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Edition



The Ambrosian

The Monthly Newsletter of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church
900 Edgewater Boulevard, Foster City, California 94404

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Reflections from our Rector

Dear Members and Friends of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church,

Aloha! The Season of Lent begins this month on Ash Wednesday, March 6. Lent is an opportunity for us to reorient our lives on the mystery of dying to self so we may live in the power of the Resurrection. I invite you to a holy Lent by self-examination and repentance; by self-denial and giving of yourself for the needs of others; and recommitting yourself to the practice of prayer, reading of scripture and worship. What in your life do you want to change? What are you willing to give up to have more time to do what is truly important in your life? Who are the people in your life God is calling you to serve? How are your practices of prayer, reading scripture and worship sustaining you in living a life of sacrificial love?

I find the Season of Lent to be a gift and reminder to me to slow down. Each of us feels rushed as the pace of life seems to get faster and faster, seeking to meet all the demands asked of us. Part of the gift of Lent is learning to let go of some of the self-imposed demands, and making room in our lives for a deepening of our lives as we breathe in the Spirit and remember our spiritual journey in life.

As many of you may know, my mother Mary Ota who lives alone in San Francisco, although still healthy needs more attention and help from me. I am grateful that she is still active despite her years and I want to help her and enjoy my time with her. This means I will need to let go of some things. I do not yet know how I will do this, but it is one of the questions I will be living with this Lent.

During the Season of Lent we have many opportunities for you to come for worship, to pray, to learn and to reflect:

- On Ash Wednesday, March 6 the Holy Eucharist with the imposition of ashes will be held at 12:10 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.
- During the Fridays of Lent (March 8, 15, 22, 29 and April 5 and 12), I will be walking the Stations of the Cross in the chapel from 12:10 p.m. and invite you to join me.
- On the Sundays in Lent (March 10, 17, 24, 31 and April 7), we will have our Lenten lunches of soup, salad and bread at 11:15 a.m. I invite you to sign up to share this simple meal with one another.

Reflections from our Rector (continued)

Our Lenten program follows the lunches and will begin at or around 12 Noon. Our program is based on our Stewardship theme for the year “Caring for our communities and God’s world.”

- March 10, “Caring for children and their families”, Ms. Jerelyn Weber, Principal, St. Ambrose Sea Breeze School
- March 17, “Caring for the older ones in our midst”, Ms. Supriya Singh, Foster City Village
- March 24, “Caring for the older ones in transition”, Mr. Alan Brauner, Senior Seasons
- March 31, “Caring for ourselves”, the Rev. Karen Swanson and others
- April 7, “Caring for God’s world”, David McIntyre, on the Carbon Tracker

Finally, if we are to be faithful, we must provide for those we love and leave behind a will and instructions for our burial. The clergy of the church is called to remind the people to make wills while in health, arranging for the disposal of their temporal goods, especially if they have children, and for all people to make bequests for religious and charitable purposes (Book of Common Prayer, page 445). Instructions for burial for you to use are below.

I wish you all a holy Lent which will help you live more fully in the Christian faith, life and hope.

Yours,

David Y. Ota, Rector

Instructions for Burial

“The liturgy for the dead is an Easter liturgy. It finds all its meaning in the resurrection. Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we, too, shall be raised.

The liturgy, therefore, is characterized by joy, in the certainty that ‘neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nothings to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.’

This joy, however, does not make human grief unchristian. The very love we have for each other in Christ brings deep sorrow when we are parted by death. Jesus himself wept at the grave of his friend. So, while we rejoice that one we love has entered into the nearer presence of our Lord, we sorrow in sympathy with those who mourn.” *The Book of Common Prayer*, page 507.

(When possible, it is suggested that you fill out the following in consultation with your clergy.)

“The death of a member of the Church should be reported as soon as possible to, and arrangements for the funeral should be made in consultation with, the Minister of the Congregation.” *The Book of Common Prayer*, page 490.

Circumstances permitting, I wish my Burial Service to take place at:

Church _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Celebrant: _____

“Baptized Christians are properly buried from the church. The service should be held at a time when the congregation has the opportunity to be present.” *The Book of Common Prayer*, page 490.

The service shall be “The Burial of the Dead” from *The Book of Common Prayer*: __Rite I or __Rite II

I request the Burial Office only be read.

I request the Burial Office and Eucharist be done.

Suggested Pall Bearers:

If possible, I would like to have the following Psalms and Lessons: (for suggestions, see *The Book of Common Prayer*, pages 494 ff.)

I would especially like the following hymns:

“The coffin is to be closed before the service, and it remains closed thereafter. It is appropriate that it be covered with a pall or other suitable covering.”

Note: Some parishes permit the use of a pall only, within the church building.

Instructions for Burial

Memorials may be made to:

I prefer to be: Buried or Cremated Ashes at Memorial Service: Yes or No
 Before or After the Funeral

Disposal of Ashes

Location of cemetery lot deed, crypt deed, columbarium contract:

I have made arrangements to have certain parts or all of my body donated to:

Funeral Home to use:

Coffin Specifications: Least expensive Mid-range Elaborate

I do do not wish to have my coffin open at the funeral home.

Other information for my survivors:

Signature

Date

This guide was prepared by the Episcopal Diocese of California to encourage thoughtful funeral preparation.

Announcements

THANKS to...

- Don Gundry, Alison LeBlanc and Yvonne Sidell for attending the deanery meeting at Transfiguration Church on February 16.
- Frank Sanchez for helping the Rector clean out the shed on February 16.
- The Rev. Karen Swanson, Fe Balamiento, Daniel Tate, Sam Albertson for organizing a day of fun for children on February 24.
- The Rev. Karen Swanson, Nilda Chong and Teresa Rajaratnam for helping the children with their art project for the room in the chapel on February 24.
- Shelley Keefe for hosting the Vestry dinner on February 24.

Study Groups in March

- **The Monday Bible Study Group** meets on the second and fourth Mondays of the month, **March 11 and 25 from 7:00 p.m.** They are currently reading the book "God of Love: A Guide to the Heart of Judaism, Christianity and Islam," by Mirabai Starr. The location of the study group for March is yet to be determined.
- **The Tuesday Bible Study Group** meets on **March 5, 12 19 and 26 from 12:45 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.** in the Foyer. They are reading the Gospel according to John and are at John 8:31, Jesus' teaching on what it means to be children of Abraham.

The study groups are open to any interested person.

S.F. Giants and Cincinnati Reds Game

Join the Rector and members of St. Ambrose for a Giants baseball game on **Saturday, May 11 from 6:05 p.m.** This is a "Let Pablo Pitch Bobblehead" game. We have 20 seats in View Reserve 307, Rows 5, 6 and 7. Tickets cost \$30.75 each. Tickets will be given when payment is received. If interested, speak with the Rector or sign up on the sign-up sheet in the Parish Hall.

Bishop's Ranch Fellowship Weekend, October 11-13, 2019

St. Ambrose is scheduled to go to the Bishop's Ranch in Harrison House on the weekend of Friday, October 11 – Sunday, October 13. If you are interested in attending, please speak with Jim Neubert or the Rector.

Announcements (continued)

Mark Your Calendars

Ash Wednesday Services: **Wednesday, March 6, 12:10 and 7:00 p.m.**, Chapel

Stations of the Cross: **Friday, March 8, 15, 22, 29, April 5 and 12, 12:10 p.m.**, Chapel

Daylight Savings Begins: **Sunday, March 10**

Lenten Lunches: **Sundays, March 10, 17, 24, 31 and April 7;** Lunches begin following the 10:00 a.m. service

Lenten program, "Caring for children and their families": **Sunday, March 10, 12:00 p.m.**, Ms. Jerelyn Weber, Principal, St. Ambrose Sea Breeze School, Parish Hall

Lenten program, "Caring for the older ones in our midst": **Sunday, March 17, 12:00 p.m.**, Ms. Supriya Singh, Foster City Village, Parish Hall

Lenten program, "Caring for the older ones in transition": **Sunday, March 24, 12:00 p.m.**, Mr. Alan Brauner, Senior Seasons, Parish Hall

Lenten program, "Caring for ourselves": **Sunday, March 31, 12:00 p.m.**, the Rev. Karen Swanson and others involved in teaching practices of self-care, Parish Hall

Lenten program, "Caring for God's world": **Sunday, April 7, 12:00 p.m.**, David McIntyre, the Carbon Tracker, Parish Hall

Palm Sunday Liturgies: **Sunday, April 14, 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.**, Chapel

Maundy Thursday Liturgy: **April 18, 7:30 p.m.**, Chapel

Good Friday Liturgies: **April 19, 12:10 and 7:30 p.m.**, Chapel

Great Vigil of Easter with Baptism: **Saturday, April 20, 8:00 p.m.**, Chapel

Easter Sunday Liturgies: **Sunday, April 21, 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.**, Chapel

Easter Egg Hunt: **Sunday, April 21 following the 10:00 a.m. service**, Playground and Courtyard

San Francisco Giants and Cincinnati Reds Game Outing: **Saturday, May 11, 6:05 p.m.**, Oracle Park (formerly known as AT&T Park)

Bishop's Ranch Weekend: **Friday, October 11 to Sunday, October 13**, Harrison House at the Bishop's Ranch, 5297 Westside Road, Healdsburg, CA 95448

170th Diocesan Convention of the Diocese of California: **Friday, October 25 to Saturday, October, 26**, Grace Cathedral, San Francisco

2019 Annual Stewardship Dinner: **Saturday, November 16, 2019, 6:00 p.m.**, Foster City Recreation Center's Lagoon and Blue Bird Rooms

The Desk of Rev. Karen Swanson

Vacation Bible School This Summer

Looking for an opportunity for your child to have lots of fun and deepen his or her faith at the same time? Vacation Bible School may be right for you! This year's Vacation Bible School will include art, games, Biblical stories and music. The theme will revolve around the natural world which God has brought to life and our care for it. Loving parishioners, including some of our teens, will lead activities. Please contact the Rev. Karen Swanson (650-200-8449) if you are interested in helping or attending. Children between the ages of 4 and 12 years old are encouraged to participate. Middle school and high school youth are invited to help as assistants and leaders. More information and dates will follow soon.

Youth and Children to Address World Hunger

One of our St. Ambrose youth saw a you tube on the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela, and has raised the issue of how our church can respond to the issue of world hunger and, yes, starvation. The youth and children of the church are responding with a project called "Mission Mason Jar", and they need your support! On Sunday, March 24, the young people of the church will gather in the parish hall to fill Mason Jars with ingredients for homemade soup or cookies, complete with recipes.

You come in on the next step, when the filled Mason Jars go on sale on Sunday, March 31 and on Sunday, April 7. Please plan to purchase several Mason Jars for Mission for your home and for gifts for friends. All proceeds will go the alleviation of world hunger.

Youth Ministry – by Fe Balamiento

Dear St. Ambrose,

This week, your teens will think about the role of the church in their lives and the role of their lives in the church. Too often teens think that the church exists to serve them—and that's true. But that's made possible only when members of that church view the church as a place to serve, not just a place to be served.

While the church is a place to gather and be strengthened and encouraged, the church also is sent out into the world.

Thank you,

Fe

Seminarian Reflections – by Daniel Tate

Spring Is Coming! It's Planting Time!

It's time to plant wheat again! Last spring the children and youth from Sunday school and the Sea Breeze school planted a crop of wheat, and in the fall the children and some adults harvested it, separated the seeds from the chaff, and then milled it into flour. It was a great time of learning and watching the wheat grow, especially because we did it ourselves and we did it without using growth hormones or pesticides. Organic wheat! We had moderate success last year. This year we're going to plant more and plant the crop earlier to see if we can get greater yield. The best part of growing wheat is that we get to make it happen together, and while doing so, think about it and talk about it in terms of caring for God's creation. We'll be planting Sonora wheat, the same as last year, and the same wheat made into flour that we use to bake our communion bread for Sunday morning Eucharist. Watch for updates as to our progress and how you can get involved.

Daniel Tate

March Outreach Report – by Steve Yuen

Home & Hope (homeandhope.net/)

On Tuesday, February 19 and Thursday, February 21, we fed four families---a total of eleven (11) people--- at Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church in San Mateo.

On Tuesday I piled my plate with Valerie's casserole and sat across from a mother and her two kids. Volunteers for [Home and Hope](http://homeandhope.net/) not only prepare dinner, but also engage in dinnertime conversation with the guests.

Do you like to read, A.J.? I asked the nine-year-old, who had been using an impressive vocabulary. He shook his head.

"He likes math," said five-year-old Taylor, who immediately peppered him with addition problems using the biggest numbers she knew, i.e., "what's 100+50?" Addition being no sweat, a couple of questions about multiplication quickly showed that he had mastered those tables, too.

But math, in fact any subject, should be fun, not a test. I recounted the story about a famous mathematician who as a child was asked to calculate $1+2+3+4+5+\dots+100=??$ (This is a familiar tale to people like retired math professor Warren Wong.) The child solved the sum quickly, confounding his teacher. How did he do it? A.J. puzzled for a minute, then shook his head.

Using pen and paper, I wrote the series in reverse order below the original:

$$\begin{array}{l} 1+2+3+4+5+\dots+100 \\ 100+99+98+97+\dots+1 \end{array}$$

The total of the two series is $101+101+101+\dots$ (one hundred times). So the solution is 100×101 divided by 2, or **5,050**. The mathematician was [Carl Gauss](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carl_Gauss) (1777-1855) who was seven when he came up with the answer.

A.J. enjoyed hearing about how kids in those days were pretty smart, too—maybe smarter since they did it all with pen and paper and no computers, or even calculators.

Many thanks go to our cooks and servers: Carolyn Moriarty, Valerie Mersh, Clara Padilla, Steve Yuen, Susan Yates, Irene Stead, Nellie Wong, and Warren Wong.

We will make dinner for Home and Hope clients on **April 9** and **11**. Please join us! Please contact Steve Yuen (650-341-1966, steveyuen@aol.com) if you have any questions.

Outreach Report (continued)

Second Harvest Food Bank (www.shfb.org)

Second Harvest Food Bank sent a note of appreciation to St. Ambrose and Sea Breeze for donating 255 pounds of food in 2018. Thanks to the generosity of the church and school communities, we regularly refill the food barrel that is located in the Narthex.

In 2018, the Second Harvest Food Bank provided 55.3 million meals to needy families in San Mateo and Santa Clara County.



Upcoming Events

Sandwiches on Sunday

On **Sunday, March 31**, members and friends of St. Ambrose will be serving a hot lunch of baked chicken & rice and salad for about 70 people. We need seven (7) entrée trays, and seven (7) salads. Plus, we can use some bread or rolls.

Who: St. Ambrose members and friends

What:

1) Prepare lunch (chicken & rice and salad); 2) serve lunch and clean up.

Where:

Fair Oaks Community Center in Redwood City, 2600 Middlefield Road, Redwood City

When: 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

If you can help to prepare a dish and/or serve and clean up, please put your name on the sign-up sheet in the Parish Hall. If you have any questions, please contact Rob Richards (rob.richards@tensorlabs.com, 650-577-8924).

Sea Breeze School News – by Jerelyn Weber, Principal

While the calendar and the activities of the day say we should be getting ready for Spring, the rain and wind say we are still in the dead of winter. I think our groundhog friend may have been mistaken this year!

We held our annual Open House at the end of January, registration for Summer, and the 2019-2020 School year opened in early February. We have been very busy working to fill all the requests from current and new families that want to either continue in our school or join us for next year. Each year we have an overwhelming call from families that have three-year-old children looking for full-time care. This year was no different – in fact, the call was even larger. For this reason, we have made a change and increased our full time three-year-old program to allow for an additional 15 children in the program. While this may not sound huge, it has allowed many more families to join our Sea Breeze Community, that otherwise may not have been able to. I am thankful to have that flexibility to be able to mold our program to meet the needs of our always changing community. Enrollment is going well in all programs and growing each day. Preschool still has a few openings and although the afterschool program has 91 children enrolled, we do have a few spaces still available there.

Summer Camp registration continues to grow as well. The School Age camp is scheduled June 25 – August 2 and the Preschool camp is scheduled June 17 – August 9. Registration is still open, and both have limited openings still available. This year, both camps will focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math. We will have visits from Microsoft, Google, Hillier Air Museum and Create Mix and Mingle, just to name a few. If you have any talents that you would like to share with the children, please feel free to contact the office and let me know.

Aside from registration, we have been busy preparing for our annual Family Fun Day that will be held in the courtyard on Saturday, April 27. There will be lots of games, entertainment and fun to be had! Please save the date and watch for further details. We hope that you can come out and join the fun. We will be looking for bakers for the ever-popular cake walk this day!

Happy March!

Continued Blessings,

Jerelyn Weber, Principal

The Editor's Corner—by Yvonne Sidell



You say, "I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing." But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see. Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent. —Revelation 3:17-19

Have you heard of the "five-second rule"? That's the informal rule that many people use, whereby if you should drop some food on the floor, and you pick it up within five-seconds the food is still considered to be good to eat. The rule implies that the food will not have become contaminated.

The theory has been tested repeatedly, even on the popular Discovery Channel's *Mythbusters* program. As it turns out, the amount of time food was on the floor didn't matter. What really matters is the condition of the floor. If the floor is clean, any food dropped on it will stay clean. However, if the floor is contaminated, no matter how quickly one might pick up dropped food, it will become contaminated.

There is a spiritual parallel to the "five-second rule." It goes something like this: if we sin just a little, or if we just briefly embrace sin, it's no big deal. A thoughtless or unkind word spoken in the heat of the moment? No real harm done. An impure thought when accidentally stumbling upon Internet drama and scandals? No foul. It's not my fault! This approach of seeing "little sins" as inconsequential is simply misguided.

Let's not kid ourselves. Just as a clean food falling on a contaminated floor equals contaminated food, whenever we sin, whether small or big, in passing or habitually, we become contaminated. The reality is that just as with food, there is no "five-second rule" where sin is concerned. We need to take all sin seriously!

Fortunately, we have a solution to the contamination of sin! We have the boundless grace, mercy, and forgiveness offered through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through our confession and repentance, we can be de-contaminated from sin. Jesus died and rose again to guarantee it! Not even the vilest of sinners is so far gone that God's mercy cannot be found.

Today, evaluate your attitude regarding sin. Thinking we aren't so bad by glossing over sin is dangerous. But, when we reaffirm both the seriousness of sin and our need for Jesus to cleanse us, we are in the safest place of all!