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The Ambrosian

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Edition

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• Add a highlight or your point of interest here.

• Add a highlight or your point of interest here.

# Reflections from our Rector

Dear Members and Friends of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church,

Aloha! The summer months are times for travel, visiting family and friends and taking some time to renew oneself from the hectic pace of life. I know that some of you already have gone on summer vacations in June and many of you have plans for vacation in July and August. It is an in-between-time.

Our youth will be going on its mission trip with the Sierra Service Project in San Diego under the leadership of Father Jay Watan and Ngoc Rodriguez. Eight youth will be joining them on this journey to stretch themselves to learn about the conditions of those less fortunate and to reflect on their own lives. They will be leaving on Sunday, July 10th and returning on Sunday, July 17th.

On Sunday, July 17th, we will be saying farewell and Godspeed to our Junior Warden, Jill Schwab and her husband Jerry at the 10 am service. After living most of their married life here in Foster City they have decided to sell their home and move to Sonora in the Gold County. We will surely miss them. Jill plans to come back for the Senior Stocking Stuffers in which she gathered gifts to give to seniors and veterans in her home. The date is already set for Thursday, December 8th from 9 am. However the location has yet to be determined. The Parish Hall is a possibility, but if it rains it will be needed for the preschool. I hope as many of you who are in town will join us for worship that Sunday to wish them all the best.

From Monday, July 18th through August 17th I will be taking a sabbatical month. Father Jay Watan will lead the worship services for the four Sundays. Charles Saunders, our Senior Warden will be in charge if any executive decisions need to be made. Margie Lee, our administrative assistant will keep the day to day operations going.

During my sabbatical month, I will be resting, reading and seeking to regain my energy through daily exercise. I will be spending time helping my mother in San Francisco. I will spend most of my time here in Foster City. I will be visiting other congregations to join them for worship on those Sundays. I also will be taking a trip to Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota to take a workshop called, “Rethinking Sunday Morning: Better Questions, Bolder Experiments.”

## Rector’s reflections continued…

As we all know the practice of Sunday morning worship as a time for Sabbath rest has more and more competition from work or forms of recreation. In response we have experimented with having a Saturday Evening Worship through the school year to see if it could serve as an alternative for those who wind up being otherwise occupied on Sunday mornings.

The organizers of the workshop have asked these questions, “But what is God up to in all of this? And to what more faithful future are Christian communities now being called? What are the practices of discipleship for a post-churchgoing world?

These are interesting questions for a sabbatical time. In the meantime, I hope you will continue to find our life together meaningful for you as we gather to worship, so we may rest in God’s love for us and then feel refreshed to serve God by loving our neighbors.

Yours,

David Ota, Rector



**Thanks**

* Thanks to everyone who prepared food or served for Sandwiches on Sunday on May 29th at the Fair Oaks Community Center
* Thanks to Karin Patterson, Keith Adolph and Jill Schwab who organized the church’s booth and everyone who volunteered to be present in the booth at cityFest on June 4th and 5th.
* Thanks to Jill Schwab for her service as Junior Warden this year.
* Thanks to Steve Yuen, Nellie and Warren Wong for representing St. Ambrose at the Deanery meeting on June 23rd

**2016 Vestry News**

The 2016 Vestry met on June 28th.

* The Community Outreach Working Group reported that about 50 people visited the St. Ambrose booth at cityFEST but most were people we already knew.
* The Capital Campaign for Housing reported on the meeting with Davey Gerhard, the Diocese of California Director of Development that two pilot projects in the diocese have already been successfully completed. They still have some research to do for St. Ambrose.
* The Disaster Preparedness Committee met on June 26. Karin Patterson gave an excellent presentation on the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Foster City and encouraged everyone to take the training. The committee continues to work on developing the Disaster Plan for St. Ambrose. The next meeting is **Sunday, July 24th at 11:30 a.m.**
* The Vestry decided that the Commissioning of the Sunday School teachers and choir, and the St. Ambrose Sea Breeze School staff will be done a little differently this fall. The Commissioning will be held at the **10 am** service on **Sunday, September 18th** followed by a Back to School Lunch.
* The Vestry accepted the resignation of Jill Schwab as Junior Warden and member of the Vestry as she and Jerry will be moving to Sonora in July. The Vestry elected April Cherrington as the new Junior Warden.
* The Vestry voted to move future meetings to be dinner meetings beginning at 6:30 pm.

**Study Groups in July**

The Monday Book Study group will be taking a break for the summer, and will resume on **Monday, August 22nd from 12:45 to 2 pm** in the foyer.

The Tuesday evening Bible Study group will meet on **July 12th and 26th from 7 pm** in the Wong’s home. They are reviewing the riches of The Book of Common Prayer with the help of The Prayer Book Guide to Christian Education published by Morehouse Publishing.

The Wednesday evening Bible Study group meets on **July 13th** in the foyer at **7:30 p.m.** They are now reading Paul’s Letter to the Galatians. They will then be taking a break until **August 24th.**

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

**ABUNDANCE ORCHARD VBS Camp - August 8-12, 2016**

Our Vacation Bible School at St. Ambrose will focus on stories about food and eating with Jesus. Children will learn how people in our world need help getting enough to eat, and how God provides and challenges us to help.  Through bible stories, songs, food and fun activities, our campers can gain confidence to share the blessings of God’s abundance with all people.  Faith grows with actions of compassion, gratitude & grace.

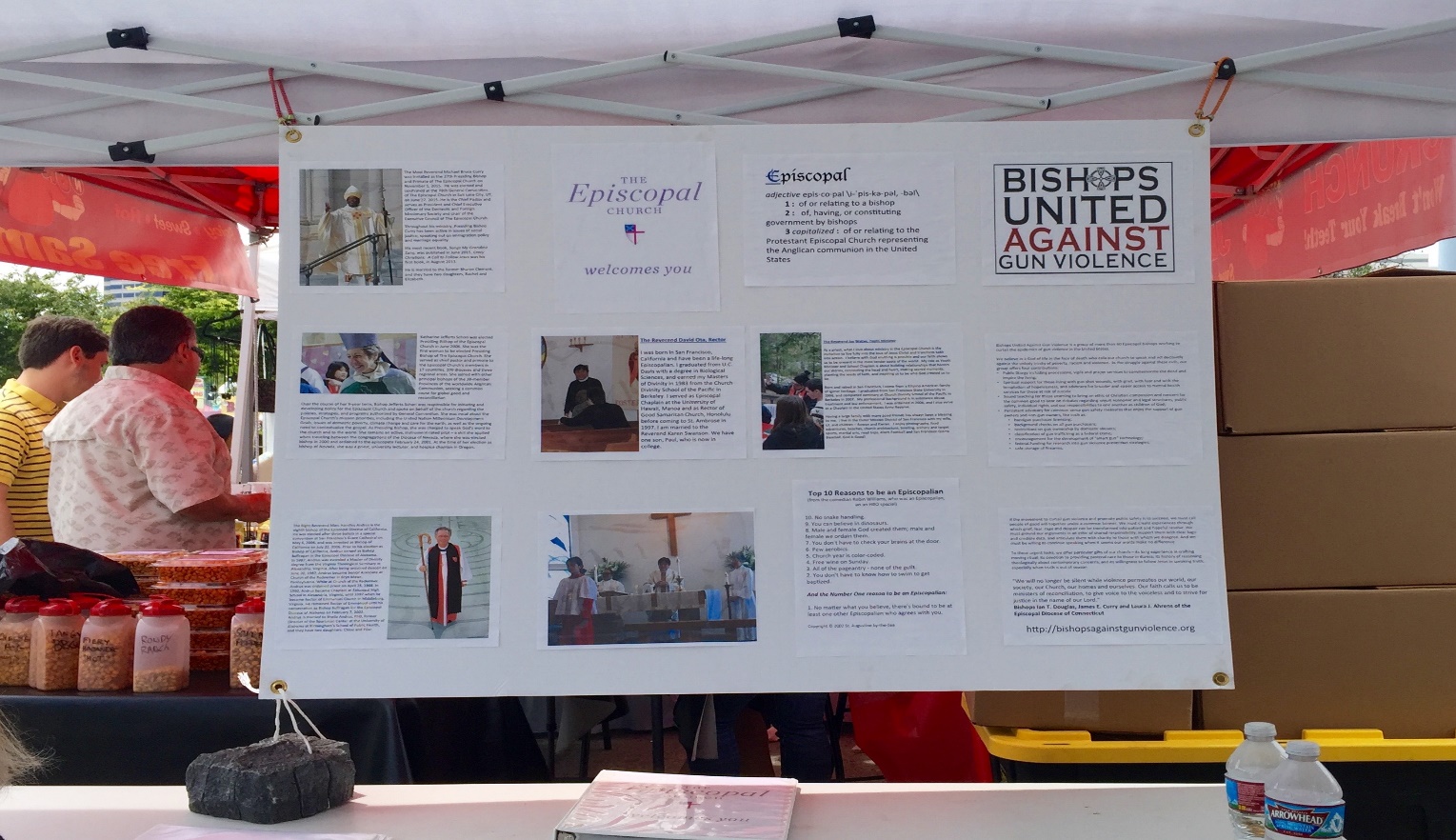
**Registration is $85 and open for children ages 4 through 10.** Camp will include music, stories, crafts, games, a t-shirt, snacks, and lots of fun!  A portion of the registration will go to support The Society of St. Andrews' mission to bring food to feed hungry people. **Registration will be limited to 25 campers and closes on Monday, July 25th, 2016.**

For more information, please **contact the Rev. Jay Watan at 415-309-8968 or via email at igorothighlander@hotmail.com**.  Registration forms available in the church office.

**Mark Your Calendars:**

* Youth Mission Trip: **Sunday, July 10th to Sunday, July 17th,** San Diego
* Rector’s Sabbatical month: **Monday, July 18th to Wednesday, August 17th**
* Disaster Preparedness Committee Meeting: **Sunday, July 24th, 11:30 am,** Kitchen
* Vacation Bible School Registration Deadline: **Monday, July 25th**
* Sandwiches on Sundays: **July 31st, 11:30 am,** Fair Oaks Community Center
* Vacation Bible School: **Monday, August 8th to Friday, August 12th, 8:30 a.m. to 12 Noon,** St. Ambrose Parish Hall
* Kick-Off to Fall Picnic and Kickball Game: **Saturday, August 20th, time to be arranged,** Foster City School field
* Saturday Evening Worship, **Saturday, August 27th, 5:30 p.m.,** Chapel
* Evelyn Harbold Memorial and Reception, **Saturday, August 27th, time to be arranged,** Chapel and Parish Hall
* Saturday Evening Worship, **Saturday, September 10th, 5:30 p.m.,** Chapel
* S.F. Giants and St. Louis Cardinals game, **Friday, September 16th, 7:15 p.m.**
* Commissioning of the St. Ambrose Sunday School Teachers, Choir and Sea Breeze School Teachers and Staff and the Back to School Lunch: **Sunday, September 18th, 10 am,** Chapel and Parish Hall
* Saturday Evening Worship, **Saturday, September 24th, 5:30 p.m.,** Chapel

## Outreach Report - by Steve Yuen

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Outreach at St. Ambrose takes many forms: feeding the hungry, donating to schools like the Cambodia Academy and Holy Trinity in Haiti, and helping the homeless through Home and Hope and Habitat for Humanity. As we get caught up in the “busy-ness” of Outreach—indeed we are very grateful to all who contribute--it’s easy to lose sight of the overall mission:

The mission of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church of Foster City is to proclaim the good news of God in Jesus Christ as we care for each other and our larger community.

In order to invite listeners to hear the “good news” with us on Sundays, Karin Patterson organized the St. Ambrose booth at CityFEST (formerly known as the Foster City Arts and Wine Festival). Sandwiched between a corn crunch vendor who was passing out free samples and a chiropractor who was giving free neck rubs, church members fielded questions about music, worship, outreach, Sunday school, and theology. They had nothing to sell or give away, unless one counts the free gift of eternal life.

Thanks go to Karin, last year’s organizer David McIntyre, and all the volunteers who staffed the booth, for reminding us why we are doing what we do.

**Sandwiches on Sunday:** We serve a hot lunch to all comers on fifth Sundays of the month at the Fair Oaks Community Center in Redwood City. Turnouts have lately risen to about 80 people. On **July 31st** we’ll be serving salad and baked lasagna. If you can prepare a dish and/or help with serving and clean-up, 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).

If you have any questions about Outreach activities, please contact Steve Yuen ([stevebyuen@aol.com](mailto:stevebyuen@aol.com), 341-1966).

**An Eagle Scout Project –** by Ben Tjandra

I’m Ben Tjandra, a youth member of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church. I’m also a member of Boy Scout Troop 176 across the Bay in Fremont. As a Boy Scout working on my Eagle rank, I need to lead a project that benefits my community – such as helping a community center, school or religious institution. To help the church community, I have chosen to conduct schoolyard improvement at Sea Breeze School.

I intend to do this through the construction of two planter boxes and the painting of a mural of the world map. These improvements will benefit Sea Breeze School (SBS) for a number of reasons. First, the mural will improve the play-space of the students of SBS. This will not only improve the student’s experience on the playground, but also make the school more attractive to prospective parents. The map would also be a tool for students to learn about the world and for teachers to teach about it. The planter boxes, too, would help the school in another way: they would help students learn about pollination science and plants.

The project will be funded by a generous grant by St. Ambrose Church. If additional funding is needed upon finalization of the project scope, I will be soliciting members of church, scouts and school communities for monetary support or/and supplies.

While Troop 176 of Fremont members will help me to work on this project, youth volunteers from St Ambrose are also more than welcome. The workdays will not be at SBS every day; many will be off site to help put together the boxes, make a stencil for the mural, etc. These workdays will be throughout July and early August. The exact days when we will be on SBS site to paint the map mural and put the plant boxes together are being worked out. Contact me at [benjamin.tjandra@gmail.com](mailto:benjamin.tjandra@gmail.com) if you would like to know more.

**Sunday School and the Children and Family Ministry –** by Lizz Klammer

It is always a blessing when you feel that the Lord is guiding you through a process of growth. The spring has brought new and continuing traditions to our families at St. Ambrose. On June 12, the Sunday school classes came together for a Sunday School End of Year celebration. Students opened with a prayer from Fr. Jay, had snacks and played an egg hunting game, and each egg had a few words of a bible verse. The kids then put the verse together. Father Jay provided Matthew 22:36-39 verse:3*6“Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?”37Jesus replied, “‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’[*[*a*](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Matthew+22%3A36-39&version=NLT#fen-NLT-23884a)*] 38This is the first and greatest commandment. 39A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’*

After the game, Fr. Jay led the students in a discussion, Liva Neyroud guided the students with a craft activity on the bible verse and the students each signed their name on the art piece, which was hung in the Parish Hall. Fr. Jay ended our celebration with a prayer of thanksgiving. Then the children entered the Church and stood in front of the congregation to present their art piece. Students who had excellent attendance were also recognized. These students were: Jayanth Diwakar, Keiran Watan, Rachel Ajit, Shania Wilson, Elliot Dun, Michael Chang, Aurelia Gerber, Rowan Watan, Lydia McIntyre, and Reuben Ajit Philip.

Fr. David Ota ordered Spark Bibles for all the families with children for summer reading fun and for our twelve week summer Sunday school program. There are many bibles left in the office and are available before and after Church services. Please contact me if you have not received a bible for your children. The twelve week summer Sunday school program started on **June 19th** and will run till **September 4th**. Each Sunday, students will have an arts and crafts activity to take home. All Sunday school teachers are returning for next year and we will also be joyfully adding Shaiji Ajit, Lois Wilson, and Teresa Rajaratnam to the list of teachers. I would like to thank the following teachers for their service to our children: Christina Brockman, Gwen Juha, Barbara Milligan, Raphaele Gerber, Teresa Rajaratnam, Liva Neyroud, Sandy Schowengerdt, Fr. Jay Watan and the nursery staff; Rose Umeda and Mary Bradford.

On **August 20th**, the Church families are invited to a “Kickoff to Fall” picnic and kickball game to held at the school sport field across the street. The bible verse stated above reminds me how lucky we are to have the love of our St. Ambrose families and the freedom of loving the Lord with all of our heart, soul and mind. As we move into the summer, let us take the opportunity to share our faith with our neighbors and maybe invite their children to a friendly kickball game. I am looking forward to working with the Sunday school teachers and families in the 2016-2017 school year.

**“Losing”** by the Rev. Jay Sapaen Watan

*"Don't cry because it's over, smile because it happened." – Dr. Seuss*

Right after the Warriors lost to the Cleveland Cavaliers in Game 7 of the NBA Finals there was an incredible silence in my household.  It was a close game that came down to the final minute and the difference of 4 points.  There are certainly more important things going on in the world to lament over, but in my household and I know in many others around the Bay Area a silence came over us in the process of having to accept loss. I thought about the hard work that went into reaching an NBA Finals and having a championship run. The disappointment in seeing “my team” go down in defeat had to be processed. And then I thought about the rejoicing in Cleveland, Ohio, and what that means to a community that has been struggling to shed the identity of decline and loss. The joy of winning something must have been incredible.

All of this makes me wonder about our culture of winners and losers.  I understand in sports we crown champions and competition can bring out excellence.  But not all of life fits into the sports metaphor.  We don't celebrate losers as we do the victors.  In fact history is weighted on the story of the victors, because who ever “wins” get to write the history. I remember in grade school 30 years ago the stories of American history proudly proclaimed “*How the West was won.”*  This narrative of American history focused on pilgrims and pioneers, discovery and missions, guns and the gold rush, purchases and wars; but only a few pages documented the loss experience by Native Americans. Since then our growing diversity has opened the way for a greater consciousness to research more complete and compassionate narratives of history, especially when it comes to loss.

But what do you tell your kid who just lost in their basketball finals, knowing that a pizza and saying, *“all that matters is that you had fun,”* may not be sufficient. Part of the richness of being human comes from losing. Yet, I find many of us struggle to find a direction from loss and to create new meaning from it. The saying above attributed to Dr. Seuss rings with much so truth… Sadness naturally comes with loss. Yet in the end sometimes the best thing we can say is “*Thank* You.”

Acknowledging the power of the moment invites us to grow from the experience, to get up again, to walk with gratitude and give meaning beyond the loss itself. More often than not, we are placed in a position to be a God bearer to someone else’s story. In the ministry I serve, I hear the stories of families struggling to live in San Francisco and the Peninsula in this economic climate of have and have not and feeling beat up and defeated. I hear regret from our brothers and sisters over broken relationships and the hurt that takes years to heal. I hear stories of anger and anxiety over changes they have no control over. I hear stories of illness and injury that force people to dig deep in the well of peace. To be on a losing side can send people into deep personal and public isolation. And this is where we need a little faith. I have found in my life God will send the right people, friends or professional helpers, in my life just at the right time. The Lord empowers us with the capacity to be very good listeners. Now listening isn’t the same as giving advice (which can be like opening a toxic barrel of monkeys). It involves an open heart, without judgement, and us not needing to say much but to acknowledge a major moment in someone’s life and to be present with them on their journey.

In this dichotomy of winning and losing I’ve come to understand that loss can teach us so much about who we are. Isn’t so much about living discovering who God calls us to be? Keep the faith… Life continues to happen on the other side.

## Sea Breeze School News – by Jerelyn Weber

Summer school at Sea Breeze has begun! We had a lot of new friends join us and while there were some tears on that first day, everyone has settled in nicely and is having fun. The children are enjoying daily water play, painting, bike riding and many other fun and exciting things throughout the day. We will have several special visitors during this summer, including the very fun Party Train that will take the children (and the teachers) for train rides through the parking lot!

With the change in the School District Calendar, we continue to run off of 2 different calendars. The children entering kindergarten and first grade next year are in a 7 week camp that runs through August 5th. They are learning all about camping in the great outdoors, while our preschool children have the option of attending 2 separate 4 week camps where they will be learning about Science, Transportation , Sea Life and the feathered and furry friends in our environments.

We are also busy enrolling children and planning for the 2016-2017 school year. If you know anyone looking for a great school, please send them our way. Our Registrar, Wendy Walker is relocating and will be leaving Sea Breeze in mid-August. We certainly appreciate the work she has done for Sea Breeze and we will miss her very much. Our new Registrar, Lisa Walker, will join us in early July and will spend time with Wendy to learn all that is needed to keep Sea Breeze moving forward.

We hope that you are having a wonderful summer and we wish you a very patriotic July 4th holiday (we are taking the day off too!).

**Peninsula Deanery Convocation, June 23, 2016** by Steve Yuen

The Peninsula Deanery held its second meeting of 2016 at Transfiguration Episcopal Church in San Mateo. St. Ambrose attendees were Nellie Wong, Warren Wong, Steve Yuen, and the Reverend David Ota, all of whom enjoyed the Thursday meeting / barbecue dinner. The Reverend Matthew Woodward was a gracious host.

We had an abbreviated business session that consisted of standard reports and approval of a resolution to replace compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs) with light-emitting diode bulbs (LEDs) due to the danger posed by mercury in the CFLs. The CFLs don’t have to be replaced until they burn out, however. The resolution will come before the Diocesan General Convention in October.

A major benefit of Deanery meetings is the informal conversations between members of the 19 churches. On this night we compared notes on best practices, talked about new programs, and commiserated about common problems like declining youth participation. And, although it was frowned upon, gossip did occur.

Discussion topics at dinner included how to make the church more diverse, how we can better welcome newcomers, and whether to object to “ageist” Church rules like mandatory retirement. The conversations were stimulating, but there were no memorable solutions to these often-mentioned problems. (On the other hand, your humble scribe may not remember any solutions because of age-related memory loss, which may be a point in favor of mandatory retirement……for volunteers.)

The meeting was adjourned at 9 p.m. The next convocation will be at St. Edmund’s at 10 a.m. on Saturday, September 17th.