

THE MESSENGER

Church of the Holy Cross
United Church of Christ
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April 10, 2012

FROM PASTOR TOM

ALARMING EASTER JOY -

Easter Morning, as the colored eggs were being hidden around our campus, I suddenly heard a screeching alarm not quite familiar – loud and shrill. If I had any doubts, I was now alert and wide awake! My first thoughts were the fire alarm has been tripped! Then, I thought, “No! A police car has new alarm designed to wake me to attention, and not ignore it as a familiar siren!”

But, I was surprised to realize the ear splitting cry came from a Myna bird, who quickly repeated the cry where I could see it open its beak in a clearly expressed announcement of its own distress. I was amazed and awe struck that this bird had such a powerful voice, quite unlike any of its previous songs and chatter.

Hearing such a cry we might imagine could sound much like a surprised cry from Mary at Jesus’ tomb. “What I expect is not here. Reality has shifted. My grief has been compounded by the absence of Jesus’ body. Where have they put my Lord?”

Death of a loved one itself alters our sense of reality. A person who has been so much a part of our lives is gone! Their sacred memory is precious to us. However the presence of personal contact has been cut away from the immediate fabric of our daily life. The pain of grief is real to our experience. Yet, it is also imbedded in the consciousness by which we want to deny such drastic change is part of the events we must live through as our relationship with the deceased is gone from our every day encounters. We too feel the cry and the void Mary encountered at the tomb of Jesus, each of us in our own way. We gradually come to realize it is good to retell the significance of our loved one’s life as we seek out friends who can share and to pick up the unfinished work our valued relationships call us to express.

The New Testament reminds us some of these experiences are too deep for us to give voice to as they echo within our souls, but that God hears our groaning and knows what is in the mind of our spirit. We are also reminded that when two or three gather together in

Christ’s name and share the reality we face he will be present with us. A comfort of assurance.

After hearing the shrill cry of the Myna bird as dyed eggs were being hidden, it was equally and oppositely joyous to hear the laughing sounds of children as they ran around our church campus looking for the hidden eggs. Easter Eggs symbolize the finding of new life and nourishment even in the midst of our sacred observance of God giving us the promise of new life beyond the limits of death.

The announcement of Easter is that death itself has been overcome by God’s love for us in Jesus Christ and that we can share this with each other.

Warmest Blessings of Easter Joy,
Pastor Tom

Thank you for your participation in the preparation and activities of our celebration of Lent, Holy Week, and Easter. Our choirs and musicians took special effort to surround us with music that inspired our meditations on the life of Christ heading for the Cross and the resurrection. Our church Deacons, worship leaders, school teachers, Christian Education leaders, parents, family and children created opportunities to experience the meaning of this season. All of our members in worship lifted each other up with song, prayer and celebration. “Mahalo for your Aloha, and support for each other.”

FROM PASTOR JIM

As most of you, know, our church has two AEDs - automated external defibrillators for potential use in cardiac emergencies. Now we need people trained in their use. Such training will be conducted on **Sunday April 22nd from 1:30 - 3:30** at the church. To date, only eight folks have signed up, we need more than that! Our hope is for at least twice as many. Please sign up on the sheet on the Bulletin Board or let me know. The instructor: student ratio is 1:8 ; we need to know ASAP how many instructors we need. Mahalo!

So much for heart disease. Now how about stroke ("Brain attack")? A stroke

happens when a portion of the brain is deprived of blood, either because there has been a clot or a rupture in an artery in the brain. When either occurs, blood flow stops and that portion of the brain's cells begin to die. The damage from a stroke is determined, at least partially, from the length of time blood flow has been blocked.

A stroke, just like a heart attack, is a medical emergency. One has only a few hours (3-4 at most) in which to get treatment in order to mitigate the effects of a stroke.

Effective treatments are available to save lives and reduce disability. Therefore, call 911 as soon as symptoms occur! What are some of those? Think of the acronym **FAST**:

F stands for face: any drooping, sagging, or uneven smile? Ask the person to stick out the tongue to see if it goes to one side.

A is for arms: check for numbness or weakness. With the victim's arms extended, does one drift downward? Or maybe one can't be extended at all.

S - speech; any slurring? difficulty speaking? understanding? Any confusion?

Finally - **T**: time - call 911 immediately so the person can get to a hospital for emergency care and treatment.

Strokes are the third leading cause of death in the U.S., and the leading cause of disability. So - just like with a possible heart attack, act FAST. It is possible to improve chances of survival and to decrease the potential disability.

Oh - and prevention? don't smoke, don't drink to excess, maintain normal weight and blood pressure. Eat a DASH (dietary approaches to stroke and heart disease) diet - low salt, plenty of fruits and veggies, low fat, and fish or fowl (no skin!). Let's try to stay healthy.

To your health - Pastor Jim
(Parts adapted from an article by my friend, Dr. Bill Werner).

DEFIBRILLATOR TRAINING

Just as Pastor Jim announced: **Defibrillator training on April 22 from 1:30-3:30.** Learn how to use this life-saving device if the need should arise. It is better to be prepared, than

to hope the emergency doesn't arise. Sign up on the bulletin board

The training is free, the knowledge...priceless!

THANK YOU

TAKERU HAYASHI along with his Boys' Scouts troop installed three benches along the Hamakua side of the sanctuary. This was Takeru's Eagle Scout project and was handed at no cost to the church. It is out of the morning sun and is already used by the pre-school students.

ROBERT SHIOSHITA, husband of child care coordinator Evonne, for spending several days to power wash the walkways, hallways and parking areas.

Much thanks go to both men for caring and thinking of the church and for making it more presentable.

BREAD FOR THE WORLD

From the Board of Stewardship and Mission

John 14:15 "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." This month, Church of the Holy Cross will be participating in our annual Bread for the World campaign with two activities to be held on Sunday, April 29th – our Offering of Letters, and our Bake Sale. Both activities are designed to help us "love your neighbor as yourself" by helping to combat hunger and poverty in the United States and around the World.

You are asked to bring things to be sold at our "Bake Sale" where the proceeds are sent to Bread for the World. Items need not be bread products, but anything that may be sold to help provide funds. In the past we have sold baked goods, preserves, produce, and even artwork, too. The sale begins after worship service on Sunday, April 29th. (*Due to this Bake Sale, J's Mini Mart, usually scheduled for the 4th Sunday, will not be held.*)

The Offering of Letters activity will take place before worship service on April 29th. Please help complete letters to our United States Senators and Representatives requesting their support to protect federal assistance programs that combat poverty and hunger in the US and the World. All you need to do is address and sign a prepared letter requesting their assistance. You may add a

sentence or two to personalize the letter. To make it easier, bring your address labels for the envelopes so you need not write that in.

If you have any questions, please see one of the Board Members. We need the help of all of you as we do God's work.

BLOOD BANK CANTEEN

CHC TO HOST BLOOD BANK CANTEEN
TUESDAY – MAY 22, 7:30 – 5 pm
AT AUNTY SALLY'S LUAU HALE

CHC will host the canteen in May this year... away from Thanksgiving this year, Tuesday, May 22 at Aunty Sally's Luau Hale between 7:30 and 5 p.m.

Here is a chance for you to give the most precious gift to someone in dire need. You literally give of yourself. You give your blood to someone who needs it.

New donors are encouraged to give. For appointments or further information contact the Blood Bank of Hawaii at 1-800-372-9966. A picture ID with birth date is necessary.

Here are some ways we can help:

1 – Spread the word – get your friends and neighbors to donate blood. You and your friends may be eligible. A person who is at least 110 pounds and is in reasonably good health is eligible to give. Even if you take medications for high blood pressure and/or cholesterol, he/she may be able to donate blood. Check it out!

2 – Help by providing refreshments to the donors who had given blood. Some suggestions include sandwiches, wraps, sushi, rice dishes, soup, veggie sticks, desserts, etc.

3 – Help to staff the refreshment area for a few hours to help serve, refill, clean up, etc.

To help by donating food or staffing the lines contact Karl at 959-8861 or Margaret at 935-4071. Former donors of food or staffing will be contacted to ask for your help again so please say "yes" to make this another successful CHC activity.

Mahalo a nui loa!

VOLUNTEERS FOR APRIL 15, 22

USHERS: Mae Kawahara, Moira Tanaka, Muti Selifis, Marvin Heine

FLOWERS:

4/15: Roberta Chu, Alice Fujimoto
4/22: Michi Koizumi
4/29: Carolyn Lum-Bellem

CHILDCARE:

4/15: Clarice Suzuki
4/22: Jennifer Tanouye
4/29: Emi Katada

LAYREADERS:

4/15: Bob Smith
4/22: Mary Ann Katayama
4/29:

REFRESHMENT:

4/22:

Reprinted from the bulletin cover for April 8, 2012 Now What?

The challenge of seminary education, of teaching and leading in schools that prepare women and men for various forms of Christian ministry, is this: We do not know what the problems of the future church will be. Every few decades, new dilemmas emerge that today's seminary students must be prepared to confront. If we could predict what those dilemmas would be, we would teach our students to handle them, but the very nature of the unfolding of time make such preparation impossible. Ministers simply need to be ready for anything, which means they need both wisdom and faith.

Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome were ready for one kind of problem when they went to the tomb to anoint Jesus' body. The stone in front of the tomb was likely to be too heavy for them, and they were so preoccupied on their walk by this likely obstacle that the angel took them by surprise. "Do not be alarmed," the angel told them. But how could they not be alarmed by what they saw and heard: An empty tomb? A message of resurrection?

So often we brace ourselves for one set of possibilities, only to turn around and face challenges for which we never could have prepared. A parent worries about a decline in his teenage child's grades, only to learn that the same child is struggling with depression. A hardworking manager strives to protect some of her staff members from lay offs, only to receive word that her entire branch is shutting down. As we read in Amos 5:19, it is "as if someone fled from a lion, and was met by a bear."

Our hope comes from our past, as well as our future. Consider the year behind you,

between last Easter and today. Could you ever have imagined the adventures or the trials? The setbacks or the triumphs? If you had known what this past year was going to hold, could you have prepared yourself? Or did you simply need to live through it faithfully, each day, trusting that God had already provided for you everything that you would need?

This is the good news of Easter: Where there once was death, God has breathed life. Death and life struggled, and life prevailed. This knowledge is the root of wisdom and faith, and with wisdom and faith, we are ready for whatever comes next.

Rev Sarah B. Drummond
Andover Newton Theological School
Newton Centre, MA

The Healing Journey

A Six-week Adult Grief Support Group

Are you grieving the loss of a loved one?

Each Tuesday from 10:00 – 11:30 AM, from April 3rd through May 8th, 2012, Hospice of Hilo will present The Healing Journey, a six week adult grief support group.

Participants will meet in a safe and confidential setting, and will receive education about grief and loss and group support while developing coping skills.

There is no charge for the group, but pre-registration is required.

Please call 969-1733 for further information and registration.

The “Don’t Quit” Poem

Author Unknown

When things go wrong, as they sometimes will,
When the road you’re trudging, seems all uphill,
When the funds are low and the debts are high,
And when you want to smile, but you have to sigh,
When care is pressing you down a bit,
Rest, if you must, but don’t you quit.
Life is queer with its twists and turns,
As everyone of us sometimes learns,
And many a failure turns about,
When he might have won had he stuck it out;
Don’t give up though the pace seems slow-

You may succeed with another blow.
Often the goal is nearer than it seems to
a faint and faltering man.
Often the struggler has given up,
When he might have captured the victor’s cup,
And he learned too late when the night slipped down,
How close he was to the golden crown.
Success is failure turned inside out –
The silver tint of the clouds of doubt,
And you never can tell how close you are,
It may be near when it seems so far,
So stick to the fight when you’re hardest hit –
It’s when things seem worst that you must not quit.

Reprinted from Home Touch

Easter Sunday, April 8, 2012

Scripture Reading: John 20:1-18

THOUGHT: Do not abandon yourselves to despair. We are the Easter people and hallelujah is our song.

-Unknown

The Hiding Place is a devotional classic written by Corrie ten Boom who, as a girl, lived through the Nazi occupation of her native Holland. Corrie lost most of her family in concentration camps. The Nazis had imprisoned this deeply Christian family because they’d been sheltering Jewish fugitives in their home.

As a young girl, Corrie went with her mother to visit the home of some neighbors who had lost a baby. Overwhelmed by this, her first experience of death, Corrie was overcome with tears. She didn’t know how she could ever stand it, she sobbed, if she were to lose a member of her own family.

Corrie’s father explained to her, calmly, that God gives us the strength we need, just when we need it. God’s timing is always perfect that way. It is, he told her, like when they travel by train to Amsterdam as a family, “You don’t have your ticket when we leave the house, do you?” her father asked.

“No,” she admitted.

“But we go to the station anyway, don’t we? And when we get there, how do you get your ticket, Carrie?”

“You give it to me, father,” she replied.

Because of the cross, and because of Easter, we can be confident that God will provide what we need when we need it. The same God who rolled away the stone from the tomb can roll away the anxiety and cares which sometimes sadden our spirits.

- Timothy Merrill

Prayer: Gracious and loving God, I rejoice in the risen Christ. I praise you for the resurrection power of Easter morning. I am grateful that although Jesus died, he now lives and reigns with you. Blessed be his name. Amen.