

May
2020
Edition



The Ambrosian

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

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Reflections from our Rector

Dear Members and Friends of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church,

Aloha! I imagine most if not all of you know of the announcement by the six Bay Area counties on Monday, April 27, 2020 that the Shelter-in-Place order will be extended through the end of May. Although the new order will have different restrictions, I am assuming the order for limiting gatherings to ten people or less for people 65 years old or younger will continue.

I had been anticipating this extension of the Shelter-in-Place order, and I regret to report that I will no longer be able to be physically present in the YouTube live-streaming worship service after Sunday, May 3rd as I will turn 66 years old later that week. However, I will be able to prepare the worship services and do the rest of my ministry as I have been for the past several weeks.

The Rev. Karen Swanson will begin to lead worship on Sunday, May 10. On that day, Daniel Tate will be the preacher. Karen will be the preacher on Sunday, May 24. I hope to tape sermons to be included in the Sunday worship on Sundays, May 17 and 31.

In regards to our YouTube Live-Streaming Worship, we had a couple of glitches on Sundays, April 19 and 26. On April 19, the equipment failed, and David and Lydia McIntyre managed to continue streaming the service using a laptop camera instead of the regular camera. On April 26, the new camera purchased required more bandwidth than our Wi-Fi was able to support. However, David has seemed to have fixed the problem, and hopefully there will be no technical difficulties in May. Please join us for worship using this link:

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

Editor:
Yvonne Sidell

Reflections from our Rector (continued)

Finally, I want to remind you that I will complete my ministry among you as I will retire on July 31 of this year. For the next three months, I hope to be able to converse with each of you to express how much I have appreciated the opportunity to get to know you and serve as your Rector. As it will be difficult to have in person meetings, I hope we will be able to visit on a Zoom meeting.

These are challenging times. Yet, we believe in God who not only sustains us, but empowers us to live faithfully with love.

Yours,

David Y. Ota, Rector

Announcements

Mark Your Calendars

Mason Jar Mission Sales: contact the Rev. Karen Swanson to order your jars of bean soup or chocolate chip cookies. Contact the Rev. Karen Swanson at karen.2.swanson@gmail.com or 650-200-8449

Virtual Zoom Coffee Hour: **Every Sunday, 9:00 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.** To be invited, contact the Rev. David Ota at dyota@mindspring.com or 650 200-9331

Virtual Fourth Sunday of Easter, Liturgy of the Word from the Holy Eucharist: Rite II, Presider and Preacher, the Rev. David Ota: **May 3, 10:00 a.m.**, You Tube link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfCRkqxS1li-yYov5kMpvDg>

Virtual Zoom Children's Sunday School, Preschool to 5th grade: **Every Sunday, 10:00 a.m.**, Join Zoom Meeting. To be invited, contact Fe Balamiento at valentin_fe@yahoo.com or 415-579-8872

Virtual Zoom Youth Group Meeting: **Every Sunday, 4:00 p.m.** To be invited, contact the Rev. Karen Swanson at karen.2.swanson@gmail.com or 650-200-8449

Virtual Zoom Bible Study on Philippians: **Tuesdays, May 5, 12, 19 and 26, 1:00 p.m.** To be invited, contact the Rev. David Ota at dyota@mindspring.com or 650 200-9331

Virtual Fifth Sunday of Easter, Liturgy of the Word from the Holy Eucharist: Rite II, Presider, the Rev. Karen Swanson; Preacher, Daniel Tate: **May 10, 10:00 a.m.** You Tube link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfCRkqxS1li-yYov5kMpvDg>

Monday Zoom Bible Study Group: **Mondays, May 11 and 25, 7:00 p.m.** To be invited, please contact Warren Wong at wwong@nd.edu

Virtual Sixth Sunday of Easter, Liturgy of the Word from the Holy Eucharist: Rite II, Presider, the Rev. Karen Swanson; Preacher, the Rev. David Ota (video): **May 17, 10:00 a.m.** You Tube link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfCRkqxS1li-yYov5kMpvDg>

Virtual Zoom School Board Meeting: **Tuesday, May 19, 7:00 p.m.**

Virtual Seventh Sunday of Easter, Liturgy of the Word from the Holy Eucharist: Rite II, Presider and Preacher, the Rev. Karen Swanson: **May 24, 10:00 a.m.** You Tube link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfCRkqxS1li-yYov5kMpvDg>

Announcements (continued)

Virtual Zoom Vestry Meeting: **Wednesday, May 27, 7:00 p.m.**

Virtual Day of Pentecost, Liturgy of the Word from the Holy Eucharist: Rite II, Presider, the Rev. Karen Swanson, Preacher, the Rev. David Ota (video): **May 31, 10:00 a.m.** You Tube link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfCRkqxS1li-yYov5kMpvDg>

Bishop Marc Andrus' Visitation to St. Ambrose: **Sunday, June 21, 10:00 a.m.**

Diocesan Convention: **Friday, October 23, 2:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.,** Grace Cathedral

Harvest Festival Dinner: **Saturday, October 24, 6:00 p.m.,** Foster City Recreation Center, Lagoon Room and Blue Bird Room

The Desk of Rev. Karen Swanson

Youth Group News

St. Ambrose Youth Group has a virtual meeting every Sunday at 4:00 p.m. Middle school, high school and college students sheltering in place at home are welcome. Friends are too! Please contact the Rev. Karen Swanson by e-mail at karen.2.swanson@gmail.com or by text at 650-200-8449 if you or a friend would like to join in, and have not yet received a link. Eight or nine youth generally participate in each meeting. Youth group meetings usually begin with a check-in about the highs and lows of the previous week. Next, there is a Scripture reflection. The rest of the meeting is for activities.

Activities are often suggested by the youth and, this month, have included making Easter decorations, playing balloon volleyball, and a scavenger hunt.

Next month's activities include the following:

May 3

Make or bring a mask that expresses the inner you to show off. Be ready to say why you like it!

May 10

Show or tell us about a gift you have made for your Mom, and why she might like it. Your youth leaders are also hard at work thinking up something we can create "together" on that day.

May 17

Games, games and more games!

May 24

We are awaiting your great idea to guide us this day.

May 31

Pentecost celebration that will include a virtual "potluck" of your favorite foods. Be ready to tell us how you made, or helped to make your dish, and watch us drool!

Thanks to Elliot Dun, Jr. and Christina Rodriguez for inspiring or proposing awesome May activities. A heartfelt shout out to Alison LeBlanc and Daniel as well who help lead the weekly meetings with Rev. Karen. Thank you to them for their thoughtful and fun presences and their gentle and helpful feedback.

Youth Ministry – by Fe Balamiento

Dear St. Ambrose,

Thank you for those who are able to participate and the Easter festivities. They were held by the children's ministry online whether it was Sunday school session at 10:00 a.m. for the small kids, Sunday school session at 11:00 a.m. for the older kids, or virtual Easter egg hunt at 11:30 a.m. for all ages.

I would like to thank Saint Ambrose Episcopal Church for continuing to support the children's ministry during our shelter in place, Covid-19 time. I like to thank the parents who have made the time to support their children's virtual attendance. They trusted me to deliver lessons that are still based on faith formation through the Episcopal Church with our Spark lesson plans and the book, the great book, The Bible. Thanks David Ota and Karen Swanson for continuing to support me throughout all my endeavors. As I try to continue to make Sunday school a fun and faithful place for friends to connect, even if it is virtually.

Though we are home and safe, we can still be together. For Christ is risen and the power of the Lord is with us and stronger than any burdens that we can bear. I was surprised at how much the kids knew and we're ready to talk about why they were safe at home. I credit that to the parents and families who have been good about keeping their children informed in a way that they could understand and feel safe and in control.

It does my soul good to be part of Sunday school. Every Sunday I look forward to keeping this consistent and continuing to be blessed with the honor of supporting the children's ministry for St. Ambrose.

Thank you,

Fe



Hymn for May – by Maureen Fromme

ETERNAL LIGHT (The Hymnal 1982, 466)

The text of this hymn is a prayer, offering hope-- something all of us need to have at this time, and all the time. It is based on a prayer written by Alcuin, an 8th century English scholar and Clergyman. Later in life, he moved to France and was an advisor to Charlemagne. The prayer as Alcuin wrote it is:

*Eternal Light, shine in our hearts;
Eternal Goodness, deliver us from evil;
Eternal Power, be our support;
Eternal Wisdom, scatter the darkness of our ignorance;
Eternal Pity, have mercy upon us;
that with all our heart and mind and soul and strength
we may seek your face
and be brought by your infinite mercy to your holy presence
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

Christopher Idle edited the text for a hymn. Fr. Idle is a priest in the Church of England and has written texts for more than 300 hymns. The music was composed by Jane Manton Marshall. Mrs. Marshall was a native Texan who passed away in 2019, at the age of 94. Jane wrote many hymns and anthems for church choirs, as well as being a teacher in the sacred music department of Southern Methodist University, Dallas. I had the privilege of meeting and discussing some of her music with her on several occasions. I asked especially about her background with this hymn. She told me that the tune name is 'Jacob'. He was a young boy in the Dallas area who was being confirmed. Jacob's parents asked Mrs. Marshall if she would write a hymn to this text for the confirmation service. The prayer, as edited by Christopher Idle, follows:

1 Eternal light, shine in my heart;
eternal hope, lift up my eyes:
eternal power, be my support;
eternal wisdom, make me wise.

2 Eternal life, raise me from death;
eternal brightness, make me see:
eternal Spirit, give me breath;
eternal Saviour, come to me:

3 Until by your most costly grace,
invited by your holy word,
at last I come before your face
to know you, my eternal God.

As you read through the words and listen to the hymn, I hope that the words Light, Hope, Power, Wisdom, Life, Brightness, Spirit, and Savior bring renewed hope and peace. If you wish to hear the hymn (in a choral arrangement), please go to this website:

<https://www.giamusic.com/store/resource/eternal-light-print-g7970>

May Outreach Report – by Steve Yuen

The current debate is over which is worse: the loss of life from the coronavirus vs. the toll from keeping the economy closed. The magic bullets of vaccines and effective antiviral medicines still seem months, if not a year away, so society will have to choose between the lives of hundreds of thousands versus the immiseration of hundreds of millions. We can disagree with the policies of our political leaders—who, by the way, seem to disagree with each other—but we can pray for them. They have to make decisions that none of us would want to make.

Meanwhile on a personal level, I am fortunate in not knowing anyone yet who has tested positive, but I do have people close to me who have lost their jobs or who have had to shut down their businesses. If we do have resources, it's more difficult to help because not only have those resources also taken a hit, but we may need them for ourselves in this time of uncertainty. The challenges are greatest when we are weakest.

The Outreach programs that St. Ambrose supports are also facing unprecedented difficulties. During past recessions, donors experiencing financial strain have often been able to substitute volunteer hours and expertise for money. That's much less possible today because of social distancing and other restrictions.

As we noted last month, **Home and Hope** is housing the families in motels during April and May. We would have made dinner for them and served as an overnight monitor at Hope Lutheran during the month of May, but all churches are closed to everyone.

Home and Hope and other charities have issued special pleas for financial contributions during this time of need. The Outreach Committee will take a hard look at our funds to see if there's room to respond to some of these additional requests.

The 2020 Outreach budget is \$8,500. So far this year the Outreach Committee has authorized \$3,100 in donations:

<u>Program</u>	
Church Divinity School of the Pacific	\$1,800
El Buen Pastore – Musician	600
Home and Hope	300
Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church (H&H supplies)	100
Sandwiches on Sunday (St. Pius Church)	<u>300</u>
Total Outreach donations	\$ 3,100

Outreach Report (continued)

Comments

The *Church Divinity School of the Pacific (CDSP)* in Berkeley is the only Episcopal seminary west of the Rocky Mountains. Since 1893, it has trained thousands of Episcopal priests, including David Ota, former St. Ambrose members Jay Watan and Rebecca Goldberg, and our seminarian Daniel Tate.

El Buen Pastor: St. Ambrose provides financial assistance to the Episcopal Church's Spanish-speaking ministry on the Peninsula. In past years, we have contributed \$1,800 toward their music, typically in three installments of \$600 each.

Home and Hope: Thirty (30) Peninsula churches and synagogues have joined together to help families in need of emergency shelter. St. Ambrose serves dinner 3-4 times a year to families housed at Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church in San Mateo.

Sandwiches on Sunday (SOS): St. Ambrose serves lunch four times a year to all comers at the Fair Oaks Community Center in Redwood City. We also make donations to St. Pius Catholic Church, which administers the every-Sunday program and whose volunteers assemble 100 bag lunches every week. SOS was suspended at the end of March.

The *Outreach Committee* plans to convene remotely in early June to consider the next round of donations. If you have any suggestions, comments, or questions, please contact Steve Yuen (650-341-1966, stevebyuen@aol.com).

Sea Breeze School News – by Jerelyn Weber, Principal

As we all continue to adjust to our new normal, things are going well for the teachers and the families. I hope the same is true for all of you and your families.

Virtual teaching is in full force for us as we strive to remain connected with our children and their families. Our preschool children have at least 4 opportunities each day to join a ZOOM class session with their teachers. We have now added Yoga, Bollywood dancing, STEAM and art classes to our schedules, as well as a short chapel session each week. In addition to the class sessions, the teachers and I also host regular “parent chat” sessions with each classroom. This is an opportunity for parents to ask questions, give suggestions and simply connect with us and each other in a casual and relaxed way. These meetings are very popular and we are seeing more and more participation as we move forward. Staff meetings are held weekly as a way for all of us to stay connected as well.

We continue to adhere to the Shelter in Place order that is in place and the school will remain closed until it is safe to open again. In anticipation of opening again, there is much planning about the processes that will need to be in place once authorized to open. Things may look very different and we are going to be as prepared as possible. While this has been a very stressful time for all of us, we have all learned so much and continue to learn each day. I am very thankful for the continued support and guidance from the School Board and the Vestry.

Continued Blessings,

Jerelyn Weber, Principal

The Editor's Corner – by Yvonne Sidell



Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God."

Phil 4:6

****SPECIAL NOTE****

Dearest St. Ambrose Family,

Thank you for all of your thoughts and prayers during recovery from my second stroke. I thank God for you because you are truly an example of what kindness, generosity, and compassion really means.

I cannot begin to thank you enough for all the things that you have done for me these past two months while I was healing, especially when you simply don't show any signs of stopping that help and love. I don't know where I would've been without you as my church family.

Your amazing spirits and unshakeable faith truly made me strong and inspired me to feel better during this difficult event in my life. Again, I am very grateful to have you all as my Family.

I pray to Jesus for your happiness, protection, inspiration and strength during this difficult time for all of us while we figure out the pandemic. I hope you can feel my sincerity for what you did for me – **thank you!**
