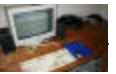


CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS WITH A TRUE SPIRIT OF THANKSGIVING!

A Note From the Desk of the Executive Director



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What are you thankful for today?

We are so very blessed here in America and especially in Hawaii. In this season of Thanksgiving, let's remember to focus on God, who is the giver of life and all things good. As He said He would do, God supplies our needs. "And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus." [Philippians 4:16] Indeed He has.

Are you thankful for Christ Jesus? If that's all there was, that would be enough, right? Be thankful for His forgiveness and grace and mercy; for his ever-lasting love and His ever-amazing faithfulness. God is good.

Are you thankful for the family of God? Our Christian community and our churches are something for which we should praise God. The freedom to worship freely and to regularly sing praises to the creator is a blessing. We should be grateful for our churches and the love and fellowship we enjoy.

Are you thankful for family and friends? Dear ones, I pray you are

blessed beyond measure by the ohana that surrounds you—by the joy in the laughter of children, from babies to teens, by the love of siblings who encourage you, by the wisdom of the kapuna shared with the future we see growing up before our eyes, and that you are tied together by blood or heart and are working toward good relations with all.

Are you thankful for nature's beauty? So, so lucky we live Hawaii!! The mountains bow down and seas roar at the sound of His name. We should wake up everyday praising God for this paradise here on earth. God is good.

Are you thankful for your health and safety? While property crimes and cholesterol levels skyrocket in Hawaii, be thankful enough to keep your body and your home in shape. These are gifts to be treasured.

Are you even thankful for your trials and

struggles? Ah, that's a harder one for sure. But that's how we grow—closer to each other and closer to the creator. God, help us to be thankful for our suffering. Help us to use the lessons we learn to

help others who similarly struggle.

Are you thankful for this great nation? What a blessing! We live in a country founded on Christian principles

and by Christian leaders, many of who gave their possessions and careers to stand for the gospel. For the moment, this is still a Christian nation. But our religious liberties are being trampled at an alarming rate. We need to be on our knees for this nation—BUT then we need to get up from our knees, take a stand and fight to preserve our God-given rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

Most of us think of
(Continued on page 2)

We need to be on our knees for this nation—BUT then we need to get up from our knees, take a stand and fight to preserve our God-given rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

From the Executive Director—continued

(Continued from page 1)

the first Thanksgiving as the meal hosted by the Pilgrims in America. But the holiday actually came into formal being more than 150 years later, after the Revolutionary War had been won and our Constitution had been signed. Congress approved the Bill of Rights, the first ten Amendments to the Constitution in 1789. Congress then “recommended a day of public thanksgiving and prayer” to thank God for blessing America. President Washington declared November 26, 1789, as the first national day of prayer and thanksgiving to the Lord.

In addition, when the Civil War ended, President Abraham Lincoln established the last Thursday in November as a day to acknowledge “the gracious gifts of the Most High God” bestowed upon America. Every president did the same until 1941, when Congress officially made Thanksgiving a national holiday.

So, Christian friends, give thanks

proudly for this nation, knowing the heritage of this important holiday. Teach your children the origins of our country and of Thanksgiving. Teach them there is more to it than turkey and football. Teach them to give to those who are needy even while we are thankful for so much. Teach them to thank God for being so good to us and to America.

Yes, friends, there is much to be thankful for today. Our prayer at HFF is that you and your family will be especially blessed as you share a meal on Thanksgiving Day and that you will take time to name the blessings in your life. Provide a time for each member of the family to pray in thankfulness for the specific blessings they appreciate.

Thanksgiving is an important day in our culture and our country. Praise be to God for a day set aside to give thanks for the bounty He has so richly bestowed.

J. Denice von Gnechten is the executive director of Hawaii Family Forum. Contact her via e-mail at: denice@hawaiifamilyforum.org

Abraham Lincoln's Thanksgiving Proclamation

October 3, 1863

It is the duty of nations as well as of men to own their dependence upon the overruling power of God; to confess their sins and transgressions in humble sorrow, yet with assured hope that genuine repentance will lead to mercy and pardon; and to recognize the sublime truth, announced in the Holy Scriptures and proven by all history, that those nations are blessed whose God is the Lord.

We know that by His divine law, nations, like individuals, are subjected to punishments and chastisements in this world. May we not justly fear that the awful calamity of civil war which now desolates the land may be a punishment inflicted upon us for our presumptuous sins, to the needful end of our national reformation as a whole people?

We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven; we have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity; we have grown in numbers, wealth and power as no other nation has ever grown. But we have forgotten God. We have forgotten the gracious hand which preserved us in peace and multiplied and enriched and strengthened us, and we have vainly imagined, in the deceitfulness of our hearts, that all these blessings were produced by some superior wisdom and virtue of our own. Intoxicated with unbroken success, we have become too self-sufficient to feel the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace, too proud to pray to the God that made us.

It has seemed to me fit and proper that God should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged, as with one heart and one voice, by the whole American people. I do therefore invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November as a day of Thanksgiving and praise to our beneficent Father Who dwelleth in the heavens.

QUOTE OF THE MONTH:

“Whereas it is the duty of all nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor; and Whereas both Houses of Congress have, by their joint committee, requested me ‘to recommend to the people of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer, to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God, especially by affording them an opportunity peaceably to establish a form of government for their safety and happiness.’ ”

—George Washington, 1789 Thanksgiving Proclamation

A Name by Any Other Name...

This time of year is full of anecdotal tales of intense gratitude, warm fuzzies and remember-whens. You know, sitting around the table listening to our kupuna sigh as they recall days of true extended ohana.

I grew up in Pearl City in the not-so-long ago days when our neighbors would recognize me and my brothers and say, "aren't those Jimmy's kids?" Needless to say, my brothers and I refrained from acting too mischievously because of the loud and swift "ohana-network." Without the use of a cell phone my dad would find out about our escapades long before he got home from work. To this day I am unaware of who his local spies were...

Every summer my parents would send me and my three brothers to Maui to stay with my grandparents in Haiku. Even on Maui my brothers and I were afraid to act in any way contrary to my fathers house rules—"aren't those Manuel and Eva's grandkids?" we would hear while we were traipsing through the aisles of Fukushima's Store. The gentle, elderly Japanese owner (or his wife) had no qualms about grabbing my arm with one hand and my brother Eric's with the other. (My older brothers, James and Kevin, would be out the door and down the street before our little legs could follow!)

Delivering us directly to the front door of my grandparents house was inevitable. After

my parents were doing, and receiving the infamous brown paper bag of locally grown goodies (papaya, lychee, avocado, green beans and lettuce), the Fukushima's would leave with a wave and a smile. My brothers and I, however, didn't fare so well.

My grandfather was a strong man. I remember many times being hoisted up on his broad shoulders so that I could pick lychee or avocado. Sometimes he would take my brothers and I to upcountry Makawao to pick guava and passion fruit so that he could make his famous POG. His secret ingredient was adding a can of Exchange! (*Exchange, goes down, down, down, and around, round, round in your glass, glass, glass, makes your mind, think yum, yum, yum—I'm sorry, I digress...*)

My grandmother washed our laundry by hand and hung it each day to dry. I can still smell the fresh scent of sunshine and bluing solution. (I wonder if they still sell bluing solution?) Oft times I would stand with her while she hung the clothes telling me stories of the "camps" on Maui and the shenanigans of her sisters. (She had five sisters and one brother!) To this day I can envision her outside her front door with a laundry basket in one hand and a bag of vegetables in the other!

They are long gone, today. My grandmother died of cancer a few years ago and my grandfather followed soon

being used by a small school. Each day the sounds of school children echo in the yard that my brothers and I once played in. Laughed in. Fought in.

My parents have 11 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren. Their yard is hardly the large acre property of my grandparents, but it is large enough for baseball games and wheelbarrow rides. My mother, who is originally from Missouri, doesn't hang laundry too often, but she still takes time to sit with our keiki and tell stories of her five sisters and three brothers. Hers was a poor Irish-English family, but full of love, laughter and happy memories.

My father is much like my grandfather. I see him pick up his grandchildren and bounce them off his shoulder onto the couch. Laughter spills off the walls as he tickles them into a frenzy. "Papa 'top it!" My nephew Micah squeals in delight.

As I sit here writing this I have tears in my eyes. My grandfather in Missouri is the only grandparent I have left. I miss my other grandparents terribly.

I still see glimpses of my maternal grandmother when my mom makes a cup of tea adding both cream and sugar, or making a jug of Missouri

grandmother is forever etched in my own life as I am her namesake. When I crochet, I can see her hands firmly encouraging my younger, unsteady fingers.

The strong Christian faith of my family is what matters the most to me. Hearing people say, "isn't that a

Christian" is the same as them saying, "isn't that God's child?" Our actions are always viewed by the world through a magnifying glass. We must always be mindful of

this. Etched on the palm of His hand, we belong to our Abba. Our daddy.

Think about that for a moment. The Name of All Names belongs to us via the bloodline of Jesus Christ. How awesome is that—by no other Name are we saved!

In the meantime, during this time of year, I sigh and recall days of true extended ohana. As I tell the stories of my youth, I notice the eyerolls of my children. For some reason, my own daughters do not like it when they hear, "hey, aren't those Eva's kids?" I, on the other hand, understand its deeper implication and am

truly grateful
Eva M. Andrade is the director of communication and administration of Hawaii Family Forum. Contact her via e-mail at: eva@hawaiifamilyforum.org



Other News and Announcements

Panel on Physician-Assisted Suicide to Air on Olelo

On November 16, 2003 at 6:00 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. Please note that this showing is a repeat of the October 18, 2003 show.

Hawaii Family Forum (HFF) Pastors' Advisory Board (PAB) to Meet on December 12

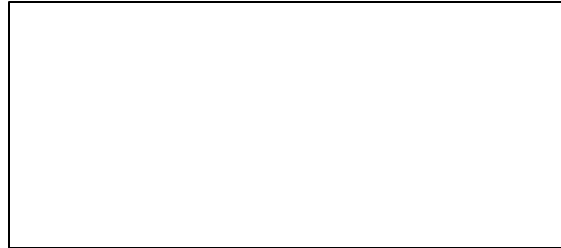
If you are a pastor and your church is interested in finding out more about HFF, please call us at (808) 230-2100. The PAB meeting will be held on December 12, 2003, at First Presbyterian Church of Honolulu. This important meeting will provide interested pastors with detailed information about HFF and how to become more involved in the strengthening of families through the shaping of public policy in Hawaii. Call now for more information and to ensure your place at lunch.

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Facing the issues that face Hawaii's families.

Things Hawaii Family Forum is Thankful For:

- The signing of the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban (S3). With the ban firmly in place, the horrific procedure of killing babies in the process of being born will be eliminated!
- Terri Schiavo who is still alive, being fed and loved by her parents.
- Our Board of Directors who continue to guide us with the love of Christ.
- The ongoing prayers of family, friends and committed supporters.
- The churches and individuals who generously give to our ministry.

Thanksgiving To Do List:

1. **Start a blessings jar.** When good things happen through the year, put in a slip of paper describing the blessing. On Thanksgiving, pour out the jar and read each blessing, giving God glory and thanksgiving for each.

2. Have each family member make a list of things they are thankful for (i.e. freedom, friends, finances, healing); just before Thanksgiving dinner, each family member can read their list before prayer.
3. **Name your turkeys each year after the Presidents.** Help your kids learn our heritage. Have the children research each year's candidate and share with friends and family about that President's faith walk and contribution to America.
4. **Share a tradition that your grandparents taught your parents and your parents taught you.** Call your grandparents and thank them for their ongoing legacy.
5. **Pray for our nation, that God will continue to protect her and find favor on her as He has done for centuries.**
6. **Give a gift of love to a needy family in your local community.** Volunteer to serve at IHS or River of Life. Ask your pastor how you can help your community!

Recommended Resources:

Thanksgiving: A Time to



Remember by Barbara Rainey
Beyond recalling the history of Thanksgiving in America, Barbara

Rainey takes a biblical look at gratefulness and remembrance. This full-color, large-format gift book includes a CD of Thanksgiving music. This interactive set allows families to rediscover the joys of tradition and the roots of gratefulness year after year. Order online at: www.familylife.com.

[A Grateful Nation / Recovering America's Christian Heritage](#)



by David Barton
(Broadcast cassette)

In a prerecorded message, Dave Barton gives a Thanksgiving message about the true spirit of Thanksgiving practiced by our forefathers. Order items directly online from Focus on the Family: www.family.org/resources/

Important Prayer Reminders:

- ◆ Thank the Lord for His continued providence in your life.
- ◆ Pray for your family—specifically for each individual. Then, pray together.
- ◆ For those in the community who are less fortunate than we are. Specifically those who do not have families with whom to celebrate the holidays.

HFF reminds you to set aside a prayer time each day to spend quality time with the Lord.