



The Journey

St. Mary's Episcopal Church

An Online Monthly Pictorial News Record



April 2020

Betty Hirozawa

January 7, 1930 – March 23, 2020



Maybe gone but not forgotten



Greetings from the New Priest-in-Charge ***The Rev. Charles A. Browning II***

This is a somewhat difficult piece to write. I'm currently sitting on the couch of my in-law's house near Tarpon Springs, one day after saying farewell to my previous congregation in Boca Raton. It is March 16. You will be reading this in April. By then, I'll have arrived in Honolulu. Added to this are the complications surrounding COVID-19 (the "novel coronavirus"—perhaps you've heard of it?), which has changed the date of our first Sunday together.

So, I was supposed to leave from my in-laws, go to Disney for a nice vacation with my family, and then leave on the Magical Express bus to the airport in Orlando. We'd fly to San Diego. See the zoo or the aircraft carrier. Then, we'd fly to our new home. After that we'd have a nice celebration and welcome service to begin our time together.

Instead, thanks to the virus and just everything surrounding it, all of our plans went out the window and we have no idea what awaits us.

I really wish I had some profound wisdom to put forward here. Some great statement that's going to make everything click and we're all going to feel okay with sitting in our homes as we wait this thing out. But I don't. I'm experiencing a mix of emotions and I, like the rest of our community, really just want to find a return to normalcy. And honestly? I'd like to just go to church.

There are a range of questions that have been in my mind throughout all of this, but the most persistent is this: do we believe what we say we believe—or are they just platitudes?

Do we believe that Jesus has saved us from the power of death and, therefore, we have no reason to be afraid?

This question is crucial to us, since it is the defining question of our faith. And our response to that question is what drives us to be what Jesus has saved us to be.

While driving across the state of Florida yesterday, Keith Green's "Because of You" came through my phone. In case you don't know who Keith Green is, he was an important Christian musician in the late 70's and early 80's whose life was tragically cut short by a plane crash when he was 28 years old. He pioneered the genre of Christian rock and was committed to a fairly radical life defined by the gospel.

In "Because of You" he sings a line that has stuck with me for many years: "People smile at me and ask me what it is that makes them want to be just like I am."

In classic Christian terms we'd call this quality—the thing that people want in this case—joy. Christians are called to live a quality of life defined by joy. Now joy is something deeper than simply happiness because you can still be sad and have joy. Joy is a pervasive quality and it comes from a feeling of liberation. Of being free.

Free from fear. Free from the oppression of death. All made possible by Jesus' cross and empty tomb.

And so, this will impact how we live in these uncertain times. Even though we're all called to live a life of social distancing and heightened awareness of hygiene, we come at this new way of living from a different place.

The person whose life is defined by fear will do these things out of a sense of self-preservation. We see this in the panic at the grocery stores all over the country.

But the person who's life is defined by the joy that comes from being saved from fear and death will do these things out of a sense of commonality and forbearance—a place of love.

One of the things I've come to love about Hawai'i is the definitive quality of *aloha*. For us Christians, we let the aloha of Jesus' saving work speak through us and enrich the aloha that is already a part of our life in Hawai'i.

We might not be in church, but we are always *the Church*. And as such, we are a people defined by the aloha of our Savior, which is something that we share regardless of where we are.

And, one hopes, that maybe our particular sense of aloha can be contagious—more contagious than the thing so many in our world now currently fear.

—Fr. Charles+

View Sunday Service – Live Stream 9:00am HST



<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCBu9Dqg3tGBo85hBC9I6DTg>

Laurie Lee Gives a ECW Retreat Report

It was by the grace of God, the women were able to attend the annual Quiet Day Retreat, before more stricter isolation rules were put into effect.

We were blessed by a sunny day, a time for reflection, sharing & music by KK, who was Sharon Muramaru's (Epiphany) guest.

The ladies were so blest by KK's singing, ukulele & guitar playing, and such a wonderful spirit. She even wrote & sang a song for the ECW retreat. Thank you Lord for blessing the attendees with your Spirit, through KK. KK was blest by attending & being with ladies from different churches.



Beautiful hibiscus greeting the morning sun.



Louise did an M&M ice breaker, by going around the room and asking ladies questions, depending on the color of M&Ms they selected.



It was fun to listen to everyone's response. We all got to know a little more about each person.

KK sharing her God given talent, by playing the ukulele & singing, bringing the ladies ready for personal reflection.



If you are a woman who is an Episcopalian, you are already a member of the Episcopal Church Women (ECW). So if you have the time to spend a Saturday (in March/April), with other women around the Diocese, please come and join us. You may also invite a friend if you want.

This past Quiet Day, there were members from First Presbyterian, and couple a new faces from our Episcopal Diocese, which was wonderful to see!

**All Activities on Church Property Cancelled for April
(due to COVID-19 Virus)**