

The Friend



HAWAII
CONFERENCE

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Council Selects Interim Conference Minister

Gabrielle Fackre Chavez has been unanimously selected by the Conference Council to begin as Intentional Interim Conference Minister in early January 2018.



Gabrielle comes to Hawai'i from the Central Pacific Conference where she has served for 27 years as an interim minister and a new church start pastor. She has also been an Interim Associate Conference Minister in the Iowa and Massachusetts Conferences and is trained in intentional interim ministry.

In addition to performing the duties of conference minister, Gabrielle will lead the Conference through the transitional interim period. She will collaborate with consultant Cynthia Scherr and a recently appointed strategy team to develop the Conference's strategic planning process launched at the 195th 'Aha Pae'aina.

Her Hawai'i connection and love for the islands goes back to a year living with family on O'ahu, where her father was on sabbatical as a Visiting Theologian at the University of Hawai'i and Theologian in Residence at Church of the Crossroads. She graduated from Kaimuki High School and worked in the pineapple cannery before attending Yale University.

Holding a Master of Divinity degree from Andover Newton Theological School, Gabrielle is an author whose works have appeared in books, spiritual magazines and denominational publications. She is married to author and health educator Thomas C. Chavez, who will join her in Hawai'i. They have two adult children and are anticipating their first grandchild early next year.



What Is Our Church's Wider Mission?

By Elwood Kita, Stewardship Missional Team Chair

Christ calls us to share the word and care for all God's people, not just ourselves and those we know by name. Christianity involves being a community of many people interacting, supporting and loving each other.

Supporting Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) connects us to the entire United Church of Christ denomination. As partners in Christ's mission, OCWM is our responsibility, our kuleana to invest in our local church, the UCC and in God's world.

Whom does OCWM benefit?

OCWM personally benefits you and me when we attend events sponsored by the Hawai'i Conference such as the Church Leaders Event, 'Aha Pae'aina and clergy retreats. Registration does not cover all the costs. Churches in the Hawai'i Conference that give to OCWM make our life together possible.

OCWM benefits every church in the Hawai'i Conference through conference staff and programs including scholarships, retreats, training, youth events, and pastoral search and support. Churches in the Hawai'i Conference that give to OCWM undergird our staff and programs.

OCWM benefits everyone in the United Church of Christ: Half of the funds for OCWM Basic Support collected in Hawai'i stay in Hawai'i, and half support the UCC nationally and globally. Churches in the Hawai'i Conference that give to OCWM support all the ministries of the UCC.

OCWM benefits God's people in need: Churches in the Hawai'i Conference that give to OCWM through Special Mission Offerings (Neighbors in Need, One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church, and the Christmas Fund) offer support to the world's hungry, develop new congregations in the United States and care for our retired clergy and church staff that have insufficient retirement income.

If you are looking for new ways to inspire your congregation to *kokua mai*, to offer help, contact the Hawai'i Conference Office and ask for copies of the new OCWM brochure to share. Check out other free resources at www.ucc.org/ocwm.

There are many ways to support Christ's work. Giving to OCWM is the essential place to start as we live together in the UCC.

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Tuvalu Fou Finds Home for Worship



Acting Conference Minister Iese Tuuao with leaders of Tuvalu Fou at Kahikuonalani UCC

Tuvalu Fou Church of Hawai'i, the only Tuvalu congregation in Hawai'i and in the United Church of Christ, has at last found a home for worship.

For the past five years, members have held services under a pavilion at Dole Community Park on O'ahu. Enduring inclement weather, noise from homeless people and police responding to crimes, the congregation longed to worship in a safe area.

Their prayers were answered on August 6 when the church held its inaugural service at Kahikuonalani UCC in Pearl City. The Hawai'i Conference Foundation, which owns the property, helped arrange a partnership between the churches in conjunction with the Hawai'i Conference.

"This is a great opportunity for our church," said Pastor Iosefa Kilisome. "We have spent years looking for this, and we are happy to have a safe place for our members to worship."

The congregation pays \$300 per month to use facilities at Kahikuonalani UCC, which also rents to a non-denominational Pohnpeian congregation. The three churches share the sanctuary with half-hour breaks between Sunday services.

Leaders of Tuvalu Fou Church of Hawai'i and Kahikuonalani UCC have discussed the possibility of holding joint worship services on special occasions and collaborating for ministries.

"I can't see anything negative about this partnership," said Kahikuonalani UCC Pastor Rick Hirakawa. "Our bills are easier to pay, the building is being utilized, and most importantly Tuvalu Fou now has a safe place to worship. All around, everyone is being blessed."

Acting Conference Minister Iese Tuuao, who delivered the inaugural sermon for Tuvalu Fou Church of Hawai'i in the

(Continued on page 7)

Conference Begins Strategic Planning

*Open our hearts and our minds
Discerning your spirit, we welcome you in
Joy overflowing our hearts
Show us your vision so we can begin*

*God of grace, God of mercy
Ke Akua Manaloa
O God, hear our prayer.*



Consultant Cynthia Scherr leads an 'Aha Pae'aina plenary session.

In September, the Hawai'i Conference began developing a strategic plan to guide our future. The purpose of the plan is to unite under a shared vision that will guide the Conference into a spiritually rich and fulfilling future. Three plenary sessions at last year's 'Aha Pae'aina introduced the strategic planning process by focusing on the following themes:

Prayer: How will we begin our spiritual strategic journey?

Exploration: How will we listen for God's vision for the Conference?

Common understanding: What is strategic planning anyway?

Relevance: How will our plan be infused with the Spirit, meaningful and practical?

Mission: What is the Conference sent into the world to do?


Prayer

Delegates to the 195th 'Aha Pae'aina formed small groups to write prayers for strategic planning. They were read aloud to the entire body, accompanied by music composed by Papa Makua Ken Makuakane. Prayers are available on the Conference website: <http://bit.ly/2xeNMgg>.

Exploration

The wide-ranging perspectives of 'Aha participants provided

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God is still speaking

Climate Change: A Moral Dilemma

Climate change is not disappearing, but entire nations may soon be because of it.

This is the case for Tuvalu, a small island chain located midway between Hawai'i and Australia. Resting 15 feet above sea level at its highest point, the country could find itself submerged in the Pacific Ocean in coming decades.

"We have come to the reality that in 25 years Tuvalu will be gone," said Tusi Sakaio, a member of Tuvalu Fou Church of Hawai'i. "What are we going to tell our kids? What will happen to our culture? That is what I am worried about."

On a visit to Tuvalu last year, Tusi witnessed firsthand the effects of climate change. He described a 1,640-foot-long seawall built to protect homes from rising tides, neighborhoods engulfed in oceanwater and centers of villages that are now waterfront property. Graveyards have also flooded, he said, forcing officials to exhume and relocate bodies inland.

"Even growing food has become difficult," he explained. "The salt water mixes in with the farmland and crops are not able to survive."

As the atmosphere heats up in response to global greenhouse gas emissions, storms worldwide become more frequent and severe. When torrential rain stops, land dries out faster because it is hotter. The paradoxical result is both increased flooding and drought.

Tusi said that droughts in Tuvalu have resulted in government-mandated rationing of potable water.

"They tell people not to shower for certain periods," he said. "People can wash clothes and shower using the water well, but tap water is reserved for drinking. It is not easy."

Another consequence of global warming is the bleaching and killing of coral reefs. Fisheries in Tuvalu are dwindling, making it difficult for families to self-subsist. Deteriorating reefs are hastening beach erosion, leaving shores more vulnerable to inundation.

A member of Tuvalu Fou Church of Hawai'i said the island he grew up on has shrunk five feet in circumference since 2008. Sea levels are projected to rise nearly a foot by 2065, due largely to melting Arctic sea ice and glaciers, per the United Nations.

In a 2015 speech to the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP21), the Prime Minister of Tuvalu, Enele Sopoaga, warned, "Tuvalu's future at current warming is already bleak. Any further temperature increase will spell the total demise of Tuvalu."

Unfortunately, Tuvalu is not the only nation facing the possibility of succumbing to climate change soon.

Dr. Keola Downing, a past President of the Hawai'i Island



An atoll in Tuvalu

Photo/Wikimedia

Association who lived for years in the Republic of the Marshall Islands, said king tides are destroying homes and businesses in the capital of Majuro. Like Tuvalu, the country has been affected by worsening droughts, tropical storms and coral bleaching.

Members of Church of the Holy Cross in Hilo report that some of their ancestral land in the Federated States of Micronesia is uninhabitable due to scarce freshwater and soil severely degraded by ocean water.

In an emergency resolution on climate change, the Thirty-First General Synod of the United Church of Christ declared our moral obligation to protect God's creation. The resolution, which received over 97 percent of votes in favor, deems climate change "one of the greatest moral challenges the world has ever faced."

For some, climate change is not merely a moral challenge, but an imminent existential threat.

"We want our children to see Tuvalu before it is gone," said Tusi. "Our church is fundraising so that our members, especially the kids, can visit within the next five years."

What Can I Do to Help?

The Justice and Witness Missional Team of the Hawai'i Conference recommends that churches and individuals urge members of Congress to support legislation defending our oceans, air and water. Divesting from fossil fuels through portfolios offered by United Church Funds is also advised.

To learn more about climate change and ways to reduce your greenhouse gas footprint, visit the websites of the UCC (<http://bit.ly/2xYcMnZ>) and the United Nations (<http://bit.ly/1WMIBe4>).

Sue Smith, Chair of the Justice and Witness Missional Team, contributed to this report.

OCWM: Pastors' Perspectives

Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) is the lifeblood of the United Church of Christ, supporting more than 150 ministries across the nation and world. Three ministers in the Hawai'i Conference shared why they prioritize giving to this fund.

"Number one, it enhances God's kingdom," said Miguel Morales, Pastor of Maui Evangelical Church. "We donate because God calls us to help the world."

Gifts to OCWM change lives through programs of disaster relief, child and elderly sponsorship, refugee resettlement, missionary work, justice advocacy and dozens more.

Throughout the year, Miguel educates his congregation about the importance of OCWM giving. Last year the church tithed \$1,750 and was "5 for 5" in special mission giving.

"Once churches understand OCWM, they give joyfully instead of seeing it as an obligation," said Miguel. "I remind my congregation often why we give as a church."

For Naleen Andrade, Pastor of Kahikolu Congregational Church on Hawai'i Island, the importance of OCWM became evident after attending her first General Synod and 'Aha Pae'aina this year.

"I realized that this fund is the glue that holds the UCC together and that we should be giving regularly," she said.

Upon returning from General Synod, Naleen explained OCWM to her congregation, which unanimously supported monthly giving. She said the church has resolved to contribute 10 percent of its tithes and offerings.

Through giving to OCWM, churches multiply their power to change the world by uniting to promote justice and compassion worldwide. The Hawai'i Conference is empowered to connect and resource our churches, members and clergy.

"We are not in isolation," said Naleen. "We are part of a much larger church, and OCWM is a powerful way that we come together. Even though my church has modest means, what is important is our commitment to a larger vision of the church and making OCWM a priority."

Wayne Higa, Kahu of Ka'ahumanu Church on Maui, concurred with that sentiment, stating, "The idea is to prioritize money for OCWM as opposed to taking care of everything else and giving what is left over."

With \$7,800 (11 percent of its local expenses) dedicated to OCWM last year, Ka'ahumanu Church ranked as a top-eight per capita contributor among Hawai'i Conference churches.

Summarizing what is perhaps the heart of OCWM giving, Miguel affirmed, "We give because we are blessed and expect nothing in return. We give because it is a joy and we are in covenant with the UCC. We give because we are Christian."

OCWM Supports Disaster Ministries



Zach Wolgemuth, Executive for UCC Disaster Ministries

Each year, UCC Disaster Ministries provides lifesaving relief to hundreds of survivors of natural and human-induced disasters worldwide. Because churches give to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM), which supports the United Church of Christ's operations, 100 percent of funds designated for disaster relief are used for that purpose.

In response to devastation recently caused by Hurricanes Harvey in Texas and Irma in the Caribbean and Florida, the UCC has provided over \$30,000 for recovery efforts. Survivors have received temporary shelter, food and water security, hygiene kits, disease prevention assistance and psychosocial support. Long-term recovery, which includes home repairs, will also be provided.

Executive for UCC Disaster Ministries, Zach Wolgemuth, called these storms a "teachable moment" on disaster preparedness, which is a primary focus of UCC Disaster Ministries.

"The big teachable moment is to avoid being a statistic," he said. "None of us wants to be stuck on a rooftop waiting to be rescued after being trapped for several days."

UCC Disaster Ministries offers a Disaster Preparedness Guide to help churches and individuals prepare for hurricanes, floods, earthquakes and other disasters (<http://bit.ly/1E9g4Qm>). Preparing for a disaster can seem overwhelming, but getting started is imperative, said Zach.

"It is especially important in Hawai'i for individuals, churches and communities to be prepared," he said. "Because of Hawai'i's isolation, a major event could mean that people don't receive aid from the mainland for days or even weeks."

Securing two weeks worth of food and water and developing an evacuation plan can help avert a worst-case scenario, said Zach. He encourages churches to build relationships with emergency management agencies and to maintain a list of members needing evacuation assistance.

Before and after a disaster strikes, UCC Disaster Ministries helps our churches and communities stay safe. You can support this work by giving to OCWM, One Great Hour of Sharing and the Emergency USA and International Emergency Relief Funds.

When supporting disaster recovery efforts, Zach stressed the importance of giving undesignated dollars (money not designated for a specific disaster).

"When people give undesignated money, it really allows us to focus on the most vulnerable communities and live out our mission, which is to serve the least of these," he said.

This year, the UCC has already responded to 12 domestic and 29 international disasters. For more information, visit www.ucc.org/disaster.

Pension Boards UCC Empowers God's Servants



Executives from the Pension Boards visit the Hawai'i Conference Office in August.

The Pension Boards of the United Church of Christ exists to help those who faithfully serve the church achieve financial security and wellness.

In August, Pension Boards executives

visited churches and ministers on O'ahu to provide information about comprehensive retirement and health benefits available to UCC clergy and lay employees and their eligible dependants.

The Pension Boards, funded in part by gifts to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM), administers more than \$4 million in annual benefits. It has 305 members in the Hawai'i Conference of which 61 are clergy.

"Many clergy devote their entire careers to the church and retire at poverty level," said President and CEO Brian Bodager. "We can bring them closer to a financial standard of living that the national UCC recommends."

Services offered by the Pension Boards include a professionally managed pension plan, medical and dental benefits, long-term care and life insurance, disability income and financial planning.

To help clergy prepare for retirement, the UCC recommends that churches contribute 14 percent of their salaries to a pension plan. Doing so over 30 to 35 years will account for at least 75 percent of pre-retirement income, said Director of Health Plan Operations Frank Loiacono.

Churches unable to contribute 14 percent may apply to receive financial assistance. Smaller contributions and plans tailored for second-career clergy, many of whom incur student loan debt in mid-life, are also available.

"We are not a one-trick pony," said Brian. "The pension program can be accessed by as little as \$10 per month, maybe less. It can be one or two percent of a pastor's income or a fixed dollar amount."

This year, an estimated \$80,000 in small annuity supplementation—a 137 percent increase since 2014—will be provided to 15 retired clergy in Hawai'i. The Pension Boards also provides emergency assistance for medical bills, funeral expenses and home repairs after natural disasters.

Starting in October, the Pension Boards will launch a five-year program empowering UCC ministers with tools and strategies

for effectively managing personal finances. Three cohorts of 30 ministers from historically-underrepresented groups will be selected to participate in the Ministers' Financial Vitality Initiative.

"It would be fantastic to have a significant number of people in these cohorts come from the Hawai'i Conference," said Brian. Applications for the first cohort are due by October 31. Applications for the second cohort will be accepted next fall, and matching grants of \$1,000 may be applied for in January 2018. Find out more at <http://bit.ly/2xnUfCJ>.

The many life-changing ministries of the Pension Boards are strengthened by your generous gifts to OCWM and the annual Christmas Fund special mission offering. Nationally, OCWM annual giving has dropped by over \$400,000 since 2007, said Brian. Last year, three of the top per capita churches in Christmas Fund giving were from Hawai'i.

Learn more about the Pension Boards at www.pbucc.org.

mission Offering

Support the Christmas Fund Offering

Gifts to the annual Christmas Fund special mission offering embody the spirit of the season by supporting those in need who have served the church.

Administered by the Pension Boards, the fund provides pension and health premium supplementation to low-income retirees, emergency assistance to families of clergy and lay employees, and Christmas gift checks to hundreds of annuitants.

This year, Christmas thank-you checks will be distributed to approximately 512 people, totaling \$230,000. More than \$1 million in annuity supplementation, \$366,000 in health premium supplementation and \$29,000 in emergency grants were provided in 2016.

Among 5,000 UCC congregations, Lahuiokalani Ka'anapali, Waioli Hui'ia and Koloa Union Churches were ranked among the top ten per capita givers in 2016.

"Shepherding the Light" is the theme for this year's offering, which churches are invited to receive during Advent. Visit www.pbucc.org for more information.

News briefs are adapted from UCC News, the online news portal for the United Church of Christ. For details on these and other stories, visit www.ucc.org/news.

UCC Shows Up in Charlottesville



The presence of the United Church of Christ was strong and widespread in Charlottesville, Va., in August as hundreds of white nationalists, neo-Nazis and Ku Klux Klan members clashed with counter-demonstrators in the streets of that university community, killing one woman and injuring 19 others. UCC leaders mobilized clergy and people of faith, putting their bodies on the line in prayer, in protest and in offering pastoral care in local hospitals and the public square.

UCC National Officer and Executive Minister of Justice and Witness Ministries, the Rev. Traci Blackmon, escaped injury when she was whisked away in the middle of a live interview with MSNBC near Emancipation Park, the site of the planned white supremacist rally. Violence broke out and the area was shut down by police for unlawful assembly before the noon start time.

Organizers expressed gratitude for the presence and the courage of clergy, faith leaders and allies who united to demonstrate against white supremacy and fascism.

UCC Responds with a Message of Love, Inclusiveness to 'Nashville Statement'



The leadership of the United Church of Christ has denounced a 'beliefs statement' issued by a coalition of evangelical conservatives, by reasserting the inclusive positions adopted by the General Synod that celebrate the diversity of humanity.

In rebuking the statement — issued on Aug. 29 by the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood which indicates that marriage should be between a man and woman, and condemns the acceptance of "homosexual immorality or transgenderism" — UCC leaders point out that every unique individual was created by a loving God.

(Conference Begins, continued from page 2)

guidance for drafting the plan:

- Include many voices and perspectives
- Embrace the spirit of aloha
- State the plan clearly and simply
- Build on history and think boldly about the future
- Keep the plan adaptable and flexible

Common Understanding

Because definitions sometimes vary, we will use the following terms throughout the strategic planning process:

Vision: A picture of the desired future

Mission: What we are sent into the world to do

Values: How we will conduct ourselves as we pursue our mission

Key initiatives: Major programs or areas of focus

Progress measures: Metrics, milestones and benchmarks

Relevance

The work done in the 'Aha plenary sessions raised many questions about the future direction of the Conference. We want to align the strategic plan with national UCC efforts while remaining relevant and specific to the Hawaiian context. We also want to incorporate the best of previous strategic planning efforts (for example, the 2002 New Creation Initiative document "Called and Sent") with a clear, inspiring and practical direction for the future.

Mission

The current Mission Statement of the Conference was adopted in 2002. Although it is on the Conference website, few delegates to the 195th 'Aha Pae'aina were familiar with it, much less use it in their associations or congregations. This clear stated purpose—what the Conference is sent into the world to do—will provide focus for the plan.

What's Next?

An eight-member strategic planning team will provide insight, guidance and connection with congregations. Members of that team are: Jack Belsom (Waiola UCC); Robinson Fredrick (Central Union Church); Mary Herbig (UCC-Judd Street); Roberta Jahrling (Kaumakapili Church); Wryen Keoki Kiwaha (Puka'ana Congregational Church); Jeannie Thompson (Kapa'a UCC); Iese Tuuao (Acting Conference Minister); and Lori Yamashiro (Conference staff).

Open meetings will be held in March 2018 on O'ahu, Maui, Kaua'i and Hawai'i Island. Please read the *Coconut Wireless* weekly e-newsletter for details on dates and locations. Feel free to contact members of the strategy team or strategic planning consultant Cynthia Scherr through the Conference Office if you have thoughts or comments to contribute to the strategic planning process.

Pastoral Changes

Phil Reller concluded his ministry as Senior Pastor of Pearl City Community Church on July 30.

Larry Roller concluded his interim ministry at Waipahu UCC on July 30.

Joseph Medlin began as Pastor of Hokuloa UCC on August 1. He most recently served a church in New York.

David Kieffer concluded his interim ministry at Church of the Crossroads on August 13.

Curt Kekuna retired from his position as Senior Pastor (Kahu) of Kawaiaha'o Church on August 31.

Dave Schlicher concluded his ministry as Pastor of Makawao Union Church on September 24.

Services of Ordination and Installation

David Turner was installed as Pastor of Church of the Crossroads by the O'ahu Association on September 3.

Makana Milotta was ordained and installed as Pastor of Waipahu UCC by the O'ahu Association on September 24.

Ecclesiastical Council

Russell Kirby was approved for ordination pending a call by the O'ahu Association at an ecclesiastical council on September 10.

(Tuvalu Fou, continued from page 2)

sanctuary, presented money to cover its first month's rent. The funds were raised by Samoan Church of Hawai'i, LMS in Nanakuli, which lease pastors.

"This gift is to help your church get started," Iese told the congregation. "On behalf of myself and the Hawai'i Conference, we thank Kahikuonalani UCC for opening its doors and we are grateful to have Tuvalu Fou Church of Hawai'i be part of the United Church of Christ."

The church's 60 members, which include former prime minister of Tuvalu, Willy Telavi (2010-13), represent about 20 percent of the state's Tuvaluan population, said Iosefa. Tuvalu is the world's fourth smallest nation, located midway between Hawai'i and Australia.

For the members of Tuvalu Fou Church of Hawai'i, which was established in 1996, finding a sanctuary to call home was a dream 21 years in the making.

"It has been a long time coming," said Assistant Secretary Tusi Sakaio. "There was a lot of anxiety about getting a church and we are so happy to finally have one. How awesome is that?"

In Memory of Faithful Servants



Randy Reynoso, 55, Pastor of Ewa Community Church, died on September 3. Randy was ordained in 2015 and previously held positions concentrating on youth and adult ministries at UCC-Judd Street, Waikeola Congregational Church and Central Union Church.



Kenneth Smith, retired UCC minister and author, died September 7 in Washington. Kenneth served the Larger Waimea Parish from 1977-89. He later became Interim Pastor of the newly merged Waimea UCC and was named Pastor Emeritus in 2009.

Conference Calendar of Events

October 27-28	State Council of Hawaiian Congregational Churches Board
October 28	Tri-Isle Association 'Aha Mokupuni
November 4	O'ahu Association 'Aha Mokupuni
November 12	Kaua'i Association 'Aha Mokupuni
November 16	O'ahu Association Board of Directors
November 23-24	Thanksgiving Holiday (Office Closed)
December 9	AHEC Board of Directors

Thanks to our friends, *The Friend* is free of charge to anyone who requests it. We offer our sincere mahalo to those who have generously given a monetary gift to help defray publication costs. A gift of \$10 will pay for one person's subscription for one year. Gifts may be sent to the Hawai'i Conference UCC, 1848 Nu'uuanu Ave., Honolulu, HI 96817.



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Our Historical Roots

Dr. Albert W. Palmer

By Rev. Barry Mick, Kapaʻa First Hawaiian Church



Courtesy of Chicago
Theological Seminary

Eighty years ago, Dr. Albert W. Palmer wrote in his 1937 book *The Minister's Job*: "The minister's task is ... perennially new and never more so than today. Life is ever in flux and the work of a spiritual leader is to reinterpret it on its highest levels to each new generation."

Three generations later, life is still in flux, but Albert's legacy as a preeminent pastor, theologian and peace activist remains firmly established.

Ordained in 1904, Albert graduated from Yale University before being called as Senior Pastor of Central Union Church (1917-24). Among his most notable achievements in Hawaiʻi were supervising the church's move from downtown Honolulu to its present location and the construction of its sanctuary. The famous inscription in the chancel, "Love Never Faileth," was chosen by Albert. His contributions have helped the church remain a visual and spiritual landmark to this day.

Albert's charge to interpret life on its highest levels was illustrated by his social justice work. An example can be found in Yukiko Kimura's book *Issei: Japanese Immigrants in Hawaiʻi*.

In response to a six-month, island-wide labor strike by Japanese and Filipino plantation laborers that threatened racial conflict and significant financial loss, Albert proposed the "Palmer Plan" for a negotiated settlement. The strike was eventually called off and wages and conditions substantially improved.

A president emeritus of Chicago Theological Seminary (CTS), Albert influenced numerous clergy in Hawaiʻi, including renowned clergyman Abraham Akaka. After hearing Albert lecture in December 1939, Abraham elected to attend the seminary. "His lectures fed the hungers I had since Amsterdam for training that would equip me for presenting and proclaiming my Christian faith to the world ...," he wrote. Several clergy from Hawaiʻi have since attended the seminary on the Albert Palmer Scholarship.

From 1945-48, Albert served as moderator of the General Conference of Congregational Churches, a predecessor of today's UCC General Synod. He was an outspoken advocate for the 1957 merger of denominations that formed the United Church of Christ.

Albert's devotion to the UCC and CTS has left a lasting impact in Hawaiʻi as our ministers continually strive to interpret life on its highest levels and spiritually guide each new generation.