

April
2019
Edition



The Ambrosian

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

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Editor:
Yvonne Sidell

Reflections from our Rector

Dear Members and Friends of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church,

Aloha! As we enter the month of April, we will be heading toward the end of Lent and entering Holy Week and Easter. I wonder, "How are you doing with your Lenten discipline?" Personally, I have found it challenging to let go of the many demands to take time for caring for God's gift of life and to consider what I can change for the better. I have found it as a constant refrain that people are very busy. We each aspire to do well in school, in work, and as neighbors. And as much as we strive to be good citizens of both society and the reign of God, we cannot by our own efforts achieve what we seek. We all need help. We all need God's grace and the contributions we offer to one another in friendship and kindness.

Our first Lenten speaker this year was Jerelyn Weber, Principal of St. Ambrose Sea Breeze School. She addressed the topic, "Caring for families and children." She shared how parents today want their children to succeed, be good citizens, be kind and empathetic and be someone in whom they can take pride. But what do the children need? She mentioned five necessities that children and, perhaps, we all need.

We need a reliable environment which comes from the familiarity of routines. We need to be able to know that mom and dad will be there for us. We need to have a regular time to wake up, to prepare ourselves for the day, a regular place to go and do our work, regular times to eat, some time for recreation, and a regular time and place to rest. The more reliable the basics of our lives are, the more time and energy we can devote to more creative challenges. I recently heard on National Public Radio that when we don't have the basics, we become hyper-focused on securing the essentials, and we don't have the attention to do anything else.

We need opportunities to grow which involves taking risks outside of our comfort zone. If we never do things outside of our comfort zone, we will not be exploring and expanding our understanding. We can expand our horizons by taking trips, meeting new people or reading books. We can learn to practice a new skill. The more we challenge ourselves, the greater the potential we will have to grow.

Reflections from our Rector (continued)

We need to be connected and belong to a tribe. As human beings, we need to care about others and know that they care about us. Technology can get in the way of connecting to one another, instead of being a tool to connect. Jerelyn gave an example of a dad interacting with his cell phone while taking his child shopping. So the child asked his dad to put away the cell phone so they can be together. Emotionally distant adults leave their children feeling confused about whether they matter or not. We remind our family members that they are important to us the more we spend face time with them, asking how they are doing, listening and attending to what is happening with them.

We need encouragement to be the best we can be. Children believe whatever they hear most, so optimism shared with children can make the biggest difference to help them persevere when they would otherwise quit. When our words and actions are positive and supportive, we become the role models that children and others need. So much of the news we consume is negative, and the world needs role models who in the face of negativity will encourage others to be the best they can be.

Finally, we need to practice facing the challenges as problems to solve instead of problems to avoid. The world community is faced with many problems such as climate change, cultural conflicts and violence. Instead of perceiving these problems as overwhelming and thus doing nothing, we are called to seek to solve them so we may contribute our small part towards making a solution.

As members of the church, we have practices of prayer, reading scripture, and worship. When they become regular in our lives, then we can depend upon them to ground us spiritually. We are also called to take risks to seek to grow in our faithfulness. We are members of a church called to serve. Your presence and participation helps the entire congregation to be stronger. We are encouraged by the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit to live not only for ourselves, but for the sake of spreading God's love with others. As Christians, we believe the challenges that we face are not too great for God and God's people, and we can do our part in our time.

I found these five necessities to be apt necessities for us all. I wish you all a holy Lent as we move toward Holy Week and the celebration of new life we know as Easter.

Yours,

David Y. Ota, Rector

Announcements

Holy Week and Easter Services

Holy Week begins on Palm Sunday, the Sunday of the Passion on **Sunday, April 14**. The **8:00 a.m.** and **10:00 a.m.** services will include the Liturgy of the Palms, the reading of the Passion Narrative according to Luke and the Holy Eucharist. At 10:00 a.m., we will walk around the block following the cross as we sing, "All glory laud and honor."

On Maundy Thursday, April 18 from **7:30 p.m.**, the worship service will include the ceremonial washing of the feet, the Holy Eucharist and the stripping of the Altar by the Altar Guild. The Rev. Karen Swanson will be the Celebrant and Preacher.

On Good Friday, April 19, two liturgies will be held at **12:10 p.m.** and **7:30 p.m.** Both services will include the reading of the Passion Narrative according to John. Throughout the Episcopal Church, a special Good Friday Offering will be taken in support of the Anglican Province of Jerusalem and the Middle East. Please be generous as we remember and support the church in its compassionate ministry of funding a hospital in Gaza or the West Bank, an eye clinic in Aden, women's programs or summer camps and leadership training for young people.

On **Saturday, April 20** at **8:00 p.m.**, the Great Vigil of Easter with Holy Baptism of Aviana Nagar and the first Eucharist of Easter will be held. This service begins after sunset and will be a candlelight service. It tells the story of salvation history.

On **Sunday, April 21**, two services of Holy Eucharist will be held at **8:00 a.m.** and **10:00 a.m.** The Easter Egg Hunt will be held following the 10:00 a.m. service around 11:30 a.m.

THANKS to...

- Thanks to everyone who prepared soup, salad or bread for the Lenten lunches: Dorothy Matsuo, Charlene Adolph, David Ota, Judy Marshall, Dulce and Michael Lord, Warren Wong, Carolyn Moriarty, April Cherrington, Jim Neubert, Diane Robertson, Barb Saunders, Jean Ozeki, Clara Padilla, Bettie Davis, Carolyn Moriarty, Valerie Mersh, Shelley Keefe, Janet Gardner, Irene Stead, Maureen Fromme, Sarah Albertson, David McIntyre and Cathy Rincon, and Karen Swanson.
- Thanks to Connor Moriarty, Nathan Matsuo, Aurelia Gerber and Oliver Moriarty (youth); Lily Moriarty (children); and Brenda Matsuo, Carolyn Moriarty, Daniel Tate, Fe Balamiento and Karen Swanson (adults) who helped fill mason jars with a variety of beans for soup, and dry ingredients, sugars and chocolate chips for cookies.

Study Groups in April

- **The Monday Bible Study Group** meets on the second and fourth Mondays of the month, **April 8 and 22** from **7:00 p.m.** They are studying the assigned lectionary readings for the upcoming Sunday worship. The location of the study group for April is yet to be determined.
- **The Tuesday Bible Study Group** meets on **April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30** from **12:45 pm to 2:00 p.m.** in the Foyer. They are reading the Gospel according to John.

The study groups are open to any interested person.

Announcements (continued)

S.F. Giants and Cincinnati Reds Game

Join the Rector and members of St. Ambrose for a Giants baseball game on **Saturday, May 11 from 6:05 p.m.** This is a “Let Pablo Pitch Bobblehead” game. We have 20 seats in View Reserve 307, Rows 5, 6 and 7. Tickets cost \$30.75 each and will be given when payment is received. If interested, speak with the Rector or sign up on the sign-up sheet in the Parish Hall.

Bishop’s Ranch Fellowship Weekend, October 11-13, 2019

St. Ambrose is scheduled to go to the Bishop’s Ranch in Harrison House on the weekend of Friday, October 11 – Sunday, October 13. If you are interested in attending, please speak with Jim Neubert or the Rector.

Mark Your Calendars

Mason Jar Mission Sale: **Sunday, April 7**, Foyer

Lenten Program, “Caring for God’s World”: **Sunday, April 7, 12:00 p.m.**, David McIntyre, the Carbon Tracker, Parish Hall

Youth Inquirer’s Class: **Sunday, April 7, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.**, Children, Family and Youth Office

Palm Sunday Liturgies: **Sunday, April 14, 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.**, Chapel

Maundy Thursday Liturgy: **April 18, 7:30 p.m.**, Chapel

Good Friday Liturgies: **April 19, 12:10 and 7:30 p.m.**, Chapel

Great Vigil of Easter with Baptism: **Saturday, April 20, 8:00 p.m.**, Chapel

Easter Sunday Liturgies: **Sunday, April 21, 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.**, Chapel

Easter Egg Hunt: **Sunday, April 21 following the 10:00 a.m. service**, Playground and Courtyard

San Francisco Giants and Cincinnati Reds Game: **Saturday, May 11, 6:05 p.m.**, Oracle Park (formerly known as AT&T Park)

General Confirmations: **Saturday, June 1, 10:00 a.m.**, Grace Cathedral

Vacation Bible School: **Saturday, August 3, 10:00 a.m. to Noon** (Orientation); **Sunday, August 4, Noon to 4:00 p.m.** (Family nature experience); **Monday to Friday, August 5 – 9, 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.** (Regular sessions with children only); **Sunday, August 11, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** (St Ambrose family worship service followed by congregational care for creation project)

Bishop’s Ranch Weekend: **Friday, October 11 to Sunday, October 13**, Harrison House at the Bishop’s Ranch, 5297 Westside Road, Healdsburg, CA 95448

170th Diocesan Convention of the Diocese of California: **Friday, October 25 to Saturday, October, 26**, Grace Cathedral, San Francisco

2019 Annual Stewardship Dinner: **Saturday, November 16, 2019, 6:00 p.m.**, Foster City Recreation Center’s Lagoon and Blue Bird Rooms

The Desk of Rev. Karen Swanson

Mason Jar Mission Sale

Decorated mason jars filled with ingredients for yummy bean soup or delectable chocolate chip cookies are on sale now for \$10 per jar. All profits from this youth and children's project will go to alleviate world hunger through Episcopal Relief and Development. You may purchase your jars on Sunday, April 7 after either worship service or through the Rev. Karen Swanson, Fe Balamiento, or the church office after that. Thank you for your support!

Youth Inquirers' Class Underway

Connor Moriarty, Nathan Matsuo, and Aurelia Gerber are exploring their relationship with God, learning about Christian and Episcopalian beliefs, doing outreach, and experiencing community in this Spring's Youth Inquirers' Class. Please pray for each of them as they take this faith journey.

Candy Needed for Children's Easter Egg Hunt

Please help out St. Ambrose Youth by donating a bag of small candies to be used for filling plastic eggs for the children's Easter egg hunt on Easter Sunday, April 21. Donations are welcome the first two Sundays of April. The bags of candy may be brought to church and left in the box in the Narthex, or delivered to the church office. Thanks in advance for your help!

Vacation Bible School Set for First Week of August

Your kids, grandkids and their friends between the ages of 4 and 12 are welcome to join the dynamic 2019 St. Ambrose Vacation Bible School focused on the appreciation and care of God's creation. Middle and high school age youth are strongly encouraged to join in as staff members. VBS activities will include indoor and outdoor games, art, music, Bible stories and more. Vacation Bible School will be offered on the following dates: Saturday, August 3 from 10:00 a.m. to noon (orientation session); Sunday, August 4 from noon to 4:00 p.m. (family nature experience); Monday through Friday, August 5-9 from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. (regular sessions with children only) and on Sunday, August 11 from 10:00 a.m. to 2 p.m. (St Ambrose family worship service followed by congregational care for creation project).

April Outreach Report – by Steve Yuen

Those of us who have been around a while <cough> remember a sentence from the King James version of the Bible: “Ye cannot serve God and mammon.” (Matthew 6:24)
Mammon is the devil of covetousness. In *Paradise Lost*, Milton portrayed him as a fallen angel:

The least erected Spirit that fell
From Heaven; for even in Heaven his looks and thoughts
Were always downward bent, admiring more
The riches of heaven’s pavement, trodden gold...

Whether one views wealth as personified in a mammon-like being or just as a concept, it is clear that people have worshipped money for millennia, i.e., by looking down instead of up. The love of money is not a defect of modernism, but is embedded in human nature.

But it’s also clear that modernism hasn’t helped to dampen that desire; money is essential in today’s economy. Before the Industrial Revolution, it was possible to survive without money by “living off the land.” Now nearly everyone has money/wealth as one of his or her principal life objectives. We need money to buy goods and services that we cannot produce ourselves – from food, clothing, and shelter to medications, cars, smartphones, and tax-preparation services.

Money flows rapidly in the modern economy, prices increase in products we want, and businesses try to meet the demand (if the economy were centrally planned, we’d still be opening flip phones, hailing taxis, and drinking Bud or Miller). High prices in the money economy are a *signal* to producers, investors, friends, and, in fact, everyone, of what the people value.

We live in the world, but are not *of* the world. Let’s understand and use Mammon wisely without worshipping him.

The 2019 Outreach budget is \$8,500. So far this year, the Outreach Committee has approved \$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)

Program Comments

The Church Divinity School of the Pacific (CDSP): 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, Karen Swanson, our seminarian Daniel Tate, and former St. Ambrose members Jay Watan and Rebecca Goldberg.

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 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. Our next dinners are on **Tuesday, April 9** and **Thursday, April 11**. A signup sheet has been posted in the Parish Hall. Please join us!

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. We will have a report on the March 31 SOS in next month's Ambrosian.

Upcoming Events

Home & Hope Dinners

Our next Home & Hope dinners will be on **Tuesday, April 9** and **Thursday, April 11**. Please contact Steve Yuen (650-341-1966, stevebyuen@aol.com) for more information.

United Thank Offering

We will have the Spring ingathering of the blue boxes and blue envelopes at the offertory on **Sunday, May 19**.

Editor's Corner—by Yvonne Sidell



For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God. —1 Corinthians 1:18

What is a symbol? Simply put, it is “something used for or regarded as representing something else.”

We see symbols every day. For example, the Nike swoosh symbol represents athletic gear. A red octagon on a street corner is the symbol to stop. Other symbols are used to show prestige or power. For some, buying a Mercedes or owning an Armani suit can be a symbol that says, “I have made it” in the business world. For Adam and Eve, the fruit was a symbol of divine knowledge. It was something they felt they had to have.

The symbol for Christianity has long been the cross. It seems almost counterintuitive to use a symbol that represents pain and death as a hallmark for a faith with the goal of telling the whole world about salvation and life. However, when you look past the surface of the cross and at the meaning behind it, it is a wisely and carefully chosen symbol. On the surface, the cross represents how our Lord and Savior, Jesus, died. Below the surface of the symbol, the message of the cross is where one finds true hope.

The message of the cross represents life and peace. It screams out to us that there will no longer be condemnation for it brings freedom, deliverance, and forgiveness. When we look at the cross, we find a symbol of eternal life and acceptance to all who believe. The message of the cross does not end with Jesus’ death, for three days later He rose again and conquered its power. Upon the cross, He took the sin of the world and paid the price due for that sin; the blameless Lamb sacrificed so that we can have eternal life. When we look at the cross, we find an unequalled message from the Lord that says, “You are my beloved. I gave my one and only Son for you so that you may have life with me everlasting...”