

November

2020
Edition



The Ambrosian

The Monthly Newsletter of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church
900 Edgewater Boulevard, Foster City, California 94404

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Editor
Yvonne Sidell

Reflections from the Interim Rector

Dearest Parishioners,

As you know, we are in the midst of our annual Stewardship Campaign and this year's is probably the most challenging St Ambrose's may have ever experienced. Being in a time of transition between Rectors would be challenging enough on its own. Add a global pandemic, and all the challenges of adapting to virtual community during shelter-in-place, and social distancing, and the challenges can seem daunting. Yet, our community has risen to the ever-changing challenges with good humor, love, creativity, and a willingness to roll up our sleeves and keep the vital work we do going.

We need your help more than ever. Stewardship campaigns always struggle to make it more than just an appeal for more money, but in all honesty we need more money. The Sea Breeze School is doing an amazing job keeping the school open and running but at a great cost – paying toy-cleaners, new equipment to ensure health, extra staff for smaller classes, etc. To help the school, St Ambrose's needed to reduce the school rent of our buildings. That means a certain 'domino-effect' for us.

As you can imagine, the pledge and plate offerings are significantly lower with a mere nine in-person worshippers per Sunday. The vestry has made the wise decision to invest a significant amount of money in online streaming equipment – the benefits of which I hope you will soon notice. However this pandemic plays out, it seems certain that online streaming will continue simultaneously with in-person attendance for the foreseeable future. Our on-line attendance includes many new people from beyond Foster City whom we now reach and we don't want to lose them. I urge you all prayerfully to consider contributing whatever you can to helping us meet these new challenges because I know how much good we are doing for people's lives, far and wide.

However (I say with the proverbial tin cup extended!), the campaign *is* about more than mere money. There are so many new and creative ways everyone can contribute non-financially as well: altar guild service, technological help, taking part in our Divine Liturgies, outreach to those in need, music contributions, praying for St Ambrose's, and inviting new people to join our virtual throng.

'Sacrifice' has an unfortunate modern connotation of being deprived of something dear to us; something cut off or destroyed. I believe that is the wrong connotation. 'Sacrifice' means 'making something sacred/holy',

and mind – something consecrated for God’s use. When we give a treasured gift to someone we love, we don’t look at it as a loss to us – we see it as a gift freely given to someone as an expression of our love of them. In this case, that ‘Someone’ we love is God, knowing God will use our gift-made-sacred to help our community, our ‘neighbor’, the many Children of God – a community which needs to be ever-growing and thriving rather than ever-shrinking.

We can only do that with your continued help. May God be pleased with the sacrifices we offer with loving hearts! Many, many thanks for all you continue to do!

Devotedly,

Fr Shane

Announcements

Mark Your Calendars

NOVEMBER 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 All Saints Day 10:00 AM Choral Holy Eucharist, Chapel 11:30 AM Zoom Coffee Hour 4:00 PM Youth Group	2 1:00 PM Monday Zoom Bible Study - Daniel Tate	3	4	5	6	7
8 23 Pentecost 10:00 AM Choral Holy Eucharist, Chapel 11:30 AM Zoom Coffee Hour 4:00 PM Youth Group	9 1:00 PM Monday Zoom Bible Study - Daniel Tate	10	11 5:00 PM Altar Guild Meeting, Zoom	12	13	14
15 24 Pentecost 10:00 AM Choral Holy Eucharist, Chapel 11:30 AM Zoom Coffee Hour 4:00 PM Youth Group	16 1:00 PM Monday Zoom Bible Study - Daniel Tate	17 7:00 PM School Board Meeting	18 7:00 PM Buildings and Grounds Meeting, Zoom	19	20	21
22 Last Sunday after Pentecost 10:00 AM Choral Holy Eucharist, Chapel 11:30 AM Zoom Coffee Hour 4:00 PM Youth Group	23 1:00 PM Monday Zoom Bible Study - Daniel Tate	24	25 6:00 PM Vestry Meeting, Zoom	26 Thanksgiving Day Holiday, Office is closed	27	28
29 1 Advent 10:00 AM Choral Holy Eucharist, Chapel 11:30 AM Sandwiches on Sundays, Fair Oaks Community Center 11:30 AM Zoom Coffee Hour 4:00 PM Youth Group	30 1:00 PM Monday Zoom Bible Study - Daniel Tate	1	2	3	4	5

Virtual Sunday Liturgys

[The Rev'd Canon Shane Scott-Hamblen;](#)

You Tube link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfCRkqxS1li-yYov5kMpvDg>

- Virtual Sunday Liturgy of the Word from the Holy Eucharist: Rite II: **Sunday, November 1, 8,15, 22, 29 10:00 am**
 - Zoom Coffee Hour, **Sunday, November 1, 8,15, 22, 29 11:00 am.** To be invited contact Shelley Keefe at 650 787-7614
 - Zoom Youth Group Meeting, **Sunday November 1, 8,15, 22, 29 4:00 pm** To be invited contact Daniel Tate at ym_stambrosefc@att.net or 650-799-7084
 - Zoom Altar Guild Meeting **Wednesday, November 11th 5:00 pm**
 - Zoom Building and Grounds Meeting, **November 18th 7:00 pm**
 - Zoom Vestry Meeting, **Wednesday, November 25th 6:00 pm.** To be invited contact April Cherrington at aprilcherrington@gmail.com or 650-574-7449
 - Thanksgiving Day Holiday, Office Closed
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Lives shaped by the Beatitudes -

All Saints Day

Lives shaped by The Beatitudes



BY MARY MACGREGOR



Today's Gospel recalls Jesus' sermon on the mount, commonly referred to as The Beatitudes. In his usual manner, Jesus surprised his followers by uttering godly, countercultural truth. In essence, his teaching that day laid the foundation for what it means to live a Christian life.

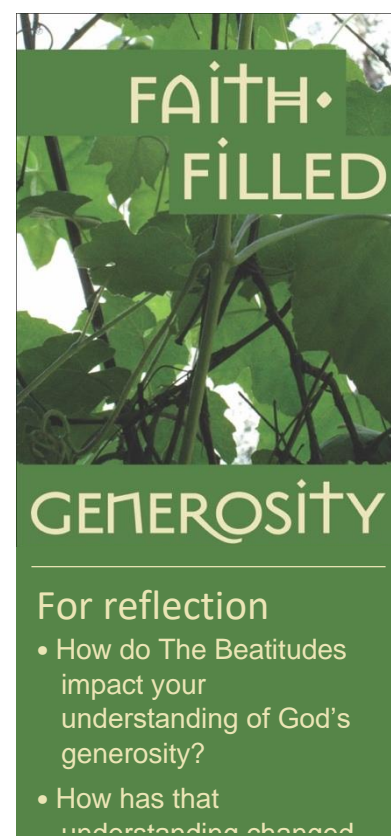
What does it mean to be merciful, pure in heart, meek, poor in spirit, mournful, to be a peacemaker, to hunger and thirst for righteousness and be willing to be persecuted for it? The Beatitudes are a guide that, when studied, reveal layers of meaning for us as believers. They challenge many of our basic human desires and behaviors. Of ultimate importance, they clearly reveal what God seeks to bless.

Aren't we fortunate that our God is forgiving and full of grace as we strive to be transformed by these teachings? Our journey of formation requires change and opening our eyes to see God in action all around us. Included in this change is seeing God's endless blessings poured out upon us and developing a posture of gratitude in return.

Being thankful changes us for the better. Being thankful changes our perspective on life and can profoundly impact our understanding of God's generosity. Being thankful can shape us to be stewards of all God has entrusted to us. Being thankful softens our fears. Being thankful turns fear of scarcity into joyful gratitude for God's abundance.

We remember the saints who have gone before us on this All Saints Day. Some were revered as saints of old. Some were modern day saints. Some were simple folks like you and me. One distinguishing characteristic of saints is that we can see how they embodied and lived Jesus' teachings, these very Beatitudes. They generously gave of their lives so much so that we remember them today. We are confident they were blessed by God for their faithfulness. May we be thankful for their witness and see in them lives shaped by The Beatitudes and be willing to do the same.

Canon Mary MacGregor is a member of the board of The Episcopal Network for Stewardship. She has been deeply involved in congregational development for over 25 years, and served as Canon for Congregational Vitality and Mission Amplification for the Diocese of Texas.



Youth Ministry and Youth Group News – by Daniel Tate

St. Ambrose Youth Group News

Last month the Youth Group planted a garden in the plot where we planted wheat in the past. Already, we can see seedlings coming up: cabbage, kale, chard, carrots, and spinach. We also planted lots of flower bulbs: daffodils, paperwhites, and some mystery bulbs. We'll see what comes up! We planted some nasturtiums too.

To celebrate Halloween, Alison and I delivered pumpkins to all our Youth and then during our Sunday Zoom session, we all then did some carving. Several of us participated. We came up with many wonderful designs. Our Youth Group is so creative! Last month, the Youth Group also wrote letters to a couple of the Cambodia Academy students that St. Ambrose supports. Parishioner George Gardiner was a guest one Sunday, and he described a visit that he and his wife Janet had a few years ago to the Cambodia Academy in Cambodia. It was a great learning experience.

This month, we'll be preparing lunches for Sandwiches on Sunday with our Outreach Leader Stephen Yuen, maybe do a local service project cleanup at the Foster City levee, and then have some arts and crafts activities for Thanksgiving during one of our Sunday Zoom meetings. I'll be sending more information and dates for these activities by email soon.

St. Ambrose Youth Group has a ZOOM meeting every Sunday from 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. College, high school, and middle school youth, including those who have just completed the fifth grade are all welcome. Friends are welcome too! Please contact Daniel Tate by e-mail at ym_stambrosefc@att.net if you or a friend would like to join in and have not yet received a link. Usually five to ten youth participate in each meeting. Each meeting includes talking about the highs and lows that we've had during the past week, reflection on scripture, and an activity or game. *Please join us!*

St. Ambrose Youth Service and Learning Opportunities

Below are a few service and learning opportunities at St Ambrose that youth might be interested in doing in order to keep active, get out of the house, away from the online life, and to be around some nice people at the church:

Technicians: Every Sunday, we produce an online YouTube broadcast of our worship service. Lydia McIntyre set the system up from the beginning and has been doing an incredible service for the church. But now, Lydia needs some relief from time to time, and she and her father David are looking to train some people to help out.

Readers: During each worship service, church members read the lectionary scripture for the day, and the Prayers of the People. Traditionally, adults have filled these roles, but now we're looking for our youth to take part too.

Youth Ministry and Youth Group News (continued)

Musicians: If you like to sing or play an instrument, there are still plenty of opportunities to do at St. Ambrose. On Saturdays, we record the music to be spliced into the live broadcast recordings on Sundays. During the service, the prelude, the postlude, the main anthem, the offertory, and the hymns, all offer a chance for singing or playing an instrument. If you are a beginner or expert, either one, Maureen Fromme and Frank Saunders, our music leaders are happy to teach, assist, and accompany.

During the pandemic, we are observing safe social distancing and allow only 10 people in the sanctuary at a time, and everyone is required to wear a mask. We do all we can to create a safe environment. If you are interested in any of the above chances for service in the church, maybe learning and doing something new, and seeing some of your church community in person, please contact me, email ym_stambrosefc@att.net or call 650-799-7084.

Thank you,

Daniel

Hymns for November – by Maureen Fromme

“Let All Things Now Living” (Gather- #567)

The month of Thanksgiving –
Turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, cranberry sauce, green beans, and pumpkin pie!

However, the most important thing about Thanksgiving is actually giving thanks. In this time of Covid-19 (how long has this been going on??), we need to remember to be thankful for what we have and what we can share with others. As a child, when we sat around the table, loaded with way too much food, we would name people and things for which we were thankful. I think that is still a good thing to do-- every day.

There are several hymns associated with Thanksgiving. I have chosen one from the 'Gather' hymnal. It has a lovely melody—a Welsh melody originally used with the text “The Ash Grove”. This Thanksgiving text was written by Katherine K. Davis (1892-1980) -- an American teacher, composer, pianist and author. She is probably best known for having written, “The Little Drummer Boy”. She wrote over 800 compositions, mostly for the students at schools where she taught.

As we listen and read through the text, may we remember throughout the month of November, and always, to give thanks to our Creator who guides us and gives us the beauty of creation -- all reasons to thank and praise Him with thanksgiving in song. And to thank those around us with whom we are blessed to spend time. <https://youtu.be/UEk2QI7qJsc>

*Let all things now living a song of thanksgiving
To God the creator triumphantly raise.
Who fashioned and made us, protected and stayed us,
Who still guides us on to the end of our days.
His banners are o'er us, His light goes before us,
A pillar of fire shining forth in the night.
Till shadows have vanished and darkness is banished
As forward we travel from light into light.*

*His law he enforces, the stars in their courses
And sun in its orbit obediently shine;
The hills and the mountains, the rivers and fountains,
The deeps of the ocean proclaim him divine.
We too should be voicing our love and rejoicing;
With glad adoration a song let us raise
Till all things now living unite in thanksgiving:
"To God in the highest, Hosanna and praise!" Amen.*

Words: Katherine K. Davis

Music: Ash Grove

Thank you,

Maureen

November Outreach Report – by Steve Yuen

In this most unusual year, it is very easy to be discouraged. With COVID-19, wildfires, and the shuttering of places where we work, learn, meet friends, and worship, 2020 seems to be applying the finishing touch with an election that many say will be the most rancorous since the Civil War.

But, I like to think that the vast majority of Americans are like the Mitchell and Gates families of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania rather than the Hatfield and McCoy's. The Wall Street Journal (<https://www.wsj.com/articles/how-next-door-neighbors-with-opposing-political-views-stayed-friends-11603210097>) wrote about them on October 20:

The Mitchells, lifelong Democrats, planted a Joe Biden sign in the front yard of their suburban Pittsburgh home. The Gateses, who live next door and are lifelong Republicans, put a Donald Trump sign in theirs.

Another homemade sign stands in each yard. It reads: "We (Heart) Them" with an arrow pointing to the other house. In the middle of each heart are the words "One Nation."

Let us focus on how much we have in common with each other, not only because we live in Foster City, but in the values we share. Whatever our politics, St. Ambrose members are united in helping those who are not as fortunate as we are.

November is Stewardship month, and I hope that as you deliberate on a monetary pledge that you also consider devoting some time to helping neighbors through our Outreach programs--- which we hope will resume in 2021.

Sandwiches on Sunday (SOS)

We will be handing out a brown-bag lunch consisting of a sandwich, chips, and fruit at the Fair Oaks Community Center in Redwood City on **November 29**. We are in the early stage of planning the preparation of 80 sandwiches—tentatively, it will be at the Church on Saturday, November 28. If you would like to volunteer or have any questions, please contact Steve Yuen (650-341-1966 or stevebyuen@aol.com).

Samaritan House Family Sharing

In the past we have purchased and delivered Christmas gifts for three Samaritan House families. This year, we will be sending a combination of cash and Target gift cards to the Samaritan House who will donate them to the families. The normal fundraising goal is \$1,000 -- please note that Family Sharing has been funded by offerings and not from the Outreach budget. If you would like to help, please send a check to St. Ambrose Episcopal Church and designate it "Family Sharing."

Sea Breeze School News – by Jerelyn Weber, Principal

The excitement of Halloween is over, and the children and teachers are now busy preparing for Thanksgiving. There are many fall-themed activities in the classrooms and the preparations for the Thanksgiving celebration in each classroom are well underway.

As part of our goal to always be prepared for emergencies on campus, the school participated in the Great California Shake Out that was held across the state on October 16. This is a state sponsored earthquake drill that everyone across the state is encouraged to participate in at precisely 10:21 a.m. One of the goals is to allow everyone the opportunity to examine their emergency procedures and to make any necessary adjustments. Our children practice each month and I was very pleased how quickly and efficiently everyone followed our procedures. I am confident that we are ready if we need to be.

November is a busy time of year for the teachers as they are preparing for and delivering Family/Teacher conferences. Family conferences give us the opportunity to personally speak with each family about their child's development and learn how we can best serve the family and the child. It is a great opportunity to build relationships with the families that we serve and a great way to open two-way conversations in a quiet setting as opposed to trying to converse in a busy classroom. This year, our conferences will be held via individual ZOOM meetings.

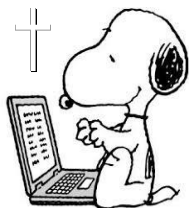
As the Holiday season is upon us, **I challenge each of you to take a deep breath and remember to take care of yourself as you care for others.** Think about what is important to you and what you are most thankful for in your lives.

Happy Thanksgiving to all of you from the staff at St. Ambrose Sea Breeze School!

Respectfully,

Jerelyn

The Editor's Corner—by Yvonne Sidell



“...let us draw near to God with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled to cleanse us from a guilty conscience and having our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. —Hebrews 10: 22-25

I found this tasty morsel hiding in the pages of my favorite church cookbook when I lived in Maryland long ago:

A Church Garden

*First, plant five rows of peas:
Presence, Promptness, Preparation, Purity, Perseverance*

*Next to those, plant three rows of squash:
Squash gossip, Squash criticism, Squash indifference*

*No garden is complete without turnips:
Turn up for the meetings, turn up with a smile, turn up with new ideas, turn up with determination to make everything count for something good and worthwhile.*

While the poem can be enjoyed solely at face value, deeper truths are found when you look below the surface. Rather than “squashing” too often, people can get filled with the poisonous ingredients, which hurt not only our own churches, but the reputation of the Church itself.

The early church dealt with this openly and honestly. The author of Hebrews gives us a glimpse of some of its own struggles. Some of the faithful had given up meeting together and some had fallen prey to a spirit of discouragement. But as the Church, we are called to persevere in times of difficulty and to be set apart from actions that hinder the work of Jesus Christ.

Today, may we have the courage to check ourselves and find ways we can begin encouraging those in our own community of faith.