



MĀNOA VALLEY  
CHURCH

# Mānoa Connection

*Connecting our 'ohana*

eNewsletter

October 1, 2025

## Pastor Abe's Message

### "Our Next Chapter— the Legacy Fund"



As Stewardship Sunday approaches, I wanted to share an exciting shift that will happen in the life of our church. As you may know, for many years, our church family has faithfully given to two annual funds: the Operating Fund (which supports day-to-day ministry) and the Building Fund (which allows us to care for one of God's great gifts to our church—our campus).

Anyone who has had the chance to be involved in the life of our community has experienced how our buildings—including the sanctuary, classrooms, meeting rooms, kitchen, breezeway, outdoor play area, and gym—have enabled us to more fully be Jesus Christ's church here in Mānoa Valley and beyond, welcoming neighbors and nurturing deep, meaningful friendships.

I want to begin by thanking the countless people who have given to the Building Fund. I also want to acknowledge all those who have prayed for and served in leadership to maintain the Building Fund. Through your support, the church has been able to care for our property—including projects like resurfacing our parking lot, repairing our roof, painting walls, clearing drains, fixing lights, and so much more. Your consistent generosity and service have made it possible for our campus to stay safe and beautiful and allows our congregation to show Jesus' love in practical ways. Thank you.

As we look to the future, the church leadership has sensed Jesus inviting us into a new season—one where Mānoa Valley Church continues to care for the building we are blessed to have and also expand our reach to people in need in our community. After prayer and discussion, our Church Council has approved a shift that reflects this wider vision. At the beginning of the 2026 fiscal year, what we've called the "Building Fund" will become the "Legacy Fund."

We chose this new title for the fund because it helps us hold two specific calls of MVC together:

- 1) **Caring for Place.** Through our Reserve Study, we've been able to make a responsible, scheduled plan for the care for our property. That includes practical items like roof upkeep and repair, air-conditioning maintenance, safety and fire-alarm upgrades, accessibility improvements (elevator maintenance, clear signage, etc.), and energy-efficiency projects that lower costs. The Legacy Fund will continue to underwrite this important work so our campus can remain a hospitable, safe space for ministry.
- 2) **Serving People.** The Legacy Fund will also help open new opportunities to start ministries that meet real needs across our intergenerational community—including caring for youth and young adults; strengthening marriages and



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family relationships; supporting parents; caring for kūpuna, including those navigating dementia and home-bound seasons; coming alongside neighbors facing food insecurity or housing instability; offering spaces for mental wellness and recovery; and walking with families through end-of-life and grief. In this next season, we hope to listen well and act faithfully as opportunities arise.

To be clear, we will continue to collect funds for the Operating Fund to help us in our daily operations. And with this new Legacy Fund we will continue to care for our building as well as be able to shine Jesus' light and be His hands and feet in new ways to the world He so loves. As Jesus said, "Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16).

If you feel led to contribute to this fund, on your checks, envelopes, or online giving simply designate "Legacy Fund" in the memo line. And don't worry, if you are passionate about the ongoing care and maintenance of our campus, you can still write "Legacy Fund" with confidence—as the funding of the care and maintenance of our building will continue to be an essential and central focus of this account.

One last note—some may one day wish to bless the church through a special offering or a bequest. If that's been on your heart, we would be honored to start a conversation with you to help you align your gift with the Legacy Fund's purposes in a way that feels faithful and true to you.

Henri Nouwen once said that fundraising isn't about asking for money—it's an invitation into a story. Our hope is that the Legacy Fund becomes exactly that: a way to join God's work of caring for our neighbors so the love of Jesus can take root in ordinary, beautiful, life-changing ways in Mānoa Valley and beyond. We hope it will be a tool that Jesus will use to write new stories in and through each member of our community as we choose to be available, prayerful, and generous.

As we make this transition, we encourage you to share with the church leadership places where you see needs in the community and any practical steps that could help.

Thank you for the legacy you've already built—through your prayers, your service, and your steady faithfulness. As we enter this next chapter, let's continue to do what Mānoa Valley Church has always done: love Jesus, love our neighbors, and be a place where Jesus' light shines.

Christ's Peace, Abe

## Calling All MVC Members!



Our annual fall Congregational Meeting will be held on **Sunday, November 16 after church service**. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend this important gathering of our church members. Agenda items include the review and approval of our Church Operating Budget as well as our Building Fund Budget.

We will also provide an update regarding MVC's various ministry programs and important events coming up in the fall and the holiday season. Learn how you can play an active role in the life of Mānoa Valley Church. Join us at this important Congregational Meeting.

## Neighbors in Need

On October 5, we will receive the Neighbors in Need special mission offering of the United Church of Christ. This offering supports the ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. One-third of the funds support the Council of American Indian Ministry and two-thirds goes towards Justice and Witness Ministries. UCC churches and organizations are awarded grants for projects that focus on the rights and freedoms of individuals, environmental justice and economic justice.



Please write your check to Mānoa Valley Church and write "NIN" on the memo line.

## Harvest Fair Appeal: White Elephant Needs Your Help

It's no secret that White Elephant sales at MVC's Harvest Fair are its biggest source of revenue. Clothes, toys, books, appliances, jewelry and household goods at discounted prices attract many fair attendees. Under the spirited leadership of **Sam Browning**, this juggernaut is hoping for your participation. Thus, we encourage everyone to consider helping in any of the following ways.

### Donations

Between September 28 - October 31, donations of new or gently-used items may be dropped off on or under the two tables in front of the kitchen. Acceptable items are exhibited in the chart below.

#### Items We Accept



**Clothing, Clothing Accessories, Personal Accessories, Media, Houseware, Toys**

#### Items We Can't Accept



**Weapons and Explosives, Hazardous Waste, Construction Materials, Flammable Products, Large Appliances, Automobile Parts, Food, Mattresses and Box Springs Sofas**

### Sorting and Pricing

Between September 28 - October 31 help would be very much appreciated in sorting donation items and pricing them.

### Setup

On Friday, October 31st, from 5:00-9:00 pm, help is needed in displaying the items on designated tables and in certain areas.

### Selling and Cleanup

On the day of the Harvest Fair, November 1, between approximately 8:30am-2:30pm, people are needed to oversee the sales of the items in one of six booths and when the Fair ends, to help pack up leftover items for donation to non-profit organizations.

Thank you for your efforts to support MVC and please contact Sam for more information at [mrsammyjb@gmail.com](mailto:mrsammyjb@gmail.com).





## What's worse than finding a worm in your apple?

Got your attention. And you will be rewarded with the charming answer given by a young kindergarten lad soon.

But here's the thing. Mānoa Valley Church's 53<sup>rd</sup> Harvest Fair is occurring on Saturday, November 1<sup>st</sup>, and the Baked Goods and Delectables subcommittee needs your help!



Please share your culinary and homemaking skills by donating treats to stock our booth. In the past, sales showed a favorite for cookies, cakes, bread, rice dishes, snack bars, preserves, and more! Some recipes were borrowed from parents and grandparents, so the choices went back several generations. Anything homemade is never overrated but guaranteed to be consumed with gusto!

Yummy, yummy in the tummy.

**Delivery options:** You may drop off any hardier edibles, like snack bars, preserves and cookies on Sunday, October 26 in the breezeway. Please indicate if your recipe contains any nuts.

**Questions?** This year's Baked Goods and Delectables Booth is being co-chaired by **Louise Yamamoto** ([yamamolouise007@gmail.com](mailto:yamamolouise007@gmail.com)) and **Catherine Miyahira** ([cmiyahira@gmail.com](mailto:cmiyahira@gmail.com)), with assistance from **Maddie Oshiro**. If you wish to volunteer at the booth on Fair day, please contact either of the co-chairs.

The lad's charming answer to the question, "What's worse than finding a worm in your apple?" Half a worm.

## Make a Difference With a Food Donation

Our monthly dinners to the Family Promise of Hawai'i (FPH) Program have been greatly appreciated by parents and children at the Moili'i apartments while they recoup and prepare to move to long term stable housing. Mānoa Valley Church will be taking dinner for 20-25 people to FPH on **Thursday, October 9** and again on **Thursday November 6, 2025**. The food is served family style so if you can donate a small tray of veggies, fruits, or a main dish for 5 or more people please sign up on the [OCT. 9 LINK](#) or the [NOV. 6 LINK](#). We are sharing God's love for His people and making a difference in a struggling world. If you have questions, please contact **Inga Park Okuna** ([ingaparkokuna@gmail.com](mailto:ingaparkokuna@gmail.com)).



## Consider Joining the Peace and Justice Committee!



The Peace and Justice Committee works alongside the Missions Committee but with more of a focus on social justice. To help struggling families, we have been coordinating monthly dinners and Welcome Home Kits for Family Promise of Hawai'i parents and children. Our shared goal is to have all children in Hawaii living in a safe and secure place. Between 2022 and 2024 there was a 14% increase in overall homelessness but for families with children, there was actually a 20% increase. There are about 101 families living on the streets of Hawaii on any given day. It is also the Peace and Justice Committee's role to alert the church to other related issues, especially those that the United Church of Christ highlights for prayer and action. We need people to join the committee who would like to help make the world a more just place. If you're interested in serving on this committee, please contact its sole member, **Inga Park Okuna** at [ingaparkokuna@gmail.com](mailto:ingaparkokuna@gmail.com) or (808) 258-3781.

## Aloha Committee



Denise Au and Reggie Tamashiro comprise the Aloha Committee, which ensures that we have snacks after worship once a month.

## MVC's Exercise Class is a "Ministry of Wellness" by Pastor Gwendolyn Kirkland

"Present your bodies as a living sacrifice."

Romans 12:1 NRSV

Beginning in 2021, **David Park**, our very own strength and nutrition coach, who also serves as our Office Administrator at Mānoa Valley Church, has been offering a series of health and wellness classes for members and friends.

Fit4Life, the aptly named, dynamic, comprehensive wellness program designed and implemented by David, can prove to be totally life changing.



I began my Fit4Life journey with David when I joined his class in July 2023 and became a member of the S.W.E.A.T. Sisters. The acronym, which I created, stands for "Seniors with Energy and Tenacity."

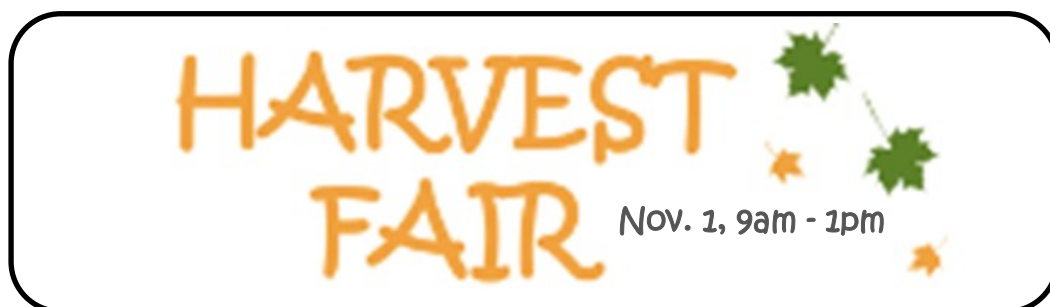
The Fit4Life classes began with David teaching us fundamentals based on the Tripod of Health. We learned that Nutrition/Health, Rest/Sleep and Movement/Exercise, are the major components of a fitness program.

Prior to joining the class, we felt that our walking 10,000 steps each day was sufficient exercise. Though all movement is beneficial, just walking we learned was only a part of a total fitness program.

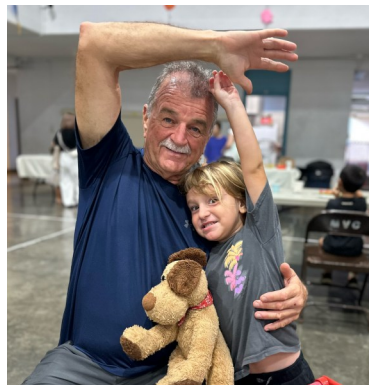
With each class beginning with a lecture or instructional video, we learned about the recommended 150 minutes of exercise weekly including moderate to intense cardiovascular and two sessions of strength training.

According to **Dianne Ishida**, an avid participant, many church members and friends of Mānoa Valley Church have been taking his class for several sessions to progressively increase their fitness, following David's "progression not perfection" principle. She says, "While sweating a lot, we have steadily improved our strength and overall fitness. David encourages us to try our best from where we are. We are truly blessed in having David with his fitness background in our church family."

Thank you, David, for sharing your "ministry of wellness" with us!



## Our Preschool hosted Kupuna Celebration Breakfast on September 5



Date	Event
Oct 5	Book Club meeting at 12pm either in the Upper Room or on Zoom
Oct 5	Neighbors in Need Special offering will be received during service
Oct 9	Family Promise dinner donation, drop off by 5:00 at the breezeway
Oct 26	Christian Education Committee provides snack
Until October 31	Harvest Fair sorting and pricing, gym
Oct 31	Harvest Fair set up, 5:00—9:00pm
Nov 1	Harvest Fair, 9am—1pm
Nov 6	Family Promise dinner donation, drop off by 5:00 at the breezeway
Nov 16	Congregational Meeting after church service