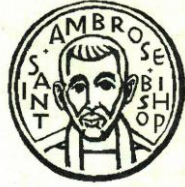


February
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Edition



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! Last month I took a trip from January 15th to 18th for my Aunt Miyoshi's funeral in Akanuma, Kainan City, Wakayama Prefecture, Japan. It was an extremely short time-frame for such a journey, but it was meaningful to visit once again my mother's family home before it would be sold and passed on to others. I was pleasantly surprised by my ability to re-connect with my distant relatives using my modest Japanese language skills. I had not been back in over 25 years.

Visiting the home of my mother's family helped me appreciate both the beauty and challenge of living on a mountain farm. The vistas are marvelous to behold, and the long journey just to go to town and back takes perseverance.

On my way to Japan, I had the opportunity to read the book, *A Failure of Nerve, Leadership in the Age of the Quick Fix* by Edwin H. Friedman. His major point in this book was that we are living in an age of emotional regression, that is, we live in an age of mistrust and fear instead of an age of vision, hope and adventure. He compared our time to the time before the Renaissance when people in Europe believed the world was flat and that the equator was the end of the world. In order for people to get beyond their fears someone had to break the barrier of the equator. Once it was broken, many more were willing to take risks and explore.

Friedman compared our emotional processes as the barrier which keeps us stuck in our relationships and in our lives. From his experience as a rabbi counseling people, or working with others in their leadership roles, he noticed that what kept people stuck was not a lack of knowledge about the world or technology, but rather was a lack of nerve to make a decision for health and growth.

He mentioned five characteristics of emotionally regressed individuals or systems: (1) reactivity; (2) herding; (3) blaming others; (4) quick-fix mentality, and (5) a lack of self-differentiated leadership. He called self-differentiated leadership the immune system of an individual or group. When we know who we are and act out of our integrity,

Rector's reflections continued...



we will be less likely to react, to go along with the crowd, to accept responsibility for our actions and to work toward the long-term health and growth of ourselves and others.

This year Lent will not begin until Ash Wednesday, March 5th. I hope to present as our Lenten program my learning from Edwin Friedman on family systems and leadership, so we can become more self-aware of how we may or may not be stuck in emotional processes that keep us from choosing health and growth as individuals and as a community. Next month I will have more to say about the schedule of the program.

My visit to Japan to visit my extended family and pay my respects to my aunt remind me of the importance of taking time to honor the relationships we have been given and the journey we have made. I give thanks for my relationship with you and the journey we have made together, seeking to grow in faith and love and in service to our God as revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Yours,

David Ota, Rector

Summary of the 41st Annual Meeting of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church

At the Annual Meeting, Father Ota reported that 2013 was a year of stability with fewer changes in the staff, although a new Principal to St. Ambrose Sea Breeze School was called, Ms. Jerelyn Weber, and Father Jay Watan had necessary absences due to his ministry as an Army Reserve Chaplain and time needed to recover from surgery. Five households moved away, but twelve households joined St. Ambrose for worship. The Child and Family Ministry developed in the second year under the leadership of Fe Valentin and the support of the parents. Gina Perez, our administrative assistant has grown in her knowledge of the church and her responsibilities. Maureen Fromme began her second year as choir director, and added a ministry with the School's After School program teaching the children to sing. Frank Saunders continued his excellent playing of the organ and continued to mentor young musicians. The youth ministry continued on despite Father Jay's absences with the help of the Rev. Karen Swanson and Mark Watan. The average Sunday worship attendance was practically the same at 94 each Sunday.

Highlights of the year included the many new people who have joined St. Ambrose, the program of Fellowship Dinners, the Welcome Ministry, the monthly Children and Family ministry events, the Lenten program on "Seeking a just peace in Palestine and Israel," the continuing youth ministry, the Vacation Bible School as a youth leadership training event, the Bishop's Ranch weekend led by Jim Neubert, the Stewardship Dinner and the success of the 2014

Pledge Campaign, Jade Neyroud's Senior Sermon, the efforts of the outreach committee and Rebecca Goldberg's acceptance as a Candidate for the priesthood.

St. Ambrose Sea Breeze School had an operating surplus in the 2012-2013 school year and increased the health benefit for employees beginning January 1, 2014. The transition from the Rev. Diana Wheeler as Principal to Ms. Jerelyn Weber was very smooth.

The Finance Committee continued to assist the Vestry in the financial oversight of the church and school. The church had an operating surplus of \$27,996.

The Buildings and Grounds Committee under the leadership of Jim Neubert accomplished many projects including the staining of the shingles of the facility, removing the ivy and replanting ice plant, installing new exit signs in the parish hall and the hallway of Room 1, installing overhang protection for the cubbies of the After School program, repairing the fence of the dumpster, plus other needed repairs. A project that was begun was investigation of installation of a sprinkler system in Room 1, the hallway, Principal's office, kitchen, parish hall, chapel, foyer and church offices.

The Outreach Committee led by Steve Yuen continues its local one-time outreach efforts with the Blessing of the Animals at the Foster City Dog Park, Call Primrose Fill a Box Feed a Family for Thanksgiving and Christmas, Senior Stocking Stuffers, Samaritan Houses' Holiday Family Sharing, and its year round projects of Sandwiches on Sundays, Home and Hope and Second Harvest Food Bank. They also made grants to many organizations including El Buen Pastor who restarted their ministry at Messiah Lutheran Church in Redwood City.

The Congregational Vocations Committee led by Deb Sakurai-Horita continued to support Rebecca Goldberg who completed her Clinical Pastoral Education program.

The Altar Guild was led by Deb Sakurai-Horita for 2013, however she will be stepping down in June 2014, so a new leader will be needed.

Keith Adolph, April Cherrington, Tippy Irwin and, Charles Saunders were elected to the Vestry. George Gardiner, Janet Gardiner and Steve Yuen were elected as delegates to the Deanery and Diocesan Convention. No alternates were elected. George Gardiner and Ngoc Rodriguez were thanked for her service on the Vestry. Dorothy Matsuo was thanked for her long service as church librarian.

Father Ota announced the St. Ambrose Award to be given to:

- George Gardiner for serving as Senior Warden and initiating the Stewardship Dinner Planning Committee.
- Ngoc Rodriguez for her service as the Clerk of the Vestry and her support of the youth ministry.
- The Rev. Diana Wheeler for serving as Principal of St. Ambrose Sea Breeze School from 2010 to 2013.

Father Ota also announced the appointment of Bettie Davis as Senior Warden for 2014.

Following the Annual Meeting the Vestry elected Jim Neubert as Junior Warden, Shelley Keefe as Clerk and Marilyn Canon as Treasurer.

Bible Studies in February

The Monday Bible Study group continues to study the Gospel according to Luke on Mondays, **February 3rd, 10th and 24th** from **12:45 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.** in the home of Merilyn Vosburg. This Bible Study is led by the Rector.

The Tuesday evening Bible Study group meets on **February 4th** and **18th** in the home Warren and Nellie Wong at **7:00 p.m.** They are studying the Book of Isaiah. Shelley Keefe is leading this study.

The Wednesday evening Bible Study group meets on **February 5th** and **19th** in the foyer of the church at **7:30 p.m.** They are studying the Gospel according to John. The next session will begin with Chapter 10.

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

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner

The pancake dinner is reverting back to the traditional Shrove Tuesday date on Tuesday, **March 4th** from **6 p.m.** in the Parish Hall. Troy Ryder again is leading this effort. If you are able to assist in the dinner, please speak with him.

S.F. Giants games in 2014

This year St. Ambrose will be going to three Giants games. Instead of using it as a fund raising activity, these games will be used as fellowship activities. Tickets will be sold at cost, with a \$10 discount for children and youth. On Friday, **April 11th** we will go to the Giants and Colorado Rockies game at 7:15 pm. The cost of these tickets is \$22 for adults and \$12 for children or youth. On Saturday, **May 24th** we will go to the Giants and Minnesota Twins game at a time yet to be determined. The cost of these tickets is \$23 for adults and \$13 for children or youth. On Friday, **September 12th** we will go to the Giants and Los Angeles Dodgers game at 7:15 pm. The cost of these tickets \$32 for adults and \$22 for children or youth. We will arrange to carpool with those who buy tickets. If you are interested in going to any of these games, please speak with Father Ota.

Mark Your Calendars:

- USO Valentines for Vets: Sunday: **February 9th, 2014**, Parish Hall
 - Rector on Vacation in Honolulu: **February 15th-20th, 2014**
 - Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner: Tuesday, **March 4th, 2014**, Parish Hall from 6 pm
 - Ash Wednesday services: **March 5th, 2014, 12:10 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.**
 - Daylight Savings Time begins: Sunday, **March 9th, 2014**
 - St. Patrick's Day Parents' Night Out: Friday, **March 14th, 2014**
 - Stations of the Cross: Fridays in Lent: **March 7th** through **April 11th, 12:10 p.m.**, Chapel
 - Giants and Rockies game: Friday: **April 11th, 7:15p.m.**, AT&T Park
 - Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday: **April 13th 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.**
 - Maundy Thursday Liturgy: **April 17th, 7:30 p.m.**
 - Good Friday Liturgies: **April 18th, 12:10 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.**
 - Great Vigil of Easter: **April 19th, 8:00 pm**
 - Easter Day: **April 20th, Holy Eucharist: 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.**, Easter Egg Hunt at **11:20 a.m.**
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OUTREACH – by Steve Yuen

Sandwiches on Sunday (SOS):

We had been expecting a small turnout on the Sunday between Christmas and New Year's Day, but to our surprise a record number of people showed up at noon at the Fair Oaks Community Center on December 29th. Fortunately, the good people of St. Pius Catholic Church in Redwood City had been closely monitoring the need and made enough brown bag sandwiches for everyone to take home.



Over the years the number of customers for a free Sunday hot meal has ranged between 50 and 80. Lately it's risen toward the high end of the scale. Today we counted 100. Tippy Irwin ran out to buy more roast chicken, which she carved at the picnic table. Some of us baked an extra tray of chicken and rice, while others brought more salad. Everything was consumed.

The likely reason for the increased traffic to Sandwiches on Sunday is the recent cut in food stamp allotments. Whatever the cause, the need is likely to remain high for the foreseeable future. Thanks go to Tippy Irwin and the Stewart and Yates families for cooking and serving, and thanks especially to Rob Richards for coordinating SOS when it is St. Ambrose' turn in the four-church rotation. Our next SOS hosting is on **Sunday, March 30th**. Please contact Rob (577-8924, rob.richards@tensorlabs.com) if you would like to help or have any questions.

Home and Hope: Our hopes of easing into the New Year were dashed when four families were housed on short notice at Hope Lutheran Church during the first week of January. Diane Robertson, Kay Huffman, Irene Stead, Steve Yuen, and Liva Neyroud prepared dinner for 15 people, the majority of whom were children. The next dinner is scheduled for **Tuesday, April 1st**. If you would like to help or have any questions, please contact Kay Huffman (345-4529, kaysandra220@hotmail.com). Home and Hope (hopeandhope.net) provides shelter for families who are faced with unemployment, family breakup, loss of their house, and other crises. 31 Peninsula churches and synagogues participate in this program, and St. Ambrose is a founding member.

Appeal for Volunteers:

Attending an Outreach Committee meeting on the first Sunday of the month after the ten o'clock service is a good way to become acquainted with our Outreach activities. If you have questions, please contact Steve Yuen (341-1966, stevebyuen@aol.com).

"Believe it and You'll see it!" – by Rev. Jay Sapaen Watan

The celebration of a new year has a way of inviting us to reflect on where we have been, where we are now and where we are going. Just the nature of this time gives us a moment to renew, start again, or to go with the stuff that is most life giving. So I wonder why the language we hear describing our world sounds more negative than ever. As if the only news worth delivering is bad news.

One of the things that seem more prevalent in America is this culture of complaining. While it seems like a cultural norm, it is hard to create solutions that work if we focus on what is wrong rather than on what we want to have happen.

Those who get stuck in this culture of complaining may find that bitterness and anger are reoccurring themes in their lives. Even worse they may find that they are always framing their story from the perspective of being a victim. It's a language that does not empower, but de-energizes.

Yet every time I see little children, including my own, I am reminded of how anything is possible at their age. They are so joyful, because they are free to be alive without judgment until they learn the cultural norms from us elders. Yes, there are things that are wrong in the world, but to put our energy on a negative mindset will only get us to seek out what is wrong and never what is right. Personally, I find more spiritual energy and inspiration in what is right in this world. In this place I can create solutions and live into love.

Try making homemade cupcakes from scratch without any previous experience and subpar tools. Complaining isn't going to bake that cupcake. You're still going hungry. A recipe for success requires us to name the outcome we really seek and seek solutions. If I'm going to make fabulous cupcakes, I need to find or create a recipe that works, solicit the help of others, get my hands dirty, put a little of my heart in it, and make it so.

DeWitt Jones, a National Geographic photographer who makes a living offering life perspectives of familiar everyday scenes believes that if we don't believe it, we won't see it. So BELIEVE! Jones writes, "By celebrating what's right, we find the energy to fix what's wrong. Because, by celebrating the best -- that allows us to fall in love with it, which connects us with our passion that emancipates the energy. By celebrating what's right, we find the energy to fix what's wrong."

There is Good News to be shared in our world. In the prologue of John's gospel, "God's light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it!" There is more positive in the world than negatives. Let's look for Good News and proclaim it to others. In this New Year, celebrate what's right with the world... Because what we believe is what we will see!

Happy New Year and God Bless You and Your Love Ones.

Sea Breeze School News

The year is moving along very quickly here at school. It is already time for registration for Summer School and the 2014-2015 school year. That is always our most exciting time of year!

We will begin celebrating Lunar New Year and the Year of the Horse during the first week of February. Parents and grandparents bring great feasts and share their traditions with us. On the 10th our faithful dentist, Dr. Lee will be teaching us about how to care for our teeth. The children have been busy making Valentine's for loved ones and teachers have been party planning for the Valentines week. Our days are always packed with activities!

On March 4th we will have our annual Open House. This year we will be welcoming the public to visit our school between 7:00pm - 8:00pm. Our Scholastic Book Fair will also be open from March 5th – 7th. Come on by and do some shopping for those Easter Baskets!

Have a wonderful month and do come by for a visit or to volunteer!!

Valentines for Veterans – by Jessica Morales

St. Ambrose Church and Sea Breeze Preschool are partnering to make Valentines for Veterans in San Mateo County. Please open your hearts – and your art supplies – to make local Veterans feel loved and appreciated this Valentine's Day.

To participate, simply create a handmade Valentine of any shape or size (no envelope please). You can make as many as you want – all Valentines will be distributed to local Veterans and will be much appreciated.



On **Sunday February 9th**, St. Ambrose Children & Family Ministries will host a Valentines for Vets coffee hour. Tea party snacks and craft supplies will be provided. Exercise the right side of your brain and please join us!

If you choose to make Valentines on your own, please turn them in to the Parish Hall no later than **Monday, February 10th**. If you would like to make an additional donation, the VA Hospital needs small, personal toiletries such as "hotel-size" soaps, shampoos, and other hygiene products.

This is a joint initiative for Sea Breeze Preschool and St. Ambrose Church, and is organized by the Sea Breeze School Board. If you have questions or would like additional information, please contact Jessica Morales, jesmorales@gmail.com, 650-483-3754.

Message Ideas:

- Thank the Veteran for his or her service, sacrifice and commitment to our country and citizens.
 - Tell the Veteran why they are important, or the reason you want to wish them a Happy Valentine's Day.
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