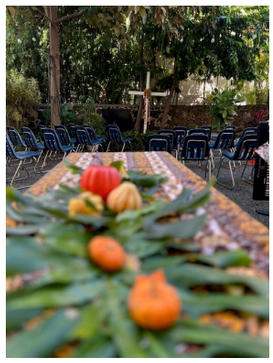
NEWS OF ST PETER'S

DECEMBER 2025

Dear Friends in Christ,

Wow! It's getting earlier and earlier, isn't it? I spotted my first Christmas decorations in the store before the end of October (not even Halloween, forget waiting for Thanksgiving!). And since early November, one of the local radio stations has started playing Christmas music around the clock. For some reason I can't quite understand, our society has declared that the celebration of Christmas must start earlier and earlier each year. And I get it, waiting is HARD! And Christmas promises such good things, why wait?? But for Christians, we find that we walk to a different drummer. We insist on setting apart the four weeks before Christmas as a separate season, the season of Advent (this year starting on November 30). This is a true gift that the world does not understand: a sacred season of anticipation, reflection, and preparation rooted in Christian tradition. In a fast-paced world, Advent invites us to pause, reconnect with our spiritual roots, and find deeper purpose. I would invite you in the midst of all the hectic "busy-ness" of this month, to set aside for time to focus on the real meaning of Christmas.
As we prepare to celebrate the birth of God's only Son, may this Season of Advent bring you peace and joy and a deeper connection to God.
In God's Love,
Pastor Ruth



THANKFULNESS PRAYERS, PRAISE AND POTLUCK

Mahalo Nui Loa to the Fellowship Committee and all those who helped make our gathering on November 23rd such a special event. In addition to a meaningful worship service, the food was onolicious, the decorations were amazing and Fun was had by all!

Contemplative Prayer group

An experiential Advent Happening December 3, 10 and 17 from 6:00 to 7:30 in the sanctuary. You are invited to spend 90 minutes each week with a group coming together for a time of Contemplative Prayer. This practice is rooted in an ancient Christian tradition and offers a method of quieting the mind and opening the heart to the presence of God. Questions or for more information, please reach out to Father Bill, w.heran@gmail.com

Mahalo Nui Loa for all those who were generous!

When the appeal went out to help replenish the shelves of the Hawaii Foodbank, St Peter's Ohana responded. Over the weeks, at least 5 full car loads were taken (mahalo Beth Cox for being our delivery person!). We will continue to collect canned food for the Foodbank every Sunday — look for the collection box in the Bell Tower.
We are also so grateful to those who donated to help our outreach to Kuhio Park Terrace, as well as the many people were generous in donating to help provide a home cooked meal for the Wounded Warriors of Marine Corps Base Kaneohe .

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We are in need of someone to help format the newsletter each month. (Pastor Ruth and other will write all the articles, but we are looking for someone who can create the actual Newsletter with photos and graphics.) If you can help by volunteering your computer skills each month, please speak to Pastor Ruth.

Annual Meeting 2026

The Annual Meeting of the congregation will be held Sunday, January 25 between services in the sanctuary.

MOAI'S* AT ST PETERS

BRAINSTORMING SESSION REPORT

On Sunday, November 9, a group of St Peter's members gathered together to begin the process of brainstorming ways to increase our connection to each other and to the world. We were centered around the three questions:

"I would love to gather together for……",
"To Better Serve God and the World, we should……."
"St. Peter's should reach out by……."

Pastor Ruth and others began by talking about the current ministries and outreach groups we are currently engaged in. We then spent time thinking about new (or renewed) ways to gather together, to create new Moai groups. The suggestions included:

Renew our Partnership with Harris Methodist in outreach to the homeless
Reach out to Ke'elikōlani Middle School (e.g., tutoring for students, donations of supplies and technology
Book Discussion Group
Monthly Movie Night and Fellowship meal
Young Professionals Group and networking
Camping weekend at St Peter's including worship and a picnic (we could even offer it as a time to help as a "work party")
Men's Fellowship and Bible study group
Episcopal Church Women's group
Daughters of the King (a prayer and service group)
A group for those who are grieving.

We know that not everyone who has ideas and thoughts about these things could be present at the meeting, and so we are encouraging you to spend time in prayer and thought, and if you have ideas or thoughts to share, please email Pastor Ruth stpetershonolulupastor@gmail.com.

Over the next few months, the Vestry will be taking time to discuss how to begin to make these ideas a reality, and we look forward to a follow up meeting in early January to begin forming the Moais.

Lots of conversation to be had by the Vestry and we are looking forward to the next meeting in early February.

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(*Note: we are borrowing the Okinawan concept of Moai, defined as "Social support groups that provide a sense of community" as the basis for our discussion)

HELP DECORATE THE SANCTUARY FOR CHRISTMAS

If you would like to donate money to help purchase special flowers for Christmas and for 2026, look for the inserts available each Sunday starting December 30. You can also make a dedication specifically for Christmas, by sending an email to the church office NO LATER than Sunday, December 14. Let Susan know if you are donating money in memory of someone, in thanksgiving for, or for another reason. You can mail your check to the office.

The (possible) Legend Behind the 12 Days of Christmas Song

The history of the tradition of the 12 Days of Christmas is an interesting one. There is one report that it harkens back 250 years when English Catholics were prohibited from openly practicing their faith. To deal with their restrictions, these Catholics implanted hidden meanings in 12 Days to educate Catholic children in the faith. The partridge in a pear tree depicted Jesus Christ (the mother partridge feigns injury to decoy predators from her helpless babies). The other meanings were, in order: the Old and New Testaments; faith, hope and love; the four gospels; the first five books of the Old Testament (the Pentateuch); the six days of creation; the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit; the eight Beatitudes; the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit; the Ten Commandments; the 11 faithful disciples; and the 12 points of belief in the Apostles Creed.

JOIN US FOR CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

We have Four opportunities to celebrate Christmas!

On **Christmas Eve** we will have **two worship services**:

"Lessons and Carols for Christmas with a Pop-up Pageant"
all are invited to join the worship at 5:00 pm the Cathedral of St. Andrews for a family friendly worship service (we even anticipate a visit from "Grandpa Bishop" in the Grandpa chair!)

Festive Worship with Candlelight
At 7:30 our celebration begins as we gather in the sanctuary for a time of Christmas Carols and Special Music.. At 8:00 pm our festival service begins including Christmas Carols, the retelling of the Christmas Story, a celebration of Eucharist and a time to bask in the beauty of candlelight.

On **Christmas Morning We will have One Worship service**
At 9:30 am on Christmas Morning we will come together to give praise and thanks for the birth of our savior

On **First Sunday of Christmas**
On Sunday, December 28th we will have one service only at 9:30 am. This will be a festival worship of Lessons and Carols as we continue to celebrate!

Children's Christmas Pageant

Mark your calendars for Sunday, December 14th. At the 7:30 am service the Children of St Peter's will be presenting a wonderful retelling of the Christmas Story in this unique Christmas Pageant.

BLUE WORSHIP

For some this Holiday Season will bring not just feelings of thankfulness and joy, but also feelings of grief as they anticipate an empty seat the table. For those who are walking through the pain of loss and grief, we are offering a special worship service on Thursday night, December 18 at 6:00 pm during the service of Jazz Vespers. This reflective time is geared toward helping all those present recognize their strength and encouragement to be gentle with themselves in this time, embracing vulnerability. It is hoped that this time will lead to a sense of comfort in shared experiences of loss and love, emerging with renewed peace and hope.

COME AND JOIN US FOR CHRISTIAN FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES!

Every Sunday we offer an Adult class as well as a time for Children's Christian Adventure between services in the Parish Hall. The Adult class is currently studying the book "Walk In Love: Episcopal Beliefs and Practices". Lifelong Episcopalians and those brand new to our faith have found this a lively discussion!
On **Wednesday morning at** 10:00 am we have a zoom bible study at 10:00 am.
Both the Adult Class on Sundays and the Bible Study are available over zoom. Email Pastor Ruth at Stpetershonolulupastor@gmail.com for the link

Special Opportunity for High School Youth

The Diocese of Hawaii is hosting a special Youth Gathering next summer! High School students from all over the Province will be coming to Hawaii to spend four days. The dates are July 28-31, 2026. The cost is only $120 which covers food, lodging, transportation, and fees , and financial assistance is available. "EYE with Aloha: TalkStory Pilgrimage 2026." We will encounter the stories of our kānaka maoli and immigrant forebears, taking a spiritual and social pilgrimage to various sacred and special sites in and around downtown Honolulu. We will also have fun activities and times of worship St Peters and at the Cathedral. This is a great chance for our youth to meet youth from across our Province and to benefit from the rich diversity of our host and immigrant cultures through their stories. Registration deadline is January 1 **(NO MONEY is needed to register,** but they need to know how many are planning to attend.) Are you or anyone in your Ohana interested in attending? Talk to Pastor Ruth.

DECEMBER 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
First Sunday in ADVENT **7:30 am worship** **9:00 am Fellowship Hour** **10:00 Worship** **11:00 am Fellowship Hour**		5:30 Choir Practice	10 am Bible Study 6pm Contemplative Prayer	6:00 pm Jazz Vespers 6:45 pm Dinner		
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
2nd Sunday in ADVENT **7:30 am worship** **9:00 am Education Hour** **10:00 Worship**			*Bible Study Cancelled* 6pm Contemplative Prayer	6:00 pm Jazz Vespers 6:45 pm Dinner		9:30 am K2P2 (knitting group) 10:00 am Practice for Christmas Pageant
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
3rd Sunday in ADVENT **7:30 am worship** **Christmas Pageant** **9:00 am Education Hour** **10:00 Worship** 12:00 Advent Retreat The Cathedral of *St Andrews*	*Newsletter Deadline*	5:30 Choir Practice	10 am Bible Study 6pm Contemplative Prayer	6:00 pm Jazz Vespers ***"Blue Christmas"*** Service 6:45 pm Dinner		
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
4th Sunday in ADVENT **7:30 am worship** *No education Hour* **10:00 Worship**			**CHRISTMAS EVE** *Bible Study Cancelled* **5 pm Children's Worship** (*The Cathedral of St Andrews)* **7:30 pm Gathering Music** **8:00 pm Worship**	**CHRISTMAS DAY** *Office closed* **9:30 Worship**	*Office closed*	9:30 am K2P2 (knitting group)
28	29	30	31	1		
1st Sunday of Christmas 8:00 am Vestry meeting **9:30 am Worship**			*Bible Study Cancelled*	*Office closed*	*Office closed*	