

ALOHA KE AKUA

"God is Love" - Finishing Well
April 2022

BUILDING SPIRITUAL MOVEMENTS EVERYWHERE SO THAT EVERYONE KNOWS SOMEONE WHO TRULY FOLLOWS JESUS



I had the opportunity to be at one of my first Epic College Retreats since the pandemic. Every year, Epic SLO and UCSB have their joint Spring Retreat and I have spoken here many times. It was a bit of a homecoming to be back realizing that the last time I was here, the Freshmen I had met were now finishing their Senior year. It was somewhat surreal to meet Freshmen, Sophomore, and Juniors who had never been to a Spring Retreat or any retreat for that matter. They came with newness and excitement ready to experience something for the first time. It was a sweet time for me as well getting to talk about summer missions, conferences, and the impact of Epic as if it was all new because it was for most of

them. The theme of the retreat was community unity in Christ. John 13:35 says, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." We spent the weekend talking about why this is such a needed topic in these times and the lack of love that we are seeing around us. Scripture is clear that how we love one another is a reflection of Christ and we need to remember His love for us so that we can love others the way He does (*even when it's hard and especially when it's hard*). It was an encouraging time even for me and a reminder that I need to walk in the Spirit daily. I'm thankful for what I get to do!

• Kintsugi • "A form of Japanese art in which ruptures and repairs are treated as part of the object's history. Broken ceramics are delicately repaired by craftsmen using lacquer resin mixed with gold powder, silver, or platinum. The repairs are intentionally visible and embellish the object. Instead of erasing imperfections and trying to make them disappear, this Japanese technique instead wishes to highlight them and celebrate them in order to live in a new way the restored object."

My dear friend and sister Sandhya Oaks led us into a holy moment. As we brought the broken pieces of our stories before the Lord, we watched as He reminded us that there is beauty in the mess and through His love and grace, He is making beauty from ashes. As I held my bowl, smashed it, and put each piece back together, I felt as if I was holding onto so much more. I cut myself in the process and was reminded that life is messy and sometimes hurts. I thought about how I wanted everything to be perfect and presentable even in the brokenness. I wrestled with what shows, the inside and the outside. I thought about the end result and if and how others would see it and find beauty in it.

And the Lord is His goodness and wholeness clearly reminded me that He is enough and that nothing is too small or too big for Him. It doesn't matter what it looks to anyone else because to Him it is perfect. ***Praying for each of you and you hold your stories close and hold even closer the promise that God is near!***

