

*"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

## December 2010 **Standing in Two**

### **Worlds**

*The Rev. David J. Gierlach*

We Christians stand with our feet planted in two worlds. That planting is nowhere more evident than today, our first Sunday of Advent. Last week, we completed our year of living with, walking with, and listening to St. Luke as he opened for us the life and mystery of Jesus. Since Easter, we have walked with Jesus; with Luke as our guide; the long, dusty road from Galilee up to Jerusalem.

We walked with him as he brought hearing to the deaf, sight to the blind, as the lame walked, as the poor rejoiced. Our journey ended last Sunday, with Christ the King, nailed to his throne. And I ask you: were you changed by this journey? Has your sense of who Jesus is and what he calls us to become, changed through the journey of this last year?

We stand with one foot firmly planted in what is. The life our Lord lived 2000 years ago; the life we each of us live each day. Yet Advent is the season of the great reminder. Reminding us that we also live with our other foot firmly planted in what will be.

The life of Jesus was full of laughter and miracles and wine and friendship. It was also full of betrayal and loss and death. As followers of Jesus, we probably should expect the same for ourselves. But Advent says that life is not defined only by our experiences here and now. Advent is the

promise that, despite what seems to be only circles of time, as in: "I can't believe it's nearly Christmas again!"; despite what seems to be the same ole same ole, day in and day out, Advent stands as the "Angel to Remind Us" that God is moving and working and shaping our world and ourselves to an end that is pleasing to God.

That end will be an end: an end to life as it appears to be; and the beginning of life as it actually is in the sweep, in the nearness of God. This is the promise of Advent!

And while it may seem vague or elusive, that promise is more substantial than the walls of this church. But it is also a promise that will shake us to our core. As we grasp for safety and security, Advent shouts that while our lives are secure in God; God is never safe.

Jesus today compares God to a thief breaking into your home and mine. Sit with that image. God the cat burglar!

For anyone who has been burglarized, you know the feelings of outrage and invasion; of fear and insecurity. Make no mistake, Jesus knew exactly what he was saying when he likened God to a thief breaking in.

God is an intrusion, God is a violation of my space, an uninvited interruption: this is the Advent of God: Unexpected, Unwanted, yet Undeniable and Unstoppable.



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 Saimone Lino,  
Diocesan Missioner

The Reverend Dr.  
Gerald G. Gifford.  
Rector Emeritus

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

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Editor and Layout  
Music Consultant

Arleen Young  
Senior Warden

Doug Ing  
Junior Warden

Preston Lentz  
Secretary / Clerk

David Hirashiki, Treasurer

Website:  
[www.stelizabeth720.org](http://www.stelizabeth720.org)

Email:  
[stelizabethhawaii@gmail.com](mailto:stelizabethhawaii@gmail.com)

# Rector's Message, continued

If you think this isn't so, ask yourself when the last time was you gave yourself fully, without reservation, over to God's will in your life. And if you have, what followed once you did?

We don't know when God shall be revealed in all of his fullness. Jesus didn't know when. Our friends who waste time calculating the end have entirely missed the point of the Advent of God. We cannot know when. We can only live as if "when" is today. One foot in today, the other foot standing in hopeful, if tremulous, expectation.

Living in the Advent of God, today, is to "live a caught-up life, not a put-off life, so that wherever you are, you are ready for God. Ours may be the generation that finally sees him ride in on the clouds, or, we may meet him as they have for generations past; one by one, as we each close our eyes for the last time." Taylor, The Seeds of Heaven.

Because our God is not safe or domesticated; because he comes breaking in when we least suspect, the Advent of God is a time to be afraid. Fear of God runs from the first pages of Scripture to the last.

Yes, I say to you, fear God.

Because when you fear God, and God alone, there is nothing else to fear. Fear God, and you will not fear other people. Fear God, and you will not fear places or things. Fear God, and you will not fear death.

When you fear God, and God alone, you are able to stand at the burning bush with Moses; you are able to stand in the Temple, behind the curtain, with Zechariah; you are able to stand with Mary in the presence of Gabriel, you are able to stand with the apostles before the Risen Lord, and hear the words said to each of them; the words God speaks to all who fear him: "Fear Not." "Do not be afraid."

It is paradox. It is riddle. It is truth. Those who fear God need not fear God.

In the Narnia story, the children learn that Aslan is not a man, but a lion.

"Is he – quite safe?" Susan asks. "I shall feel rather nervous about meeting a lion!"

"That you will my dear," said Mrs. Beaver. "If there's anyone who can appear before Aslan without his knees knocking, he's either

braver than most or quite silly."

"Then he isn't safe?" Lucy asks.

To which Mr. Beaver responds: "Safe? Don't you hear what Mrs. Beaver tells you? Who said anything about safe? Course he isn't safe! But he's good! He's the King, I tell you!"

This is the God of Advent! This is the God of our hope! Hope that this life is not all there is. Hope that at the appointed time, all that is hurtful, all that is distressing and confusing and destructive will be taken up with all that is light and pure and fun and holy and made into something that only God can fashion. This is the God of Advent. Purple for bruises. Purple for royalty. Purple for hope.

This God whom we rightly fear, who in turn assures us to fear not; takes together all that has ever been, and is creating, even now, a joy we cannot even begin to imagine.

We stand this day with feet firmly planted in two worlds.

Welcome to Advent!

+amen.



## Attendance

11/3	Wed. Healing Eucharist	10
11/3	Ilokano Service	35
11/7	All Saints 8:15 Eucharist	149
11/7	Ilokano Service	43
11/10	Wed. Healing Eucharist	13
11/14	Sunday 8:15 am Eucharist	135
11/14	Chinese Eucharist	4
11/17	Wed. Healing Eucharist	15
11/21	Sunday 8:15 am Eucharist	150
11/21	Chinese Eucharist	4
11/24	Wed. Healing Eucharist	20
11/25	Thanksgiving	82
11/28	Sunday 8:15 am Eucharist	145
11/28	Chinese Eucharist	3

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



“Where did those wise men find a store that sold frankincense and myrrh?”

from JoyfulNoiseletter.com  
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# Happy Birthday

God's blessings on those with  
December birthdays!

Jeffrey Starkman	12/1
Gillian Batangan	12/2
Cheryl Mitsuka	12/2
Rev. Peter Fan	12/3
Charles Steffey	12/4
ShellieAnne Steffey	12/4
Dexin Lu	12/6
Christopher Lau	12/10
Jonathan Lau	12/18
Carla Pacupac	12/19
Kaylen Hayashi	12/20
Susan Won	12/22
Gelacio Timonio	12/23
Delphine Shea	12/23
Christine Ling	12/24
Laureen Zane	12/28
Rally Muludy	12/29
Aaron Arakawa	12/30
Ieichy Mako	12/30
Mildred Goo	12/31
Otega White	12/31



# A Taste of St. Elizabeth's

featuring fine foods, wonderful entertainment, silent auction and a taste of over 100 wines (provided by Kendall Jackson Winery) will be happening on **Saturday, December 11th from 6 to 9 pm.** Entertainment will be provided by the **Gilbert Batangan Quartet** (Gilbert Batangan, *Guitar*; Mark Tanouye, *Double Bass*; Jason Gay, *Saxophone* and Shinya Yarimizo, *Drums*) playing classic and modern Jazz This is our major fundraiser of the year and we hope to see all of you there! Tickets at \$35 are available from **Arleen Young** or at the door and will benefit St. Elizabeth's Youth and Adult Outreach Ministries and the Scholarship Fund.

A partial list of Silent Auction donors include: **Assaggio's Ristorante Italiano, Diamond Head Theatre, Fare No Tehau (Tahiti), Hawaii Kai Golf Course, Ko Olina Golf Course, McKinley Car Wash, MGM Grand Hotel (Las Vegas), PahKe's Chinese Restaurant, Sheraton Waikiki Resorts and Tiare Teiti Designs.** We thank **Gretchen Jong** for chairing the Silent Auction part of the evening.

A sign-up list is on the narthex table for those who can provide heavy pupus. We will provide a van service from east and west for those who'd like to come but don't like driving at night!



The Gilbert Batangan Quartet will provide entertainment. Gilbert is David Hirashiki's nephew.

# Thanksgiving



Fresh pine-apples, bananas, squash, apples, carrots, breadfruit, onions, and lemons decorated the altar on Thanksgiving and were given to the needy after the service.

Dr. Gerald Gifford preached the sermon on Thanksgiving Day.



## News From the Garden

Two of the GINORMOUS sunflowers graced our Thanksgiving Day Mass, beautiful and smiling yellow for all to enjoy. Then, on Saturday, the long awaited harvest of the Okinawan sweet potatoes finally arrived! Over a hundred came out of the ground, huge and delicious! Added to that are the long green onions, eggplant, more Manoa lettuce, green peppers and tons of herbs! Come by and get your hands dirty!



Father David and Father Saimone are happy to see the sunflowers. but the sunflowers don't look too thrilled!



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*and then shop anywhere on the net!*

## Quotable Quotes

“We are being sorely tested in a society where we call medical insurance for babies and daycare for working mothers and food stamps for underpaid families “welfare for the poor” but then fail to call agricultural subsidies and corporate bailouts and tax breaks for the wealthy “welfare for the rich.”

J. Chittister, *Welcome to the Wisdom of the World*, 132.

“What if on Christmas Eve people came and sat in the dim pews, and someone stood up and said, “Something happened here while we were all out at the malls, while we were baking cookies and fretting about whether we bought our brother-in-law the right gift: Christ was born! God is here! And we, hushed and awed by something greater and wiser and kinder than we, would kneel of one accord in the stillness.”

[Ross-Gotta, *Watch For the Light*, 100].



# More Quotable Quotes

*No one can celebrate  
a genuine Christmas  
without being truly poor.*

*The self-sufficient, the proud,  
those who, because they have everything,  
look down on others,  
those who have no need  
even of God—*

*for them there will be no Christmas.*

*Only the poor, the hungry,  
those who need someone  
to come on their behalf,  
will have that someone.*

*That someone is God.*

*Emmanuel. God-with-us.*

*Without poverty of spirit*

*there can be no abundance of God.*

-Oscar Romero

## Clean Up Day, Nov. 27th

Thanks to all who turned out to clean the church and the grounds. The Youth Center was made spic and span in preparation for HCAP's renovations (20+ computer labs and a recording studio to be installed), the church finery all polished and all the windows are sparkling.

Lots of work was done in the garden. Here's **Father Saimone Lino** with the wheelbarrow.



The hard work was followed by a delicious lunch courtesy of **Auntie Nancy Shim-Au** and the kitchen angels!

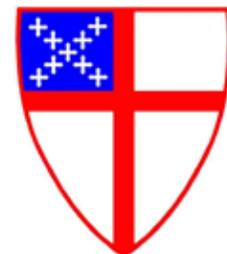
# Community Outreach



On November 18, St. Elizabeth's was a federal surplus food distribution point and our volunteers helped bag canned peaches, cranberry sauce, macaroni, spaghetti sauce, apple juice and milk.

## Red Doors

**Charlie Steffey** got the front doors to the Church painted **RED**! As you know, **RED** is good luck for the Chinese. For the church, **RED** doors symbolize the blood of Christ, and they announce a sanctuary for any in trouble. Come in through the **RED** doors and no one can come after you to do harm.



**Mark your calendars now  
ANNUAL MEETING  
JANUARY 30, 2011**



## Sunday School News

The Sunday School children have been busy in St. Elizabeth's Community garden – their special box with the flowers bordering the box frame - planting seeds and enjoying the vegetables that sprouted and matured – radish and bok choy, one snap pea and waiting for the carrots to mature! (The second planting of radish seeds has been planted.)

Everyone on Thanksgiving Day got to enjoy the beautiful sunflowers on each side of the altar rail! There are two more blooming sunflowers in the garden... no beanstalks! Take a look at the garden and you're sure to see the sunflowers!

The music program keeps the children marching to the right beat and participating in the church service during the offertory! When **Bishop Bob Fitzpatrick** visited, the children lifted their voices in song and Bishop Bob joined in and had the children follow him as they all marched down the aisle and around the church singing! On All Saints' Day, the children waved their pennants

with the name of their special saint to be remembered and followed Seine as they all sang, 'When the Saints Go Marching In' alternating verses with the congregation and accompanied with guest musicians – **Lina Doo** on the 'banjo', **Daniel Yuen-Schat** on cello and **William Lino** on guitar! No one missed a beat!!



As the children look forward to Christmas, each Sunday in Advent the children will process in and participate in the opening service by lighting a candle on the advent wreath and reading a prayer. During the offertory, the children will share with the congregation their hopes and gifts to children around the world – the ragdolls made by the Pali Seniors will be brought forward for blessings and sent to Afghanistan for the children who live in war torn cities, giving them hope! The children are also participating in the Heifer Mission of filling the arks! Around the world, families wait for assistance from Heifer. You can provide them hope this holiday with your offerings of loose change that give them the opportunity to lift themselves out of poverty. The arks will be brought forward for blessings and hopefully be filled with your loose change...no matter how small or large the donation, change matters! So please help the children fill the arks and the donation jar on the table in the narthex each Sunday during Advent.



With Christmas comes the joy of the birth of the Christ child, the Christ candle on the Advent wreath lit, a very blessed Christmas to all. It is in this spirit of Hope and Love that the Sunday School will say 'Aloha' to 'Miss Lisa' – **Mrs. Lisa Anne Mitsuka Chan** who will be relocating to Los Angeles at the beginning of the New Year! Lisa Ann has been with the Sunday School program for decades...teaching Sunday School under the direction of **Mrs. Pat Ramos** and never missed a beat when she continued with **Sue Yap**. Lisa Ann will certainly leave a void in the program but has assured us that when she does come 'home' to visit, she will be in the classroom with the children! (*We're encouraging her to 'visit' every weekend!*) We wish Lisa Ann and her husband, **Allen**, well and all God's blessings as they continue to grow in God's love and ministry.

# Holy Land Pilgrimage with Mother Jodene

by Colette Buis, St. Michael's and All Angels

I remember meeting Rev. Jodene for the first time – and what a lucky time for me! We were delegates to the Episcopal Convention in Honolulu on October 31st, 2009. She had just started promoting her very first “women” pilgrimage to the Holy Land. I remember the excitement in looking over the colorful flyer and thinking – is this possible for me? By the time I arrived home, I made a couple phone calls, and by early morning I had the answer. YES IT IS! ...not only for me, but it was for 4 other ladies in my parish, one of whom was my daughter-in-law, Rebecca. They signed on after church that Sunday when I handed them the flyer. Before we knew it, we started planning our May 2010 trip.

As time grew closer to our leaving for the Holy Land, we could feel the electricity in the air in the realization that we were about to embark on something we couldn't imagine. I must add that everything was taken into consideration and handled...all we had to do was show up! Except for the 5 of us from St. Michael's, all the other ladies were strangers...but not for long. Following in the Footsteps of Jesus and the Women of the Bible was not only exciting and humbling, it was awe inspiring – a joint experience that will be



Washing in the Jordan river.

forever lasting!! I never dreamt I would have had this opportunity and I am thrilled that the opportunity came my way.

As we traveled from place to place in anticipation of what we were about to see, we reviewed the bible stories as they pertained to that day's pilgrimage. I was impressed with one lady in particular who did extra research and presented her interpretation of two Bible stories with a dramatic reading that she composed. That was dedication on her part to enrich our experience – and that she did! While riding on the bus and gathering in the evening after dinner, we sang songs, we prayed, and we enjoyed learning about each other. There was a diversity in the sites we visited and in the ladies visiting them. I had never been on a pilgrimage before and wasn't sure what a difference it would be from a “normal vacation”. Although before leaving home it seemed like I was going on a vacation, once I arrived, the atmosphere was definitely that of a pilgrimage...much more gratifying and emotionally moving than the “normal vacation”. We not only were



Mother Jodene and Lyad Qumri our Palestinian Christian Episcopal guide on the Sea of Galilee boat ride

enjoying a spiritual time together, we had fun while doing it. I hadn't felt that connected to Jesus since my First Holy Communion.

A sampling of the places we visited and prayed at were in the Old City of Jerusalem, the Wailing Wall, Nazareth, Bethlehem, Jericho, Mt. Tabor, and others. We even sailed in a replica boat on the Sea of Galilee just like Jesus did (only on calm waters). J When I think about being at Jacob's Well and realize that I actually stood in the same place where Jesus stood and drew water from the same Well as the Samaritan Woman, I am humbled and still taken aback. My memory of Jacob's Well also includes the reaction of two other ladies with whom I shared this experience after all the others had left the area. There were smiles and there were tears of joy. Each site took on a different meaning for each of us. We even took into consideration how fortunate we were. Jesus visited all these sites on foot or by donkey, which were separated by many miles, while we traveled comfortably in our air-conditioned bus.

If you have any doubts about whether or not to make this pilgrimage, I highly recommend you contact Rev. Jodene and JUST DO IT!!! You will come away with a treasured memory, an enriched heart & soul and a whole host of new friends.

*Aloha, Colette Ruiz  
(St. Michael's and All Angels)*

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## Children's Christmas Party

Neighborhood  
Children's Christmas Party, **Saturday,  
Dec. 18th, 12-3 pm.** Mark your calendars  
now for this annual St. Elizabeth's tradition.  
Please sign up on the sheet for refreshments.  
Santa will be here!

## Christmas Services



### Christmas Eve

Dec. 24th, 9:30 pm. Special Christmas music,  
Handbell Choir, and  
Dec. 24th, 10:00 pm, Festival Holy Eucharist

### Christmas Day

Dec. 25th, 9:00 am Festival Holy Eucharist

### Christmas I

Dec. 26th, 8:15 am Holy Eucharist

*Please invite your friends to join us in the worship of the newborn King.*

A little boy was asked in Sunday school  
what he was going to give his sister for  
Christmas. "I don't know," he said.

"What did you give her last year?" the  
teacher asked.

"Chicken pox," he replied.

### Poinsettia Donations Needed



Donations will be gladly accept-  
ed for purchasing poinsettias to  
decorate the church for Christmas  
—in memory or in honor of a loved one.  
**Deadline is December 19, 2010**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Number of poinsettias @ \$8.50 each \_\_\_\_\_

In memory / honor of (*please circle*) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_