

FROM PASTOR TOM

LENTEN PRAYERS

CAN OPEN DOORS

Lent involves keeping an open mind and heart to the startling possibility of God working through us even in times of trouble and weakness.

We have the story of Jesus confronting his disciples (us) with the reality that he has to face the cross, and that each follower will have to carry their own cross with faith that God's grace will be stronger than any despair or fears. Will faith actually up-end and turn a situation around through integrity, forgiveness, truthfulness, and unconditional love with patient commitment?

Well, it sounds good! However, we all know living with such faith is not easy and often leads us through difficulties which are harder than we would want to imagine.

Perhaps this is why one line from the Book of Revelations (a book filled with violent images which find promise that hinges on the image of hope for a better world) also offers the door to faith. Here, Jesus stands at the door and knocks, if anyone opens their life to him, he will enter and make his home with them.

Artists depict this door as having no external handle, so it must be opened from inside of us by faith – and a welcome extended.

Not every door should be opened to let the outside world in. Some doors need a “peep” hole so we can check the reality we might be opening ourselves up to! Some doors need double locks, and dead bolts, or security chains and bars for protection. Caution is wise and not foolish!

Never-the-less, a metaphor for prayer like “opening the door of faith” should not necessarily be extrapolated to become a “blind rule” for every-day situations. Unconditional, does not mean without caution or risk.

I was co-chaperone on a canoe trip with teens. The transportation driver of the borrowed van which had no gas gauge was coordinator of the outing and assured us he was pretty certain we had enough fuel. But,

on the way home on the Interstate the engine chugged to a rolling stop – no more gas! We had just passed a lone farm house lit in the evening twilight 500 yards back on the other side of safety fence. With one teen (in a time before cell phones) I walked back to the house to inquire about using a phone to call AAA, or gas stations, and help in a difficult situation?

We knocked! The curtain on the window of the door pulled aside and the owner peered out. The gas station was 2 miles down the road. She was reluctant to have us come in to use the phone. We understood fully. However, through the door she said her son kept a 2 gallon can of gas for the lawn mower in the outside shed. I offered her \$10 for the gas, promised to return the can, and we returned to the van with enough fuel to get us to the gas station where we could fill up and continue home after the borrowed gas can was returned.

The teen and I stood at the door and knocked – hospitality was opened to us! We were ready for rejection. We faced the inquiring voice of caution. We stated a genuine need. In that moment of doubt and hesitation someone on the other side had to make a quick decision. Was there reason for fear or trust? – What was the risk? Was our plight real or doubtful?

Prayer takes the risk of voicing need, hoping for hospitality, understanding our situation, and embracing the risk even when we know the response opens us up an unknown outcome. This is also one way we travel with Jesus through the time of Lent. When we are out of the fuel that gives us energy to keep going, we can also be ready to be surprised by grace!

Warmest Lenten Blessings,
Pastor Tom

FROM PASTOR JIM

The Church of the Holy Cross has acquired two automatic external defibrillators (AEDs). These units are used to "shock" the heart back into normal rhythm in cases where the heart has stopped functioning, either because a condition known as ventricular fibrillation (abnormal, disorganized, non-functional electrical rhythm in the muscle of the ventricles - the two lower heart

chambers) or the heart has stopped beating altogether (asystole). Either way, the heart is no longer pumping blood to the rest of the body. Although training is better (we will have training sessions soon), AEDs are designed for use by untrained laypersons. The units "talk" the responder through the procedure. The type we have can be used for both adults and children.

Why did we do this, you ask? Well, heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women in the U.S. Heart disease affects over thirteen million in the U.S. Deaths due to heart disease occur in over 325,000 per year, and one-half of these are sudden deaths. The reason behind using a defibrillator, along with CPR, is to prevent a death if possible. AEDs have been used for some years and have been placed in both public and private areas, such as airports, hotels, malls, parks - and churches. As people who care about people, we needed to be prepared for a possible emergency in which an AED might be used.

As soon as dates and times have been arranged, we will let everyone know where (here, of course!) and when. This is also a good time to remind all to learn about heart disease and prevention. There are several good websites, books, etc. to do this. One of these is webMD.com

Hopefully, we will never have to use one of our AEDs, but we must be prepared to do so if needed.

Grace and peace - Pastor Jim Erickson

NOTE: CHC has two defibrillators on hand: one will be installed in the back of the sanctuary and the other in the Building of Faith.

EASTER LILIES

Order your Easter Lilies for **\$12.50 per pot**. Order deadline is Friday, **March 16**. Please sign up on the bulletin board. They will be used for the Easter Service on April 8 and will be available for pick up after that worship service. Thank you for sharing.

Details of the Easter Sunrise Service being planned are not yet available.

EASTER EGGS ACTIVITIES

The Board of Christian Education will be hosting the Easter egg coloring in J's Café on Saturday, April 7 from 9-11 am. Children should wear an apron or ready-to-discard old clothing.

The Easter egg hunt will follow on Sunday, April 8 during the Sunday School time starting from 8:45 am. Children are reminded to bring a basket to collect your 'findings'!

CHURCH WEBSITE

CHURCH WEBSITE COMING SOON –
"GOT PICTURES?"

Church of the Holy Cross is taking the "tortoise approach" to the "digital" revolution – slowly but surely! Many of you already use e-mail, or shop, book flights, or read the newspaper on the internet. We are in the process of creating our own website in order to make our church more accessible to our members, to extend an invitation to visitors, and to let the world know that "God is still speaking"...in Hilo!

If you are a photographer or visual artist by hobby or profession, would you consider submitting photos (preferably digital, but prints are also welcome) to enhance our website? (If there are recognizable people in the photos, we will need to get their permission (or parent/guardian for minors) on a release form.) Scenic photos of the church campus or any other landscape are also wanted. You will be given photo credit unless you choose anonymity.

Please contact me by phone (969-8215 day / 959-1763 night) or e-mail RNDuPonte07@gmail.com
Mahalo – Ruth Niino-DuPonte

ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

The joy that comes from giving someone just the perfect gift is rewarded by their utter delight. Joy motivates us to share our resources with a hurting world through One Great Hour of Sharing.

Giving from our abundance helps build clean water and sewage facilities in villages devastated by poverty, nurtures self sufficiency through health care, education and job training, and brings safety, shelter and food after natural disasters or violent circumstances that have made towns uninhabitable.

OGHS provides support in 138 countries by working with local, national and international partners. On average, of every dollar given to OGHS, 88 cents are used directly for mission, 6

cents for interpretation materials and 6 cents for administrative costs.

Sharing brings joy to us, to others, to God. Let sharing transform you as you help transform the world through One Great Hour of Sharing. Use the enclosed envelope to share with the world.

ARAB VISITORS TO SHARE EXPERIENCES

Two Arab Palestinian Muslim men who live in Bethany, a village in the West Bank close to Jerusalem, were scheduled to speak at Church of the Holy Cross on **March 16 at 2:30 p.m.** However, due to a family situation both had to return home. The priest who has hosted them will be the speaker instead. The public is welcome to come and hear about experiences living in Israeli occupied territory.

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT

Takeru Hayashi will be building three benches plus concrete foundations on March 31 and April 1 as part of his Eagle scout project of the Boy Scout of America. Location is along the north side walkway toward the courtyard side of the sanctuary.

Also birds nets will be installed on the beams above that walkway.

He is trying to coordinate the work in the way to cause minimum disturbances of the events taking place on the same day. He hopes to finish the project by the time the Palm Sunday service starts.

Please contact him t.k.hayashi808@gmail.com or Saeko (spacecadet@hawaiiantel.net cell phone 895-2804) if you have any concerns or questions.

We thank Takeru for this thoughtful and meaningful project to the church.

HELP NEEDED - ICIA

Paint up - fix up: Can you help?

Hawaii Housing Authority is asking for help from ICIA for a community project. They need volunteers to help paint the interiors of four housing units. Paint and all other equipment will be provided. As soon as the painting is done, four families will be able to move in. The project is scheduled for March 17th. We have been asked if any churches can help provide enough volunteers the project can be finished

in one day. If you are interested please speak to Pastor Tom or Pastor Jim.

VOLUNTEERS FOR MARCH 18, 25

USHERS: IYAA

FLOWERS:

3/18: Millie Daikawa

3/25: Goya Family (Mem)

CHILDCARE:

3/18: Irene Okada

3/25: Yoko Hayano

LAYREADERS:

3/18: Ruth Niino-DuPonte

3/25: Eric Tanouye

PERSONAL:

SHIGEKO CHANG, 88, passed away on February 24, in Kona. Shigeko was a retired public health nurse and a long time member of our church who expended so much time and energy to better the lives of many, many people in our community and never shied away from taking on tasks, large or small, as a member of our church family. She was a great guiding inspiration for the early days of Hospice of Hilo. She is survived by two sons: Larry (Paulette) and Paul (Pat) Chang of Kona, three brothers, three grandchildren, numerous nieces and nephews. No service is planned. Our condolences to the Chang and Izumo Ohana.

HONORING TERUO KAWATA

Retirement Housing Board Honors Kawatas at its February 24 meeting, the Board of Directors of Retirement Housing Foundation (RHF) honored Teruo Kawata, a former Hawaii Conference Minister, on his retirement from the Board after fifteen years of service. His wife, Kiku, was also recognized for her efforts on the RHF Advisory Commission. The Board also elected Norma DeSaegher, Waipahu UCC pastor, as a new member. She joins Kaumakapili Church member Frank Jahrling as board members from Hawaii.

FRIDAY MATINEE FILM SERIES

March 30 – June 1, 2012: 1pm – 4pm

Institute for Astronomy

“Films Made in Hawaii” is the topic of the second 2012 series of movies for viewing and discussion. A varied collection, both those about Hawaii and those filmed in Hawaii but about other places, has been selected. From huge blockbusters to

small local movies, these films illustrate the realities of movie-making in beautiful Hawaii.

People directly involved in producing, acting in, and promoting movies in Hawaii may join the discussions to help us understand what making a movie here entails.

Cost is \$10 for the series, payable at the door. All sessions will meet in the lower level auditorium at the Institute for Astronomy, 640 N. Auuhoku Pl, Hilo, on Fridays from 1 to 4 pm.

Directions: From Komohana, turn makai on Nowelo and take the first left. The Institute for Astronomy is the building at the end of the road. (Park on the street).

Here is a list of the dates and tentative list of the films scheduled. Because each film stands alone, you may choose to attend only some of the films.

- March 30: *Princess Ka'iulani* (2009)
- April 6: *Hawaii* (1966)
- April 13: *Jurassic Park* (1993)
- April 20: *Picture Bride* (1994)
- April 27: *Bird of Paradise* (1951)
- May 4: *In Harm's Way* (1965)
- May 11: *Papillon* (1973)
- May 18: *Blue Hawaii* (1961)
- May 25: *Molokai: The Father Damien Story* (1999)
- June 1: *Pearl Harbor* (2001)

NOTE: *South Pacific* will be shown as part of our fall musical series.

From the Pension Boards – UCC

Dear Friends of the Church of the Holy Cross

Your gift to the 2011 Appeal for the Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund in the amount of \$1,796 has been received by the Pension Boards. Thank you!

Your donation has made a difference in the lives of UCC Pastors and their families who have benefitted from your generosity. Pastors who received grants from the Christmas Fund in recent weeks ago wrote:

“Please give my thanks to each one who made this gift possible. The love and kindness reflects God’s love, through your ministry. It is a blessing and a big help for me. Bless you in this advent season and on in the year.”

a carrot? an egg? or a coffee bean!

“Please accept my sincere thanks for the wonderful advent gift. It is so gratifying to

know that we elders are still remembered as real persons, even though we cannot give the service to others as we would like. Our love for our friends and family is constant. God’s blessings to you all.”

“Thank you so every much for the Christmas gift. It was a big help. I was faced with surgery which kept me in the house a shut-in for several weeks. Thank God I am doing much better for 89 years. It sure makes a difference. It is a real help in making our Christmas a joyful time.”

“We are also so grateful for and touched by the UCC congregations and individuals who have provided the funding in recognition and appreciation of the faithful ministry of so many ministerial families like us. We thank you for your wonderful compassionate work. May God richly bless you and yours now and in the years to come,”

“Thank you for sending me a most generous check at Christmas time. It is wonderful to know I have been remembered and cared for in this way by the church that my husband I loved, and love to this day. Blessing to you all.”

Your gift matters. Let me express sincere gratitude for your compassion and your willingness to take time during this busy holiday season and respond with generosity to the needs of our UCC clergy, lay employees and all who will receive help from the Christmas Fund in 2012.

In Christ’s service,
The Reverend Dr. M. Douglas Burko
Director, Ministerial Assistance

Reprinted from Home Touch

March 11, 2012

Scripture Reading: John 2:13-22

THOUGHT: We are not human beings on a spiritual journey. We are spiritual on a human journey. – Unknown

According to an article by Zachary Roth there’s this guy who lost his job, was in pain, and desperate for medical attention. Here’s Roth: “Some people who need medical care but can’t afford it go to the emergency room. Others just hope they’ll get better. James Richard Verone robbed a bank. Earlier this month, Verone, a 59-year-old convenience store clerk,

walked into a Gaston, North Carolina bank and handed the cashier a note demanding \$1 and medical attention. Then he waited calmly for police to show up. He's now in jail and has an appointment with a doctor this week.

Verone had a plan. He tried to relieve the bank of only one dollar. 'That's why he's being charged with larceny, not bank robbery. He's thinking he'll do his time in jail for a few years, get the back and foot surgery he needs, then get released from jail in time to collect Social Security and go live on a beach somewhere. Verone's story is that of a person moved by desperation. And sometimes, desperation causes us to act and react in creative, if not harmful, ways.

We get desperate for a lot of reasons. Sometimes the reasons are *financial*, or *medical*, or the *heavy burden of responsibility*. Sometimes, the desperation is *romantic*: The bloom of love fades, or a thorn draws blood. A sense of *spiritual desperation* is rare, but not unheard of.

Perhaps *all* desperation is at the core *spiritual*. That's why, back in the day, the doors of a church were often left open so that people could step inside a safe place to pray and pour out their hearts. Walking into a sanctuary, kneeling at an altar, praying beneath a cross was not only therapeutic, but perhaps a step on a journey to wholeness and healing.

Verone's hatched a creative plan to get what he needed. But he's not the only desperate soul in our cities, towns and hamlets. The New England writer Henry David Thoreau believed that many people live lives of "quiet desperation."

If you are feeling this way, remember the Bible says to "Cast all your anxiety upon him, for he cares for you: (1 Peter 5:7 NIV). If you know of someone who is at their wits end, remind them gently that Jesus said, "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest"

(Matthew 11:28 NIV) - Timothy Merrill

Prayer: O God, help me to turn my cares over you. You are much stronger than I! In Jesus' name, Amen.

A GRANDMA'S WISDOM CARROTS, EGGS OR COFFEE BEAN

A young woman went to her grandmother and told her about her life and how things were so hard for her. She did not know how she was going to make it and wanted to give up. She was tired of fighting and struggling. It seemed as one problem was solved, a new one would pop up.

Her grandmother took her to the kitchen. She filled three pots of water and placed each on high fire, and soon the pots came to boil. In the first she placed the carrots, in the second she placed the eggs and in the last she placed ground coffee beans.

She let them boil without saying a word. After a while she turned off the burners.

She fished the carrots out and placed them in a bowl. She pulled the eggs out and placed them in a bowl. Then she ladled the coffee out and placed them in a cup. Turning to her granddaughter she asked, "Tell me what you see," "Carrots, eggs and coffee," she replied.

Her grandmother brought her closer and asked her to feel the carrots. She did and noted that they were soft. Then the grandmother then asked her to take an egg and break it. After pulling off the shell, she observed the hard boiled egg.

Finally the grandmother asked her to sip the coffee. The granddaughter smiled as she tasted its rich aroma then asked, "What does it mean?"

Her grandmother explained that each of these objects had faced the same *ADVERSITY... boiling water*.

And each reacted differently.

The carrots went in strong, hard and unrelenting. However, after being subjected to the boiling water, it softened and became weak.

The egg had been fragile. Its thin outer shell had protected its liquid interior, but, after sitting through the boiling water, its' inside had become hardened.

The ground coffee was unique however. After they were in the boiling water, they had changed the water.

When adversity knocks on your door, which are you..

a carrot? an egg? or a coffee bean!

“A REDISCOVERY OF LIFE”

*The Teachings of Anthony de Mello,
A Modern Day Mystic*

**Friday: Mar. 30, 7-9pm and/or
Saturday: Mar. 31, 8:30am – 4:00pm***



*"When the eye is unobstructed, the result is sight....
When the heart is unobstructed, the result is love."
Anthony de Mello*

**A four part video of Anthony de Mello's last U.S. Seminar, plus readings,
meditation, and discussion.**

Facilitated by Richard Hennessey, LCSW

**THE CHURCH OF THE HOLY CROSS, UCC
440 West Lanikaula Street, Hilo, HI 96720
FREE - Donations Welcome**

*Bag lunch or order bento (\$7) by 3/16 at revthomasolcott@hotmail.com for the
Saturday session.

Info? contact Richard: 808 372-1219 or rhawareness@yahoo.com
Pre-registration recommended at revthomasolcott@hotmail.com
Co-sponsored by: East Hawaii UCC Clergy and NASW-HI
(Other co-sponsors welcome: revthomasolcott@hotmail.com)