

PRAY FOR THOMAS & ANGIE
CASTELLAW
MISSIONARIES IN HAWAII



January - February 2025

Dear praying brethren,

Per Elon Musk's request, here's what we did last week. We never stopped coming into work and pray you find this letter comforts your hearts concerning our attempt at being useful to the body of Christ and work of the Lord Jesus. [Since Mr. Trump was elected, I've unfortunately become a news junky again. I'm weaning myself off (again) but admittedly, it's a delight to wake up six hours behind the East Coast to all of the wonderful things happening. Yes, it's the world. Like you, I know how the story ends, but I *rejoice* in each and every millimeter of movement towards ANYTHING that is good, conservative, moral, decent and honest - especially on a national scale! Remember, we **do** have to live here until we're called out and how can you fulfill the NT mandate to "pray for those in authority" without caring about the outcome!? I'm thankful and would encourage you to also rejoice in any (even small) victory the Lord gives us until he comes. Things were looking prematurely bleak there for a while.] Angie and I continue to plow here in the center of Oahu.

Church attendance:

(1) Encouraging development/big request: Over a year ago, I met a most excellent brother on a different island, all alone (with this wife and child), longing for a church like ours. After many hours of fellowship on the phone, we're praying together if the Lord would allow and facilitate his moving here to be part of our church. I remember people in Germany moving to us and staying in Germany solely for our church. As Laodicea advances, we find individual soldiers and sometimes even squads, roaming the battlefield, their company, chain of command and whole units having been decimated. Regrouping and reassigning assets to "strengthen the things that remain" seems to be the tactical necessity of the day. Bible believers are spread thin - too thin sometimes. Good churches are longing for good people. Good people are longing for good churches. Pray with me the Lord's will be done.

This brother is a pilot and says: "I love it when the flight attendants or the co-pilot walk in and ask me about the large Bible on the shelf in the cockpit. It's led to some great conversations lately. Praying for open doors to sow the seed."

(2) While on this theme, please also pray with us about new solid Coast Guard family coming to the island in the summer; our church being recommended by Lydia, a dear sister and friend in our German church. We pray they will join us for their three years in Hawaii.

(3) I reported last time of a sister and her two teens boycotting our church during December, saying she'd return in January. It's now end of February and she's not coming back. Her life is a complete mess: she has a restraining order against her husband; her teens are the most socially backwards I've ever seen. Such decisions (to not attend church on some frivolous conviction against hymns about the birth of Jesus) are only indicative of why their pseudo Christian lives are in the shape they're in. This is not a "sour grapes" moment, but a commentary on the results of a "Christian" life without discipline, grace, order and balance. I sure wish I could have been of more help.

Soap box moment: Dad... Mom... when you make your kids sit still, sit upright, say *yes sir* and *no sir*, ask to be excused from the dinner table, brush their teeth, go to bed consistently on time, say their prayers, pay attention and look adults in the eye when they're being spoken to, you're *GIFTING* them essential, fundamental, basic disciplines that they'll build upon for the rest of their lives. Rob them of that and you're condemning them to a life of self-will, selfishness and utter FAILURE! We see it EVERYWHERE here. Pull up your pants, tuck in your shirt, tighten your belt and look at me when I'm talking to you! But you're 35 years old and now we cannot talk to you like that anymore because you're "not a child", except you still are!

(4) We have a new local couple visiting for over a month ("local" = permanent residents, not military). Last Sunday he brought his 40 year old brother. He seemed to enjoy it although admittedly he comes from a more happy-clappy background. He was swaying during the hymns but couldn't seem to find his familiar mojo. (Hymns are SPIRITUAL, not emotional, necessarily.) He also said he's fresh out of a six month long Korean cult experience in which SumTingWong is the second coming of Jesus and his wife is New Jerusalem, both of them are to be worshipped. Pray with me he sticks and we can help him!

After a few weeks, this new couple stated that they'd like to give but never carry cash. "*Is there a way to give online?*" That was new to me, but we found a reputable online service with that beautiful word beloved by all Baptists, *FREE!* Now, I still like the old fashioned way of a box at the back or a collection plate, but not only these but others have started giving online. We're screaming along the autobahn to a cashless society. They ain't nuthin we can do to stop it. Rev. 13 is penned and even so come, Lord Jesus! I will say most pragmatically, we're THANKFUL for the new folks giving. It's a real help with all the work at church we still have to do! (Thank you too for helping! We have a long way to go - all in the Lord's time.)

Some witnessing anecdotes:

(1) Angie and I were out grabbing a quick bite to eat, when we gave a tract to an 88-year old woman from Taipei. She said, "I'm this old and this is the first time I hear this."

(2) While on post, we witnessed to a Chinese immigrant serving in our military (sure way to get a Green Card). He also said this was his first time hearing the gospel of Jesus.

(3) Two people followed up from recent street meetings. One man came to church to get a King James Bible, the other came to get the booklet, "Born of God."

(4) The bookstore has 2-3 outside customers per week, not all of them Christians. A Catholic soldier named Gabriel bought some (Bible-believing!) Bible study material and was excited to get a complimentary free book, "*Done. What Most Churches Won't Tell You about the Bible*". The bookstore creates opportunities to witness to lost people and talk about doctrine with the saved: King James Bible, eternal security, no "soul sleep", how to witness, etc.

(5) Chief Petty Officer "W", my brother currently out to sea doing dangerous things in dangerous places on the USS S[truncated], reported he witnessed to a young man on board who just got saved and our dear brother was able to help him find assurance with a few verses from the Bible. He described his witnessing experience, "*The words just started flowing...*"

This brother also reported having just read his Bible through for the first time. His wife is home with two sweet baby girls who are sick. Angie has been helping out. We really do love those good people - it's easy to love Christians who love and serve Jesus! Do that and more good people will love you!! And all God's people said, *duh!*

Construction:

(1) We're happy to report Teni the Tongan (a man named Teni from Tonga) has finally come through and has nearly finished stamping our outer church walls with a faux rock stucco. For the past few days, everyone driving by hangs their head out the window and hollers, "Nice brah!" So I guess the neighborhood is happy and we're getting closer to having our "book" judged by a better cover.

(2) The new man attending is a general contractor. He volunteered to install the second door in the back of our church but we discovered that the mechanisms of our old aluminium swinging doors are all busted up, rotten and useless. We have to bite the bullet and buy a new one for \$5k.

(3) We are still in need of someone to tile our 2050 sq. ft auditorium and bathrooms downstairs. If anyone is feeling froggy, we have a place for you to stay and a vehicle. You could make it a working vacation! If not you, would you help us pray the Lord would raise someone up? We checked here and the offer came back at \$40k and WE buy the supplies (tile, grout, etc...). We cannot do that.

(4) Still no news on the electrical permit: Hawaii is infamous for its mafioso style government - run by Chicago style democrats. We're left of all lefties. We're still awaiting approval for our electrical permits. Please ask the Lord of Heaven to expedite this in his time, so we can close up our walls and press on to better things!

New missionary support:

Our little church has a few new givers so we took on another missionary and are supporting three now. Little is much when God is in it.

Good news from afar:

A former member of our church (many, many have transferred away already) told us her granddaughter (8) just got saved. When they were still in Hawaii, the girl had started inquiring about salvation. Mom and grandma would answer her questions, but not push her. They wisely wanted to make sure that her salvation would be real. After a while, the girl's questions became less, and mom and grandma started fearing they had put her off too much and missed the window of opportunity? Until on the way home from church recently, the girl asked: *"Is it true that Jesus could come back anytime?"* Yes. *"Even today?"* Sure. *"Even before we get home?"* Yes. That thought distressed her enough for her to call on Jesus Christ to make sure she will be in that number!

Mysterious Christmas gift: WHODUNIT!?!?

We received a box in the mail with a popcorn assortment; winter goodies (candy cane spoons/hot chocolate/butter cookies) and decorative lights. There was no card, no return address. If you're the "Secret Santa" (pardon my mention of that name), then fess up, cause we'd like thank you! If you insist on remaining anonymous, know of our appreciation for thinking of us. It was a blessing.

Well, I hope this bulleted list of what we did in the last few weeks allows us to keep our jobs! (If you don't get the allusion to recent news, just observe what Mr. Musk is requiring of all federal employees!)

Our good God bless and keep all you saints still striving for the mastery. Stay in your lane and keep yourselves in the Love of God! As the Lord is my witness, the things of God, his Son, our going home, his Word have NEVER been more real to me as they are right now!

Bro. and Sis. Castellaw