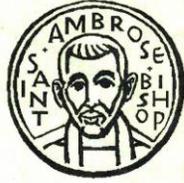


January

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The Ambrosian

The Monthly Newsletter of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church
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Editor
Yvonne Sidell

Reflections from the Interim Rector

Praying Shapes Believing

As we launch into a new year, gladly leaving 2020 behind, hopefully many of us find ourselves offering God many prayers for 2021. Some of those prayers are surely extemporaneous and from the heart in our normal conversational voice. Yet, as Episcopalians we also have an urge sometimes to pray using the carefully and beautifully chosen words others have painstakingly hammered out before us. Does God prefer our casual and spontaneous prayers over formal word-smithed pieces of art? I'm sure the answer must be "both".

Formal well-written prayers are, of course, meant for God's ears but they also have an effect on us as we pray them. There's an old Latin paradox taught in Liturgy studies – "*lex orandi, lex credendi*". It's tricky to translate but basically it means "we pray what we believe, we believe what we pray". Carefully sculpted prayers shape and guide our beliefs as much as they elegantly express them. They expand our voice; they train us into a broader understanding; and they offer the beauty of poetry as much as they offer the sentiments those words carry with them. For example, we could just say a casual "*Do It!*" at the end of every prayer, but we find the ritual formality of an ancient language more elegant so we say "*Amen*".

As a musician, I'm not much of a composer. When I try and 'improv' I end up with limited musical phrases. So, I play a lot of Bach. To me, Bach is the musical Bible. He has such beautiful complexity beyond my limited imagination. His music shapes me; takes me places spiritually I could never have imagined on my own; his music transforms and heavily influences my own limited musical offerings. For me, prayer is like music. I don't want to keep playing my own same limited childish song over and over every time I communicate with God, or my voice would hardly grow. I want something bigger than me, deeper and more profound than my own limited expression to shape my own voice.

I admit to having a slight preference for the traditional "thee & thou" language not just for its Shakespearean elegance but because "thou" is a second-person-familiar expression that we no longer have in modern English. Despite how it comes across ("holier than thou"!), being told we can address the All-Powerful Creator in the equal-familiar language of a peer is an exciting privilege which teaches us something very important about prayer that we might not have reached in our own extemporaneous communication with God.

Reflections from the Interim Rector

With that in mind, during this time of pandemic, I thought I might share a few of my favorite beautifully written prayers. The first is one written by Fr Bede Jarrett, who taught a priest who taught me, like a spiritual grandfather:

We seem to give them back to thee, O God, who gavest them first to us. Yet as thou didst not lose them in giving, so do we not lose them by their return. Not as the world giveth, givest thou, O Lover of souls. What thou givest, thou takest not away, for what is thine is ours also if we are thine. And life is eternal and love is immortal, and death is only a horizon, and a horizon is nothing, save the limit of our sight. Lift us up, strong Son of God, that we may see further; cleanse our eyes that we may see more clearly; draw us closer to thyself that we may know ourselves to be nearer to our loved ones who are with thee. And while thou dost prepare a place for us, prepare us also for that happy place, that where thou are we may be also for evermore.
Amen.

Even though I'm never totally certain I believe in angels (except that Jesus seems to), I still say the Guardian Angel prayer every morning when I wake. I appreciate the childlike rhyming to help me remember it (especially before I've had clarifying coffee):

Angel of God, my guardian dear,
to whom God's love commits me here,
ever this day be at my side,
to light and guard, to rule and guide.
Amen.

In my everyday arsenal of prayers, St Bernard of Clairvaux's *Memorarae* prayer, probably because I love the imagery of flying:

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thine intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my mother; to thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen.

And at the end of a day, I always like to end with the beauty of words from the Oxford priest, John Henry Newman. I want what I say to God to be beautiful because beauty and holiness are such a powerful pairing that I hope will both express what I want to say, as much as teach me better ways to say it, and stretch me to say more than I had previously felt or understood before. Praying can shape our believing.

O Lord, support us all the day long of this troublous life, until the shades lengthen and the evening comes, the busy world is hushed, the fever of life is over and our work is done; then Lord, in thy mercy, grant us safe lodging, a holy rest, and peace at the last, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Yours,

Reverend Canon Shane Scott-Hamblen

Father Shane's Schedule

We have been working on setting a regular work schedule for Father Shane so that we can all know when it is best to contact him, and also so that he can have some routines (which include day off, Sabbath and study day).

It seems that the best days to have off are Friday and Saturday. From Monday through Thursday, he will be working at the office or from home. While we all know he is available to us when necessary, it would be best to keep communication to emergencies during his days off. Thank you!

Mark Your Calendars

12/31/2020

Calendar - View by Calendar

JANUARY 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27 1 Christmas 10:00 AM Choral Holy Eucharist, Chapel 11:30 AM Zoom Coffee Hour 4:00 PM Youth Group	28 1:00 PM Monday Zoom Bible Study - Daniel Tate	29	30 10:00 AM Zoom Contemplative Meditation	31	1	2
3 10:00 AM Choral Holy Eucharist, Chapel 11:30 AM Zoom Coffee Hour 4:00 PM Youth Group	4 1:00 PM Monday Zoom Bible Study - Daniel Tate	5	6 10:00 AM Zoom Contemplative Meditation	7	8	9
10 10:00 AM Choral Holy Eucharist, Chapel 11:30 AM Zoom Coffee Hour 4:00 PM Youth Group	11 1:00 PM Monday Zoom Bible Study - Daniel Tate 5:00 PM Altar Guild Meeting, Zoom	12	13 10:00 AM Zoom Contemplative Meditation	14	15	16
17 10:00 AM Choral Holy Eucharist, Chapel 11:30 AM Zoom Coffee Hour 4:00 PM Youth Group	18 1:00 PM Monday Zoom Bible Study - Daniel Tate	19	20 10:00 AM Zoom Contemplative Meditation	21	22	23
24 10:00 AM Choral Holy Eucharist, Chapel 11:30 AM Zoom Coffee Hour 4:00 PM Youth Group	25 1:00 PM Monday Zoom Bible Study - Daniel Tate	26	27 10:00 AM Zoom Contemplative Meditation	28	29	30
31 10:00 AM Choral Holy Eucharist, Chapel 11:30 AM Zoom Coffee Hour 4:00 PM Youth Group	1 1:00 PM Monday Zoom Bible Study - Daniel Tate	2	3 10:00 AM Zoom Contemplative Meditation	4	5	6

Money Matters – by Shelley Keefe



Dear Fellow St. Ambrose Parishioners,

On December 13, we successfully wrapped up our 2020 Stewardship Campaign in the church parking lot. **Woohoo!**

Thanks to everyone who turned in a pledge card and attended the drive-through – it's becoming quite the St Ambrose tradition.

As of December 30, 2020, we have received 49 pledges totaling \$84,584. Every dollar is a gift from God and we are thankful to all who decided to pledge. We are still 40% below 2020 pledge levels and, if you would like to pledge in 2021 and have not returned your pledge card yet, please do so at your earliest convenience. We really do need every dollar to support our mission and our life together.

Thank you, Happy New Year and blessings on all your endeavors.

Respectfully,

Shelley, Junior Warden

Youth Ministry and Youth Group News – by Daniel Tate

The year 2020 is finally behind us. But, despite the struggles created by the pandemic, the fires last summer and fall, the closure of schools, businesses, parks, and places of worship, there is much to be thankful for. A new year is upon us, and it allows for a new start. We passed winter solstice last month, the shortest day of the year, and now the days are getting longer. More daylight each day! The much-needed rainy season is upon us, and the air has been fresh. Our online services are becoming more and more robust and are something we can continue after we worship together in person. Most importantly, a vaccine is now beginning to be distributed. Maybe by summer we will be able to meet again together in church. I am hopeful.

And finally, last month, we celebrated Christmas, the birth of Jesus, the one who transforms the world. The one who by His coming, helps us, if we reach out to each other, to renew ourselves with new beginnings, again and again. Last month we also put together a short Christmas pageant, despite the pandemic, and reduced numbers of participants. The big plus with the pageant was that it was a joint effort, with children from both the St Ambrose Youth Group, and Sea Breeze kids. We have started a new tradition!

This month on January 30, the last Saturday of the month, we will be preparing lunches for another Sandwiches on Sunday with our Outreach Leader Stephen Yuen. This is for giving out to people at the Fair Oaks Community Center in Redwood City the next day, Sunday, January 31. We will make the sandwiches and lunch packages outdoors under one of the overhangs and practice safe distancing, with gloves provided. This is good service project, and an opportunity to be in community together.

We are also planning to do some more gardening in the plot where we planted chard, carrots, and spinach, flower bulbs, and nasturtiums in October. Plus, we are thinking about putting together a service project workday/cleanup the same day at the church. I'll be sending more information and dates for these January 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!

Also, here are a few service and learning opportunities that St Ambrose 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. We are still looking for people to train and to help out. If you are interested in learning how we produce our Sunday morning services, please contact me.

Youth Ministry and Youth Group News (continued)

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.

Musicians: If you like to sing or play an instrument, there are plenty of opportunities to do that 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.

Sincerely,

Daniel Tate
Associate for Youth and Family Ministry
ym_stambrosefc@att.net
650-799-7084

Hymns for January 2021 – by Maureen Fromme

How many of us are happy to bid farewell to 2020? (*20-20 vision may be better in the rearview mirror*).

With January, in the liturgical calendar, comes the season of Epiphany with such wonderful hymns as “Brightest and Best of the Stars of the Morning”, “We Three Kings”, and “Songs of Thankfulness and Praise”.

As I contemplate the New Year and what it might have in store for us as a church as well as individuals, I am led to the hymn with the repeated refrain “for the earth shall be filled with the glory of God...” That hymn appears in The Hymnal 1982, #534, as “God Is Working His Purpose Out”.

The words to this hymn were composed by Arthur Campbell Ainger (1841-1919), a British writer who taught at Eton. He was the author of several books and the texts for more than 10 hymns, this one being the most well-known. The hymn was first published in 1894 and was dedicated to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Edward Benson. Martin Shaw, English composer and conductor (1875-1958) composed this music.

The text has been used by other composers as well. Mr. Shaw published over 300 musical works, ranging from hymns to operas. The text of the hymn has roots in two passages of scripture: Habakkuk 2:14 is the ending phrase for each verse “...the earth shall be filled with the glory of God as the waters cover the sea” and Philippians 2:12-13, which tells us that our actions should fulfill God's purpose.

As you listen to this hymn-- and sing along with it-- may we go forward in the strength of God as we embrace a New Year, living our days with purpose ... for the glory of God.

And—HAPPY NEW YEAR!

<https://youtu.be/YSi8iL6izRM>

(In keeping with 2020, this is sung by a Live Stream virtual choir with text included)

Thank you,

Maureen

January 2021 Outreach Report – by Steve Yuen

Historians will be writing about the extraordinary occurrences in 2020 for years to come, and this report will leave the words of wisdom to those who are far wiser and more insightful.

The coronavirus has affected every corner of our society in ways both obvious and unexpected. The catastrophe is not over, and we pray for guidance that God may reveal to us how we can best employ our limited Outreach resources in the service of His community.

One year ago, we were writing about how Jill Schwab's Senior Stocking Stuffers program delivered 1,021 gift bags to elderly shut-ins at VA hospitals and Meals on Wheels. We also described how Clara Padilla, Honkai Milda, and Michael Chang delivered \$1,200 of groceries, toys, and gift cards to three Samaritan House families as part of the Holiday Sharing program. Both programs were cancelled this year due to the coronavirus.

We hope that these and other programs will resume, at least in modified form, in 2021.

Sandwiches on Saturday

[Last month](#), we reported on our makeshift assembly line that made 80 lunches at the church for Sandwiches on Sunday. On Sunday, November 29, the brown bags were delivered to everyone who showed up—about 60 people—at the Fair Oaks Community Center.

Thanks again go to the McIntyre family for handing out all the lunches and following all safety protocols at the county facility.

Our next Sandwiches on Sunday will be on **January 31**. We will again put the brown bags together the day before (i.e., Saturday, January 30) at the church. If you would like to volunteer or have any questions, please contact Steve Yuen by phone at 650-341-1966 or email stevebyuen@aol.com.



Sea Breeze School News – by Jerelyn Weber, Principal

As I sit in my office writing the last report for 2020, I am forced to look at everything that has happened and wanting to focus on the positives.

I am thankful for many things and especially that our School community is together and strong. When we opened in June, there was much fear amongst all of us and I thank God every day that we have had healthy children, families and staff. We are all working very hard and at times I think I am asking so much of the teachers, all while appreciating the work that gets done each day to keep all of us safe.

November brought Thanksgiving feasts in each room, parades of Pilgrims and many great smiles from the children. While the feasts of pizza and yogurt were not what we would typically serve, the children loved it and the families appreciated the fact that we acknowledged the holiday with the children. We continue to get used to not have families join us on campus, especially for the holidays.

While we all anticipated the long Thanksgiving weekend, we did have some families that traveled or gathered and therefore needed to quarantine upon their return. The children that needed to quarantine were able to join our virtual classes during the time they could not attend on campus classes and that worked out well.

We held virtual parent/teacher conferences in November and every family participated. The teachers did their typical assessments and while delivering these virtually was different, it was very efficient for everyone. Families were pleased with the progress their children have made and all voiced their appreciation for the work that we are doing.

As I write this report from my office, I hear many Christmas songs being practiced throughout the school. All classes will host Christmas Programs this year and they are all working very hard to learn the songs. Some classes will invite their parents to a Zoom session to enjoy the show, while others are taping their programs and will share via our YouTube channel.

In January, we will start the registration process for the 2021 Summer program and the 2021-22 School year. This is going to be particularly challenging this year as we try to project what programs will be offered. So much depends on CV-19 concerns and how many restrictions may be different. So much is unknown and we will do our best to fill all programs to capacity. However it unfolds, we will adapt!

Merry Christmas and Happy, Healthy New Year!

Respectfully,

Jerelyn

The Editor's Corner—by Yvonne Sidell



“Do to others as you would have them do to you.”
 —Luke 6:31

At a high school class reunion a few years ago, an old classmate approached me with the dreaded question, “Do you remember me?”

He looked familiar, but he wasn't one of my close friends in high school. “Do you remember what you did?” he then asked. Gulp. I put my brain into overdrive trying to remember. Was I nice? Was I mean? Was I considerate or was I a bad girl?

Fortunately, he did not give me time to answer. “That day it was raining, my sister and I had our car break down on the road and you stopped to help us. Everyone else kept driving by, but you stopped. We never forgot that.”

I remember that day. It was a split-second decision to pull the car to the side of the road. But had I been in a hurry or had a car been in my way, I may not have stopped. For the most part, I was a nice and considerate teenager, but like many high school students, I had a “too cool” and “it's all about me” streak as well. When my classmate recounted the story, I felt relief that he wasn't bringing up a time I had been snotty to him, because I am sure someone could have approached me with that scenario as well.

We all have the ability to treat others well and the ability to treat others like dirt. If you are anything like me, how I react depends on my mood. Sometimes I am friendly and personable with the cashier at the checkout stand and other times I am rolling my eyes at his incompetence. Same situation—it's just a different day. Or if I get cut off in traffic I sometimes think, “Gee, I hope everything is okay.” But, catch me on a bad day and I am ready to chase you down and give you a piece of my mind.

How have you been remembered? You have been remembered for who you were in a moment that counted. With this classmate, it just so happens that I am remembered as a nice, caring and considerate person. But I am sure I can find some other classmates who would disagree. I wish I could change it, but the impression has been made.

The challenge for you and me is this: do to others as you would have them do unto you each day, not just when you feel like it because Jesus ALWAYS treats us EVERY DAY with love.

January 2021 Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

Diane Robertson	1
Lauren Adolph	4
Dr. Edward Avakoff	4
Carolyn Moriarty	10
Sandy Schowengerdt	14
Teresa Murakami	15
Gwen Juha	18
Jeanne Detorre-Ozeki	22
Josh Rawley	26
The Rev. Karen Swanson	26
Pedro Watan	28
George Gardiner	30
Ali (Alison) Le Blanc	31
Wilfredo Nagar	31



Anniversaries

Jim Miller & Torrie McAllister-Miller	21
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