

"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

July 2017

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The Reverend Dr.
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The Reverend Peter S. M. Fan,
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The Little Ones

The Rev. David J. Gierlach

Last week, our gospel lesson ended with some words by Jesus that made at least a few folks here pretty upset.

You remember the words, about Jesus not bringing peace but actually causing division between children and parents, brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, how we need to love Jesus more than those most intimately connected with us.

More than one person wondered how such language ever made it into the Bible, much less coming from the lips of Jesus.

I start there this morning because what Jesus may be getting at has everything to do with how we are to understand what it is to welcome others, and to be welcomed by others, which is our lesson for today.

Perhaps what Jesus is getting at in his harsh, two by four between the eyes observation about our family life is to help us keep relationships in perspective: meaning, we get in trouble when we ask any human relationship to bear too much weight, to bear the weight that only the ultimate, that only the divine, can carry.

I heard an interview the other day with a singer who had been given up at birth to adoptive parents, parents, who, it turned out, left a lot to be desired.

Dad was an active alcoholic and mom had her own serious issues.

This singer, a woman now 52 years old, was talking about her latest song which, she said, is all about finally learning the lesson that romantic love isn't the answer to her deepest needs.

She says she's felt like a plug in search of a socket throughout her whole life, and for the longest time, kept trying to make romantic love, the love our popular music is enthralled with, the love that really describes, according to this singer, maybe the first 6 months of any relationship, maybe only the first 90 days — she kept trying to make that love the socket that will satisfy her need, her emptiness, to be the love that would save her.



Jesus, in his harsh words last week, is asking us to pay attention to what we seek from each other, because we none of us can be, completely, the socket for anyone's plug.

We are creatures made in the image and likeness of God, and our relationships with each other, if lived with an understanding of their limits, can be and often are deeply fulfilling, deeply enriching.

Yet, at the end of the day, we each of us has an even deeper longing, an even deeper need, an even deeper desire, that only the love of God can fill.

That perspective, I think, is what Jesus is getting at as he cautions us to keep our priorities straight, as he teaches us today about welcoming.

If we see our family and friends as the be all and end all of our relationships, we will welcome only them, and those who look like or talk like or act like them.

But if the true ground of our relationships is God, if God is the source of the love that flows through us and to each

Rector's Message, continued

other, then all of a sudden a whole new world opens up before us.

Jesus peels away the veil that keeps us from seeing this new world by speaking of the little ones, little ones who, if given even a cup of cold water, have a great blessing to pass on.

And I have to ask, who are these little ones, these disciples, that Jesus is talking about this morning?

When I first read the passage, I figured he's talking about you and I and all Christians in the world who are doing the giving.

But then I began to wonder.

Jesus isn't focusing so much on the one giving the water as he is on the little one receiving the water - he's not zeroing in on the one doing the welcoming, but the little one who is welcomed.

We who are gathered here this morning are mostly the ones doing the giving; we here are the ones most often doing the welcoming.

And here's the question that kept nibbling at me all week long: what if we are not the little ones Jesus is talking about?

What if we are not the disciples he has in mind?

What if people with money and power and who are generally living the good life, a category most Episcopalians fall in, what if we aren't the little ones Jesus has in mind?

What if, instead, the little ones, the disciples Jesus is talking about, are the children from Honduras and Guatemala and El Salvador who are pouring over our borders in Texas?

What if the little ones, the disciples Jesus is talking about, are the refugees from Iraq and Syria?

What if the little ones, the disciples Jesus is talking about, are those in the world who are the most vulnerable, the most at risk, those camping out today in Kakaako Park or down the street sleeping in tents on the sidewalks?

And I wonder this because Jesus says if someone gives a glass of cold water to one of these little ones, they'll get a reward; which sounds very much like the final judgment as Matthew describes it, at the end of time, as all of humanity is divided into two groups, the sheep to one side and the goats to the other.

One group is praised for feeding the hungry and clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned; the other group is condemned for not doing those things.

And what's always baffled me about that story is why both sides, both the sheep and the goats, are surprised, because, both groups, in shock, ask Jesus when on earth did we see you naked or hungry or in jail?!

There shouldn't be much of a mystery here; after all, isn't Christian discipleship all about reaching out to and taking care of those around us?

So why are both sides surprised?

You'd think both sides would see this coming.

I wonder if there is surprise maybe because those doing the giving and feeding and visiting are not necessarily the disciples of Jesus, if we define "disciple" as Jesus does: becoming like Jesus....

Maybe the true disciples of Jesus, God's emissaries to the rest of us, are the ones receiving the food, the drink, the prison visit.

And maybe it's a surprise to both groups, just as it might be a surprise to us, to realize that at some level, the true disciples of Jesus may not be those with much, but those with nothing, and if that's the case, then how we find our salvation may not be by seeing ourselves as good Christians who visit and feed and heal, (important as those things are) but perhaps by changing how we see those whom we welcome, particularly the dirty, the unkempt, the houseless, that guy who's belongings are stuffed in the shopping cart at the back of our church, that, rather than seeing ourselves as Christ's emissaries to them, perhaps we begin to see them as Christ's emissaries to us.

Perhaps it is then that we might see that our relationships, as Christians, cannot be defined or confined to blood or friendship or family, but rather that we are invited to move far beyond those limited arrangements — out into the whole wide world — where every single human being is honored as a being made in the image and likeness of God; where every human being, particularly the little ones, the true disciples of Christ, have a claim upon our time, our talent and our treasure.

Perhaps.

+amen



The Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) through the Hawaii Food Bank provides low-income seniors with eligible fresh produce with the goal of improving their health and nutritional status. In fiscal year 2016, the Foodbank and partners provided 3,959 seniors/ the disabled with vouchers valued at \$197,950 to purchase fresh produce through the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program.



On June 27th, hundreds of senior citizens from around the neighborhood gathered to receive the SFMNP vouchers.

There will be two more dates at St. Elizabeth, Tuesday, July 18th, and Tuesday, August 22nd, from 8:00AM - 12:00PM.

Recipients must be 60 years of age or older AND have a household annual income of less than \$25,290 for single person or \$34,096 for a couple.

For more information, visit <http://www.hawaiifoodbank.org/senior-farmers-market>



Volunteers of the Hawaii Food Bank process each individual. If you'd like to help out, contact volunteer@hawaiifoodbank.org, or call (808) 954-7869.

Happy Birthday

God's blessings on those with July birthdays!



Craig Peterson	July 2
Richard Roke	July 3
Ronald Roke	
Faith Chock	July 4
Alan Esaki	July 10
Ruby Wai Ching Chock	July 12
Carly Venenciano	
Jeldan Romualdo	July 13
Kody Hayashi	July 15
Onlyone Helly	July 16
Mildred Kuniyoshi	July 17
Mosese Langi	July 18
Nathan Neeto	
Lisa-Anne Mitsuka Chan	July 19
Tim Blaisdell	July 20
Frank Yap	
Lynnsey Ho	July 21
Richard Yee	July 23
Barry Zane	July 24
Mary Ann Lentz	July 25
Jerek Jong	July 26
Jean Hirashiki	July 27
Lydia Joseph	
Fran Kramer	July 28
Juliette Ling	July 30
Jordan Rico	
Michael Lum	July 31



A Message from the Youth Coordinator

By Melanie Langi

Hello All,

I just recently realized we are already midway through this year. Time passes so swiftly. With this realization I've made a swift decision to embrace this time of year. Summer time! One would think that summer means break. Yes that is true, for some, however to me summer means long days, short nights. More time with my family, and my children so that means more activities, outings and just merely spending more time together. For some it means sleeping in longer, cleaning house, yard or even parents' cars. For some it means hanging out with friends, going to the mall or going to the beach. But whatever summer means to you, embrace it! It wont last long and so make lots of memories.

For some youth here at St. Elizabeth's, summer means waking up early, washing cars, taking trips, and going to summer camp! Sounds fun!

This summer in June, our youth have been washing cars every Saturday, raising monies to fund trips to the E.Y.E17 conference in Oklahoma. Five of our youths are making this special trip to represent St. Elizabeth's in one of this year's largest Episcopal conventions for youth. They will be there from July 10-July 14. Four days of education, fun and meeting other youth from around the world. How exciting!

Our youth has also been raising monies to fund this year's Hui Pu Summer camp at Camp Mokuleia July 2-July 7. Ten youth from St. E's will take part in this exciting adventure. Youth from all over the state are also taking part in the camp this year. And it sounds like they will all have a blast! Can't wait to hear all about their adventures!

Youth bible studies are still being held here at St. Elizabeth every Friday night at 8pm for grades 6 to 12. Please come and join us. Journey with us through the bible, and fellowship with others. If you'd like to share a message with the youth, you are more than welcome to come share with us! You're never too young to teach and never too old to learn. Hope to see you there!

Have a safe and fun filled Summer! Make memories and embrace each moment! Remember the summers of your youth. Make it nostalgic! See you guys next month, where we will welcome August and Back2School!

#LongSummerDays

Blessings,
Melanie Langi



June Attendance

Sunday, June 4,	178
Wednesday, June 7,	14
Sunday, June 11,	158
Sunday, June 18,	179
Sunday, June 25,	188



Faith is not about
everything turning
out okay.

Faith is about being
okay no matter how
things turn out.



Welcome Jennifer!

Jennifer Beckham is our new parish administrator. She has administrative experience for government, state and private sector. Both she and her husband share a great love of the Episcopal Church, sacred music, people and philanthropy. Jennifer is excited to embark on this new adventure with St. Elizabeth's Church.

Jennifer's office hours will be Monday - Thursday 9am-2pm.

Cleaning Day



Mahalo to everyone who stopped by to help clean our campus on June 17th. Pictured above is the Langi Family, Lynette Shim, and David Kaloi, just a few of the people who showed up. Keep an ear out for the next date!




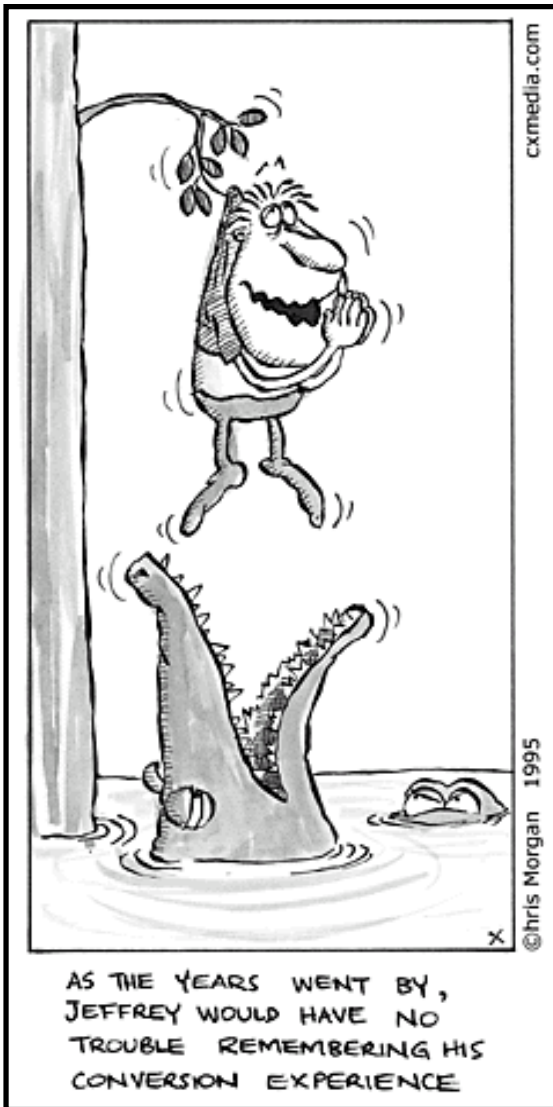
A Note To Our Readers

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 Junebe 70 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.

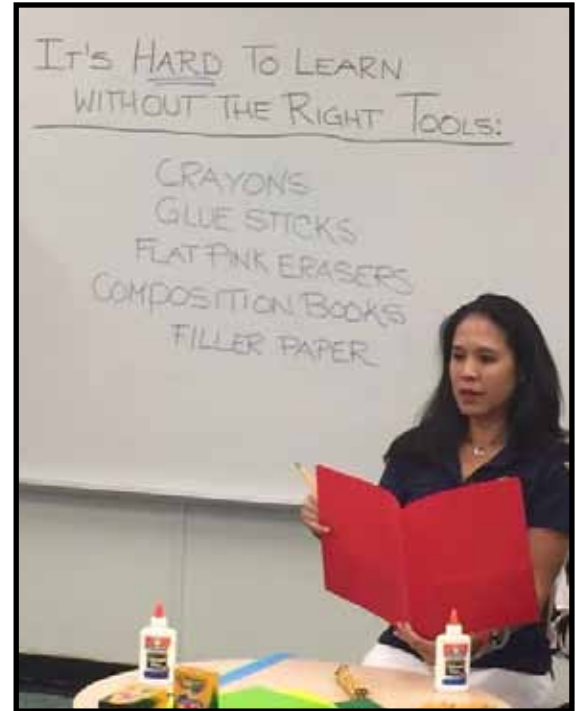
And as the wise man once said: **"Money is like manure —it's not worth a thing unless it's spread around...."**

Many thanks and blessings!
—Fr. David





And the list goes on...pencils, 3-ring binders, portfolios, composition books (wide-ruled), highlighters (yellow and Green colors), index dividers, dry erase expo red markers, glue... zip lock quart size freezer bags, zip lock gallon size bags, Kleenex, paper towels, wet-ones wipes... top of the list, Backpack!



Please help, the sales are all on - pick up something...it all adds up to helping our students enjoy learning! Leave your donations in the box marked 'school supplies' on the table in the narthex!

There is a sign-up sheet for students - students - please sign up - your name! - name of the school you will be attending, grade you will be attending, school supplies will only be distributed to students who sign up! **The students will get their bag of supplies on Sunday, July 30th, so please bring in any donations by Sunday, July 23rd! School begins August 7th!**



Help the children! School supplies are a requirement for school, but for some families, they face the choice between supplies or food on the table. Any contributions would be greatly appreciated.



Sunday School News

By Sue Yap

Thank you for an awesome school year! Dedicated band of teachers, eager-to-learn students and our very supportive congregation!

Pentecost, the birthday of the church - festive 'red' everywhere! Sunday school children distributed red streamers to the congregation to wave as the processional walked in, and again during the recessional! Thanks to all who participated, and **Miss Jamie**, making the streamers!

Trinity Sunday! **Fr. Frank Chun** had the older kids chuckling as he read the gospel in pidgin English! Fr. Chun had the older congregation smiling as he shared his 'life's lessons' he had with his daughter and then his grandchildren explaining 'God' on Trinity Sunday!

Miss Ajaon will have a jamming music program on Sundays in classroom A through July. Please don't miss a beat...join in on the fun!

School supplies donations through July - please be generous and give our kids tools for success! Place your donations in the box marked 'school supplies'. Monetary donations are gleefully accepted!

Happy Safe Summer!



Fr. Frank Chun delivers his sermon in Pidgin English. Ho brah!



Red balloons adorned the church to celebrate Pentecost



Mother Imelda Padasdao gives out certificates to all of our youth



All of our youth and Sunday School leaders. Congratulations on completing another year!

Mahalo to all our volunteers!

Mosquito Netting



Laying under mosquito netting
It's like laying in your casket.
The laced white enfolds,
But there is one difference
Between then and now,
Between beds and caskets,
For now
My consciousness surrounds
And envelopes,
While then,
It shall be gone.
But gone to where?
Is it merely the engine of the heart
That fires the synapse of the
Brain?
When engine stops
Does all else as well,
Returning dust to dust
As if it never was at all?
Is all we know so self-contained,
So neatly packaged,
Time-stamped and finite?
Or is consciousness more like a
Gift, given at first breath,
And when that last breath comes,
Does it return to whence
It came?
Returning to its larger whole,
Never alone, but one with all?
Such are the wayward
Meanderings of mosquito nets
And lace,
Of warm beds and cold coffins,
As the slow embrace
Of an African morning
Smiles on her children.



A huge mahalo to the **Oahu Contractors Association!**

They came by on June 24th to help feed the hundred or so people that come by for our Five Loaves Two Fishes breakfast.

We can always use more help! Stop on by Saturday mornings to help flip a pancake or two around 6:00am. The breakfast goes from 7:30–8:30am.

