

"I am the vine, you are the branches; abide in me and you will bear much fruit." John 15:5

Vine & Branches

Monthly News from St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church, 720 N. King Street, Honolulu, HI 96817 • Phone (808) 845-2112

July 2012

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V Bishop of Hawaii

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Rector

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Priest Associate

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Naked

The Rev. David J. Gierlach, Rector

Funny how the first thing the missionaries did when they got to Hawaii and Tahiti and Tonga was to put clothes on everyone!

As many of you know, my wife is Tahitian.

And every time our mainland nephews come to visit, there's my wife—putting band-aids and masking tape on all the strategic places of all the paintings and drawings and silk screens of topless women that she has hanging all over the house.

So I ask you, is nakedness good, or is it evil?

In the first reading from Genesis this morning, we enter the scene just after our common father and mother, Adam and Eve, discover their nakedness because they now are empowered to define what is good and what is evil.

That's the fruit of the forbidden tree: the tree of the knowledge of good and evil bore that fruit, and they each took a bite.

You see, God apparently is just fine with nakedness—it only becomes a problem when our first mother and father decide to compete with God in defining what is good—in defining what is evil; and for them, to be naked was a bad thing.

And there we have it, humanities first, but certainly not last, disagreement with God.

The authority to say what is good, and what is evil, is something, from the very beginning, that God alone intends to have.

Remember: "My ways are not your ways?"

That's kind of God's point; but of course, most of the time, we don't listen.

When Adam and Eve, the archetypes of humanity, decide to compete with God, to say, for themselves, as we say for ourselves, "It's okay, God, we'll decide what is good, and what is evil;" well, my dear friends, that's when all hell breaks loose.

The fact is, and human history bears this out with sickening regularity, we are really, really bad at properly identifying what is good and what is evil.

President George W. Bush, during the build up and prosecution of the Iraq war, used to receive briefings from the Pentagon that had, on the cover of each briefing, this verse or that from the Psalms, about rooting out evildoers and the like.

The carnage that followed that escapade of pre-emptive war is only one example of the great difficulty we have in rightly deciding what is good, and what is evil; perhaps especially, it seems, when we believe our motives are pure.

I'm reading Robert Caro's exhaustive third volume on President Lyndon Johnson.

The book is a fascinating, highly detailed look at Mr. Johnson and it is a case study on how good and evil are so often intertwined, mistaken for one another—confused so often by those who know—in the very core of their being—that they have the very best of intentions.

Some of the modern scoffers at faith, people like Richard Dawkins and Bill Maher, like to ask how any rational person can



Rector's Message continued

believe in a God who punishes humanity for eating an apple?

In fact, it's not God who's doing the punishing.

It is simply that God has left us with the consequences of our choice, a choice renewed every day in every human heart, to decide for ourselves, rather than leaving to God, the determination of what is good and what is evil.

Sadly, any honest examination of human history seems to bear out the wisdom that distinguishing good from evil is not humanity's strong point.

On any given Sunday, (present congregation excluded, thankfully), our churches are often among the most ethnically and racially segregated places on the planet.

The tone of our political discourse seems to become more toxic by the day, with each side convinced, without a doubt, of its own purity, its own moral righteousness.

And today, Mark's Gospel steps right in the middle of the debate over what is good and what is evil...

Today's reading starts in mid-sentence: "and the crowd came together again so they could not even eat."

And then the controversy begins.

"Who is this nobody from Nowhere Ville and who does he think he is by healing all this rabble that no self-respecting person would be caught dead with?"

His own family is on the hunt for him; planning a first class intervention for this son, this brother of theirs, who is obviously off his rocker.

Mark, in his gospel lesson today, brings us nose to nose with the conundrum of deciding what is good and what is evil.

On the one hand, we have the Blessed Virgin Mary, together with Jesus' immediate family, standing shoulder to shoulder with the educated scribes and men of letters; all of them dedicated to upholding the social fabric; all of them well acquainted with the word of God; all pillars of society to whom we should rightly listen.

On the other hand, there is Jesus; surrounded by the mentally and physically ill; those who are outcast because they are not clean; the unlettered; frankly, a motley crew who wouldn't know the word of God if it bit them on the nose.

All they know is this: they need.

They need compassion; they need understanding; they need the healing grace of God.

So what do the good folk do?

The good immediate family of Jesus says he's lost his mind; and the good religious leaders, folks like me and Fr. Fan, we say: "he's possessed by evil itself."

And Jesus responds by talking to us all about power.

He's here, he tells us, to bind up the strong man of the status quo; to loot the house of what we say is good; what we say is evil.

Jesus talks about power because it's power that got us in this mess to begin with: that first desire for power, to be like God, and to say what is good and what is evil: that's the bite of the forbidden fruit.

And over the years, we've built on that power; creating the powers of racism and sexism (declaring some races good and others evil; by institutionalizing a second-class status for women); and by creating the power of money and consumerism (declaring it good to have stuff and money—and evil to be without); and the power of military might, since everyone knows that "might makes right!"

This kind of power is motivated by fear.

Fear of the other, fear of not having all I want, fear of being subjected to the power of someone else.

No wonder the most often used phrase in the Bible, when God comes near to us, is "Fear not"— "Don't be afraid."

In the seeming chaos of God's love for the unlovable, of God's unbridled



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Rector's Message

willingness to ensure that rules are meant to serve us, and not we the rules, Jesus gives to us a new kind of power; a power, that, seen through our everyday eyes, looks crazy; perhaps even demonic.

What is this new power that Jesus gives to all who are willing to accept it?

It is the power of love -- but of love crucified.

It is the power of sacrificial love: a love that turns the other cheek; that gives coat and shirt when only the coat is demanded; that walks the extra mile; that loves the enemy and has mercy on the broken; it is the love that dies rather than kills.

Such is the upside down power of the God who comes to us in gentle nudges and quiet whispers; a God who, when we find ourselves on the cross -- comes and hangs with us.

Which kind of gets us back to where we started with all of this: being naked.

God today invites us to strip away the many layers of certainty with which we have each of us clothed ourselves: certainty in deciding who is in and who is out; certainty in deciding who is right and who is wrong; certainty in deciding who should lead and who should follow.

Crazy Jesus says to us today:
"Get naked!"

Crazy Jesus says to us today:

"Lose all of that certainty and learn how to listen to the gentle God who loves the undeserving; who embraces the ugliness not only in them over there, but the ugliness in you and me too; this God who is content to let decisions of what is good and what is evil wait for another day."

Those who can do so?

They are the brothers, the mothers, the sisters, of Jesus.

Pray God we may be found among them.

+amen



Summer Programs

Many thanks to **Rebecca K., Ignacia T., James F., Rev. Helen** and **Barry** for all of your efforts to make the Nutritional supplemental food program work on a shoestring budget! Thank you for all the assistance and keeping the children busy and fed Tuesdays and Thursdays for lunch and Saturday breakfasts!

Na Hokulele's SUMMER BRIDGE Literacy/ STEM Program started June 6th and ends on Saturday, July 14th (6 weeks). HPU Mentors work with the children under the guidance of Suzanne Langford, Project Director. The program invites children **ages 3 through high school**, meeting on Wednesdays through Fridays from 2:30 to 5:30 pm and on Saturdays with the adult Family Literacy program from 9:00 am to noon. The program is **free to all** in the community. **Mrs. Fane Lino** and **James Fitzpatrick** are very much involved with the children and this program. Stop by and see how you can get involved!

St. Elizabeth's Basketball Team is rocking! What they do need is **shoes!** Please donate a pair of **shoes** – new or slightly used – all sizes – mostly the kids are sizes 9 to 11 but any size at this time... they really need **shoes!!!** The basketball games go through July so there's still time for the team to get into the finals! See Coach James for more information.

HCAP - The Ha Initiative: Creative STEM After-School Program continues to offer exciting, hands-on science explorations and free tutoring throughout the summer. **Two field trips** are coming up! Kokua Kalihi Valley, June 29th, and Bishop Museum, July 27th. The program is FREE and open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 2:30 to 5:30 pm, and Wednesday from 1:30 to 5:30 pm. HCAP is accepting new participants in Grades 2 to 8. **Mahalo to the congregation** for your support and belief in the potential of these young people. **SEEKING VOLUNTEERS...** Can you give one afternoon to make a difference in the life of a child from our Kalihi-Palama community? Call **Chadrhyn**, site Program Manager at (808) 447-5422 for more information.

And you can't help but notice, school will be starting soon... for some children, school is year round! Some have asked about the **school supplies drive** that we have been doing since Mother Jodene and Kit Hawkins' worked with Princess Kaiulani School. The list of children seems to get longer, so does the list of supplies needed. If you would like to help, the youth will be purchasing the school supplies – donations can be dropped in the **"school supplies jar,"** checks can be made payable to the **Pastoral Fund**. Thank you!

Pentecost at St. E's



The Sunday School children joyously carried flags of the nations in the opening procession for this year's Pentecost service.

her time and talent with the Sunday school students. This year she worked on two projects with the students — making Bible story books and paper flowers and vases for mother's Day. Mrs. Fan selected examples of student works to be put on exhibit. **Congratulations** to those students whose work was selected!



Mrs. Doris Lam and her annual exhibit

Pentecost, May 27, was a happy, festive red celebration at St. Elizabeth's! Pentecost, fifty days after Easter, when the tongues of fire descended and rested over each of the disciples' heads...the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on human flesh promised by God through the prophet Joel (Joel 2:28-29)...the disciples suddenly **empowered** to proclaim the gospel of the risen Christ, going out into the streets of Jerusalem and began preaching not only with boldness and vigor, but by a miracle of the Holy Spirit they spoke in the native languages of the people present! The Sunday school children celebrate Pentecost, the birthday of the church, walking in with the cross, waving red streamers along side 7 flags representing Hawaii, Japan, Philippines, Taiwan, China, Micronesia, and Tonga! (*What, no Poland?*)

During the Sunday School ceremony - 28 very proud children, ages 4 to 15 stepped forward to receive **Participation Certificates** from Fr. David. This year saw a record number **18 children** in the **first communion class** with Fr. David and his power-point technology ... then received their first communion on **Easter Sunday!** During the offertory, the children and Youth lifted their voices in thanksgiving, singing 'Sunday Morning in Palama', a song written for St. Elizabeth's Church by **Aaron Loo**.

Mrs. Doris Fan continues to share

Coach **James Fitzpatrick** and Coach **Amber Manini** are busy getting the eager basketball team ready for the games during the week at the church and Coach James giving them extra practice time at Makiki Park Sunday afternoons. The Basketball team is part of the **Palama Settlement League**. They are always in need of shoes and could really use any and all that can be donated. Please contact Coach James Fitzpatrick for more information if you can help! (*Did someone say "Shoes?"*)



The Sunday School sang Aaron Loo's "Sunday in Palama" for the Offertory. It was written specially for St. Elizabeth's.

The Sunday School has increased by leaps and bounds! Many of our Youth Group can remember when the entire Sunday School with Mrs. **Pat Ramos** and Miss **Lisa-Anne Chan** was a 'band' of 6 or 8... Today we have an average of 31 students! Congratulations to **Troy Esaki**, son of **Alan Esaki** and **Caren Chun-Esaki**, one of the 'band of 6', who now serves the church as an **acolyte**, graduated from **Iolani School**, and in August will be packing his bags heading to U.S. Naval Academy Preparatory School. Another of the 'band', **Rebecca Kleinschmidt** is on summer break, will be returning to Colorado, starting her Jr. year. And Rebecca's sister, **Miss Sarah**, is a very helpful and dedicated Sunday School teacher this past year and works with the outreach youth, home before going off to graduate school.

Happy summer! Safe travels to all visiting, coming home, on vacations, off to colleges . . . Sunday school will resume at the end of August!



A few of our Sunday School grads for 2012.

Why We Give

by Roy Chee

“Why do we give money to the church?” a child asks her mother, who is filling out Sunday’s offering envelope. How will the mother answer? How do we answer this question for ourselves? Do we say we give to **help pay the church’s bills**? Do we say that we give because of **the good things** the church does such as **teaching** children, standing for the **best** things in the community, fostering **happiness** and human **welfare**, providing help, friendship and caring for people in **need**? Or do we give because we recognize that we are receivers first; giving back to the One who gives us all we have? (From *Christ Church, Winchester, VA*)



God’s blessings on those with July birthdays!

Ronald Roke	7/3
Richard Roke	7/3
Faith Chock	7/4
Alan Esaki	7/10
Richard Okubo	7/11
Ruby Chock	7/12
Carly Venenciano	7/12
Hermenegilda Sarceda	7/12
Jeldan Romualdo	7/13
Kody Hayashi	7/15
Onlyone Helly	7/14
Mildred Kuniyoshi	7/17
Nathan Neeto	7/18
Lisa-Anne Chan	7/19
Tim Blaisdell	7/20
Frank Yap	7/20
Lynnsey Ho	7/21
Richard Yee	7/23
Barry Zane	7/24
Mary Ann Lentz	7/25
Jerek Jong	7/26
Jean Hirashiki	7/27
Lydia Joseph	7/27
Fran Kramer	7/28
Jordan Rico	7/30

Racism

“Few of us seem to realize how insidious, how radical, how universal, and evil racism is. Few of us realize that racism is man’s greatest threat to man, the maximum of hatred for a minimum of reason, the maximum of cruelty for a minimum of thinking.”

-Abraham Joshua Heschel, *Essential Writings*, 66.

Money Matters

The Vestry is pleased to report that our budget and expenditures (excluding lawyer fees for the Kim litigation) so far this year has us right on track to end the year with yet another balanced budget! Thanks to you all for your continued generous pledge support, volunteered time and prayers for the ministry of St. Elizabeth’s, now entering its 111th year!!

“What makes a genius? The ability to see. To see what? The butterfly in a caterpillar, the eagle in an egg, the saint in a selfish person, life in death, unity in separation,

God in the human and human in God and suffering as the form in which the incomprehensibility of God himself appears.”

—Brennan Manning, *The Wisdom of Tenderness: What Happens When God's Fierce Mercy Transforms Our Lives*



Attendance

Kapuna/Buddy Lists

Please sign up on our Kapuna/Buddy List the point of which is to have younger members give a ring every day to older members, especially those who live alone, to be sure they are A-OK. We've had a few elders who have fallen and could not, as the saying goes, get up --- with a couple of elders stuck for hours or even days like that!

6/3	Sunday 9:00 am Eucharist	141
6/3	Ilokano Service	39
6/6	Wed. Healing Eucharist	35
6/6	Ilokano Service	29
6/10	Sunday 9:00 am Eucharist	128
6/10	Chinese Eucharist	5
6/13	Wed. Healing Eucharist	28
6/17	Sunday 9:00 am Eucharist	162
6/17	Chinese Eucharist	5
6/20	Wed. Healing Eucharist	30
6/24	Sunday 9:00 am Eucharist	153
6/27	Wed. Healing Eucharist	65

“We live on an island of the articulable, and often mistake it for reality.” —Marilynne Robinson



Summer Eats

St. E's Summer Eats program is coming along swimmingly, with Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday meals for the neighborhood folks; and speaking of swimmingly, we were joined during the

last week of June by a 30 plus gang from Tahiti here in Hawaii for a swim competition. The Tahitians had their meals with us all week and are very grateful for the open doors and open hearts that allowed them in. These are kids mostly from poor homes who fundraise all year to come north for these annual swim meets!

Sunday School Summer Programs

Preschool students: Summer Sunday School Program, meet in Classroom B with Miss Jamie and Miss Lillian, beginning July 8th and ending on August 12, 2012.

The **Music Summer Program** will meet with **Miss Ajaon** during the Sunday Service beginning on August 5th for 3 weeks ending on August 19th.

The music program will meet in classroom A. The program will focus on handbells and musical instruments.

First **Aaron Loo** gave us his song, written just for St. E's: “Sundays in Palama” and on Sunday, July 1 he stopped by and SANG IT for us as the offertory hymn! Thanks Aaron!!



Sunday School will resume on August 26th!

“God beckons storm clouds and they come. He tells the wind to blow and the rain to fall, and they obey immediately. He speaks to the mountains, ‘You go there,’ and He says to the seas, ‘You stop here, and they do it. Everything in all creation responds in obedience to the Creator...until we get to you and me. We have the audacity to look God in the face and say, ‘No.’”

—David Platt, *Radical: Taking Back Your Faith from the American Dream*

Inherit the Mirth by Cuyler Black



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Manifesto: The Mad Farmer Liberation Front

Love the quick profit, the annual raise, vacation with pay.
Want more of everything ready-made.
Be afraid to know your neighbors and to die.
And you will have a window in your head.
Not even your future will be a mystery any more.
Your mind will be punched in a card and shut away in a little drawer. When they want you to buy something they will call you.
When they want you to die for profit they will let you know.
So, friends, every day do something that won't compute.
Love the Lord.
Love the world.
Work for nothing.
Take all that you have and be poor.
Love someone who does not deserve it.
Denounce the government and embrace the flag.
Hope to live in that free republic for which it stands.
Give your approval to all you cannot understand.
Praise ignorance, for what man has not encountered he has not destroyed.
Ask the questions that have no answers.
Invest in the millenium.
Plant sequoias.
Say that your main crop is the forest that you did not plant, that you will not live to harvest.
Say that the leaves are harvested when they have rotted into the mold.
Call that profit.
Prophesy such returns.
Put your faith in the two inches of humus that will build under the trees every thousand years.
Listen to carrion — put your ear close, and hear the faint chattering of the songs that are to come.
Expect the end of the world.
Laugh.
Laughter is immeasurable.
Be joyful though you have considered all the facts.
So long as women do not go cheap for power, please women more than men. Ask yourself: Will this satisfy a woman satisfied to bear a child? Will this disturb the sleep of a woman near to giving birth?
Go with your love to the fields.
Lie down in the shade.
Rest your head in her lap.
Swear allegiance to what is nighest in your thoughts.
As soon as the generals and the politicians can predict the motions of your mind, lose it.
Leave it as a sign to mark the false trail, the way you didn't go. Be like the fox who makes more tracks than necessary, some in the wrong direction.
Practice resurrection.

Wendell Barry

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*Pride makes us artificial and
humility makes us real.*

Thomas Merton



Intern's Corner



James Fitzpatrick

This summer has been a busy one. The basketball team is mid-season. We have two teams in Palama Settlement's

Late Night Basketball League. Our junior team, ages 10-14, has a 2-4 record, while our senior team, ages 15-18, has a 0-5 record. These records do not reflect the hard work, the dedication, and the teamwork that many of our boys have shown all season. Under the leadership of Coach Amber the Saints have begun transforming from street-ballers to league playing basketball stars.

Iolani School has also helped in this transformation. Allison Ishii, the Community Service/Service-Learning Coordinator at Iolani, has been instrumental

in helping us achieve a functioning basketball team. Through her, Iolani School has donated clothes, shoes, and equipment that have helped us run practices and compete competitively. She has also organized practices at Iolani where young alumni run small clinics to help our senior basketball team understand the sport of basketball.

The Na Hokulele Program is in full swing this summer. Kylie Petermann has taken over as Literacy Tutor of the program in Fane Lino's absence. The program has seen a surge in young interest. Averaging fifteen children daily, in the second grade and younger, the classrooms of Shim Hall are filled from Tuesday through Friday where they learn about science and improve their reading skills.

The continued support of the Church and our community will ensure the continued efforts to help the youth of our neighborhood. I would like to thank everyone who has helped make these programs possible.

A Friend From The Field Afar

We were delighted to host **Fr. Fred Vergara** on Sunday June 24. Fr. Fred is a long time church planter who has worked in the Philippines, Singapore and is now working out of the national church headquarters in New York. Fr. Fred gave us a wonderful homily about how VISION is what leads us out to others; reminding us that when we OUT God brings people IN!