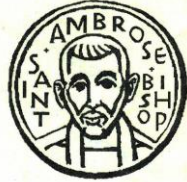


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The Ambrosian

The Monthly Newsletter of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church
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Reflections from our Rector

Dear Members and Friends of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church,

Aloha! Alleluia. Christ is risen. The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia. In April and the Season of Easter, we turn our hearts towards the signs of new life among us. During the Lenten program we focused on how to “Heal ourselves in the face of racism” and other oppressions. We learned that these systems of injustice are enforced by violence, and by those who are privileged by them. One way to heal ourselves in the face of injustice is to claim our voices.

The students of Marjory Stoneham Douglass High School in Parkland, Florida claimed their voices in the face of the unspeakable tragedy of mass murder. From the depths of disaster and despair, they were able to huddle together and create a movement among their peers and other young people to call for change. Hopefully, this movement and others like it will continue to seek life out of tragedy.

What is needed in our lives is a change of heart. Before we can call on anyone else to move in a new direction toward life and love, we need to make that movement ourselves. And this is what the Easter Story from John’s gospel (John 20:1-18) reveals when Mary Magdalene went to the tomb of Jesus and found it empty.

In her despair, she found the tomb empty and feared the worst. She ran for help, and those who came did little if nothing to console her. They too were perplexed by what the empty tomb meant. And in her grief, she mistook the Risen Lord for a gardener. She did not recognize or understand what had happened until she heard her name called in a loving manner, “Mary.”

On Palm Sunday, I shared in Mark’s gospel the account for the Liturgy of the Palms, how the crowds first came to welcome Jesus as “the Son of David” and their hope for returning the nation to the glory of ages past. But in the Passion narrative, the cheering crowd had turned into a mob calling for Jesus’ crucifixion. Jesus went from the joyous march on Palm Sunday to a solitary journey known as his passion.

Reflections from our Rector *(continued)*

Likewise, when we work together, we can do great things. We can build great buildings and cities, create life changing technology such as nuclear energy and digital phones, and feed and educate large masses of people. But at the same time in doing these “great things”, we have the potential of unintended consequences: the damage done to the planet and to native peoples, the use of people not privileged (slaves, native peoples, low-paid immigrants) for the purposes of the privileged, the threat of nuclear war and the misuse of social media to create confusion.

Our Lord Jesus Christ did not recreate the world in his image. He cared for the people in his community, especially the vulnerable. He spoke the truth of God’s ways to the powerful and lived peaceably even in the face of threats and death. He overcame the oppressions of his day not by using force, but by living, dying faithfully in love and by being raised in new Resurrection life and love.

It is this divine amazing love which gave Mary Magdalene hope to continue to live for the love of Jesus. It is this divine amazing love which I hope will sustain all those who seek a better way to the methods of the powerful who use people and the creation for their own purposes.

Here at St. Ambrose and Sea Breeze School, our seminarian, Daniel Tate is taking on a project to create a learning experience for us. He will be working with children and youth of the church and school to plant and care for the Sonora wheat we use in making our communion bread. It is a humble project to teach us to think about what we do, and to care for the earth and our food. Indeed, we are to be gardeners as were Adam and Eve and the Risen Lord.

Open your heart and your eyes, and behold God’s marvelous love in action in the creation, among the people with whom you share your life, and you too will be able to live with love even in the midst of the oppressions of our time, for Jesus the Christ is risen, Alleluia.

Yours,

David Y. Ota, Rector

Announcements

THANKS to...

- Dorothy Matsuo, Diane Robertson, Janet Gardiner, Jim Neubert, April Cherrington, Irene Stead, Eva Kwong, Yuan Li, Bettie Davis, Judy Marshall, Valerie Mersh, David McIntyre, Nellie and Warren Wong, Shelley Keefe, Maureen Fromme, Marilyn Canon, Reena Davis, Barbara Saunders, Jeanne Ozeki, Clara Padilla and Dulce Franke who provided soup, salad or bread for our Lenten Lunches.
- Members of the Altar Guild for cleaning the chapel and preparing for Holy Week services.
- Rev. Karen Swanson, Shaiji Ajit, Gwen Juha, Mukund Ambarge and Subbi Patil for organizing and helping with the movie night and food on Friday, March 16.
- Jim Neubert who provided the palms for the altar from his home for Palm Sunday.

Study Groups in April

- **The Monday Evening Study Group** has embarked on the Good Book Club daily lessons from Luke and Acts in the seasons of Lent and Easter. At each of our meetings, on the second and fourth Mondays of the month, we will discuss the readings we have completed to that point. For more information on the Good Book Club go to the link:
<http://www.goodbookclub.org/readings/>

They will meet this month on **Mondays, April 9 and 23 at 7:00 p.m.** at the home of Shelley Keefe, 887 Erickson Lane, Foster City.

- **The Tuesday Bible Study Group** meets each week from **12:45 to 2:00 p.m.** in the foyer. In April, they will be meeting on **April 3, 10, 17 and 24** and reading the Book of Job.

All are welcome to join! The study groups are open to any interested person.

Outings to S.F. Giants Game

St. Ambrose will once again attend San Francisco Giants games. The games will be as follows:

- **Friday, April 6, 7:15 p.m.** – Giants and Los Angeles Dodgers, View Reserve Section 307, Rows 5, 6 and 7. This is a Fireworks Night. Tickets cost \$30 apiece.
- **Friday, May 18, 7:15 p.m.** – Giants and Colorado Rockies, View Reserve Section 314, Rows, 14, 15 and 16. Tickets cost \$29 for Row 14 and \$28 for Rows 15 and 16.

We have 25 tickets for each game. Mark your calendars and plan to join in the fun.

Announcements (continued)

Mark Your Calendars

The Day of the Resurrection – Easter Sunday: **Sunday, April 1**, Holy Eucharist, **8:00 a.m.**, and Choral Holy Eucharist, **10:00 a.m.**, Chapel

Easter Egg Hunt: **Sunday, April 1**, immediately following the **10:00 a.m. service**, Courtyard and Playground

Choir Practice: **Thursdays, April 5, 12, 19 and 26, 7:30 p.m.**, Chapel

S.F. Giants and L.A. Dodgers Game: **Friday, April 6, 7:15 p.m.**, AT&T Park

Youth Group: **Sunday, April 8, 8:00 a.m.**, Room 5

Sea Breeze School Family Fun Day: **Saturday, April 21, 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.**, Courtyard

Baptism of Randy Jew and Sydney Jew: **Sunday, April 22, 10:00 a.m.**, Chapel

Youth Group: **Sunday, April 22, 8:00 a.m.**, Room 5

Sandwiches on Sundays: **Sunday, April 29, 11:30 a.m.**, Fair Oaks Community Center, Redwood City

Youth Mission Trip Parking Lot Sale Fundraiser: **Saturday, May 12, 8:00 a.m.**, Parking Lot

Mother's Day Breakfast: **Sunday, May 13, 8:50 a.m.**, Parish Hall

S.F. Giants and Colorado Rockies Game: **Friday, May 18, 7:15 p.m.**, AT&T Park

The Day of Pentecost: **Sunday, May 20**, Holy Eucharist, **8:00 a.m.**, and Choral Holy Eucharist, **10:00 a.m.**, Chapel

From the Desk of The Rev. Karen Swanson

Upcoming Child and Family Events

Shhhhhh! Top Secret Mission for Men

A comment I heard recently from one of our children: *"I can help with the Mother's Day breakfast. I know how to pour my cereal into the bowl!"*

On Sunday, May 13 from 8:45 – 9:45 a.m., St. Ambrose children will be offering a top-secret, special breakfast in gratitude for the women who love and care for them. Table decorations and simple gifts are being prepared by the children, and they will help serve the food on the morning of the breakfast.

We need a few good men to take the lead in the kitchen. What better way to honor the mother of your children, your own mother, or another woman special to you! Chef hats will be provided for men willing to brown the sausage, scramble the eggs, cut up the fruit, and especially to take charge of the kitchen on the morning of Sunday, May 13. *Men, please call the Rev. Karen Swanson at 650-200-8449 if you are able to lead/assist in this very important mission.* Thank you!

Save the Date: Mother's Day Breakfast on Sunday, May 13 from 8:45 – 9:45 a.m.

Thank you to

Barbara Milligan for co-leading the Children and Family Ministry trip to the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve.

Subbi Patel for co-leading the Children and Family Ministry movie event featuring the movie "Ferdinand" and theatre goodies, and to **Nilda Chong** and **Kyn Dellinger** who prepared for and led an art project after the movie.

The **Rev. David Ota** for welcoming every child and family; to the **Rev. Jay Watan** for setting up and running the movie; to **Mukund Ambarge**, **Gwen Juha**, and **Shaiji Ajit** for overseeing the selling of food; to **Reena Davis** for sage advice; and to **Liva Neyround** for making a sign-up sheet. Thanks also to the children and youth who helped to serve the food including **Neel** and **Jay Ambarge**; **Rowen** and **Kieren Watan**; **Oliver** and **Lily Moriarty**; and **Gabriel** and **Leila Juha**. **Leda Girardi** for donating to the church several DVDs featuring children's movies.

The dedicated Sunday School teachers who have prepared for and/or led classes this month including **Gwen Juha**, **Christina Brockman**, **Raphael Gerber**, **Shaiji Ajit**, **Yvonne Sidell** and **Barbara Milligan**.

From the Desk of The Rev. Karen Swanson (continued)

Children and Family Ministry to Help the Hungry

Children and families of St. Ambrose are invited to get a taste of community service on Sunday, April 29 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. On that day, the chair of the Outreach Committee, Steve Yuen, and other “old hands” will guide the children in serving food to hungry people through the Sandwiches on Sunday program.

On the morning of April 22, the Sunday School lesson will prepare the students for this adventure with age appropriate learning about hunger, and ways that Christians can respond. Parents that would like to extend the lesson by working with their children at home to prepare one of the dishes that we will serve are strongly encouraged to do so. **The Outreach Committee needs seven individuals or families** to prepare a chicken and rice dish to serve 10-12 people, and seven to prepare a salad of similar size.



Please sign up on the outreach clipboard in the Parish Hall to indicate your willingness to bring food and/or to serve. Those serving will gather in the narthex (entry way) to the church at 11:25 a.m. for any final instructions before heading to Fair Oaks Community Center in Redwood City where the meal is offered. Children learn best by doing. I hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to engage with them in the important ministry of extending a helping hand to the hungry.



From the Desk of Daniel Tate, Seminarian

Dearest Members of St. Ambrose,

This coming Saturday, March 31, with Honore Farm and Mill of Marin, I'll be learning how to plant heirloom wheat at the Poncia Family Farm in West Marin. Here at St. Ambrose, we use the flour made from the wheat grown there to make our communion bread.

Led by Elizabeth DeRuff, an Episcopal priest, Honore Farm and Mill is a farming group that grows old wheat varieties that are unprocessed, grown organically without pesticides, and with little water that tastes better than mass produced wheat and bread.

I'm learning how it's grown so we can grow some of our own here at St. Ambrose with the goal of teaching and showing children how wheat and other plants are grown. It's also a way to teach about gardening, agriculture, and nurturing and caring for the environment.

I'm looking forward to sharing more about what we learn and how things progress in the coming months.

Yours,

Daniel Tate

“Meekness is not Weakness” – by The Rev. Jay Sapaen Watan

Violence will not lead us where we want to go if we desire to live lives rich in relationship and fulfillment! Yet, why does it seem like our culture promotes violence as the answer to our problems? Perhaps because violence is easy. It does not require much training, self-discipline, or resources for violent action to create meaning and the excitement we desire in our lives. This easiness seems to make the redemptive violence myth acceptable in our culture despite not agreeing to it. Redemptive violence says we can solve our problems and save ourselves through destruction or having power over others. It's the premise behind ideology that tells us that *might makes right* or *war brings peace*. In our world of uncertainty and impermanence, the certainty of having more power and massive impact makes things like guns so appealing. Add to the contextual mix one's outlook, spiritual life, value system, traumatic experience, social status, and perception of dominance, picking up cold steel can make some of our own brothers and sisters feel downright significant.

When we hold an instrument of violence, without a heart of compassion that holds responsibility for others and discipline to apply self-control, we will undoubtedly justify using it. And yet, history teaches that violence only adds to our suffering. The very essence of violence is to violate someone's humanity and dishonor life. Ironically, suffering of the self is the very thing folks try to avoid by holding on to the myths of redemptive violence. Redemptive violence is what put Jesus on the cross to die.

We pass on the myth of redemptive violence in our language and story. And in our popular culture - music, television, movies, video games, and social media – we hold a sense of longing for this myth to be true. We go on pointing fingers at corporate interest and the ones making money as our people buy into the myth. But we also need to account for biology and human nature. Made in the image of God, human beings have a massive capacity to generate chaos and mayhem. We mirror the creative consciousness of the Divine. But when we forget who we are and try to be God, instead of letting God be God, we actually become quite good at inflicting pain and causing destruction in our personal relationships and in the world. Part of being human is that we forget who we are. And unlike the God we know in Jesus the Christ, we don't always allow ourselves to start from a place of unconditional love, wholeness, wonder, forgiveness or meekness.

In this season of Easter, where we celebrate God's redeeming love in the resurrection of the Christ, I want to invite us to sit with the idea of meekness a bit because I believe it can help us overcome the violence we're mired in. First of all, meekness isn't weakness. But it's so strongly associated with weakness that it can be hard to talk about. Jesus says in the Beatitudes, *“Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth”* (Matthew 5:5, NRSV). The Holy Scriptures associate meekness with one's context in life; having mild temperament, humility and gentleness; and a quality of those who fully place their trust in God. Because of the wide range of meaning and an orientation towards a dominant Divine figure, translations into modern language softened meekness into submissiveness, and subsequently, weakness. Yet that understanding of meek misrepresents the full meaning. The ones in scripture described as meek, folks such as Abraham,

“Meekness” (continued)

Moses, Mary and Jesus, were not weak, but trusted God in a way that made them responsible, courageous, vulnerable and strong. Given this, a more accurate definition of *meekness* is *strength under control*. We human beings already have God given inner strength. Meekness speaks to our mindfulness of the Divine power within each of us, and to our capacity to restrain ourselves and temper our impulses to do what is easy.

Made in the image of God, we have the amazing power to create foundations to lift up the broken hearted and the imagination to see more than one right answer. In the awareness of our God given power to create and destroy, meekness – having strength under control – is a discipline that allows us to take responsibility and walk with courage. Meekness is a way of love. And isn't love what we need more in our world and in our hearts? *Meekness is not weakness.*

We are challenged to teach love, especially when so many feel deprived or deficient in it. Even more, parts of our society dismiss love as “sitting around in circles singing *Kumbaya*,” as such, they may see love as *weak*. But I suspect that those who view love as weak are hurting. That hurt makes violence just too easy. Living into love... we all know that's hard! In this broken and beautiful world, we are called to teach our people to walk with courage and take responsibility for ourselves and others because love will get us out of this mess. There is a correlation between the more responsibility we embrace and living a fulfilled life. Taking responsibility gives us the consciousness to adapt and respond to the surprises and problems we face. Responsibility invites our heart to live into love. The poet Manuel Alegre once penned, “*Armed I am with love. Disarmed I am.*”

We are constantly being reminded of our human capacity to be co-creators with God. The students and families from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, out of their horrific experience and loss, responded by taking responsibility and walking with courage to challenge the violence of our society and our idolization of guns. They communicated truth in a gentle and honest way, leading those open to change in the *March for our Lives* demonstration in March. Today this consciousness that has sparked many of our younger ones to challenge America's relationship with violence. It is a shift of consciousness that I believe is part of the *great turning*. That great turning, like described in Mary's song - the Magnificat - in Luke 1: 46-58, is about people living into what God has been doing, creating life-giving systems and practices that defend creation, heal our wounds, promote life, and help us be whole.

Rory Cooney's Canticle of the Turning takes the Magnificat and helps us sing,

*My heart shall sing of the day you bring.
Let the fires of your justice burn.
Wipe away all tears,
For the dawn draws near,
And the world is about to turn.*

I believe we're getting there. The blessing of having a touch of meekness in the midst of chaos is having strength under control. Made in the image God, we have power to make a better world.
Love is not weak... it is meek!

Outreach Report – by Steve Yuen

OUTREACH – APRIL 2018

Home & Hope (homeandhope.net/)

We served dinner to five families who were temporarily housed at Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church on Tuesday, February 27 and Thursday, March 1.

All 15 beds at the church were filled. The drop-off in demand for services last year proved to be a short-lived phenomenon.

We have previously speculated why requests fell (e.g., increased immigration enforcement, people moving away, prosperous local economy) and why they bounced back but, just like the recent volatile behavior of the stock market, it's above our pay grade.



A few days before that week, the St. Ambrose sign-up list was looking sparse, but some long-time volunteers (see photos on each night) stepped into the breach.



After dinner on Tuesday, a couple of kids took basketballs and soccer balls outside. I followed after them. Under the rules, an adult must supervise children at all times.

Soon they were joined by three others, and I spent the rest of the evening corralling “five under-and-through-age ten year olds” in the parking lot. My warnings to stay within sight—it was dark after seven—became louder, with no apparent change in behavior. When the two-year-old fell down, I picked him up, which was a mistake because his crying deafened my right eardrum.

My glower told the kids that playtime was over and they went inside. The two-year-old was fine, as everyone knew he was – I should have stayed with kitchen duty.

Thanks go to our cooks and servers: Diane Robertson, Clara Padilla, David and Susan Yates, David Ota, Leda Girardi, and Phoebe and Shay Venkat.

Our next Home & Hope dinners will be on **Tuesday, May 8** and **Thursday, May 10**. A signup sheet will be posted in the Parish Hall in early April. Please join us! Please contact Steve Yuen (650-341-1966 or stevebyuen@aol.com for more information)

Outreach Report *(continued)*

Upcoming Activities

Sandwiches on Sunday

We serve a hot lunch to all comers on fifth Sundays of the month at the Fair Oaks Community Center in Redwood City. Turnouts have lately risen to about 70 people. On **April 29**, we'll be serving chicken and rice, salad and rolls.

If you can prepare a dish and/or help with serving and clean-up, please sign up on the sheet in the Parish Hall. Please note that the Sunday School youth will also be helping at this event (see Karen Swanson's post elsewhere in this newsletter). If you have any questions, please contact Rob Richards (650-577-8924 or rob.richards@tensorlabs.com).

United Thank Offering

Contributions to the United Thank Offering continue to be a major funding source for the Episcopal Church's missions. The missions not only spread the Good News but also provide basic needs to people in their local communities.

The UTO blue box, which came into existence in the 1950's, has an honored place in many Episcopal households. It is both a reminder of the great blessings that have been bestowed upon us and a call to share those blessings with those who live in poverty.



We will have the spring ingathering of the blue boxes and blue envelopes at the offertory on **Sunday, May 20**, the Sunday after Mother's Day.

Sea Breeze School News – by Jerelyn Weber, Principal

Spring has sprung and life at Sea Breeze continues to be a great place to be a child!

Easter celebrations are over, the eggs have all been found and the teachers and the children are enjoying their Spring Break. School comes back in session on Monday April 9 for the preschoolers and Monday April 16 for the After School Program.

This month, we will be celebrating Grandparents/Special Persons Day on April 17-18. This is a day that children invite their grandparents to come to school with them and enjoy a chapel service, as well as a special snack and the opportunity to make a special project with them. We recognize that not all children have grandparents that can attend, so we also open the event up to a special person that may be in their lives. This is a highly anticipated event at Sea Breeze and we greet many people on this day. It is always fun to see the excitement on the faces of the children and their special visitors. There are many Kodak moments and special memories made on this day.

Summer School planning and registration are going well. Due to the changes in the San Mateo Foster City School District calendar, we are offering one six-week session of camp for children entering kindergarten or first grade, and one eight-week camp for preschool aged children. While registration is strong and the six-week session is full, we do still have limited space available in our preschool camps. If you know anyone looking for summer fun for their preschool aged child, please refer them to our office.

The Sea Breeze Annual Family Fun Day is here! We are excited to offer this event on Saturday April 21 from 10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. on the courtyard of the school. There will be a jumper for the children to jump in, a face painting booth, several game booths and so much more happening. This event is open to everyone, so please come out and enjoy the fun!

Hope to see you around!

Very truly yours,

Jerelyn Weber, Principal

The Editor's Corner—by Yvonne Sidell



I can do everything through Him who gives me strength.

—Philippians 4:13

I once heard it said, “I would rather attempt something great and fail than attempt nothing and succeed.”

What dream is God placing in your heart? Don't sit back and wait for someone else to make a difference when you can be that person. The world doesn't need more armchair quarterbacks; the world needs people like you to get in the arena and give it everything you can!

It was President Theodore Roosevelt who said:

“It is not the critic who counts; not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled or where the doer of deeds could have done them better.

The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena; whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood; who strives valiantly; who errs, and comes short again and again, because there is no effort without error and shortcoming; who does actually try to do the deed; who knows the great enthusiasm, the great devotion, and spends himself in a worthy cause; who, at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly.”

Our Lord plants a dream in everyone's heart. Most often the dreams are mighty, life-changing dreams with long-term positive results. Take your dream, then take the words of Paul, “I can do everything through Him who gives me strength,” and make a difference in this world!

*Credit: HomeWord Devotionals