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Edition



The Ambrosian

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

In This Issue:

*Reflections from the
Interim Rector.....P 1-2*

Announcements.....P 3-5

*Reading
of Wisdom.....P 6*

Youth Ministry.....P 7

*Hymns for
February.....P 8*

*February
Outreach.....P 9*

*Sea Breeze
School News.....P 10*

Editor's Corner.....P 11

*Birthdays &
Anniversaries.....P 12*

Editor
Yvonne Sidell

Reflections from the Interim Rector

Dearest Sisters & Brothers,

I know it is super 'nerdy' of me, but as an historian who reads some Latin, I've always been annoyed by our calendar month names. September should mean "7" (septus in Latin); October should be "8"; November, "9"; and December, "10". Instead, the numbers are all off by two because of the insertion of "Julius" (July) and "Augustus" (August) into the calendar.

I should be over it by now, but I still want it changed back almost as much as I wish we could drop "Daylight Savings" (Ben Franklin's worst idea in my opinion).

But the month of "February" got me wondering why it isn't called "Secundus" or "Secondary" instead of "February". That led to an interesting and apropos trip down a proverbial rabbit hole. Februus is associated with an ancient pagan god of purification to promote health and fertility in Ancient Rome - a festival called "Lupercalia" which was adopted into the new Christianity of the Empire. February 2nd (marking 40 days of "change" after the incarnation of Christ at Christmas) is when we celebrate one of the Church's oldest and earliest feasts (c. 354 AD): "Candlemas" (from "Candle- Mass") when all the pure beeswax candles the church will use for the year are consecrated and blessed celebrating Christ as the Light of the World. The feast is also called "Feast of the Presentation of Jesus in the Temple" with Ss Simeon & Anna (Lk 2.22-40), or the less politically correct "Feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the Temple" (a Jewish purification ritual for women after giving birth).

I say it's apropos because I learned a new fact while down in this particular rabbit hole research. Around the year 542 AD, the Feast took on an augmented observance due to the cure of the Christian Emperor Justinian. Justinian had contracted what came to be called "the Plague of Justinian" - the first recorded "global" pandemic - a plague that raged from 541-549, killing around 5,000 people a day in Constantinople and 1/5 of the population. Ironically, the plague was believed to have originated in China. [The same plague strain would re-emerge in 1347-1351 as "The Black Death"] When Emperor Justinian survived the pandemic, a new emphasis was placed on the old and transformed Lupercalia / Feast of the Presentation.

Reflections (continued)

As we are now starting our third year of a global pandemic, I find myself seeing February and the Festival of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple in a whole new Light.

Historically, the day after February 2nd's Candle-Mass is the Feast of St. Blaise (Feb 3rd). St Blaise (died 316 AD) was a bishop and physician who miraculously cured a young boy choking on a fish bone. It became the Church's custom to take two of the candles from Candlemas and use them to bless everyone's throat for protection from all ailments for the year. I'm wondering if the world shouldn't revive the "blessing of St Blaise" and the festival of Lupercalia as we enter the month of Februus... *"for now mine eyes have seen Thy salvation which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a Light to lighten the Gentiles and to be the glory of Thy people Israel"*.

Respectfully Yours,

Father Shane Scott-Hamblen, Th.D.

Announcements

St. Ambrose Choir

The choir will resume rehearsals on Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. We will be masked and correctly distanced, and would be happy for anyone who wishes to join us. If you wish to join us, please let Maureen Fromme know so she can prepare a folder for you. You may contact her at mhfromme@yahoo.com OR 415.990.6758.

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!

Intercession Prayers

The apostle James tells us to "pray for one another, that you may be healed" (James 5:16).

If you would like the St. Ambrose community to pray with you, please write your intercession in the Blessing book placed in the Narthex or send your request to stambrosefc@att.net. Your prayer will be included at the following mass service. Please leave your name and contact information in the booklet, in case clarifications are needed.

Thank you!
Raphael Gerber

Announcements (continued)

The Search Committee Update

The Search Committee has completed the OTM responses for the Diocese and will finalize the Profile at the January 5 meeting in order to send it to the Vestry for approval. Once the Vestry has approved the documents, we will present it to the Parish at the January General Meeting. Each of these documents will “paint a picture” of St. Ambrose as we are now, and our hopes are for the future. The list below shows the order of the tasks.

- ~~1. Form the Search Committee~~
- ~~2. Organize and review discernment process tasks~~
- ~~3. Create and pilot questions for Town Hall Meetings~~
- ~~4. Hold Town Hall Meetings on September 12th and 15th~~
- ~~5. Analyze data gathered from the Town Hall Meetings~~
- ~~6. Write Parish Profile and OTM Portfolio~~
7. Parish Profile and OTM Portfolio approved by Vestry
8. Open Rector position.
9. Evaluate application materials
10. Two or three Interviews with applicants
11. Check references
12. Submit two or three finalists to the Vestry

The members of this committee are:

Father Shane
 Canon Denise Obando (Diocesan Transition Minister)
 April Cherrington
 Nilda Chong
 George Gardiner
 Carolyn Moriarity
 Liva Neyroud
 Yvonne Sidell
 Warren Wong
 Steve Yuen

Announcements (continued)

Contemplative Meditation Group

St. Ambrose has a wonderful "Contemplative Meditation" group who meet each week on Hump Days. That's right! After the first two hectic days of the week, it's just time for a much needed 30+ minute break.

Beginning with his monastic early life, Father Shane has a lifetime of meditation. From this wealth of experience and knowledge, Father Shane draws inspiration from various forms of contemplation as well as meditation.

Of course, we all know that schedules can get in the way of participating...even on Zoom. We have been recording some of the sessions and are making them available for your practice on your own time. How about that?!

Please email me at hfongster@gmail.com if you have any questions or would like to request access for the recordings...maybe even the Zoom link to join us.

Thank you!
Hamilton Fong

Reading of Wisdom – by Shelley Keefe

From St. Augustin's Prayer Book:

'Remember, Christian Soul

That today and every day you have

God to glorify.

Jesus to imitate.

Salvation to work out with fear and trembling.

A body to use rightly.

Sins to repent.

Virtues to acquire.

Hell to avoid.

Heaven to gain.

Eternity to hold in mind.

Time to profit by.

Neighbors to serve.

The world to enjoy.

Creation to use rightly.

Sights to endure patiently.

Kindness to offer willingly.

Justice to strive for.

Temptations to overcome.

Death perhaps to suffer.

In all things, God's love to sustain you.'

Respectfully Yours,

Shelley Keefe

Youth Ministry and Youth Group News – by Daniel Tate

Our Youth Ministry and Youth Groups are currently active with many blessed events, so we will share an update in February! Thank you!

Respectfully Yours,

Daniel Tate

Hymn for February – by Maureen Fromme

“O DAY OF RADIANT GLADNESS” – Hymn #48

During February, we continue with the “Sundays After the Epiphany”, with Transfiguration Sunday at the end of the month. Scripture lessons will include: Simon, James and John following Christ as fishers of men; the familiar words of Psalm 1 and Psalm 37; the Beatitudes; our Christian attitude toward others; the wonder of the Transfiguration. Plenty of Scripture to ponder!

And, why not have a hymn to help us through this month that helps us to express, through music, the wonder of this time? “O Day of Radiant and Gladness...” helps to be renewed, worshipful, hopeful and joyful. Christopher Wordsworth (1807-1885) wrote the text to this hymn and seven others in our Hymnal. Born in London, he comes from a family of many distinguished writers, poets and scholars. According to records, he was an excellent student and athlete. He became headmaster of a school, Canon of Westminster Abbey, writer of many books, including a commentary on the Bible. He had very particular opinions about hymns and stated those opinions rather dogmatically. For example: “Hymnology has been allowed to fall into the hands of persons who had little reverence for the Authority and Teaching of the ancient Christian Church...” (from igracemusic.com). Much more is stated at that website and is interesting to read.

The tune is a 17th century German folk song, “Es flog ein kleine Waldvögelein” (“There flew a little forest bird”) <https://youtu.be/jxnE3iQAvU4>

With the text of Christopher Wordsworth, it sounds like this: <https://youtu.be/Q-2ZZlkrWc>

Turn up the volume and joyfully sing along!

Respectfully Yours,

Maureen Fromme

February Outreach Report – by Steve Yuen

Sandwiches on Sunday (January 30)

After 14 months of assembling the brown bag lunches, we are further up the learning curve.

Our supply chain management is state-of-the-art---we now check the inventory *before* we go shopping---and when we do go to the store, we peer through the translucent bread wrapping to count the number of slices in a loaf, then perform *long division* to figure out how many loaves are needed for 80 ham-and-cheese and 80 peanut-butter-and-jelly sandwiches.



Elliott Dunn, Jr., Daniel Tate, and Valerie Mersh

These techniques have proved to be more efficient than going through the aisles, throwing stuff in the cart, and praying for a feeding-the-5,000 moment to have it all work out.

And so it was that four volunteers were efficient enough to put together the lunches on Saturday, January 29. On the assembly line were Elliott Dun, Jr., Valerie Mersh, Daniel Tate, and Steve Yuen. In two hours they were done, and the finished product was stored in a refrigerator overnight.

On Sunday, there were 30 people in line at 11:45 a.m., and a dozen stragglers showed up in the next half hour. After we made sure that each had at least one, the customers were told they could have two, and all 87 brown bags were snapped up.

The community center director said that the garden is closed indefinitely, and there is not even a tentative date when hot lunches could resume.

The next Sandwiches on Sunday is **May 29, 2022**.



Sea Breeze School News – by Jerelyn Weber

It was great to see many of you at the Annual Meeting, either in person or via Zoom.

The Year 2022 at Sea Breeze has started very busy. After a very nice winter break and Christmas vacation, school reopened on January 3. While every child and staff member were required to submit a recent clear COVID test to return, we were faced with many folks unable to return due to testing positive. I am thankful that nobody was very sick and all have since recovered and returned. In honor of Martin Luther King Jr., school was closed on Monday January 17 and over the weekend, I was notified once again of several folks testing positive throughout the school. For this reason, we made the difficult decision to close the school through what would have been the 5-day quarantine time since the last exposure on Friday January 14. We took the opportunity during this closure to deep clean the school. We had the carpets cleaned and sanitized, the HVAC system sanitized and HEPA filters replaced and every toy and surface was cleaned and sanitized. The majority of the children returned to campus on Thursday January 20 with clear antigen tests. We did feel it necessary to credit the families' accounts for the days the school was closed and I am happy to say that many families donated that credit back to the school. Families have been very supportive as we continue to navigate this situation and do what we can to mitigate the spread. Teachers are now testing weekly and wearing KN95 masks and we are strongly encouraging families to do the same. Thankfully, many of our eligible children have been vaccinated already and we are eagerly awaiting the approval for the youngest children to receive the vaccination as well.

Moving right along, registration for the 2022 Summer Camp and the 2022-23 school year opened at the end of the month and is going well. We hope to have a full preschool for the upcoming school year. We will continue to work in small groups of 12 in the preschool rooms and are holding our decision on what the After School program will look like. The After School program has been very small the last two years and we are not sure what this coming year will bring. Whatever the situation is, we will do our best to meet the needs of our families and the school.

February brings the celebrations of the Black History Month, Chinese New Year, Valentine's Day and of course the Presidents Birthdays. As you may know, many of our students will celebrate the Chinese New Year in their homes, and we feel fortunate to have families share this tradition with our students. We have families in each classroom that will share virtual celebrations with the children. The classrooms will each have Valentine's celebrations and the school will be closed on February 21 in honor of our great Presidents.

Thank you for your continued support of the school. They say it takes a village and this is especially true as we continue to work through all that present in the world today. Please wear your mask, wash your hands and stay well!

Respectfully Yours,

Jerelyn Weber, Principal

The Editor's Corner—by Yvonne Sidell



“I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

—Romans 12:1-2

What are some practical ways you can fully surrender your life to God? Sometimes we get “too” comfortable in our lifestyle. Here’s a gentle reminder:

*I would love to buy \$3 worth of God, please;
Not enough to explode my soul or disturb my sleep,
But just enough to equal a cup of warm milk or a snooze in the sunshine.*

*I want fantasy, not transformation.
I want the warmth of the womb, not a new birth.
I want a pound of the Eternal in a paper sack.
I would like to buy \$3 worth of God, please.**

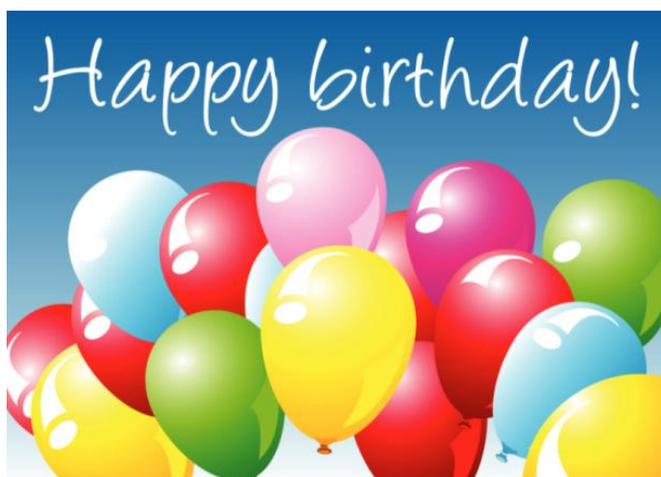
I’m afraid too many people approach their Christian faith as if they wanted to buy \$3 worth of God.

They want only the best that God has to offer. As today’s Scripture points out, you can’t have both. God’s desire for your life is that you actually give your body as a living sacrifice to Him. If you choose to identify with Jesus, you are choosing to make Him the Master of your life. A life fully surrendered to Jesus is lived on the edge of adventure.

February Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

Meltem Tanner	3
Elliott Dun	7
Nathan Matsuo	7
Andy Walker	7
Marilyn Stephens	9
Andrea Saunders	19
Linda Censoprano	20
Karen Chee	22
Joshua Franco	24
Bettie Davis	25
Liv Dahdah	25
Dilip Selvaraj	27
Valerie Mersh	28



Happy
Anniversary

Rev. David Ota & Rev. Karen Swanson	4
Keith & Charlene Adolph	5
Paul and Chelsea Ota	21