

Services in Kahaluu Tomorrow:

Charles Hookano Dies; Devoted Church Worker

by Lois Stewart, *Honolulu Star-Advertiser*, October 22, 1955

An outstanding layman of St. John's-by-the-Sea Episcopal church, Kahaluu, Charles Hookano Jr., died at St. Francis hospital at 4:15 a.m. Wednesday [October 19, 1955]. He was 46.

Members of the family said Mr. Hookano's unexpected death was caused by a cerebral hemorrhage which he suffered while fishing the previous day off Kaneohe.

Services will be held at St. John's-by-the-Sea at 1 p.m. tomorrow. Officiating will be the Rt. Rev. Harry S. Kennedy, Episcopal Bishop of Honolulu; the Rev. Kenneth T. Cosbey, rector of Mr. Hookano's parish church, and the Rev. William Grosh.

Friends may call at the church from 9 a.m. Saturday. The procession will leave, following the reading of the Episcopal burial service, for Kahaluu cemetery.

Mr. Hookano was born March 18, 1909, in Kahaluu, and spent his entire life in the community where he was a beloved member. He was the son of the late Charles and Caroline Watson Hookano. He was unmarried.

Known as one of the best fishermen on windward Oahu, he lived up to the tradition of the Hawaiian race and its love for the sea. On the day he was stricken he had gone with fellow fisherman into the bay. While in the water he complained of dizziness and was pulled onto the boat which put in at Heeia-kea. An ambulance was called and he was moved to St. Francis hospital where his condition worsened.

He was employed for 15 years by the City and County road maintenance department but devoted much time to the church. He is survived by two adopted daughters, Mrs. Calvin (Charlene) Naipo and Irmalee Basset; one sister, Mrs. Martha McCabe, and many other relatives in the Kahaluu district.

In December, 1951, high tribute was paid Mr. Hookano as a layman in an issue of *Forth*, national Episcopal church publication. It said:

"Along the peaceful shore of Kaneohe, Hawaii, the fishing boats bob lazily in the bright tropical sun. Fishing is an occupation dear to the heart of the Hawaiian, and the men who sail these boats are happy men.

“Perhaps the most contented is a stocky, bright-eyed Churchman named Charlie Hookano. Charlie is lay reader at St. Johns-by-the-Sea, Kahaluu, and devotes practically all his ‘off-fishing’ moments to the Church.

“Every day, in between fishing hours, he can be seen puttering around the little mission—cleaning, polishing the brass, making repairs here and there, or planting and tending the flowers on the mission grounds.

“Charlie has seen St. John’s-by-the-Sea grow from a tiny gathering in an old corrugated iron building into a large congregation meeting in a new building. Since 1939, he has never missed a service. Once he even had to defy the government in order to attend.

“After the attack on Pearl Harbor, all fishing in Hawaiian waters was prohibited and the fishermen had to find other employment for the time being. Charlie immediately applied for a job with a road construction crew.

“But war did strange things to the lives of the peace-loving Hawaiians. Charlie, who had not missed a Sunday as lay reader at the mission in 12 years, was told that he would have to report for work on Sundays as well as on week days.

“Charlie shook his head. No, he could not be away from his church on Sunday mornings. His orders were, ‘This is war: your country first.’ The dictates of his heart were, ‘This is His Church; Christ first.’

“Quietly and calmly, Charlie walked away from his superior. The next Sunday, he brought with him an order from the Governor of the Territory excusing him from work on Sundays so that he might be in his church. His record of unbroken attendance still stands.

“Gentle and gracious, Charlie Hookano exemplifies the Aloha spirit that exists among the different races and cultures in Hawaii today. From the time of the earliest missionaries, the Hawaiians have shown an eagerness to learn about Christianity. Prejudice and bitterness find little place in their way of life.

“This is Charlie Hookano, lay reader and devout Christian. He has learned Christianity, but more important, he lives it.”