

"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

**February
2010**

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

Hsiao Ying "Ajaon" Chen
Choir Director

Marie Wang
Organist

Katherine Crosier
Parish Administrator
Graphic Design
Music Consultant

Arleen Young
Senior Warden

Doug Ing
Junior Warden

Preston Lentz
Secretary / Clerk

David Hirashiki, Treasurer

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Tap Water

The Rev. David J. Gierlach, Rector

A few Sundays ago, right after the service, I was accosted by 2 of the under 12 crowd. These two boys had a burning question. "Where do you get the water to baptize children? Is it from the Jordan River? "No." Is it from sacred pools on Maui?

"No". "Is it just tap water?!", they asked with clearly disappointed faces? "Why, yes it is!", I told them. As they moped away, it occurred to me how young we are when we fall into the trap. You know the trap I'm talking about. The trap of figuring that God is only to be found in the fantastic, the far away. The trap, it seems, even catches the boys who are not yet 12. And the trap? It is the trap that let's us separate our lives into "Monday to Saturday" lives, on the one hand; and Sunday lives on the other. It seems to be our earliest instinct to push God out to the margins of the fantastic, the unusual, the far away.

We like it that way, you know. Because when God is far away, we can do it our way! Think about it. God says: "trust in me in all things." We say: "Cash is king." God says: "every person on this earth is my child, and you are all brothers and sisters." We say: "Stick to your own kind." God says: "Forgive." We say: "Get even." God says: "Peace." We say: "pre-emptive war." God says: "love". We say: "Get real!"

That's what happens when we wander far away from the Creator of all that is; She who is, as the scholars say, the Ground of All Being.

Our Declaration of Independence from the God who made us has been our undoing. Thankfully, God refuses to accept our "no". Into our independence, into our "no", into the mess we have made of this free gift of creation, comes the God of all, and today, we find him at a wedding.

John begins his gospel story of the ministry of Jesus right here, at the wedding at Cana. Jesus and his disciples and Mary are all there. Now, weddings then are different than weddings today. There were no highly selective guest lists. Everyone came. The wedding didn't last a few hours, it lasted 7 days. Usually it was the social event of the year in these small, poor towns of ancient Israel, the talk of the town. Plenty of food and plenty of drink were expected. And at this particular wedding, the unthinkable happened. The wine ran out!

With no Costco or Safeway to send Uncle Ernie to for more wine; that bride and groom would be the talk of the town alright, they were about to be the year's social embarrassment. What does Jesus do? First, he protests. He isn't ready. That kind of protest is common with the prophets. Moses protested he couldn't speak for God because he stuttered. Jeremiah protested that he was too young. Isaiah lamented his dirty mouth.

And here Jesus seems to scold his mom, telling her the time wasn't yet ripe. She



Rector's Message, cont.

ignored him, as mothers are prone to do, when a child, even an adult child, pipes up. "Do what he tells you", she told the waiters. And what does he tell them, but to fill up the foot washing jugs.

Now, I promise you, this was not treated drinking water that was put in those jugs. Foot washing water is about as ordinary as you can get when you're talking water. Nothing special about it at all. And then it happened. That most ordinary of water, was, by God's grace, turned into the finest wine, as a gift to this newlywed couple.

What I hope our two boys who accosted me last week come to see is that it is not the extraordinary occasion that God is in. Instead, God turns ordinary occasions, ordinary people, our ordinary lives, God turns all of these extraordinary, and does so by using the most ordinary things: like tap water to baptize; like bread and wine, as God becomes present among us in the Eucharist; like you and I to be the hands and feet of God in the lives of one another.

What I wanted those two boys to know is that God doesn't need us to run all over for exotic water from a far distant place to work the miracle of baptism. In fact, we probably shouldn't do that. Everything in the gospel tells us that God comes in what we dismiss as the run of the mill, or worse. The shepherds to whom the angels appeared? In first century Israel, they were the lowest of the low. Few had worse reputations. Few smelled as bad. They were at the bottom of the social register.

Yet to them came the heavenly host announcing the astonishing news of God born among us.

It is in the ordinary, daily living that we share with one another; it is in the cool of the morning at sunrise, what we so often pass off as ordinary---is in fact the extraordinary creation of God. All of this creation. All of this life. From nothing! All of it a gift to us. So, let's not forget to remember that what we so often call ordinary is in fact extraordinary.

That guy or gal sitting right next to you? She's made out of dust, but she's infused with the breath of God. Even that lowly tap water that so disappointed our children. It didn't begin as tap water. It began as the miracle of rain, that then soaked through miles of rock to finally make its way into the vast underground reservoirs that lie in the depths of our islands. Ordinary things that are indeed extraordinary!

Bishop Willimon of Alabama tells the story of being invited to

speak at an inner city church one Sunday. Like us here, he expected to be in and out in an hour or so. When an hour and a half rolled around, and he hadn't even been invited to speak, he began to fidget. Finally, he got his chance, finally the service ended, and as he was leaving, some three hours after he arrived, he asked the pastor why the service was so long. The pastor told him: Out there our people live in a world that says to them, every day, "You are nobodies". "You have no fine car", "You have no fine house", "You have no job." By the standards of the world, you are nobodies. So once a week, we gather together here, to sing, to pray, to give thanks, and in these few hours, once a week, we remember that we are some

continued on page 5



Shrove Tuesday

Tuesday, February 16

6:00 to 8:00 pm

Shim Hall

Shrove Tuesday is also commonly known as Pancake Day. In many countries, the day before Lent, Shrove Tuesday (Mardi Gras) was, and still is, a day of public revelry and carnivals. For the faithful, Lent meant abstaining from eggs and all dairy products, so all of these had to be used up before Ash Wednesday.

Back by popular demand, St. Elizabeth's Shrove Tuesday will have pancakes, sausages and desserts. Please sign up on the clipboard if you can come. It will be fun . . . and delicious!

Making St. Elizabeth's Even Better for YOU . . .



Thanks to **Jerry Goo, George Shim, Father Saimone, Dennis Akau'ola, Ichy Mako** and **Dale Sato** there's now a smooth walkway into the church, with no steps! We are especially indebted to Jerry Goo who donated the cost of the concrete.



Daniel Ho wins 5th Grammy

Daniel Ho's compilation, "Masters of Hawaiian Slack Key Guitar 2" was awarded a Grammy, his fifth overall. He made history last year when he and Tia Carrera became the first to win the Hawaiian music Grammy as performers. Daniel has given several concerts at St. E's. His father was an usher in **Nancy Shim-Au's** wedding, years ago.

2009 Financial Report

| | |
|----------------|-----------|
| Budget Income: | \$264,880 |
| Actual Income: | \$278,551 |
| Expenses: | \$371,863 |
| Loss: | \$ 93,311 |

*Pledge offerings were up over \$6000 from previous year.

The loss was covered in part by the following: Proctor fund; Sale of Apt 109 Banyan Gardens; Rental of rectory and office in Shim hall and parking spaces.

Restricted funds reduced to \$29,388.

Major repairs: Cost of about \$60,000 for re-roofing of church and Shim Hall and repair of air conditioner.

2010 Budget: There is an approximate shortfall of \$55,000.

- Roy Chee



Ichy Mako and Father David painted new stripes in the parking lot.

Born to Eternal Life

Priscilla Kurihara, January 10.

A service of celebration was held at St. Elizabeth's on January 23rd.

Johnny Kuniyoshi, January 26. A

service of remembrance will be held at St. Elizabeth's on Saturday, Feb. 6th, 3:00 pm. Visitation will begin at 2:00 pm..

Give rest, O Christ, to your servants with your saints, where sorrow and pain are no more, neither sighing, but life everlasting.

Sunday School News

by Sue Yap, Dean

Heifer International donations totaled \$413.00! Thank you to all who generously dropped your loose change and more into the little arks, changing the world two by two and bringing the gift of hope to many hungry families. The monies donated have been sent to Heifer International to be used in Haiti. Your support of this mission work is very much appreciated by these families in Haiti who have suffered so much devastation.

On the second Sunday of Christmas, the children brought forward their own pets for a special blessing, lifted their voices in Thanksgiving singing, What a Wonderful World, and all the donations in their little arks in a basket placed next to our crèche were blessed.

Celebrate Shrove Tuesday, February 16, 2010 with the Sunday School children in Shim Hall at 6:00 pm! Pancakes, Pancakes, Pancakes! It's time to party and eat up all the 'fattening' no-no foods as we start our Lenten Season on Ash Wednesday. Please sign up or call the church office if you will join in on the celebration!

During Lent the older children will be weaving crosses from palm leaves. The children will be handing out the crosses on Palm Sunday along with olive branches. Thanks to Kama Wong and his dad for the donation of the palm leaves. Anyone want to learn how to weave the crosses and donate them to our 'cross' basket, drop in to our Sunday School class before the church service!



Children are gathered around the arks which collected loose change for Heifer International. This year's donations will go to benefit the people of Haiti.



Happy Birthday

| | |
|-----------------------|------|
| Elsie Okubo | 2/1 |
| Zachary Okimoto | 2/2 |
| Andrea Sagucio | 2/4 |
| Ida Teiti | 2/8 |
| Alicia Ho Nakata | 2/11 |
| Doris Lam | 2/11 |
| David Kalo | 2/12 |
| Beatriz Timonio | 2/15 |
| Elyson Badua | 2/16 |
| Edward Fitzpatrick | 2/17 |
| Harlan Arakawa | 2/17 |
| Betty Wong | 2/17 |
| Sue Jean Chun | 2/12 |
| Faye Tsukamoto | 2/24 |
| Tulenkun Tulenkun Jr. | 2/25 |
| Kazner Alexander | 2/26 |
| Herold Unarce | 2/26 |
| Ashton Ballesteros | 2/26 |
| Ethan Anderson | 2/27 |
| Lilia Timonio | 2/28 |

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

Wapiti, WY News

Bishop Bob and Mary Page Jones enjoy good health. This month they will put their house on the market and, once sold, will move to Ft. Collins, Colorado. Life is wonderful and exciting and rich and full. (Bishop Bob was interim at St. E's before Mother Jodene.)



Rector's Message, cont.

bodies. We who were once no people: We are the people of God!
We are the people of God!

Like fine wine from foot washing water. Like baptism from tap water. So are you. So am I. Made of the earth, you and I, yet, we are given the breath of God.

I leave you with this. The wedding at Cana says something wonderful about the nature of God. Our God is Trinity. Three persons in one God. God is a God in relationship. The essence of God is relationship. And this God loves a good party! This is a God who lets his hair down! This is a God who takes off her shoes and has a good time! And this is a gracious God.

Did you hear what Jesus didn't say to those newlyweds? Like: "Too bad, you should have planned better!" or "Sorry, you get what you deserve!" NO! There is none of that. Instead there are gallons upon gallons upon gallons of the best wine! Freely given!

Do you see the extravagance of God? Do you see the wastefulness of grace? It is the sower who sows seeds wildly in every direction! This is our God! This God of tap water and fine wine. This is the God who calls us home.

Hear again today's psalm, if you think I'm going too far: "How priceless is your love O God! Your people take refuge under the shadow of your wings. They feast upon the abundance of your house. You give them drink from the river of your delights. For with you is the well of life and in your light, we see light!"

As Elizabeth Browning put it: "Earth is crammed with heaven, and every common bush afire with God. But only he who sees takes off his shoes; the rest sit round it, and pick blackberries."

Amen+

David+

New Directories are here!

At long last, new picture directories have been published and are welcome for the asking. One per family, please.

Thanks to **Tom Ishida** who took pictures of our parishioners for the directory.



Peggy Ishida was the recipient of the Senior Cross Award. Troy Esaki was awarded the Junior Cross. These awards have been given to St. Elizabeth's outstanding volunteers.

Annual Meeting Highlights

Congratulations to the new Vestry members: **David Hirashiki, Gretchen Jong, and Ignacia Terno. Christine Ling**, who had previously had a one-year term, agreed to continue serving. David Hirashiki will be the new treasurer. Elected as Junior Warden was **Doug Ing**. We thank **Rowena Blaisdell, Lowell Ing, and Lani Kaaihue** for completing their terms of service on the Vestry.

Elected as Diocesan Convention delegates were: **Laura Iwami, Fran Kramer, Preston Lentz, Christine Ling, and Arleen Young**. Alternates are Gretchen Jong and Nancy Au. ECW Delegates are: **Nancy Au, Faith Chock, Gretchen Jong, and Pearl Kau**.

Cool Jazz at St. E's

Saturday, February 20th
4:00 — 5:30 pm

Come to St.

Elizabeth's for an afternoon of cool jazz and contemporary music with **Simplicity**, featuring musician **Andy Sexton**. Adults \$10 before February 17th, and \$15 at the door. Children are \$1.

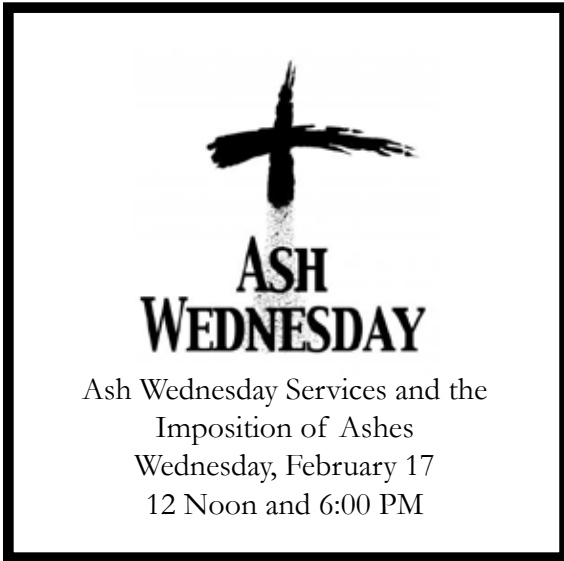


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 720 N. King Street
 Honolulu, HI 96817

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A House of Prayer for all People

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Ash
WEDNESDAY

Ash Wednesday Services and the
 Imposition of Ashes
 Wednesday, February 17
 12 Noon and 6:00 PM



Words of Wisdom

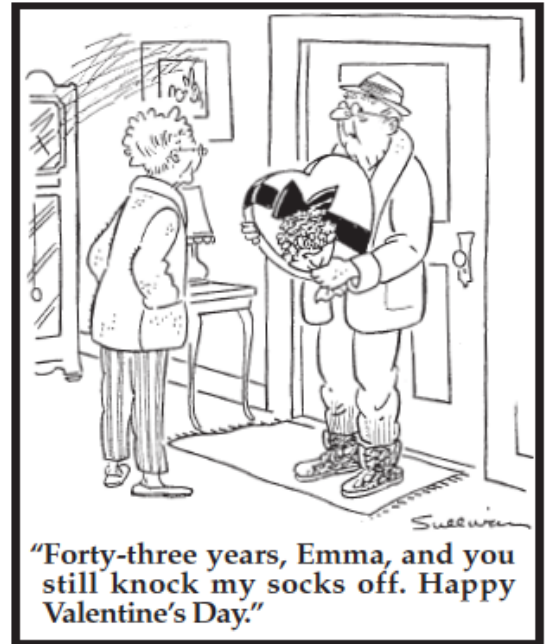
“The preaching of St. Francis of Assisi was effective because he lived the Word. He pondered the Word; he nurtured the Word; he became the embodiment of the Word. And thus when he proclaimed the Word, people saw the Word come to life.” —Roch Niemier, OFM via Apple Seeds



Attendance

| | | |
|------|---------------------|-----|
| 1/3 | Sunday 8:15 am | 172 |
| 1/3 | Ilokano Sunday | 52 |
| 1/10 | Sunday 8:15 am | 137 |
| 1/17 | Sunday 8:15 am | 141 |
| 1/24 | Sunday 8:15 am | 136 |
| 1/31 | Sunday 8:15 am | 171 |
| | Cantonese - average | 6 |

Guest musicians Wing Yin Luk (soprano), Yong Yong (pianist) and Charles Yio (cellist) presented “Jesus loves you” by Li-ling Wong on Jan. 17th.



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