

Bishop's Message: E-News, January 9, 2015

Alcohol Policy

December 30, 2014

Aloha,

As we look to 2015, and because of some issues raised in news stories, I have received questions about the Diocesan policy regarding the serving, display and consumption of alcohol at church functions.

The following policy regarding the display and consumption of alcohol during church functions was adopted by the Convention at its 19th Annual Meeting in 1987, and is still in effect in this Diocese.

Alcohol Policy in the Episcopal Diocese of Hawai'i

As adopted at the 19th Annual Meeting of the Convention, 1987 "BE IT RESOLVED.

That the Episcopal Church in Hawai'i adopt the following as a policy on the use of alcohol at church functions:

1. When alcoholic beverages are provided at a church sponsored activity, non-alcoholic beverages must also be provided, in sufficient quantity and attractively displayed.
2. Any food or beverage containing alcohol must be clearly labeled.
3. Alcoholic beverages or food containing alcohol should not be used to advertise or promote attendance at any church function.
4. Alcohol is not to be served prior to or during any church-related business meeting or at youth functions.
5. Alcohol should be maintained under the control of a responsible adult."

Further, the recommendations of the Church Insurance Company can be found on our website [HERE](#).

It has been the practice for many years not to serve alcohol at the annual clergy retreat or other diocesan events (though a cash bar is sometimes available for off church site social events like the annual clergy dinner at Diocesan Convention or the Convention dinner when at a hotel). As a parish priest, I preferred to not have alcohol at any church sponsored events (especially those held on church property). Personally, I would prefer to not have alcohol served at any Diocesan functions. I don't see the need or value to the church 'ohana. I do, however, understand that its use at social events of congregations is allowed in keeping with the policy of the Diocese. The use of alcohol must always be well monitored and, especially, used responsibly by members of the Church.

Yours in Christ Jesus,

+Bob

The Right Reverend Robert L. Fitzpatrick