# pacific connector



Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention

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## Building the Kingdom

#### From the Interim Executive Director/Treasurer

Aloha Hawaii Pacific Baptists,

As your HPBC President, after the departure of Chris Martin as our executive director/treasurer, our by-laws have me serving as interim executive director/treasurer. Be sure to read page four for details about our transition.

As an introduction to this edition of Pacific Connector, here's an update from Brian Frable, the chair of the HPBC Executive Director/ Treasurer Search Committee:

Greeting from the executive director search committee. The search committee consists of seven executive board members, including President John Endriss and 2nd Vice-President Brian Frable from the Big Island, 1st Vice President Sterling Lee, Naomi Ashman and James Kinoshita from Oahu, Pastor Larry Hale from Kauai, and Paula Higuchi from Maui. We are humbled to serve our churches during this process. The search committee is busy praying and planning the process to find God's provision in our next executive director/treasurer. At the last meeting on February 10, 2023, 2nd vice president Brian Frable was elected chair of the search committee.

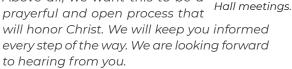
The committee would like to report on their progress and request two things. We are diligently praying and planning. But before we gather any data or request resumes, we believe praying is the foundation of this process. So, we first ask for prayer. Please make a daily commitment or weekly time at your Bible Studies (perhaps during Sunday School classes) to pray for the search committee and our progress as we search for God's provision in our next executive director/treasurer.

Secondly, we invite your thoughtful comments. An email has been established where personal, confidential opinions regarding hiring our next executive director can be given. The email is HPBCExecSearch@gmail.com. We want to hear from you. However, we ask you, please make your brief comments applicable to hiring the new executive director. We want to make this about what we want to see in our future director and not a critique of the past. Speak the truth in love in such a way that it honors Christ.

The search committee has also scheduled multiple in-person Town Hall Meetings in March to hear directly from you. These meetings, on four different Islands, will allow your voice to be heard. The search committee wants to hear from you. Times and locations of the meetings are available at hpbaptist.net/search-committee-updates, so you can plan accordingly. There will also be

several scheduled zoom meetings for anyone unable to attend the Town Hall Meetings.

Also, later, we will distribute a general survey asking questions regarding your expectations of the next executive director/treasurer. information Above all, we want this to be a prayerful and open process that



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on the Town

Mahalo nui for praying for the search committee. Let's seize this opportunity and anticipate what God has in the days ahead for us at the Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention. The Lord bless you all.

Pastor John Endriss HPBC President/Interim Executive Director/ Treasurer



**About the Cover** 

Mauna Loa eruption on Hawaii Island. November 30, 2023. Adobe Stock Image.



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#### **Changing Hearts and Lives**

Connections Church is at work in their Sunday morning worship services by changing hearts and lives. They recently held two new-members' classes.





#### Aloha to Chris and **Wendy Martin**

The HPBC staff and families hosted a special meal and fellowship to express their appreciation to Chris and Wendy Martin.



#### **IMB Journey Woman** Sent from Hawaii to Serve as Missionary

Natalie Nations answered the call to missions by serving college students in Tokyo.

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#### **HPBC** Executive Board First Quarter Update

by John Endriss, HPBC President and Interim Executive Director/Treasurer

As we begin a new year in service to our Lord, we (your HPBC Executive Board) thought we'd try something new. Each quarter through video and other forms of communication, we want to update you on things happening within our convention, including actions taken at quarterly HPBC board meetings.

At our board meeting Saturday, we approved several new members to fill the many vacancies on our board. Your new board members are Eric Dissinger from Waialae on Oahu, Pastor Larry Hale from Ele'ele Baptist on Kauai, Pastor Hanale Lindo from Kaunakaki Baptist on Molokai, Paula Higuchi from Kahului Baptist on Maui, and Pastor Shane Tanigawa from University Avenue Baptist on Oahu. We are blessed to add them to our board, making it even stronger, and fulfilling one of my goals of a board representing nearly every region across our convention, and most of our people groups.

At our January 28 meeting, we celebrated the sending of our executive director/treasurer of nine years, Dr. Chris Martin, to serve at the International Mission Board (IMB).

One of the major actions of this quarterly meeting was to approve an interim executive director/treasurer job description and a process for seeking and approving an interim executive director/treasurer that, Lord willing, will be completed in several weeks.

On January 31, we sent a video outlining our actions, the job description, and our process for selecting an interim executive director/treasurer via e-mail. We also posted it on our website and social media. After we have completed this process, we will notify you who will serve as our interim executive director/treasurer.

A long-term executive director/treasurer search committee was elected at our meeting (by the process of our by-

laws) from the members of your board. The chair of the committee is Brian Frable from the Big Island. Members include John Endriss from the Big Island, Pastor Sterling Lee, Naomi Ashman and James Kinoshita from Oahu, Pastor Larry Hale from Kauai, and Paula Higuchi from Maui. This process will last at least several months and Lord willing, we hope to have our next executive director/treasurer by our next annual meeting. Pray for this search committee as we work on this great task.

In other board activities, our committees discussed our HPBC finances and the topic of the properties, but no new action was taken at this time. Another committee took time to begin further outlining parameters for applicants of our initiative scholarships and subsidies. Along with previously approved applicants, the board approved the following Theological Development Initiatives seminary scholarships: Noah Denney from Pawa'a Community, Pastor Todd Morikawa from Kailua Baptist, and Pastor Pancho Madrid from Guam Christian Life Fellowship. For Leadership Development Initiatives new church worker subsidies, the board approved applicants from Yokohama International Baptist, Engage Church on Hawaii Island, and Life Christian Church on Oahu.

We are excited about the work of investing in future pastors and ministry leaders in our convention. Thank you for your partnership in this. May God bless us as we do his work and make much of Jesus in our islands and across the Pacific.





Read the first quarter update and watch a video with President John Endriss at hpbaptist.net/lqboardupdate

#### Hawaii Pacific Baptists Gave Generously in 2022

According to Mike Martin, HPBC Assistant Executive Director for Business and Finance, Hawaii Pacific Baptists gave \$1,564,946 in 2022 through the Cooperative Program and three special offerings. This includes:











View a 2-page report by Mike Martin on 2022 giving from Hawaii Pacific Baptist churches to the Cooperative Program and Special Offerings at tinyurl.com/2022giving-HPBC.

## Hawaii Pacific Baptists Bid *Aloha*to Chris and Wendy Martin

by HPBC staff

The Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention Executive Board and HPBC staff team bid aloha to Chris and Wendy Martin and celebrated almost two decades of ministry in Hawaii in January.

The HPBC staff and families hosted a special meal and fellowship for the team to express their appreciation on January 27. At the January 28 Executive Board meeting, board members and HPBC staff gathered around Chris to pray for blessings on him and Wendy as they relocate to Richmond, Virginia where Chris will serve as Director of State, Association, and Network Partnerships at the International Mission Board.

In an e-mail to Hawaii Pacific Baptists announcing his transition, Chris wrote, "It's an honor to have served you as Executive Director for the past nine years. These years have been the most meaningful of my ministry career. Wendy and I have developed friendships and relationships with you like nowhere else."

Chris Martin served as pastor of Lahaina Baptist Church from December 2005 until January 2014, when he became the executive director/treasurer for the Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention. Chris had previously served as a pastor in Louisiana and Florida.





(above) HPBC Staff and Families Aloha Lunch (below) HPBC Executive Board members and HPBC staff commission Chris Martin for his new role with the International Mission Board.



### IMB Journey Woman Sent from Hawaii Will Serve as Long-Term Missionary

I have learned that 'going' is more than just moving to a new place. It's living. It's being present.







by Natalie Nation

grabbed my heart and called me to surrender my life to Him while I was a swimmer at the University of Hawaii at Mānoa (UH). Shortly after, I knew He was calling me to follow Him wherever He called, possibly overseas. After graduating college, while coaching swimming and leading UH athlete Bible studies and young adult ministries through my church, God made it clear to me that I could be doing all I was doing here, where the gospel was less prevalent.

Upon answering the call to missions, God paved a way for the perfect job for

me to serve college students in Tokyo. However, the week I was supposed to leave for my two-year term, COVID-19 shut the borders of Japan. I spent eight months wondering if and when I'd finally get to "go." In the meantime, God used that season to grow me immensely, in trusting His plan and purposes for my life. He graciously allowed me to walk closely with my church family for an unexpectedly, extended period and opened the doors for me to connect with other churches and pastors around Oahu. Although it was a slow and stress-filled season, I finally made it to Japan in October 2020.

Arriving in Tokyo was filled with culture shock. As I slowly learned my new city, made new friends, started language school, and began my new life, I was exhausted. However, God used my immense joy of eating Japanese food to comfort me through the constant confusion. It took me months to learn the train stations and my regular commuting routes. It took every ounce of energy I had to get used to never knowing what was going on, and evaluating what people around me were doing to try to stay within the "culturally appropriate" bounds.

About eight months into my term, I started understanding some of what was being said. I could sometimes check out at the store by myself. I could





almost relax on the train. My friends and I understood each other enough to laugh together. That's when Tokyo finally started to feel more like home.

My absolute favorite part of life in Japan is my friends. Friends who come over and dance in my living room while we cook dinner together, explore the many bizarre animal cafes, or take me to interesting restaurants they've always wanted to try, go swimming with me, or take me on vacation. Friends who laugh until we cry or have heartfelt conversations over a cup of tea. Those friendships are the ones God laid on my heart as I felt Him telling me, "you can come back and continue to see the work I'm doing here." I pray these friends will someday know Jesus as their Lord and Savior.

Over the last two years, I have seen eyes opened when hearing about the hope of Jesus. I have seen hearts softened and God move in people's lives as He draws them near to Himself. I have learned that "going" is more than just moving to a new place. It's living. It's being present. It's going to the fruit stand every Monday morning and making friends with anyone who reciprocates a smile. It's saying good morning to my neighbors, patiently waiting for a response from my friends, and it's trusting that God is in control of the frustration, heartache, and perseverance as well as the joy, love, and honor of serving Him in a dark place.

Natalie Nation served for two years in Tokyo as part of the International Mission Board's (IMB) Journeyman program. She will return to Tokyo in May 2023 to serve as a full-time, fully funded IMB missionary supported by your gifts through the Cooperative Program and the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions. Natalie's sending church is Pawa'a Community Church on Oahu. Arjay Gruspe is the pastor.

Every gift to the Annie Armstrong Easter Offering — 100 percent — goes to train, resource, and send thousands of missionaries involved in church planting and compassion ministries across the United States, Canada, and territories.

**Pray for Kay Bennett** director of Send Relief's Baptist

Friendship House in New Orleans, Louisiana

Pray for people experiencing homelessness to be drawn to Baptist Friendship House for help. Pray for Human trafficking victims to be able to escape

exploitation. Pray for strength and encouragement for Kay, the staff, and the volunteers.

To watch a video and learn more about Kay's story, visit: anniearmstrong.com/resource/ kav-bennett



#### **Pray for Vergil & Kelsev Brown**

church planters in Portland, Oregon



Redemption Church to be faithful and bold in their evangelism efforts. Pray for unity in this growing young church and joy in the

journey for these church planters, the Brown family.

Watch a video and learn more about their story at: anniearmstrong.com/resource/ vergil-kelsey-brown





Pray for Sam & Joanna Choi church planters in Minneapolis, Minnesota

Pray for All Peoples Church that their growth in numbers will be matched with spiritual maturity. Pray for faithfulness to the mission to reach the nations in Minneapolis.

Watch a video and learn more about the Choi's story, at: anniearmstrong.com/resource/ sam-joanna-choi



#### **Pray for Philip &** Andi Coleman

church plantina missionaries in Anchorage, Alaska



Colemans and True North Church as they reach a culture that doesn't see a need for Jesus. Pray for their church planting

residency project to grow new missionaries to reach Alaska.

To watch a video and learn more about their story, visit: anniearmstrong.com/resource/ philip-andi-coleman





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#### **Hawaii Pacific Baptist Goal:** \$125.000

When you give through the Cooperative Program and the Annie Armstrong Offering, you support these persons and ministries.

National Goal: \$70,000,000



#### **Pray for Emanuel &** Ioana Grozea

church re-planters in Ridgewood, New York

Pray for the Grozeas and Maranatha Church as they reach and welcome Albanian, Nepali, Polish, Latino, Egyptian, Italian, Turkish, Armenian,

and Romanian neighbors. Pray for Maranatha to plant three new churches by 2030.

To watch a video and learn more about Grozea's story, visit:

anniearmstrong.com/resource/ emanuel-ioana-grozea



#### **Pray for Matt &** Amanda Hadden

as they lead Čhankú Wašté Ranch, a ministry center in Porcupine, South Dakota

Pray for the

Hadden's as they minister to the Oglala Lakota people on Pine Ridge Reservation, one of the largest reservations in the United States

and among the poorest. Pray for continued favor and

Watch a video and learn more about their story at: anniearmstrong.com/resource/ matt-amanda-hadden

partnerships with tribal leaders.





#### **Pray for Matthew & Ruth Lahev**

church planters in St. John's,

Newfoundland

Pray for God to open the eyes and soften the hearts of people towards the gospel in St. John's. Pray that Kilbride Community Church represents Christ well in an apathetic environment.

Watch a video and learn more about Lahey's story, at: anniearmstrong.com/resource/ matthew-ruth-lahey



osecha

#### **Pray for Angel &** Vanesa Viveros

church planters in Lincoln, Nebraska.

> Pray for the Viveros family as they

plant a church in a vibrant. multicultural community. Pray for the Spanishspeaking community in Lincoln,

Nebraska, to

find community and gospel hope

at Cosecha Iglesia Bíblica.

rosecha

To watch a video and learn more about the Viveros'. visit: anniearmstrong.com/resource/ angel-vanesa-viveros









Pastor Saufo'i Tavete, pastor of **Happy** Valley Baptist, Samoa reported baptisms on January 7, 2023 (pictured above and to the right).

Olivet Baptist has celebrated 13 baptisms in the past several months, including Kodie-Lynn Fujioka, baptized on January 29, 2023, by Associate Pastor Jeffrey Mullis. Jamie McElrath is the senior pastor.



Life Christian Church, Oahu, celebrated baptisms on Sunday, January 15, at Magic Island Lagoon. Shaw Okawara is the pastor.







Koza Baptist, Okinawa, celebrated the baptism of seven new believers on Sunday, January 29, 2023. Chris Eyre is the senior pastor. (bottom) Church members of Koza gather at the East China Sea on a brisk day to witness baptisms.





Pastor David Whitehead shared that at Connections Church Kapolei church plant, God is at work in their Sunday morning worship services, changing hearts and lives. They recently held two new-members' classes.





Freedom Village Church, Seoul, South Korea, recently held baptisms of four new believers in their worship center. It was also the Sunday they celebrated their third anniversary. James Lynch is the lead pastor.









#### **Packer Serving** as Interim at **IBC** Manilla

David Packer began serving as the interim pastor at the International Baptist Church (IBC) of Manilla at the beginning of February 2023. He and his wife Lana served as missionaries in the Philippines from 1980-89, as



senior pastor of IBC Singapore (1992-2004), of IBC Duesseldorf Germany (2007-2009), and IBC Stuttgart Germany (2009-2020). David and Lana have three grown children and five grandchildren.



#### **Pastor Steve** Kaneshiro Named Pastor **Emeritus**

On Sunday, January 29, 2023, Valley Isle Baptist on Maui named Steve Kaneshiro, pastor emeritus. The church chose to do this on the first anniversary of his retirement. Kenneth Priest (pictured left) is the Transitional Pastor.



Pastor Dave Choi with his wife, Hyeyoung, and his sons, Nathaniel and Andrew

#### Choi Affirmed as Senior Pastor at **Antioch Baptist**

On Sunday, February 5, 2023, church members of Antioch Baptist Church on Oahu unanimously voted to call Dave Choi to serve as their Senior Pastor. Pastor Choi had been serving as their associate pastor.

#### **Leaders Installed and Commissioned** at Happy Valley Baptist, Samoa

Pastor Saufo'i Tavete, Happy Valley Baptist, Samoa, shared that they held a special service to bless their new ministry and church leaders on January 8, 2023.



#### Haynes and Brennan Serve at Kahului Baptist

On Saturday, January 7, 2023, Kahului Baptist Church installed Pastor Jay Haynes (middle) and celebrated the addition of Pastor Noah Brennan (right) to their council of elders. Pastor Rocky Komatsu of Waiehu Community Church delivered a charge and congregational encouragement. Members of Kahului Baptist, Waiehu Community Church, Kahului Union, Lana'i Baptist, and Kihei Baptist joined in the worship service and a potluck celebration that followed.



### Barr is New Pastor at Living Faith

Phillip Barr began serving as the pastor of Living Faith in Honolulu on January 8, 2023. Phillip and his family lived in Beijing, China, for seven years. After returning to the US, he worked to plant an international church in Knoxville, Tennessee. Phillip is married to Betsy. They have two sons, Nate (11) and John Alan (9). Living Faith is the English-speaking congregation of Hawaii Chinese Baptist Church where Andrew Tong is the pastor.

(below) Pastor Phillip, Betsy, Nate, and John Alan Barr with Living Faith Church Leaders



Vera and Pastor Andrew Tong with Pastor Phillip and Betsy Barr



## **Church Budgeting:** 5 Ways to Take Care of Your Staff

By Seth Hawkins and Mark Dance

This year's

**SBC Church** 

Compensation

**Survey** noted

that senior pastor pay has remained flat since 2018,

despite the impact

of inflation.

astors carry the responsibility for the health of your church—which includes financial health. Pastors and church leaders are also responsible for the welfare of staff and their families—including their own.

In leading their people to prepare a generous and responsible budget for next year, pastors walk the tightrope of equipping their leaders for stewardship without over-reaching, since pastors do not want to be perceived as selfserving. Let us help you this year by giving you a resource you can share with the leaders preparing next year's budget.

So, how can your church develop a solid budgeting plan that helps demonstrate your commitment to your pastor and staff?



Follow or establish written policies and procedures

This helps reduce confusion or unfair comparisons by forming a standard for future and current budgets. Ensure your budget policies clarify ministry-related expenses, employee benefits, personal income, and spending policies. In other words, do your homework (kudos for reading articles like this).



Assess the compensation needs of your ministers and staff

This year's Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Church Compensation Survey, conducted by GuideStone®, Lifeway, and Baptist state conventions, noted that senior pastor pay has remained flat since 2018, despite the impact of inflation. This means pastors have less buying power, making them feel as if they are earning significantly less than they were four years ago. Additionally, the impact of runaway inflation is an undeniable consideration.

Compensation includes personal income and housing allowance as well as health, life, and disability coverage and retirement plan contributions.

The 2022 SBC Church Compensation Survey provides a benchmark of what SBC churches are doing. While these results are descriptive of what others are doing, they may not be prescriptive in your environment.

What do other professionals in your location make? Consider others with an education similar to your pastor's with similar responsibility—business owners, accountants, lawyers, school principals, and bankers are all places to start.

#### Provide for ministryrelated expenses

Remember to include non-income expenses like travel, hospitality, professional development, and even personal vehicle use for ministry purposes. An Accountable Reimbursement Plan (ARP) helps ensure that these expenses are not included in a minister's or employee's personal income (and thus become subject to income tax).



#### Provide competitive employee benefits

A strong employee benefit plan includes retirement contributions and medical, life, and disability coverage for ministers and other employees. Budgeting for these benefits is a tangible way to show your church staff you care—which can help attract quality new employees and reduce turnover.

Places like GuideStone work diligently to provide best-in-class retirement plans specifically for pastors and other church staff. These medical plans cover a variety of budgets with access to some of the largest medical networks in the nation. But the responsibility of budgeting for and implementing those benefits is squarely on the shoulders of local church leaders.



#### Complete a compensation planning summary

Once you've completed the other pieces of the compensation plan, review it to identify areas of inadequate support, and see if you can find the means elsewhere.

In a salary-and-benefits approach, the church pays for any medical, life, and disability insurance and makes contributions to a retirement plan. Churches set aside money for housing allowances for ministers for tax purposes. Churches also make a Self-Employed Contributions

Act (SECA) offset available to help

pastors, who must pay both the employee and employer part of Social Security. Finally, churches calculate the cash salary.

Even if raising the total compensation isn't an option, using this approach, many churches could raise their pastor's pay without costing a dime more than their current outlay. Many churches pay their pastors the wrong way, using an outdated approach that offers them a lump

sum. Sadly, too many churches don't pay their pastor his worth. Others may pay well but do so in a way that saddles their pastor with higher taxes than would otherwise be legally owed. That means less money for his

family and their needs.

Working diligently to enhance financial security and resilience for those who serve the Lord in vocational ministry helps ensure that every servant of Christ finishes well.

If you're a church leader, deacon, finance, or personnel committee member, let us close with this thought: No pastor entered the ministry to get rich. Your pastor serves your church because of

the call of God on his life. Would you be a part of showing him that he and his family are important to you by seeking to pay him well and pay him properly as you finalize next year's budget?

That investment in your pastor will pay dividends for years to come.

This article is reprinted with permission. It was originally published on Lifeway.com.



After serving as a pastor for 28 years, Mark Dance is now the director of pastoral wellness for Guidestone Financial Resources. He frequently speaks at churches, conferences, and retreats—often with his wife Janet.



Seth Hawkins provides leadership to GuideStone's Retirement Solutions Team which serves institutional clients. Seth spent most of his formative years overseas where his parents served as church planters. It was this experience that fueled his passion for serving those who serve the Lord.



#### Oahu Pastors Gather for Fellowship, Discussion, and Prayer

Oahu Baptist Network (OBN) and Hawaii Pacific Baptist Convention (HPBC) leadership worked together to gather Oahu pastors. Pastor Fola Finau hosted the gathering at Aina Haina Baptist and served lunch. HPBC's Director of Regional Ministry led a discussion on matching your ministry calendar to your church's vision, and Pastor Bob Gierhart of Nu'uanu Baptist led a guided prayer time. Pastor Bong Abagon is the moderator of the Oahu Baptist Network.



#### First Pastors Forum of 2023 with Dr. Mark Dance

Hawaii Pacific Baptist Pastors from Kauai, Molokai, Maui, Oahu, Hawaii Island, Samoa, Okinawa, Tokyo (Kanto Plains), and Yokohama joined Zoom for our first Pastors Forum of 2023. Dr. Mark Dance. Director of Pastoral Wellness for Guidestone Financial Resources, shared four barriers to pastors finishing well from Acts 20.

Watch video from Mark Dance and previous forums online at tinyurl.com/PastorsForum2023 or scan the QR code.





#### **Upcoming Pastors Forums March 8, April 19, and May 10**

Trevin Wax on The Thrill of Orthodoxy

Trevin Wax is vice president of research and resource development at the North

American Mission Board. He is a former missionary to Romania and a regular columnist at The Gospel Coalition. On Wednesday, March 8, Trevin will share and answer questions about his new book, The Thrill of Orthodoxy: Rediscovering the Adventure of Christian Faith.

Brian Croft on Church Conflict and Church Discipline

Brian Croft is the former pastor of Auburndale Baptist Church in Louisville, Kentucky, and is the



Founder and Executive Director of Practical Shepherding. On Wednesday, April 19, he will focus on church conflict, and on Wednesday, May 10, he will focus on church discipline.

If you are a lead pastor of an HPBC church and want to participate, contact Craig Webb by email at craig@hpbpatist.net.