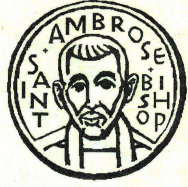


April  
2024



# The Ambrosian

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

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Editor  
Nilda Chong



## In Midst of Life

Imagine what it would have been like for Mary Magdalene on that first dark Easter morning. Remember she was with Mary the Mother of Jesus and the beloved disciple, standing near the cross as a witness to his suffering and death. Joseph of Arimathea had generously offered his tomb for the burial, and perhaps Mary helped with the ritual preparation of the body.

Now it's the third day since all of this happened. Mary must have wanted to be with her grief and sorrow at Jesus' resting place. It would give her comfort to honor the body of her teacher and friend with her presence, her tears, and her love. But what is this? What has happened? The heavy stone that was at the entrance to the tomb has been rolled away. What is going on? It's too much to bear. It's bad enough that Jesus, the one who brought new life and hope, is dead, lost forever, and now even his dear flesh, the earthly remains, are gone! She has nothing to hang onto, even the earthly reminders of his life have been taken, and possibly desecrated. There is indeed no sorrow like unto her sorrow.

Meanwhile, Peter and the beloved disciple had actually gone into the tomb, and they saw the burial cloths lying there where the body of Jesus had been, and they believed. Then they went back home. But Mary, bewildered, confused, and heartbroken, is still standing there. She is weeping uncontrollably, sobs shaking her body. Then she looks in the tomb, and sees the angels sitting where the body of Jesus had lain.

They ask her why she is crying and she says “they have taken away my Lord, and I don’t know where they have laid him.” She turns around and Jesus is standing there, but she doesn’t realize it’s him. So when he asks her, “Woman, why are you weeping, whom are you looking for?” she believes she is speaking to the gardener, and she answers, “Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him and I will take him away.” And then Jesus says her name “Mary.” How recognition and joy must have moved over her face when she heard that beloved voice! “Rabbouni,” she cries, which means teacher. He is there! He is alive! She must have tried to embrace him, for he tells her not to hold onto him, because he has not yet ascended to the Father. And he asks her to tell the brothers, the other disciples, that he is alive and ascending to the Father.

And we can imagine how her feet must have danced along the ground as she went to tell the others the good news. Gone were the fear, the sadness, the heaviness. Joy wells up within her, and fills her heart!

The other Gospel accounts have some variations, yet they agree on the essentials of what happened that morning. Women were present at the tomb in all 4 Gospel accounts. In Matthew’s story, the angels give the women the news, and they meet Jesus while running back from the tomb to tell the other disciples. In the Gospels of Mark and Luke, they discover that the tomb is empty, but In Mark’s account, there is no mention of Jesus appearing, and in Luke’s record his first appearance is to the disciples on the road to Emmaus. In all three accounts, the angels tell them that Jesus is not there, but that he has been raised, and in Luke, the angels ask them why they are looking for living among the dead. Jesus defeated death, and is wondrously, gloriously alive, and because he lives, we shall, too! And because of Jesus’ victory over death and the grave, the world will never be the same again!

What is at the heart of this great mystery? We won’t ever be able to explain it, only enter into the mystery, and let it work in our hearts. I would like to offer some reflections this Easter morning which might help us put into inadequate words what is only knowable in the language of faith, of grace.

First, the Resurrection is universal, and, at the same time, personal. It is universal in that the ministry of Jesus is no longer limited to a particular time and place. Through the resurrection, the living Christ transcends these boundaries, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, his grace, his healing, his reconciling love are set free to transform the world, in all times and places.

And no longer is the covenant of God limited to one historical people; it is opened to all, and in fact, embraces the whole creation. And the God of the Resurrection does this without changing or diminishing the original covenant.

In the reading from Acts 10, we heard Peter proclaiming to the Gentiles the story of Jesus’ death and resurrection. He had experienced a vision in which God had revealed that all people had been made ritually pure through God’s love in Christ. That was a big deal in the world of first century Israel. Peter tells his audience that “God shows no partiality, but in every nation those who fear him and do what is right are acceptable to him.” The promise of the Resurrection is for all.

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And yet the Resurrection is personal. Jesus suffered, died and was raised to bring new life, new hope to all. And yet, he calls us each by name, just as he called Mary that first Easter morning, when he looked upon her with love. He doesn't love us in the abstract, but values and sees each person. The Resurrection is personal. Jesus comes to us, and brings what is dead, or despairing, to life and hope once more, and raises us up out of the tombs that hold us. He invites us to travel with him in hope, love, and deep peace. Know there is no darkness through which the Risen Christ cannot see you and reach you. Resurrection is personal.

Second, in the Resurrection Jesus is transformed and glorified, and we will be, too. Notice in the Eucharistic Prayer that we will soon share, the Memorial Acclamation declares, "Christ has died, Christ IS risen, Christ will come again." It doesn't say Christ has risen, but Christ is risen. Resurrection is not just an action that happened to him in the power of God, it's who he is now, forever, the Risen One. Emmanuel, God with us in the flesh is risen, in his humanity, with all of his scars, his human nature wonderfully glorified, transformed into new and unending life. And the good news is he fills our humanity with God's wondrous life! We, here, in the midst of our imperfect, gifted, wounded lives are also lifted up and transformed. We are caught up in the power of the Resurrection, and we will never be the same!

And finally, the Resurrection is not reserved for some far-off time in the next life. It begins here, and now, with great abundance! Because Jesus conquered the power of death, grace is running wild, gloriously amok and out of control, and we can begin to live in the joy of the Kingdom of God right now! Because we have seen Jesus, and know that he lives, we are free to love in ways we never thought were possible. Because Jesus was in the world, reconciling all people to himself, we can embrace the humanity of everyone, even that of our enemies.

We can begin to build bridges, instead of walls of suspicion.

Because of the unending love of Jesus, we can look with his eyes and see the worth and beauty of every human being and realize in the presence of one another, we are walking on holy ground. Because Christ has been lifted up upon the cross and is raised into new life we can live not only for ourselves, but for him, and the beloved community that transcends race, or culture, or age, or ability or anything by which we seek to put limits on the grace of God.

I would like to conclude with a quote from the late Rachel Held Evans, a prophetic lay voice in the Episcopal Church and beyond. In her book "Searching for Sunday, Loving, Leaving and Finding the Church", she writes about the Church's mission: "But if the world is watching, we may as well tell the truth. And the truth is the church doesn't offer a quick fix. The Church offers death and resurrection. The Church offers the messy, inconvenient, gut-wrenching, never-ending work of healing and resurrection. The Church offers grace. Anything else we try to peddle is snake oil. It's not the real thing.

This, friends, is the real thing—the empty tomb, the transformed Jesus present in the broken bread, the wine outpoured, in the lives of all of our brothers and sisters here today. We don't need to look for the living among the dead. Christ is risen, the Lord is risen indeed, Alleluia, Alleluia!

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## Layman's Reflection



Gratitude for reflection, Lenten Season, Holy Week, culminating in Easter and the "Light of Christ" lifting us out of darkness.

This week I'm enjoying the sweet afterglow of Holy Week. Restful quiet down time. Joyous music echo festively from the recesses of memory.

Alleluias ring! Organ playing! People sing! Children gleaming! Smiles streaming!

Stations of the Cross: there in the church all year. I know they surround us. Jesus bears the cross for us, Jesus falls several times, he rises, Jesus meets his mother, Jesus is stripped, nailed to the cross, and dies. Jesus Lives!

Maundy Thursday, foot washing, service, we lift each other up. This is what Jesus did to us. We are community!

Pick ourselves up, move forward, welcome the rain, hail, thunder. Sun is warm.

Let's share a smile,  
Ham

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## **It Takes a Parish!**

It takes a Parish to celebrate Easter. Alleluia!

Easter Sunday was a wonderful culmination to the week. Thanks to everyone, and it was everyone who did so much.

The music was fabulous, starting with Amanda Yuxin Dei and Christopher Pluntke on the piano and organ, Star Valley Choir who sang the Prelude, and Tiffany Gao who sang the Offertory. A special thanks to Hamilton who invited and organized it all.

The Easter Egg Hunt and Sunday School was organized by Raphael Gerber and Kay Umeda. It was wonderful to see the children attending Sunday School and parents in church as well as the egg hunt. And cheers of course for the Easter Bunny (Mathias Berber) and his bunny assistant Liva Neyroud.

Coffee Hour organized by Elizabeth and Don Peters was amazing. Also thank you to Brenda Matsuo and so many others who brought treats to share.

The Altar Guild, Marilyn Stephens, Valerie Mersh and Teresa Murakami, arranged for the beautiful flowers on Easter Sunday and did all the work throughout the week setting the altar and draping for every event.

Many thanks to The Livestream Technicians, Ali LeBlanc and David McIntyre, for their work throughout the week making sure it was all be recorded and broadcast.

Thank you to all the readers and participants in the services throughout the week, Mary Loretta Rose, Eugene Hetzer, Dulce Lord, Daniel Tate and others.

Of course, our sincerest gratitude to most important Mother Rebecca and Deacon Daniel Tate who lead and preached at the all the services throughout the week, to Hamilton who kept it all together, and to Angeli Labrador who made sure we had bulletins for every service.

April Cherrington  
Junior Warden

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## Easter 2024



Easter 2024 was an enriching and joyful preparation that began in February and involved many members of our community: planning with flyers and sign-up forms, craft activities, Easter bunnies, eggs to fill and then preparing for the class itself.

We were thrilled to welcome over 30 families for the hunt, almost half of whom came for the service. We had more than 15 children for the class and we prayed, sang and made crafts all together! One young child (elementary school age) was so knowledgeable about the Bible and shared that his mom used to read the stories - he loved it! Was such a joy to have a great diversity. One of the most beautiful moments was taking the children to communion - we would like to do that every week!!

Then the party started with our two warm and funny Easter bunnies! We are very grateful to Liva and Mathias for being our mascots and helping the children to find the eggs! About 50 kids hunted for eggs - 800 filled with delicious treats (the finest Haribo from Brenda, Italian fruit jellies from Kay, and chocolates from Daniel) with the help of many volunteers - Maria Loretta, Teresa, Elliott jr/sr, Daniel, Kristin, Karen, Suzanne, Jacques and Mathias.

We received thanks and positive feedback from several new families. They'd like us to do this more often so they can get to know our community better. They appreciate the spirit of our church. Families that are bicultural or have a religion that they no longer practice because it no longer fits are interested in learning more, but they probably feel shy and not sure if they can move forward and join us. Through discussion, they come to appreciate that St. Ambrose is truly multi-cultural,

open-minded, non-judgmental, and thrives on bringing together people from different backgrounds/cultures/experiences to pray together for the world of today, the world of tomorrow, and the world of the past.

The message of Easter is that Jesus is alive, always present in our hearts, we need to spread the good news. Therefore, we must be effective and work together on better signage around our church to welcome people from different backgrounds so that they are not afraid to come and really feel welcome.

The Sunday School teachers are very grateful for all the volunteers who helped and look forward to more hands on deck for the follow-up activities mentioned above. Please contact us or the Vestry.

Teacher Kay and Teacher Raphael

## Announcements

### Outreach – April 2024



### **Sandwiches on Sunday – March 31st:**

Despite the crowding of the calendar during Holy Week, St. Ambrose volunteers again came through like champions in putting together more than 80 brown bag lunches on Saturday and distributing them at Fair Oaks Community Center on Easter Sunday. We had ten assemblers at the Parish Hall, more than we've had in over a year. They completed the task in under an hour, less than half the budgeted time.

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Nathan Yuen took the sandwiches and bottled water to Redwood City, where there were 20 people standing in line at 11:45. Nathan initially gave everyone two bags but stopped at one bag when stragglers raised the customer count to 40. Everything was gone by 12:10 p.m.

Fair Oaks Community Center has re-opened the garden area to churches who want to start serving hot lunches again. St. Ambrose will need to decide its level of participation (hot lunches, brown bags, both, or even nothing) in the next few months. The next SOS is **Sunday, June 30<sup>th</sup>**. Stay tuned.

### **Lenten Campaigns:**

**United Thank Offering:** we collected \$360! We hold the funds until the Diocesan Convention in October. We intend to follow the tradition started by retired Father Ota to put in the offering at the Cathedral service, which is usually held on Friday on Convention weekend.

**RIP Medical Debt** (ripmedicaldebt.org) buys medical debt for cents on the dollar. The debt is then cancelled, relieving families from financial burdens that many find overwhelming. We collected \$440, which is an excellent result according to our sister churches.

### **Tuesday Bible Study**

Meets on Tuesday at 1 pm over Zoom to study the scriptures for the following Sunday's service. There is good discussion, usually lasting about an hour.

For information and Zoom link, contact Warren Wong at [wwong@nd.edu](mailto:wwong@nd.edu)

### **Contemplative Meditation Group**

Welcome to our "Contemplative Meditation" Zoom group. Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. Enjoy a 40 minute respite of mindful breaths, compassionate, and contemplative community. Be heard should you choose to share.

We are currently working through David Brooks' recent book "How to Know a Person: The Art of Seeing Others Deeply..."

If you wish, an email-list reminder can arrive in your inbox Tuesday nights -- write to: [hfongster@gmail.com](mailto:hfongster@gmail.com) (Questions are welcome).

[Click this link on Wednesday's 10am to join Zoom.](#)

Or use this QR Code:



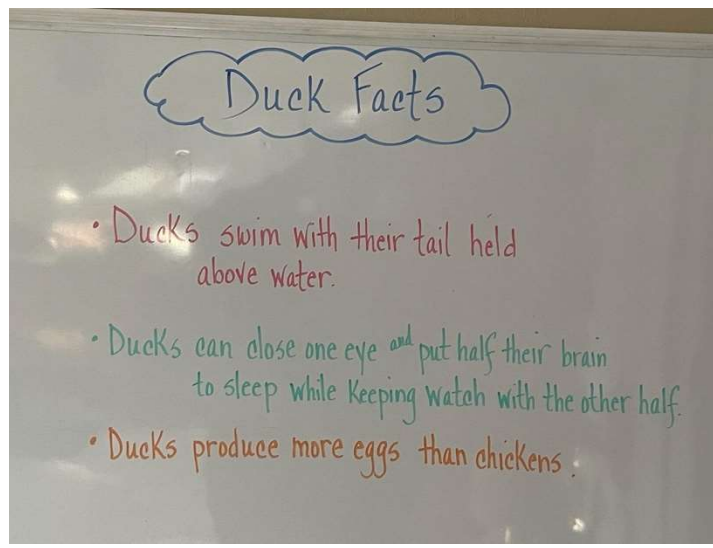


## Card Ministry

Every month our members receive birthday and anniversary cards and sometimes, when events happen, some also receive get well or sympathy cards. In March, we sent out 15 birthday and 2 anniversary cards.

If you become aware of a member's good news, illness, or a family loss, please let Kyn Dellinger know at (650) 291-6208 or email her at [bonanzalady@gmail.com](mailto:bonanzalady@gmail.com)

## Sea Breeze School News



Rain, Rain and more rain...I think it is almost gone for the season.

After several egg hunts and bunny visits, our Spring break has come and gone. While some of our families traveled abroad for the break and will not be returning until next month, many are back and the children are ready to be at school.

If you have been to Church you have noticed the large area up front surrounded by yellow caution tape. If you have not yet heard, we have a mommy duck and her eggs in there! There was much excitement around her arrival and the children were anxious to learn all about what was happening in those bushes. Each day we posted "Important Duck Facts", on a white board outside my office, and the conversations between the children and their parents were so sweet. One day we had a "Name the Duck" question up and after many ideas, she was named Lavendar! We see the ducks each year and often they get scared away by all the commotion around here and this year we saw her early enough to protect her and the eggs. We hope to see babies this week or next.

We had a lot of work done over Spring Break and teachers are excited to see the changes. The biggest change is the new carpet in all of the classrooms and new flooring in the Church and School offices. Outside, we had the majority of the sand removed from the playground and we are replacing it with soft mulch. The playground was supposed to be completed during the week and unfortunately there was a delay because of a contractor error and things will be done by the end

of this coming week. Next time you are at Church, please feel free to take a look at our recent upgrades, I hope you like them as much as we do.

Enrollment continues for this summer and for the 23-24 School Year. If you know of anyone looking for a great place to be a kid, please send them our way. To help with enrollment, we will be hosting an evening Enrollment Fair on April 10<sup>th</sup> at 5pm.

Happy Spring!

Jerelyn Weber, Principal

## The Editor's Corner – by Nilda Chong



What an eventful March we had! If a picture is worth a thousand words, I hope all the photos in this issue convey how busy our congregation has been. Thank you to everyone for sharing them!

## April Birthdays

April 7	Shelley Keefe
April 7	Emily Rodriguez
April 14	Keith Adolph
April 15	Alexandra Miller
April 15	Rami Amireh
April 19	Clara Padilla
April 23	Kirk Matsuo
April 29	Irene Stead

## April Anniversaries

April 8	Wendy & Doug Stewart
April 13	Barbara & Frank Saunders
April 21	Kenneth and Karen Nagar

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