Together

The Sue Nishikawa Offering for Hawaii Pacific Missions exists to encourage and assist churches in their evangelistic outreach, assist in new kingdom work, establish missions awareness and develop missions training, and strengthen the church body and the work of the Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention.

Our week of prayer focuses on Hawaii Pacific Baptists working together, planting churches, engaging their community, reaching the next generation, and bringing new life! Thank you for praying and thank you for giving generously through your church.

There are five videos you may share with your church family. Watch as Chris Martin introduces this year's week of prayer and offering.



HPBC Executive Director, Dr. Chris Martin, shares an overview of this year's focus and expresses profound appreciation for your support of the Sue Nishikawa Offering for Hawaii Pacific Missions.

tinyurl.com/nishikawa-intro





Hawaii Pacific **Baptist Convention** 

Stories, resources, giving, & more at hpbaptist.net/suenishikawa





# Sue Nishikawa Offering 2022 Prayer Guide

Day 1 - Sunday, September 4, 2022

#### **Hawaii Pacific Baptists Working Together**

We are better together! "According to the purpose statement found in our Constitution.



- Pray that God would bring unity among our network of churches as we work together for the Kingdom of God.
- Pray that God would give our churches a heart for reaching our community for Christ and that God would give us innovative ways to do so.

Day 2 - Monday, September 5, 2022

#### **Hawaii Pacific Baptist Churches Planting Churches**

- Pray for our current Hawaii Pacific Baptist church plants and those who will take the call to plant churches in the future.
- Ask God to prepare the harvest, provide laborers for the harvest, and draw people to Himself.
- Pray that each church planted will grow into a vibrant, life-giving, and gospel proclaiming church.

### **Hawaii Pacific Baptist Churches Engaging Their Community**

- Pray for God to guide Hawaii Pacific Baptist church leaders as they assess the current needs of those around them and determine the best way to reach them.
- Pray that God will give opportunities for gospel conversations.
- Pray that God will open hearts and minds to hear the gospel.

Day 4 - Wednesday, September 7, 2022

#### **Hawaii Pacific Baptist Next Generations Ministries**

- Pray for the student ministry leaders to find ways to be intentional and creative in reaching students for Christ.
- Pray that God will open the hearts and minds of students to receive the message of Jesus.
- Pray for discipleship opportunities among students.

Watch Video



Watch Video

Watch Video

Watch Video

回鄉

Day 5 - Thursday, September 8, 2022

#### **Hawaii Pacific Baptist Church** Revitalization, Rebirth, and Growth

深級幾回

Watch Video

 Pray for Hawaii Pacific Baptist church pastors and leaders as they make disciples who make disciples.

- Pray for God-led enthusiasm for His Word and joy as people hunger and thirst to know God more deeply and
- Pray for Hawaii Pacific Baptist church pastors and leaders to have wisdom and discernment from the Holy Spirit as they lead their congregations.

Day 6 - Friday, September 9, 2022

#### Hawaii Pacific Baptists in the **Hawaiian Islands**

- Hawaii Island (The Big Island), Maui, Molokai, Lanai, Oahu, and Kauai.
- Pray for Hawaiian Islands pastors and church leaders as they prepare for and lead worship gatherings, small-group discipleship, and as they "equip the saints" (Eph. 4:12).
- Pray that God will give these pastors and church leaders a heart to reach their community and the nations for Christ.
- Pray for unity and cooperation in each church, in associations of churches, and throughout the HPBC.

Day 7 - Saturday, September 10, 2022

#### Hawaii Pacific Baptists in the **Pacific and Asia**

The Philippines.

- Guam, Samoa, Thailand, Japan, South Korea, and
- Pray for Asia and Pacific pastors and church leaders as they prepare for and lead worship gatherings, small-group discipleship, and as they "equip the saints" (Eph. 4:12).
- Pray that God will give these pastors and church leaders a heart to reach their community and the nations for Christ.
- Pray for these churches as they navigate different levels of pandemic restrictions.

Day 8 - Sunday, September 11, 2022

#### **Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention Staff Team**



Dawn Akutagawa, John Allison, Arjay Gruspe, Monica Kang, Sean Lathrop, Chris Martin, Mike Martin, Robert Miller, Corey Perkins, Brian Smart, Diana Ventura, Craig Webb, John and Gay Williams.

- Pray for each team member to abide in Christ and walk closely with God.
- Pray for staff team members' families.
- Pray for wisdom and discernment in all their work.











The HPBC Arrangements Committee would like to invite Hawaii Pacific Baptist messengers and guests to join them at the Prince Waikiki Pi'inaio Ballroom on Thursday and Friday, Nov. 3-4, 2022.

The HPBC Annual Meeting is not only our chance to affirm new member churches, approve the operating budget, and select new officers... it's family time. The annual meeting is for biblical fellowship, mutual encouragement, ministry celebration, and worship.

The HPBC Arrangements Committee is still finalizing details, but our basic schedule for the week will include the following elements:

Wednesday evening, November 2: A Missions Conference featuring guests from the International Mission Board (IMB) who will provide training and an update on the state of global missions. Location: TBA

**Thursday morning**, November 3: New Workers Orientation for new HPBC pastors and staff members. Location: HPBC Offices

Thursday evening, November 3: HPBC Annual Meeting will take place in the Prince Waikiki Pi'inaio Ballroom

Friday, all day, November 4: Continuation of HPBC Annual Meeting in the Prince Waikiki Pi'inaio Ballroom

Lou've Invited!