

*"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

**May 2010**

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## Come and have breakfast

*The Rev. David J. Gierlach*

My friend Mary Lake, who was 20 years sober in AA when I met her and 30 years sober when she died, used to say that the best gift anyone could give someone else is the gift of a new day. Wiping the slate clean. Forgetting the past. Starting fresh. The gift of a new day.

In the days and weeks following the Lord's resurrection, nobody needed a new day more than Peter. Here's a guy who never got it for the longest time. He was the one who, when Jesus asked: "Who do people say that I am?" yelled out, "You are the Messiah!"

But, within a few minutes, once Jesus got done telling them what the consequences of that were, Peter is called a Satan and told to get lost.

Or the time Peter was invited to join Jesus in walking on the water, only to sink into the depths when fear took the place of faith. He fell asleep in the garden while Jesus sweated drops of blood. "Can't you wait one hour with me?" Jesus asked.

It was Peter's sword that cut off the guard's ear when they came to arrest Jesus. "Put it away!" Jesus scolded. "If you live by the sword, you'll die by it too."

Even when the women bring news of the empty tomb, of seeing the risen Lord, according to Peter: "Nonsense!"

Peter was an intensely practical man. Life was what he could see, touch, taste, feel and hear. There was nothing more to it than that. Except, that as one of the first called by Jesus, he also kept encountering life that was not so easy to explain. He was there, even

if for a moment, walking on the water with Jesus.

He was there when Jesus brought the daughter of Jairus back from the dead. He was there when Lazarus came stumbling out of the tomb. But Peter was an intensely practical man.

Much of what he experienced with Jesus just didn't sink in. His practical view of the world wouldn't let it in. And then Jesus was killed. Life doesn't get much more practical than death, does it?

And then... First one. Then two. Then, today, a third appearance. In between, they all went back to what they knew. They were, after all, and all of them, practical men. But even that seemed to be a failure.

A boatload of professional fishermen, couldn't catch a minnow all night. How embarrassing! And once again, a stranger on the shore points the way. The same stranger who years earlier pulled them off those very same boats, away from those very same nets, and said: "Follow me."

The one they ate with, laughed with, learned from, still, so very much the stranger to them.

Right from the start, Peter knew he was an odd choice for Jesus to choose. The first words we hear from Peter in all the gospels echo in the last words we hear from Peter in St. John's gospel: "Leave me Lord, for I am a sinful man." Indeed.



You have to wonder what must Peter have been thinking? No question he was elated that once again, Jesus was there again. But you gotta believe he felt dread too. Only a week or two had passed since he denied him, ate his own words about going down with him.

Shame and dread.

Perhaps made worse when he saw the charcoal fire already lit. It was, after all, a charcoal fire that he warmed himself on when that little girl confronted him: “You’re one of them!”

Into that scene, into those memories, Peter stepped, onto the beach, soaking wet, out of breath from his swim. Only to hear the words: “Come, and have breakfast.”

Jesus the Messiah. Jesus the Christ. Jesus the Anointed one. Jesus the Suffering Servant. And today, Jesus, the short-order cook.

“Come and have breakfast.”

And what he is cooking up is Peter’s redemption. Three times: “Do you love me?” Three times: “You know I do!” Three times: “Feed my lambs.”

And with that, Peter’s standpoint has changed from the charcoal fire in the high priest’s courtyard to this charcoal fire, lit by the Lord; and Peter’s viewpoint of himself, of his Lord, of reality itself, has shifted.

His denials are cancelled. He is restored. By himself he hauls in the net of 153 fish. 153, representing the entire membership of the church. Every last one of us, in every shape and size. The whole motley crew!

“To haul” in Greek is the same word as “to draw”. As when Jesus said: “When I am lifted up, I will draw all people to myself.” Peter hauls in the fish, all of the fish.

However blurry, Peter begins to see the world as Jesus sees it. However haltingly, Peter begins to do what Jesus did.

There is the story of Fred Snodgrass.

He played centerfield for the New York Giants during the 1912 World Series. They were playing against the Boston Red Sox. In the 6<sup>th</sup> game of the Series, Fred caught a fly ball, and then dropped it. A run scored. The Sox went on to win the Series. When he died some 66 years later, in his obituary, the New York Times reported:

Fred Snodgrass

Ball Player

Muffed fly ball.

Until that encounter with Jesus on the beach, Peter’s fate was the same:

Valued apostle

Impetuous

Denied his best friend three times.

If you have ever felt you have fallen too far, wandered away to a place of no return, think about Peter. The rock on whom the church is built had feet of clay indeed. Of all the apostles, he was the most wounded. The wounds were often self-inflicted. And in that, we have a real brother in Peter.

It has been said that a person can choose only in the world he can see. For Peter, for you, and for me, the world we see too often is one that is hostile, that requires our best efforts just to keep from drowning, that demands our full control and maximum effort.

Alas, this is not the world made new in Jesus. And to gain the eyes needed to see the world made new by Jesus, our efforts, our maximum efforts, must often blow up in our faces. Shaming us. Confusing us.

The shame, the confusion, is not intended to punish. It is intended to encourage a surrender. A surrender of our maximum effort. A surrender of control. That is the painful letting go that Peter endured; it is the same letting go Jesus demands of you and of me.

In the letting go dawns the gift of a new day: when the slate is wiped clean, the past forgotten, the start made fresh again. Only now, the fresh start begins in a world made new by Jesus. A world where we (quoting Stringfellow):

“In the midst of chaos, celebrate the word; amidst babel, speak the truth! Confront the noise and verbiage and falsehood of death with the truth and potency and efficacy of the word of God! Know the word, teach the word, nurture the word, preach the word, defend the word, incarnate the word, do the word, live the word! And more than that, in the word of God, expose death and all death’s wiles, rebuke lies, cast out demons, exorcise, cleanse the possessed; raise those who are dead in mind and conscience!”

This is the new day that Peter struggled to open his eyes to see. This is the new day created in the resurrection of Christ. This is the new day that you and I live in. May we be given the grace to embrace it; the grace to let it embrace us.

+amen



## Attendance

3/24	Wed. Eucharist	16
3/26	Tongan Fri. Eucharist	15
3/27	Sunday 8:15 am	176
3/31	Wed. Eucharist	17
4/1	Maundy Thursday	52
4/2	Good Friday Stations	66
4/2	Good Friday - evening	52
4/4	Easter Day	225
4/7	Wed. Eucharist	17
4/7	Ilokano Eucharist	54
4/11	Sunday 8:15 am	125
4/14	Wed. Eucharist	12
4/18	Sunday 8:15 am	152
4/21	Wed. Eucharist	10
Cantonese - average		5

## Quotable quotes from notable folks

“How do we overcome the spiritual “power” of money? Not by accumulating more money, not by using money for good purposes, not by being fair and just in our dealings. The law of money is the law of accumulation, of buying and selling. That is why the only way to overcome the spiritual “power” of money is to give our money away, thus desacralizing it and freeing ourselves from its control. To give away money is to win a victory over the spiritual power that oppresses us. This is an example of what the fight of faith means.”  
*Jacques Ellul, Violence: Reflections From a Christian Perspective, 166.*



Joshua Yuen-Schat, son of Ajaon Chen, recently played the offertory on the organ. He is an eighth-grader and has taken organ for nearly four years with Katherine Crosier.

## FOR HEAVEN’S SAKE

By Mike Morgan



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# A Glorious Easter at St. E's!



The sweet smell of Easter lilies fills the air at the joyous Eucharist on Easter Day. Father David (center) is joined by Father Saimone Lino, Father Peter Fan, Mother Imelda at the altar, with assistance from Eucharistic Ministers Charles Kokubun, Preston Lentz, and Lani Kaaihue.



Bernice Kau and Sue Jean Chun enjoy the yummy food .



The church was so full, it was hard to find a seat!



Easter Day was also Walter Kau's birthday, so he celebrated by playing the piano at the Easter brunch in Shim Hall.



Stuart Ching



Fane Lino



Mother Imelda.

# Sunday School News

The Sunday School children accompanied by the Handbell Choir all raised their voices and ringing bells in Thanksgiving during the Offertory on **Easter** morning.

Thank you to everyone who donated so generously—the Easter treats, eggs, monetary donations and your time! The children from infants to adults, all enjoyed the Easter Egg hunt and treats...and the fellowship that followed! Blessed Easter season to all!

On **Mother's Day**, the children will again lift their voices to all the mothers in the congregation. ...mothers, grandmothers, great grandmothers... mothers to be, mothers who have lost a child, women who nurture a child... the children give thanks to all the women in their lives.



*The innocent sound of children's voices were joined by the handbell and adult choir in the Easter anthem, "Alleluia! Christ the Lord is Risen!" by Lynn Shaw Bailey and Becki Slagle Mayo.*



*The annual Easter Egg Hunt.*

**Pentecost Sunday**, which marks the end of the Easter season celebrates the descent of the Holy Spirit on the Apostles. There are three festivals commemorated in the Christian calendar. God the Father's wonderful Christmas gift of His one and only Son, and Christ's Easter triumph over the power of sin, death, and the devil would be of no benefit to us if the Holy Spirit did not give us the gift of saving faith. Through the Word and Sacraments, the Holy Spirit gives us the power to believe and trust in Christ as our Savior. This gift of faith in the saving work of our Lord Jesus Christ is why we celebrate Pentecost with such joy and thanksgiving. The church will look 'red', symbolizing the tongues of fire that appeared on the apostles. Pentecost falls on Sunday, May 23rd.



The Sunday School year ends the following Sunday, on May 30th. Sunday School will be in recess until the first Sunday in September. During the summer, pew packets and activity worksheets will be available to the children sitting in church. The music academy will meet in July and August during the Sunday service, from 8:15 to 8:40 am.

Safe and Happy Summer to all!



# Rector's Ramblings

+The newly painted Church, wearing the deep ivory perfectly chosen by Patsy Ching, looks absolutely beautiful! Thanks to all who made it happen!

+I want to resume the quarterly lunch first with the men, then with the esteemed women of the church. Not one to let a few extra pounds stop me, please let me know which day of the week works best for you and please come hungry. We can talk about anything and everything and nothing, as you wish!

+Mother Jodene and Kit are well settled into their lovely new home in Kihei. They graciously fed me a few weeks ago and send their love and aloha to everyone at St. E's! For those of you going to the Holy Land soon with Mother Jodene, may God's blessing be on you throughout your travels. I am sure it will be an astonishing time.

+Many thanks to you who volunteer in the building up of God's Kingdom. Whether its music or cleaning or calling or cooking or writing or praying or serving or supervising or flower putting or bell ringing or reading or singing, you make the Kingdom that much closer, that much more tangible, that much more embracing in our day to day lives.

+The HCAP plans, including a 20+ computer station at one end of the Youth Center and a Sound Studio at the other end is going forward full speed ahead. HCAP's board of director's has approved the project and we will be negotiating lease terms this week!

+Confirmation classes will begin May 2 right after church in Shim Hall. Bishop Bob will confirm all who are prepared at St. Andrew's Cathedral in late May, 2010.

+If you're reading this and have not seen the inside of St. E's for a month (year?/decade?) or more, please stop by and get reacquainted. We would love to see you!

## Who Are You?

- God is not rescuer.
- God is not safety.
- God is not benevolent or critical Father-knows-best.
- God is not puppet or puppeteer.
- God is not who I thought/was taught he is.
  
- God is love —reckless, spendthrift, indiscriminate, passionate.
- God is pursuer — relentless, determined, tireless seeker of my soul.
- God is challenger — demanding movement, journey, change, growth.
- God is creator — delighted in me, her creation.
- God is nurturer — feeding her hungry children at the breast.
- God is teacher — eager to share her knowledge and wisdom.
- God is dancer and music maker — creation responds joyfully to her choreography.
- God is spirit, wind, and fire — uncontainable, she will not tolerate the tidy boxes we painstakingly construct for her.
- God is light — exposing, revealing, searching out all that I would hide.
- God is unknowable yet constantly revealing herself to me with a richness and intensity I cannot ignore.
- God knows me, penetrates and forms me, recognizes and claims me as she has from my mother's womb.

*The Reverend Virginia Going*



## ECW Meeting

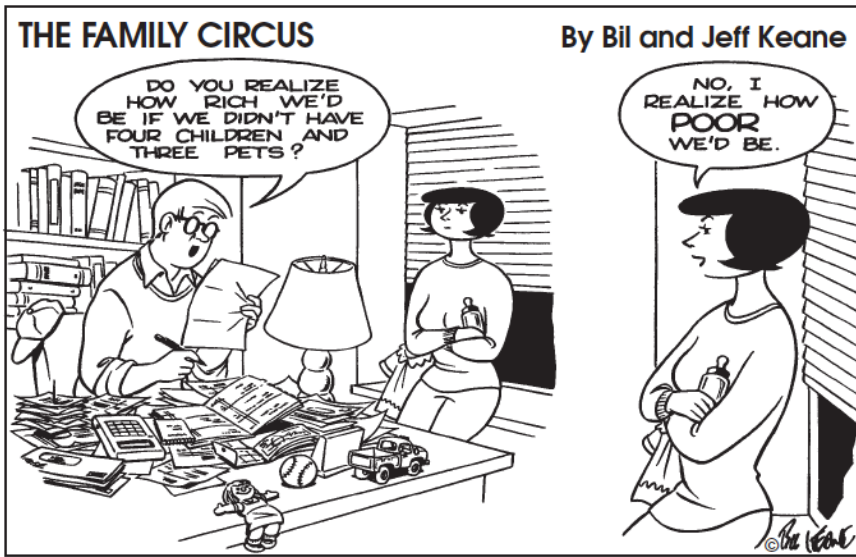
**Saturday, May 8**  
**St. Mark's Episcopal Church**  
**739 Kapahulu Avenue**

9 am Votive Mass for Julian of Norwich  
Sung Mass and Benediction with Father Paul Lillie

9:50 am Break

10 am, Dr. Michael Ida, Senior Warden will share a talk on Blessed Julian of Norwich. May 8th happens to be the Julian Commemoration Day.

11 am, Business meeting followed by lunch hosted by teh women of St. Mark's. A calabash offering will be taken to the assist the LA ECW with their stained galss window of Julian.



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# A mother's dictionary

*Amnesia:* A condition that enables a woman who has gone through labor to consider a second child.

*Feedback:* The inevitable result when your baby doesn't appreciate the strained carrots.

*Grandparents:* The people who think your children are wonderful even though they're sure you're not raising them properly.

*Show-off:* A child who is more talented than yours.

*Whodunit:* None of the kids who live in your house.



## Disciples Journey '10

About 20 children from St. Elizabeth's attended Disciples Journey '10 held April 16-17 at the Church of the Holy Nativity in Aina Haina. For many of them, it was their first trip to East Honolulu! They made the Easter altar cloth above, adorned with birds, butterflies, angels and crosses.

## Out of the mouths of babes . . .

A Sunday school teacher asked her little children, "How many of you would like to go to Heaven?"

Everyone raised their hands except little Jimmy. "I'm sorry, I can't," he explained. "My mommy said to come right home after Sunday school." —via Peter Dring, Land O Lakes, WI

Richard Haller	5/2
Taylor Venenciano	5/3
Jennie Pang	5/3
Dr. Gerald Gifford	5/4
Evelyn Tyau	5/4
Mermi Dereas	5/4
Leslie Mitsuka	5/5
Preston Lentz	5/8
Jessie Hayashi	5/10
Margie Leong	5/10
Felicidad Bueno	5/12
Harold Shak	5/13
Inoleen Eichy	5/13
Liesl Eng	5/14
Rowena Blaisdell	5/15
Iwickson Este	5/15
Chase Pacupac	5/18
Tim Chong Young	5/19
Shirley Lau	5/22
Ruby Au	5/24
Dwight Kokubun	5/25
May Wai Hin Chock	5/26
Helen Tom	5/26
Greg Smith	5/26
Marjory Tyau	5/28
Dorothy Jung	5/31

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

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THE FAMILY CIRCUS By Jeff & Bil Keane



"Mommy, will you write 'Happy Mother's Day' on here? But don't look at it!"

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## Friday Nite Spaghetti Dinner and Dance!

**Friday, April 30**  
**6:00 pm**

Come to Shim Hall this Friday to "fill your tummies" with food and fellowship and who doesn't like spaghetti!



After dinner we'll put on our dancing shoes and gear ourselves up for the next day.

## Parish Work Day, May 1st

Junior Warden **Doug Ing**'s next project is to create gardens at St. Elizabeth's on our next Parish Work Day, Saturday, **May 1**, from 9:00 am to noon. Load up on all those carbs the night before, then help us beautify our church grounds with gardening and other tasks.