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**Interim Editor:**

*David Y. Ota*



The Ambrosian

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Edition

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Dear Members and Friends of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church,

Aloha! I want to thank the Vestry and congregation for allowing me to attend my third CREDO conference last month. It was a time of refreshment and inspiration for me. Mostly, it helped me to focus my attention and energies on looking for the beauty of God’s creation and Gospel in our lives, to participate in it, and to help create gospel beauty through my life and ministry.

I realize from having this time to be quiet, to walk in nature, to pray and worship with others and to spend time thinking about what is most important in my life that it is very important for you to have these times as well. I hope and pray that during these summer months you will be able to take a break from “your busy lives” to spend time alone and with loved ones, to play, pray, worship and to see how God is recreating the world each new day, and how you can be renewed to help you live into God’s vision for you and us all.

During the summer until the Sunday after Labor Day, the Summer Sunday School will be held in Room 2 led by different volunteer Sunday School teachers from the congregation. Thanks go to Lizz Klammer who arranged with me to work on the stories and projects that will be worked on. Thanks go to the Rev. Karen Swanson, who is our new Interim Coordinator for Children and Family Ministry. She met with several of the Sunday School teachers to be sure that each Sunday is covered.

We are fortunate that Karen is willing to serve in this capacity, as she has great experience, knowledge and passion for ministry with families with children. As some of you may not know, during the weekdays she is currently serving as a therapist intern at the Family Service Counseling & Community Center in San Leandro during the week earning her hours to become a licensed therapist in the State of California. But beginning on Sunday, July 9th she will be with us on Sundays to interact with members of the congregation, and to assist us in this vital and important part of our ministry together. If you do not already know her, I hope you will introduce yourself to her and get to know her.

Father Jay Watan will be away on the Mission Trip with our youth and some parents from July 15th to 23rd. In his absence, Karen will be leading the Youth Sunday School class and assisting at the altar.

# Reflections from our Rector

## Rector’s reflections continued…



Also, this month we will have baptisms on July 2nd at 8 am and July 30th at 10 am. We have a total of six persons interested in Holy Baptism. This is a sign of hope and renewal for us as a congregation. Even as some of our long-time members have moved in recent months, God continues to call and send people to us for us to welcome, befriend and share the Christian life.

Wherever you may be this month, I hope you will see the beauty of God’s world and Gospel, and that you will use your life to bless others.

Yours,

David Y. Ota, Rector

**Thanks**

* Thanks to Father Jay Watan who prepared nine youth for Confirmation, with eight choosing to be confirmed at Grace Cathedral on June 3rd.
* Thanks to Maureen Fromme for organizing the “Make Your Own Sundae” social for the Children’s choir and the Sunday School children on June 11th.
* Thanks to Dulce Franke and Michael Lord, An Bartoszynski, Wilfredo and Olivia Nagar, Lilian and Father Jay Watan, Pedro and Dolores Watan for hosting the Filipino Food Fest on Sunday, June 11th and for sharing so much about the Filipino history and culture.



* Thanks to Lizz Klammer, Christina Brockman, Lilian Watan, Raphaele Gerber, Lois Wilson, Shaiji Ajit, Barbara Milligan, Sandy Schowengerdt, Teresa Rajaratnam, and Liva Neyroud who taught Sunday School this past school year.
* Thanks to Father Jay Watan who led the Vacation Bible School, “Wonder-ful” based on Godly Play stories and for volunteers Shelley Keefe, the Rev. Karen Swanson, Lilian Watan, the Rev. David Ota, Christina Rodriguez, Tuva Kagedal, Marie Mendoza, Crystal Mendoza and Ruben Ajit Philip.
* Thanks to Raphaele Gerber, Shaiji Ajit, Lois Wilson, Lilian Watan, Gwen Juha, Jessica Morales, Teresa Rajaratnam, Teresa Murakami who hosted a wonderful farewell luncheon for Lizz and Brian Klammer on Sunday, June 25th.

**Congratulations**

Congratulations to James Bradford, Amarine Gerber, Michael Lord, Landon Matsuo, Lydia McIntyre, Emily Miller, Reuben Ajit Philip, Christina Rodriguez, Emily Rodriguez who were confirmed at Grace Cathedral on Saturday, June 3rd.

**Study Groups in July 2017**

The Tuesday Evening Study group meetings are cancelled for July and will resume in August

The Wednesday Bible Study group meets on **July 12th** and **19th** from **7:30 p.m.** in the Rector’s office. They will be completing the Book of Daniel.

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

**Wonder: a Vacation Bible School based on Godly Play**

The Vacation Bible School this year was at a different time, from 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm from **Monday, June 19th through Friday, June 23rd**. This year fourteen children participated, and about half came from St. Ambrose Sea Breeze School. Five youth also served in different leadership roles. It was a fun-filled week of making friends, learning some of the stories of the Bible through the practice of imagination and “wondering.” They also made tie-dyed tee-shirts, painted photo frames and created art.

**Summer Mission Trip with Sierra Service Project to Spokane, Washington – July 15 to 23, 2017**

Eight of the St. Ambrose youth will be going to the Sierra Service Project Mission Trip to the Spokane Indian Reservation in Wellpinite, Washington: Reuben Ajit Philip, Landon and Nathan Matsuo, Lydia McIntyre, Emily Miller, Connor Moriarty, and Christina and Emily Rodriguez. They will be led by Father Jay Watan and chaperoned by Brenda Matsuo, John Miller and Ngoc Rodriguez.

**San Francisco Giants baseball games**

St. Ambrose is going to the Giants and Miami Marlins game on **Friday, July 7, 7:15 pm.** The cost of the tickets is $29 and the seats are in View Reserve 318, rows 12-14.year. Join fellow members and friends and enjoy an evening together. We have several tickets for sale for this game. As in the past the cost of the tickets for children and youth will be discounted $10. For more information, please speak with the Rector.

* **Friday, July 7, 7:15 pm,** Giants and Miami Marlins, View Reserve 318, 12-14, $29

Join us for another game with the St. Louis Cardinals:

* **Friday, September 1, 7:15 pm,** Giants and St. Louis Cardinals, View Reserve 319, rows 12-14, $30

**Outing to the Bishop’s Ranch**

Join members of St. Ambrose for a weekend at the Bishop’s Ranch in Healdsburg, CA on the weekend of **October 6th**- **8th**, 2017. We will be staying at Harrison House. A sign-up sheet is posted in the Parish Hall. For more information speak with the Rector or Jim Neubert.

**Mark Your Calendars:**

Independence Day**, July 4, 2017,** Office Closed

Giants and Miami Marlins game: **Friday, July 7, 7:15 pm,** AT&T Park

Intercessory Prayer Group: **Sundays, July 9 and 23, 11:45 am,** Room 1

Bible Study, **Tuesdays** meetings are cancelled for July and will resume in August

Bible Study, **Wednesday, July 12 and 26, 7:30 pm**, Rector’s Office

Altar Guild Clean-Up Day, **Thursday, July 13, 9:00 am,** Sacristy

Summer Mission Trip with Sierra Service Project: **July 15 to 23** Spokane, Washington

Vestry Meeting, **Tuesday, July 25 7:00 pm,** Parish Hall

Sandwiches on Sunday: **Sunday, July 30, 11:30 am,** Fair Oaks Community Center, Redwood City

Rector’s Sabbatical Month: **July 30 to August 27**

Giants and St. Louis game: **Friday, September 1, 7:15 pm,** AT&T Park

Altar Guild Meeting: **Saturday, September 9, 9 am,** Kitchen

Commissioning of St. Ambrose Sunday School and Sea Breeze School Teachers and Staff: **Sunday, September 10, 10 am Holy Eucharist,** and Back to School Lunch following

Bishop’s Ranch Weekend: **Friday, October 6 to Sunday, October 8,** Bishop’s Ranch, Healdsburg

Stewardship Dinner: **Saturday, November 4, 6 pm,** Foster City Recreation Center, Lagoon and Blue Bird Rooms

## Outreach Report - by Steve Yuen

**Summer Movies:**  Living in the 21st century, we feel

that there’s never enough time to do the things that are

really important, like spending time with one’s family or volunteering for Outreach!

Our beliefs about time are central to two entertaining

movies, *The Arrival (2016)* and *Groundhog Day (1993),*

which initially seem to be about other problems.

In *The Arrival* Louise Banks (Amy Adams), professor of linguistics, tries to communicate with aliens from outer

space before societies succumb to panic and start

shooting at the spaceships and each other. In *Groundhog*

*Day* weatherman Phil Collins (Bill Murray) relives

February 2nd over and over in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania. Everything is reset every morning

(except for Phil’s thoughts and memories).

If the audience is so inclined to think about such matters,

repeated viewings reveal that these films not only raise

questions about time, but also the nature of free will and

memory, even the purpose of life. But if you just want to

relax, *The Arrival* and *Groundhog Day* can be enjoyed as

plain entertainment where the main character tries to solve

a puzzle. Break out the popcorn!

**Humanitarian Aid to the Diocese of Venezuela:** As

noted in last month’s issue, Venezuela is experiencing widespread shortages of food, medical supplies, and fuel. During Sunday services in June our congregation has been collecting donations for the Diocese of Venezuela, which is a member of the Episcopal Church. Individual contributions were combined with **$500** from the church Outreach budget and a total of $1,075 was sent to our sister Diocese. Please direct your questions to Steve Yuen (stevebyuen@aol.com, 341-1966) or Father Ota (dyota@mindspring.com, 574-1369)

**Sandwiches on Sunday:** We will be serving a hot lunch of lasagna, salad and bread to 60-90 people in Redwood City on **Sunday, July 30th**. If you can make a dish (it is not unnecessary to be a lunch server—although we would appreciate the help), please sign up on the sheet posted in the Parish Hall. If you have questions, please contact Rob Richards (577-8924, rob.richards@tensorlabs.com).

**“Heroic Imagination” – by the Rev. Jay Sapaen Watan**

On June 2, 2017, Wonder Woman opened at our local theaters, and I can say it was truly an amazing film. I believe one of the best super hero films ever! It was so good that rumors are about that it may even get an academy award nomination, not for special effects or soundtrack, but for best director and best film. Wow! I grew up a comic book fan of the X-Men, Avengers, Iron Man, Black Panther, and Wolverine. In the superhero I loved their capacity to find hope even in the direst circumstances. I also was a fan of the animated Super Friends – which included Wonder Woman, Batman, Superman, Aquaman, and the Wonder Twins. What I really loved was that the Superfriends series of the 1970’s and 80’s also included a diverse band of ethnic heroes such as Samurai, El Dorado, Black Bolt and the Apache Chief. And while they were minor characters who were based on stereotypical characterizations, those heroes had some brown in them… and that was good enough for me to actually see a hero I can relate to.

And finally with Wonder Woman, there is a hero on film – thanks to actress Gal Gadot and director Parry Jenkins - which my daughter can relate too. The world has been waiting for a superhero film with a female lead that is faithful to the character, directed well, and cinematically beautiful. Along with Batman and Superman, Wonder Woman completes the holy trinity of the DC Comics universe. She is loving, kind, intelligent, powerful, and fast. A selfless and confident warrior who unlike many of her male counterparts she does not get caught up in the mess. She finds a way to clean up messes. In the midst of human suffering and brokenness, throughout the film, Wonder Woman, also known as Diana, holds a grace and gentleness that allows her to wonder and keep her faith in the goodness of humanity.

The opening theme from the 1970’s Wonder Woman TV show staring Linda Carter held the lines… “*All the world's waiting for you, and the power you possess.”* So I wonder if we’re still waiting for heroes in the real world today. And if they don’t exist in real life… our God given creativity and spirit will imagine those heroes to give us an ideal to live up to. The growing popularity of the modern superhero film genre that started with the X-Men and Spiderman 2000, the Dark Knight Trilogy in 2005, Iron Man in 2008, and Man of Steel (Superman) in 2013 seems to indicate something that has been simmering in popular culture for the long time… we live in a world that needs heroes.

Our faith invites us into a relationship with the ultimate hero in Jesus Christ. But this hero isn’t going to save us like some damsel in distress; this hero empowers us to join the movement of the Spirit and live into love. In Matthew’s Gospel we hear Jesus giving his disciples the Great Commission… *“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” (Matthew 28: 19-20, NRSV)*

It is easy to focus on the importance of the Great Commission… Jesus invites you and I to join this movement to love, connect, empower, and heal a world that’s so broken, but also so very beautiful. And yet there’s also another part to this Great Commission that is easy to overlook when our gaze is directed to this selfless kind of service. We are also given what some call “the Great Promise” when Jesus says *“And I am with you always, to the end of the age.”* Jesus isn’t going send us out alone.

It seems to me that our only hope of fulfilling the great commission – sharing the good news of God’s grace in Christ – will come by keeping the great promise close to our heart: God will be with us. Yet nowadays I am not sure many of our people can sense that God is with them. I know we live in a time where so many distractions and disappointments can supplant the frequency of Divine connection. Perhaps those come of Jesus moments only happen when great challenge, tragedy or loss, open up even the most casually spiritual call on God for some help. However, there is a difference in relational depth between calling on God and experiencing God… and sometimes we need to readjust the focus of our natural senses to grow again in the awareness that **God IS Here** with us.

In good times and bad, sad days and days of joy, hopeful moments or anxious times, how do we begin to sense God’s presence? My answer begins with Gratitude and Trust. When I start every day saying “*Thank You” - Thank you to God, my family and friends, the Church, my community and places I call home, our military and first responders, our teachers, healers and peacemakers, for the earth and call creation, and the ones I met along the way -* this simple action changes my day. It focuses my attention to what’s life giving. And when I don’t, I notice that what I pay attention to often isn’t as helpful to me. We can train ourselves to focus our intention. Trust, however, is much harder to learn because it is so much about letting go of what we’re holding on to.

Matthew 28 also gives us the Holy Trinity as Jesus commissions the disciples to baptize people in the *name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*  I must admit that I don’t fully understand the mystery of the Holy Trinity as a concept or doctrine, what I do know is what God actually does and in my experience the Holy Trinity is the reality of God’s unconditional love. God creates, redeems and sustains. At the heart of the Trinity is the belief that God is inherently about love, connection and transformative growth. One God in three persons whose shared, mutual, and sacrificial love spills out into the world and into all creation. For me, the Holy Trinity helps me understand that God - the three in one - invites you and me into the heroic imagination to create a more beautiful, just, healthy and loving world. I may not be able to trust doctrines or overly complex theologies, but I can trust what I see and feel. The experience of God’s love allows me to trust in a God who is present right here and right now.

Promises bind us together, they provide hope, and they create courage to live into love with each other, support each other, forgive each other, and encourage each other. At the heart of every authentic and nurturing relationship, when you think about it, is a promise. Jesus’ promise: *I will be with you. I am for you. You can count on me. I’ve got your back*. Let’s see what we can do together.

Dr. Philip Zimbardo, the famed psychology researcher from Stanford, who I first met as a guest professor at SF State University, explains that in our society the traditional idea of what a hero is a mythic larger than life figure, often a warrior. Especially in America we often see heroes as unique and unusual, outliers with a special set of personal virtues or super powers who do extraordinary things - like Superman or Wonder Woman. But we often overlooked our everyday heroes. Through the *Heroic Imagination Project*, Dr. Zimbardo wants people to challenge these traditional notions saying: *1) You don't have to seek redemptive violence to be a hero, you can be a hero for love and peace, 2) Heroic acts shouldn't be "extraordinary" - they can be acts that are performed all the time because our society expects it, and 3) Anyone can be a hero.*

Throughout the Wonder Woman film, Diana, saw how mankind could destroy each other mercilessly… she has witnesses a world full of discrimination, inequality, and pain. She has seen the face of evil. (*Spoiler Alert!)* At the final battle scene Diana confronts Ares the god (with a lower case g) of war who tries to convince her to join him and abandon humanity. However, Diana realizes that saving the world isn’t something she can do alone. She sees the sacrifices of all who have tried to make a difference and it is that experience of others who may not have the same gifts she has which reaffirms her faith in humanity.

We live in a world searching for heroes. But we have heroes every day in all who are willing to share unconditional love. They are folks living everyday lives like you and me. This is who God created us to be. Gratitude creates mindfulness to trust in a God who has promised Divine presence in the Holy Trinity. The attitude of gratitude also allows us to fulfill what we promise. And promises create relationships and builds up hope and possibilities. So thank you for your heroism to imagine possibilities, take action, and to offer God’s love in this world. You, my friends, have the heroic imagination that makes a difference.

Sea Breeze School News- by Jerelyn Weber, Principal

Summer Camp is in full swing and we are surrounded by fun and laughter.

The theme for Summer Camp this year is S.T.E.M., Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. Our first week was all about Science and the children were busy learning about water and color absorption and why balloons do not always pop when you stick them with a pin. They spent time making lava lamps and rocket ships and many hours trying to stay cool playing in the water. The second week will continue to focus on science as they discover a new “mud kitchen” that is being constructed on the playground along with a special visit from Orchard Supply when the children will be taught to plant vegetables that they can harvest later. So many fun activities are planned for the remainder of our camp this summer.

With our summer program underway we continue to prepare for the school year to start and one of our biggest struggles during the school year is parking. Each year we struggle with the families from Foster City Elementary School using our parking lot and consequently our families and staff often struggle to find parking. For this reason we will implement parking hang tags for all St. Ambrose and Sea Breeze Families. If you visit the church during school hours please see Father Ota for a hang tag for your car.

Fall enrollment is once again very strong. Our Afterschool program has grown to over 90 children with only a few openings available and we currently have only a few available openings in our part-time preschool programs. We are very blessed to have a strong teaching team and a strong foundation to provide a fantastic program to the Foster City Community. Thank you for your continued support as we look forward to another great year at St. Ambrose Sea Breeze School.

We hope you are enjoying your summer so far and we wish you a very patriotic July 4th holiday!

Be Safe.