In this Issue:

*Reflections (cont) …...P 2*

*Announcements......P 2-5*

*Outreach Report….*.P 5-6

“*Location*” ................P 7-8

Sea Breeze School News………….….…...P 8

**Interim Editor:**

*CD & S. Rowsell*



The Ambrosian

The Monthly Newsletter of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church

900 Edgewater Blvd, Foster City, California 94404

December

2014

Edition

***Individual Highlights:***

Inside Story 2

Inside Story 3

Inside Story 4

Inside Story 5

Inside Story 6

Inside Story 7

Last Story 8

***Special Interest Articles:***

• Add a highlight or your point of interest here.

• Add a highlight or your point of interest here.

• Add a highlight or your point of interest here.

Dear Members and Friends of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church,

Aloha! I am grateful for the blessings that we have enjoyed in the past month of ministry. Primarily, I am grateful for the faithfulness of members and new friends who give of their time for one another and our common life. A church community requires the cooperative spirit of its members, and Bishop Marc Andrus commented to the Vestry during his visitation last month of how welcoming the spirit of our congregation seemed to him.

Each of us has many choices of how to spend our time. But for those who choose to gather for worship or other activities of the congregation we are making a choice for a community of care and hospitality. In a world with so much social mobility, the natural family networks are difficult to maintain so it is even more important that we gather together as Christ’s family in this place.

On Sunday, November 23rd I attended the Interfaith Thanksgiving Service for Home and Hope at Temple Beth El. The Rev. Mary Graves of Trinity Presbyterian Church, San Carlos shared her reflections on Isaiah 58:6-8:

6 Is not this the fast that I choose:  
   to loose the bonds of injustice,  
   to undo the thongs of the yoke,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
   and to break every yoke?   
7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,  
   and bring the homeless poor into your house;  
when you see the naked, to cover them,  
   and not to hide yourself from your own kin?

She shared an insight from this passage which I found insightful, challenging and hopeful. The phrase that popped out to her was, “and not to hide yourself from your own kin?” She shared how as she has gone out to be involved with the St. Francis Center who works with immigrants or even to serve homeless people, afterwards she goes home touched, but not feeling that the people she reached out to are her “kin.” Then she commented on her aging father, who will soon need help, and she and her siblings will be sure that he is cared for and his needs are met, because he is her “kin.”

# Reflections from our Rector



The gospel lesson appointed for November 23rd, the Last Sunday of Pentecost was Matthew 25:31-46, the story about how there will be a sorting out at the final judgment. Jesus shared how when he was hungry, thirsty, a stranger, naked, sick or in prison, the righteous cared for him. But they asked and he replied,

“Then the righteous will answer him, `Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, `Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'” (Matthew 25:37-41)

And then it dawned on the Rev. Mary Graves that Jesus’ kin was the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and the prisoner. She realized for the first time after reading this text so many times that unlike herself, Jesus saw all people as his kin. And she was grateful that Jesus understood her as his kin, but also challenged her to come to have the vision of Jesus to know especially those in need as her kin.

I am grateful that I attended the interfaith service for Home and Hope at Temple Beth El so I could both thank those who give of their time to care for our kin who are in need of shelter, but also for the insight and challenge I received to see as Jesus sees.

As we prepare for the annual celebration of the birth of our Lord Jesus the Christ, my prayer and hope is that I and we will recognize the family of Jesus and meet their needs with compassion, hospitality and grace in the manner of our Lord.

Yours,

David Y. Ota, Rector

**Thanks**

* Thanks to everyone who brought food for the reception for Bishop Marc Andrus on Sunday, November 9th. The food was delicious and represented our congregation well.
* Thanks to Eugene Hetzer, Steve Yuen and Barbara Milligan for sharing their stories of being stewards and what St. Ambrose means to them during our worship services.
* Thanks to George Gardiner, Eva Kwong, Jill Schwab and Irene Stead who planned this year’s Stewardship Dinner, fondly known by many as the Harvest Dinner.
* Thanks to Jimmy Rawley, Poppy Bradford, Mary Bradford and Jimmy Bradford who played music and sang songs for the Stewardship Dinner. Thanks to Frank Saunders who played the piano for the dinner. Thanks to Liva Neyroud who read a poem by Rumi with Ruben Neyroud improvising on his violin as she read it. Thanks to Amarine Gerber and Aurelia Gerber for playing the violin, and to Matthias Gerber for playing the piano. Thanks to Kendall Richards and Danielle Richards for playing the harp. Thanks Maureen Fromme, April Cherrington, Shelley Keefe, Marilyn Fromme, Valerie Mersh, and Barbara Saunders of the choir for singing a fun song.
* Thanks to Sal Censoprano, the other members of the band Vinyl Classic for playing for our dance: Paul Lynch, Herb Perez and Al Cordoza.
* Thanks to Fe Valentin for organizing the Parents’ Night Out on November 7th.
* Thanks to Steve Yuen for organizing the Fill-A-Box, Feed-A-Family effort for Call Primrose.
* Thanks to the members of the Altar Guild who work behind the scenes to allow the rest of us to worship with beauty. The polished the brass on Saturday, November 22nd. The members of the Altar Guild are Charlene Adolph, Donna Avakoff, Marilyn Canon, George and Janet Gardiner, Deb Sakurai-Horita, Marilyn Stephens, Yvonne Sidell, Dolores Watan and Debbie White.

**Bible Studies in December**

The Monday Bible Study group will meet on **December 1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd from 12:45 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.** to study the book by Alexander Shaia, The Hidden Power of the Gospels: Four Questions, Four Paths, One Journey. He calls his approach Quadratos which looks at the four gospels as material for the early church to use for its Lenten retreat. The group began its study of the book, and learned about the origins of the gospels, his theory about why four gospels were selected from among 50 gospel accounts, and how over the early centuries until the 600’s a three year lectionary was used for Sunday worship, only to be replaced by a simple one year set of readings until the mid-twentieth century.

The Tuesday evening Bible Study group is also studying the Gospel according to Luke and meets on **December 2nd and 16th** in the home Warren and Nellie Wong at **7:00 p.m.**

The Wednesday evening Bible Study group will meet on **December 10th and 17th** in the foyer of the church at **7:30 p.m.**  They are studying book of Revelation and will be at Chapter 12. This Bible Study is led by the Rector.

Each of the Bible Study groups is open and newcomers are invited to join.

**The Giving Tree (Sunday, November 30th – Thursday, December 18th)**

St. Ambrose Episcopal Church and Sea Breeze School are partnering with Star Vista Learning Together program to provide holiday gifts to children in need in San Mateo County. This is our 6th year supporting the children of Star Vista Learning Together program. We hope you will open your heart again this year to help make their holidays a very special one.

* **Select a Red Gift Tag** from the Christmas tree in the Parish Hall.
* **Shop and Wrap** all gifts (books, toys, clothing...) should be new and gift wrapped – firmly attach the gift tag to the outside, making sure it is visible.
* **Return your Gift Tag** with the **wrapped** gift under the tree by **Thursday, December 18th.**

For more information about Star Vista, visit:

<http://www.star-vista.org/what_we_do/family_support/learning_together.html>

**Christmas Caroling**

Spend some spreading Christmas joy by singing Christmas carols to those who are home bound and cannot get out. We have three opportunities to sing.

* **Wednesday, December 17th**, Atria Hillsadale, 2883 S. Norfolk St., San Mateo, 6:30 p.m. with the Sea Breeze Staff led by Maureen Fromme
* **Sunday, December 21st**, Visit shut-ins of St. Ambrose, time to be arranged
* **Sunday, December 21st**, Foster City Care homes, time to be arranged

**Rehearsals for the Christmas Pageant: The Christmas Pageant will be part of the Family Christmas Eve Service held on Wednesday, December 24th beginning at 4:00 p.m.** Thanks to Gwen Juha who has volunteered to serve as this year’s Pageant Director. If you are interested in having your child in the Christmas Pageant please plan to attend.

* **Sunday, Dec. 7th**, Pageant rehearsal, **11:30 a.m.**, chapel
* **Sunday, Dec. 14th**, Pageant rehearsal, **11:30 a.m.**, chapel
* **Sunday, Dec. 21st**, Pageant rehearsal, **11:30 a.m.**, chapel
* **Tuesday, Dec. 23rd**, Final dress rehearsal, time to be arranged, chapel
* **Wednesday, Dec. 24th**, Christmas Pageant as part of the Family Eucharist, **4:00 p.m.**

**Installation of Fire Sprinkler System in Room 1 and the Kitchen:** Fire sprinklers will be installed in Room 1, the Principal’s office, the hallway between them, the kitchen and the adjoining bathrooms in addition to the outside area between Room 1 and the Parish Hall. The work will be done during the Christmas break between **December 20th and January 4th, 2015**. This is Phase 1 of a two phase process. The second phase will include the parish hall, the chapel, the foyer, the sacristy and the church offices. So please bear with us as we make these improvements.

**Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Services:**

**Wednesday, December 24th**, Christmas Eve Family Eucharist with Pageant, **4:00 p.m.,** chapel

**Wednesday, December 24th**, St. Ambrose Choir’s Christmas Choral Concert, **10:00 p.m.,** chapel

**Wednesday, December 24th**, Candlelight Christmas Eve Choral Eucharist**, 10:30 p.m.,** chapel

**Thursday, December 25th**, Christmas Holy Eucharist with Christmas hymns, **10:00 a.m.,** chapel

**Fellowship Dinners Coming In January:** Fellowship Dinners are coming again! These dinners are organized around small groups that meet in the homes of those who participate, and give people an opportunity to get to know their fellow church members better. Watch for details in the weekly Sunday bulletins or the January Ambrosian. The kickoff organizational dinner will be held at the church on **January 17th at 6:00 p.m.** Participants will meet for monthly potluck meals three or four times, beginning in February. Sign-up forms will be available soon.

**Update on the 2015 Pledge Campaign: What will we do with God’s gifts?**

To date we have received 73 pledges totaling $141,226. We have also received 43 pledges of time and talent. We also received 19 pledges for Altar Flowers. The 2014 pledge total was 75 pledges for $131,852. Thanks to everyone who has turned in a pledge for 2015.

Keith & Charlene Adolph Rami & Linda Amireh Ed & Donna Avakoff

Bill & Charlotte Bradford Christina Brockman & Stan Hui Larry Buyers

Marilyn Canon Darlene & Tony Caponera Sal & Linda Censoprano

Honkai Chang & Milda Beh Grant & April Cherrington Nilda Chong

Bettie Davis Kyn Dellinger Jeanne DeTorre-Ozeki

Betty Dial John & Beth Dossett Elliott Dun & Teresa Murakami

Carolyn & Hugo Franco Maureen H. Fromme George & Janet Gardiner

Raphaele & Jacques Gerber Don Gundry Demian & Lorraine Harvill

Eugene Hetzer Tippy Irwin Shelley Keefe

Joanne Kerseg Brian & Lizz Klammer June Kudzia

Judy Marshall Dorothy Matsuo Kirk & Brenda Matsuo

David McIntyre & Cathy Rincon Valerie Mersh Jim Miller & Torrie McAllister-Miller

John Miller & Eva Kwong Barbara Milligan Kirk & Jessica MoralesKenneth & Karen Nagar Olivia & Wilfredo Nagar Jim Neubert

David Ota & Karen Swanson Clara Padilla Karin Patterson

Don & Elizabeth Peter Sydney & Cristina Pok Elmer & Allette Pong

Peggy Redmond Rob & Anita Richards Diane Robertson

Julio & Ngoc Rodriguez C.D. & Siew Rowsell Ruth Rymer & Ron Borden

Deb Sakurai-Horita Charles Saunders Frank & Barbara Saunders

Abe & Sandy Schowengerdt Jill & Gerald Schwab Dilip Selvaraj & Teresa Rajaratnam

George & Merle Silverman Irene Stead Jon & Marilyn Stephens

Doug & Wendy Stewart Matt & Meltem Tanner Noelle & Nick Vitale

Andy Walker Wendy Walker Jay & Lillian Watan

Pedro & Dolores Watan Warren & Nellie Wong Susan & David Yates

Steve & Belinda Yuen

If you would like to make a pledge, you still can do so. Pledge envelopes are in the foyer. The Vestry will be reviewing the final draft of the 2015 Budget at its December 16th meeting. Thanks to everyone who participated in the 2015 Pledge campaign.

**Mark Your Calendars:**

* Rehearsals for the Christmas Pageant: **Sundays, December 7th, 14th and 21st from 11:30 am,** Chapel.
* Christmas Stocking Stuffers for Seniors and Vets: **Thursday, December 4th, 10 a.m.,** 501 Coos St., Foster City
* Altar Guild Bake Sale: **Sunday, December 7th**
* Crystal Children’s Choir Christmas Concert: **Sunday, December 14th, 2 p.m.,** Chapel
* Christmas Caroling at Atria with Sea Breeze School Staff: **Wednesday, December 17th**
* Christmas Eve Services: **Wednesday, December 24th**

Family Eucharist with Christmas Pageant, **4:00 p.m**.

Christmas Concert by the St. Ambrose Choir, **10:00 p.m.,**

Candlelight Christmas Eve Choral Eucharist, **10:30 p.m.**

* Christmas Day: **Thursday, December 25th**, Holy Eucharist with Christmas hymns, **10:00 a.m.**
* Fellowship Dinner Organizing Potluck Dinner: **Saturday, January 17th, 6:00 p.m**., Parish Hall
* Annual Meeting of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church: **Sunday, January 25th, 11:30 a.m.,** Chapel

## Outreach Report - by Steve Yuen

**CALL Primrose:** We delivered eight food boxes, each containing 15 food items and one $20 Safeway gift card, to CALL Primrose on November 19th. Thanks go to the twenty St. Ambrose families who donated cans and packages, and especially Fe Valentin who organized the Parents’ Night Out activity that had the children complete the boxes according to the lists that CALL Primrose had furnished.

CALL Primrose (callprimrose.org) was founded in 1983 to provide grocery assistance and other services to Peninsula residents in need. In 2013 the organization distributed more than 25,000 bags of groceries to over 45,000 recipients.

Personal note from Steve: when I dropped off the boxes, I encountered a former co-worker whom I had not seen for ten years. Yana Abecassis is an IT specialist who is volunteering for CALL Primrose. I also met Terri Boesch, who replaced retired Director Mary Watts in May. Both Yana and Terri said that despite the prosperity experienced by many on the Peninsula, there are more people who have been left behind and that the need for food aid has never been greater.

**Home and Hope:** In Hope Lutheran and St. Ambrose’ final hosting of 2014 Diane Robertson, Irene Stead, Susan Enochs, and Steve Yuen made dishes for 11 people on September 30th.

Diane, Steve, and Susan were able to meet the H&H clients and dine with them and the Hope Lutheran volunteers.

St. Ambrose is next scheduled to prepare dinner on **Tuesday, January 27th, 2015**. Hope Lutheran has also been recently asked to provide accommodations during the week of January 18th, and we will decide later whether St. Ambrose will want to volunteer for Tuesday, January 20th, or any other day that week.

**Outreach Donations:** The Outreach Committee approved a $500 donation to the Heifer Project. $6,080 of donations have been approved so far this year, while the budget for 2014 is $7,200.

**Upcoming Outreach Activities**

**Sandwiches on Sunday:** In next month’s Ambrosian we will report on our November 30th lunch for 50-100 people at the Fair Oaks Community Center in Redwood City. Our next turn to host is on **Sunday, March 29th**. If you have any questions, please contact Rob Richards ([rob.richards@tensorlabs.com](mailto:rob.richards@tensorlabs.com), 577-8924)

**Senior Stocking Stuffers:** Jill Schwab is again leading the effort to prepare “stocking stuffers” for seniors, veterans, and homeless people on the Peninsula. The date is **Thursday, December 4th**, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., and the place is Jill’s house on 501 Coos Court, a few blocks from the church. If you have questions or comments, please call Jill at 571-1079.

**Family Sharing**: Each year as we approach Christmas our congregation has adopted two San Mateo families. This year Samaritan House has identified one family of five and one family of six, and we are making arrangements to deliver presents to them. We are trying to collect at least $750 ($375 each), which will enable us to buy presents and gift cards that will be delivered during **the week of December 14th**. All donations should be made to St. Ambrose Episcopal Church, designated "Family Sharing", and deposited in the offering plate or mailed to the church office. Thank you for spreading holiday cheers to our neighbors.

## “Location” - by Rev. Jay Sapaen Watan

We truly live in a special time where more people have migrated away from the places of their birth more than any time in human history.  While our stories in this moment usually are a result of economic need or opportunity or sanctuary, making a new home can be difficult especially on the heart.

Foster City is generally regarded as a great place to live due to the proximity to employment, family atmosphere, and access to “good schools.”  Yet the vast majority of people I have met do not intend to stay.  Many will follow where their careers lead them.  But the longing of home rarely leaves us.  I have heard many many people also tell me that would either like to return "home" someday, or when their kids have grown they wish to settle into a more downsized place and call that home.

The lack of rootedness may have a practical reasoning, but for young ones it can be disorientating to our natural homing device.  More and more when I ask young people about the location of their ancestral home, they do not know.  Admittedly, it's a strange thing to hear.  I grew up in the Filipino American context where my parents believed it was important for me to know the location of my ancestral home - the Mountain Province, Philippines.  In my family narrative we always had stories to share about our ancestors and relatives who came before us. I realize that not every family functions this way and that dysfunction may necessitate a distancing from unhealthy family patterns, but I do see many young ones disconnected from their own family narrative.

The economics of disconnection and exile contribute greatly to the patterns of function and dysfunction we see in modern families.  So while the yearning for that place called “home” is deep, I do hear more and more people say, from this location of my vocation, that they are not sure if they want to return to the place they came from or if they ever can return at all.  Such displacement can leave many of us feeling very lost.

A wise soldier once said to me, "everything has a home."  And I believe this is true.  Home is ultimately the place where we belong. And as patterns for migration caused by climate change, war, and economic need uproot us, that natural homing device we have in our heart invites us to be creative.

Theology professor Sharon Daloz Parks believes that everyone needs a psychological home. That home is made of the interconnections and relationships we have with people and our primary community.   Parks would say, “we all need a tribe.”   So when Parks speaks about threshold people and hospitable places, for me it is manifested in the making and doing of family.

Growing up, my family played host to so many relatives immigrating from the Philippines to the United States. They petitioned my grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins, and at one point we had 17 people living in our family home.  Essentially they brought “home” to them, to share in that American Dream of a better life and to elevate the next generation for the common good.   And their home was that place that launched others.  In my life practice of homemaking, helping others connect with the common good starts with finding that place we call “home.”  On the front door of my parents’ home is a poem that is in my heart: *Where ever you wander, Where ever you roam, be happy and healthy, and Glad to come home.*

I also find myself homemaking among my circle of friends, at church, at my children's school, with fellow Igorot people around the world, with other people of faith, and among those who are serving or who have served in the military.  This is where we can help one another create home.

Sport metaphors can be cliché, but what I love about baseball, just like in life, is that the journey is all about making it home.  And even though we can simply hit a home run and circle the bases on our own, more often than not coming home is dependent on “our teammates” to get us home.

As we approach the Christmas Season and hear the songs that remind us of the places we call home, may your location be a place where the Love of God meets the place where you belong.

Merry Christmas... XOXO

## Sea Breeze School News

With Thanksgiving behind us and Christmas before us, the children and the teachers have been working very hard practicing for the Christmas programs they will put on for their families. Many songs are being taught and it is very cute to hear the stories that are being told. The programs are certain to entertain all that attend. Parent/Teacher conferences are almost over and the teachers are ready for a well-deserved Christmas break.

Our Annual See’s Candy fundraiser is underway and will run through December 12th. If you or anyone you know is interested in supporting this fundraiser, please contact us in the office. We are happy to take your orders and have them ready for pick-up at the church at your convenience. Each year we have fundraising goals so that we can enhance the programs for the children, and one of our goals this year is to add technology to each of the classrooms by purchasing interactive white boards. These boards will allow the teachers to project lessons on a large screen and have the children become physically involved in the learning process.

The children in the After School Program spent most of November preparing for the Annual International Dinner and Performance. Each year this group comes together to celebrate the different culture of each child and family as they are invited to dress in Cultural attire and participate in a fashion show; followed by an International Potluck provided by the families. The children perform dances and songs from around the world. Our dinner was on November 21st this year and was well attended.

The school will be closed from December 22nd - January 2nd for our Winter break, and classes will resume on January 2nd. While the teachers will be off during this time, much work will be done around the campus. The process of installing fire sprinklers will begin during this time and will hopefully conclude early next year.

Many wishes for a Happy and Blessed Christmas Season!