

EASTER

HOLY WEEK: EASTER

Welcome to our 24th anniversary of New Hope Central Oahu! 24 years ago, we started out in humble beginnings at Wahiawa Middle School and now we are back in Wahiawa. For many years, we were a multi campus church, in Mililani, Haleiwa and Wahiawa. We still have property in Mililani Mauka and we hope that we can eventually build on that property to have at least two locations.

Speaking about locations, I researched the reasons people go to church, especially for Easter. Here are the top reasons,

1. **Having family, friends and people you can relate to in the church**, especially in Hawaii as it's all about connections, who you know: Many of you first timers, are here because someone forced to come. I hope you are glad you are here! Even if it took some small kine arm twisting. No raise your hands. But that's not you right, right. Turn to the person next to you and tell them, that's not you.
2. **Location**: How many of you are from Wahiawa? How many from the NS? How many from Mililani? Dass why we are open to going back to the NS if God opens the doors again. And we surely hope we can get back to Mililani Mauka as well.
3. **Style of service**: Part of it is the music! Did you enjoy your worship experience today? We all like concerts, don't we! But we wanna rock out for Jesus every weekend!
4. **Feeling the aloha**, welcomed by leaders: I hope you felt da aloha when you came to church today? You felt like WE wanted you here? How was your welcome?
5. **Get something good fo my kids?** If your keiki is with us, they are having a great time at our Eggstravaganza across the street!
6. I found this interesting as the top reason, **Quality of the sermons** (if the message is meaningful/relevant can you relate to the message, is it engaging, you feel like the pastor is speaking to you, not at you), is the most important. So I'll do my best today, and if I gotta speak speak da local braddah braddah kine Hawaii pidgin fo catch your attention, I no goin hold back.

But why you are here? Some of you have honestly said, I tried religion, but neva change nothing. Today, I hope something happens to you today because religion fails, but the reality of Jesus living in his power today, shouldn't fail us. How many of you would agree that that same power that raised Jesus from the dead is the same power that can do da same in all areas of our lives today? How many of you believe in that?

That same power that raised Jesus back from the grave can he raise my marriage up again? That same power, can it to heal my physical ailment? Some of you need inner healing of some stuff you've been hurt from in the past.

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And some of you here are thinking, yes, we are celebrating Jesus resurrection from the dead, but that was 2000 years ago. I need some resurrection power in my life today.

We want God to change the economy, our post Covid reality, our nation, change my marriage, change my kids, well maybe God wants to start with you. Yeah you.

Today we are celebrating with 2 Billion plus people that Jesus is alive! And He's risen and He's risen indeed. That's mainland haole style. Fo us local peopo, I get one fo us, you ready? He stay alive, (And you tell) He stay alive fo real kine. Dass right! He stay alive fo real kine.

Transition into the message: Ok. I'll take you back to the moment three days after his execution, his crucifixion, death by hanging on the cross! Jesus has been taken down from the cross and taken in a cave tomb with one stone blocking the tomb. And instead of telling you the story, I'll show you a video of that scene. And I figure many of you know the story. So I let you lissen da story in da language dat speak to me an plenny a you too. Try watch dis.

(Show video: 2 minutes)

I pick up the story of the two men, Luke tells, they are Jesus' disciples. Well, they aren't the ones that were up close, inner circle disciples like the other 12 who had the last supper with Jesus. But they were part of the many others who decided to follow Jesus. Let me read the account to you.

¹³ "Now that same day two of them were going to a village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem."¹⁴ They were talking with each other about everything that had happened. ¹⁵ As they talked and discussed these things with each other, Jesus himself came up and walked along with them; ¹⁶ but they were kept from recognizing him. ¹⁷ He asked them, "What are you discussing together as you walk along?" They stood still, their faces downcast. ¹⁸ One of them, named Cleopas, asked him, "Are you the only one visiting Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?" ¹⁹ "What things?" he asked

(Luke 24:13 - 19 NIV).

These two bummed out men, were Jesus followers, are returning to their hometown going down from Jerusalem cuz their expectations of all those who made their pilgrimage to Jerusalem to Passover and now their promised messiah is mahke die dead. Jeshua, the one who they decided to follow, healed people, multiplied the bread, did other kine miracles, and even raised someone from the dead. The one that did all that must have just been a great human being. He's different than us. Great prophet, teacher, but no king and surely no savior for all time.

The men were bummed out as their expectations were dashed! What they thought would happen didn't happen. Not sure where they are returning to, but it's not to be around for Jesus Jerusalem reign. Expectations dashed: We live in disappointments, our best laid plans, are dashed.

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We gotta like to this story. Jesus could have shown up for his first resurrection appearance in the midst of the crowds in Jerusalem who just witnessed his crucifixion or to the mass of people who returning to their provincial homes.

He instead shows up to these two men on their journey away from what they had expected to happen, but they don't know it's Jesus.

Seven miles. Dass jalike you guys who live Haleiwa, walking back home maybe little longer for you (9 miles) But more like from here to Costco Waipio, if you walk it, how long would it take? 3 hours or so. Going downhill from Jerusalem to Waipio or three hours for you NS guys.

Many of us have gone to an Easter or Xmas service for years, maybe some of you have gone to church regularly as well, but would you recognize Jesus if he were to sit next to you.

We see the evidence of Jesus in others, hear about the amazing life change in others, but we wonder, can he do that same kine life changing work in my life? Why don't they recognize Jesus:

Luke tells us that they were kept from recognizing him. I'd imagine, Jesus would just come up to them and tell them, hey, it's me, Jesus! But maybe, they would have run away, it's a ghost. Let's continue the conversation on the journey.

"About Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "He was a prophet, powerful in word and deed before God and all the people.²⁰ The chief priests and our rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they crucified him;²¹ but we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel. And what is more, it is the third day since all this took place.²² In addition, some of our women amazed us. They went to the tomb early this morning²³ but didn't find his body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels, who said he was alive.²⁴ Then some of our companions went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but they did not see Jesus."²⁵ He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken!²⁶ Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?"²⁷ And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself (v. 19 - 27)

We had hoped he was the one! But, their hopes were dashed! They needed some NEW HOPE! They gotta come to our church!

Jesus' gradual eye opening of himself lets them learn some lessons about trusting God's promises. The disciples were told about these events many times, but they never believed. They had their ideas of who Jesus was, what He had come to do, and how He should do it. But when things did not turn out like they thought they should, they gave up their hope and trust in those promises.

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Jalike us, we have some ideas of who Jesus is and what he wants of us today. How can a 2000 year old bible savior, messiah have any relevance for me today. Yeah, he has taught some amazing teachings, we've heard about his miraculous healings, but can he show up in our lives today?

That's the beauty of our resurrected Jesus today. That story of Jesus revealing himself to those two is how many of us need to have of our face to face encounter with that Jesus. Yes, it may be 2000 years later, but that same power that raised Jesus is the same power today to show up in our lives today!

They heard the reports of the women who went to the tomb. They saw the empty tomb with their own eyes and yet they had not believed. The supernatural ways of God to make Jesus come back alive was a blow your mind kine story. No one is raised from the dead. How about us? Does his resurrection, blow our minds today, that he is the messiah for real kine for you? Let's see how this story ends.

²⁸ As they approached the village to which they were going, Jesus continued on as if he were going farther. ²⁹ But they urged him strongly, "Stay with us, for it is nearly evening; the day is almost over." So he went in to stay with them. ³⁰ When he was at the table with them, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it and began to give it to them. ³¹ Then their eyes were opened and they recognized him, and he disappeared from their sight. ³² They asked each other, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?" ³³ They got up and returned at once to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and those with them, assembled together ³⁴ and saying, "It is true! The Lord has risen and has appeared to Simon."

Finally, their eyes were opened and they recognized Jesus! But he disappeared! Just think, the men could have said, this is the ghost of Jesus! And continued their journey back home. Instead, they said, "Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?"

And what did they do? They said we go back to Jerusalem, found the eleven, and told them Jesus is alive! He opened our eyes and showed up big time on our journey.

Jalike that story, Jesus join us on our journey of life and like the men we don't recognize him. Maybe we recognize him in others, in what Jesus is doing in them. Like those men, we need a 1st hand encounter with Jesus, not just a 2nd hand encounter. And jalike them, we too need a 1st hand encounter with Jesus!

I got a question: Have you been to the happiest place on earth? Where's that? Disneyland. But what if somebody said, I've experienced Disneyland many times. So many times, countless. I like the rides, the new ones, Mickey & Minnie's Runaway Railway, and Rise of the Resistance, so good and what about Avengers against King Thanos ride, hoooo so good.

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When did you go? I go every night, I watch others posts on youtube and IG, yeah. But wait, you've not been there yourself. No I scared fo fly! What? You've not been to Disneyland. So you neva felt the joy of riding It's a Small World, touched the water, ate the turkey leg, gotten a churros, met Mickey and Mini Mouse? No! Wouldn't you think his guy is nuts? You like the scary rides and you not even willing to chance um on a plane flight? No so scary that!

Like this story about this guy that never experienced Disneyland himself firsthand, I think that's the story of many of us. Our experience of Jesus is just 2nd hand. We see others experiencing Jesus, they are changed. But, we need one 1st hand encounter with Jesus.

(Dance Element). Would you help me welcome up some dancers to inspire us with who Jesus is today! (Come up to intro the video or transition from Dance to Video?)

Try watch this story of how God worked in this one couple to open their eyes, especially the husband and how his life stay different now cuz he wen chance um.

I wanna invite you to chance um jalike Wally. This is your broke the bread moment when I hope your eyes are open, but your friend or family member no can chance um for you. You gotta chance um yourself.

"The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you (Romans 8:11 NLT).

Misha is gonna sing one of my favorite Rosario songs about knowing Jesus is no longer a mystery. He's shown up in so many people's lives, now it's your turn to respond to him showing up in your life. I'll ask the prayer team to come up and sing if you feel like you need fo chance um, come up an they'll be glad to pray with you and help you take the next steps to having Jesus show up again and again in your life.

If you are with someone, ask them, if they ready, maybe you accompany them up to chance um. And you can pray with them too!

So no wait fo anodda date, if your eyes are open, respond to Jesus today! Cuz that same power that saved Jesus from the dead is in us!