

# HEART-TO-HEART

*We are reminded that Christ is in our hearts and we are in His and that love connects us all in unity.*



*Give Thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever.*

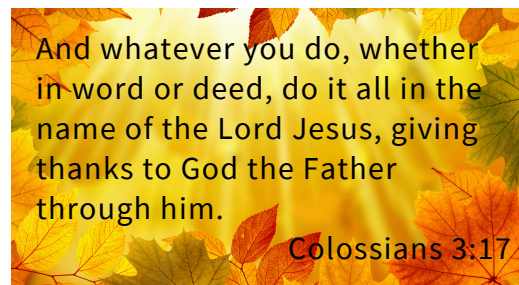
*1 Chronicles 16:34*

## *Gratitude*

Those responsible for Thanksgiving Day becoming a national holiday included: Sarah Josepha Hale who campaigned for 40 years for a national day of thanks, President Abraham Lincoln who proclaimed in 1863 that all states will observe Thanksgiving Day as a national holiday on the last Thursday in November, and President Franklin D. Roosevelt who signed a Presidential Proclamation in 1939 that changed the official date to the third Thursday in November (to give us 7 more shopping days

before Christmas). After public opposition, he changed it to the fourth Thursday in 1941.

Our nation's forefathers knew that it was important to pray and give thanks to the Lord for what He has blessed us with. As followers of Christ, we are blessed by His sacrifice, His mercy, His grace and His love for us.



## *IN THIS ISSUE*

Aloha From Out of the Ashes

God With Us: A New Season

Card-Making Activity

# Aloha From Out of the Ashes

by Joan Doi

What began as a typically normal day suddenly turned into a double emergency both needing immediate attention. My then three-year-old grandson, Jaxon, had just minutes before complained that he was having trouble breathing. He looked quite distressed. A mild panic set in and not knowing what to do, I called and made an appointment with his pediatrician. No sooner had I gotten off the phone, when it rang. It was Joel with an alarming message, "Mom, I got a call that our house is on fire. Can you go check?" What to do? "Lord, please calm my nerves." Fortunately, my husband Ken was home that day. It was quickly decided...I'd take Jaxon to the doctor while he checked on the house.

My task ended in comic relief, although I didn't see the humor at that time. While checking Jaxon in at the doctor's, he gave a big "Achoo!" and out popped a big yellow bead. The receptionist looked at me with a smile and said, "No charge," while she crossed his name off her clipboard. Ken's news, however, was grim. The duplex home which Joel's family shared with his parents had burned beyond recognition.

Walking through the rubble and ash of what was once their home was a soul-wrenching experience. The charred remains of Sabrina, the family's pet cat, was found near the kitchen door. We could only imagine the desperate attempt she had made to escape the fire. Lost forever, for both Joel and his parents, were priceless mementos of wedding photos, birthday celebrations, baby albums, locks of hair from Jake's and Jaxon's first haircuts, and so much more. But, then, amidst the ash of a burnt baby book was a solitary word (Smiling) left unscathed on a page fringed with black. Was there anything to be smiling about?

In actuality, there was a lot to smile about. Taken from a *could-have-been-worse* perspective, the family had escaped harm. Had the fire started at night when all were asleep, the only exit would have been through the bedroom windows. The fire had started in the office due to a faulty power strip. Escape down the hallway to the front and side entrances would have been impossible. The fire would also have destroyed the cars belonging to both families. Fortunately, Snibbles, their pet dog, escaped harm and was retrieved at the Humane Society. A good Samaritan had turned him in. "Thank you, Lord!" Joel's parents were able to move in with his brother's family and Jen, Joel and the boys were welcomed at our home.

Aloha from out of the ashes? Yes, more than we could have imagined. Our living room was soon filled with boxes upon boxes of donated items. Outpourings of love and concern came from all avenues of communications and gifts from relatives, friends, our WOCC family, and even from classmates living on the mainland whom Joel had not seen for quite a while.

God is good, all the time! He had turned a seemingly tragic experience into an opportunity to express His love in more ways than one. It opened up, for us as a family, an immeasurable heartfelt gratitude that we will long remember.

This shared experience is a mere microcosm of the devastation caused by the Maui fires; so may it be that the outcome of ALOHA and blessings be increased a hundred-fold, and more, as God's matchless grace prevails upon His people on Maui.

HAWAII NEWS

## Fire in Pearl City duplex is blamed on power strip

By [Leila Fujimori](#) Feb. 7, 2012



FL MORRIS / FMORRIS@STARADVERTISER.COM

"Give thanks not just on Thanksgiving Day but every day of your life. Appreciate and never take for granted all that you have."

Catherine Pulsifer



# *God With Us: A New Season*

by Joel Duldulao

“But he knows the way that I take; when he has tried me, I shall come out as gold.”

– Job 23:10

Aloha all! As a longtime member of WOCC I have always heard of the General Assembly, a biennial gathering of all the churches in our Conference. As a full-time worker with limited vacation hours, it was a challenge for me to attend any assemblies. Add to the equation a global pandemic, meeting in-person hasn't occurred since 2019. Well, the long-awaited moment finally arrived, and it was absolutely worth the wait! From September 7th to 9th, 2023, Orange County Christian Church teamed up with South Bay Holiness Church and welcomed us with open arms for the first in-person assembly since the pandemic. The gathering was aptly named "God with Us: A New Season." And let me tell you, it was a blessed time of renewal, and most importantly, fellowship.

It was my inaugural attendance at the assembly, and it was a treat! From the moment I met other delegates in the hotel lobby while waiting for our ride to Orange County Christian Church, to being stuck in the Los Angeles traffic after leaving the airport, I felt a special sense of being part of a larger group of believers. We were gathered together with a common purpose – to strengthen our faith and connect with one another. It was reassuring knowing that we are not an island on our own and that we do have access to resources other than ourselves.

The 2-day event was packed to the brim with activities and discussions that nourished our souls. We kicked things off with worship time. English and Nichigo attendees singing and praising together brought a smile to my face. We also had a time of prayer and a message from Rick Chuman, who just recently gave a message at WOCC.

Then, in one of the highlights of the conference, we broke up into small groups and discussed the question, "What would a 'New Season' for our conference and churches look like?" It was like a brainstorming session of faithful ideas that was quite interesting. The discussion in the groups were meaningful, and I hope that the ideas captured will be used to steer our conference in the future.

Next up, we had actual business to attend to. Yay! Various committees and organizations shared their achievements and plans for the future. The Conference's Administrative Office shared the pension fund and financials. For me, these reports were engaging because I finally saw and heard from the people rather than reading about it in a newsletter or email.

But that's not all – we also took care of some important business. Delegates gathered to vote on five propositions to the By-laws. In summary, all five propositions passed rather easily. The process in which we voted and discussed the propositions was not what I anticipated. It was a departure from how it was conducted in the past. It'll be interesting to see how this is done in the future.

Now, let's talk about where we laid our heads for the duration of this fantastic event. The Marriott in Anaheim was my home for the 2 nights that I was in California. We were spoiled with a breakfast buffet every morning. I got to spend some time with other delegates over a plate of sausage, bacon, eggs and self-serve waffles (small kine koge though. lol)!



Panel Discussion with Holiness Shepherd's Council  
Jean Kam, Rick Chuman, Matty Belvins, Steve Nishimoto, Makoto Okura, and Mike Rodriguez



Watson Tanji (Honolulu Christian Church), Joel, and Stan



Watson Tanji, Joel, and Daniel Inoue (Pastor South Bay Holiness Church)



Elaine Nagasako, Joan Doi, and Laura Fukumoto

Thank you to Sharon Kishaba and Jeanne Nagatani for hosting the Card-Making Activity held on October 14. The ladies who attended had a great time listening to music as the Worship Team practiced their songs for Sunday, talking story, and letting their creative talents flow in the cards that they produced. And there was more talking story during lunch as sandwiches, salad, and chips were provided. It was a great time for fellowship.

Thank you also to Darren Nako and his crew of young men as they helped with the set-up for the event and the cleaning of the sanctuary when it was done. Their muscle-power was much appreciated!



94-420 Farrington Hwy.  
Waipahu, HI 96797  
Office: (808) 671-0699  
Email: [info@westoahuchristian.org](mailto:info@westoahuchristian.org)  
Website: <http://www.westoahuchristian.org>

Pastor - Stan Miyamoto  
Editorial Staff - Linda Kunimitsu & Julie Morita

“Be present in all things and  
thankful in all things.”  
Maya Angelou

*Please feel free to contact:  
Linda Kunimitsu or Julie  
Morita about this newsletter  
or to submit an article.*