

PAAM CONVOCAATION 2024

Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries



OLA I KA WAI

“Water is Life”

June 18 - 22, 2024

Honolulu, Hawaii - Nation of Hawaii

Schedule (Tentative)

Tuesday, June 18 - The Source of Living Water

4:15PM Registration Opens
5:00 Welcoming Protocols (please wear your appropriate regalia)
5:45 Dinner
6:30 Opening Worship (Papa Makua Wendell Davis)
7:00 General Assembly (Rev. James Bhagwan)
7:45 Preliminary Business Session/Agenda – Youth Track 1
8:30PM Pau

Wednesday, June 19 - Stewards of God's Creation

8:30AM Opening Worship - Guest Preacher: Rev. Tracy Howe
9:00 General Assembly (Dialogue - Rev. James Bhagwan and Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson)
9:45 Talkstory with Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson
10:30 Workshops and Youth Track 2
12 Noon Lunch
1:00 Business Meeting
2:00 Workshop 1
3:00 Workshops 2
5:30 Dinner
6:30 Community Movie "The Wind and the Reckoning"
8:00 Pau

Thursday, June 20 - Healing Waters

8:30AM Opening Worship -
9:00 Presentation "Militarization in the Pacific - Bhagwan and Derek Duncan (Global Ministries)"
10:00 Break
10:15 Business Meeting
12 Noon Lunch
1:00 Presentation: Boarding Schools Resolution - AHEC and Dr. Maile Arvin
Youth/Young Adults MANOA Falls hike
5:15 PM Dinner and Celebration of 50th Anniversary Years
7:45PM Kava - Talanoa - Youth
8:30PM Pau

Friday, June 21- Rivers of Justice

8:30 AM Opening Worship and General Assembly
10:00 Presentation on Local Manual on Church
Youth Track 4
11:30 Lunch
12:30 PM Huaka'i Hele
4:30 PM Dinner (on your own)
5:30 PM Rehearsal and Set up at Kawaihāo Church
6:30 PM Hoike AHA MELE and AHA HULA at Kawaihāo

Saturday, June 22 - Ola I Ka Wai Communion Service)

8:15AM Gathering at Ala Wai Canal (Genki Balls)
9:30 Closing Worship, Installation of New Officers, Communion
10:45 Pau - Bento to Go

PAAM Celebrating 50 Years!

Aloha and warmest welcome to our esteemed guests, speakers, and participants from across the world. Today, we invite you under the auspices of the **Pacific Islander and Asian American Ministries (PAAM) - United Church of Christ USA**, an organization dedicated to nurturing connections, understanding, and advocacy within and beyond our communities. This year is particularly momentous for us as we celebrate the **50th Anniversary of PAAM**, marking half a century of commitment, growth, and unity. Our conference theme, deeply ingrained in Hawaiian wisdom, "**Ola I Ka Wai**," translates to "**Water is Life**." As we discuss fresh water and its critical importance to sustaining life across all forms, from the mountains to the sea, this powerful theme guides our discussions as well as illuminates our future.

Water, in its ceaseless journey from the peaks to the vast oceans, is more than a mere element; it is a life force that binds us all, nurturing our lands, enriching our communities, and weaving a tapestry of life that stretches across the globe. Our chosen theme, "**Ola I Ka Wai**," calls upon us to delve deep into the essence of our existence and the fundamental role water plays in it, echoing our interconnectedness with nature and each other.

In an opening ceremony that captures the essence of unity and collective care for our planet's water resources, we invite each participant to bring a small vial of water from a natural source that resonates with their home region—be it a spring, stream, river, lake, or ocean. In a symbolic act of unity during our opening protocols, we will merge these waters into one large bowl. This poignant act is a reflection of our common purpose and shared destiny in safeguarding the lifelines of our world.

As **PAAM** celebrates 50 years of service, advocacy, and community, let this conference serve as a beacon of our ongoing commitment to the stewardship of the earth's most vital resource. Let us draw from the wisdom of waters flowing together, embodying the convergence of our diverse insights, experiences, and aspirations. Together, we will explore sustainable solutions, share invaluable knowledge, and cultivate partnerships that will ensure the life-giving force of water continues to flourish and support life for generations to come.

Mahalo for joining us in this significant milestone for **PAAM** and for bringing your passion and dedication to the forefront of this vital cause. As we embark on this journey, let us approach it with open hearts and minds, ready to embrace new learning, share our wisdom, and act decisively for the well-being of our planet and all its inhabitants. Welcome to a conference where water is not just our theme but the very essence of our collective endeavor. Welcome to "**Ola I Ka Wai**," a celebration of life, unity, and the enduring spirit of PAAM's mission.



Featured Guest Speaker: Rev. James Bhagwan

Born and raised in Fiji and an ordained minister of the Methodist Church in Fiji, Rev. James Shri Bhagwan is in his second term as **General Secretary of the Pacific Conference of Churches**, the Oceania region's peak ecumenical organization with 35 member denominations and 11 national Councils of churches from 19 Pacific Island Countries and territories, including Aotearoa New Zealand and the land now called Australia. A practicing ecumenist, Rev. James is also licensed to preach and celebrate the Sacraments in the Anglican Diocese of Polynesia. He holds a Bachelor of Divinity in Ecumenical Studies (with Honors) from the Pacific Theological College, a Master of Theology in Christian Social Ethics from the Methodist Theological University in Seoul, South Korea and hopes to eventually finish his PhD, when he can make time.

A great-grandson of laborers brought to Fiji under the British modern slavery programme known as the Indenture System, social and ecological justice are key areas of Rev. James' Christian Activism. An avid stand-up paddler and volunteer crew member, chaplain, and trustee of the Fijian Traditional Voyaging canoe, the Uto Ni Yalo - he is heavily involved in coastal and ocean/marine protection. He has previously served in the Methodist Church as Fiji's Secretary for Communication and Overseas Mission, as well as acting General Secretary of the Fiji Council of Churches.

Rev. James is also involved in gender justice work, climate justice and development issues.



SPECIAL GUEST: Rev. Karen Georgia Thompson, UCC President

The Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia A. Thompson is the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ. Rev. Thompson is the first woman and first woman of African descent to serve as leader of the denomination.

Prior to this call, Rev. Thompson served in the national setting of the United Church of Christ for 14 years – two years as Minister for Racial Justice, eight years as Minister for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations and four years as the Associate General Minister for Wider Church Ministries and Co-Executive for Global Ministries. She was elected as AGM in 2019. Her passion for justice and equity moved her work on behalf of the UCC into a global context, affording the opportunity to participate globally in efforts to reduce the marginalization experienced by African descendant peoples and other communities globally.

Before joining the national staff, Rev. Thompson served in the Florida Conference United Church of Christ as a Pastor and on the Conference staff as the Minister for Disaster Response and Recovery. She also worked in the nonprofit arena for over 10 years in senior leadership positions.

Rev. Thompson earned a Bachelor of Arts from Brooklyn College in New York, a Master's in Public Administration from North Carolina Central University in Durham, NC, and a Masters of Divinity from Union Theological Seminary in New York. She also studied Public Policy at Duke University and earned her Doctorate in Ministry at Seattle University. She was awarded an honorary doctorate from Heidelberg University.



OPENING PROTOCOLS AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Please remember to bring a small vial/bottle of water from your region as we will pour together into a large bowl representing “Wai Ola I Ka Wai” and also to acknowledge the lands from which you are presently living.

The United States seized more than 1.5 billion acres from Indigenous people since 1776, but today, most of that land is held in trust by the government, severely [restricting the rights](#) of Native American people. Recognizing the original inhabitants of the spaces we occupy through awareness-building and land acknowledgment practices is only a first step toward equity, but it is an important one.

A new [SMS bot](#) developed by [Code for Anchorage](#) with information provided by the Canadian nonprofit [Native Land](#) encourages land acknowledgment by making it easier for those in the US to learn which Indigenous territories they’re standing on. Just text your zip code or your city and state (separated by a comma) to **(907) 312-5085** and the bot will respond with the names of the Native lands that correspond to that region. (The service currently only works for US residents, but may be available for other countries in the future.)

A Note on Water Bottles

The event organizers are requesting attendees to bring their own water bottles for refillable drinks to promote sustainability and trash and plastic waste. The theme of the event is OLA I KA WAI "water is life."

WORKSHOPS (All Tentative)

At the upcoming conference, we are excited to introduce a new and innovative approach to workshops - the "flip workshop". This approach involves a video component that all participants will view prior to attending the workshop. Traditionally, workshops have consisted of 75% lecture presentations and only 25% group discussion time. However, we have decided to flip this ratio on its head. With the flip workshop approach, only 25% of the lecture will be presented live, with the majority of it already recorded on video and transcribed with accompanying materials. This means that we can dedicate a whopping 75% of the workshop time to open discussion and group interaction. We believe that this approach will lead to a more engaging and collaborative learning experience for all participants, and we can't wait to see the results!

- Climate Justice and Faith Communities - Rev. James Bhagwan
- Dominionism and Christian Nationalism - Rev. Neil MacPhearson
- Militarization in the Pacific - Derek Duncan (Global Ministries) and Rev. James Bhagwan
Troubling the Waters in the Pacific Basin: Contending with the U.S. Empire in Asia and the Pacific *One and a quarter centuries after the end of the Spanish American war, the contours of America's Pacific Empire remain discernible today. How does the US maintain its Pax America through militarization and economic claims throughout the region? How can we as communities of faith confront America's colonial legacy in East Asia and the Pacific?*
- Lei Po'o - A special flower lei made to be worn on your head.
- Hymn Writing (Youth and Adult) - Kahu Ken Makuakane, Pastor Kawaiahao Church
- Youth Arts Dance Workshop
- What We Learned about the Maui Disaster and Preparation for the Next Disaster - Danny Tengan

Huaka'i Hele (Field Trips)

Makiki Japanese Cultural Center - <https://www.jcchawaii.org/>

Manoa Nature Center - <https://hawaiinaturecenter.org/>

Manoa Falls (Youth/Young Adult Hike) -

<https://www.alltrails.com/trail/hawaii/oahu/manoa-falls-trail?u=i>

Tori Gate

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hiroshima_to_Honolulu_Friendship_Torii



AHA MELE and AHA HULA

On Friday, June 21st we will be having our traditional talent show where participants can share in song and dance. We are also inviting the UCC churches and other church partnerships to share their talents with us. It will be held at the historic Kawaiahao Church in Honolulu. Be ready to share your talents, but this is not a competition, but a time of worship and fellowship! In honor of the late Juliette Galuteria.



GENKI BALLS

During the upcoming PAAM Convocation, attendees will have the opportunity to learn about the crucial role that water plays in the Hawaiian ecosystem. Specifically, we will explore how water flows from the mountains down to the sea, passing directly beneath the Church of the Crossroads and continuing on towards Waikiki. Unfortunately, this natural process has been disrupted by human activity, as the manmade "Ala Wai" Canal has become heavily polluted over the years due to the use of toxic pesticides, fertilizers, and sludge. In an effort to combat this issue, PAAM has joined forces with the Ala Wai Genki Ball project. This initiative involves throwing special rice-soil balls containing EM good bacteria into the polluted waters, which then work to consume and eliminate the harmful sludge and toxins. The culmination of this project will take place on Saturday, June 22nd at 8:15AM, when we will all come

together for a big throw prior to the close of the PAAM Convocation. By participating in this important effort, we can help to protect and preserve Hawaii's precious natural resources for generations to come.



YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT TRACKS

As we plan for this year's convocation, we are making a conscious effort to ensure that youth and young adults are not just included, but actively engaged in our gathering. We are committed to creating an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and heard, regardless of their age. We want to provide opportunities for young people to take on leadership roles, share their ideas and perspectives, and contribute meaningfully to the convocation experience. By doing so, we hope to empower the next generation of leaders and create a more vibrant and dynamic community for all.



Pacific Islander and Asian American Media Showcase

The upcoming event will feature a series of films produced and directed by talented Pacific Islander and Asian American filmmakers. The films will be screened each evening, providing a unique opportunity for the public to experience the diverse perspectives and creative visions of these talented artists. From thought-provoking documentaries to captivating narratives, this

showcase promises to offer a wide range of cinematic experiences that are sure to captivate and inspire audiences. Whether you're a film buff or simply looking for an exciting new cultural experience, this event is not to be missed. So mark your calendars and get ready to immerse yourself in the rich and vibrant world of Pacific Islander and Asian American cinema!



Private Community Screening 6:30PM, Wednesday, June 19th

ACCOMMODATIONS AND TRANSPORTATION:

PAAM will not be handling your accommodations or transportation as we are trying our best to keep costs down for all participants. With technology we encourage you to book yourselves online as well as utilize Uber, Lyft, and local taxis. The Church of the Crossroads is approximately two miles from Waikiki hotels. Suggested link for hotels: Kuhio Banyan Hotel
2310 Kuhio Ave, Waikiki

<https://www.booking.com/hotel/us/kuhio-banyan.html>

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **If I change my mind after registering, can I get a refund?**
If we are notified no later than June 1st, you will receive a full refund of your registration cost.
2. **Will childcare be provided?**
No childcare will be provided.
3. **Is there a youth & young adult program provided (ages high school to 30 years)**
*Yes. NOTE: All under 18 year old youth attending without a parent or guardian present, **MUST** submit a Youth & Young Adult Permission and Medical Release Form. Form can be found on the web site or by request.*
4. **What's included with my registration?**
1. Access to all activities of the convocation. 2. All scheduled meals
5. **What's NOT included with my registration?**
Any transportation costs (airfare, ground transportation, etc); meals during the convocation that is not scheduled.
6. **Can I mail my registration in?**
In order to maintain the continuity of the process, we have all registration online.
7. **Where is the main convocation being held?**
We will spend the bulk of our time at Church of the Crossroads, 1212 University Avenue, Honolulu, HI 96826
8. **Can I register online?**
Yes.
9. **When is the deadline to register?**
Please register no later than June 1, 2024.
10. **I hear there is an issue with clean drinking water in Oahu.**
According to the Honolulu Board of Water Supply, tap water is safe to drink on Oahu. We encourage everyone to bring their own refillable water flask.
11. **Are there grants available to attendees?**
Each of the active regions of PAAM UCC has been given grants specifically for the convocation. Please contact your regional moderator.

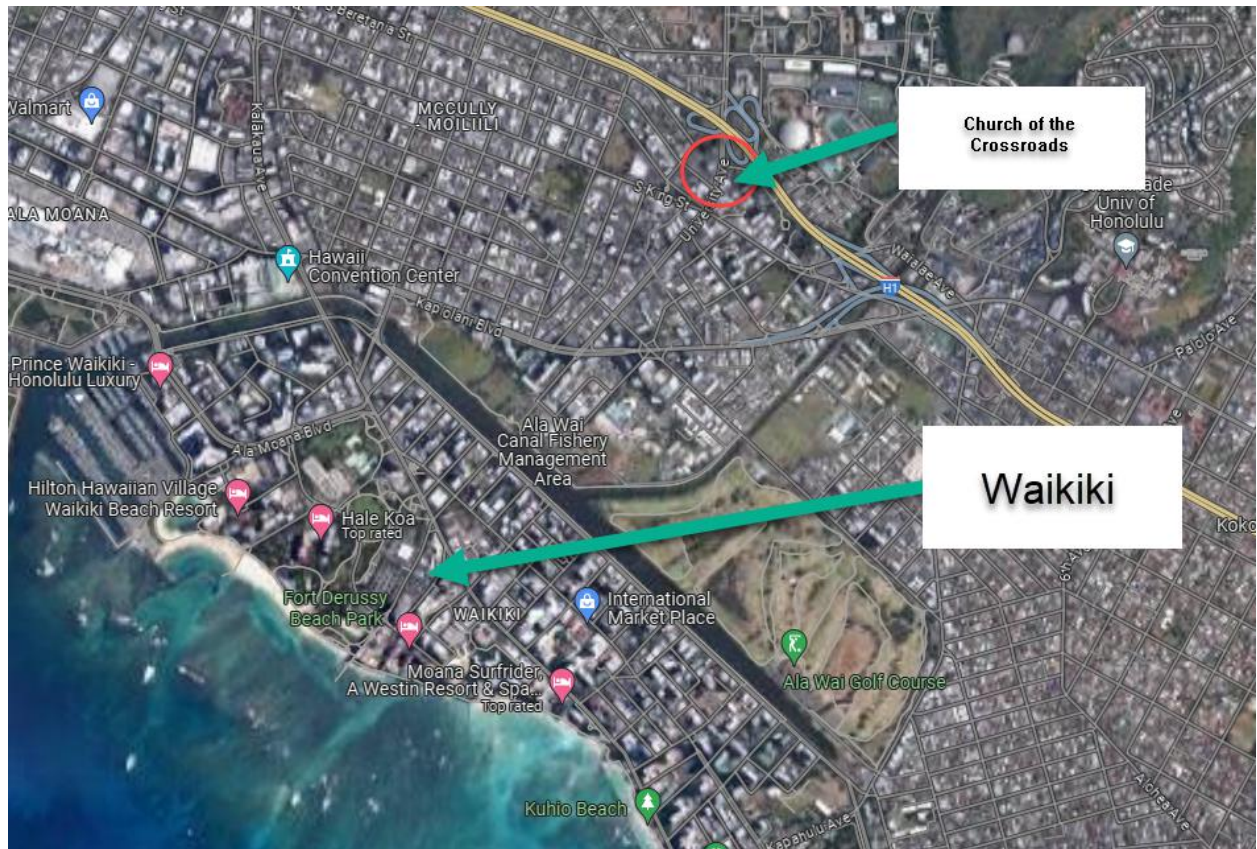
Important Dates and Deadlines

For questions, please contact the registrar

Dr. Ernie Reyes - Email: rev.dr.eoreyes@gmail.com

Airport

The closest airport is the Honolulu International Airport (14 miles away)



Ground Transportation

Church of the Crossroads located at 1212 University Avenue is approximately two miles from Waikiki. We encourage everyone to take a LYFT, UBER, or Taxi. If you are renting cars there is a daily parking fee in a commercial lot next to the church.

Restaurants Near Crossroads

All within 2 - 5 minutes walking!

Bangkok Chef
2700 South King Street
bangkokchefexpress.com

Betty's Burgers
1025 University Avenue

Blazin Steaks
1010 University Avenue

Burger King
2536 South Beretania Street

Cafe Maharani (Indian Restaurant)
2509 South King Street
cafemaharanihawaii.com

Dagon Burmese, Thai, and Chinese
2671 South King Street

Da Spot Health Foods and Juices
2469 South King Street
daspot.net

Down to Earth Organic and Natural Market
2525 South King Street

Frostcity Icecream
2570 South Beretania St. #105

Fukuya Japanese (6am-2PM,
Wednesday-Sunday)
2710 South King Street

Glazers Coffee
2700 South King St #101

Hana No Sato
2671 South King Street

Honey Glazed Hams (Sandwiches)
2758 South King Street #101

Imanas Tei Restaurant
2526 South King St. #1

Izakaya Naru Honolulu
2700 South King Street #D104

Jersey Mike's Sub Sandwiches
2615 South King St. #6

Kansai Yamato Mochi Snacks
1035 University Avenue

Kaiten Sushi Ginza Onodera
2680 South King Street

Minatoku Kitchen
2471 South King Street
minatoki-k.com

Nijiya Japanese Market
1009 University Avenue #1

Oli's Kitchen
MP2, 1009 University Avenue
oliskitchenhawaii.com

One Plus One Drive Inn
2437 South King Street
oneplusedriveinn.com

Pho Nina (Vietnamese)
2743 South King Street

Phuket Thai Express
1010 University Avenue

Pieology Pizzeria
2615 South King St. # 101
pieology.com

QQ Tea & Vegetarian House
931 University Avenue #109
808-941-6688

Raising Cane's Chicken Fingers
2615 South King Street

Shaka Shaka Tea Express
2600 South King Street

Subway
2509 South King Street

Yakiniku Korea House
2494 South Beretania Street