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**Interim Editor:**

*CD & S. Rowsell*



The Ambrosian

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January

2016

Edition

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Dear Members and Friends of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church,

Aloha! As we begin a new year, I want to give thanks for you, the congregation of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church for our life together. It is the ministry we share that expresses the love of God as revealed through Jesus the Christ that gives a congregation its life. Our Christmas celebrations were made possible and poignant because of your participation and presence.

However, this year Christmas was most moving for me as our dear devoted member, Merilyn Vosburg passed away to eternal life after a long illness on Saturday, December 26th. Her Memorial Eucharist will be held at St. Ambrose Episcopal Church on **Thursday, January 7th, 2016 from 2:00 p.m.** with a reception to follow in the Parish Hall.

A congregation is really a large extended-family-community of faith in Jesus the Christ. Merilyn had been at the heart of St. Ambrose with her deceased husband Chuck from the very early years of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church and St. Ambrose Sea Breeze School. They helped build the congregation and school to be what it is today. She loved this congregation and school, especially the inclusion of children and youth in our common life. She opened her home and heart to many of us. She led the Altar Guild for many years. She hosted the Altar Guild each December for a special meal. She hosted the Acolyte Party for many years. She went with me to visit the shut-ins, until she finally became homebound herself. She fully participated in the life of our congregation as long as she could.

When I reflect on Merilyn’s ministry among us I am filled with a sense of gratitude. But I also sense in a tangible way the passing of an era for St. Ambrose. I am grateful for those of you who have carried on the ministry she had in your own way. And when I think about our ministry together I realize there is much for us to give thanks.

I am grateful to Lizz Klammer and the parents and children who prepared and presented the Christmas Pageant on Christmas Eve, reminding us all of our need for graceful acceptance of one another. The pageant was a beautiful expression of those who took part in telling the story of how God’s love is made known to us.

# Reflections from our Rector



I am grateful to the members of the congregation who went Christmas caroling to five of our shut-ins on the Sunday before Christmas, with Merilyn being one of those visited. For those of you who knew Merilyn, she requested the singing of Ave Maria, and miraculously (to me at least) Michelle Jessen was able to sing it without preparation.

I am grateful for the choir members who sang the Christmas Concert this year and for the people who came to listen. Although the choir was fewer than in past years, we sang with joy. Thanks to Maureen Fromme, our choir director and Frank Saunders our Minister of Music.

I am grateful for Father Jay Watan who presided at the Family Christmas Eve Holy Eucharist, assisted at the Candlelight Holy Eucharist, and led the Christmas Day service.

I am grateful to Lauryn Adolph, our Administrative Assistant, who prepared all the worship bulletins and came in to the office to send out the special email update on Merilyn the night of her passing.

And as we begin a new year together, I am mindful of our need to continually renew our sense of connection and community with one another, and those who come to join us.

On Saturday, **January 23rd from 6 p.m.** in the Parish Hall there will be a potluck dinner for those of you who would like to get to know your fellow members through Fellowship Dinners. This is a ministry started by Nellie Wong. It provides an opportunity for members to share a meal once a month from February through April or May. At this potluck dinner those who are interested are divided into groups by Nellie.

Finally, our Annual Meeting of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church is set for **Sunday, January 31st** **from 11:45 am** in the chapel. At this meeting we will thank our outgoing Vestry members, Jim Neubert, Senior Warden, Shelley Keefe, Clerk of the Vestry and Warren Wong. We will hear reports of our ministries in 2015 and review the budget for 2016. We will elect new Vestry members and delegates to Diocesan Convention and the Deanery of the Peninsula. I ask you to make an effort to attend this meeting to help us recommit ourselves to be an extended-family-community of faith known as St. Ambrose Episcopal Church.

Yours,

David Y. Ota, Rector

**Thanks**

* Thanks to Lizz Klammer and everyone who donated gifts for the Giving Tree for Baby Basics.
* Thanks to the members of the Altar Guild for baking cookies for their bake sale and to everyone who purchased them to support the Altar Guild’s Flower Fund.
* Thanks to Doug Stewart and Father Jay Watan for organizing the Christmas Wreath Fund-Raiser Sale for the Youth Ministry.
* Thanks to Lizz Klammer, the parents and children who prepared the Christmas pageant this year.
* Thanks to Amanda Kiernan who was our guest preacher on December 13th and who spoke to the Vestry on Planned Giving and Legacy Societies.
* Thanks to Jill Schwab for her Stocking Stuffers project and including St. Ambrose in it, and to the members who helped stuff gift bags.
* Thanks to Maureen Fromme, Michelle Jessen, Shelley Keefe, Jim Neubert, David Ota and Barbara Saunders who went Christmas caroling to shut-ins.
* Thanks to the Rev. Rebecca Goldberg who was our guest Celebrant and Preacher on December 27th.

**May Her Soul and the Souls of All the Departed Rest in Peace**

Merilyn Vosburg passed away quietly in her home on Saturday evening, December 26th. The Memorial Eucharist will be held on Thursday, January 7th from 2 p.m. at St. Ambrose. May her soul and the souls of all the departed rest in peace.

**Saturday Evening Worship continues**

Our Saturday Evening Worship this month will be held on **January 2nd and 16th** at 5:30 p.m. It is a worship service that children can participate in more easily than the longer worship service at 8 am or 10 am on Sundays. If you are unable to worship on a Sunday, consider coming on Saturday evening.

**Study Groups in January**

The Monday Book Study group meets in the foyer on **January 4th, 11th, and 25th** from **12:45 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.** They continue to read the section, “Resting in John’s Glorious Garden,” in the book, The Hidden Power of the Gospels.

The Tuesday evening Bible Study group meets on **January 5th and 19th** in the home Warren and Nellie Wong at **7 p.m.** They are studying the Gospel according to John.

The Wednesday evening Bible Study group meets on **January 6th and 20th** in the foyer at **7:30 p.m.** They are reading the Acts of the Apostles and are at Acts 24:1.

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

**Update on the 2016 Pledge Campaign: A Community of Sharing, a Community of Giving**

To date we have received 78 pledges totaling $147,760. The 2015 pledge total was 87 pledges for $155,736. Thanks to everyone who has turned in a pledge for 2016.

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

Bill and Charlotte Bradford Christina Brockman & Stan Hui Marilyn Canon

Anthony and Darlene Caponera Sal and Linda Censoprano Honkai Chang & Milda Beh

Eunice Chee April Cherrington Nilda Chong

Bettie Davis Kyn Dellinger Jeanne DeTorre-Ozeki

Elliott Dun & Teresa Murakami Maureen H. Fromme George & Janet Gardiner

Raphaele & Jacques Gerber Don Gundry Demian & Lorraine Harvill

Caroline Helmuth Eugene Hetzer Dave and Irma Hoag

Tippy Irwin Hani and Gwen Juha Shelley Keefe

Ray Kelley Joanne Kerseg Brian and Lizz Klammer

June Kudzia Dulce and Michael Lord 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 Morales

Kenneth & Karen Nagar Wilfredo & Olivia Nagar Jim Neubert

Liva & Alain Neyroud David Ota & Karen Swanson Clara Padilla

Karin Patterson Don & Elizabeth Peter Ajit Philip and Shaiji Ajit

Elmer & Alie Pong Jimmy & Poppy Rawley Peggy Redmond

Anita and Rob Richards Diane Robertson Julio and Ngoc Rodriguez

C.D. & Siew Rowsell Ruth Rymer Charles Saunders

Frank & Barbara Saunders Abe & Sandy Schowengerdt Jill & Jerry Schwab

Dilip Selvaraj & Teresa Rajaratnam George & Merle Silverman Irene Stead

Jon and Marilyn Stephens Doug & Wendy Stewart Matt & Meltem Tanner

Wilson and Lois Thampi Kay Umeda Andy Walker

Wendy Walker Jay and Lilian Watan Pedro and Dolores Watan

Deborah White Warren & Nellie Wong Susan and David Yates

Steve & Belinda Yuen

If you would like to make a pledge, you still can do so. Pledge envelopes are in the foyer. Thanks to everyone who participated in the 2016 Pledge campaign.

**Mark Your Calendars**

* Saturday Evening Holy Eucharist: **Saturdays, January 2nd and 16th, 5:30 p.m.,** Chapel
* Monday Book Study: **Mondays, January 4th, 11th and 25th, 12:45 p.m.,** Foyer
* Tuesday Bible Study: **Tuesdays, January 5th and 19th, 7:00 p.m.,** Wong’s home
* Wednesday Bible Study: **Wednesdays, January 6th and 20th, 7:30 p.m.,** Foyer
* Memorial Eucharist in Celebration and Thanksgiving for the life of Merilyn Vosburg: **Thursday, January 7th, 2:00 p.m.,** Chapel
* Choir Practice: **Thursdays, January 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th, 7:30 p.m.,** Chapel
* Office Closed for Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday: **Monday, January 18th**
* School Board Meeting: **Tuesday, January 19th, 7:00 p.m.,** Parish Hall
* Fellowship Dinner Potluck: **Saturday, January 23rd, 6:00 p.m.,** Parish Hall
* Final Meeting for the 2015 Vestry: **Tuesday, January 26th, 7:00 p.m.,** Parish Hall
* Sandwiches on Sundays: **Sunday, January 31st, 11:30 a.m.,** Fair Oaks Community Center, Redwood City
* Annual Meeting: **Sunday, January 31st, 11:45 a.m.,** Chapel

## Vestry Elections – by Warren Wong

The Vestry is a body chosen by the congregation and entrusted with a ministry of leadership and management for the parish. Shelley Keefe, Jim Neubert and Warren Wong are rotating off the Vestry, each having completed a three year term. They will serve (along with the Rector) as a Nominating Committee to submit a slate of candidates for the election of at least three new members at the annual meeting of the parish on January 31st.

If you feel called to be a candidate for Vestry, or you think of somebody else who you think would be a good candidate, please speak to a member of the Nominating Committee.

The qualifications for being nominated to the Vestry are to be “in good standing in this Parish for at least six months prior to the date of their election to the Vestry, and a regular contributor to the support of this Parish by currently stated pledge.”

The Nominating Committee will also need to submit a slate for the election of three members to serve as delegates to Diocesan Convention and the Deanery of the Peninsula. Delegates help govern our life as a diocese by representing our congregation at four Saturday deanery meetings, as well as the diocesan convention on a Friday and Saturday in October. The qualifications for being nominated to be a delegate are to be “in good standing in this Parish and a regular contributor to the financial support of the Parish.”

## Description: IMG_1507Outreach Report - by Steve Yuen

The lyrics are “it’s the most wonderful time of the year,” but, for the members of St. Ambrose, December is also the busiest time of the year, not only with additional worship services, music, and decorations, but also with Outreach activities.

**Sandwiches on Sunday (SOS)**: We served chicken and rice, salad, and bread to 50 guests on November 29th. The cool and sunny weather was a pleasant contrast to one year ago, when we had to cope with rain. Thanks go to our many cooks and 13 servers: the Yates (4), Stewart (3), and McIntyre (3) families, Clara Padilla, Rob Richards, and Steve Yuen. As in previous outings, Clara Padilla brought loaves and rolls donated by Lucky Supermarket. Our next hosting is **January 31st**, when we will be serving lasagna. If you can prepare a dish and/or help with serving and cleanup, please sign up on the sheet in the Parish Hall. If you have any questions, please contact Rob Richards (rob.richards@tensorlabs.com, 577-8924).

**Stocking Stuffers:** Jill Schwab marshaled an army of volunteers from the Santa Clara Thunderbird Club, St. Ambrose, the Boy Scouts, the Foster City Police Department, and the Lions Club. On December 10th they assembled and distributed over 1,300 “stocking stuffer” bags to the Veterans hospitals, Catholic Charities, Meals on Wheels, the San Carlos adult day care center, and homeless organizations.

Jill writes:

We were over last year’s total by about 30. We set a new record at 1,334, which were out of my house by 2:00 p.m.. It was really amazing!!!! The bags went to the same institutions as last year except that we added 25 homeless women veterans at Menlo Park. I need to find a bigger place!!!!

It was truly a labor of love and the outpouring was wonderful. It reaffirms my faith in everyone's desire to help other people.

**Family Sharing:** St. Ambrose parishioners made Christmas brighter for two families, each with three children, living in San Mateo. We over-achieved our target of raising $750 to purchase gifts for the two Samaritan House (www.samaritanhouse.com) families; the excess will be donated to the Second Harvest Food Bank. Clara Padilla and Daniel Yuen purchased and delivered the presents to the happy recipients during the week of December 13th. Thanks go to all church members who donated to this long-running Outreach activity.

**The Giving Tree:** Members of the St. Ambrose and Sea Breeze community grabbed all the red tags off the Giving Tree in the Parish Hall and purchased and wrapped holiday gifts to children of San Mateo County. This is our 6th year participating in the Giving Tree Program. The presents were distributed by Baby Basics of the Peninsula.

**Outreach Donations:** In its December meeting the Outreach Committee approved $1,140 in donations. Year-to-date donations totaled $8,100.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Program |  | Approved Feb-Nov | **Approved Dec. 6th** |
| CALL Primrose – Safeway Gift cards |  | $160 |  |
| **Cambodia Academy\*** |  | 500 | **500** |
| Church Divinity School of the Pacific |  | 1,800 |  |
| Episcopal Diocese of Northern California (Fire) |  | 800 |  |
| El Buen Pastore – Musician |  | 1,800 |  |
| Global AIDS Interfaith Alliance (GAIA)\* |  | 300 |  |
| Home and Hope |  | 300 |  |
| Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church (for H&H) |  | 100 |  |
| Ombudsman Services of San Mateo County |  | 400 |  |
| Sandwiches on Sunday (St. Pius Church) |  | 300 |  |
| **Sandwiches on Sunday - Supplies** |  |  | **200** |
| **Second Harvest Food Bank** |  |  | **440** |
| Stocking Stuffers expenses |  | 500 |  |
| Total from Outreach Budget |  | $ 6,960 | **$ 1,140** |
| **\***Millennium Development Goals |  |  |  |

**Upcoming Event - Home and Hope**: On **Tuesday,** **January 5th**, and **Thursday,** **January 7th**,we will again be making dinner for 2-4 families at Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church in San Mateo. Even if you cannot attend, perhaps you can make a dish! Please add your name to the sign-up sheet in the Parish Hall. If you have any questions, please contact Steve Yuen (341-1966, stevebyuen@aol.com)

## “Create… Connect” - by Rev. Jay Sapaen Watan

You may be wondering just what is hanging up in the rafters in the Chapel at St. Ambrose. Right before the Christmas break I invited our students at Sea Breeze School and our parish families to weave into a long roll of black dear block netting ribbons of blue, white, gold, and glitter filled fabrics. I had always wanted to work an art project that would reflect an aspect of interconnection and community here at St. Ambrose and Sea Breeze School. Like many creative ideas, this project was inspired by other artists who were subsequently inspired by the work of others in a cycle of sharing that has continued since the dawn of time. So after attending a workshop on *Art that Creates Community* led the Rev. Mathew Woodward, an artist and rector at Transfiguration Episcopal Church in San Mateo, I was encouraged to design a project that would invite participation from as many in our community as possible.

Many hands on one project could mean chaos, but I invited our participants to seek inspiration from what they see in the lines and colors of our stained glass windows and how the story of the birth of Jesus Christ and the season leading up to Christmas made them feel. We had approximately 200 pairs of hands work on this piece and it took a week to embellish the 3’ x 35’ netting.

In many works of art and there is an awareness that we stand on the shoulders of others and are connected through a lineage that not only imagines possibility, but seeks to make it so. Whether inspiration comes Divine presence, personal experience, or just from the lives of others, art comes from a place where our stories seek to be shared. I believe our works of imagination and innovation is another language to give meaning to our shared life together. Many of us love to make music, dance, sketch, write, take photos, build furniture or restore cars, but the capacity to create and appreciate is a language that reflects a piece of who God made us to be.

So what does this work mean? Yes, there may be a factual backstory, but like many pieces of creative inspiration, there is also what the work in itself in the weaving of colors and fabrics call you to believe. Creativity has a way of seeking connection.

God Bless you and Happy New Year!

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On another note… Many of you may know that I serve as a Chaplain in the US Army Reserves; however, at the beginning of the year I will be away for training at Ft. Jackson in South Carolina from January 9th through February 5th, 2016. While I am away Fr. Ota will facilitate the school chapel services, and youth Sunday school will be facilitated by church volunteers. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at 415-309-8968 or via email at: [igorothighlander@hotmail.com](mailto:igorothighlander@hotmail.com) . I look forward to seeing y’all again in the New Year.

## Sea Breeze School News

Happy New Year to you from your school!

As I sit at my desk and write to you, I reflect on the many memories that have been made this year. The children’s performances are complete and the teachers are enjoying their well-deserved time off. Teachers are visiting loved ones near and far and I wish them all safe travels, happy times and safe returns.

While the teachers finished family conferences, helped the children prepare for Christmas programs and make wonderful gifts for their families, they also had the opportunity to serve the community. We partnered with the church to provide gifts through the Giving Tree and did some caroling at the Atria Senior Living home.

With the teachers and children on Christmas break, we took the opportunity to have all of the vinyl floors replaced in the school, the kitchen and the adult restrooms. The Buildings and Grounds team worked diligently to gather bids and make selections so that the project could be completed during this time. The floors look great and I am sure the families, children and teachers will enjoy the new flooring.

January brings the preparation for upcoming fall registration at the school. Our Registrar, Wendy Walker, has been working hard to identify the needs of the families and prepare for registration to begin in February. If you are looking for a school opportunity for your child, or know someone else that may be looking, feel free to stop by and learn of the great opportunities that your school offers.

We are always looking for all volunteers to assist in our classrooms and around the school. If you would like to spend time reading to our youngest children or helping the older children during homework club, please contact the office. We would love to have you join the fun at Sea Breeze.

Dates to Remember:

January 4th – School Resumes

January 18th – Martin Luther King Jr. Day – School Closed

January 19th – Teacher In-service Day – School Closed

I wish you all a very Happy New Year filled with good health, good friends and many blessings.

Peace,

Jerelyn Weber