



St. Michael & All Angels, Kaua'i Monthly Newsletter September 2019

## Upcoming Events

- Rally Day! September 7 & 8  
Following each service, we will have a reception in our Parish Hall which highlights our various ministries and common life in this place.
- Finance Committee  
Sept. 11, 12:00 —1:00 pm
- Property Committee  
Sept. 18, 3:30—4:30 pm
- Vestry Meeting  
Sept. 19, 4:30—6:00 pm
- New Strings Attached! A benefit concert for St. Michael's grand piano restoration  
October 6, 4:00 pm

## Life Cycles

Andrew McMullen, Rector

We are all too familiar with our life cycle. We are born, grow up as children, somehow make it through our teenage years, become adults with jobs, families and friends. If we are fortunate, we cruise through several decades with meaning and fulfillment, but eventually our age catches up with us, bringing us physical, and perhaps other, challenges, until one day, we die; again if we are lucky, we do so with a feeling of peace and contentment, surrounded by the ones we love. As Episcopalians, we are likewise familiar with the life cycle of our faith, each year living into the liturgical seasons of the church which mark the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. What is often less apparent is that all churches, as institutions, have a life cycle.

There are seven overall stages of the life cycle and they look like this: 1. Birth – a core group of seekers gathers and forms a faith community. (Continued on next page)

## A Fond Farewell to Mila

Pat Hillegonds, Director of Loaves and Fishes



Mila Vilorio passed away on July 26, 2019. She was 87 years old. Most of you never met, or even heard of, Mila, and don't have any idea why she is being written about in *The Herald*. Mila was one of the longest-term volunteers for our Loaves and Fishes ministry.

Even though she was not a St. Michael's member, the ministry was an important part of her life for at least the past eleven years. Mila was born in the city of Camiling in the center of the island of Luzon in the Philippine Islands. She and her husband emigrated to Kauai as young adults. Mila's husband, Salvador, was a supervisor in the sugar cane plantations, and Mila was a pantry helper and restaurant worker for various hotels on the island. (continued on the next page)

## Life Cycles (continued)

Energy is high; resources and organization are scarce. 2. Momentum Growth – The group begins to organize and establish the structure and norms of the community. Energy remains high and resources are developing. 3. Strategic Growth – Energy remains high; resources are sufficient to establish the community and guide its purpose and mission. It is usually here that the “building gets finished” and leadership is solidified. 4. Sustained health – The community functions according to its mission, with sufficient energy and resources to support it; this is the “middle age” of the church. 5. Maintenance – this is the first stage of decline, where the community is able to fulfill its mission, but energy is dropping and resources become a challenge. 6. Preservation – The community is no longer fulfilling its mission as energy and resources have dropped to a level where they only can sustain the existence of the community. 7. Death – Eventually, energy and resources drop to such a level that the community no longer exists.

Where do you see St. Michael’s on this list? It is a difficult question. Even more challenging, how does a faith community avoid a steady progression through this life cycle? The good news is that, unlike other life cycles, the stages

are not linear – communities can and do bounce around these stages, reaching back to earlier stages to redefine and re-energize their purpose, mission and ministry. Parishes actually get to *decide* which stage they wish to be in and they can then *act* in a way that makes that a reality. This is how parishes not only survive but thrive. Regardless of where you see our parish, this is what we are up to on Rally Day and our establishment of a new formation year. We intentionally make a new commitment to each other and this parish each year, infusing energy and resources so that we might live into who we are to be. But here’s the thing, for this to work it needs us to do it. It won’t just happen on its own; we have to make it happen. So, as we embark on a new year, I ask for your prayers, reflection and discernment as we journey forward together. How can you bless us with your time, talents and resources? I invite you to dive into the life of this parish, to nurture and grow this vineyard, so that we might continue the blessings and work of all the faithful that came before us. Let us take this parish on our shoulders so that we might continue to be the love of God for each other, our community and the world.

## A Fond Farewell to Mila (continued)

She and her husband had four children, six grandchildren, and five great grandchildren, and she often talked about the importance of family in her life.

No one knows exactly how long Mila had been volunteering for Loaves and Fishes, or how she chose Loaves and Fishes as a place to volunteer in the first place. I first met her more than ten years ago, and she had been a volunteer for at least a year prior to that. She was faithfully there every week, attired in matching ensembles and carefully made up, including penciled-in eyebrows, rouge, and always lipstick. She helped with setting up for

distribution, bagging rice and other items that needed re-packaging, and then taking her place in the distribution line to pass out potatoes, onions, and other fresh produce items. Her family emphasized how important her volunteer work was to her. When asked why she did it, her answer was always that she didn’t want to sit at home and grow old. Far better to be of service to her community and to those in need. It was a message she gave to all of us, and it is her legacy. She will be sorely missed, and we bid her a fond farewell. Thank you, Mila!

# Being a LEM (Lay Eucharistic Minister)

Lindsay Kamm, Altar Guild & LEM



At St. Michael's we have an unusual arrangement in which Lay Eucharistic Ministers also serve as Lectors, or Lay Readers – and that suits me, as I

love both aspects of service. If I had to choose just one ministry at church, this would be mine. I remember sitting in St. Michael's little redwood church more than 30 years ago, watching the Lay Reader and thinking, "I could do that." And then I recalled that I had been an occasional Lector at Central Union Church in Honolulu when I was a teen. I distinctly remember standing before a large congregation in that large church while feeling quite hungover from partying the night before. But even then, I was a Bible reader and a literature lover and had no qualms about speaking into a microphone. So that part – sharing the Word of God – was easy and immediately fulfilling.

Being the Chalice Bearer gave me pause, however. What qualifies *me*, I wondered, to serve *the Blood of Christ*? In spite of the training I received, I felt like an imposter. Now that I have been offering the Cup of Salvation once a month for 30 years, I have an answer. I am not myself when I serve; I am an agent. My personality and my voice fade away in my head, and, though I recognize the friends I know and love, I feel a similar fondness for each person receiving Communion. While we are individuals - I am administering and you are receiving – the act transcends us and slips into a current that swirls through all time and around the world. Regardless of whether we have eye contact or not, the encounter is both extremely intimate and absolutely impersonal. It is transporting.

Both reading and serving are for me portals to grace, and I am blessed each time I do them.

## ReSource for Christian Spirituality Participates in Lei Hali`a O Kalaupapa 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Phyllis Meighen, Director of ReSource (RSCS)



"It was the most marvelous experience I could have had," Ida Furumoto reflected. Her sister Alice Brown followed up, "When you get there, you're more in tune with God. It's a different feeling the minute you land." Ida and Alice just returned from a spiritual retreat at Kalaupapa Settlement

to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of lifting the isolation ban for people who were deemed to have Hansen's Disease (leprosy). The sisters

from St. Michael's joined eight other people from Kaua'i, O`ahu, and Maui to learn, to worship, and to be inspired by the lives of the 8,000 men, women, and children who were exiled to the isolated peninsula for over 103 years.

The retreat brought together spiritual insights, historical learnings, cultural practices, and personal life experiences as a portal to very deep and meaningful Christian formation. At the start of our time together each retreatant was given a unique biographical profile of someone who had actually lived in Kalaupapa. This person became the retreatant's Kalaupapa Companion, the person through whom the retreatants would experience Kalaupapa. Ida's historical Kalaupapa Companion was Lizzie Kapoli Kamakau, who was songwriter and friend of Princess Lili'uokalani before Kapoli was sent to Kalaupapa. (Continued on next page)

## ReSource (continued)



Alice's companion was Jessie Kaena and her husband Kalani Joseph Kaena who petitioned the Board of Health to serve as his wife's kokua when she was sent to Kalaupapa. The places, the historical events, the personal trials and tribulations of

the Companions became the lens through which the retreatants explored Kalaupapa, as well as how Kalaupapa speaks to the retreatant's life today and to our collective socio-political-economic condition.

We gained a grounded appreciation for how centrally important God was as the stronghold of faith to sustain hope and strength of Kalaupapa patients. Six months after the first patients were sent to Kalaupapa in 1866, they formed the first church in the settlement. They called it Siloama Protestant Church as a name inspired by the Gospel story told in John 9 of Jesus healing the man born blind when he told him to go wash his eyes in the pool of Siloam. Siloama became for the blind man and for the patients of Kalaupapa "the pool of healing waters."

Our time in Kalaupapa culminated in worship and blessing of more than 5,700 ti leaf lei woven by churches and halau from all the islands. Ida, Alice, and the ReSource retreatants were humbled and honored to visit Papaloa Cemetery and Kalawao Cemetery to place lei on the graves of those who lived, died, and continue to inspire us today by their courage, character, and care for one another under extraordinarily difficult and unjust circumstances.



ReSource for Christian Spirituality is planning four retreats over the next year. Please join us for a life-changing experience in God.



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