WOW: Word Of the Week

'Ohana
April 15, 2026

Our granddaughter, Morgan, traveled to Hawaii with her parents for her "high school senior year" international trip. Reports of her trip rekindled my interest in things Hawaiian. I had a great aunt named Liliuokelani, Aunt Lil. A word that recently caught my attention is *'ohana.*

'Ohana is a Hawaiian word for family, but also includes extended, adopted, and close-knit friends who form a support network. Reflecting unity and shared responsibility, it refers to a deep, lifelong bond—sometimes summarized as "no one gets left behind or forgotten" (from the movie *Lilo and Stitch*).

This little word*, 'ohana*, started my wheels turning. If I were ministering with a church in Hawaii, would we have Ohana groups instead of Life groups or Connect groups? Does not *'ohana* communicate what church is about? An extended family, community, support system. Nurturing and sharing, giving support and respect. No one left out. Unconditional loyalty. Everyone included.

'Ohana: a group devoted to inclusion, love, and mutual support.
I have a new lens for considering what church should look like.
And perhaps you have a new word!