

**JULY**  
2018  
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 our Rector

Dear Members and Friends of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church,

Aloha! During the month of July the Episcopal Church will be holding its triennial General Convention in Austin, Texas from **Tuesday, July 3<sup>rd</sup> through Friday, July 13<sup>th</sup>**. I am privileged to participate as the first alternate clergy deputy of our diocesan deputation. This means I will be spending some time on the floor of the House of Deputies as well as attending legislative committee hearings.

You may wonder, "What does the General Convention do?" General Convention is foremost a representative body of Episcopalians from throughout the Episcopal Church in the world. It is a bicameral body divided into the House of Bishops and the House of Deputies. Together, these two bodies consider policies which affect the life of the Episcopal Church and speak to society on behalf of the Episcopal Church. The focus of this General Convention as articulated by Presiding Bishop Michael Curry is Racial Reconciliation, Evangelism and the Care of Creation. How will the church respond to a world in need of reconciliation? How will the church proclaim and live the good news in these times? How will the church call itself and the world at large to be stewards of creation? These as well as many other issues will be addressed by resolutions proposed, considered and debated, and a few being passed by both houses.

One example of how social conditions are addressed by General Convention is the chaos created by the separation of families seeking asylum. The schedule of the General Convention has been changed so that all may attend a special prayer service on Sunday, July 8 from 12 Noon outside the T. Don Hutto Residential Detention Center in Taylor, Texas. Resolutions calling for action on immigration by the Episcopal Church's Office of Government Relations will surely be made.

In another issue related to society and affecting the church, the President of the House of Deputies, the Rev. Gay Jennings, has appointed a Special Task Force on sexual harassment and exploitation within the church. This 47-woman committee will be proposing resolutions about church discipline and the prevention of misconduct in the life of the church.

## Reflections from our Rector *(continued)*

Finally, an internal church issue to be debated is about revising the language and theology of the Book of Common Prayer to better reflect the theological understanding of the church today.

In addition to this kind of business, the General Convention is a gathering of the Episcopal Church "Family." The Episcopal Church Women will be having its triennial meeting from July 5 to 11. Their theme is: Go! Share the Word, **Every Day**, **Communicanos**, **Every Where**. There will be all kinds of gatherings from different constituency groups to renew the bonds of affection which keeps the Episcopal Church whole.

After General Convention, Karen and I will visit friends in Texas and will return on July 16. I will be taking four weeks of sabbatical rest from **July 14 to August 11**. In my absence we will have the following schedule of clergy leading our worship:

**July 8 and August 5**, the Rev. Karen Swanson

**July 15**, the Rev. Canon Abbott Bailey, Canon to the Ordinary, Diocese of California

**July 22 and 29 (and August 12)**, the Rev. Jay Watan

Yours,

David Y. Ota, Rector

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## The Capital Campaign for Clergy Housing

Dear Members of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church,

Aloha! Thanks to everyone who participated in the Capital Campaign for Clergy Housing, and especially those who made pledges. Our total to date is \$371,220. It is never too late to make a pledge, and we understand that some members are still praying about it. We will be updating you all as we receive additional pledges.

I would like to thank those who have made pledges to date:

Keith and Charlene Adolph	Christina Brockman and Stan Hui
Marilyn Canon	April and Grant Cherrington
Nilda Chong	Bettie Davis
Kyn Dellinger	Jeanne DeTorre-Ozeki
Elliott Dun and Teresa Murakami	Raphaelle and Jacques Gerber
Don Gundry	Gwen and Hani Juha
Shelley Keefe	Michael and Dulce Lord
Carolyn and David Moriarty	Dorothy Matsuo
Valerie Mersh	Jim Miller and Torrie McAllister-Miller
John Miller and Eva Kwong	Jim Neubert
David Ota and Karen Swanson	Clara Padilla
Ngoc and Julio Rodriguez	Cathy Rincon and David McIntyre
Charles Saunders	Frank and Barbara Saunders
Sandy Schowengerdt	Yvonne Sidell
George and Merle Silverman	Irene Stead
Andy Walker	

I am grateful for the generosity and commitment of the members who participated. Thanks again to the committee members who worked on the active phase of the campaign with me: Jim Miller and Elliott Dun, co-chairs; Marilyn Canon, Administrator; April Cherrington; Jim Neubert and Shelley Keefe.

Yours,

David Ota, Rector

## Announcements

### THANKS to...

- Sunday School teachers Shaiji Ajit, Christina Brockman, Raphaelae Gerber, Gwen Juha, Sandy Schowengerdt and Lilian Watan who taught the children throughout the year, and to Liva Neyroud and the Rev. Karen Swanson who supported them.
- Frank Saunders, Minister of Music, Maureen Fromme, Choir Director, and Choir members: Marilyn Canon, April Cherrington, Reena Davis, Jeanne DeTorre-Ozeki, Shelley Keefe, Clara Padilla, Barbara Saunders and Daniel Tate for leading our singing during the 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist.
- Maureen Fromme, April Cherrington, Jeanne DeTorre-Ozeki, Shelley Keefe, Clara Padilla and Barbara Saunders for hosting the Fathers' Day brunch on June 17.
- Shelley Keefe, Bettie Davis and Nina Aggarwal for serving on the Sea Breeze School Board and completing their terms.

### Study Groups in June

- **The Monday Evening Study Group** will meet this month on Mondays, **July 9 and 23 at 7 p.m.** Where they will meet is to be decided. They are reading a journal from the Center for Action and Contemplation called, "Oneing, an Alternative Orthodoxy on Anger." It is a series of reflections edited by Richard Rohr.
- **The Tuesday Bible Study Group** will be on a summer break and begin meeting again on **Tuesday, September 4.** They are continuing to read the Book of Job and will resume at Job 30:1.

The study groups are open to any interested person.

### Mark Your Calendars

Holy Eucharist: **Sunday, July 1, 8 a.m. and 10 a.m.,** Celebrant and Preacher, the Rev. David Ota

Rector at General Convention: **Monday, July 2 to Friday, July 13, Austin, Texas**

Holy Eucharist: **Sunday, July 8, 8 a.m. and 10 a.m.,** Celebrant and Preacher, the Rev. Karen Swanson

Rector on Sabbatical Month: **Saturday, July 14 to Saturday, Friday, August 10**

Youth Mission Trip: **Sunday, July 8 to Sunday, July 15,** Smith River, CA

Holy Eucharist: **Sunday, July 15, 8 a.m. and 10 a.m.,** Celebrant and Preacher, the Rev. Canon Abbott Bailey

Holy Eucharist: **Sunday, July 22, 8 a.m. and 10 a.m.,** Celebrant and Preacher, the Rev. Jay Watan

Holy Eucharist: **Sunday, July 29, 8 a.m. and 10 a.m.,** Celebrant and Preacher, the Rev. Jay Watan

Holy Eucharist: **Sunday, August 5, 8 a.m. and 10 a.m.,** Celebrant and Preacher, the Rev. Karen Swanson

Holy Eucharist: **Sunday, August 12, 8 a.m. and 10 a.m.,** Celebrant and Preacher, the Rev. Jay Watan

Blessings of the Backpacks: **Sunday, August 12, 10 a.m., Holy Eucharist,** Chapel

Stewardship Dinner: **Friday, November 16, 6:30 p.m.,** Foster City Recreation Center Lagoon and Blue Bird Rooms

## “Good Food, Great Company” – by The Rev. Jay Sapaen Watan

I'm writing on the rooftop of my parent's home in San Gabriel, La Union in Northern Luzon, Philippines. Its rainy season here, but I've got a roof over my head and an open view of the whole town that sits in a valley next to the Cordillera Mountains, near the waters of the South China Sea. While in the Philippines, my family and I have been meeting with loved ones and next of kin every single day. You see, to make the effort to return to the Philippines, especially after living elsewhere for over a generation now, to “come home” as they call it here, is to honor the people who have remained home to keep the nest warm. In fact, remembering others is one of the greatest ways to share love in these parts. Folks here treasure relationships. And an acknowledged connection gives joy and pride for those at home, and comfort that someone out there in the world is giving them some love. In return, they reciprocate the honor, and will almost always share a meal, coffee, or some form of *arak* (beer, wine, or whisky) together. Hospitality and feeding people is a strong part of Filipino culture. I'm happy to say we've been having some amazing meals here. I've even had a thing called *dragon fruit*.



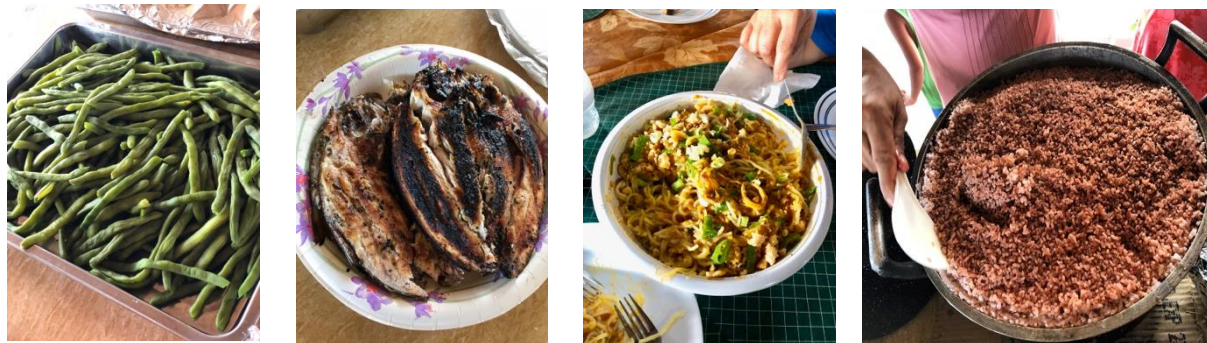
My older cousin, Teresita W. Madeo, or Manang Cita as I call her, has been our executive chef for most of our stay. *Manang* is a title given to someone more senior who is of the same generation. She caters for a living in the Philippines, along with her three children, and is well known for preparing some amazing longanisa (sweet sausage) and bangus (milk fish). For meals, she prefers cooking fish – grilled, fried and steamed – veggies, and BBQ on a stick. Filipino food requires a lot of preparation and is truly a labor of love. Manang Cita learned to cook as a child and grew in her culinary knowledge working as a domestic helper in Hong Kong and Taiwan. As with many Filipinos, she went abroad as an OFC (overseas worker) to create more opportunities for herself and her family. The main export of the Philippines isn't any product, it comes in the form of people - the nation's sons and daughters. It's part of the push and pull of human migration we see happening around the world. My parents are part of this movement – my dad came to the United States via the US Navy and my mom as a nurse. Manang Cita was overseas for almost three years before getting married and having kids of her own. For my loved ones, even though they were away from the place they called home, it was the food and gatherings that made a home the place where you are now. Food and how it gathers us is central to being human.





## “Good Food, Great Company” (continued)

Manang Cita would say she is blessed because of food. It connects us to what matters most. Perhaps this is why Jesus did a lot of eating with friends, strangers, and even enemies.



Green beans, milk fish, pancit palabok, and rice... good food to share with great company!

I can't talk about food without mentioning Anthony Bourdain's passing last month. His memory comes with both sadness and celebration for a life well lived. I was a fan of his shows *No Reservations* and *Parts Unknown* and learned a lot from his insight and curiosity for food and people. Much has been documented about his life – his adventures around the world as a celebrity cook, foodie and journalist – and also the cause of his death. There really may be nothing more I can add to his remembrance. Yet Bourdain's blessing came in his capacity to value human beings on a genuine level and share their truth as a valid story. Good food just connects us better. His uncanny ability to tell stories of real people through sharing food was captivating, rich with honest humility and a gracious heart. Food is always about people. Which is why, especially in America, things like fast food culture and microwave cooking have shifted our capacity to be in relationship. He did not settle giving broad caricatures or feeding into the stereotypes of what we think people should be. Rather, he took great care and attention to get a flavor of the character of the people and cultures he encountered. When he spoke of Filipino food and culture, he loved it. Because people and food go together, much like the flavors of bitter and sour, sweet and savory found in Filipino cooking, that Bourdain found “alluring.” His words were lyrical. I remember how he opened an episode on Southern Louisiana saying, “*There are parts of America that are special, unique, unlike anywhere else. Cultures all their own, kept close, much loved, but largely misunderstood.*” Well said and beautiful!



Kieran finding that connection with home through these “alluring” Filipino-style donuts

A whole lot of the world fits that billing when it comes to people we don't know and cultures we can't seem to understand. Yet I have found that in our mindfulness of sharing a meal together, we become better people because we can learn to care for ones we share a meal with. Food is always about people. The fullness of our humanity and our ways of being cannot be told in simple or single narratives. We are a collection of stories. Like a spread at mealtime, we come together with multiple dishes that feed the Mind, Body, and Spirit. And we become more flavorful because of this. So, it is that we each have a story that connects us for love. With great food comes good company... taste and see!

## Outreach Report – by Steve Yuen

### OUTREACH – JULY 2018

A question often posed to the Outreach Committee is: how do you decide which activities to support?

The problem isn't finding activities—the problem is that there are too many to choose from. Whether its homelessness or hunger, education or employment, sickness or substance abuse, there are dozens of programs available to address these needs, and those are just in the Bay Area.

One criterion has proven helpful: if a member of our church is active in a program, that fact is often decisive. Not only does the parishioner vouch for the program's importance, he or she often becomes the leader of that Outreach activity and our liaison to the organization.

Below are examples of programs that have been brought to our attention by parishioners in 2018:

- 1) *Guatemala Micro-Loans*: Christina Rodriguez, a lifelong St. Ambrose member who now attends Hillsdale High, helped to raise funds to provide micro-loans to impoverished Guatemalan women who want to start businesses. Unfortunately, Christina's club had to cancel its trip due to the eruptions in early June. All donations, including \$300 from the Outreach budget, will be redirected to Guatemala relief.
- 2) *Virgin Islands Recovery*: The Rev. Karen Swanson (Father Ota's wife) spent six and a half weeks helping two Episcopal Churches in the Virgin Islands rebuild from last year's hurricane damage. The recovery has been very slow, and shortages of water, electricity, and basic shelter are still widespread. We donated \$500 from the Outreach budget to support her mission.

So, how do we decide which activities to support? Our parishioners tell us.

### Ercira Puig

Ercira Puig had been struggling with age-related infirmities, but she was strong in body and mind on June 10, her last Sunday. She spoke movingly of her 30+ years in the life of our Foster City parish. She and her late husband Peter worked tirelessly to help the suffering and less fortunate. They always turned out to make dinner and read stories to the children of the Interfaith Hospitality Network, which became Home & Hope.

She is going to live with her nephew in the greater Sacramento area. We know that this parting is best for Ercira; nevertheless, we all will miss her.



*From 2010: Kay Huffman (d. 2018), Jerry Brooks of Hope Lutheran, and Ercira Puig served dinner at Home & Hope*

## **Outreach Report (continued)**

### **Upcoming Event – Sandwiches on Sunday**

Our next hosting is on **July 29**, when we will be preparing lasagna and salad. If you can make a dish and/or help with serving and cleanup, please sign up on the sheet that will be posted in the Parish Hall in July. Please contact Rob Richards (rob.richards@tensorlabs.com, 650-577-8924) if you have any questions.

### **Sea Breeze School News – by Jerelyn Weber, Principal**

Summer Camp is in full swing and we are surrounded by fun and laughter.

The theme for Summer Camp this year is S.T.E.A.M., Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math. Our first week was all about Technology and the children were busy learning about cameras, computers, tablets and of course cellphones. They were able to make their own computers with boxes and pipe cleaners and they sent their parents messages and pictures from the classroom tablets. We are looking forward to visitors from CuriOdessey, Microsoft, Google and The Mad Scientist throughout the summer. So many fun activities are planned for the remainder of our camp this summer.

This summer will bring an exciting change to the Sea Breeze playground. Due to the generosity of our families and many fundraising campaigns over the years, we will be replacing our climbing structures with new and updated structures in August. This will be a big surprise for our children and so much fun as the children return for the start of a new school year.

Fall enrollment is once again very strong. Our Afterschool program continues to be strong with over 90 families enrolled. Our full-time Preschool program is full and we do currently have a few available openings in our part-time preschool programs. We are very blessed to have a strong teaching team and a strong foundation to provide a fantastic program to the Foster City Community.

Thank you for your continued support as we look forward to another great year at St. Ambrose Sea Breeze School.

We hope you are enjoying your summer so far and we wish you a very patriotic July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday! Be safe...

Very truly yours,

Jerelyn Weber, Principal

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## The Editor's Corner—by Yvonne Sidell



*The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and have it to the full. —John 10:10*

I was talking with a friend about rhythm. Both of us are huge music fans, so the discussion started with our exploring what the other person had in his iTunes collection. As we went through each other's collection, the discussion moved from musical tastes, to favorite bands, to songs that, in our humble opinions, are "flat-out amazing." As we listened to each other trying to describe what moved us about certain songs, we kept saying, "I can't describe it. You just need to hear this song."

Music has a way of moving us, changing us. Sounds played in a certain rhythm, with words that capture our thoughts and emotions. For anyone who is a music fan, you know when a song comes together... and you know when one doesn't. You know when it's in rhythm, or whether it's out of rhythm.

Our lives are similar, aren't they? You just know when you are living life in a good rhythm. It may be hard to describe, but you just know it. You can feel it. It just works together. At the same time, you can feel when your life is out of rhythm. It feels forced. You feel drained. You keep asking yourself, "Why is life so hard right now?"

One day, Jesus is walking with His disciples and makes this astounding statement, "*The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.*" In essence, Jesus is saying, "*I came to show you how to live, really live. I came to show you how to live in rhythm with God—a life both now and forever more.*" Jesus came, not only to open the door that we may be reconnected to God; He came to show us the very best way to live in the here and now—a life in rhythm with how the Creator wired us to live.

Perhaps that's why when we live as Jesus lived—a life of love, grace, and generosity—we feel that we are tapping into something beautiful, something that feels right. This is the way God wired you to live. To live in any other way would be out of rhythm with how we were designed by our Creator.

Today, may you choose to live deeply in rhythm with how God created you to live: A life lived in the way of Jesus, empowered by His Spirit.