

*"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

## June 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  
Editor and Layout  
Music Consultant

Arleen Young  
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Doug Ing  
Junior Warden

Preston Lentz  
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## Pentecost 2010

*The Rev. David J. Gierlach*

Two years ago this week, I went to Tampa for the funeral of my Mom's brother, Richard, my uncle and godfather.

While the occasion was a sad one, to my delight, I got to spend time with a bunch of cousins whom I had not seen in 25 to 30 years. Naturally the talk turned to family, to parents, grandparents, those who did well by us and those who caused considerable pain. The good and the bad. The ugly and the beautiful.

What was so deeply felt was that we who were there to celebrate the life of Uncle Richard weren't alone. Standing shoulder to shoulder with us were the dead, those parents and grandparents who had so much to say, so much to do with who we all have become today.

The dead were very much alive with us down in Tampa, as we remembered the good, and the bad, the ugly, and the beautiful, that got us here today.

And in this very Church, our beloved Saint Elizabeth's, every week, but particularly at Pentecost, we the living are not alone in these pews.

This year, we have grieved for and celebrated the lives of **Elizabeth Wong, Priscilla Kunihara, Johnny Kuniyoshi, and Mildred Shinto**. Just last week, dear **Helen Ing** died. In ways we cannot understand, they are each of them here in our midst. Sometimes, it feels like we have to squeeze in just to fit all of us in the pews.

We are all here. We are all here.

I share these thoughts not because I am feeling particularly nostalgic. I share these thoughts because the lesson of Pentecost

is (quoting Will Willimon): "We are all here".

In the reading from Acts, we are told that people from all over the world are in Jerusalem. But if you read it carefully, you will see that the people were not only from other places, they were from other times too.

The Elamites who were there at Pentecost? They would have had to travel not only a few hundred miles to be there, they would have had to travel a few hundred years! You see, they died out around 600 BC.

Same for the Medes. They had long since gone extinct.

Tom Long says this about that first Pentecost, (assuming it happened today): "You should have been there with us on Pentecost! We had a huge number of visitors for the service. Some were all the way from Montana! There were people from Arizona, and Michigan, not to mention a whole van load of Assyrians, a couple of Babylonians and a nice little Hittite couple who asked to be baptized."

By bringing together not only people from every WHERE, but also people from every WHEN, God has caused something marvelous to happen. Remember the Tower of Babel? Humanity got a collective swelled head and decided to become God. Everyone spoke one language. A tower was built to reach heaven. God scattered that effort at uniformity, that worship of ego and pride, of domination and control.

Pentecost is God's answer to Babel. The scattering has ended. People from all over are joined back together. But not by human



# Rector's Message, cont.

pride. Not by the ego or domination or control. And most definitely not by one language. At Pentecost, everyone hears and understands; but in their own language, in the sounds of their own traditions.

The gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost is not uniformity, it is harmony!

Divergent voices from everywhere on earth hear and speak the great miracle that God has accomplished in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Just as the prophet Joel foresaw:

“Your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.”

Each in our own language. Each in our own tradition. This is the marvelous tapestry woven by God!

We so often think of salvation as something WE must do, something WE must achieve. But the gift of the spirit shows just how wrong we are to think that. Salvation is not about what we do for God; it is what God is doing for us.

Fr. Vince Donovan lived for years among the Masai people in Africa. He tells the story of a Masai elder who came, after a long time, to faith in Jesus. That elder said this about what he discovered:

“When I first thought about faith, I thought of the lion on the hunt. Its hair on end. Its nostrils wide. It pounces and consumes. I thought I was the lion in pursuit of faith. But now I think differently. The lion is still there, hair raised, eyes wide, pouncing and consuming. But the lion is God, and I, I am the prey.”

In the beginning God breathed into Adam and the first man came alive.

On that first Pentecost, Our Lord breathed on 11 frightened men and they were transformed into a force that would change the world. On this day, Our Lord breathes on us, and out of a scattered, confused, worried people, that breath creates a community living in the spirit of reconciliation, a community based on non-violence, and a community that is full of gifted people using each gift to create, here and now, a glimpse of the Kingdom of God. Here and now.

Here in these islands, one of the greatest gifts we have is the rebirth of the Hawaiian culture. After years of persecution, it is alive and growing today. Part of that rebirth is greeting one another in the traditional Polynesian way: Forehead touching forehead; nose touching nose, breath exchanged with breath.

Peace is at hand. Forgiveness is born. A community is formed. The Spirit is in the breath.

Such are the gifts received then. Such are the gifts received today.

And these ragdolls that have been so lovingly made? Before you send them off — breathe on each one. Send your breath to our brothers and sisters, our little children, who live in too much fear, too much uncertainty, too much pain. Send your breath with these

dolls, for in the breath is life.

My family in Tampa, our family of St. E's, the living and the dead, our Polynesian family. The children of Iraq and Afghanistan. Those from everywhere and every when, at that first Pentecost, we are all together!

Saved! Redeemed! Made new! By the God who will not take NO for an answer. The God who will do it all to have us.

Thanks be to God!

Amen+



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# Spaghetti Dinner and Dance



Sue Yap and Nancy Shim-Au prepare the salad.



Over 40 people came to St. Elizabeth's first-ever **Spaghetti Dinner and Dance** on April 30th in Shim Hall and everyone had a great time!. The delicious spaghetti and sauce was prepared by **Alii Napolean**, son of famous Hawaiian singer Nalani Olds. Alii is a gourmet chef, a delightful young man and always willing to pitch in and lend a hand. He even occasionally shows up at church on Sundays! **Auntie Helen Richardson** and **Uncle Walter Kau** were tearing up the rug (er, concrete), **Ida Gierlach** led everyone in the Macarena and **Marie Wang** (our organist) was on cloud nine all night, having realized her childhood dream of a night spent dancing! Please join us for the next spaghetti dinner and dance set for 6 pm **Friday, June 18.**



Dancing the night away . . . More pictures may be found on the website: [www.stelizabeth720.org](http://www.stelizabeth720.org)

# Quotable Quotes

“Do what you can for God and God will do for you what you cannot do. And remember, the only thing is to give yourself completely, your weakness also, for obedience is dearer to God than the fat of rams.” —*Soren Kierkegaard, Provocations, Orbis Books (2002) at 332.*

“In the Happy Hypocrite, Max Beerboehm tells about a regency rake named Lord George Hell, debauched and profligate, who falls in love with a saintly girl, and, in order to win her love, covers his bloated features with the mask of a saint. The girl is deceived and becomes his bride, and they live together happily until a wicked lady from Lord George Hell's wicked past turns up to expose him for the scoundrel she knows him to be and challenges him to take off the mask. So sadly, having no choice, he takes it off, and lo and behold beneath the saint's mask is the face of the saint he has become by wearing it in love.” —*F. Buechner, Telling The Truth, Harper (1977) at 80.*

# Wise Words

“Surrender yourself wholly to God in all things, and then do not trouble yourself with what he may do with his own.”  
—*Meister Eckhart*

# Have you seen?



The beautiful mural in the Youth Outreach Center was designed by Father Saimone and painted by the children as an ongoing art project. The mural depicts marine life and reminds us that a healthy marine environment is part of our stewardship responsibility.

# St. Elizabeth's Community Garden



An urban garden is a sight for sore eyes. In the midst of all of Palama's concrete, to see tilled dirt sprouting sweet potato, banana, Tongan spinach, basil, parsley and mint, is to see an oasis! So far several individuals and groups are planting away. Some of our



Filipino members are active in the garden, as well as members of the Tongan Free Methodist group with whom we are getting acquainted. There's more room to plant and we could use some tomatoes, some purple eggplant and anything else (legal) you have in mind.

Many thanks to **Doug Ing** for renting the tiller, **Dave Kleinschmidt, Fr. Saimone, Michael Young** and our many friends who tilled the soil, and to **Kathy Crosier** who designed our sign! We hope this garden will be a place where we can work together, grow some food together, provide a source of free vegetables to those in need nearby and get outdoors in the sun a little while every day. See you in the garden!!

## Lunch with the Guys

Friday, May 28th, 11:30 am  
 Pah Ke's Restaurant  
 46-018 Kamehameha Highway  
 Kaneohe



Sign up on the clipboard to have lunch with Father David and the guys. All the men of the church are welcome to this sumptuous Chinese feast (no-host) to talk story. Sign up, then come hungry! We will talk about anything as you wish.



## Attendance

4/25	Sunday 8:15 am	145
4/25	Cantonese service	6
4/27	Compline (CCA)	22
4/28	Wednesday Eucharist	14
5/2	Sunday 8:15 am	127
5/2	Ilokano - Sunday	63
5/5	Wednesday Eucharist	14
5/5	Ilokano - Wednesday	44
5/9	Sunday 8:15 am	148
5/9	Cantonese service	6
5/12	Wednesday Eucharist	18
5/16	Sunday 8:15 am	134
5/16	Cantonese service	7
5/19	Wednesday Eucharist	10
5/23	Sunday 8:15 am	163



The Parish Work Day on Saturday, May 1st, was devoted to clearing the front yard for the Community Garden.

# From the Treasurer

by David Hirashiki, Treasurer

For the first 4 months of 2010 our operating expenses totaled \$128,705. These costs of running our church on a day-to-day basis include payroll expenses (priests, administrator, choir director, organist), utilities, office expenses, building maintenance, grounds maintenance, and insurance.

Our pledges and other offerings totaled \$41,574 for this period. This amounted to 32% of the operating expenses.

Our vestry is very concerned because we have been spending too much of our reserve funds for current operations. We need to build up our reserves but we can't if we spend them on current operations. Here's an example of how we use reserve funds—we will be spending \$11,000 to re-seal the top of the church roof. In 2009 we spent \$65,000 to re-roof the bottom church roof, to re-seal the Shim Hall roof and to fix the A/C. In the future money may not be available if we spend our reserve funds for current operations.

Those who have studied finances of churches found that members of viable churches pledge about 75% of the operational costs. We realize this is an average figure but we are concerned at the large discrepancy between 75% and our current pledge rate which pays only 32% of the costs.

In light of our needs and what is considered appropriate contributions of viable churches, we set a goal of paying 60% of our expenses from pledges and other offerings. As a step in this direction we ask that you reflect on your stewardship of our church and consider increasing your offerings by 50%. We realize that each of you will have to look at your individual circumstances and we appreciate that you contribute in many other ways through your time and talents. The need is really great. We urge you to join us.



## April 2010

Total Income	\$33,735.77
Deferred investment income	5,666.66
Total Expenses	<u>48,252.98</u>

**DEFICIT** -\$ 8,850.55



## Happy Birthday

Jerry Goo	6/1
Kerty Esisok Robert	6/1
Sanson Kom	6/2
Caleb Ramelb	6/2
Daniel Lai	6/3
Elipha Sorcey	6/3
Wallace Tyau	6/4
Caridad Badua	6/4
Noah Blaisdell	6/5
Linda Venenciano	6/8
Teatuahere Gierlach	6/8
William Blaisdell	6/8
Pearl Kau	6/8
Margarita Suyat	6/8
Glenn Woo	6/8
Tracy Blaisdell	6/9
Allen Chan	6/9
Lori Ho	6/9
Charles Kokubun	6/11
Bless Salvator	6/11
Jodene Hawkins	6/12
Sharon Sunagawa	6/15
Lani Kealoha	6/16
Lani Kaaihue	6/17
Alan Ramos	6/17
Estella Iwerks	6/17
Ignacia Terno	6/17
Kenneth Fujishige	6/18
Nakayama Michael	6/19
Ancheny Kom	6/20
Madson Michael	6/20
Eunice Hughes	6/21
Caroline Anderson	6/22
Stephen Chun	6/22
Mason Starkman	6/25
Imenta Helly	6/26
Laura Smith	6/29

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

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Return service requested

## Kids in Church

*thanks to Nella Kleinschmidt for finding these:*

3-year-old Reese : 'Our Father, Who does art in heaven, Harold is His name.Amen.'

One particular four-year-old prayed, 'And forgive us our trash baskets as we forgive those who put trash in our baskets.'

A Sunday school teacher asked her children as they were on the way to church service, 'And why is it necessary to be quiet in church?' One bright little girl replied, 'Because people are sleeping.'

## Helping our Neighbors in Need



*Jennifer Watanabe and Lani Kaaihue prepare food bags for weekly distribution to the needy in our parish. Gifts to the Pastoral Fund help support this project. Please be generous!*

## Volunteers Needed

We need volunteers to assist with our **Summer Youth Program**, Tuesday through Friday, 10 am– 2 pm. Readers, craft makers, gardeners, etc. needed and welcome!



## 'Ask Anything' Night

**May 27th, 7 pm, Shim Hall**

With a little wine and some good food, let's talk story about our faith, the Bible, the goings on in the wider church and anything else on your mind.

If you always wondered about something church-related, or just have a gripe, or want to share some of your own journey of faith, or are struggling with plugging your Sunday life into your Monday through Saturday reality, this informal get together is for you!

It's a chance for us to get to know our faith, and one another, a little better.