



## The Cathedral of St. Andrew - Honolulu

### Sermon: Year C – Third Sunday after Epiphany – January 27, 2019: Malcolm Chun

As I read and listen to this morning's Gospel, one word keeps playing over and over in my mind and that word is shock.

When something happens suddenly that surprises or upsets us, we tend to experience shock.

Jesus shocks the elders in the synagogue with his knowledge and wisdom.

Then the elders in the synagogue shock Jesus when they try to run him out of the town and throw him over the edge of the cliff.

Many people in this morning's Gospel reading are shocked and upset by things that are surprising and unexpected. So, I guess when we are shocked, we're connected in a way to stories in the Bible.

Our community suffered a big shock this past week when on Sunday afternoon we got word that The Rev. Dr. Malcolm Chun died suddenly in his home on Halekoa Drive. And as many of you know, Malcolm was a Canon, an Honorary Canon of this Cathedral.

In addition to that, he served on our staff as your Canon Pastor, served on the diocesan Commission on Native Hawaiian Ministry, the Anglican Indigenous Network, and was a well-known scholar of Hawaiian history and Hawaiian language.

Malcolm's death is a huge loss to our community, and because he was only 65 years old and we had no indication that this was coming, we are in shock. Malcolm, after all, the Sunday before he died, preached and presided at a Eucharist at Good Samaritan Episcopal Church in Palolo. We didn't see this coming.

I've known Malcolm since 2001. He was a part of my life for almost two decades and an advocate for me as I prepared for my seminary studies in Illinois. He taught me about Hawaiian culture and Hawaiian values and in turn, I worked with the Commission on Ministry to do what we could to ensure that he was ordained to the priesthood. And when that day came, he extended a personal invitation to me to come from Hilo and participate in the service – a wonderful, rousing service for which I will always be grateful to have been a part.

And then at the reception after the service, for those who were a significant part of his path to ordination, he bestowed the gift of handmade Hawaiian quilts, one of which was a night blooming cereus – something that took hours and hours and days and days and months and months of intensive labor to complete. They were beautiful, priceless treasures.

When I was a little kid and someone died, my grandparents told me that the person's death was an opportunity and a lesson about how to live life. And one of the lessons that I will learn from Malcolm is to be extravagant in my gratitude – the way he was extravagant in his gratitude by bestowing those gifts of beautiful Hawaiian quilts.

*“Our beloved Church regards her children as having bodies as well as souls to be cared for, and sanctions the consecration of these and all that is beautiful in nature and art to the service of God.” . . . - Queen Emma.*

### Epiphany 3 – January 27, 2019, cont'd.

Another lesson that I will learn from Malcolm about life is to be persistent when you feel that God is calling you to do something and others may not see it. This is someone, after all, who spent over 17 years in the ordination process when many of us would have given up after three or four, even if we knew down to our core, to our *na'au*, that God was calling us to keep on.

And because he was a language scholar and was very deliberate in his choice of words when translating from English to Hawaiian and Hawaiian to English, another lesson in life that I will learn from Malcolm is to think about my words and to choose my words carefully.

And my words about him this morning I do indeed choose carefully — generous, steadfast, deliberate, careful, persistent, pastoral, and faithful.

We are a community in shock and many of us are very upset. But what would Malcolm have us do? How would he have us react?

I'd like to think that he would call upon us to accept that (no matter when it comes) that death is a part of life and that if we believe in the hope of the resurrection, that it is a beautiful thing.

I'd also like to think that Malcolm would call on us to continue to act as good and faithful stewards of this Cathedral's Hawaiian history and Hawaiian heritage and Hawaiian liturgy and Hawaiian music and to build a legacy to him by carrying that commitment on to the horizon of our future and to be persistent and steadfast in that cause, and then to be extravagant with the goodness that can and will flow from it.

I think he would also turn to Scripture to assure us that while, yes, shock is a part of the stories of the Bible, that prayers and acts of love and kindness are also part of Scripture and of the story of the Jesus we love and come to worship this morning.

And in tribute to Malcolm, I ask that we send him off with warm thoughts and best wishes and our fondest, fondest *aloha*.

Good luck and Godspeed to you Malcolm. May you rest in peace and rise to eternal life in Christ.

*Amen.*