

*"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

**August 2015**

**God**

The Right Reverend  
Robert L. Fitzpatrick  
V Bishop of Hawaii

The Reverend  
David J. Gierlach  
Rector

The Reverend  
Imelda S. Padasdao,  
Priest Associate

The Reverend Dr.  
Gerald G. Gifford.  
Rector Emeritus

The Reverend Peter S. M. Fan,  
Cantonese Language Priest

Hsiao Ying "Ajaon" Chen  
Choir Director

Marie Wang  
Organist

Katherine Crosier  
Parish Administrator  
Editor and Layout  
Music Consultant

Caren Esaki  
Senior Warden

David Kleinschmidt,  
Junior Warden

Donovan Young, Secretary

Mary Ann Lentz  
Treasurer

Website:  
[www.stelizabeth720.org](http://www.stelizabeth720.org)

Email:  
[stelizabethhawaii@gmail.com](mailto:stelizabethhawaii@gmail.com)

*This month's column was written  
by Alex Teiti Gierlach, age 15*

While on the five-and-a-half hour plane ride home from my trip to Los Angeles, I found myself increasingly bored. So, I decided to read the sermon my dad sends me whenever I'm away from home. He told me the day before that he had quoted me, so, naturally, I was curious about which wise words he decided to share with the congregation. It turns out, he did not quote me exactly, instead he just mentioned me, but I'll take what I can get.

Anyway, my father decided to share a story about this man that I had seen on the Humans of New York Facebook page. This man spoke of how he was a priest for many many years. But the thing that made him stand out among other priests is that he had lost faith in God. Which is a surprising thing for a priest to say, as their entire livelihood is based on God.

But this man had a reason for questioning his faith. He asks, what kind of God allows millions of children to starve and millions of people to be massacred? I ask myself the same thing whenever I hear about another innocent black person being murdered by a white police officer, ten year old girls forced into prostitution all over the world, women being asked what they wore after they report a rape. I question God, as I am sure most people do. What kind of God allows innocent people, people She claims to love so much, to be so badly hurt? It's not fair, no God should allow the cruelty that occurs in this world, yet She does (*yes, my God is a She. A black woman, to add to it*).

My father made an excellent point when explaining why God allows those awful things to happen. As he often does. Imagine having a debate with a lawyer of almost thirty years, and to add to that difficulty, imagine debating over theology. I never win. But back to this excellent

point, God allows the awful things to happen for two reasons. The first being because God allows us to make our own choices, (okay maybe Dad didn't say that exactly in his last sermon but I know he has said this before) and the second being because stuff just happens. And God's gotta let it.



I mean sometimes She allows miracles to happen, like a five year old kid with Stage 4 leukemia magically going into remission, or a person in dire need of a heart transplant gets one right when their time is about to run out. And those miracles are amazing, but sadly enough, they don't happen too often. So, God just has to let nature take its course.

The Big Bang for example, that theory has a lot of holes in it. And so does the story of Genesis, historical accuracy for example... but I can get into that some other time. If you overlap the Big Bang Theory and Genesis, the holes fill up. Any educated person knows the theory, but I will explain mostly because this flight is long and I would like to make a point. Billions of years ago, there was nothing. No Earth, no sun, no moon, no stars... nothing. Except God, of course. And out of nowhere, there was Something out of nothing.

After the Something appeared, over millions of years, more Somethings sprouted out of the Mama Something. Over many more years, lots of things began evolving.

The holes in this theory are how it's possible to have plants and complex animals form out of unicellular organisms. Things that have no relation to each other, somehow do. Orchids have no relations to Chimpanzees, yet they do. So what about Genesis?

On the first day God created day, the second he created night, then the universe, then plants

# Guest Message, continued

and animals, until finally She created us. The story of Genesis is exactly that, a story. A story used to explain the unexplainable. It is scientifically proven that people did not exist at the same time as dinosaurs, even though a friend of my friend, who does not even know what Neanderthals are, would beg to differ.

I brought this point up to my dad and he said that God does not go into extreme detail, as not every single organism is named in the book of Genesis. And also that a day in God's world is not necessarily a day in human world. As my friend Gerald would say, time is man made. So for God, a day could be millions of years for us.

Which makes sense.

Now to fill in the holes. That Something was made by God, probably. Then She guided the rest, but mostly allowed nature to take its course. Allowed the lions to eat the gazelle and the white man to put up walls between himself and his darker neighbor. God kind of just sat back on Her love seat made of clouds, and watched everything take place. She watched the woman talk the man out of jumping off the Golden Gate Bridge, watched the man save an entire poverty stricken village, the white man shoot the black kid with the hoodie, and the frat boy rape the girl. God is here for all of this. Every bad thing we do and every good thing. Every door we hold open for the person behind us, every time we lead on the sweet boy we really don't have much interest in.

I see God chuckle as She sees us crying over the boy who just broke our hearts, because She knows the right person just caught a glimpse of our mascara smeared face while buying ice cream at Safeway and texted his friend because he just saw the most beautiful person carrying a pint of over-priced Cherry Garcia. God cries with us every time a six year old girl gets thrown out a car window because a drunk driver rear ended her mother's minivan. God is always there, always here. Always watching. Sometimes crying, sometimes laughing. Much like how we do. After all, we were made in Her image.

God knows She can't always interfere. She knows that things happen. Awful, awful things happen all the time. But amazing things happen too. Every minute someone kisses their partner for the first time. And during that same minute, someone else kills themselves. God sees it all. The good and the bad. Imagine how intense that is? To see good people die and bad people live. The girl with the brightest smile mutilate herself and the boy finally ask out the boy in his chemistry class, and have him say yes!

To see an eight year old kid eat dirt because that's the only thing they can put in their mouths and another kid in the same place be adopted and given a better life. I get overwhelmed while reading about the ten year old black kid who got shot because he didn't put down the toy gun he had quite fast enough. Imagine seeing that happen and not being able to do anything about it? It's like when you watch a nature show and get all angry when the camera men didn't save the little bunny.

We get mad at God when She doesn't spare the teenage girl who had

so much promise or the man who devoted his entire life to Her. God can't interfere with nature.

Imagine the amount of love God has? Imagine how much love She puts in all of us, that we just throw away? The racist can love the black man, the Palestinian woman, and the Cuban man. The homophobe can love the stereotypical gay man and the stereotypical gay woman. All makeup and hair and high pitched voices and bright fashion choices. All short hair and flannels and combat boots. The feminist who stands for the black people, the gay people, the transgenders, all the people persecuted against, can also love the racist and the homophobe and the transphobe and the sexist. The feminist can tolerate and love and accept and be willing to educate the ignorant with a caring hand and compassionate voice. We can all learn to love a little more. Break down the walls that absorb our love.

I think that's what God is all about, loving everyone. Love your neighbor.

Sometimes your neighbor happens to be yourself. You have to love yourself, too.

Accept yourself for who you are, but never stop improving yourself either. Your neighbor never happens to be the person who is just like you. Your neighbor is the opposite of you. So that makes it so much harder. I could easily love the next raging feminist I come across. The racist could easily love the next white male that moves in next door. But no. I have to love that racist, the homophobe, the sexist. I have to love the person that is the exact opposite of me and they have to love me, all in order to truly live in God's image.

So I guess I went off topic a bit... but I always talked about God. What I'm trying to say is, don't lose faith in God. Pray to Her when you're about to take off from your flight and you want to get home safely, pray to Her when you're laying in bed and you hear something outside and terror rises up in your chest. Pray to Her when you're scared, when you need more help loving the person who takes the Bible way too seriously, pray to Her whenever you need it. She will be there and She will love you. So why not love her too?

“To say that one must live with uncertainty doesn’t begin to get at the tenuous, precarious nature of faith. The minute you begin to speak with certitude about God, he is gone. We praise people for having strong faith, but strength is only one part of that physical metaphor: one also needs flexibility.”

Chris Wiman, My Beautiful Abyss, 72.



**Happy Birthday**  
*God’s blessings on those with August birthdays!*

Renza Farek	8/2
Pablo Venenciano, Sue Yap	8/4
Nicholas Chung	8/5
Wayne Pacupac	8/6
Maxwell Starkman	8/9
Akiu Chock, Sean Padasdao	8/11
David Hirashiki, Linda Woo, Elyjah Badua	8/13
Man Love Sos	8/14
Etta Leong	8/15
Simter Robert	8/16
Keith Ho, Harold Ware Jo Ann Young	8/17
Patsy Ann Ching, Reden Ho, Doug Ing, Kaitlin Nagamine	8/18
Karen Batangan	8/19
Caren Jean Esaki, Pedro Timonio Marietta Ware	8/20
Nancy Au, Joel Jong Francis Kau	8/21
Joshua Lino, Jaden Morey, Jeferrson Noket	8/22
Madleen Michael	8/24
Jarrett Young, Illuminada Padasdao, Inaria Repaky	8/25
Mercy Julio	8/26

## The Pride of St. Elizabeth’s!



Their uniforms have the picture of a Coconut open in half with its rich milk flowing out. The Coconut tree has many uses for many Pacific Islanders, whose contents include the flesh and the milk used for food flavoring, milk, oil, copra for livestock, etc. It is enriching and sustaining, which is exactly what we as a church community hope to give these boys and their families.



© 1997 David W. Harbaugh. More at LeadershipJournal.net/Caricatures

“When I said, ‘I’d like to see both of you at 2:30; Harry, I meant you and your wife.’”



**Fane Lino** is looking great in her new vestment!



# Clean-Up Day at St. E's



On a beautiful 1000 degree day, our youth and a few of the used to be young did a great job cleaning up the Palama Garden of Eden. Thanks everyone!



**Auntie Pearl Kau** and the Generalissimo of the Altar Guild **Collette Arakawa** got those brass candles back in tip top shape!



(Left) **Bruce Walter**, with mop and bucket in tow, got the church floor shining like the sun!

(Below) Okay, how many Episcopalians does it take to assemble a weed whacker???

The Langi family knows!







## Youth News

by *Viliani Lino*

**Saints Basketball Team:** We had a lot of fun with the boys who showed great improvement this year. Improvement meant not only mastering the skills to play, but gaining a lot of respect from the community and commitment from the boys. There were a lot of things that the team needed to work on, working together as a team was one of them. Many thanks to Coach **Joshua Yuen-Schat** and his brother **Daniel** for their hard work. We also had people behind us, supporting us in every step of the way.

Thanks to **Ajaon and Naomi Yuen-Schat** and the **Lino Family**. This year, 18 boys participated in this Summer Event called the Late Night Basketball Summer Tournament on 2 teams, Varsity and Junior Varsity. Each team played 8 games this season, with the varsity winning 6 games and JV winning 7. We were down by only one point in 8 games! The boys were proud of the way they played as a team. At the end of the season, the team received trophies for participation encouraging them to be sportsmen on and off the court. The boys love St. Elizabeth's Youth and the fellowship we had. We are looking forward to next summer!



The basketball team and friends had a great beach day, celebrating the end of a winning season and having fun.

**Hui Pu Camp:** A Diocesan Youth Camp was held at Camp Mokule'ia called Hui Pu Camp 2015, with over 60 campers, elementary, middle school and high school. **Anaseini Lino** and I were one of the 5 counselors helping Youth Director **Sarah Klitze** and **Rev. Carol**. Six of these campers were children from St. Elizabeth, **Simion Singeichy, Nathan Neeto, Kevin Espin, Lee Tokoma'ata, Joshua Lino** and **Inoleen Eichy**. Two had scholarships from St. Peter's Episcopal Church participating in Wednesday Breakfast. Fun activities included Chaplain's Chat to zooming down a Zipline. Thanks, St. Elizabeth's for funding this event.



**Back to School Supplies.** The basketball boys helped at the rectory with the Lino family to pack school supplies for two days. *Oh boy, we were counting pencils, pens, crayons, all day long and it was so hot!* But music kept us going as we counted and packed. This year \$500 was donated from St. Elizabeth's and matched by anonymous youth donors. *Isn't that amazing?*

Thanks to those parishioners who donated school supplies and **Sue Yap** for donating school bags for children serving as acolytes and crucifer.





*Miss Ajaon  
makes learning music  
FUN!*

## Sunday School News

The music program with **Miss Ajaon** continues in Classroom A through August 16th.

**Sunday School will resume, all students,  
on August 23rd.**

All classrooms will be opened. Middle school and high school, meet in Shim Hall. Grades 2 - 6, meet in Classroom A. Preschool through grade 1, meet in classroom B. We will have registration forms available on the first day of Sunday School, August 23rd.



## Scholarship Recipient

The bishop called and said they have a scholarship fund, but it's heavy with restrictions. Like, the person has to be from Kalihi Palama or Waianae. No sweat we said. Also, the person has to be getting vocational training after high school. No problem! Then, he went on, the person has to be given the check after a prayer service followed by a pot luck. Easy! Friday night spaghetti dinner, evening prayer, we got it COVERED! So here's **Jeremy Walter** with dad **Bruce**, a Kalihi boy and the first recipient of the new grant! Congrats!!



**Happy  
100th  
Birthday!**



**Akiu Chock** will celebrate her 100th birthday on August 11th. Our Seniors will help her celebrate at the **Senior Luncheon, Tuesday, Aug. 11 at 11:30 am** at **Wah Kung Restaurant**, 1151 Mapunapuna Street.

Sign up on the clipboard on the narthex entry table.







The Hawaii Foodbank, Inc.  
&  
Harry C. & Nee Chang C. Wong Foundation  
sponsor:

## The 11th Annual Hunger Walk 2015

Saturday,  
September 19, 2015  
Honolulu Civic Center

Check-In: 8:00 a.m.  
Walk Begins: 9:00 a.m.  
Program: 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

## Kathy Crosier's Retirement Party

Sunday, September 27, 2015  
11:45 am

Hale Koa Hotel (Parking is \$5)  
Buy tickets from **Roy Chee**.  
**Cost \$40** which includes \$5  
for a gift and gratuity.

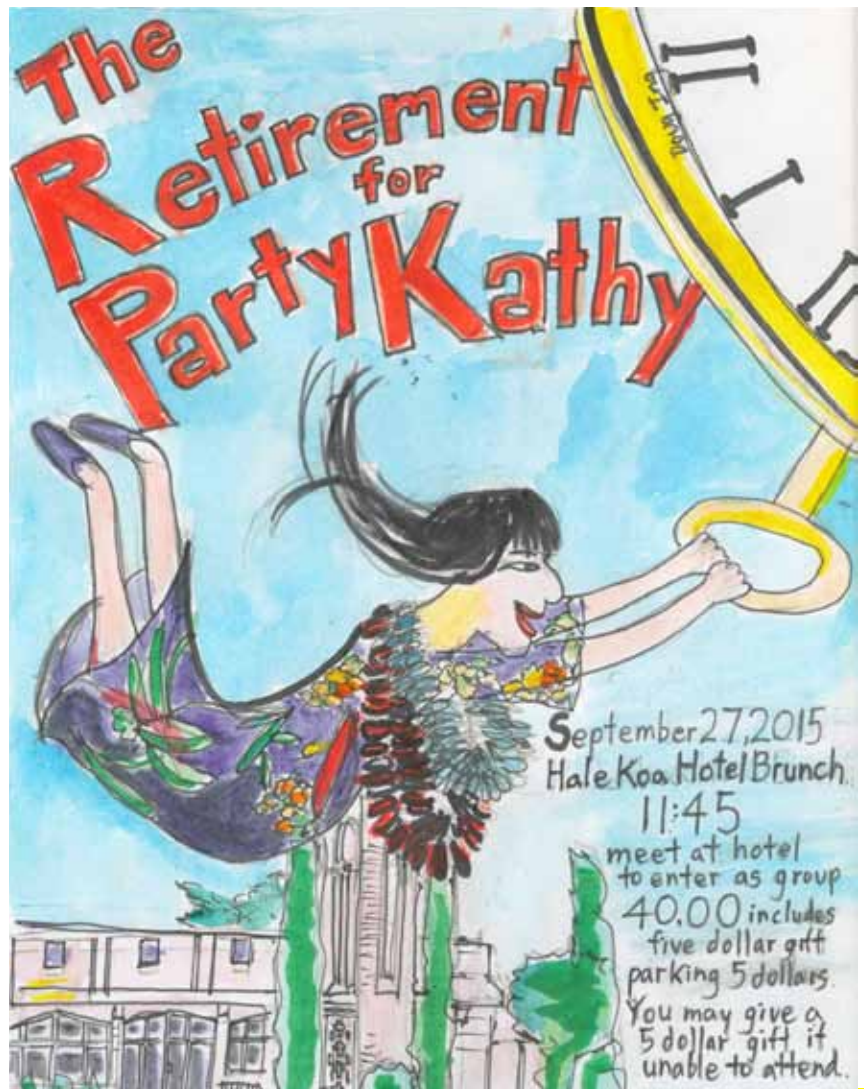
Make checks payable to Roy Chee.

# 11th Annual Hunger Walk

*Please Come Out and Join Us!*

for the **11th annual Foodbank Hunger Walk** on  
**Saturday, September 19**  
from 8:30 till noon!

This walk asks all participants to ask for sponsors to pay a few bucks per mile to support this most worthy organization. The best news though is that whatever we raise is TRIPLED back to St. E's with matching grants the Foodbank has. In short, if we collect \$1000, we will see a \$3000 credit in our Foodbank account, practically our entire annual Food Pantry Budget!! Our neighborhood kids will certainly turn out BUT THIS YEAR we're hoping our longer time members can encourage their kids and young adults (you know, our friends who are here mostly for Easter and Christmas!) to also come by and walk along with the gang!



*“Our faith begins at the point where atheists suppose it must be at an end. Our faith begins with the bleakness and power which is the night of the cross, abandonment, temptation, and doubt about everything that exists! Our faith must be born where it is abandoned by all tangible reality; it must be born of nothingness, it must taste this nothingness and be given it to taste in a way that no philosophy of nihilism can imagine.”* -H. J. Iwand

## Born to Eternal Life

**Mrs. Polly Gifford**, wife of former rector, The Rev. Dr. Gerald G. Gifford, died on June 29th. Please keep the Gifford family in your prayers.



The memorial service will be at St. Elizabeth's on Tuesday, **September 29 at 10:00 am.**

## Laundry Aloha

Thanks to a generous grant from the diocese and matching funds by each participating church, St E's and 7 of her sister churches will have \$20,000 to help the houseless and working poor with their laundry needs this year.



### Laundry Aloha

is tagging along with a mainland idea to provide coins, soap and a brief blurb on each church to those who are struggling to keep body and soul together. Every week we shall head out to places where folks in need are located and hand out enough money for two large capacity washes to make life just a tad easier. Everyone needs a roof and some food, and clean clothes come in handy too! We will report to you about this ministry every month.

St. Elizabeth's folks were on TV and you can click this link to watch them: <http://www.kitv.com/news/churches-help-the-homeless-through-laundry-aloha/34452668>

**Care to donate? A check made to the church with the memo line "Laundry Aloha" will get your help to the right folks!**

*“Jesus is always on the side of the crucified ones, and I believe he changes sides in the twinkling of an eye. He is not loyal to the person, or even less to the group; Jesus is loyal to suffering.”*

-Peter Dumitriu



**Welcome Fr. Saia!**

## Attendance

Wednesday, July 1, Eucharists	38
Sunday, July 5, Eucharists & Vespers	194
Wednesday, July 8, Eucharist	16
Sunday, July 12, Eucharists & Vespers	208
Wednesday, July 15, Eucharist	18
Sunday, July 19, Eucharists & Vespers	254
Wednesday, July 22, Eucharist	25
Sunday, July 26 Eucharists & Vespers	205
Wednesday, July 29, Eucharist	25