Celebrating Our Heritage

History Time Line
of
Koloa Union Church
(modified for the Confirmation Class September, 2004)

1819: American Board of Foreign Missions asks for volunteers to carry the gospel to the Sandwich Islands.

1823: First hymnal published in Hawaiian. By 1827, 100 hymns had been translated or written.

1835: First sugar plantation was established in Koloa, attracting an influx of Hawaiians into Koloa. Rev. Peter J. Gulick, from the mission station at Waimea, came to Koloa, organizing our congregation in April 1835. Twelve members held services in native grass houses.

1841: Four Protestant Mission schools organized, holding classes for 225 children. During this time, Rev. Gulick introduced the first oxen to plow the canefields, replacing a team of 40 powerful native Hawaiians, who had been required to operate a plow.

1842: Dr. J.W. Smith, together with his devoted wife, began serving Koloa and Kaua'i. In 1854, he was ordained as a Christian minister and formally installed in the Hawaiian church.

1855-1860: Koloa had the only school on the island for white children, and only successful sugar enterprise anywhere in the islands, and was third in importance as a port of call for whalers.

1858: A storm destroyed the Koloa Meeting House. Immediately materials and funds were collected to reconstruct the church.

1859: The new building was dedicated. The parish area included Koloa, Nawiliwili, and Wailua, resulting in a huge increase in membership.

1860: The Congregation was growing sugar cane as a fund raiser.

1907: Rev. Solomon Kaulili held morning services in the Hawaiian language, while in the afternoon, Rev. John M. Lydgate from Lihue held services in English. English Sunday School was held in the morning, followed by Hawaiian Sunday School.

During the course of the years, the predominant population of Koloa was no longer Hawaiian. Other races immigrated to this island to work in the sugar and pineapple industries from Puerto Rico, China, Japan and the Philippines.

1922: The parsonage was dedicated as “Smith Memorial Cottage.”

1923: Hawaiian Church, Union Church, Japanese Church and Filipino Church merged to form the Koloa Union Church, affiliated with the Kauai Evangelical Association. There were 24 charter members.

1928: The church building was remodeled and leased to Koloa Union Church for 25 years. Separate buildings were built for the Hawaiian group.

1932: Mr. Walter C. Moore served as resident religious leader for Koloa Union as well as director of religious education for the Larger Parish. The church sponsored a branch school with an enrollment of 100; there were 12 organized athletic teams involving approximately 150.

1941: During WW II, Hawaii was under martial law. The parish hall was used as a secondary first-aid station. The congregation assisted the Red Cross, giving them use of the church van (except on Sundays) and befriended the military personnel stationed in Koloa. The military band could be heard as they practiced in the graveyard behind the parsonage.

1951: Church split occurred. Several members left to join the Missionary Church.

1960: The new sanctuary was constructed and dedicated to Dr. Albert Waterhouse, grandson of Dr. James W. Smith. The new Fellowship Hall was dedicated to Walter C. Moore.

1961: Koloa Union became affiliated with the United Church of Christ. Membership 63; Sunday School 64.

1962: Nursery school was organized and begun.

1965: Pre-school for low-income families was added to nursery school. Space and adult supervision for homework and an enriched reading program were provided for 24 Koloa School students.

1992: Hurricane Iniki devastates Kauai on September 11. Church building is relatively undamaged. Children’s Center has enrollment of 36, with a waiting list of 14.

1996: Preschool closes.

1999 – 2002: Rev. John Lunn is pastor.

2003: Kahu Nani Hill is called as our new pastor.