

"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

February 2014 **Blessed Are**

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

Dawn Yadao, Secretary

Mary Ann Lentz
Treasurer

Website:
www.stelizabeth720.org

Email:
stelizabethhawaii@gmail.com

by The Rev. David J. Gierlach

This past Tuesday was yet another State of the Union address by our president.

And as I sat there listening to it, with this week's three readings all rolling around in my brain, I began to fantasize.

I began to fantasize that the president started his state of the union speech by reminding the American public that we are, historically and culturally, rooted in the Judeo-Christian traditions and faiths.

He reminds those listening in to his speech that we are a nation of church-goers, a nation of believers in God — that our trust in God is so profound we even imprint it on our coins and dollar bills!

And therefore, because we take faith in God so seriously, he has determined that the United States shall, starting this very day, unilaterally disarm, dissolve the military, bringing all troops home from overseas, the money will be redirected to building schools and roads and he will see to it that we give 10% of our Gross Domestic Product to the poor of the world, while at the same time opening our borders for any who wish to enter.

And my daydreams weren't over quite yet.

I began wondering once again what the world might look like today if our born again President Bush had gotten up on that pile of rocks at ground zero on September 12 and announced that we, as a nation, forgive those who caused this disaster — he tells the world that we shall not retaliate — we shall endure the suffering without returning suffering in

exchange....

Now, what do you think will happen to a president who says and does such things, whether he be Barack Obama or George Bush, democrat or republican?

Will they be hailed as faith-filled leaders and heroes or will they be immediately impeached, perhaps even hauled away to the pupule house?

What do you think?

Our faith invites us to enter a kingdom, the kingdom of God, a kingdom that is even now invading this world, a kingdom most folks will tell you, doesn't exist.

But it does exist; and it's so very different from the world we try to create.

It's a world, as one fellow puts it, where "down is the new up!"

Did you hear of the discussion between the Archbishop of Canterbury and an actor, when the Archbishop asked:

"Why do you actors seem to make such impressions on your audiences while we preachers leave our congregations cold?"

To which the actor replied:

"Well your Eminence, actors speak of things imaginary as if they were real, while you preachers speak of things real as if they were imaginary."

In some ways, it's like one of our immigrant families who ended up sleeping in the park in a tent last week because they didn't understand that their landlord was willing to let them stay in their apartment even though they owe some \$30,000 in back



Rector's Message, continued

rent.

They thought, they mis-thought, they misunderstood the true nature of their situation, and relying on their best thinking, left the warmth of the home for a tent and a tree in the park, because they could not fathom that someone owed so much might still extend hospitality and kindness even in the face of such debt.

When I think of our militarized, fragmented, divided and contentious world, I wonder if we are all something like that family: running from the sure embrace of God, closing our eyes to God's kingdom, because we just can't bring ourselves to believe it's true.

Jesus, God in the flesh, comes to us and lives the life he calls us to live.

He doesn't engage in violence.

He trusts absolutely in the faithfulness of God.

He neither fights nor flees, but rather, he endures; he dies; and on the third day is raised again, the first born of the dead: the promise of what awaits us all if only we will tag along....

And yet, it is so hard.....

The beatitudes define this problem.

No other teaching by Jesus is more sentimentalized, crocheted into pillows, sugar coated and given lip service than the sermon on the mount.

And yet, these words are the very spine of the gospel.

People often wonder, what is Christianity all about?

What does Christian living look like?

The answer is right here.

It looks like the beatitudes, it looks like the sermon on the mount.

The beatitudes are the upside down blessings we heard today.

The sermon on the mount extends these blessings with admonitions that are equally strange, equally true.

And so it is in the sermon on the mount where Jesus oddly tells us we need to love our enemies, to do good to those who harm us, to give the shirt too when the coat is taken.

"In a word", Jesus says, "Grow up. You are Kingdom subjects. Now live like it. Live out your God-created identity. Live generously and graciously toward others, the way God lives towards you." Mt 5:48 (*The Message* Tr.)

The sermon on the mount is the constitution of the Christian faith.

It is the central principal around which we, the church, exist.

It insists upon God's preference for the poor, the wounded, the lost and the outcast.

This insistence is a devastating departure from the way our Monday through Saturday society organizes itself.

Throughout the world today, we have a whole different set of beatitudes.

Blessed are the shrewd, they shall succeed.

Blessed are the strong, they shall rule.

Blessed are those who help themselves, for God will help them too.

Blessed are those with money, they shall not burden others.

Blessed are the famous, they are admired by all.

Blessed are you when people speak well of you and praise you, you will never embarrass your family or friends.

Our way praises life on our terms; life we pretend to control.

Jesus praises life on God's terms; a life God controls.

Poverty, meekness and mourning bring us face to face with Reality – with a capital "R."

The Reality that we are all in this life together, that none of us gets out of this life alive, and that all we have during this life is not deserved or something to which I am entitled, but is a free gift from the God who creates all there is.

So much of our daily discourse is about holding onto what's "mine" or looking out for my inner circle.

God, in Jesus, does not go there.

God, in Jesus, in fact, goes in the opposite direction.

Our way separates us from one another.

God's way unites us.

The beatitudes tell the truth about our condition, that "across all barriers of land and language, wealth and poverty, knowledge and ignorance, we are one, created from the same dust, subject to the same laws, destined for the same end." H. Nouwen, *With Open Hands*, 86.

The constant challenge we all of us face,

Rector's Message, continued

every day, is shall we admire Jesus, or shall we follow Him?

If we admire him, we can hold tight to the world's beatitudes, while tipping our hat to the lovely but hopelessly unreasonable beatitudes of Jesus.

Yet, in abandoning the radical call of Jesus to follow him, we abandon Jesus as well.

Just as a nation's constitution requires the consent and cooperation of the governed, so the beatitudes can only be lived out in a community that will take the leap of faith.

A leap of faith rooted in the conviction that "meekness is the way of God, that righteousness and peace will prevail, and that God's future will be a time of mercy, not cruelty." 8 *New Inter Bible*, 181.

The beatitudes of Jesus are not a list of tasks or requirements.

They instead describe how a people, gathered around Jesus, seek to live.

My daughter asked the other day if, when people die, can they choose to go to heaven.

I told her I thought everyone is welcome in heaven, but many may choose not to go, since in heaven, the beatitudes of Jesus are lived out, not the beatitudes of America.

Paul picks up on this new creation in his letter today to the people at Corinth.

Corinth was a town created for and settled by freed slaves.

By the time Paul gets there, it is a town becoming, as we say today, gentrified.

Lots of new start up businesses, lots of up and coming folks, and a divide that grows ever greater between those with and those without.

So Paul today reminds these many upper class and middle class folk of God's choice to reveal himself in weakness, in need, in poverty.

And more, he uproots the blossoming weed of trust in self and plants, in no uncertain terms, the foolishness of the cross.

"Where is your God?"

"He is there, hanging from the tree."

And he does more.

Paul sees the "Body of Christ" as something alive in this world.

He sees it as something like an energy field created by participating in the Holy Spirit of Christ.

Or as St. Augustine puts it,

"The church consists in the state of communion of the whole world."

Those who live in communion and love, made possible by God, are the church, wherever they are.

They are the yeast, the salt, the light, that changes the world.

For Paul, you don't live in the world and go to church.

For Paul, you live in the Church and go to the world.

Take off your head, shake it out a few times and put it back on; because that's not the way any of us are trained to think.

Church, for Paul, is not something you attend.

Church is something you are — or not!

It is more an organism than an organization.

You don't join it as much as you breathe it.

This is who you are.

This is who we are.

So blessed are you poor, you meek, you who mourn, you who make peace.

Your vulnerability creates an open hand, and only an open hand can receive the gifts of God.

+amen

Dream Journaling Workshop with Fran Kramer



Wednesdays thru Mar. 5 from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m., Shim Hall. Share and explore dreams recorded during the week. We will be referencing Rev. Bob Haden's *Unopened Letters from God* and the Bible to study dreams through a Christian perspective. Contact: Fran Kramer Phone: 457-9753 or email at coach@healingdreamgarden.com. \$5 donation per session.

Weekly Prayer Group for Women

Meets every Thursday at 6:30 pm in Bridal Room. Members select the prayers and intentions. In English and Chuukese.

Sunday School News



Martin Luther King Jr. Parade

On January 20th, over 50 folks from St. E's and the Pacific Island Ministry, wearing those bright green shirts that can be seen from outer space, made the trek from Magic Island down the middle of Waikiki and straight to Kapiolani Park.

With some singing and some dancing and an all around good time as we joined with folks of all sizes and flavors in remembering and living out the dream of one of America's greatest heroes!



Next year, let's do it again!



Thank you to all who so generously dropped your loose change into the jars for the people in ICODEI. All counted and sent: \$700 with \$300 to the young women doing the poultry farm, and \$200 each to the Watermelon folks and bee folks!

Have you noticed the garden at St. Elizabeth's Church? Mrs. Fan and Jamie Chock have been busy tending to the Children's Garden, along with other busy gardeners during the week. The flowers planted by Mrs. Lam are beginning to bloom and the vegetables planted by the other gardeners are enjoyed by many! The beauty of God and the reaps of nutritional vegetables... Kale, beets, bananas, basil... what can you find on the sharing table on a Sunday morning! Thank you to all the gardeners!



Junior Acolytes continue to serve the church and assist in the Sunday Services. They will meet on Saturday, February 15th at 8:30 am with Preston Lentz in the church and bake communion bread with Mary Ann Lentz in Esther's kitchen. Thanks to all!

The Sunday School and the Sunday School Youth alternately continue to sing the offertory hymn each 2nd Sunday of the month. In February and April the Sunday School, in March and May the Youth. Fane and the traveling Sunday School Youth Singers and Strummers travel on the 3rd and 4th Sundays of each month, sharing their music with other Episcopal churches and meeting new friends.

On the wish list - top of our prayer list... A piano tuner and fixer! Music class was not fun when the piano could 'play' only 4 notes in the low octave!

Welcome to the Youth Column

by *Viliani Lino*

2014 kicked off with a bang! We welcomed the youth representative to the vestry, **Mrs. Melanie Langi** from Tongan Church Group. Mrs. Langi (Mel) as we call her, replaced me after serving 2 years. I am very thankful for that opportunity. From my perspective that hopefully will bring all youth to work together under the roof of St. Elizabeth.



Here's what's happening:

E.Y.E 14: Episcopal Youth Event (National Level) this summer. EYE14 is being held in partnership with the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania a 3 Days of Urban Mission is offered for all EYE14 participants. It is an event designed to give delegates an opportunity to engage mission in an urban environment. Participants should expect to engage in hands-on labor, which might include everything from painting and hauling debris to childcare and preparing meals. EYE14 is geared for the youth particularly in grade 9-12 during the 2013-2014 academic year and their adult leaders. St. Elizabeth's representatives are **Simo Singeuo, Saimon Singeuo, Joshua Lino, Mounika Langi** and **Nunia Ikavuka** and myself. I will be one of the adult leaders accompany these 24 youth representing the Episcopal Diocese of Hawaii and St. Elizabeth Episcopal Church. Fundraisers are going on every Saturday: Car Wash, recycling and garage sale. Please, do remember us in your prayers.

Our youth participated in two events on Sunday Jan. 5th: **Diocesan Oahu Youth Event** at Mililani Lutheran Church and **Fr. Greg's Installation** as St. Mary's Episcopal new rector.

At St. Mary's Episcopal Church for the installation of Fr. Greg, our gift was a song, and it inspired and motivated the spirit of celebration in this special occasion. Later we went to Mililani for the Diocesan Youth Event of Oahu held at Christ Lutheran Church. It was focused on how you tell your story.

Jan 20th: **Martin Luther King Junior Day**

The Pacific Islander Ministry took 56 people including folks from Tonga, Micronesia, **Fr. David, Preston Lentz, Maryann Lentz, Fran Kramer** and **Ann Hansen** joined the MLKJ Parade. Our neon green T-Shirt groups really stood out among the different colors of T-Shirts! We showed off our banner on the streets of Honolulu: "TRAIN TO GROW TALL." Someone on the sidewalk called out, "Pacific Islanders, How tall do you expect to grow?" One of our youth said, "Taller than the Coconut Tree." That's our vision. We had fun and look forward for next year.

Reminder: Our car wash is on again this Saturday and we are celebrating Chinese New Year on Sunday Feb 9. Don't forget to bring your car to wash, cans and bottles to recycle and anything you don't need at home anymore for the garage sale at the end of February.

Annual Meeting Highlights

On Sunday, January 26th, 2014 we recognized **Arleen Young**, outgoing Senior Warden, for her many years of service, and thanked outgoing Vestry members: **David Kaloi, Lowell Ing** and **Viliani Lino**. We welcomed new Vestry Members: **Mary Ann Lentz, Dawn Yadao** and Youth Representative, **Melanie Langi**, and new Senior Warden, **Caren Esaki**.

Elected as Diocesan Convention delegates are: **Douglas Ing, Jerek Jong, Fran Kramer, Preston Lentz, and Arleen Young** with alternates **Viliani Lino and Dawn Yadao**.

Elected as ECW Convention Delegates were: **Jamie Choc, Faith Chock, Gretchen Jong and Nora Kurosu**.

Senior Cross honorees were **Liesl Eng** and **Sarah Bush** and the Junior Cross went to **Leyna Esaki**.

Thank you all for your willingness to do the Lord's work at St. Elizabeth's!



Senior and Junior Cross awardees with Fr. David.

Acolyte Project Day: February 15

Calling All Youth! The next Acolyte Project Day will be Saturday, February 15 starting at 9 am. We'll begin by baking communion bread plus lots of other fun stuff to help the church.



"Well, I haven't actually *died* to sin, but I did feel kind of faint once."

Swimming

once
i went a swimmin'
where
there were no
wimmen
in the deep blue sea
seein'
no one there
i hung my
underwear
upon a
willow tree
dove into the water
just
like pharaoh's daughter
dove into
the nile
someone saw me
there
and stole
my underwear
and left me
with
a
smile.



Contribution Statements

Contribution statements for the year 2013 are available for pickup on the table in the back of the church. Please help your church save the cost of postage by picking up your statement.

Please notify the office of any errors and a corrected statement will be issued.

A Note To Our Readers

To you dear ones who read this newsletter but can't worship with us, please keep in mind an occasional gift to **St. Elizabeth's PASTORAL FUND**. Every Tuesday at 8 am sharp, there are maybe 30 folks in desperate need of a few bucks to keep the lights on or the roof over head or some food on the table. A little bit of moolah goes a long way in making a HUGE difference in the lives of so many.

And as the wise man once said: **"Money is like manure —it's not worth a thing unless it's spread around...."**
Many thanks and blessings! —Fr. David



-joe gierlach



Philadelphia, here we come!

Photo.com

Our Yutes (you may know them as “youths”) are gearing up for a once in a life time trip to Philadelphia; yes, the City of Brotherly Love, this summer to take part in a gathering of young folks from throughout the Episcopal Church in the USA. To get to Philadelphia, since they don’t want to swim and then walk (ha! kids these days! why in MY DAY.....); sooooo, they are holding EVERY SATURDAY FROM NOW TILL KINGDOM COME, Fundraisers here at the church; like CAR AND/or DONKEY WASHES, Spam Musubi sales, kissing booths, and just about anything they can think of (mostly legal) to raise the bucks needed to make this trek. So stop on by each and every Saturday from 8 am - 2 pm — and see what they’re up to!!



Welcome to the Lord’s Family

On January 12th we welcomed the following persons through the Sacrament of Baptism: **Ashenr Weong, Catherine and Elizabeth Chan.** Ashenr is the son of **Aurona Sarapin and Moriento Weong.** Catherine and Elizabeth are twin daughters of **Allen and Lisa-Anne Mitsuka Chan.** Their grandparents at **Leslie and Cheryl Mitsuka,** godparents **Evonne and Allison Mitsuka.**

Heavenly Father, we thank you that by water and the Holy Spirit you have bestowed upon these your servants the forgiveness of sin, and have raised them to the new life of grace. Sustain them, O Lord, in your Holy Spirit. Give them an inquiring and discerning heart, the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love you, and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works. Amen.



Attendance

Wednesday, January 1	24
Sunday, January 5	208
Wednesday, January 8	14
Sunday, January 12	162
Wednesday, January 15	20
Sunday, January 19	180
Wednesday, January 22	13
Sunday, January 26	189
Wednesday, January 29	16



Happy Birthday

God’s blessings to those with February birthdays!

Elsie Okubo	2/1
Myra Okimoto	2/1
Zachary Okimoto	2/2
Andrea Sagucio	2/4
Inasia Thomas	2/7
Ida Teiti	2/8
Shiloh Ramelb	2/8
Alicia Ho Nakata	2/11
Doris Lam	2/11
David Kaloi	2/12
Beatriz Timonio	2/15
Elyson Badua	2/16
Edward Fitzpatrick	2/17
Betty Wong	2/17
Harlan Arakawa	2/17
Sue Jean Chun	2/21
Faye Tsukamoto	2/24
Tulenkun Tulenkun Jr.	2/25
Kazner Alexander	2/26
Herold Unarce	2/26
Ashton Ballesteros	2/26
Ethan Anderson	2/27
Lilia Timonio	2/28



© 1999 Doug Hill. More at LeadershipJournal.net/Caricatures

Welcome Josie Howard!



Josie Howard, a Chuukese woman about to receive her Master's in Social Work, has joined our staff on a half-time basis to deepen our work with and among the Chuukese community. Josie's presence will also free up our dear **Fane Lino** to get more into the wider diocese, to plant in other parishes some of the seeds that are blossoming here at St. Elizabeth's, like, say, an after school tutoring program maybe at St. Mary's or how about in-home companion training to be held at St. Tim's or maybe some ukulele lessons at Good Sam? Fane's out there, ready to listen and learn, ready to teach and be taught!

Wednesday Fried Rice Breakfast

The Wednesday at St. Peter's Episcopal Church Fried Rice Breakfast continues to be a blast and YOU are MOST WELCOME to stop on by ANY WEDNESDAY that school is happening and join in the fun! With volunteers from St. Elizabeth's and St. Peter's, we have rock 'em sock 'em fun activities with the young men and women of Central Middle School. Why just last week the place was booming with the beat of drums and tambourines and even a bugle or two!! IT'S A GREAT MINISTRY THAT TOUCHES SOME OF OUR MOST VULNERABLE youngsters at perhaps the most vulnerable time in their lives.....so come on by, the coffee is hot (not good, but hot) and the folks will greet you with a smile! Any time from 6:00 till 7:45, in the a.m.



Savior

Wounds open
eyes
blackened

the savior waits
soon the nails
the crown of thorns
death so grisly
they
had
to
flee
blessed savior
forgive us our
sin
open our eyes
to the God who gives
everything
to
bring us
home.