



## Poems of Hope and Thanksgiving

*PBA Students Contribute Poetry to Interfaith Gathering*

Rabbi in yarmulke, Buddhist ministers in kesa and black fuho, Christian clergy draped in bright stoles, along with the many lay faithful, entered the Honpa Hongwanji Hawai'i Betsuin temple on an evening in late November 2007. The occasion was the 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Eve Service, a celebration sponsored by religious communities in the Nu'uuanu Valley area.

Pacific Buddhist Academy students Bianca Nagata, '10 and Christie Najita, '08 read poems they had composed in their Creative Writing class, which were based on the theme for the service: *Giving Thanks for Hope*.

Bianca described the experience with a single word: frightening. "I was extremely nervous because speaking in front of large crowds is one of my worst fears," she said. "I was terrified about the audience's reaction: Will they like my poem? What if they hate it?" But in keeping with the evening's theme of thanksgiving, Bianca fully embraced the experience. "I'm very grateful to have taken a creative writing class. Not only have I learned basic poetic structure, but it has also allowed me to confront a personal fear."



For some odd reason, movies have always made a big impact on me. The purpose of this poem was to relive scenes of my favorite films that were situated in the American heartlands. -Bianca

### *Springtime*

by Bianca Nagata

Seasons drift, sensations oscillate.  
I watch the snowy haven depart, at last.  
In my house where I reside,

The fresh buds of spring bloom.

On the bench where I reside, dragonflies  
Court gaily.

On the tree where I reside,  
The aroma of pears.  
In my meadow,

The subtle breeze waltzes in my hair.  
In my heart where you reside,  
The hunger for you, still exceeding.

This vivacious season assembles you, embodies you  
once more.  
In the wind's sonata, I recall your pacifying voice.  
In the dew on the buds, I divine your succulent lips.

In the buzzing fervor, I recollect our youthful zeal.  
In the etchings on the bark of the tree, I reminisce  
about our  
Childish plans, upbringings, many years past.

My heart thrives in this time of year. In my heart  
Where once, where once you confided,  
The passion for you endures.



I got ideas for this poem from my own experiences as they actually happened. I tried to remember those moments while writing and the words pretty much just came out on their own. -Christie

### *A Mother Not Mine*

by Christie Najita

The old, dark, tarnished silver spoon  
stirs petals from crimson flowers.  
The steam billows, covering my face,  
the scent of eucalyptus and mint leaves savory,

almost a treat for my chapped nose.  
Surprised, she willingly  
gave me the TLC I longed for,  
reminding me of the ume tree,

sturdy bark, delicate flower petals, core filled with  
knowledge,  
beautiful sap running down,  
moss growing around the amber clumps.  
I hear a soft whisper

racing back and forth between memory  
and the care from a mother not mine.