

"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

April 2011

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V Bishop of Hawaii

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Rector

The Reverend
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Priest Associate

The Reverend Saimone Lino,
Diocesan Missioner

The Reverend Dr.
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Rector Emeritus

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Danged Jesus

The Reverend David J. Gierlach

Grace was the child of an African-American streetcar conductor and his wife. She was born in Alabama.

Grace got married in the 1930s. She moved with her family to Atlanta and developed an interest in the law.

She enrolled in night classes in the local law school, and after years of part-time study, became a lawyer.

Her family wondered what she would do with her law degree, and she shocked them by announcing her intention to run for the office of governor of Georgia in 1954; which she did.

There were 9 people running: 8 white men and Grace, but there was only one issue in that political contest.

You see, the U.S. Supreme Court had just handed down the case of *Brown v. Board of Education*. The court held that so-called "separate but equal" schools were unconstitutional, paving the way for schools to be integrated.

The eight men spoke out angrily against that decision. Only Grace thought the decision was fair and just and ought to be supported by the citizens.

Her campaign slogan was: "Say Grace at the polls."

Not many did. She finished dead last.

Her relieved family hoped she'd gotten the political bug out of her system.

She did not.

In 1962, she ran again. By then, the civil rights movement was gaining traction and any talk of people of different races getting along with each other was hotly controversial.

She finished dead last again.

But during that 1962 campaign, Grace made a stop in the small town of Louisville, Georgia.

Right in the middle of the town square, preserved with pride by the townsfolk, was an old slave market, a tragic and evil place where human beings had once been bought and sold.

Grace, standing at the exact spot where slaves had once been auctioned off, and in the midst of a hostile crowd, said this: "The old has passed away, and the new has come. This place," she said, pointing to the slave market, "represents all about our past over which we must repent. A new day is here, a day when all people, of all races, can join hands and work together."

This was provocative talk in 1962 Georgia.

Someone yelled: "Are you a communist?!"

"No," said Grace softly, "I am not."

"Then," demanded another heckler, "where did you get those danged ideas?!"

Grace thought for a minute, then pointed to the steeple of the nearby church: "I got them over there," she said, "in Sunday school." *Adapted from T. Long, Preaching From Memory to Hope, Pp 19-20.*

Sunday school is where Grace learned about Jesus, and Jesus, you see, is just full of danged ideas.

He has one today.

There he is, talking story with a good for nothing Samaritan, and a woman to boot.



Rector's Message (cont.)

Where did Jesus get that danged idea?

We know.

We often don't like it, but, we know.

He got it from the heart of God.

A God who says that we human beings are all one. That there is no preferred person. That God calls each and every one of us to a place at God's table.

And something else too.

That God has an especially soft spot for the losers, the outcasts, the poor, the stupid, the confused, and the lost.

St. John, in his Gospel, does everything short of a drum roll to help us to hear, to see, what is in the heart of God.

Just last week, well educated, smart, wealthy, respected, and recently showered Nicodemus shows up at midnight to speak with Jesus.

Jesus is abrupt with him, cuts him off, and dismisses him.

Nicodemus moves from arrogance to confusion.

Know-it-all, who think they know God, often get this treatment from God.

Today, Jesus greets a sweaty, probably smelly, uneducated Samaritan woman in the heat of the day.

Married 5 times, she's now just shacking up.

Jesus gets talking to her, and talks to her longer than with anyone else in any of the four gospels.

And she moves from ignorance to belief, from confusion to understanding.

Instead of being brusque, Jesus gently coaxes her to see, to hear, until she becomes the first evangelist in John's gospel.

She goes into her town and invites everyone to come and see the Messiah. The whole town does come, and sees, and believes!

All this missionary work by a foreigner, and a woman to boot!

That danged Jesus!

Where did he get those ideas from: ideas about community and welcoming the different and the stranger, the smelly and the crazy?

Where did he get those ideas from: his danged insistence that that if we are his, then everyone is ours?

Yet, in that reality is our salvation.

Because you see, those on the margins of any group, those who are excluded, it is they who always hold within themselves the secret for the conversion, for the salvation, of the larger group.

The excluded, the ones at the margins, they hold the fears, the rejection, the denial, that exists in the very soul of the larger group.

It's why the church always goes to the least of the brothers and sisters. It's why the church always goes even to the enemy.

That danged Jesus was on to something.

He was a genius about God, about us, about our communities.

Jesus knows, and Jesus teaches, that when any church defines itself by excluding, it is always wrong.

A church that excludes avoids its only job, which is to be Christ in the world.

Only when the church welcomes the stranger, the sinner, the immigrant, those who don't play the game our way, only then, can you and I discover, not only what is hidden, afraid or hated in our own souls, but only then can we meet the fullness of Jesus himself.

The insiders need the outsiders so the insiders can be made whole.

Adapted from Daily Grace, Daily Meditations, p. 28.

Otherwise, what we become is a sect.

A sect looks inward and strives to maintain a group who loves the same foods, who worship the same idols, who play the same games, who have a tough time with outsiders.

A sect reduces the community, eliminates the different, removes what offends, whether ideas or people.

Sects create religious clubs rather than resurrection communities.

That danged Jesus means it when he says he will have us all.

He means it when he tells the woman today that the true worship of God depends not on class or race or theology or gender but on Spirit, on Truth.

In Jesus, the old has passed away. Something new is coming, indeed, it is already here: a day when all people work together, play together, and pray together.

Opening doors, and opening hearts, can rub against the grain.

There will be suffering to be sure, but "suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured into us through the Holy Spirit." Rom. 5:4-6.

It is in that hope that perhaps we can say, all together, and every one of us:

"Thank God for that danged Jesus!"

Amen+



From the Finance Committee

On Track But Only With Your Help!

Finances are always a touchy subject, so it is nice to be able to report that our expenses are being kept within our budget for the first quarter of this year. The best news, however, is that most of you are keeping up with the pledges you made. This is absolutely critical for the current and future health of St. Elizabeth's, and we want to thank you deeply for your commitments.

With the impact of the tsunami last month, challenges lie ahead for all of us, and St. Elizabeth's is no exception. For example, the company which brought Japanese weddings to us on a regular basis will not renew their \$6,000 contract when it expires next month. Somehow we will need to make up this income.

Got an idea? Share it with Father David or a Vestry member.

Congratulations



to
Jerry and Millie Goo
who celebrated
their 65th Wedding
Anniversary!

Of course, they were only children when they got married!

 *Support St. E's
when you shop on-line!!*
Log on to:
**www.marketamerica.com/
stelizabeth720**
and then shop anywhere on the net!

Inclusion, not exclusion

Those at the edge of any system and those excluded from any system, ironically and invariably hold the secret for the conversion and wholeness of that very group. They always hold the feared, rejected, and denied parts of the group's soul. You see, therefore, why the church was meant to be that group that constantly went to the edges, to the "least of the brothers and sisters," and even to the enemy. Jesus was not just a theological genius, but he was also a psychological and sociological genius. *When any church defines itself by exclusion, it is always wrong.* It is avoiding its only vocation, which is to be the Christ.

Only as the People of God receive the stranger, the sinner, and the immigrant, those who don't play our game our way, do we discover not only the hidden, feared, and hated parts of our own souls, but the fullness of Jesus himself. We need them for our own conversion.

The Church is always converted when the outcasts are re-invited back into the temple. You see this in Jesus' commonly sending marginalized people that he has healed, back into the village, back to their family, or back to the temple to "show themselves to the priests." It is not just for their re-inclusion and acceptance, but actually for the group itself to be renewed.

The Daily Meditation, First Sunday in Lent, March 13, 2011



Ms. Ajaon conducts the Sunday School children in the Offertory Anthem.

Christian Hospitality

Christian hospitality flows from the strange truth that in Christ God has entered and redeemed our time and place. This truth frees us to practice spontaneous and joyful hospitality. Christian hospitality is not about some extraordinary deed nor some heroic effort. Neither is it something we accomplish. Hospitality is a life we receive as we rely upon and respond to God and one another for the sake of God's Kingdom. — *Elizabeth Newman*



Bluegrass Music Festival

Okay. When is the last time you heard of a **hootenanny** in downtown Palama?! I'll tell you, just last month! St. E's was delighted to host a 4 day hoedown with wonderful musicians who taught dozens of us city folk how to play **banjo, fiddle, mandolin, bass and guitar**, all of it culminating in a final night of **knee slapping, hand clapping, square dance!** Did someone say **Grammy Award**....? Among those who had a great time were **Glenn Woo, Gretchen Jong, Naomi Yuen-Schat** and the **Lino family!** Our sincere thanks to Fr. Paul from St. Nicholas for coordinating this event and to all who took a chance and participated. Shall it be the **First Annual** Bluegrass Music Festival????



Quotable Quote

“There are two ways of being a prophet. One is to tell the enslaved they are free. It is the difficult path of Moses. The second is to tell those who think they are free that they are in fact enslaved. This is the even more difficult path of Jesus.”— *Richard Rohr*

Seen on a bumper sticker:

“God wants spiritual fruit
not religious nuts.”



Happy Birthday

*God's blessings on those with
April birthdays!*

| | |
|--------------------------|------|
| Shawnalyn Sunagawa | 4/2 |
| Brillan Tulenkun | 4/2 |
| Sharon Oshiro | 4/3 |
| Kit Hawkins | 4/6 |
| Ka'alaneo Blaisdell-Higa | 4/6 |
| Concisa Bartoline | 4/7 |
| Joelynne Tagle | 4/7 |
| Rev. David Gierlach | 4/8 |
| Tasy Robert | 4/8 |
| Santereen Kom | 4/9 |
| Dolores Peralta | 4/10 |
| Alberta Eng | 4/11 |
| Belinda Chung | 4/12 |
| Flora Wong | 4/12 |
| Joseph Tom | 4/14 |
| Michael Young | 4/14 |
| Kalfred Yee | 4/15 |
| Lauren Ho | 4/16 |
| Puanani Woo | 4/17 |
| Kenneth Nagamine | 4/18 |
| Juan Ramos | 4/22 |
| Ellen Tom | 4/25 |
| Craig Kokubun | 4/26 |
| Joey Gierlach | 4/28 |
| Gilbert Batangan | 4/29 |
| Richard Ching | 4/30 |
| Lily Ho | 4/30 |

Sunday School News

Mrs. Doris Fan, wife of **Fr. Peter Fan**, is sharing her arts and crafts skills with the children in Classroom A. Her first lesson with the children is sharing God's beauty all around us, particularly flowers! The children are using materials found in the home and learning to make paper carnations and vases.

Mrs. Fan will visit and teach the children another special craft in September. Thank you, Mrs. Fan for sharing your time and talent with the children.



Lent

The children participate in the processional and begin the church service with a very short call to worship. Note the Lenten wreath, quite the opposite of Advent, the candles are lit and at the end of each week's reading, one more candle is extinguished until on Palm Sunday, the Lenten wreath is dark.



One candle is extinguished each week during the season of Lent.



RagDolls2Love are blessed before being sent to children in need.

On Palm Sunday, April 17th, please join the children once again for the Palm Sunday Parade and sing with us, "The King of Glory."

The Pali Seniors have stitched and made Ragdolls 2 Love to send to the children in Iraq. The Sunday School children in Classroom B brought the ragdolls forward for blessings, to the loving hands that created them, to the troops who will distribute them and to the children who will receive them. And a special mahalo to all of you for your support and prayers that are sent with the ragdolls.



Some last-minute instructions before the children sing in church. Look how crowded the classroom is!

The children continue to participate in the music program on the 2nd Sunday of each month, they sing the Offertory hymn. The children in Classroom A study music with Miss Ajaon every 4th Sunday in Sunday School. **Parents are encouraged and welcome to join the music class! Easter music will be very special!**

As we get ready for Easter, there is a **sign up sheet** for donations for the **children's Easter baskets** for all children attending the service on Easter Sunday and please sign up if you can **donate the eggs** for the Easter Egg Hunt for children up to 6 years old.

Shrove Tuesday



Our second annual renewed Shrove Tuesday was another well-attended success! Thanks so much to **Aunty Nancy, Lowell, Gretchen, Sue Yap** and everyone else who worked so hard to make delicious pancakes, French toast and assorted fruits and goodies. Suitably fattened, we are ready for Lent!

Our Micronesian volunteers washed all the tables and chairs from Shim Hall in preparation for the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper. Thank you, ladies, for all your help!



The Sunday School classrooms are cleaned.

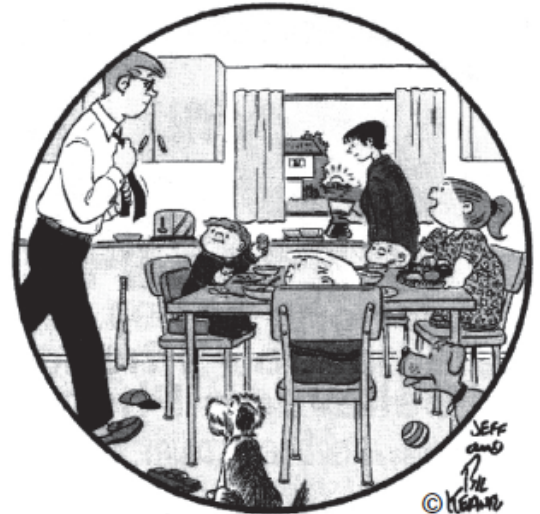
Spaghetti Dinner & Dance



will resume the last Friday of the month, **April 29th at 6:00 pm.**

Come join the fun!

THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Jeff & Bil Keane



"How'd you like your egg this morning, Daddy? Purple? Yellow? Green?..."

from *JoyfulNoiseletter.com*
Reprinted with permission of Bill Keane

Who's in Charge?

"When asked who makes the decisions in his family, a man replied that his wife makes all the little decisions and she lets him make all the big decisions. When pressed, he explained, 'My wife decides what neighborhood we should live in, what schools the children will attend, how to budget our money, where we should go on vacation, who we socialize with, and things like that. But I decide the big issues, like whether we should trust the Russians, whether the government is doing a good job, and what we should do about the economy.'"

—R. Rohr, From *Wild Man to Wise Man*, 26

More Congratulations

Jeremy "Jerry" Bush (husband of **Sarah Bush**) was given an Award for Excellence for his lithograph, "Midday Hala" in honor of artist Jean Charlot from the Jean Charlot Foundation. You can see a picture of this work at http://www.robynbuntin.com/Oceania/g_polynesian_ind.asp?ProductID=13847 as well as other works by Jerry. Go to www.robynbuntin.com and do a search on "Bush."

Parish Work Day - April 16th

The parish will be conducting its Spring "Work Day" on **Saturday, April 16, from 8:30 - 11:30 am.** Lunch and refreshments will be provided. Because we will be working on all areas of the parish campus, the Property Committee is hoping for a large turnout of parishioners, friends, and neighbors. You can either sign up for a particular job or help with the various "opportunities" the Committee has identified. Please bring any tools you might need and wear your work clothes.



Attendance

| | | |
|------|-------------------------------|---------|
| 3/2 | Wednesday Eucharist | 17 |
| 3/2 | Ilokano Service | 53 |
| 3/6 | Sunday 8:15 am | 140 |
| 3/6 | Ilokano Service | 45 |
| 3/8 | Shrove Tuesday Evening Prayer | 35 |
| 3/9 | Ash Wednesday | 42 + 29 |
| 3/13 | Sunday 8:15 am | 177 |
| 3/13 | Chinese Service | 5 |
| 3/16 | Wednesday Eucharist | 20 |
| 3/20 | Sunday 8:15 am | 158 |
| 3/20 | Chinese Service | 4 |
| 3/23 | Wednesday Eucharist | 24 |
| 3/27 | Sunday 8:15 am | 163 |
| 3/27 | Chinese Service | 5 |

Someone once said that to recognize the signs of God, pay attention to your stirrings. Look closely when you feel the swell of joy within, or the tightness as your throat closes up in sorrow. Live in that moment, poke around in its corners, and feel the texture of its walls. Sit with it for awhile, long enough to sense the presence of God sitting with you.



ECW News

Episcopal Church Women will hold their monthly meeting at St. Elizabeth's on **Saturday, April 9th**, beginning with morning devotions with Fr. David at 9:30.

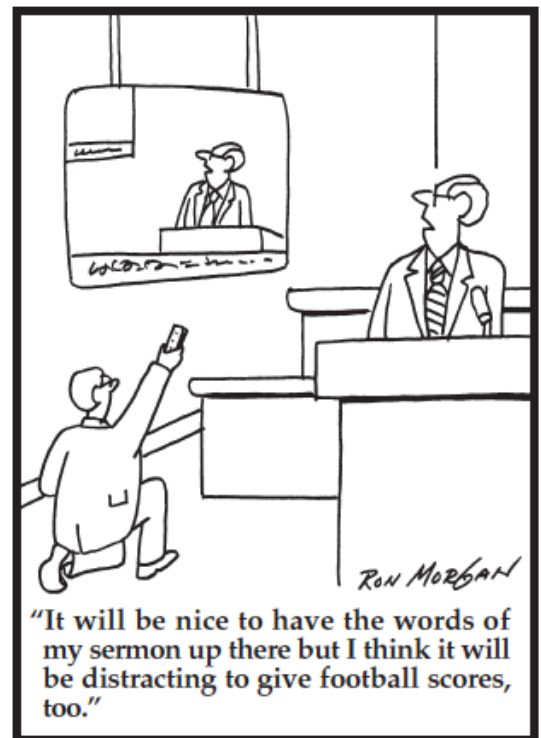
Open Your Eyes

Meister Eckhart, the great 13th century mystic, said: "The **eye** with which you see God is the **same eye** with which God sees you." Meaning, if you tend to see God, let's say, as a **policeman**, then you can only feel God coming into your world as a **policeman**. Or if you see God as a **Santa Claus**, the only way you can receive God's presence is as **Santa Claus**. How you and I perceive God shapes our understanding of God's presence in our lives.



Since God is **neither policeman nor Santa**, but is more than we can ever imagine, it behooves you and me to remove the telephoto lens that we point at God and exchange it for a wide-angle lens. **Open it as wide** as can be so that we might come to see God's fullness, God's **inclusiveness**, God's **embrace**, which is unlimited in its enormity, resting in God's love and compassion and acceptance of me and of you.

— *The Rev. Dr. Daniel P. Matthews (modified)*



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A House of Prayer for all People

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Humor for the hard times

A pastor was counseling a stockbroker worried about the market decline.

“Are you getting your rest and sleeping well at night?” the pastor asked.

“I’ve been sleeping like a baby,” the stockbroker replied. “I sleep for about an hour, wake up, and then cry for about an hour.”

From The Joyful Noise Letter

Holy Week and Easter at St. Elizabeth's

Sunday, April 17, **Palm Sunday**

8:15 am Palm Procession and
Reading of the Passion, Holy Eucharist

Thursday, April 21, **Maundy Thursday**

6:30 pm Footwashing and
Institution of the Eucharist

Friday, April 22, **Good Friday**

12:00 noon Stations of the Cross
6:00 pm Good Friday Service

Sunday, April 24, **Easter Day**

8:15 am. All choirs will join forces in proclaiming Christ's resurrection through the gift of music

9:30 am **Easter Egg Hunt** for children 12 and under
Potluck Easter Champagne and Mimosa brunch following the service. Bring food to share.



Easter Lilies

Donations will be gladly accepted for purchasing Easter lilies to decorate the church. You may purchase a plant in memory or in honor of a loved one.

Deadline: April 10.

Name _____

Number of lilies @ \$8.50 each _____

In memory / honor of: _____
