

# HAWAII PRAYER HISTORY TIMELINE

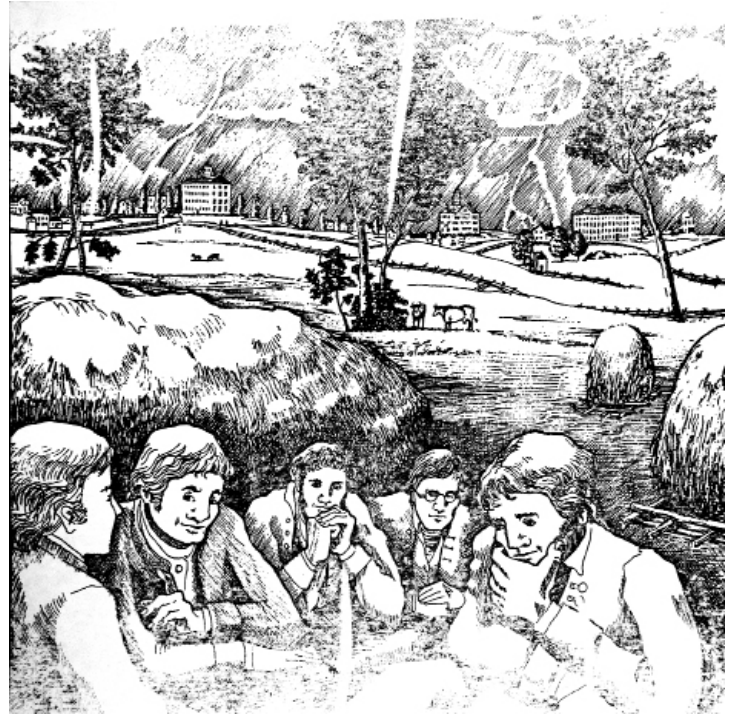


# Haystack Prayer Meeting

At the Haystack Prayer Meeting held in August 1806 Christian college students launched the foreign missions movement in the United States. This led to the Hawai'i Mission arriving in 1820. Foreign missions visionary Samuel Mills led the meeting at Williams College. A lightning storm forced the students to shelter under a haystack. Prays were made for American Christians to spread the Gospel to non-Christian lands in this landmark prayer meeting..

Mills went on to meet 'Ōpūkaha'ia-Obookiah at Yale College in 1809, seeding the vision for sending American missionaries to Hawai'i. Mills and 'Ōpūkaha'ia were to be the lead missionaries of the pioneer mission to Hawai'i, but God had a different plan and both died in 1818.

*Preparing the Way, Christopher Cook*



*Haystack Prayer Meeting August 1806 at Williams College, Williamstown, Massachusetts  
Torrington Congregational Church*

# Prayers of Henry Obookiah (‘Ōpūkaha‘ia)

Prayers uttered by ‘Ōpūkaha‘ia in New England appeared in *Memoirs of Obookiah*, the memorial book of his life published in 1818. His prayer life first developed months after arriving in New Haven in 1809. Adopted by the family of Samuel Mills in Connecticut, Henry was taught from the Westminster Catechism. He prayed with Mills, future Burma missionary Adoniram Judson, and other foreign missions pioneers at the Theological Seminary at Andover. He prayed for salvation of fellow Hawaiians he encountered in New England. By 1816 ‘Ōpūkaha‘ia read from the Book of Genesis in the Hawaiian language and prayed in church pulpits. On his death bed he prayed for the Gospel to be sent to the Hawaiian people. In death his prayers appeared in his Memoirs, the hand-sized book which drew great support for sending out the Hawai‘i Mission.

*Memoirs of Obookiah, Edwin Welles Dwight*



*Polynesian prayer in Cornwall, Connecticut  
Memoirs of Thomas Patoo*

# Prayer at Pu‘ukoholā

On the word of a Hawaiian prophet, in order to conquer all of Hawai‘i Kamehameha built the monumental Pu‘ukoholā (Hill of the Whale) Heiau at Kawaihae, Hawai‘i Island. Here in 1791 to dedicate Pu‘ukoholā Kamehameha offered the slain body of his rival chief and cousin Keoua as a human sacrifice to the war god Kū. In late March 1820 the Pioneer Company of the Sandwich Islands Mission arrived off Hawai‘i Island. The first landing ashore of an American Protestant missionary in Hawai‘i occurred at the beach fronting Pu‘ukoholā. On April 2 aboard the brig *Thaddeus* their first Sunday service was held. Ali‘i nui Kalanimoku joined the missionaries. “We...offered prayers and praises to the God of Zion. Brother Bingham preached from Iss. 42, 4, ‘The Isles shall wait for his law...’”

*A Residence of Twenty-One Years in the Sandwich Islands, Hiram Bingham*

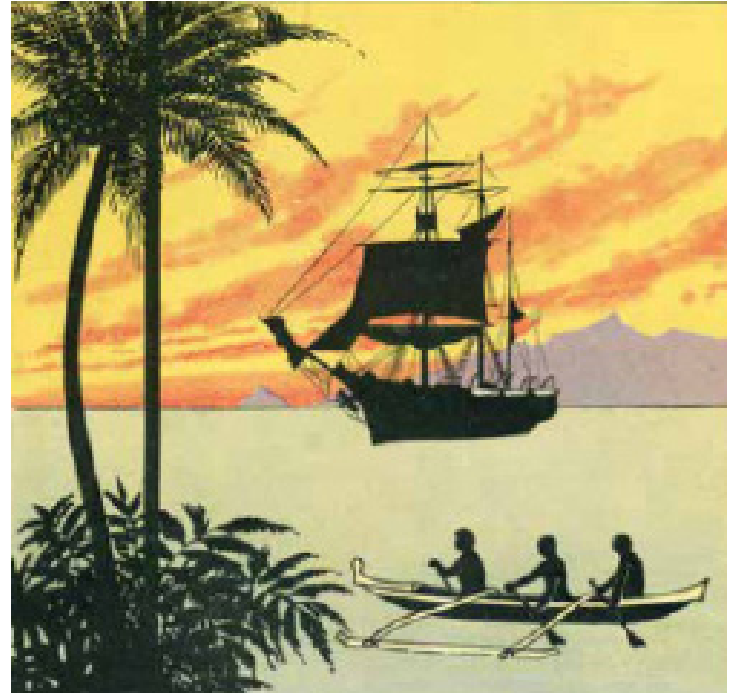


*Pu‘ukoholā Heiau c. 1900*  
*Hawai‘i State Archives*

# Concert of Prayer Off Kona

On the evening of April 3 the brig *Thaddeus* approached Kailua Bay where dwelt Liholiho, Kamehameha II, the Mō‘ī who would determine if the missionaries could stay in Hawai‘i. Powerful prayer was essential. As the brig stood offshore overnight a Concert of Prayer was held on deck. “In sight of the King’s residence, expecting an interview with him tomorrow, we lift up our petitions in concert with thousands of the friends of Zion, rejoicing in the hope that he who has begun a good work here will carry it on to perfection.” The mission party along with ali‘i nui Kalanimoku joined in this “concerted” prayer for Foreign Missions. Similar Concerts of Prayer were held that same day in many churches in New England, in Great Britain, and by the London Missionary Society in Tahiti. The practice dated back to the Great Evangelical Awakening of the 1740s.

*Thaddeus Journal, Sandwich Islands Mission*



*The brig Thaddeus off Kona  
Honolulu Star-Bulletin*

# Hewahewa Composes Christian Prayer

Kahunanui Hewahewa is credited with writing a prayer in honor of Jesus Christ, a masterful work interwoven with nuances of Hawaiian culture and language. The prayer is dated to the early days of the Sandwich Islands Mission in Hawai‘i. Hewahewa in 1820 greeted missionary leader Hiram Bingham as a “fellow priest of the one true God.” Commenting on the prayer, John Charlot, a Professor of Polynesian Religion, wrote: “He [Hewahewa] welcomed the new god as a hopeful solution to the current problems of Hawaiians and understood the Christian message largely in traditional terms. He envisioned a Hawaiian Christian community led by the land’s own religious experts.” The authorship of the prayer is sometimes questioned as its first appearance in print came some seventy years after the arrival of the Hawai‘i missionaries.

*Selections from a Kahuna’s Book of Prayers,*

*J.S. Emerson;*

*Two Early Hawaiian-Christian Chants, John Charlot*



*Kahunanui Hewahewa with Kuhina Nui Ka‘ahumanu and missionary Hiram Bingham during evangelism tour, with group of kahunas at Waimea Valley, O‘ahu.  
Hiram Bingham Sketch 1826*

**In the rolling cloud, floating in air,  
A light cloud resting on the earth,  
A rainbow standing in the ocean,  
Is Jesus, Our Redeemer.  
Iloko o ke ao kaa lelewa.  
He ohu ku i ka honua,  
He onohi kn i ka moana,  
Ieku, ko makou Kalahala.**

# Hawaiian-Tahitian Concert of Prayer

Missionary translator Thomas Hopu took part in the missionary Concert of Prayer in New England, and upon his return to Hawai‘i. His example led fellow native Hawaiian Christians to soon begin their own Polynesian-style Concert of Prayer. The Hawaiian and Tahitian Christians [in Tahiti and in Hawai‘i] followed a cultural tradition of early morning prayer, praying before the rooster crowed at dawn, “...as they do most of their meetings, this being a more convenient time for them than the eve,” a from Hawai‘i journal reads. Missionary wife and school teacher Sybil Moseley Bingham described a Polynesian-led Concert of Prayer held in 1823: “Not less than 200 attended. Two prayers were offered, the first by John Honolii, and the last by Auna, the Tahitian chief with much ability and fervency.”

*Around the Horn to the Sandwich Islands, C. Lyman, Religious Intelligencer, New Haven October, 1823*



*William Ellis of the London Missionary Society with Tahitian and Hawaiian Christians in 1823 at Kailua-Kona, at site of Mokuaikaua Church. A Narrative of a Tour Through Hawaii, or Owhyhee William Ellis*

# First Hawaiian language printing held on Concert of Prayer day

As the Hawai'i mission expanded its ministries, mission leaders chose to schedule key events on the first Monday of the month, the global Concert of Prayer day. The printing of the first pages on the Mission Press set up in Honolulu, of a simple Hawaiian language alphabet, was purposely scheduled to coincide with the monthly Concert of Prayer held on Monday, August 7, 1822. That day's mission journal entry reads: “[Aug.] 7. Monday. Set up the printing press. It appears to have suffered but little damage by transportation, and promises to be a good one. We hope to be able before long to print some elementary lessons for our pupils. Observed this evening, as usual, the monthly concert of prayer – Thomas H. (Hopu) assisted in the exercises, made an address both in English and Owhyhee, and closed with prayer.”

*Sandwich Islands Mission Journal*



*From the Mission Press in Honolulu millions of pages were printed in the Hawaiian language.  
Hawai'i State Archives*

# Keōpūolani's Concert of Prayer

Keōpūolani, the “sacred” queen of Kamehameha, the possessor of the highest mana in all Hawai‘i, became a devout Christian in Honolulu. In spring 1823 she hastened the settlement of missionaries at Lahaina in her home island of Maui. A missionary account tells of a Concert of Prayer held by Keōpūolani on July 7, 1823 along the beach at Lahaina: “The missionaries found the people collecting under the cool shade of their favourite trees in front of Keōpūolani’s house, for the purpose of attending the Monthly Prayer-Meeting... Mr. Ellis gave an address from the Saviour’s commission to the first missionaries...Matt. xxviii, 19. “Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations.” The audience appeared gratified with the brief account given of the missionary operations of the present day, especially those among the various clustering islands of the South Pacific, with whose inhabitants they feel themselves more particularly identified....”

*A Narrative of a Tour Through Hawaiï, or Owhyhee,  
William Ellis*



*Keōpūolani and Tau'ā, the Tahitian Christian who  
disciplined the “Sacred Queen” first in Honolulu, and  
then in Lahaina.*

*The Christian Queen, American Tract Society*

# Kapi'olani with prayer defies Pele at Kīlauea Volcano

Chieffess Kapi'olani traveled from her home at Ka'awaloa along Kealakekua Bay to the rim of Kīlauea Crater in 1824. Here Kapi'olani dared to pray against the spirit of the powerful, vindictive tempered volcano goddess Pele. "She determined to show her utter disbelief in the existence and power of such a goddess, by descending into the crater. When her determination was known, multitudes entreated her to forbear, lest she should be destroyed. But she answered, 'If I am destroyed, then you may all believe in Pele; but if I am not, then you must all turn to the palapala.'...[she] descended the crater several hundred feet, and there united with her attendants in prayer to Jehovah, the Almighty Ruler of the elements... From that time, the people...seeing that she was not injured, pronounced Pele to be destitute of power."

*Biographical Sketch of Kapiolani, Missionary Herald,*

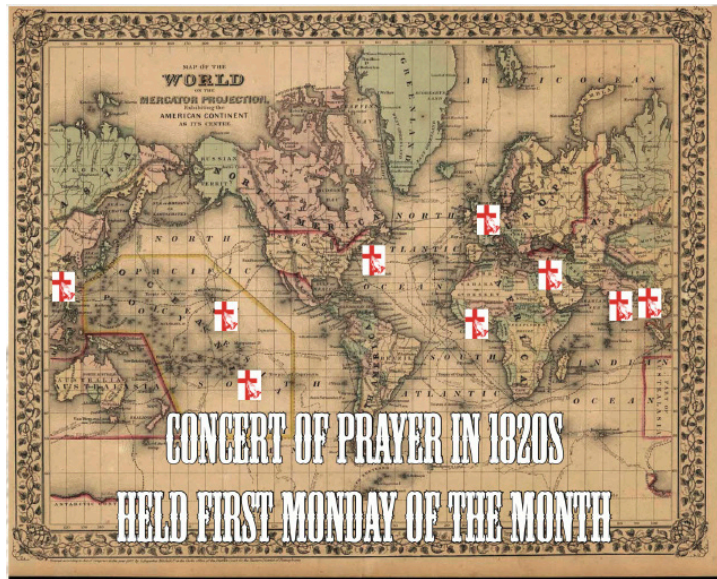


*Chieffess Kapi'olani prays at rim of Kīlauea Crater  
Peter Hurd / American Factors*

# Hawai‘i Joins in Global Prayer

Beginning in the 1820s the missions-focused Concert of Prayer reached out to God from Hawai‘i each first Monday. On that same day a time zone-by-time zone global Concert of Prayer swept around the earth as the sun rose on a new day. Prayers arose in England, Scotland and Wales, then crossed the Atlantic to New England, moving on to the Pacific Islands, onward to China, to India, Burma and Ceylon, to Persia, to Beirut and at times Jerusalem – at mission stations wherever far-flung evangelical Christian missionaries found themselves. Christians, Hawaiian and Westerners, prayed for their islands, and for God’s work on other Hawaiian Islands. At Hawaiian churches in this era the congregation brought gifts of lumber, food, cash, and labor on the Concert of Prayer day.

*The Concert of Prayer: The Prayer Covering for Hawai‘i’s Historic Nineteenth-Century Revivals,*  
Christopher Cook

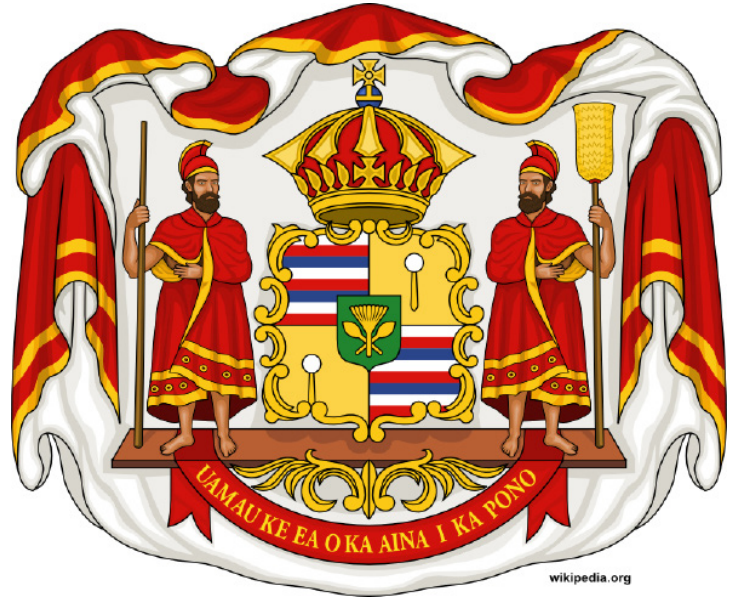


*The Missionary-Monarchy Era Concert of Prayer in Hawai‘i connected to similar gatherings held worldwide.*  
Pa‘a Studios

# Lā Ho‘iho‘i Ea – Restoration Day Prayer at Kawaiaha‘o

Lā Ho‘iho‘i Ea - Restoration Day marks the return of sovereignty to the Kingdom of Hawai‘i. A devious junior British Navy captain had lowered the Hawaiian flag and without a shot placed Queen Victoria as the monarch of Hawai‘i. A superior officer returned Kamehameha III to the throne on July 31, 1843. At a Kawaiahao Church service of thanksgiving Kamehameha III uttered the immortal phrase: “Ua Mau ke Ea o ka ‘Āina i ka Pono-The Life of the Land is Perpetuated in Righteousness.” Restoration Day was planned to be part festive and part a time of Christian prayer and thanks. On July 31, 1843 one of the grandest public celebrations ever held in Hawai‘i celebrated Lā Ho‘iho‘i - Restoration Day, and an evening Kawaiaha‘o Church service led by John I‘i offered prayers of thanksgiving. In subsequent years, both festivities and Christian prayers services commemorated the return of sovereignty.

*The Friend, Honolulu, 1845*



*Coat of Arms of the Hawaiian Kingdom*  
*wikipedia.org*

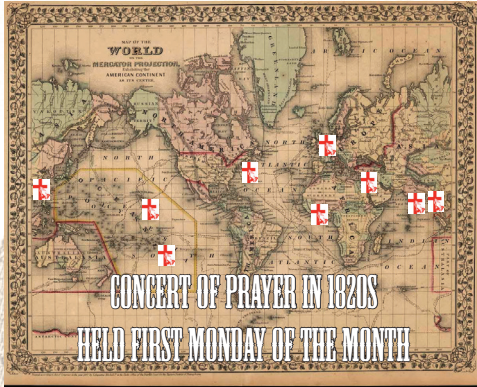
# Prayers for Hawaiian Missionary Society

The first native Hawaiians recognized as missionaries to foreign lands sailed to the Gilbert Islands from Honolulu in 1853. Honored to accept the mission were Daniela Opunui, a teacher and Lahainaluna graduate, and Berita Kaaikaula, a deacon, and their wives. Under the auspices of the newly-formed Hawaiian Missionary Society they were joined by Hawai'i Mission son Luther Gulick and his wife. The Hawaiian Mission Children's Society, known as the "Cousins" gathered in 1852 to provide prayer and material support for the Gulicks. Kamehameha III sent a letter of recommendation: "Many of my people regard the Word of God, Jehovah, and pray to him; and he has greatly blessed us." Upon departure from Honolulu: "...a hush has fallen; bowed heads are uncovered; heaven seems very near, and the cloud of witnesses close about them. Prayers are offered in English and Hawaiian."

*Luther Halsey Gulick Missionary..., Congregational Sunday-School and Publishing Society*

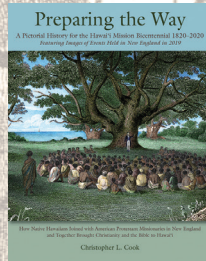
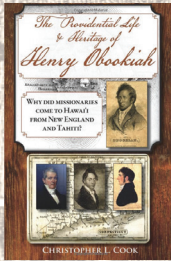


*Contributions of nickels and dimes by young students in Hawai'i and in the United States paid to build Morning Star missionary packet ships sent to the Gilbert Islands and other islands in Micronesia. The students prized the Morning Star certificates they were given in return.  
Mo'olelo Kū'i'o archives*



# THE CONCERT OF PRAYER

The Prayer Covering for  
Hawai'i's Historic  
Nineteenth-Century  
Revivals



*Christopher L. Cook*

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