

# THE JOEL FAMILY NEWSLETTER

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My latest heart check up in the Philippines Medical Center was a blessing in disguise. For three weeks, the doctors ordered many different kinds of procedure, prepping me for a bypass surgery. By the third week of confinement in my room, several doctors and nurses took turns each night, asking me about my physical condition. My answer was always, "I'm doing fine and there is no chest pain or any other pain". Then they told me that my x-ray showed that there may be blocked arteries. By Thursday of the last week, the bedside nurse asked me if I'm ready for surgery, and before I replied, I recalled my first bypass and the recovery time and the discomfort that I endured. I told her that I'm not excited at all about any kind of surgery. Well, I know that the Lord granted my wish because the bypass scheduled for Saturday, was suddenly cancelled and one of the lead surgeons came by my room on Friday night and said that after reviewing my x-ray again, they found only one narrowed (not blocked) artery, so they decided not to do the surgery, but prescribed nine heart maintenance medicines for me.

My daughter, Terisa, who had just given birth to her fourth child, a daughter name Fira (pron. "Ferra"), flew over and joined me for the rest of the third week in the PI. We left the Philippines and stopped over on Guam and did our Christmas shopping and she left for Pohnpei the next day and I spent the rest of week four at Harvest Baptist Church and their College. I told Pastor Walton that Harvest is truly a blessed Oasis for me. Their accommodation and hospitality were First-Class. I had many opportunities to speak and shared what the Lord had been doing in my life and ministry since the passing of my wife of 44 years. Pray for this new chapter in my life.

Our Christian school held its annual Christmas Parade all over Kolonia Town, with many flatbed trucks, full of students and teachers, who threw candies at parents and children on both sides of the roads, holding their plastic bags. Our two grandsons (4 and 5), returned from the parade with two bags, full of candies.. That night, our Youth surprised us by showing up at our door, singing Christmas Carols, so we showered them with one of the candy bags. The next morning the boys asked what happened to one of the bags and we told them that the young people took it away. They innocently believed our white lie.

The Polynesian Village of Pohnrakied gave us permission to have Christmas service in their Community Meeting house. We sang Christmas Carols and I preached a Salvation Message out of Luke 2 and Isaiah 53.