

"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

September 2013 **Living Together**

The Right Reverend
Robert L. Fitzpatrick
V Bishop of Hawaii

The Reverend
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Rector

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Priest Associate

The Reverend Dr.
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The Rev. David J. Gierlach, Rector

A young rabbi found a serious problem in his new congregation.

During the Friday service, half the congregation stood for the prayers and half remained seated, and each side shouted at the other, insisting that theirs was the true tradition.

Nothing the rabbi said or did solved the impasse.

Finally, in desperation, the young rabbi sought out the synagogue's 99-year-old founder.

He met the old rabbi in the nursing home and poured out his troubles.

"So tell me," he pleaded, "was it the tradition for the congregation to stand during the prayers?"

"No," answered the old rabbi."

Ah," responded the younger man, "then it was the tradition to sit during the prayers?"

"No," answered the old rabbi.

"Well," the young rabbi responded, "what we have is complete chaos! Half the people stand and shout, and the other half sit and scream."

"Ah," said the old man, "that was the tradition."

Last week, one of our members gave me a St. Elizabeth's parish newsletter from February 1, 1956.

Fr. Shim, my role model, was the Rector.

The newsletter announced the birth of Dorothy Jung's third child, Randall and Bill Eng's appointment to the vestry.

There was also this announcement:

"Our newest parish organization is the Parish Council made up of the vestry and the heads of all organizations within the Parish. The function of the Parish Council is to coordinate the activities of the Parish so that conflicts may be eliminated."

And, I must say, I chuckled to myself, because clearly our church, like every other church for 2000 years, had conflicts in 1956 and of course we have conflicts in 2013.

And today's Gospel tells us: don't despair!

Whenever well meaning people gather together on a journey of great importance, conflicts will arise.

We fail to communicate clearly or effectively.

I have certainly failed from time to time in that regard.

Some have a vision of who we are and what we should be that differs from the vision of others.

Sometimes, any one of us can be just out of it, or mad, or hurt.

And what today's lesson teaches is that all of that is part and parcel of any real community, perhaps especially any community that gathers together in the name of Jesus.

But the gospel doesn't leave it at that.

It gives concrete guidance on what to do.



Rector's Message, continued

First, by what it doesn't say.

It doesn't say ignore the conflict.

It doesn't say just hope it will go away.

Nor does it say that one should walk away.

Instead, it puts the onus on the person who feels offended, angry or hurt.

It's up to that person to take the first step, and behind closed doors, go to the one who may have caused the offense, anger or hurt, and talk story.

Truth be told, most times that will bring the healing desired; so long as the one who is approached will hear it from the other person's point of view; so long as the one who does the approaching is willing to forgive.

If that doesn't work, the tremendous value the gospel puts on keeping the community alive and growing and real is poured out.

The resources of the community are brought to bear and every effort is made to find real peace.

More members are involved NOT to up the ante, but to see if other heads can find a solution.

Sometimes that solution means agreeing to disagree.

But more often than not, all of the participants are called to a deeper, more profound sense of who Jesus is, and who he calls us to become.

This is no easy task today.

Today, if one gets mad at any organization or at people in the organization, especially churches, folks just leave.

That's the reason we have, and I'm not making this up, 6,272 Christian denominations in the United States alone!

(As of yesterday! Who knows what tomorrow will bring).

I once heard of a two stoplight town.

As you approach the town you see a sign out front of a church that reads, "The church of God".

On the next corner, at the first light, there is another church whose sign reads, "The true church of God".

At the next light, another church whose sign reads, "The one true church of God".

This is not the way of Jesus.

Just as he argues with his followers (calling Peter "Satan"; telling the two who want to be greatest that the greatest are those who serve; rejecting the crowd's efforts to crown him king), so Jesus

recognizes that we too will, from time to time, argue with one another.

And when that happens, the truth of who God is comes striding to the fore.

Ours is a God who goes out to 'the other', to the lost, to the different.

God goes out even to the enemy, and to you and to me.

This truth is woven throughout Matthew's gospel:

The angel tells Joseph to name the child "Emmanuel," because it means, "God is with us."

Jesus reminds us that our Father knows the life story of every sparrow.

It is God, like an anxious Mother, who searches out the lost sheep, the lost coin, who searches out you and I when we wander away.

God is always and everywhere the God who goes out to the other, to the lost, to the stranger.

God does this freely, overflowing with love, mending, right here and now, your wounds and mine. Jeff Krantz & Michael Hardin (paraphrase).

The hardest part is getting our minds around this God who forgives.

It's hard to accept that God is not about revenge or violence or retaliation.

Yet it is Jesus who explains time and again that violence, and grudges, and retaliation, and licking one's wounds is not something divine: it is human, and, left to fester, can even become satanic. Id. (Paraphrase).

It is Jesus who takes me by the arm and says that if I teach 'the little ones' that there is a limit to forgiveness, that if they don't behave -- they'll get theirs; well, better that I should put a cement block around my neck and jump into Kaneohe Bay. Id. (Paraphrase).

Because that's not the way God is.

A woman stopped by the church last

Rector's Message, continued

week and showed me a deep surgical cut in her tongue.

It was in the shape of a star and it looked painful.

She had a cancer removed.

She was crying because someone told her the cancer was God's punishment, because in her youth, she was a prostitute.

And all I could think of was the prostitute who anoints Jesus with fine oil; and the tax collecting traitors whom Jesus eats with and welcomes; and all the lost that he comes to find.

I think of my personal foibles and failures.

I think of the structural sin that I participate in just by being a citizen of the First World, when so many Third World brothers and sisters watch too many of their children die; who see hope as nothing more than a distant mirage.

And I come to see that we have each of us been forgiven much.

Today's gospel invites us to forgive generously, even in the most difficult of times; those times when conflict tries to tear us apart from one another.

As Saint Paul puts it to the Romans today: "Owe no one anything, except to love one another. . ."

So, unlike our newsletter of 1956, where the hope was to "eliminate conflict," today we can perhaps come to see that conflict will always be around; what counts is what we do with it.

Having begun with a story, perhaps I can leave you with one.

Francisco Cardinal was tortured by the Somoza government in the 1970's.

Brutally tortured.

After the revolution, he came face to face with the man who had done the worst of the torturing.

Cardinal approaches the man and shouts: "Now I shall take my revenge on you! Now -- it is my turn!"

The man trembles, expecting his life is over.

Cardinal comes straight to the man, face to face . . . and embraces him.

"I forgive you," he says.

"That is my revenge."

Maybe this is what Jesus means when he gives us the great power to bind and unbind.

It is the greatest gift we can give one another.

My AA friends call it the gift of a new day.

Wiping the slate clean for one another

And we can do it, because, where only two or three are gathered, Jesus himself is there, quieting the chords of conflict; and then gently, but firmly, weaving us together, weaving the ties that bind.

And that, my friends, is our tradition.

+amen

Give Aloha



give aloha

Foodland's Annual Community Matching Gifts Program

FOR ALL PLEDGING MEMBERS AND NON-PLEDGERS TOO!!!

It's time again for Foodland's annual ONE MONTH MATCHING FUND DRIVE in September. What does this mean, you ask? You can make your PLEDGE payment IN SEPTEMBER to Foodland (have your Ma'ika'i card and tell the cashier **CODE 78661**) and Foodland will match a portion of what you give and send the whole kit and kaboodle to St. E's!! There is a limit of \$249 per family for this campaign.

Hold on to your receipt, drop it in the collection basket with your name on it or give it to Fr. David and we'll be sure to add whatever you gave through Foodland to your quarterly giving report. Let's take advantage of an easy way to increase our pledge income!!

Summer Breakfast Program



I'd like to update the parish on our Wednesday Morning Breakfast project that took place from the middle of June through the end of July. For six weeks an intrepid group of parishioners met each Wednesday

at the kitchen between 6am-8:30am to prep, cook, and serve a hot breakfast to the children in our Palama neighborhood. As the summer progressed, our efficiency and humor increased as did the number of children. The first Wednesday, the cooks and servers outnumbered the eaters six to four. By the final Wednesday, the advantage had clearly swung to the young people by a 20-5 margin. And, we were all pleased that the final Wednesday group included six girls, and brave ones at that! Plans are being made for the 2014 version.

I'd like to thank all those involved over the course of the project: **Nora Kurosu, Ignacia Terno, Arleen Young, Helen*** (*Arleen's sister who drove over from Kailua while Arleen and Larry were on the Mainland) and **Larry Young** (egg scrambler supreme!), **Mary Ann Lentz, Fane Lino, Lillian Tyau, James Fitzpatrick, Lisa Solomine** (from the Mission Houses), and **Willis Yap** (Sr. Warden at St. Peter's). And, I cannot conclude without thanking **Viliami Lino**, our Rounder Upper Beyond Compare!

-Preston Lentz

P.S. We discovered that our young people will eat just about anything...as long as it's buried in fried rice and ketchup!



Aloha, Mother Jodene!

A number of priests have filled in at the pulpit during Father David's sabbatical: **The Rev. Brian Nurdung, The Rev. Franklin Chun, The Rev. Brian Grieves, Mother Imelda Padasdao, Retired Bishop Richard Chang, Bishop Bob Fitzpatrick** and lastly, **Mother Jodene Hawkins**, former Rector of St. Elizabeth's, preached during the Sundays of August. She and husband, Kit, are loving the retired life in Maui, and she is bubbling over with energy as usual.



Sunday School News

The great news is Sunday School opened its doors to the children on Sunday, August 25th! Returning teachers, **Jamie Chock, Lillian Tyau, Sarah Kleinschmidt, Seine Lino, Fane Lino, James Fitzpatrick** and **Sue Yap** were busier than bees with all the children buzzing in... and thanks to **Heather Manning** and **Mary Ann Lentz** who walked the new students into the classroom to fill out their registration forms.

The children were so bright-eyed happy and well-dressed... all ready to lift their voices in song as we said, 'A hui Hou' to **Mother Jodene**. Many of the children were in church during the summer... each Sunday asking, 'When is Sunday School going to start?', and many others got to chat with Mother Jodene when she and Kit visited the afternoon program one day!

On the first day of Sunday School, we registered 35 children. Many look like they grew 6 inches over the summer! Classroom B: preschool through grade 1 has 6 children, Classroom A: 2nd grade to 5th grade overflowed with 17 children and the Middle School through high school meet in Shim Hall and are up to 12 and growing!

This year we welcome **Preston Lentz** as an added resource to our educational program and we are coordinating the instructions for acolytes and crucifers and they will be playing a large role in the church service. Many of you may have noticed during the summer, the acolytes that have learned well... **Kama, Lee, Joshua Lino, Kevin, Nathan** and **Makai**... and we hope to interest other students to be a part of the service each Sunday. An acolyte needs to be 10-12 years old to go through training. Seine debuted as the crucifer this Sunday—crucifers need to be at least 16 years old. Thanks to all who are participating and training! Our church service is taking on a very 'youthful' look!

And we also congratulate **Kama Wong** who is our only Junior Layreader. As the school year goes on, we will add others to this list. The children practice reading the lessons in Sunday School and work with the Gospel reading to do their worksheets.

Music will continue to also be a part of the Sunday School this year. We are in need of a few more ukuleles, although we did get some musical instruments from a generous donor and **Ajaon Chen** will work her magic with the children on the 4th of Sunday each month in the classroom.

And so it was, during the announcements on the first Sunday of Sunday School, the children sang the song they learned last year... 'Jesus Loves Me' in thanksgiving to the congregation for

the support throughout the summer and generous donations of school supplies! The children in the after-school program and youth sang 'Pacifika' in thanksgiving to God and the congregation, with Viliami strumming the guitar, Fane, Inoleen and Kevin and TJ strumming the ukuleles! Mother Jodene with us, Kama and Glory represented the Sunday School and presented her with a Ragdoll2Love to take with her to Maui. The Ragdoll Ministry was carried on by Mother Jodene at St. Elizabeth's!



Mother Jodene was presented with a RagDoll2Love.

One of the many visions Mother Jodene had was to see the church doors opened as a community center where all could gather not only on a Sunday morning... how wonderful it was for her and the congregation to meet

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Youth News

by James Fitzpatrick

With school starting so has St. Elizabeth's after school program. On average thirty-five children attend the program, designed to help them work on their homework by working with parents and teachers to make sure students stay on top of their work.

Last year all of the middle school children we worked with moved on to the next grade. The year before over half of them repeated, some of them for the second or third time. We are very proud of this.

The next big project that the kids are going to work on is a mural. Kalihi-Palama Health Center is moving in to the building next door to St. Elizabeth's. While the building is under construction there is a wall blocking in the parking lot. A local artist who grew up in Mayor Wright Housing named **John Prime** has been hired by Kalihi-Palama Health Center to work with the community to paint a mural on the wall. They approached the youth group of St. Elizabeth's to help build community pride and take ownership of this project. Whatever is painted on the wall will become the artistic theme of the new building that is going to be built, so in the future our youth will be able know that the work they did when they were children lives on.

We are very excited about this opportunity!



The Youth Group meets with the artist, John Prime.



The Sewing Ladies

the sewing ladies and see some of their handiwork—shopping bags, pillow cases, aprons, dresses and blankets! The congregation was also enlightened!

After the service, a potluck brunch, the tables overflowing with delectable goodies, as we said, 'A hui Hou' to Mother Jodene!

The HCAP S.T.E.M. program continues after school, and Palamabots are busy refining their robots for the next competition. The program is open to students in grades 2-7 and they are always in need of participants and mentors to help.

Also going on is the **Help With Homework** program, after school, everyday from 2:30 pm - 7:00 pm. Fane Lino needs volunteers to help the children do their homework. The first few days of school, she had all of 3 children... now that school has been in session for 3 weeks, many children rush to the room, dig in their pockets, pull out a crumbled piece of paper and show their homework to Fane.

The number of children has grown to 45. The children range in age from Kindergarten through high school. Anyone who has homework...this is the place to be to get help! Fane has referred some children to HCAP for extra work while her program is focused on getting homework done. The program is in need of calculators and dictionaries. Please help and donate if you can — they don't have to be 'new'! And if you have time, an hour a week, please stop by the church and help the kids with their homework.

Thank you to all who have made this summer so special and rewarding for all the kids! ... not to say 'fulfilling'! **Nora Kurosu** and the kitchen, Fane and her big heart... kept many rumbling hungry tummies quite satisfied and full. And all those summer activities—thanks to **James, Viliami** and **Sarah**.

We welcome Fr. David back from his sabbatical!

Born to Eternal Life



Shane Kealoha

October 15, 1964 – August 4, 2013

Our deepest sympathies are extended to **Jimmy and Lani Kealoha** on the death of their son, Shane. A Celebration of Shane's life was held at St. Elizabeth's on August 17.

Into your hands, O merciful Savior, we commend your servant, Shane. Acknowledge, we humbly beseech you, a sheep of your own fold, a lamb of your own flock, a sinner of your own redeeming. Receive him into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light. Amen.



There is only room for 20 students!



After School Orchestra Program

will begin September 9 through May 2014 at St. Elizabeth's. This *entirely FREE* music program will meet two hours a day, four days a week (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday) where students will learn how to play stringed instruments (violin, viola and cello) and will sing in a chorus. Lessons and the use of the instruments are FREE. Playing in an intensive music ensemble will help your child learn music AND change their lives through the discipline, focus and community created by music.

Application forms are available in the office. All who register MUST attend our organizational meeting for parents and students on **Saturday, September 7** at 10 am.



Happy Birthday

God's blessings on those with September birthdays!

Jayden-Aldrich Romena	9/1
Rosemary Lau	9/2
Jazzy Benito	9/7
Colby Pacupac	9/8
Harrison Jong	9/9
Stephen Rowland	9/9
Hayden Randell Yee	9/9
Gretchen Jong	9/11
Vivian Marlow	9/12
Mathson Meyshine	9/12
Dylan-John Vinluan Daoang	9/12
Francita Kasty	9/12
Mylast Alexander	9/16
Alyssa Rodrigues	9/17
Helly Obeti	9/18
Kellen Ho	9/19
Khloe Leo Vinluan Daoang	9/19
Francis Nakata	9/20
Bill Eng	9/20
Esby Meyshine	9/20
Wai Wah Yee	9/21
Stuart Ching	9/21
Merlina Ballesteros	9/22
John Marlow	9/24
Viliani Lino	9/24
Raymond Au	9/26
Matthew DeCosta	9/27
Pauline Gifford	9/29
Leyna Esaki	9/29

Bread Bakers Needed

Want to learn to bake bread—specifically our Communion wafers? **Mary Ann** and **Preston Lentz** welcome you to join them in their kitchen on a Saturday morning—or they will come to YOUR kitchen! From setup to cleanup it takes them 2 hours. It's a simple process and an easy recipe. Thank you to **Sarah Bush** who does the baking once each month as well.

"From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded..."

—Luke 12:48

THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Bill and Jeff Keane



"Mommy, they don't make you do homework in heaven, do they?"

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

Church Humor

A pastor was known for the clarity and brevity of his well-organized sermons, which always ended promptly after 20 minutes. One Sunday, however, his sermon wandered and drifted and went for 45 minutes.

When he got home, his wife asked him why he got so muddled and went on speaking so long.

"Well," he replied, "I've gotten into the habit of tucking a Lifesaver in my mouth before I speak. When the Lifesaver has dissolved, I know it's time to stop."

This morning, unfortunately, I picked up a collar button instead of a Lifesaver."
—via Peter Dring, Land O Lakes, WI

After church, a woman told the priest, "We especially like your sermons on the website because we can scroll through them quickly."

A little girl attended a Catholic church for the first time with her parents. When her parents went up to the altar for communion, she went with them.

After the priest blessed her, she turned to her dad and asked in a loud voice, "What did he say?"

"He said, 'God bless you,' her dad replied.

"Why? I didn't sneeze," the girl said.

—Columnist Smiley Anders, Baton Rouge (LA) Advocate



Attendance

Sunday, August 4	160
Wednesday, August 7	20
Sunday, August 11	167
Wednesday, August 14	25
Sunday, August 18	141
Wednesday, August 21	24
Sunday, August 25	138
Wednesday, August 28	not available at press time

A Note To Our Readers

To you many hundreds who receive this newsletter but aren't able to join us each Sunday, please consider a quarterly gift to the St. Elizabeth's Pastoral Fund. Our church is located in Honolulu's inner city. We have as our neighbors many immigrant families whose day-to-day life is just figuring out how to get by. Our Pastoral Fund is used almost exclusively to help folks pay a part of their rent and part of their electric bill. We have too many houseless friends and too many living without power. Your contribution can help. It's fully tax deductible. Thanks so much!

David+

