

"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 2019

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V Bishop of Hawaii

The Reverend
David J. Gierlach
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Priest Associate

The Reverend Dr.
Gerald G. Gifford.
Rector Emeritus

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

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Trinity

The Rev. David J. Gierlach

What is your very best moment in life?

My guess is, if you really sit with that question, that the very best moment of your life is when you felt completely loved by someone, completely accepted for who and what you are, completely embraced.

For most of us those moments are few and far between.

For some, they are experienced more often, and for others, perhaps never.

But that sense of being accepted, wanted, needed, I'm pretty sure we can all agree — it is the most profound gift we can ever receive.

And if you haven't experienced it yet, don't worry, it's coming, usually at a time you least expect.

The boy was 13 and his parents' marriage was falling apart.

This boy was deep and sensitive, and the messy marriage was killing him inside, and so he acted out, getting in some trouble, and his dad finds out.

Fearing his dad's wrath, the boy pounds his cell phone on his head, till the screen shatters, just as the dad walks into the house.

The boy stands in terror waiting for what's coming, but the dad doesn't yell, scold or hit, no, he grabs the boy, and holds him tight, as the boy dissolves into tears, sobbing his sorries, holding tight to his father.

And something shifts in the boy that day, something that allows him to cope with the inevitable divorce, something that helps him steer through the trials and temptations of adolescence.

What's all of this have to do with the Trinity you ask?

Well, the answer is: everything!

Most of us, if we ever think of the Trinity at all, think of it as some kind of Rubik's cube, an unsolvable puzzle, or something as head scratching

as a Buddhist koan: like, "what is the sound of one hand clapping?"

That's because we've always been taught that the Trinity is how God relates to God, and what can we possibly know about that?

But what if, in fact, the Trinity is not just how God relates to God, but how God relates to everything, and how everything relates to God?

What if the Trinity is the sum and substance of all that is, and more?

What if the Trinity is the very model for how human life was always intended to be lived?

There is a very famous icon, a religious drawing of the Trinity, and you have it as the cover on our service bulletin today.

If you look carefully, you'll see all three faces are the same, and they are very ambiguous about whether they are male or female, which makes sense since if God creates us in God's image, male and female, then God contains all aspects of gender, yes, the entire rainbow!

The figure on the left represents the Father, clothed in the gold of royalty, sanctity and holiness.

The middle figure represents Jesus.

He wears blue, the color of creation, sea and sky, and he holds up two fingers, representing his union of the divine and creation.

And to the right, the Holy Spirit wears green, which signifies how light creates life: just as plants transform light, through photosynthesis, into life.

There are three, alike but different, in love with one another, flowing into one another, and yet, look at the fingers of the Holy Spirit.

They point down, and if you look carefully you will see a small rectangle where there once was placed a mirror.



Meaning, that the love and union and joy of the three produces a fourth — you and me and all of creation — everything that may be reflected in a mirror is joined at this table of unending, ever-flowing, love!

As one fellow puts it:

“The stunning truth is that this triune God, in amazing and lavish love, decides to open the circle and share this life with others.

This is the one, eternal reason for the creation of the world and of human life.

There is no other God, no second plan, no hidden agenda for human beings.

Before the creation of the world, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit set their love upon us, bringing us along to share and know and experience the Trinitarian life itself.

To this end the cosmos comes into being, and the human race is given” the most amazing gift of all, that the divine becomes human so that humans may become divine. Kruger, *The Shack Revisited*, 62 (paraphrased).

Or as Meister Eckhart so eloquently puts it:

“Do you want to know what goes on in the core of the Trinity? I will tell you.

In the core of the Trinity, the Father laughs and gives birth to the Son.

The Son laughs back at the Father and gives birth to the Spirit. The whole Trinity laughs and gives birth to us.”

Think of a water wheel as water flows from one bucket to the next, always moving forward: this is the Trinity, except it’s not water that powers it, motivates it, defines it — it’s love!

It is love and life that creates the universe, not the other way around!

And if that is true, what does that say about how we are meant to live?

What does that say about how we are to be church?

What does that say about riches and poverty, male dominance, gender differences and “us first” nationalism?

In other words, if the nature of God is loving, self-giving, self-sacrificing, good humored relationship among diverse equals, and if we are made in the image and likeness of this relationship-crazy God, what this fact unmistakably calls for is a complete revolution in how we think, act and organize ourselves!

And it gives the lie to those who question whether all of humanity exists in a fallen state, but for the grace of God to save us.

The evidence of our fallen state is our drive to dominate one another.

Our skewed beliefs that one race is superior to others, the false myth that men should dominate women, a myth that infects just about every culture on earth — indeed,

every law, custom or practice that rejects love based upon equal, self-giving, self-sacrificing, good humored relationship — is the undeniable evidence of our fallen state.

And into that state, this Triune God becomes one of us, shows us in the life of Jesus what it is to love and laugh and let go, and then, through the gift of Pentecost, breathes the breath of the Holy Spirit into all of our nostrils, so that with love and laughter and letting go — we too can enter into the magnificent eternal dance of this Triune God who holds all things together!

We can at last open our eyes to the truth that “in God’s household, the male does not rule, that God rules together with us, in solidarity with the poor, the slave, the sinner.

That male and female are equal partners in God’s household.

That Jew and Greek, slave and free, circumcised and uncircumcised, gay, straight, trans and non-binary, that people of all colors and creeds and conditions — belong equally to God’s rule!

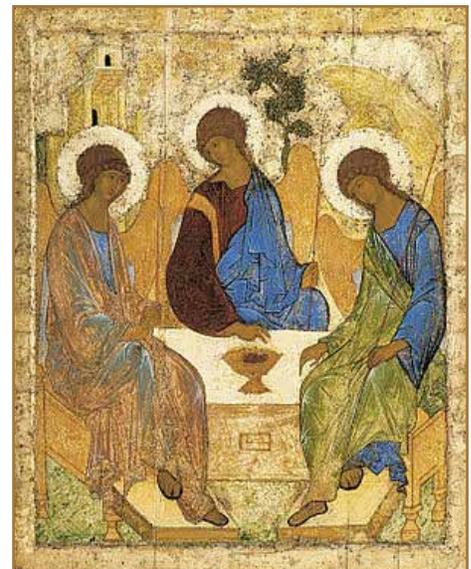
And finally coming to see that any road taken other than this one, is nothing more than idolatry.” C.M. LaCunga, *God For Us*, 394, paraphrased.

The Trinity is the essential truth of our faith.

Without it, we have an old man in the sky issuing orders, making judgments, elevating the few over the many; something we love to mimic in our own social arrangements: in every country, in every household.

But the Trinity reveals what Jesus reveals: “that love and communion among persons is the truth of existence, the meaning of our salvation, the path to overcoming sin, and the only authentic way to give praise to God.” Id. at 400, paraphrased.

+amen



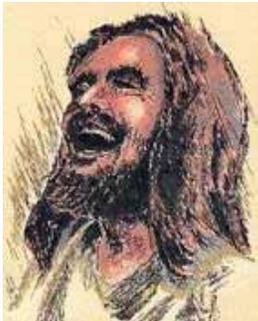
Our Campers



St E's camp Mokuleia gang arrives for a week of fun frolic and frivolity!!! Many thanks to youth leader **Melanie Langi** and trusty van driver **Mosese** for getting our treasures all the way to this far away camp!!!!

**"Do you want to know
what goes on in the core
of the Trinity?
I will tell you.
In the core of the
Trinity
the Father laughs
and gives birth to the
Son.
The Son laughs back at
the Father
and gives birth to the
Spirit.
The whole Trinity laughs
and gives birth to us."**

-Meister Eckart



Ladies First!



Happy Birthday

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

Faith Chock	07/04
Alan Esaki	07/10
Ruby Ching Chock	07/12
Carly Venenciano	
Kody Hayashi	07/15
LisaAnne MitsukaChan	7/19
Tim Blaisdell	07/20
Frank Yap	
Lynnsey Ho	07/21
Barry Zane	07/24
Jean Hirashiki	07/27
Fran Kramer	07/28
Juliette Ling	07/30
Richard Yee	07/23
Mildred Kuniyoshi	07/17
Lydia Joseph	07/27
Mary Ann Lentz	07/25
Jerek Jong	07/26
Mosese Langi	07/18
Michael Lum	07/31
Craig Peterson	07/02
Nathan Neeto	07/18
Richard Roke	07/03
Ronald Roke	07/03
Onlyone Helly	07/16
Jeldan Romualdo	07/13
Jordan Rico	07/30



HUNK EDITION



Muscles McGurk, aka, **Joey Teiti-Gierlach**, gave us a great big hand when Foodbank delivered **3 tons of food** to our front lawn!! How does one move 3 tons of food??? A few pounds at a time, my friend, a few pounds at a time!



WHAT WE PLANT IN THE
SOIL OF CONTEMPLATION, WE
SHALL REAP IN THE HARVEST
OF ACTION.
MEISTER ECKHART

Scholarship applications are open to students who will be full time students at a post-secondary school in the 2019-2020 school year.

Please review the scholarship criteria included with the scholarship application.



The completed scholarship application is due by July 26, 2019. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

Applicants may request an application via email to: arleen.young@live.com

School Supplies



Friends, it's that time of year again when we pitch in to help our keiki and their families with the unmanageable expense of school supplies!!! Some of our families have several children in school and at over \$100

a pop for supplies, well, the family budget really takes a hit, or, our little ones do without needed supplies. Please donate whatever of the following you can: folder paper, pencils, black and red pens, crayons, three ring binders (1 and 2 inch), portfolios, stick glue, composition books, highlighters, rulers, pencil sharpeners, water colors, index cards, colored pencils and wipes. **THANK YOU ONE AND ALL AND CASH IS A WELCOME SUBSTITUTE -- JUST NOTE IT'S FOR SCHOOL SUPPLIES!!!**



A Message from the Youth Coordinator

By Melanie Langi

HELLO ALL!
HAPPY 4TH OF JULY!

I'M TELLING YOU THESE MONTHS SEEM TO JUST FLY BY QUICKER THAN WE CAN BLINK! YET SO MANY THINGS ARE HAPPENING. HERE'S THE SCOOPS!

THE **LATE NIGHT BASKETBALL LEAGUE** (BETTER KNOWN AS LNBL) HAS BEGUN! JUNE 13TH WAS OUR SENIOR LEAGUE BOYS FIRST BASKETBALL GAME. THEY PLAYED AGAINST ADULT FRIENDS FOR YOUTH (AFY). IT WAS A FUN AND EXCITING GAME, AND THE BOYS PLAYED A REALLY REALLY GREAT GAME. WITH AFY TAKING THE WIN AT [27-30] IT WAS STILL A CLOSE GAME. NONE THE LESS I'M SO PROUD OF OUR BOYS FOR PLAYING HARD! **COME SEE THEM IN ACTION. THURSDAY NIGHTS AT PALAMA SETTLEMENT GYM. GO SAINTS!**

FROM **JUNE 9-14** FIVE OF OUR OWN LUCKY YOUTH FROM ST. ELIZABETH'S ALONG WITH A FEW MORE YOUTHS ISLANDWIDE GOT THE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEND A WEEK AT **CAMP MOKULEIA'S SUMMER CAMP PROGRAM** WHERE THEY ENJOYED HIGH ROPES, TEAM BUILDING, REFRESHING POOL, HIKING, KAYAKING, PADDLEBOARDING AND EVEN TAKING A DIP IN THE BIG PACIFIC OCEAN ALL WHILE BUILDING NEW FRIENDSHIPS AND CREATING LASTING MEMORIES. THEY DIDNT WANT TO LEAVE, BUT ARE EXCITED TO GO BACK AGAIN NEXT YEAR! THANK YOU CAMP MOKULEIA!

CAR WASH! CAR WASH! CAR WASH!

THOSE ARE THE SHOUTS YOU CAN HEAR ON N. KING ST. FRONTING OUR CHURCH **EVERY 2ND AND LAST SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH**, WHERE OUR GROUP OF YOUTH WORK HARD AT GETTING YOUR CARS, TRUCKS, AND VAN'S SPARKLING CLEAN. COME OUT AND SUPPORT THEM! BRING YOUR ENTIRE FLEET! **ONLY \$10 A VEHICLE! SEE YOU THERE!**



WORKING YOUTH. THIS SUMMER FOUR OF OUR YOUTH (AGES 14&15) GOT THEIR FIRST JOB WORKING AT THE 50TH STATE FAIR. AND THEY LOVE IT! HAHHAHA! MOSTLY BECAUSE THEY SEE THEIR PAYCHECK! THE HARDEST PART OF GETTING THEM TO WORK WAS THEIR WORK PERMITS. WELL MAYBE THAT WASNT SO HARD. BUT **IF ANY PARENTS ARE INTERESTED OR HAVE QUESTIONS ABOUT EMPLOYMENT AND/OR WORK PERMITS COME SEE ME, I CAN HELP.**

SCHOOL/ALTERNATIVE SCHOOL

THIS PAST SUMMER IT HAS COME TO OUR ATTENTION THAT SOME OF OUR YOUTH ARE NOT "PASSING" OR MAKING CREDIT. IF THIS IS YOUR CHILD OR SEEKING AN ALTERNATIVE WAY OF EDUCATION PLEASE COME AND SEE ME. I WILL HELP YOU.

LASTLY, YOUTH BIBLE STUDY... OUR YOUTH CONTINUE TO **MEET EVERY FRIDAY NIGHT AT 7PM FOR YOUTH BIBLE STUDY.**



COME FELLOWSHIP WITH US, WE DONT BITE, I PROMISE! JOURNEY WITH US, BUILD NEW RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS AND OUR SAVIOR! BRING YOURSELF AND A FRIEND. SEE YOU THERE! UNTIL NEXT TIME,
MELANIE LANGI

Sunday School News

By Sue Yap



The Sunday School Year 2018-2019 ended on Pentecost! Pentecost, 50 days after Easter, not only a commemoration of the Holy Spirit's visit but also marked the birth of the Christian Church. We celebrated Pentecost recognized our dedicated teachers and classroom helpers, Jamie Chock, Lisa Anne Mitsuka Chan, Lillian Tyau, Stephanie Dolton and Delphine Shea. The Sunday School children and student acolytes were also recognized with certificates and a lei! The participation in Sunday School and acolyte ministry fluctuates each

Sunday! We have averaged 25 students participating each week!

The children sang the Offertory Hymn, Jesus Loves The Little Children!

As we end the school year, we look forward to the next school year 2019-2020 ... and it's time to ask for donations for 'Back To School' tools for success! Please donate composition books, pencils, markers and folder paper and backpacks! Please bring in your donations by July 21, 2019! Happy to say, everyone is moving UP to the next grade!!!! Thank you all for your support for the children throughout the year!!!

Sunday School Students - Remember to sign up if you need school supplies!!!! There is a sign up sheet on the narthex table on Sundays or check with the teachers, most of the Sunday school children signed up in Sunday school.

The School Supplies will be distributed to the children the last Sunday in July, July 28th! Please pick up your school supplies on July 28th! Most schools will begin the week of August 5th.

Music Program with Miss Ajaon will start on August 4th. Join the percussion orchestra and have fun with music!!! As for our Youth, join Miss Ajaon in the summer music program, get the rhythm, learn the notes, move on up to join the bell choir on Sundays!!!!

Sunday School will resume on August 25th!

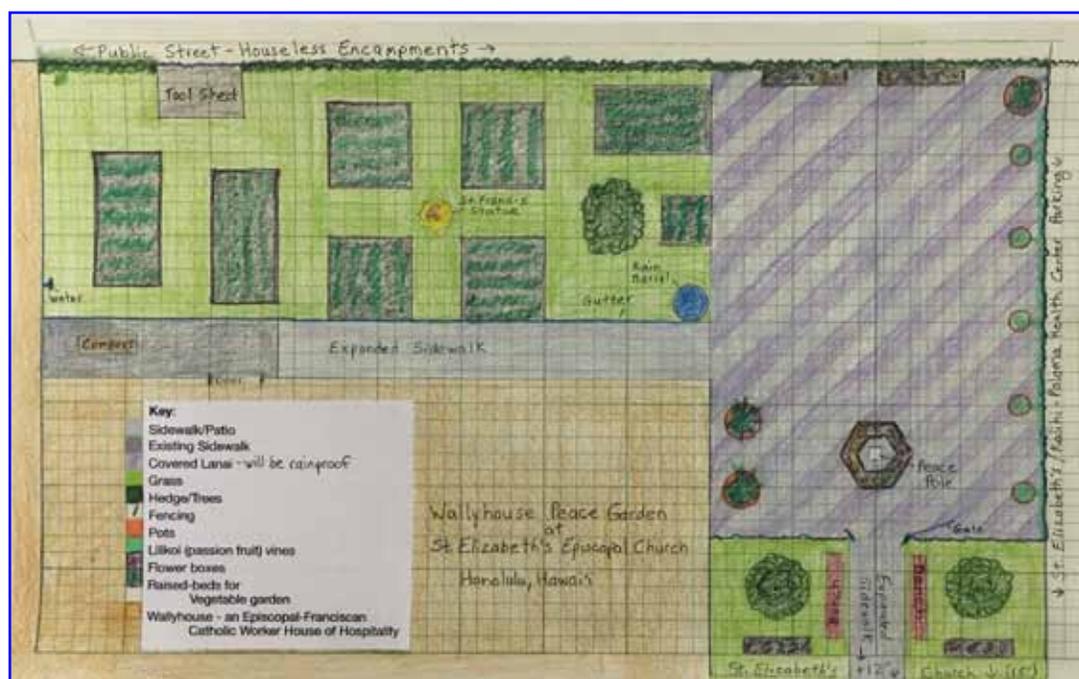
Happy, Safe and Blessed Summer!!!

Summer Camp



It's time for SUMMER CAMP at Camp Mokuleia!!!!
 July 9-14 is for High School and Middle Schoolers....
 July 23-28 is for Elementary Schoolers
 July 7-12 is for Middle School and Elementary!!!!!!
 AND BEST OF ALL, IT'S FREEEEEEEE!!!!!!!!!!!!
 See Melanie Langi for sign up!

The Peace Garden Cometh!!!



Wallyhouse has received two grants to construct a Peace Garden behind and beside the former rectory. We have been granted \$9,900 from UTO, the United Thank Offering of the National Episcopal Church and \$2,500 from the Buddhist Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii.

The garden projects aims to serve the whole community of St.

Elizabeth's, those who come for worship as well as those who come for services.

The garden site will include an area of **8 raised-bed vegetable gardens** and an adjoining covered lanai. We hope to create a place for growing food and an area to enjoy the food while talking story. The entrance will have permanent benches, and a Peace pole with "**May Peace prevail on Earth**" inscribed in **8 local languages** (see attached schema). The area is small but accessible. We are excited to break ground soon and **we welcome anyone who would like to join in the fun**: helping with ideas, construction, expertise, planting, etc.

Let's make it an all parish project!

NOTES FROM THE CATHOLIC WORKERS



Fools for Christ

My U.S. Army buddy, Humberto Caballero, from Puerto Rico, used to tell a version of the overloaded airplane joke that, translated, went something like this:



An airliner lost the use of one of its engines, and the captain informed the passengers that three volunteers would have to leave the plane to lighten its load, so they could reach the nearest airport and save the other passengers." An Englishman stood up, saluted, and jumped out, saying *Por la reina!* (for the Queen!). Shortly after, a German stood up, shouted *Por la patria!* (for the Fatherland!), and jumped out. Finally, a Puerto Rican stood up and, as he exited the plane, yelled *Por pendejo!*

The joke is intended as an ethnic slur. The nationalities of the characters can be changed at will, and the teller of the joke is often a member of the maligned group. *Pendejo* is something trivial, worthless, absurd. Humberto was saying, in effect, we Puerto Rican's are so foolish we are willing to die for nothing. But I always found something to admire in the Puerto Rican's imprudent selflessness.

Perhaps it was because Humberto and I came within days of being ordered to parachute out of an airplane as part of an invasion force at the time of the Cuban Missile Crisis (1962). We were in our twenties and had barely lived, yet were willing to lose our lives for a cause we barely understood. Now, over fifty years later, I know the cause for which we were willing to die was nowhere near as noble as we had imagined. Instead, leaders - ours and theirs - lied and used us to achieve venal political and economic ends. It was all about power.

I asked Barbara, "how is a person to know if it is Jesus or the President making the claim 'those who lose their life for my sake will find it'?" (Mt 16:25). She replied, "Jesus was a pacifist and would not send people to war to fight and die." I agreed, yet that begs the question. Whether you lose your life for a cause or die for nothing, you are just as dead. The Puerto Rican understood that better than the others when he shouted *por pendejo!*

Then what did Jesus mean? An insight came to me when she mentioned to our weekly sitting group that was very much taken by our description of our life in Brazil as "the perfect life." When they pressed Barbara to define it, she did not respond as I would have expected, "we found it in leaving everything, in dying to our old life". Instead, after reflection, Barbara responded we found it in watching the death of our new life. We found ourselves peeled like an onion, stripped of everything we had set out to do. And in that nothingness, we found joy in simply being present to others. It was not in active doing that we found new life, but in active being. It was not in building, but in failing. It was in dying to all of our ideals, constructs, and controls; it was in becoming foolish and seemingly worthless that we began to live.

Excerpted from **Don't Touch Me! Daily Stories of Gospel Relevance** by