

*"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 2018**

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## **From Nobody to Somebody to Everybody**

*The Rev. David J. Gierlach*

Today's gospel story has a lot to say about what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

It starts out with nobodies who become somebodies, who, with the grace of God, step into the shoes of everybody.

Allow me to explain.

Jesus first calls Peter and John, Andrew and James. They are, in the eyes of the world, and in their own eyes, nobodies.

They still live at home!

Their job?

It's the family fishing business!

Their future?

Well, it looks exactly like their past.

Like I said, nobodies.

Jesus walks by and seems to provide, if not a solution, then at least a diversion from the life they seem destined to live.

So off they go, leaving two dear old dads to fend for themselves in the fishing business, as two sets of brothers set off to see what might be up with this strange fellow from Nazareth.

In Mark's gospel, the one we shall be reading from all year, it doesn't take long for amazing things to happen.

Suddenly, this quiet stranger from Nazareth is casting out demons and healing people who are sick, and he's attracting quite a crowd.

Mark tells us that the whole city comes out to see him.

And I ask you, what effect will that have on these nobodies named Peter and Andrew, James and John?

How do you expect them to react when they find themselves as the road crew for the newest rockstar in town?

How does anyone cope with going from being a nobody to being a somebody?

I'll tell you!

They get swelled heads and big ideas, that's what happens!

They start thinking about opening a ersion of Disney World, only maybe call it Healing World, with Jesus front and center!

In my law practice days, I represented some guys in their 20's who hit it big during the dot com bubble in the mid 1990's.

They made millions on a single stock.

Before they found this pot of gold, one fellow was a prison guard, and the others were just working stiffs.

So how did they react to their sudden transformation from nobodies to somebodies in a country that worships money?

Well, they began to put on airs, they talked as if every word they uttered should be preserved for all time, they spoke with high falootin' accents, and they treated lesser mortals with contempt.

Until, that is, the stock collapsed, and their millions turned to zeros, and they were back where they started; a painful journey from nobody to somebody — back to nobody.

I tell you that story because today, these friends of Jesus are finding themselves in a similar place.

From lowly fishermen, they are now the pals of a guy who's doing miracles; and word about these fantastic goings-on is spreading like wildfire.

And what happens?

Jesus leaves.

He goes to the deserted places to pray — in the dark.

When Mark talks about deserted places he means places of great struggle — and when it's dark in those places — the struggle is especially difficult.



# Rector's Message, continued

The rockstar has gone away and his friends panic.

They “hunt” for him, which in the original Greek, really means that they’re furious with him.

They’ve “hunted” for him because the rockstar left town without warning and the people who are expecting a show are now standing around muttering with disappointment.

These friends of Jesus want him back on stage.

They want the show to continue.

They’ve enjoyed their time in the limelight.

Once you become a somebody, it’s really hard to go back to being a nobody.

In these early days of following Jesus, these new followers don’t have a clue about what’s coming - they don’t have a clue about where the road to discipleship leads.

Which is why, as they “hunt” for him, Mark calls Peter and John and Andrew and James not disciples, but the “companions” of Jesus.

Because companions are people who are along for the ride, while disciples are students trying to learn something new.

In these early days with Jesus, these first followers are merely companions, and that companionship continues for a good part of Jesus’ public ministry.

It won’t be long before we hear two of them arguing about who is the greatest and about Peter telling Jesus that he’s got no business talking about winding up on the cross.

Yes, there are many lessons to be learned on this journey of making disciples out of mere companions.

And I have to say, thank God these first followers struggle like this; because their struggle gives us room to struggle too, as we try to wrap our heads around the upside down nature of God, one who finds wisdom in what we call lunacy, one who is strong in what to us looks like abject weakness.

So here stands Jesus, confronted by his disappointed handlers as they urge him to go back to town and start the show again.

Jesus refuses to go back to the circus.

“We’re off to other places,” he says, “the kingdom is not a side show and I’m not here to make every sick person well.

I’m here to preach the kingdom, a place where life is not about nobodies becoming somebodies, but a life where everybody can come to know their true identity, their true destiny.”

And this is where we pick up with Paul’s letter today.

Because Paul has discovered that true discipleship means moving from being a nobody to a somebody to indeed becoming — everybody.

Is your head hurting yet?

But that’s exactly what he’s saying today.

That even though he was once a nobody, he has become a somebody

because he is the last apostle — knocked on his

backside by Jesus.

But Paul recognizes that being a somebody is not where its at.

Where its at is slowly learning the painful, ego-shattering, selfsurrendering task of becoming all things to all people.

Meaning: waking up each day with a ommitment to put myself in the shoes of every person I meet; to try my best to see the world through their eyes, and thus move out of my own way, taking off my own blinders.

Meaning: one who is used to being served learns how to serve, and one who is used to being in charge learns how to take orders, and one who is used to being put down finds herself raised up and one who is used to hatred finds out what it’s like to be loved.

“For though I am free with respect to all, I have made myself a slave to all, so that I might win more of them,” Paul says to us today.

“To the Jews I become a Jew, in order to win Jews.

To those under the law, I bow to the law, to win those under the law.

To those outside the law, I stand outside the law, to win those outside the law.

To the weak, I am weak, in order to win the weak.

I have become all things to all people, that I might, by all means, save some.”

We live in times that adore fame and money and power.

It’s no small irony that today is the high holy day of our secular nation: Super Sunday, where hype and hyperbole rule the day, as grown men throw themselves at each other and the merchants of Madison Avenue use every opportunity to sell us the latest must-have doohickey.

Jesus invites us into another place.

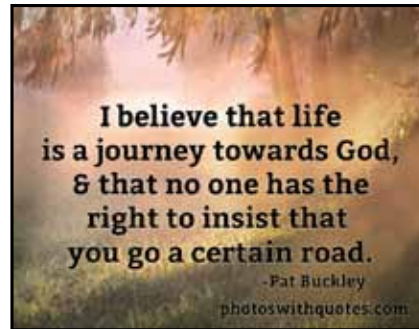
He invites us into a way of life that if practiced, slowly allows each and every one of us to catch a glimpse of the face of God in every single human being.

That by letting go of our own needs and desires, our own need to be somebody, we can enter into the great mystery that allows us, at long last, to see the truth: that we belong to everybody.

+amen



my whole life  
 church was never about God  
 i didn't go because  
 id be overwhelmed with the power  
 of jesus christ  
 i wouldn't fall on the ground crying  
 that's some evangelical weirdness  
 i went because my dad was there  
 and it meant something to him  
 i went because all the aunties and uncles  
 knew my name  
 these are still the reasons why i go  
 i go bc it's a community  
 it's a place where despite  
 the old people call me the wrong name  
 i know they love and care  
 they ask me what grade i'm in  
 and what i'm doing for college  
 they tell me how pretty i am  
 and how tall i've gotten  
 even though i haven't grown in years  
 but i believe in god  
 not because it was how i was raised  
 but because i had no other choice  
 i either had to put my heart  
 in invisible hands  
 or give up trying to live  
 i had to let myself fall  
 and for the first time something  
 caught me  
 whether or not my prayers were answered  
 is not the basis for my faith  
 it's the strength those  
 prayers gave me  
 it's the strength the prayers gave me  
 to move on  
 to accept  
 to stop crying  
 i lay in bed  
 with my fingers locked together  
 i close my eyes  
 and i ask for strength  
 and i ask for protection  
 i spent months asking  
 to heal  
 grief was tattooed on the inside of my lip  
 and every prayer  
 began to peel it away  
 i found god because i had to  
 because i needed a place  
 to put my pain and his hands  
 are the only ones big enough  
 to hold it  
 i don't need to see god  
 i don't even need to feel him  
 i just need to have faith in something else  
 i need to know that i can pull  
 my strength from somewhere else  
 i need to know  
 that i'm not carrying all this weight  
 by myself  
 -TTH



faith

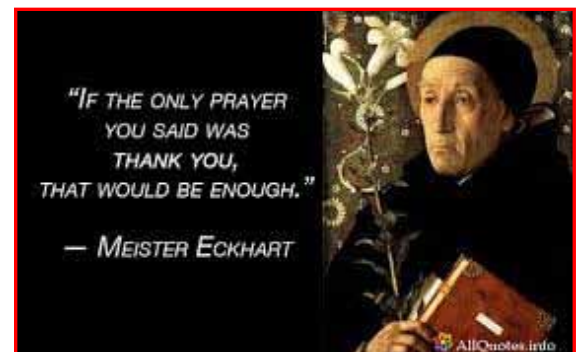
hope

love

## Happy Birthday

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

Elsie Okubo	02/01
Myra Okimoto	
Zachary Okimoto	02/02
Andrea Sagucio	02/04
Inasia Thomas	02/07
Shiloh Ramelb	02/08
Alicia Ho Nakata	02/11
Doris Lam	
David Kaloi	02/12
Beatriz Timonio	02/15
Elyson Badua	02/16
Edward A. Fitzpatrick	02/17
Betty Wong	
Harlan Arakawa	
Sue Jean Chun	02/21
Faye Tsukamoto	02/24
Tulenkun Jr. Tulenkun	02/25
Kazner Alexander	02/26
Herold Unarce	
Ashton Ballesteros	
Ethan Anderson	02/27
Lilia Timonio	02/28



# A Message from the Youth Coordinator

By Melanie Langi

Aloha All,

February already? Geez time flies...fast! I hope your beginning of the year started off on a good foot forward. And now that the beginning of the year jitters are gone, lets get down to business.

Late Night Basketball will start back up soon, so we would like to call out all those who are interested in joining and anyone who would like to help coach. The older youth who have already played are encouraged to help coach and recruit the younger and incoming youth. See me if you have questions. More details will follow

Hui Pu Summer Camp at Camp Mokuleia is back! Children and youth ages 9-18 are welcome to attend. **Camp Dates are June 24th- June 29th 2018.** Early registration begins February 1- April 30, 2018. **Last day to register is May 31, 2018.** If you are interested in sending your child please see me or Seini Lino for more information.

Friday night bible study is on-going. Parents of YOUTH if your youth has nothing to do on a Friday night send them on down to Shim Hall for an evening of fellowship with other youth from the area. If transportation is an obstacle let me know, we can work something out. Parents are always encourage to help in anyway possible. Looking forward to seeing new faces in the upcoming months.

As you all know February is the month of LOVE, so with this being said I would like to wish all of you a very **Happy Valentines Day!** And can someone whisper to the Jr. Warden that his wife would love a trip to Vegas for Valentines or a homemade dinner made by him will do just fine.

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be the glory in the Church by Christ to all generations, forever and ever.

Ephesians 3:20-21

Yours truly,  
Melanie Langi

## January Attendance

Monday, January 1,.....	59
Sunday, January 7,.....	245
Wednesday, January 10,.....	17
Sunday, January 14,.....	189
Wednesday, January 17,.....	16
Sunday, January 21,.....	191
Wednesday, January 24,.....	11
Sunday, January 28,.....	197
Wednesday, January 31,.....	16

### DO YOU WANT TO FAST THIS LENT?

*In the words of Pope Francis*

- Fast from hurting words and say kind words.
- Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.
- Fast from anger and be filled with patience.
- Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.
- Fast from worries and have trust in God.
- Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.
- Fast from pressures and be prayerful.
- Fast from bitterness and fill your hearts with joy.
- Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.
- Fast from grudges and be reconciled.
- Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.

praisefitness.com

The Saturday morning kitchen crew is up to its usual antics! This month the entire **Courie family** pitched in with mom on the griddle and everyone else slicing and dicing everything in sight. Then along came a gaggle of girls from **the Priory -- National Honor Students** -- bringing SORELY needed brains to the operation! Every week we serve anywhere from 60-100 folks who very much appreciate a hot meal cooked with love and care. Sometimes it gets exciting, like when we forgot to see if the gas burners were OFF (they weren't) before lighting up the stove... all good anyway, just that a few of us won't be needing a haircut anytime soon...and who needs eyebrows anyway???????? And take a looksee at the kitchen floor. A super old pipe collapsed, so that when we used the sink we had a swimming pool in the kitchen. Thanks to the kindness of the **Ing brothers** and the law offices of **Ian Mattoch**, it got dug up and replaced with a shiny new pipe! **Thank you!!!!!!**





This year marked the 125th anniversary of the overthrow of the last Queen of Hawaii. Queen Lili'uokalani embodied the Hawaiian values of Pono, Malama and Aloha, and the Christian values of surrendering rather than fighting, loving rather than hating. A victim of an illegal overthrow, she sought to protect her people from needless bloodshed. She is one of our saints, and a role model to all. The resurgence of the Hawaiian culture is a testament to her enduring legacy in these islands, and a sign of hope that a people once so poorly treated shall one day regain their rights not only to speak their language and dance their dances, but to be self governing too.



*pono ... aloha ... malama ...*



Please welcome our Catholic Workers, David Catron and Barbara Bennett. They shall be operating their ministry out of our newly refurbished rectory. Before coming to Hawaii, this pair ran a Catholic Worker house out of an abandoned train station in Rio. They plan to use the next couple three months to get to know the community and discern what kind of ministry might be best suited here. They are poor, they are beggars, they are members of the Third Order of St Francis....WELCOME!

The **Housing Now!** coalition is back in action as the new legislative session opens. Housing, affordable housing that is, seems to be at the top of everyone's priority list. Let's keep the pressure on our representatives as efforts are made to find solutions not only to the houseless epidemic, but also to creating a housing market that regular folks can jump into. Meetings will be at St E's regularly with times and dates coming soon!

# Sunday School News

By Sue Yap

The Sunday School children have music with **Miss Ajaon** every 4th Sunday of the month. This year we have moved the Sunday School children to sing the Offertory Hymn on the First Sunday of each month. Learning new songs and adding movement ties in with our lessons and music is fun!!! Hum along if you recognize the music!!! Photos of their first music lesson this year - children singing and moving to - 'Sing High, Sing Low'!

Shrove Tuesday has been celebrated at St. Elizabeth's for many years. The former Sunday School coordinator, **Mrs. Pat Ramos** started the celebration tradition many moons ago and we continue the fellowship today!!! Shrove Tuesday comes from the old English custom of using up all the fattening ingredients in the house before Lent, so that people were ready to fast during Lent. The fattening ingredients that most people had in their houses in those days were eggs and milk. A very simple recipe to use up these ingredients was to combine them with some flour and make pancakes! And at St. Elizabeth's we also use up the bread and eggs and make 'French' toast with all kinds of delicious 'fattening'foods to go with the supper!!!!

Shrove Tuesday is the day before Lent starts on Ash Wednesday. The name Shrove comes from the old middle English word 'Shriven' meaning to go to confession to say sorry for the wrong things you've done. Lent always starts on a Wednesday, so people went to confessions on the day before. This became known as Shriven Tuesday and then Shrove Tuesday.

We invite everyone to join us on Shrove Tuesday for an short evening prayer and pancake supper, as we begin the Lenten Season!

With Lent, the children will participate in the opening readings of the Sunday service and extinguish the candles on the Lenten wreath! **First Sunday in Lent will be on February 18th!**

Thank you for your continued support with our Sunday school program.



**Who'll be flippin' the pancakes this year???The Sunday School invites all of YOU to our annual Shrove Tuesday, Pancake Supper!**

**Shrove Tuesday, February 13th!  
6:00 pm Evening Prayer**

**Pancake Supper to follow in Shim Hall**



The season of Lent is upon us.

As we prepare ourselves for this season of reflection, this season of return to the roots of our faith, let's start with a reminder from one of the saints: "No act of virtue can be great if it is not followed by advantage for others. So, no matter how much time you spend fasting, no matter how much you sleep on a hard floor and eat ashes and sigh continually, if you do no good to others, you do nothing great." — John Chrysostom.

This is a season not only to give up something as a form of spiritual discipline, but also a season to **take up something new**. So, if you haven't pitched in at the **Saturday morning breakfast** for awhile, maybe Lent is a time to drop by and lend a hand.

Or **send a well wishing card** to one or ten of our elderly who rarely get out and who usually only have bills and junk mail greeting them when the mail is delivered.

Or stop by the **Chinese Palolo Home** and give a howyadoin' to some of the elders who wile away the day, often in great loneliness.

Lent really is a time to **renew our efforts** to become one people, one community, one family, all brothers and sisters of a living and loving God, especially in these times of so much division...let's use this Lent to welcome and affirm and love...for then we shall truly **do something great!**



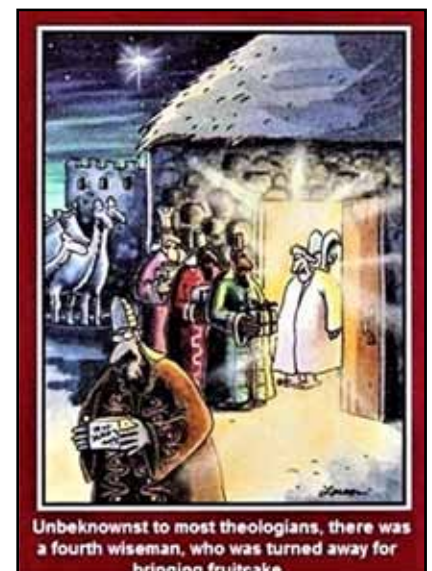
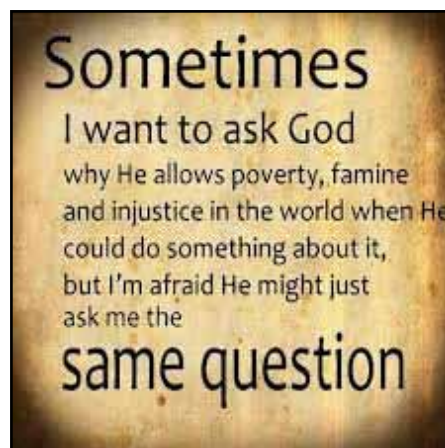
A big **Mahalo!!!** to our steadfast volunteers who stuff the newsletter each month!! Many hands make light work!



Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Psalm 51:10



The new roof is all pau and it's guaranteed not to leak for 20 years! On top of it soon is PV, which will take the church off of the HECO grid and connect us directly to the sun! We are leasing the system at no cost to us, we will instead pay the lease guys for our juice, at a rate guaranteed to be at least 20% under HECO rates.



Unbeknownst to most theologians, there was a fourth wiseman, who was turned away for bringing fruitcake.