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**Interim Editor:**

*CD & S. Rowsell*

 

The Ambrosian

The Monthly Newsletter of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church

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July

2014

Edition

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Dear Members and Friends of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church,

 Aloha!  The month of July is usually one when people go on trips for some rest and recreation.  Life doesn’t slow down as much as the rhythms of our days change.  For me it is a time to do some things I didn’t do when my schedule was more demanding through “the program year,” that time that parallels the school year.  It is a time to take walks and visit with family and friends a bit more often and to read a good book or two.  We adjust our expectations during this summer month and act accordingly.

        Likewise for St. Ambrose the months of July and August will be a different kind of time.  There will be fewer congregational “events” as people travel.  But it will also be a time to prepare for the “events” of the program year from September through June.

        With all the transition we have experienced in the past year, the Vestry and I have come to understand that we are a smaller congregation than we were just two or three years ago.  I have asked the Vestry to help us “act our size.”  Although we have gotten a bit smaller we had expanded the number of events in our common life and this has placed an extra burden on those who had led different ministries or activities.  So the Vestry and I decided that we will need to have fewer events until we have the leadership and participation to sustain them.  We would rather have fewer events with healthy participation instead of more events with minimal participation.

        So on June 22nd, the Vestry, staff members, ministry leaders and I held a meeting to plan the 2014-2015 event calendar.  Our goal was to not overburden a smaller congregation with too many events, but to do the events which have lay leadership and enthusiasm to support them.  The lay leaders for these will be supported by staff.  However, if leadership cannot be found, then we will let go of the event or do them in a more manageable way.  It will be the responsibility of the Vestry and me to find people interested in leading events and not committees.  Events are one time activities that don’t require an on-going commitment for meetings.

 The good news is that this approach from having committee leaders or staff being responsible for events will unburden those who have carried the load for a long time when we had more volunteers to help.

# Reflections from our Rector

## Rector’s reflections continued…



Another hope is that by inviting different people to lead and also to collaborate with others in the congregation, we will discover that we may have more interested people than we thought who will bring new ideas and energy.

        The calendar of events for 2014-2015 that will require new leadership or more collaboration are:

* The luncheon on Sunday, September 14th celebrating the commissioning of Sunday School teachers and Sea Breeze School teachers and staff.
* The luncheon on Sunday, November 9th to welcome Bishop Marc Andrus and celebrate with those to be confirmed
* The organization for the Christmas Pageant for the Family Christmas Eve Service.
* Christmas caroling on Sunday, December 21st at Foster City Care Homes and to shut-ins of St. Ambrose.
* A Martin Luther King, Jr. work day on January 19th.
* The luncheon for the Annual Meeting on January 25th.
* Shrove Sunday Pancake Dinner on February 15th.
* Lenten Lunches from Sundays, February 22nd to March 22nd.
* The Church Picnic, April 26th.

        So as you spend some time renewing yourself and your relationships during the summer months, I hope you will give some consideration to taking on a leadership role for an event in the coming year when you can express your commitment to our life as a congregation as well as your creativity.

 Yours,

 David Ota, Rector

**Farewell and Godspeed to John Keast**

On **Sunday, July 13th**, the congregation will say farewell to John Keast as he will be moving to Santa Cruz to live with his daughter Allison Clark and her family.  John has been an integral member of St. Ambrose since the time when the Rev. Sumner Walters served as Vicar.  John has said his inspiration for helping the incarcerated began when Father Walters asked him to visit prisoners.  As a way to celebrate John’s life and ministry among us, we will have a potluck luncheon in his honor.  So plan to come to worship **at the 10 a.m. service** that day and stay for the potluck afterwards.  John has been a faithful and loving member of St. Ambrose, and we wish him Godspeed in the next stage of his life in Santa Cruz.

**Thanks**

**Thanks to Deb Sakurai-Horita who completed a term of serving as the Altar Guild Directress in June and has faithfully led the Congregational Vocations Committee since May 2005 culminating in the ordination of the Rev. Rebecca Goldberg to the transitional diaconate on June 14th.  The Rector and Vestry are extremely grateful for her diligent leadership during a time of leadership transition in the Altar Guild and for leading the Congregational Vocations Committee all these years.**

Thanks to **Charlene Adolph** who has assumed the role of Altar Guild Directress this month.  If you are interested in serving on the Altar Guild, please speak with Charlene.

**Bible Studies in July**

The Monday Bible Study group continues to study the Gospel according to Luke on Mondays, **July 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th** from **12:45 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.** in the home of Merilyn Vosburg.  They are at Luke 18.  They have been reading the texts in comparison with the gospels according to Mark and Matthew.  This Bible Study is led by the Rector.

The Tuesday evening Bible Study group meets on **July 8th and 15th** in the home Warren and Nellie Wong at **7:00 p.m.**

The Wednesday evening Bible Study group meets on **July 2nd, 16th and 30th** 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 19. After they complete the Gospel according to John, they plan to begin studying the book of Revelation.

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

**An evening of poetry reading**

Come to an evening of poetry reading on **Thursday, July 17th from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m**. in the Parish Hall.  Frank Saunders and the Rev. Karen Swanson will be reading some poetry. Everyone is invited to bring and share poems that are personally meaningful.  Everyone is also welcome to just listen and enjoy.  Light refreshments will be provided.

**Under Construction, a new online church directory**

**During the summer the office will be using a program from** [**www.InstantChurchDirectory.com**](http://www.InstantChurchDirectory.com) **to construct a new online church directory. You can schedule to have your photo taken in the foyer by Father Jay Watan. You can contact him to schedule having you photo taken at** **igorothighlander@hotmail.com****. Or you can send in a Jpeg photo to our Administrative Assistant, Gina Perez at** **stambrose@mindspring.com****. She will then be able to upload it to the online directory. We will collect photos over the summer. Eventually, we will be able to have our church directory on the website with password protection, have it accessible on iPhones, iPad, Android devices or Kindle Fire and be printed. The major advantage will be we will have a photo directory to help members recognize each other. Another plus is that the directory will be more current and will be automatically updated on-line when changes are made.**

**Upcoming Equipping the Beloved Community**

Save the date for the next Equipping the Beloved Community training event on **Saturday, August 23rd**, at Trinity, Menlo Park, brought to you by the Peninsula Deanery. The day-long event offers a variety of workshops for leaders and learners, including ministry with young adults, and emergent and new forms of worship, as well as seasonal stewardship and Eucharistic Ministry and Visiting (the latter require 6-8 weeks of advance preparation, [download workbooks here](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=26944081&msgid=2251864&act=S18J&c=136242&destination=http%3A%2F%2Fdiocal.org%2Fdiscipleship%2Fadults%2Feucharistic-ministers-and-visitors)), and more. Save the date, start building your team, and look for an online registration link in DioBytes in July.

When: Saturday **August 23rd, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**
Where: [Trinity](http://click.icptrack.com/icp/relay.php?r=26944081&msgid=2251864&act=S18J&c=136242&destination=http%3A%2F%2Ftrinitymenlopark.org), 330 Ravenswood Avenue, Menlo Park
Cost: $25 (general);

$10 (parishioners in the Peninsula Deanery);

Free (Trinity members, trainers and youth 18 and under)
Contact: Julia McCray-Goldsmith, juliam@diocal.org, 415-869 7826

**Mark Your Calendars**

* Farewell and Godspeed to John Keast: **Sunday, July 13th, 10:00 a.m.** Holy Eucharist and Potluck luncheon
* An evening of poetry reading: **Thursday, July 17th, 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.**
* Equipping the Beloved Community Day at Trinity, Menlo Park: **Saturday, August 23rd,**

**10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

* Sunday School and Choir returns: **Sunday, September 7th**
* Giants and Dodgers game at AT&T Park: **Friday, September 12th**
* Commissioning of Sunday School and Sea Breeze School Teachers and Staff and lunch: **Sunday, September 14th, 10:00 a.m.** and following
* Blessing of the Animals: **Sunday October 5th**
* Diocesan Convention at Grace Cathedral: **Friday, October 17th and Saturday, October 18th**
* Bishop Marc Andrus’ Visitation for Confirmation: **Sunday, November 9th**
* Stewardship Dinner Celebration: **Saturday, November 15th, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.,** Foster City Recreation Center’s Lagoon and Blue Bird rooms

## Outreach Report - by Steve Yuen

**PARCA** (**http://parca.org/):** In the back of the Parish Hall is a wooden cabinet in which St. Ambrose members and friends of Sea Breeze School deposit clothes, games, books, utensils, and toys. A truck stops by 3 or 4 times a year to take the items to PARCA. Sometimes a St. Ambrose volunteer transports them to the PARCA warehouse in downtown Redwood City.

In 1952 the Parents Association for Retarded Children (PARC) was founded by concerned parents of children whose problems were little understood at the time and certainly not being addressed by Peninsula communities. As its charter expanded, the name of the organization became the Parents Association for Retarded Children and Adults and was finally changed to the acronym, PARCA.

PARCA in 2014 offers a wide variety of services, such as independence training, education (for example, seminars on special-needs trusts , Section 8 housing, and Federal disability benefits), and recreational programs. Several members of the St. Ambrose and Sea Breeze community have availed themselves of PARCA’s services.

So the next time you drop off a coat or a sweater, please know that it’s going toward a very worthy cause.

**Sandwiches on Sunday:** We serve a hot lunch of chicken and rice, accompanied by salad and bread, to 60-100 people in Redwood City on **Sunday, June 29th**. We will have a report in next month’s Ambrosian.

**Bread for the World** (<http://bread.org>)**:** On **Sunday, July 13th**, we will write letters to Representative Speier and Senators Boxer and Feinstein. In past years these “Offering of Letters” usually asked for increases to the food aid budget.

This year the effort will be made toward making food aid more effective and efficient. For example, the Food for Peace program requires that most donated food be grown in the United States and that it be shipped on American vessels. However, disasters far from American shores require a quick response, such as purchasing the food near the disaster and transporting it on whatever ships are nearby.

For those who would like to but cannot attend the July 13th Offering of Letters, we will have sample wording and other information set out near the church entrance during the month of July so that letters may be written at one’s convenience. Remember—handwritten letters in your own words will attract the most attention and will probably get an answer. If you have any questions, please contact Steve Yuen (stevebyuen@aol.com, 341-1966).

## Fix it!– by Rev. Jay Sapaen Watan

I do not like to take anyone for granted. However, in our culture of fast food and full schedules, we can easily go into automatic mode as the familiarity of what is normal to us surrounds our everyday expectations. Pay attention to how many of us share our “hellos” and “goodbyes” sometime without a pause in our stride or even a hug. We might as well have just grunted at one another. Sometimes in the moment we may feel that the ones who make up our circles of family, friends, and community will always be there. Yet the truth is life is short. And the meaning of that saying, “you only miss it when it’s gone,” rings in the moment.

We human beings are fragile, and when differences and disagreements get in the way of our relationships, that little time with someone who we should be close to is cut even more brief. Now if the relationship is beyond dysfunction and clearly unhealthy, then by all means stay away. But for most of us, our divisions are rooted in misunderstandings, fear, ego, and stubbornness. How many times have we heard of stories about friends or family who have not spoken in years? It’s a sad situation of hurt, anger, and bitterness that can linger for generations and dominate our story. Separation is the very essence of sin, and when we continue to maintain the brokenness of relationship then we participate in sin and our hearts grow harder. God knows we can fix this!

Christ reminds us that we do have the power to fix what is broken. In Matthew’s gospel Jesus says, “*So when you are offering your gift at the altar, if you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift” (Matthew 5:23-24, NRSV).* The good Lord wants us to open the eyes of our heart and prioritize making our relationships healthy and whole. I realize that this is not easy. It so much simpler to allow a broken relationship to linger than it would be to fix it. I think many people wait because they take the other for granted. When we place a label on someone it’s hard to see his or her humanity. So deferred maintenance comes with consequences. I would not want to go to my grave with a heavy heart.

This past month my dear friend, Edna Flores-Lagunte passed at a young age. I never realized the impact she had on my life and for many others until all of her circles came together and shared how her life connected with their own. Although Edna had her struggles in life, she was a faithful wife and a loyal friend. She volunteered at her church, organized efforts to combat AIDS, was an advocate for Filipino Americans, and more. In fact over 500 people came out for her funeral and many more shared their condolences on social media. This is because she lived into love! But more importantly she did not take anyone for granted. Her life was short, but it was not incomplete because living into love made her life full! I mention Edna because as long as I have known her she did not leave anyone she knew hanging in ambiguity. You always knew where you stood with her. And most of the time it was in a good place. My friends, I feel we all deserve only the best, and when we make the move to do the hard work of fixing our relationships, we’ll certainly find ourselves in a more joyful place. So I invite you to take courage, go and fix what needs to be fixed. Life is too short!

## Sea Breeze School News

Summer is here and Summer School is in full force! We welcomed several new children this session and while there were certainly some tears the first few days, much fun was had.

The children will experience a different theme during each week of summer school and they will have several different visitors. We will have a music teacher come sing with us and teach us sign language to go with our beautiful singing voices; we will have a visit from the petting zoo and an insect show. The bubble lady will come and show us so many different bubbles and will even put some of us in a bubble! For an added surprise for the children, a train will come and give all of us rides through the parking lot! There is so much fun to have and the teachers and the children are very excited.

Along with the visitors, the children will also keep up their skills as they continue to get ready for the “Big School” in the fall. There is learning all around us and even the children are excited when they figure out that they are learning some math skills as they are measuring how tall their friends are.

Please remember that we are always looking for volunteers in our programs. The children love to interact with our volunteers, whether it’s at story time, art time or getting help with academics. Please call the office to find out more information. If you have some time to spend with a child or know someone who does, please let us know!

We hope that you are able to slow down a bit this summer and enjoy time with the important people in your lives. Take some time to read a book, watch or movie or simply relax.

Have a wonderful summer!