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Edition



The Ambrosian

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

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Editor
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Reflections from the Rector

“Stations, please”

Many teenagers join the military when they become 18 years old. I was contrary and joined a Benedictine monastery until I was 28 (when I finally realized monasticism was not my vocation). Yet, I often reflect that I am a better monk now that I'm not a monk. 18-28 is a pretty formative phase of anyone's life. Just when I was at my most restless phase of life with all the energy I wish I still had, the monks required me to “be still” a lot: sitting quietly or chanting in church seven times through the days and nights; meditation; *Lectio Divina* (slow, holy, imaginative reading); study; daily solitary manual labor; meals in silence. It wasn't easy for a teenager to do, physically, mentally, or spiritually. It still isn't, to be honest, but I see more value in it now.

Before every church liturgy, monks line up in procession outside the church, sometimes for around 10 minutes with hoods up (signaling *incommunicato* to everyone), just standing in silence before the busyness of the Liturgy. It is called “*Statio*”. Just standing in procession, waiting, solitary in the midst of others doing the same – much like “shelter-in-place”.

Statio means “position” or “station”, much like an athlete pausing before springing into action; a diver momentarily frozen on the board before jumping; or a runner collecting herself before a sprint. Or, like Christians being silent sitting in pews waiting for the liturgy to begin; or a family pausing to say Grace before devouring a delicious meal.

As a teenage monk, I don't believe I understood the important lesson that was being taught me at the time. *Statio* is an important practice for all of us. It can be hard when we are so busy already, running unprepared from one busy thing to another. Like any kind of meditation, it takes *time* to turn off the thing we just finished doing; to quiet it; to let it go before starting the next task in front of us. It is a powerful way to not be torn by living in the past of what we were just doing – to be in a brief liminal space, preparing to give the next task our fullest attention, to enter into the “now”.

To those unaccustomed to this silent stillness, it can feel like being covered in ants. It can be like a talk show host is talking a running commentary in our heads. It takes *time* and *silence* to quiet the residual noise of our last task before giving our full attention to what we are about to do. Realizing that the practice of liminal silence, of *statio*, can be uncomfortable for the unfamiliar, we often provide some background music to aid the transition. As both an organist and a priest, I recognize the discomfort *statio* silence gives the uninitiated.

Reflections (continued)

The priest part of me is glad when people come to liturgy early to sit in silence, but my heart sags when someone breaks the silence with running commentary about the price of eggs – the talk show host isn't just in my mind but in the pews. As an organist, I would perform some piece of music to aid silent meditation for people before the liturgy, and the crowd would gradually speak louder over the organ music. So, I'd play a bit louder. So, the crowd speaks louder. Eventually, playing Preludes before Mass became a contact sport. I would keep playing a bit louder, they'd talk louder, I'd play even louder – until I would suddenly drop the music down to a whisper and suddenly expose the nearly-shouting din of the congregation. Oh, the games we play to entertain ourselves!

If the diver didn't take the moment to collect themselves, physically, mentally, and spiritually, before the dive, would the performance be different? I believe so. *Statio* focuses us; helps us be totally invested in what we are next about to do with our whole mind, body, and soul. Many times our *bodies* are there, but our *minds* and *souls* are not yet aligned with the task at hand. It is an important practice to be still, preparing for something important, and aligning our bodies, minds, and spirits. It is a method that works for the important work of liturgy, of having an audience with God, focused on the present moment, encountering the gentle God who often speaks in whispers under the noise and chattering busyness of our souls, minds, and bodies, and it is a practice which can help us with any new thing we are about to do. While carving out yet more time in our busy lives may sound counterintuitive, I have no doubt now that I'm much older, that *Statio* holds a lot of wisdom for all of us. I highly recommend the practice. Before liturgy, center ourselves. Before a meal, pause to realize gratitude. Before a meeting, pray for a moment. All of these things help us do more and do it better. Letting go of the task we laid down, not dragging it into what we're about to do, and giving the task at hand our full attention – most especially when the task at hand is standing before the Throne of Mercy to offer our thanks and ask for the needs of others, the world, and ourselves.



Announcements

Mark Your Calendars

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, October 4, 11, 18, 25 10:00 am Sundays after Pentecost**

Zoom Coffee Hour, **Sunday, October 4, 11, 18, 25 11:00 am.** To be invited contact Shelley Keefe at 650 787-7614

Zoom Youth Group Meeting, **Sunday October 4, 11, 18, 25 4:00-5:00 pm** To be invited contact Daniel Tate at ym_stambrosefc@att.net or 650-799-7084

Zoom Vestry Meeting, **Wednesday, October 28th 6:00 pm.** To be invited contact April Cherrington at aprilcherrington@gmail.com or 650-574-7449

Diocesan Convention: **Friday, October 16, 2 pm to 8:30 pm, Saturday, October 17, 9 am to 3:30 pm,** Grace Cathedral

Every Gift Matters – by Shelley Keefe



and we need every gift!

Our 2020 stewardship campaign will start on Sunday, October 11, and end with an Ingathering Sunday on November 22. Now, more than ever, it's important that we share our gifts of experience, wisdom, and resources to build for the future of St. Ambrose and sustain our mission.

We are asking you to support our mission...and what is our mission? *"The mission of St. Ambrose Church of Foster City is to proclaim the Good News of God in Jesus Christ as we care for each other and our larger community. We worship in the Episcopal and Anglican tradition, extending an open and inclusive invitation to all people, welcoming children into our church family and serving those in need."*

I would add to this that, in the turmoil and uncertainty of 2020, our worship service provides a safe and sacred virtual space for reflection and wholeness, a time away from the relentlessness of the 24/7 news cycle, a place to nurture our emotional and mental health. As our attendance has dwindled over the past few years, it becomes even more important that we find new ways of communicating and living out our mission in the community. Perhaps our support of Sea Breeze School needs to become more evident to the parents and students; our support of youth ministry can take on more concrete form such as young musicians pre-recording music for our worship service; youth who cannot physically attend college this academic year providing remote tech support for parishioners who are not familiar with how livestream or zoom communication works.

It will come as no surprise that our finances, both church and school, will take a hit in 2020. The church doors may be closed, but the church is still 'open' and we are all working harder to keep things going. To serve our members during the pandemic and in the future, significant investments in technology (upgrading Wi-Fi and office computers, livestream, online giving platform setup fees) will be crucial.

We share this information with you to highlight the extraordinary effort that has gone into maintaining the church and school during the pandemic (SBS PPP loan, continued salary and benefits for staff and teachers, church leadership transition, volunteer livestream team, increased outreach), and ask you to join us in supporting this joyful, and sometimes difficult, way of doing God's work.

Clearly this year is very different from any we have known so far, and our stewardship campaign will take a different form. Over a period of five weeks, we would like as many parishioners as are willing to meet three times in small groups to focus on stewardship themes and offer your reflections on your experience of and hopes for St. Ambrose. Some creative suggestions resulted from the recent congregational survey and we are interested in hearing your thoughts on what initiatives we should implement to maintain our community.

Every Gift Matters (continued)

I ask you to join me in this stewardship journey, reflecting on the words of the hymn '*Take my life and let it be*' by Frances Ridley Havergal:

Take my life, and let it be

Consecrated, Lord, to Thee.

Take my moments and my days:

Let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of Thy Love.

Take my feet and let them be swift and beautiful for Thee.

Respectfully,

Shelley, Junior Warden

Youth Ministry and Youth Group News – by Daniel Tate

Planting a Garden

On Saturday, October 10, the Youth Group is invited to come to St. Ambrose to plant a garden together, starting at 12 noon. An outdoor activity!

Fall season is officially here and usually that means it's time for a harvest, not for planting. But we can still have a winter garden! All kinds of plants can get started in the fall. Some examples: cool-season vegetable seedlings, cabbage, kale, chard and spinach. We can also plant garlic and shallots now for a summer harvest. We'll be planting some bulb flowers too for bloom in spring. We'll all be masked with gloves and keeping safe distancing practices. Alison and I are looking forward to seeing you there. We are also making plans to do something to celebrate Halloween. Stay tuned.

ZOOM Meetings

St. Ambrose Youth Group has a ZOOM meeting every Sunday from 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. where 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!

Youth Opportunities at St. Ambrose

The following are a few service and learning opportunities at St Ambrose youth might be interested in doing in order to keep active, get out of the house and 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 where she and her father David are looking to train some people to help out. Not only is this a service opportunity, but it is a valuable skill to have in one's tool belt *and* to put on one's resume. This is more than being a technician – it's learning and being of service, and a part of the production of our whole worship service. Plus, it's fun!

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. This is a great way to practice speaking in front of people in a relaxed environment in front of a small friendly group. I love reading scripture and speaking it aloud is even better. Maybe you'll find that this is the case for you too.

Youth Ministry and Youth Group News (continued)

Musicians: If you like to sing or play an instrument, there are plenty of opportunities to do so even now during the pandemic 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 ten 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 by email (ym_stambrosefc@att.net) or at 650-799-7084.

Thank you,

Daniel

Hymns for October – by Maureen Fromme

“Draw Us In the Spirit's Tether”

On Sunday, September 27, the Introit Hymn was “*Draw Us In the Spirit's Tether*”.

On a personal note (excuse the music reference), I remember being introduced to this hymn while in the choir at The Brick Presbyterian Church in New York City. It quickly grew to be a favorite hymn of mine.

In doing some research about the hymn, I read an article on the website of Lutheran Church of Our Savior, Haddonfield, New Jersey that seems to relate to our present time:

“...togetherness (as in 'tether') has taken on new meaning in 2020. We still gather, we just find new ways for it to be done. We can still gather, we can still sing, we can still pray. “*Draw Us In the Spirit's Tether*” can now be through Zoom, texting, Facebook Live, YouTube -- as God, through His Spirit, is with us.”

Harold Friedell (1905-1958), the composer of this hymn, was an American composer, organist and educator. He taught at Columbia University and Union Theological Seminary. To honor the Seminary, the name of the tune of this hymn is “*Union Seminary*”. He served as an organist at several churches, with his final position being as organist and choir master at the historic St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church in New York City.

The author of the text was the British minister, Percy Dearmer (1867-1936). He wrote the texts for several hymns in 'The Hymnal 1982'. Mr. Dearmer was the author of a liturgical manual for Anglican Clergy. His final appointment was as Canon of Westminster Abbey, where he ran a canteen for the unemployed, an outreach of his social concern.

As you listen to this hymn (text provided on video), give particular attention to Verse 3: “that by caring, helping, giving, we may be disciples true.. Alleluia!”

<https://youtu.be/90E9e-IkfvY>

Thank you,

Maureen

October Outreach Report – by Steve Yuen

Over the years, we have emphasized programs that include the human touch. Our volunteers have found them to be personally rewarding and instructive to their children, whom they hope will remember these experiences when they are adults.

Due to the coronavirus these programs have been cancelled or drastically scaled back in 2020.

Below is the status of Outreach programs in this unprecedented year:

Blessing of the Animals

Since 2006, St. Ambrose ministers have set up a table at the Foster City Dog Park on the first Sunday in October to bless pets and their owners to commemorate the Feast of St. Francis (parishioners are blessed at the Sunday morning services). Typically we advertise on the Foster City marquee, Craigslist, and the Foster City Islander. We have **cancelled** this year's Dog Park event.



CALL Primrose

St. Ambrose donates four or more food boxes to CALL Primrose as part of its annual Thanksgiving Fill-a-Box-Feed-a-Family program. The boxes are packed with 20 specified items (e.g., package of mashed potatoes, cans of fruit, etc.), then each box is sent to a family in San Mateo County. CALL Primrose (<http://www.callprimrose.org>) is a Burlingame outreach venture founded by the Presbyterian and United Methodist churches. This year's event has been **cancelled**, as CALL Primrose is not accepting food donations.

Cambodia Academy of Mongkol Borei

As we did last year, we donated \$600 which pays for the tuition, books, uniforms, meals, and transportation for two students. Since founder and Foster City resident Hans Eide's passing in 2015, the school's enrollment has grown to 320 under the sponsorship of Hans Eide's fellow Rotary Club members. The Cambodia Academy (cambodiaacademy.org) is open to students who are too poor to attend Cambodia public schools.



October Outreach Report (continued)

El Buen Pastor

St. Ambrose has made its regular annual donation of \$1,800 to El Buen Pastor, the Episcopal Church's Spanish-speaking congregation on the Peninsula. Its Vicar, the Reverend Anna B. Lange-Soto, is a regular visitor and speaker at St. Ambrose events.

Episcopal Diocese of Northern California (EDNC)

Wildfires have unfortunately become a recurring event, and we typically donate \$500 to \$700 to aid our sister Diocese to the North. It's likely that we will make a similar donation from the remaining \$1,800 in our 2020 budget.

Family Sharing

The purchase and delivery of Christmas gifts to three Samaritan House families is **likely to be cancelled** this year. Typically the gifts are funded by donations from the congregation, not from the Outreach budget. We will continue to watch for updates from Samaritan House.

Global AIDS Interfaith Alliance (GAIA)

As we have been doing for 11 years, we have donated \$300 to GAIA, whose primary missions are to prevent AIDS and to assist those afflicted by the disease in Africa.

Home and Hope

Since its founding in 2002, St. Ambrose has been a member of Home and Hope (homeandhope.net) and its predecessor, the Interfaith Hospitality Network. Home and Hope consists of 30 Peninsula churches and synagogues which provide temporary shelter for families displaced by job loss, family breakup, and sudden loss of housing. St. Ambrose makes dinner for four families who are sheltered at San Mateo's Hope Lutheran, usually for three or four separate one-week periods during the year. Sheltering at churches has been **cancelled**, and Home and Hope has been under severe financial strain as it has been paying for hotel rooms to fill the need.



Sandwiches on Sunday (SOS)

St. Ambrose serves a hot meal cafeteria-style to 50-80 people at the Fair Oaks Community Center in Redwood City during 5th Sundays of the month, usually four times a year. As the diners exit, they are handed a brown-bag lunch prepared by St. Pius Catholic Church. Since March, SOS has been scaled back to handing out the brown bags. We are grateful to St. Pius for preparing the brown bags for the McIntyre family to distribute on August 30. We still need to **organize our next and final SOS on November 29.**

October Outreach Report (continued)

Senior Stocking Stuffers

Jill Schwab moved to Sonora in 2015, and she showed extraordinary dedication by continuing to make and deliver over 1,000 gift bags to elderly shut-ins on the Peninsula. Jill cannot continue to lead this program, which in any event would have had to be canceled in 2020 due to the risk to elderly recipients.

United Thank Offering (UTO)

Normally we "pass the hat" in May and October for the UTO and present congregational donations (not from the Outreach budget) with other parishes at the Diocesan Convention in October.

Below are the donations we have made so far this year. The Outreach budget is \$8,500.

<u>Program</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Cambodia Academy	\$600
Church Divinity School of the Pacific	1,800
El Buen Pastore	1,800
Global AIDS Interfaith Alliance (GAIA)	300
Home and Hope	300
Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church (HH supplies)	100
Navajoland Episcopal Church	500
Ombudsman Services of San Mateo County	500
Regeneration Project (Energy Oscars)	200
Star Vista	300
<u>Sandwiches on Sunday (St. Pius Church)</u>	<u>300</u>
Total from Outreach Budget	\$ 6,700

Sea Breeze School News – by Jerelyn Weber, Principal

We have been doing this “routine” for a few months now and as soon as I think we have it all figured out, another curve ball is thrown!

The pandemic was something to navigate and then the heat and poor air quality came. The children have been in school for 17 days and have been allowed to go outside for less than five of those days. The teachers have done a great job of managing in smaller spaces, with less equipment and lots of children full of energy. This certainly is a different year for all of us.

Things in the classrooms are beginning to fall in place. As Father Shane learns about our children’s chapels, the children have been enjoying their weekly virtual chapels done by Mrs. Irizarry. This is something we did during our initial closure in March and they will continue until October when Father Shane will take over. There has been some talk about what this will look like and there has been some conversation about holding outside chapels when weather permits. I am sure that Father Shane will put his own spin on things and the children will be excited about what is presented. After Labor Day, we introduced the virtual Yoga and Meditation and Mindfulness classes to the children and beginning last week, PE classes started for the children. As usual, things are very busy around Sea Breeze and all is well.

We hosted our virtual Back to School Night on September 16, and while I knew the teachers would do a great job and would be successful, I was nervous for them as they needed to navigate yet another “new” way to teach. We had a very nice turnout of families and heard many great questions and compliments from them. The children and their families seem to be happy with the way the school year has started and looking forward to the many adventures that are awaiting them.

With the beginning of the school year behind us, we are starting to think of ways to celebrate the upcoming holidays while maintaining our safety protocols. I am certain the celebrations will be virtual and I am certain they will be awesome. Stay tuned for an update!

I hope all of you are staying safe!

Respectfully,

Jerelyn

The Editor's Corner—by Yvonne Sidell



“For the despondent, every day brings trouble; But for the happy heart, life is a continual feast.”

—Proverbs 15:15 (NLT)

A few years ago, a study was published reporting that emotions can be passed along much like a case of the flu. Meaning: if you know someone who is happy—especially if it is a mutual friendship—you are more likely to be a happy person. In fact, not only you, but others you know will benefit because of this happy person in your life.

A part of the study's conclusion was simply that a person's well-being is not only dependent on his or her own behaviors and emotions, but also as a direct result of one's social network. We often do not have control of what happens to us, but we do have control of our attitude and how we respond.

As the proverb says, “for those who approach everyday hopeless, they will surely find a day of trouble.” The opposite holds true as well. For those who go about their day focused on the good with a heart of gratitude, they will surely find happiness in each day.

So how do you get a happy heart?

First, it matters with whom you surround yourself. Are you in relationship with joyful followers of Christ? Or do you constantly surround yourself with naysayers? Make sure you have people in your life who have happy hearts and encourage the same in you.

However, if you really want some guidance in having a happy heart in the midst of adversity, follow Paul's example when he was in prison. He left a formula for the way to a happy heart in Philippians 4:8. He encouraged the people of Philippi to fill their minds and hearts with what is true, right and noble and to think on godly and good things.

It does not matter what we are faced with – joy will find its way into your soul when you focus on godly things.

Credit: HomeWord Devotionals

October Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

Judy Marshall	2
Ngoc Rodriguez	4
Raphael Gerber	10
Warren Wong	16
Shane Stewart	19
Eugene Hetzer	22
Charlotte Keefe	22
Julio Rodriguez	22
Gerald Schwab	23
Wendy Stewart	29



Anniversaries

Brenda & Kirk Matsuo	2
Rami & Linda Amireh	7
Elmer & Alie Pong	8
Susan & David Yates	11
Milda Beh & Honkai Chang	22
Christina Brockman & Stan Hui	28