

SKY LIKO ST. JOHN / 1948-2013

Isle minister inspired with humor, music and love

Star-Advertiser staff

The Rev. Sky Liko St. John captivated people with his infectious humor and engaging manner.

“He transformed and helped so many people,” said best friend James Buchanan.

St. John, minister of the Unity Church of Hawaii at Diamond Head, died Dec. 19 at Straub Clinic & Hospital, a day after he went swimming and was found unresponsive in waters off Queen’s Surf, according to friends and Emergency Medical Services. He was 65.

Born Patrick Lynn Dickson in Independence, Miss., St. John moved to Hawaii with his family after his father, an Army officer, was transferred to Schofield Barracks.

He earned a master’s degree in public health administration from the University of Hawaii at Manoa.

St. John worked in various fields from education to nursing. He worked as a teacher at Punahou School and Radford High School. As



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The Rev. Sky Liko St. John, center, minister of Unity Church of Hawaii at Diamond Head, led the congregation in song at a service on March 17. St. John, 65, died Dec. 19 after he was found unresponsive in waters off Queen’s Surf. Others in the photo are the Rev. Mindy Tucker, left, Margie Hyatt, right, and, in the back row, singers Anne Rosinski, left, Ralph Whitaker and Susan Weeks.

a licensed practical nurse, St. John cared for patients with Hansen’s disease at Kalaupapa.

Along with helping others, St. John also was passionate about music, associates say.

During the 1980s, St. John regularly sang at the Benihana of Tokyo restaurant at

the Hilton Hawaiian Village.

“He was a gifted musician,” said Margie Hyatt, acting lead minister of the Unity Church of Hawaii. St. John also served as musical director for Keola and Kapono Beamer, known as the Beamer Brothers.

Influenced by one of his

professors, St. John enrolled in the Unity School of Christianity at Lee’s Summit, Mo. During that time, he changed his name to Sky St. John. Ordained a minister in 1995, St. John served as the director of the school’s retreat department and ministered at churches in Omaha,

Neb., and Coos Bay, Ore., before he returned to Hawaii in 2005.

His weekly service was live-streamed with people worldwide tuned in.

“He is a much-loved individual,” Hyatt said.

Buchanan described St. John as a dynamic speaker, singer and musician who inspired him and many others. Friends said he will be best remembered for his selflessness, unconditional love and support.

He helped establish the Unity National School of the Pacific Rim Region and was involved in an outreach program in which he and others provided meals to the homeless in Waikiki.

“His ability to put others first is unparalleled,” Buchanan said.

St. John is survived by brothers Michael, Jim, Kevin and Tom.

Funeral arrangements are pending.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be sent to the Unity Church of Hawaii. Checks can be made to the Sky St. John Trust.