

## CELEBRATE "PASTOR APPRECIATION" IN OCTOBER!

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### LOVING ALL OUR NEIGHBORS

In a nutshell, Hawaii Family Forum strives to help each of us love our neighbors. It is an important command with a broad scope. Reading it, saying it, believing it is one thing. Doing it is quiet another. Why? There are several reasons.

One is how we define neighbor. Who is our neighbor? In answer to this specific question, Jesus told the story of the Samaritan who helped the overlooked Jewish traveler on the side of the road when two others had passed him by. The Samaritan helped the traveler up, cleaned his wounds, led him to safety and paid the tab for his care. *(Luke 10:27-37)* This Biblical perspective is clear— EVERYONE IS OUR NEIGHBOR, regardless of culture, race, creed, gender or economic status. Hopefully we treat our physical neighbors, our friends, our classmates, and our co-workers in a neighborly way. But "neighbor" goes far beyond these; it extends to the street person at River of Life, the ice addict and her children, the inmate at Halawa, the guy who gets on our last nerve at work, the driver who keeps cutting everyone off in traffic, the

gay couple at the grocery store, the persons, close at hand or in the distance, that are struggling financially, emotionally, physically and spiritually.

A second reason we fail to live out this commandment is how we define love. The kind of love commanded in the scriptures is more than neighborliness.

It is about compassion and commitment to the worth of all people, enough to work for aid and justice on their behalf. Love is the essence of who we are and

why we are here. Again hearing, saying, thinking it is one thing. The Message describes this command as "loving others as well as you love yourself." That's a tall order.

Surely we are not called to actually spend our valuable time reaching out to, respecting and caring for all these people. Surely we are. *(Matthew 22:39)* Surely it doesn't mean to love them as we love ourselves, to provide for them when they are

hungry and homeless, to make things better in everyone's neighborhood, to lend a listening ear and a open heart when there are emotional needs, to show them the way when they are lost. Surely it does.

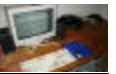
Can you imagine the radical change we would see in our communities if we succeeded at this one simple command? Can you imagine how many people would be rushing to get into the church doors each weekend? Can you imagine how many homes and lives and communities would be

changed by fulfilling what Christ described as one of the two greatest commandments? *(Mark 12:31)* I can only imagine.

But how can we practically love our neighbors? Do something random and unexpected for a stranger. Do something purposeful and meaningful for a struggling family. Do something huge and anonymous for an entire group. Mow your neighbor's

*(Continued on page 2)*

### A Note From the Desk of the Executive Director



## From the Executive Director—continued

(Continued from page 1)

yard. Give an elderly person a ride because there is no bus. Pay for the food of the car behind you in the drive-through. Bake cookies for a construction crew. Tell your mother you appreciate all she taught you. Give the waiter a bigger tip. Use a kind word to turn away anger. Care for the child of a tired single parent. Help build a Habitat for Humanity house. Pray for our leaders and be kind to a lawyer! This is more than Live Aloha—this is Live Christ!

This neighbor love extends also to our pastors and priests. October is Clergy Appreciation month—not that you should wait for this time of year to tell your pastor how much you appreciate him, you can do that anytime! But do apply the love-your-neighbor principle to your church leaders, especially in October. Cook dinner for them, send them a card or a gift certificate, give them a hug, and tell them that you appreciate all they do for God and for you.

(1 Thessalonians 5:12-13a)

I want to use some space here to show appreciation for my own pastor who definitely knows how to love his neighbors. Last year our home was burglarized three times and several nearby residents reported a white van in our driveway near the time of the burglaries. One day a few months after the break-ins, my pastor was

driving by my house on the way to an important meeting. When he saw a white van and strange men in my driveway, he turned his car around and came to check on our home. It turned out to be hired painters, but seeing my pastor in the doorway with prayerful concern on his face meant a lot to my family. Yes, he was loving his neighbor. To me, that's a full service pastor, not looking out just for my spiritual well-being and my family's faith needs, but for our safety and earthly possessions as well. I truly appreciate my pastor and all he does for my ohana and countless others

throughout our island communities.

Another way we can each love our neighbors is by participating in our community. By being aware and involved we can help scores of our neighbors. Proverbs 31:8-9 commands us to "Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure justice for those who are perishing. Yes, speak up for the poor and helpless and see that they get justice." But speak in love. When we take a stand and work against things that are bad for our society, we are loving all our neighbors. When we applaud and patronize things that are good for our neighborhoods and nation, we love our neighbors. And when we love our neighbors, we glorify God.

One more thing, my friends, this "loving our neighbors" thing will require us to turn off our computers and our televisions and spend time with our families giving, helping and serving our neighbors!

God's blessings as you love ALL your neighbors with the love of Jesus Christ.

### A Pastor Is...

A pastor is an unusual person, indeed! He gets his assignments from a voice no one else can hear. He works for a bonus check that is only legal tender in heaven. He starts his day in the prayer closet instead of the wardrobe closet. He climbs the ladder of success by taking the lowly place. He receives nourishment by feeding sheep. His greatest gains come by what he gives away. He is more attracted to what people look like inwardly than outwardly. He lives for God's approval rather than following the opinions of others. He speaks from the depths of his heart rather than from the top of his head. His richest treasures come from the investments he makes in the lives of others.

-Roy Lessin  
(Downloaded from  
[www.dayspring.com](http://www.dayspring.com))

### QUOTE OF THE MONTH:

"The clergy in America do not and ought not to, as a body, form a part of government. But why, as individuals, they should be excluded from all the emoluments of government, and all share of making the laws to which they are subject, is to me inconceivable."

—Noah Webster

Sketches of American Policy, 1785

# Ministering to Our Ministers: The Growth & Impact of Clergy Appreciation Month

Clergy Appreciation Day has only become a nationally recognized holiday within the last few years, but that does not mean people weren't appreciating their clergy before then. It does mean, however, that more and more people are beginning to understand the importance of recognizing those who serve them in ministry.

## How did it start?

The basis of the Clergy Appreciation holiday began just 11 years ago when Rev. H.B. London, Jr., vice president of ministry outreach and pastoral ministries at Focus on the Family, began to develop the idea of celebrating clergy as an annual event. While London always understood the significance of honoring church leaders, it wasn't until 1991 that he first discussed the issue on a radio broadcast. The listener response completely overwhelmed the radio staff.

That same year, Jerry Frear, executive director of Under His Wing Ministries, was brainstorming for a Pastor of the Year Contest when he noticed Groundhog Day on the calendar. Frear thought that if there was a day for groundhogs, there ought to be a day for the 375,000 clergy in America. Under

His Wing pursued Frear's idea a year later by announcing the first Pastor's Appreciation Day in 1992. Frear sought a presidential declaration, and when that failed, he wrote 10 states to request state declarations. Eight of the 10 responded, and 110 churches held clergy appreciation celebrations that year. The following year, 21 states declared the holiday, and 30,000 churches participated.

By 1994, Focus on the Family began to promote Clergy Appreciation Month in October, designating the second Sunday of the month as Clergy Appreciation Day for churches that preferred to celebrate on a specific day. They also released their first planning guide—which they have updated and released every year since—to help congregations honor their clergy.

Today, 49 out of 50 states recognize the second Sunday of October as Clergy Appreciation Day, and it has become a nationally recognized holiday. And in 1998, Australia became the first overseas country to celebrate the event.

## Why celebrate it?

Despite the national recognition of Clergy Appreciation Day, it has

been estimated that less than 10% of the 345,000 congregations in the United States do anything to participate in the event. And yet, the need is tremendous.

First, the appreciation of those who serve the body of Christ is mandated in Scripture. In I Timothy, Paul writes, "The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching" (5:17 NIV). He also urges the congregation in Thessalonica to "respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work..." (I Thessalonians 5:12, 13 NIV).

Secondly, the appreciation of our clergy carries enormous importance because of the growing pressures upon them in the world today. According to James C. Dobson, president of Focus on the Family, thousands of spiritual leaders and their families are suffering under the demands of their ministry. Surveys indicate that 80% of pastors and 84% of their spouses are discouraged or are dealing with depression. More than 40% of pastors and 47% of their spouses report that they are suffering from

burnout and frenzied schedules—and this is mostly likely because the average clergy work week ranges between 50 to 75 hours.

This "burnout" is the result of a variety of causes. The Fuller Institute of Church Growth found in 1991 that 80% of clergy feel their ministry has a negative impact on their family, 50% feel unable to meet the demands of the job, and 70% do not have someone they consider a close friend. Thus, it is not surprising that one-half of those who go into full-time service drop out within 5 years.

And yet, clergy play a crucial role in the well-being of the church and the society as a whole. It is clear in Scripture that elders are appointed by God to lead and care for the Church, which was established by Christ himself (see Matthew 16, Luke 10:1, and Acts 14:23). Clergy who feel appreciated and who maintain their positions, with all of the pressures and struggles, can have a more widespread influence upon our churches and communities.

Article taken directly from:  
<http://www.dayspring.com/clergy/clergy3.asp>

## Other News and Announcements

### The Separation of Church & State Myth

November 13, 2003 (Thursday)  
7:00 - 8:30 p.m.  
St. Stephen's Diocesan Center

HFF will be conducting a workshop discussing the myth of church and state separation. Please attend this exciting workshop if you would like to know where the idea came from and more about its effects.

The session will answer the following questions:

- *Where did the idea of separation of church and state originate?*
- *What does the First Amendment really mean?*

- *Should Christians get involved in public policy?*

- *What can I do to make a difference?*

There is no cost to attend this workshop. Call us at 230-2100 to register or for more information.

### Panel on Physician-Assisted Suicide to Air on Olelo

On October 19, 2003 at 8:00 p.m., Olelo (Channel 54) will air a panel discussion on the issue of physician-assisted suicide. Panel members include physicians, legislators, and other members of the community.

Future dates are scheduled but air time is tentative.

### Hawaii Pastors Conference

Jan. 12-13, 2004  
St. Stephen's Diocesan Center

Hawaiian Islands Ministries (HIM) is sponsoring a conference for all pastors. Topics will include effective ministry in the 21st century that begins with the spiritual and emotional health of the pastor. Guest speaker, Rick Blackmon will focus on:

1. **The Hazards of Ministry**  
The "Reservoir"
2. **The Congregational Family**  
Functional or Dysfunctional?
3. **Anxious or Non-Anxious?**  
Leading the Church Family
4. **Are They Using You or Abusing You?**  
Strategies for Self-Care

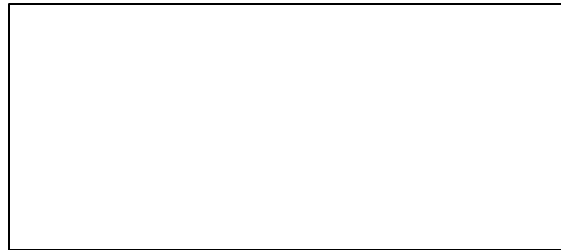
5. **Who's Looking After You?**  
Personal Transformation for Pastors.

### About Rick Blackmon

Rick is an adjunct professor at Fuller Theological Seminary where he teaches courses on personal growth and stress management for ministers. Rick has spoken nationally on clergy mental health issues. Rick holds a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from Fuller Seminary's Graduate School of Psychology, where he also received his Master of Divinity. Registration Fee includes all meals and 1 night's lodging \$29 if registering by December 12, 2003. Cost is \$59 if registering after deadline.

For more information visit [www.himonline.org](http://www.himonline.org) or call (808) 988-9777.

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*Facing the issues that face Hawaii's families.*

## Eight Ways to Honor Your Pastor This Year

*Adapted from an article by Crossings*



Pastors need a lot of support from their community. The eight ways listed below will be a positive way to show your pastor your care:

- 1. PRAY.** Prayer is the most powerful weapon you can use to help your pastor. They have daily struggles as much as, or more than, we do. Take time to ask the Lord to bless them in their very important ministry.
- 2. MAKE AN EFFORT TO LEARN FROM YOUR PASTOR'S MESSAGE.** Try each day to work on your relationship with God, and you'll honor your pastor and the lessons that they teach.
- 3. SHOW YOUR PASTOR PERSONAL SIGNS OF**
- 4. GET TO KNOW THEM BETTER.** Take your pastor out to lunch or dinner. Invite them over to your house for a family get-together. Taking the time to get to know your pastor will make it much easier for them in the long run.
- 5. GET INVOLVED.** Your pastor works hard to turn your congregation into a true community. Reward him by taking an active part in church programs and activities.
- 6. HAVE A CELEBRATION.** Pull your congregation together for a special service of appreciation.
- 7. SHOW UNDERSTANDING.** Pastors are just as human as the rest of us and they are just as troubled by pressures of life. Show as much compassion for them and their problems as they would show for yours.
- 8. SPONSOR A VACATION**

**APPRECIATION.** A thank you card or an offer to assist them at church functions may not seem like much, but it's a great way to show your pastor that you appreciate them.

**PACKAGE.** Some pastors just don't have the time, or finances, to plan a real vacation. Work with your church secretary and surprise your pastor with a trip of a lifetime.

### Recommended Resource of the Month



[Heroes of the Faith I-II](#)  
by H.B. London  
(Broadcast cassette)

Join us for a deeper look into the work Focus on the Family does to minister to those in the pastorate. But this message isn't just for pastors—it's for all of us.  
ITEM: CT475

[Caring For Your Shepherd's Heart I-II](#)  
by Panel (Broadcast CD)  
Whether they're forced out or just plain burned out, more than 50,000 pastors leave the ministry each year. How can we better serve and encourage our church leaders? ITEM: CT579

Order items directly online from Focus on the Family:  
[www.family.org/resources/](http://www.family.org/resources/)

### Important Prayer Reminders:

- ◆ Pray for our pastors, elders, and community pastoral leaders.
- ◆ Pray specifically for your church community. Get other members of your church to form a prayer team to meet once a week to pray specifically for the pastor.
- ◆ Pray for the churches in your neighborhood, regardless of denomination.
- ◆ Pray for the HFF staff and their community educational efforts.