



The Pearl

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF PEARL CITY'S MAGAZINE | JUL - SEP 2024 | VOL. 19

Season of
Change
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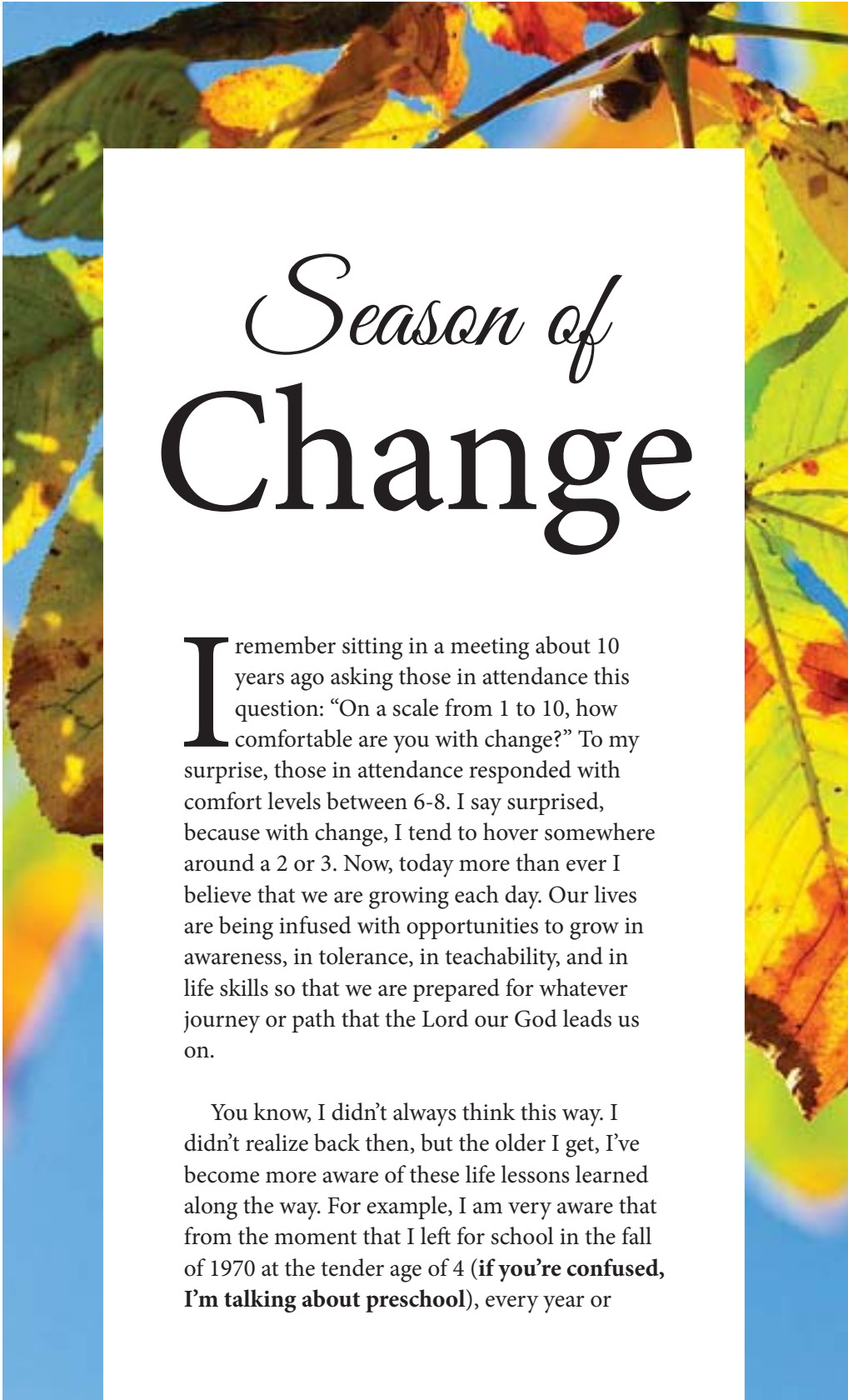
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Pastor Sterling Lee

Words from the Pastor



Season of Change

I remember sitting in a meeting about 10 years ago asking those in attendance this question: “On a scale from 1 to 10, how comfortable are you with change?” To my surprise, those in attendance responded with comfort levels between 6-8. I say surprised, because with change, I tend to hover somewhere around a 2 or 3. Now, today more than ever I believe that we are growing each day. Our lives are being infused with opportunities to grow in awareness, in tolerance, in teachability, and in life skills so that we are prepared for whatever journey or path that the Lord our God leads us on.

You know, I didn’t always think this way. I didn’t realize back then, but the older I get, I’ve become more aware of these life lessons learned along the way. For example, I am very aware that from the moment that I left for school in the fall of 1970 at the tender age of 4 (**if you’re confused, I’m talking about preschool**), every year or

The Pearl

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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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grade thereafter was infused with nuggets of wisdom that were equipping me for change. From preschool, the goal was to get me prepared for elementary school. In elementary school I recall years of new experiences and nurturing that were preparing me for these two years of transition called intermediate school, which by the way was set up to help prepare me for high school. Now high school was a different animal in and of itself. On one hand, it existed to help prepare some students for life, for adulthood, and for others, it was merely a waystation to higher education (**which by the way is another rung on the ladder of change**).

Now, you might be thinking why the abbreviated snippet of our education system. Well, because I believe we all have some experience with change, or perhaps the preparation for change. Everything that we've done in the past, or are doing today in some way has and is preparing us for what lies ahead. Also, I believe (**today**) that God has placed us in a season of change. Now, although I don't know what all of the aspects of change will look like (**for whatever it's worth, I'm not sure if anyone does**), I do believe that if we're faithful, God will indeed bless us.

This is why I asked the question I asked some 10 years ago, because I

believed (**back then**), and I believe (**today**) that God has placed us in a season of change. Again, although I don't know what all of the aspects of change will look like, for whatever it's worth, I'm not sure if anyone but the Lord does.



Again, I don't have all the answers to what the future will bring, but the thing about the future of change is that it has yet to happen. So, as we continue to take steps towards the future, my prayer and my hope is that we as a community of faith do so with a sense of excitement and anticipation, with an openness to the intuitive leading of the Holy Spirit, packaged with a degree of faith, and built upon a foundation of prayer. Prayer for the community that God has placed us in, prayer for an openness for our people to move as the Spirit of God leads, prayer for wisdom and discernment for your leaders, and also prayer that they would remain faithful as the Lord leads us through this season of change.



Summer Youth Hangouts Update

By Associate Pastor John Lee

Piggybacking off the momentum of Friday night VBS in June, our FBCPC Youth Group relaunched with four straight July Friday night Hangout times

at the Shak. Our loving and nurturing leaders have been able to keep pace with our energetic youth. We have had opportunities to fellowship with each other and grow in our relationship with Jesus through eating dinner, playing

interactive games, and studying God's word together through large group talks and small group discussion. Some of our youth have been inviting their friends to hang out at Youth Group which has been really encouraging to everyone. We praise God for providing leaders who are able to

pour into the lives of our young people. We praise God for our two summer interns, Norah Grace and Emma, who have been helping to lead our games and Bible topics. We praise God for bringing our youth to faithfully attend on Friday nights.

So far, we have had great discussions on Finding Joy, Sharing the Gospel, and knowing that we aren't Alone in Feeling Alone. We've played some fun group games like FBCPC's Amazing Race, Mafia, and Finish That Line. As we continue to build momentum with our students, we hope to have some fun activities throughout the year where students can invite their friends to check out our group.

As summer finishes and the new school year approaches, we are planning to meet every other Friday night on the following dates for the

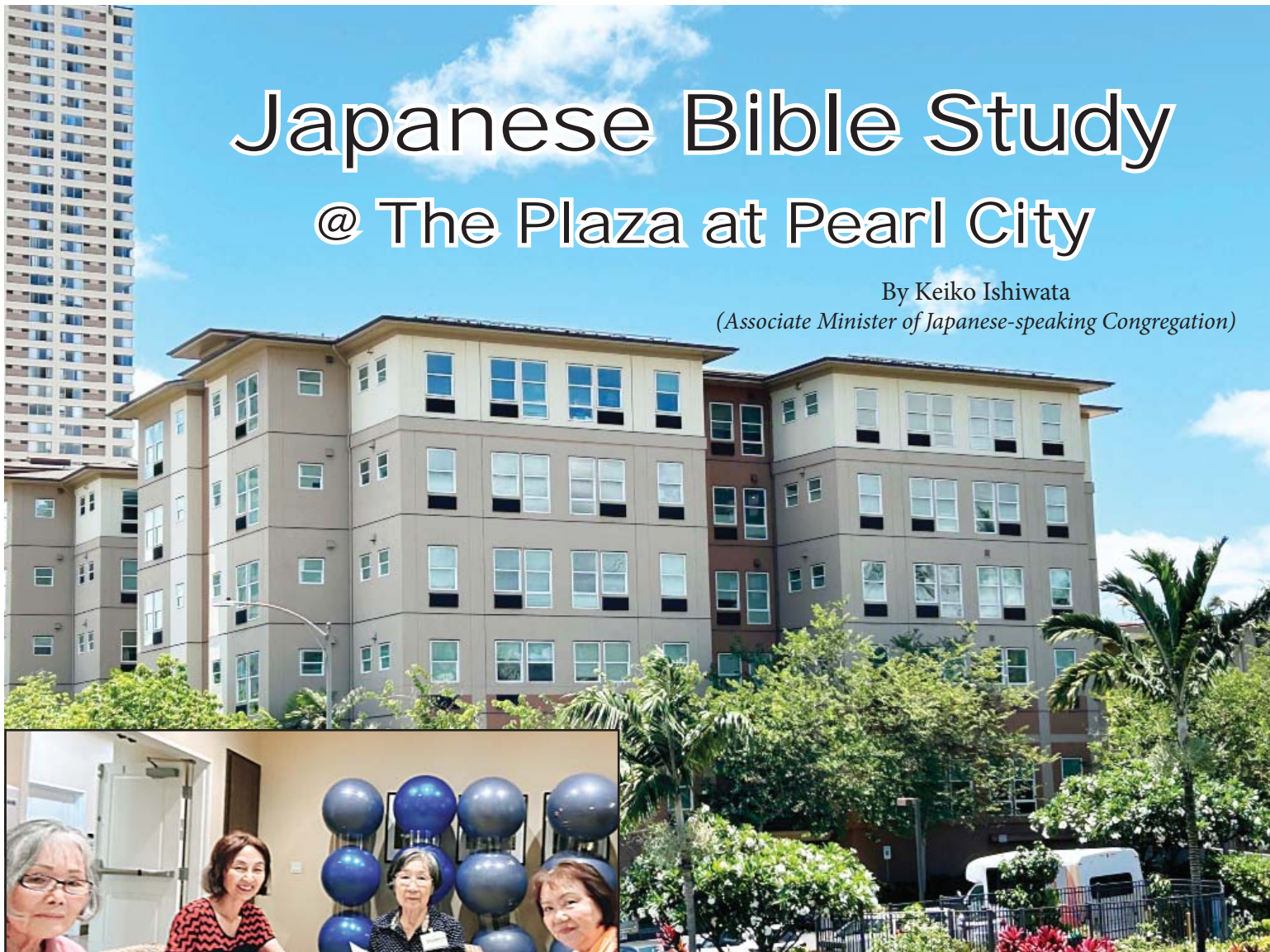
Fall Semester: August 9 and 23, September 6 and 20, October 4 and 18, and November 1 and 15. Please check our church website and calendar to see about any upcoming special events. If you know of any 7th-12th graders, please invite them to check out our Friday night Hangouts. If you are interested in serving or praying for our students and leaders, please reach out to Pastor John. We appreciate all of you for partnering with us through your prayers and food donations.



Japanese Bible Study @ The Plaza at Pearl City

By Keiko Ishiwata

(Associate Minister of Japanese-speaking Congregation)



In January of this year, we took a step forward by starting a monthly Japanese Bible study at the Plaza Pearl City as an outreach to this senior living community. Our journey began with two Christian residents who were eager to engage in spiritual discussions, and we welcomed others who expressed interest. Participants occasionally included English speakers as well.

We are grateful for the faithful members from our congregation who have participated in this Bible study, contributing their insights and support. As is often the case in such communities, we've experienced changes in our group. Our two core Bible study members have moved to different locations due to their individual circumstances. However, we are thankful that God has sent us a new member, Emi-san (on the left in the photo), who has just joined our Bible study. Her presence, along with our dedicated participants from the congregation, strengthens our mission to reach out to the Japanese-speaking residents at the Plaza.

We are committed to fostering a supportive and

welcoming environment for all who join us. Your prayers and support are invaluable as we continue this outreach. Thank you for standing with us in this ministry!

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GUARDIANS OF GREENERY:

A BUILDING AND GROUNDS UPDATE

We want to recognize and celebrate the hard work of our groundskeepers!

REGULAR MAINTENANCE AND DUTIES

- Rake the mango leaves
- Trim the mango tree
- Mow the grass
- Trim the hedges and plants
- Treat and remove weeds
- Water the plants
- Open up gates, bathrooms, tool sheds, and kitchen
- Oil door locks and gate hinges

MISCELLANEOUS JOBS

- Fix outside light fixtures
- Replace plants under the church sign
- Remove sickly plants
- Repaint parking signs
- Trim bougainvillea plants
- Repair asphalt in the parking lots
- Repair rock walls
- Power wash various areas

If you feel led to volunteer your services to help maintain the church grounds, please contact

Danny Binz

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Upcoming Fall 2024 Mission Trip

New Zealand



Rob and Donna Thommarson Reception

July 7, 2024

Rob and Donna Thommarson visited FBC Pearl City, sharing the work they are doing in Auckland, New Zealand. The reception was between the services and people got to meet them over food and fellowship. Rob shared the messages at 8AM and 10:45AM, encouraging us all to live out the Great Commission - whether that's abroad or in our backyard.



Purpose

Our team is going to Auckland, New Zealand this Fall 2024. We will be working with the Thommarsons as they minister to Auckland students. Their focus is discipleship, carrying out the great commission by sharing how much Jesus intentionally loves us. We will be partnering with them on their weekly Friday night bible study, helping with the International Student Wednesday lunches, and intentionally getting to know the students they are discipling.

Prayer

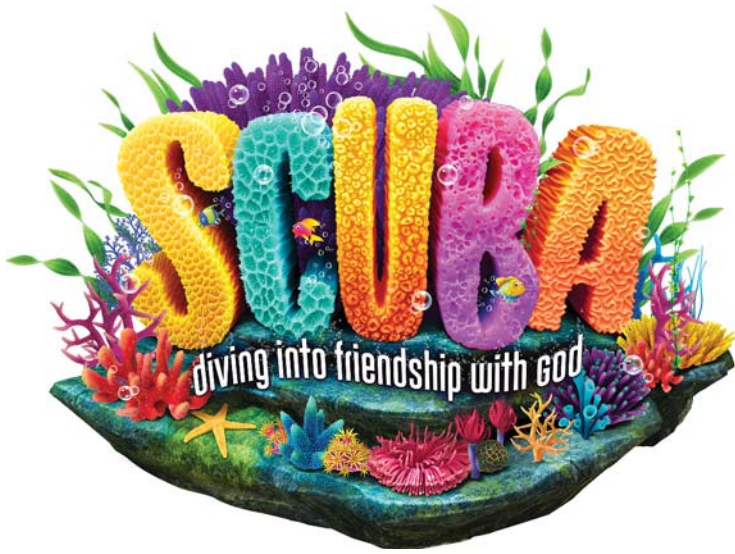
- That our hearts are open, willing, and expectant for whatever God has prepared for us.
- To be flexible to the Holy Spirit's leading as we meet different students and learn about them.
- Travel Mercies - that we trust in God's provision and that our schedule will be His, not our own.
- Bless the Thommarsons as they welcome us into their home and share their ministry and people with us.
- Vision - the Thommarsons are seeking people to discipleship train with them over the next year.

Team

Jeannette Choy and Sarah Amend are the team going to New Zealand this fall. Prayers and encouragement are appreciated!

Vacation Bible School 2024

By Emma Allender



friend who is real, loving, trustworthy, eternal, and inclusive of everyone. Thanks, God!

Throughout our VBS, children immersed themselves in valuable lessons about the Christian faith. They learned that Jesus is not just a distant figure, but a close and comforting friend who walks beside them daily.

They discovered the unending nature of God's love, understanding that His love for his people is eternal and unwavering. Moreover, they learned of the one true God, realizing that God is the ultimate source of truth, goodness, and love in their lives.

These lessons enriched their understanding of faith as well as nurtured their growing friendship with God. Throughout the program, children engaged passionately with Biblical narratives and verses, fostering a deeper

This year's Vacation Bible School theme was "Scuba," inviting children to dive into a friendship with God. Every Friday for five weeks, children participated in worship songs and dances, crafts, Bible lessons, games, and much more. During our time together, we explored the fascinating world of sea creatures and learned about their unique traits and characteristics. Through this exploration, we drew parallels to our friendship with God, recognizing Him as a true



connection to their faith. As Auntie Sandi Maruyama wisely noted, “Knowing Bible stories and Bible verses will keep God in their hearts!” and “It was amazing to hear children eagerly sharing what they already knew about the Bible stories - thanks to the VBS team members and the Sunday School teachers!” The dedication of our VBS team and Sunday School teachers ensured that every child left with a strengthened spiritual foundation and a joyful enthusiasm for learning about God’s word.

Hearing from the participants was encouraging as well. On the topic of favorite activity, Piper noted, “It was a lot of fun. I liked the outdoor activities the best because we always got wet.” Her brother, Colton, similarly added, “VBS was really fun. We played a lot. I liked the water play. Every night there was water play, and I liked that.” And Jessie said, “My favorite part of VBS was the activities that we did, especially, the weeks with water.” Water activities were clearly a big hit this year! Special thanks to the activities team for leading such fun games!

As this year’s summer intern and VBS staff member, I loved seeing the kids every week during our worship time singing and dancing their hearts out from the stage! I also had the opportunity to be a part of the Gospel presentation for the kids on week four which was very special to me. I am so grateful for this experience serving here at First Baptist Church of Pearl City!

Whether singing songs and learning motions in our worship time, exploring Bible stories in our lessons, or playing water games, Vacation Bible School proved successful this year as children delved into learning about friendship with God!



The Scoops

By Rhysa Lee

This summer, the young adults started an event called, “The Scoops.” It was an opportunity for FBC Pearl City’s college and young adults to invite their non-believing friends to come hang out and get “the scoops” on what Christianity is all about. Every Thursday through June and July, our college and young adults came together to spend time in community and hear from various guest speakers about topics that are continuously relevant to young adults both within and outside the church.

Although this outreach event didn’t bring in new young adults, it was an amazing time spent deepening the faith of the already present members of our little community. Some topics we got to discuss include:

- Who is God? Is He good?
- The “Rules” of Christianity
- Relationships: A Panel
- What Is God’s Plan For My Life?
- Is Community Important? How Do I Find It?

Over this past summer, I’ve seen the young adults grow closer in relationship to both God and each other. It’s been a super sweet sight to see! As we start to transition out of summer and into the fall, some students will start heading back to the mainland for school and our two summer interns will both be back in Tennessee. Although the group may dwindle in size as we round the corner, I believe that God is faithful and He is good. He is continuously showing me that He wants to see our young adult community thrive and that as long as we are faithful, He will be with us every step of the way.

“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

- Matthew 6:33-34



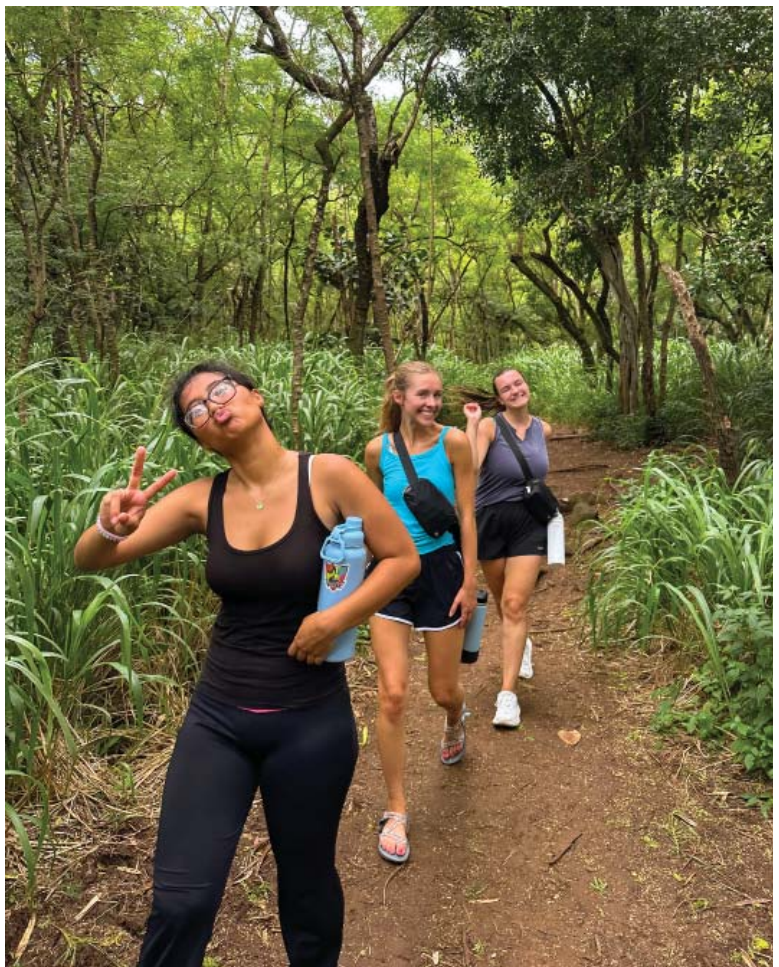
Looking forward, I know that our local students will not have as much free time on their hands and our early career folks have already been working 40+ hours a week. But in an effort to continue to keep meeting together and reaching out to our community, we are starting to put some plans in motion. As always, we will continue meeting on Monday nights for Bible study in the college house. This place will always hold a special place in my heart as I've seen relationships bloom and grow during these nights. We will also be hosting Hiking Club once a month! College and young adults can invite their friends, whether they're followers of Christ or not, and we will just enjoy time in community and God's creation together. We aren't all avid hikers so we plan to do easy to moderate hikes, keeping the opportunity open to anyone and everyone who'd want to join. We're also hoping to start volunteering once a month. This will be a way for us to give back to our community while also reaching out to our friends who may not want to go to church but wouldn't mind spending time once a month serving others.

As our church family, we ask that you continue to pray for our college and young adult ministry. Please pray for strength and endurance as we continue to follow God's calling and plan outreach events. Also, pray for the college and young adults in your own life! If you have nieces, nephews, grandchildren, or family friends who don't have a church to call home, pray for an opportunity to invite them to any of the events we have going on. Or invite them to come on a Sunday and get connected with one of our young adults here at church!

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

- Matthew 28:19-20

Our hope is to continue to reach those in our lives and our community who don't have a relationship with Jesus yet or maybe want to revive that relationship. Sometimes you guys are the connecting factor between us and those young adults. Thank you so much for your support on our journey to grow our community. Your love and care is felt through every encouraging word, donation of supplies, and prayer!



Highland Intermediate Service Project 2024

A Huge Success

Aloha all,

Once again, this mission opportunity and outreach activity with Highlands Intermediate School was very successful. Thank you very much for the donations of foliage and plants, and for giving of your valuable time (starting at 6 a.m.) and hard work.

Seventeen volunteers served by decorating the Pearl City Recreation Center Gym with banners and foliage and setting up activity stations for the school's last day of school assembly and dance. Thank you to:

Sherri Achiu, Joanne Arakaki, Danny Binz, Shirley Fujimoto, Pauline Higa, Rodney Kiyabu, Sterling Lee, Mark Nagasawa, Gary Ohashi, Janis Saiki, Carole Sugai, Ray Sugai, John Todt, Russ Tokuyama, Eric Tom, Jackie Tom, and Mona Yamada.

Foliage: Jean Goda, Kay Ikei, Doreen Kelly, Brian Muraoka, Mike Maruyama, Roy Oda, and Hisao Yamada.

This outreach activity proved to be another successful step in establishing a positive relationship and partnership between FBCPC and Highlands Intermediate School. You are a great team, true servants of the Lord.

Mahalo,
Ray Sugai, Missions Committee



Fall Prevention Class

Kupuna and family members gathered in the Fellowship Hall to learn strategies to prevent falls. Lynne Nohara-Kido gave 28 participants an overall view of what's involved in fall prevention. It starts with preparing the home to avoid hazards. Exercise can increase balance and strength. The class began with a brief assessment to see the status of the participants. Exercises for balance were introduced. An abundance of literature

and online resources were shared to continue the workout at home.

Sherine Nohara, Lynne's sister-in-law, shared how Tai Chi can also increase balance and strength and provided an introduction to Tai Chi techniques.

In addition to providing tools to prevent falls, the class provided an opportunity to invite family and friends who were able to fellowship during refreshments.



Please Welcome Our Newest Church Members!

Sunday, July 28, 2024

John & Trisha Lee
(by church transfer letter)

Cinnamon & Cassia Lee
(by statement of faith)

Keith, Lori, & Rachel Otsuka
(by church transfer letter)

Terrina Nora Martin (by baptism)

Saturday, August 3, 2024

Samuel Kagamida (by baptism)

Sunday, August 4, 2024

Zander Young (by baptism)



Pastor Sterling Lee baptizing Zander Young in the baptistry at FBCPC on August 4, 2024.

**Oahu Baptist Network (OBN)
Annual Meeting
at
FSBC Pearl Harbor**

Friday Oct 25, 2024

**5:30pm Dinner
7 to 8:30pm Program**

**HI Pacific Baptist Convention
Annual Meeting
at
HI Baptist Academy**

***"Contending Together
in Christ"***

Nov 7 @ 5pm to Nov 8 2024 @ 7pm



FBC Pearl City

Trekking for Treats

Saturday, October 26

6 to 8pm

Stay tuned for more information!





FBC PEARL CITY

The Pearl is a quarterly magazine published by First Baptist Church of Pearl City.
*If you want to contribute an article, testimony, news blurb, and/or photo,
please email office@fbcpearlcity.org*

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