

# The Pearl

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF PEARL CITY'S MAGAZINE | SEPT - DEC 2023 | VOL. 16



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Pastor Sterling Lee

# Words from the Pastor

## Take the Challenge in 2024

As we approach the new year, and as some of us make resolutions or goals, I'd like to throw out a challenge to all of us for 2024. The challenge is to take the first steps in diving deeper in our relationship with the Lord. Now, these first steps, although not hard to do at all, will take some discipline on our part. What I'm talking about is a challenge to read through the entire New Testament in 2024. Now, should we accept this challenge, know that it has the potential to transform our lives from the inside out, but don't take my word for it.

A study on the impact on those who read their Bibles, conducted by the Center of Bible Engagement, produced some interesting findings. They polled approximately 40,000 people between the ages of 8 to 80 to see how people were engaging in Scripture. As they compiled their findings, they made a profound discovery they were not even looking for when they originally planned the survey.

The study indicated that when individuals engaged in Scripture once a week, which could include corporate worship, Sunday School, or small groups, there was very little or no impact on any key areas in their life. The same result was true when individuals engaged in the Scriptures two times a week.

When individuals engaged in Scripture three times a week, there was

a small indication of its influence in their lives, but it didn't seem significant, or rather consistent enough across the board. The eye-opening "Aha" moment happened when individuals engaged in scripture at least four times a week.

Usually there would be a consistent move in a positive direction as engagement increased, but that wasn't the case here. The results did move in a positive direction; however, there was literally no movement over days one and two, with a slight change on day three. Now this is where it gets interesting, because on day four, the effects of Bible engagement spiked significantly. Those findings included the following:

- Feeling lonely dropped 30%
- Anger issues dropped 32%
- Bitterness in relationships dropped 40%
- Alcoholism dropped 57%
- Infidelity dropped 68%
- Feeling spiritually stagnant dropped 60%
- The use of pornography dropped 61%
- Individuals sharing their faith, engaging in gospel conversations increased 200%
- Participating in discipleship increased 230%

These findings bring to life the reality that there are profound differences between people who engage/read their

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## thank you

FOR VISITING WITH US!

Thank you so much for taking the time to come and worship with us. We'd love to see you again, if you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to us!

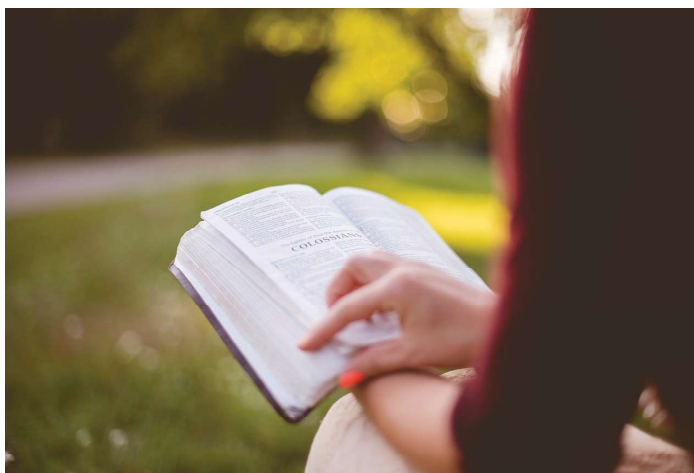


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Bibles at least four times a week and those who do so less often. Now as amazing as these findings are, there's still one more eye-opening Aha example. That is those who engage/read their Bibles on a regular basis grow in their relationship with the Lord. The more time we spend with our heavenly Father, the closer we grow in our relationship with Him. This is true in every relationship we take part in.

So, if our desire is to grow deeper in our relationship with God, then let me encourage us to spend time in His Word. I can think of no better time than this upcoming year to read through the New Testament as a community of faith together. Won't you take the challenge!



## Men's Breakfast

By Dave Masaki

On Saturday morning, September 9th, our Thursday night Men's Bible Class hosted a breakfast at the Pearl Country Club. 13 senior men attended. Thank you to Jean Nohara who escorted her husband, Masa, to our breakfast meeting. It was a memorable time gathering together again since the Pandemic. We shared the scripture Ephesians 6:17 (Helmet of Salvation). The key word we focused on was the word "Wisdom" to help protect our thoughts. Breakfast ended after singing "Amazing Grace" with John Vaughn playing his ukelele.

God willing, we will set the date and location to gather again in 2024. Please join us! Looking forward to seeing everyone.



**Navigators  
Discipleship  
Tool**

# 5x5x5

## New Testament Bible Reading Plan

*Read through the New Testament in 5 days a week, 5 minutes a day.*

**5 MINUTES A DAY**  
If you're not used to reading the Bible daily, start with this easy to use tool to read a chapter of the New Testament in 5 minutes a day. This reading plan will take you through all 260 chapters of the New Testament, one chapter per day. The Gospels are read throughout the year to weave in the story of Christ all year long.

**5 DAYS A WEEK**  
Determine a time and location to spend 5 minutes a day for 5 days a week. It is best to have a consistent time and a quiet place where you can regularly meet with the Lord.

**5 WAYS TO DIG DEEPER**  
Pause in your reading to dig into the Bible. Below are 5 different ways to dig deeper each day. These exercises will encourage meditation. Try a single idea for a week to find what works best for you. Remember to keep a pen and paper ready to capture God's insights.

- ① Underline or highlight key words or phrases in the Bible passage. Use a pen or highlighter to mark new discoveries from the text.
- ② Put it in your own words. Read the passage or verse slowly, then rewrite each phrase or sentence using your own words.
- ③ Ask and answer questions. Questions unlock new discoveries and meanings. Ask questions about the passage using these words: who, what, why, when, where, or how. Jot down your answers to these questions.
- ④ Capture the big idea. God's Word communicates big ideas. Periodically ask: What's the big idea in this sentence, paragraph, or chapter?
- ⑤ Personalize the meaning. Respond as God speaks to you through the Scriptures. Ask: How could my life be different today as I respond to what I'm reading?



navigators®

**THIS TOOL IS MEANT TO BE SHARED.**  
Download the detailed 5x5x5 plan at [navlink.org/newtestament](http://navlink.org/newtestament)

## Quote to Live By

I want to know one thing, the way to heaven:  
how to land safe on that happy shore.  
God himself has condescended  
to teach the way;  
for this very end he came from heaven.  
He has written it down in a book!  
Oh, give me that book!  
At any price, give me the book of God!  
I have it: here is knowledge enough for me.  
Let me be: "A man of one book."

— JOHN WESLEY

2023

# Thanksgiving “Take Out Boxes” Offering

“How to be His Hands and Feet”



*Pastor Sterling Lee, Pastor Barry Campbell and his wife Marcy, Kim and Bobby Chang*

In the month of August, wildfires tore through the island of Maui, destroying property and changing lives forever. On August 4, 2023, small fires broke out including one near the Kahului airport which, while delaying flights, was contained. On Tuesday, August 8, massive wildfires broke out on the west side of Maui. Driven by high winds, it engulfed the town of Lahaina, resulting in the loss of 99 lives and over 2000 homes and businesses. During that same time, wildfires also started in Upcountry Maui in the

community of Kula, burning over 500 homes and buildings, forcing many people from their homes. Fires were also reported in but limited to Kihei and Kaanapali.

Many of our congregation reached out and responded, asking “What can we do to help?” While the loss of historic landmarks, family histories and belongings are incalculable and their loss can never truly be replaced, there are many opportunities coming up to help the community heal. These are ways to not only assist with the

immediate situation but also for future recovery. The Missions and Ministries Committee would like to invite everyone to join in the effort to minister to those in need on Maui.

First, this year’s Thanksgiving Offering (a.k.a. “love loaf”) will be designated for “Maui Relief.” Monies collected will be used to assist



those persons displaced and/or affected by the Maui Wildfires. First Baptist Church of Pearl City is partnering with the Lahaina Baptist Church in the relief efforts in their community and the island of Maui. Led by interim Pastor Barry Campbell and his wife Marcy (pictured), Lahaina Baptist Church has committed to working with and in the community to assist families recover and reestablish themselves. While we have already sent some funds previously, the Thanksgiving offering will also assist with this recovery.

Second, the Committee has committed to “adopting” a family from the Lahaina Baptist Church. Please pray for Bobby and Kim Chang (pictured), for their lives, recovery and healing. Keep a lookout for as needs arise, we will be providing more specific ways to assist this family.

Third, the Committee has committed to send up to 4 short term mission teams to Lahaina during 2024. We will be looking for volunteers to assist with these trips. More information to follow so keep your eyes open.

What a gift to be able to be His “hands and feet,” used by Him for His Glory! Please continue to pray and support the people of Maui.

wishing you a happy  
**Thanks Giving**

## Thanksgiving Day Worship

Thursday, November 23, 2023

@ 10:00 AM

**\*\*Don't forget to bring your "Take Out Box" offering for Maui Relief.**

*If you write a check, please make it payable to "FBCPC" and note it's for "Maui Relief."*



## Christmas Eve - Sunday, December 24

### Special Morning Schedule

9:15am Sunday School  
10:45am Worship Service

*and*

### Christmas Candlelight Service

@ 9:00pm

**MERRY CHRISTMAS**



# Japan

FBCPC Team Aloha's Journey of Faith and Service

## Exploring Our Mission Partners

*(Keiko Ishiwata, Associate Minister of the Japanese-speaking Congregation)*



*Brian & Yuka Nakatsuka in Hachinohe, Aomori*

In the spirit of unity, love, and selflessness, FBCPC TEAM ALOHA, a mission team comprising eight dedicated members from our church, embarked on a journey of faith and service to support, encourage, and serve alongside our mission partners in Japan between September 19 and October 3. Thank you, FBCPC, for your support for this trip—JR Passes for Team members, donated items, especially your prayers!

The members of this mission team were Pastor Sterling Lee, Gary Ohashi, Sandi Maruyama, Lauren Uwaine, Kristy Nakamoto, Aaron Lee, Grace Toki (JSC), and Keiko Ishiwata (JSC).

We had the honor of working alongside Brian and Yuka Nakatsuka in Hachinohe, Michael and Yu Towery in Sendai, and Johan and Haruko Strydom in Takatsuki, Osaka.

Over the following three articles, you will have the opportunity to dive into the experiences and stories that our mission team encountered while working alongside these exceptional mission partners. Ready? Dive in!



*Michael, Yu, Luke & Logan Towery in Sendai, Miyagi*



*Johan & Haruko Strydom in Takatsuki, Osaka*

# The Nakatsukas in Hachinohe

By Aaron Lee



**B**rian and Yuka Nakatsuka are missionaries sent by FBC Pearl City to Hachinohe in Aomori prefecture. They run an English school called Kama'aina for the students and some of the parents of Oirase town as well as a small home church out of their former cafe Welcome Home.



We spent four days working with the Nakatsukas in their ministries to the members of the community. Friday we met their worship team, Akira and Kayoko Sato and Ayako, and prayed over Nanbu town. We later joined the Nakatsukas for their Sunday worship and met Masayo as well as Shoko and her children.



On our last day, we did a prayer walk around the Nakatsuka's home and then some home improvement at the church.



There was a makeshift divider in Welcome Home to keep the AC in during the hot months. With Kristy at the helm and the rest of us offering manual labor, we were able to remodel the divider into a more aesthetically pleasing design. While the time we spent in Hachinohe working with the Nakatsukas was brief, I could see and feel God moving in powerful ways as He was using the Nakatsukas to do great things in their community.

# The Towerys in Sendai

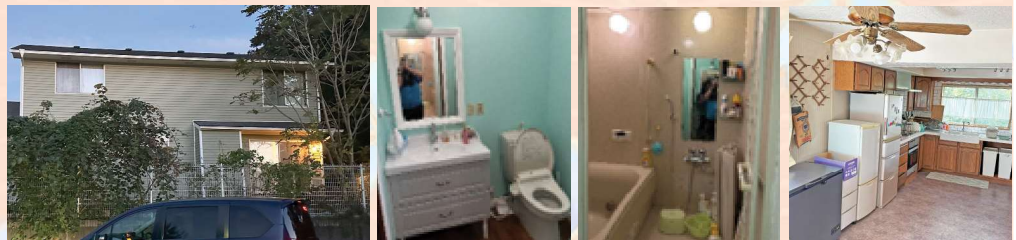
By Grace Toki

## Team Aloha, Ambassadors of Christ, meeting the needs of the churches in Japan



### MINISTRY IN SENDAI with the Towerys and Hope House

The building inspection for Hope House has passed, so it is now legally operational because of the generosity of the mission funds that came from FBCPC.



*Colossians 3:12* “Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly love, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.”

*Ephesians 2:10* “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

Team Aloha, clothed with “compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience,” embarked to Japan to do whatever was needed to “encourage, equip, empower and love” the people which God has prepared beforehand.

The team encouraged the Towerys as they kicked off the Hope House ministry to the community. They showered their love through fellowship, dancing, testimonies, and a children’s craft class. Fruits of the team’s faithful ministry were evident by the laughter, joy, and sharing throughout the event.



Team Aloha encouraged and embraced the Towery family as they listened intently with empathetic ears as Michael and Yu shared their challenges of the pain, grueling treatments, and frustrating experiences of the post-Covid Japanese medical world. Healing physically, mentally, emotionally, and financially will take time, however, it was very evident that their hearts were touched by the love of God. Their countenance was brighter, with a hopeful glitter in their eyes and a gentle smile that could only come from the touch of our Master.





# The Strydoms in Takatsuki

By Gary Ohashi

The people at Takatsuki, Osaka were very welcoming. We could feel the presence of the Spirit. A few days before, my throat was very sore from the after-effects of Covid. Although still recovering, I was able to speak and eventually sing at the International Festival and Sunday worship service.

The Strydom's, Johan and Haruko, were very warm and friendly. They welcomed us with open arms, and we opened our arms to help carry equipment to set up each event.

As in every endeavor there is a start, and the Strydom's ministry is at the beginning. Every Friday, they rent a room in the civic center to hold English events for those wishing to learn

to speak English.

On Saturday, we participated in the International Festival. This event was also used to help promote the opening Sunday service for the Strydom's International Baptist Church where we were a key feature. Pastor Sterling preached, Pastor Keiko translated in Japanese, and we sang and danced the Lord's Prayer. Later that evening, we had a praise service where we sang and shared our testimonies, the Strydoms sang songs and gave a message, and a group from Youth with a Mission sang songs.

We had a blessed time, and we witnessed the start of a new ministry in Takatsuki.



International Festival



After worship service at the Osaka International Baptist Church

## A Heartfelt Observation at the TAKATSUKI Church

By Grace Toki

*Isaiah 6:8 "Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send? And who will go for us? And I said, HERE AM I. SEND ME!!'"*

Encouraging the newly opened church, faithful missionary servants filled with the joy and desire to answer the call of God in a foreign country, participated in their celebration.

Jennifer from the Philippines said with a great big smile, "We are soooooo privileged to have a place we can serve." She helps assist leading the English café as well as the Takatsuki church.



YWAM – Team from Youth With A Mission from United States and Japan came to participate in the Praise and Worship night.

Shannon, originally from Hawaii, brought

together the Lokahi team to dance at the International Festival.

Rae-Anna, missionary from Canada, came to support the International Festival. With joy she rushed to a prayer walk at the red-light (prostitute) district in Osaka after the event.



**From Carolyn Izumigawa**  
*Associate Minister of Discipleship and Finance*

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## **Thank you!**

On Sunday, July 30, 2023, we concluded our past Sunday School year. Mahalo nui loa to all our Sunday School, Children's Church and Extended Session teachers, assistants, helpers, subs, department directors and those who just walked by, saw a need and jumped in!

### ***August 1, 2023 to July 31, 2024***

Our main small group ministry is **Sunday School**, 9:15am to 10:30am for babies through kupuna. For the adults, there are a variety of classes to choose from, who use different curriculum, teaching styles and are mixed or separate women's or men's classes. Here is a listing of the adult classes, more may be coming soon.

### **College/Career Department**

**Career 1** (*college-age to mid-career*) meet onsite using Lifeway's Explore the Bible.  
**Career 2** (*mid-career*) meet mostly via Zoom, a few on-site studying Old Testament.

### **Hui 'Ohana Department**

**Bible Basics** meet on-site and cover a variety of topics.  
**Launa Aloha** meet on-site and via Zoom and use Lifeway's Explore the Bible.  
**Truth Seekers** meet on-site and are using Chuck Missler's "Learn the Bible in 24 Hours".

### **Kupuna Department**

Three classes use **Lifeway's Explore the Bible**: an on-site men's class, an on-site women's class and a mixed on-site/Zoom class. There is also a women's in-depth Bible book study class meeting on-site.

There is also a **Thursday night men's class** meeting via Zoom that studies from Lifeway's Explore the Bible.

We would like to invite you to join a Sunday School class or mid-week small group if you have not already done so. Please let us know what you are interested in. You're welcome to email us at [office@fbcpearlcity.org](mailto:office@fbcpearlcity.org) or call (808) 455-2011.



From young to older and local to mainland, our VBS (Vacation Bible School) was enjoyed by all. This year, we teamed up with the mission team from First Baptist Hendersonville, TN.

# VBS!



Jesus is holy! Jesus is trustworthy!  
Jesus is forgiving! Jesus is worth following!



We enjoyed "Twists and Turns" every night, Monday-Friday from June 19-23, 2023.



Theme Verse: "Make Your ways known to me, Lord. Teach me Your paths." —Psalm 25:4



38 children attended with 15 coming for the first time! We also had 35 helpful volunteers!



We want to express our appreciation to those who volunteered in person and prayed over this awesome experience!  
**Stay tuned for VBS 2024** 🙏



# Happy 65th Anniversary FBC Pearl City!

**T**his year was our church’s 65th anniversary and we celebrated for the whole month! Each Sunday, during our worship services videos were shown from former members sharing their memories of their time with us. We also had weekly trivia contests quizzing us about our church. We learned a lot of things about our church history! Current member Rob Lockridge and former member Jamie McElrath along with our Pastor Sterling took part in bringing the Sunday messages.

On Sunday, August 20 we gathered together for Sunday School (9 a.m.), then one service at 10 a.m., followed by a potluck lunch celebration at 11 a.m. It was a wonderful time of eating a wide array of delicious food and spending time fellowshiping and catching up on each other’s lives. This was the first potluck we have had since the pandemic, and it was a memorable and special time seeing people of all ages sitting together and enjoying each other’s company. We also enjoyed a competitive team game of Kahoots and

watched a video of our church through the years which included greetings from some of our international mission partners.

We looked forward to celebrating FBC Pearl City’s 70th Anniversary with all of you!

*“Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”*

—Lamentations 3:21-23







# TREKKIN' FOR TREATS 2023



Join us for this  
2-hour seminar

THE HOLIDAYS ARE  
CHALLENGING WHEN YOU'RE GRIEVING A LOSS.

## Surviving the Holidays

provides encouragement, support,  
and valuable tools to navigate the season.



### Location

All groups will meet at  
FBC Pearl City,  
1445 Hoolaulaea St



### Date & Time

These one-event sessions will be  
held on Sunday, November 19th,  
& December 3rd, 6:00-8:00 pm



### Contact Info

To sign up, please email us at:  
[office@fbcppearlcity.org](mailto:office@fbcppearlcity.org), and indicate on  
which date you would like to attend.

## Grief Support Groups

Help and encouragement after the death of a loved one.  
At a Grief Share group, you'll find understanding, guidance,  
relief, and a safe place to navigate the challenges of grief.  
Come join us!

Tuesdays 6:00 to 8:00 pm.

(January 9th to April 2nd)

Thursdays 10:00 am. to 12:00 noon

(January 11th to April 4th)

@ First Baptist Church Pearl City

To sign up email us at: [office@fbcppearlcity.org](mailto:office@fbcppearlcity.org).



FBC PEARL CITY

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