

OCTOBER

2018  
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! I am glad to announce that our new staff team has been organized. Fe Balamiento has returned to us here at St. Ambrose as our next Youth Minister. Fe had formerly been a member and raised her daughter Bella with us. She had served as our first Coordinator for Children and Family Ministry until she married her husband Drew and began worshipping with his family. Fe is a Special Education teacher, knows many of the people of St. Ambrose and has a deep affection for our congregation. We are fortunate to have her among us. As she works as a teacher during the week, she will mostly be on site with the youth on Sundays and the occasional Saturday. She will be limited in her time as she already works full time, and hopes to work about ten hours a week. She will be doing her office work from home. Her phone number is 415-570-8872 and her email address is [valentin\\_fe@yahoo.com](mailto:valentin_fe@yahoo.com).

The Rev. Karen Swanson is now the Interim Associate for Children, Youth and Family Ministry (as Fe is now our Youth Minister). Karen too is busy during most weekdays as a licensed therapist. She is responsible for organizing the Sunday School, planning activities for children and families, providing theological support in organizing the Youth Sunday School, and assisting as a priest. She will work mostly on weekends and occasionally on Wednesdays. She also will be working about ten hours a week. Her phone number is 650-200-8449 and her email address is [karen.2.swanson@gmail.com](mailto:karen.2.swanson@gmail.com).

Seminarian Daniel Tate returns for the school year. As a seminarian, he is learning to do ministry. He will be assisting Fe Balamiento and the Rev. Karen Swanson in their ministries, and me on Wednesdays to lead the Sea Breeze School Chapels.

My role has changed a bit. In addition to serving as Rector, I am now also serving as the primary chaplain for Sea Breeze School. I will lead chapels on Tuesdays at 11 a.m., and Wednesdays at 11 a.m., 1 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. Serving as the primary chaplain will give me an opportunity to get to know the children and families of the school a bit better.

## Reflections from our Rector (continued)

I am sad to report that our member Tony Caponera has succumbed to a debilitating illness in about a month's time. He passed away quietly on September 24. I will announce when services will be held.

This month on October 7, we will have the Blessing of the Animals in honor of St. Francis of Assisi at the Foster City Dog Park from 12:30 to 2:00 p.m. You may also bring your beloved pets to worship that Sunday to be blessed.

Our congregational United Thank Offering Ingathering will be held on October 14. You are invited to make a special offering in thanksgiving for all the blessings of the past year, which then will be passed on to others through the ministry of the Episcopal Church Women's United Thank Offering. Our gratitude will be turned into some tangible mission and ministry.

The Diocese of California will meet in Convention at Grace Cathedral on Friday, October 19 and Saturday, October 20. During the Diocesan Convention Eucharist, our UTO gifts will be added to other congregational gifts.

The Children and Family Ministry will hold its annual pumpkin carving event on Sunday, October 28.

Plans are underway for the Annual Stewardship Dinner on Friday, November 16 from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Foster City Recreation Center's Lagoon and Blue Bird Rooms. Mark your calendars, and plan to attend. The theme for the 2019 Pledge Campaign as voted by the Vestry is "Caring for our communities and God's world."

Yours,

David Y. Ota, Rector

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## The Capital Campaign for Clergy Housing

Dear Members of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church,

Aloha! Thanks to everyone who participated in the Capital Campaign for Clergy Housing, and especially those who made pledges. **Our total to date is \$418,470.** Since last month, we had one adjustment downward and one new pledge. It is never too late to make a pledge, and we understand that some members are still praying about it. We will be updating you all as we receive additional pledges.

I would like to thank those who have made pledges to date:

Keith and Charlene Adolph	Christina Brockman and Stan Hui
Marilyn Canon	Angela and David Carducci
April and Grant Cherrington	Nilda Chong
Bettie Davis	Kyn Dellinger
Jeanne DeTorre-Ozeki	Betty Dial
Elliott Dun and Teresa Murakami	George and Janet Gardiner
Raphaelle and Jacques Gerber	Leda Girardi
Don Gundry	Gwen and Hani Juha
Shelley Keefe	Michael and Dulce Lord
Judy Marshall	Dorothy Matsuo
Valerie Mersh	Jim Miller and Torrie McAllister-Miller
John Miller and Eva Kwong	Carolyn and David Moriarty
Jim Neubert	David Ota and Karen Swanson
Clara Padilla	Diane Robertson
The Rev. Patricia and George Robertson	Ngoc and Julio Rodriguez
Cathy Rincon and David McIntyre	Charles Saunders
Frank and Barbara Saunders	Sandy Schowengerdt
Yvonne Sidell	George and Merle Silverman
Irene Stead	Andy Walker

Yours,

David Ota, Rector

## Announcements

### THANKS to...

- To our Sunday School teachers for 2018-2019 – Christina Brockman, Shaiji Ajit, Rapahela Gerber, Sandy Schowendgert and the Rev. Karen Swanson.
- Jessica Morales and Teresa Murakami for organizing the Back to School Lunch, and for Jessica's family in setting up the Parish Hall.

### WELCOME to..

- Alison LeBlanc who has joined us for worship and for the Tuesday Bible study.
- Mary Wheeler who has joined us for worship.
- Sam, Sarah, Henry and Felix who joined us for worship and Sunday School.

### Study Groups in August

- **The Monday Evening Study Group** will meet this month on **Mondays, October 8 and 22 at 7:00 p.m.** Where they will meet is to be decided.
- **The Tuesday Bible Study Group** continues to read the Book of Job from **12:45 to 2:00 p.m.** in the Foyer.

The study groups are open to any interested person.

### **2018 Stewardship Campaign: Caring for our communities and God's world**

The St. Ambrose 2018 Stewardship Campaign has as its theme: "Caring for our communities and God's world." This idea is based on the belief that we are all given life to be lived in a caring community. If we are fortunate, we are raised in a caring family. We become part of a religious community such as St. Ambrose. We belong to a school community, a neighborhood, a town or city, and the larger world. And the human societies in which we live is part of a larger community of living creatures.

*How do we care for our community of family?* What practices and commitments keep us bound to one another? If we are fortunate, we will have practices that will steady us when life disrupts us. Some of the practices are shared time, family rituals, family vacations, shared meals and supporting one another in each other's interests.

*How do we care for one another as church?* What practices and commitments keep us bound as church? We order our lives by the life and ministry of Jesus the Christ. We pray the Lord's Prayer and the rest of our prayer is organized around the dream of God, "thy kingdom come, thy will be done." We take in the life of Jesus sacramentally as we eat the bread and drink the cup. We do this together, because we are a church community and following Jesus is not a solitary journey. We seek to live in service to others: our families, our neighbors, those who are in need, and the earth and its creatures.

## **Announcements (continued)**

*How do we care for God's world? What practices and commitments make us aware that life is a gift to be shared in a beautiful world? We are all called to be "gardeners" in the sense that we are to both see the beauty of God's creation and to create beauty in our daily life. We are to be mindful to use the gifts given us to care for the earth and its creatures. During the weeks ahead, we are asked to explore the ways we can be more intentional of how we can care for the creation.*

### **Mark Your Calendars**

Blessing of the Animals: **Sunday, October 7, 12:30 p.m.**, Foster City Dog Park

UTO Ingathering Sunday at St. Ambrose: **Sunday, October 14, 8:00 am and 10:00 a.m.**

School Board Meeting: **Tuesday, October 16, 7:00 p.m.**, Parish Hall

Diocesan Convention: **Friday and Saturday, October 19 and 20**, Grace Cathedral, SF

2019 Pledge Campaign Kick-Off Sunday: **Sunday, October 21, 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.**

Pumpkin Carving: **Sunday, October 28 following the 10:00 a.m. service**

Daylight Savings Time Ends: **Sunday, November 4** (Turn your clocks BACK an hour on the night of November 3)

Sunday after All Saints Day: **Sunday, November 4, 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.** (Day scheduled for baptisms)

Altar Guild Meeting and Chapel Clean-Up Day: **Saturday, November 10, 9:00 a.m.**, Kitchen and Chapel

Stewardship Dinner: **Friday, November 16, 6:30 p.m.**, Foster City Recreation Center Lagoon and Blue Bird Rooms

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent and Altar Guild Bake Sale: **Sunday, December 2, 8:00 a.m. and 10 a.m.**, Chapel

Christmas Eve: **Monday, December 24, 4:00 p.m.**, Christmas Pageant and Family Holy Eucharist, **10:00 p.m.**, Christmas Choral Concert, **10:30 p.m.**, Candlelight Choral Holy Eucharist

## The Desk of Rev. Karen Swanson

### Pumpkin Party

Please save **Sunday, October 28** for the children and family's Pumpkin Party at St. Ambrose. The fun will begin with a heartier than usual coffee hour followed by ghoulish games, pumpkin carving, and haunted house visits led by the youth. Please contact the Rev. Karen Swanson by text or phone at 650-200-8449 (or by email at karen.2.swanson@gmail.com) if you would like to help organize the fun!

**Thank you** to the many youth who took charge of booths for the Church-School Carnival and/or helped with the carnival set-up. These include:

Jimmy Bradford  
Amarine Gerber  
Aurelia Gerber  
Lydia McIntyre  
Emily Miller  
Bennett Morales  
Oliver Moriarty  
Christina and Emily Rodriguez  
Daniel Tjandra

**Thank you** to Barbara Milligan and new member Alison LeBlanc who assisted.

Several parents offered support including Elliott Dun, David McIntyre, and Cathy Rincon. Jessica Morales and Teresa Murakami stand out as those who arranged for the delicious fiesta food. Last, but not least, thanks to Fe Balamiento, our new youth minister, who jumped right in on a very busy first day. The preschool and elementary school children were thrilled with the day as evidenced by their broad smiles and sparkling eyes. **We are all grateful.**

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## **Seminarian Reflections – by Daniel Tate**

### **Harvest Time!**

It's Fall and now time to harvest the wheat that the church youth group and the after-school kids at Sea Breeze school planted in the spring. Harvest time for wheat is from mid-September through October, and so it's time!

Everyone in the congregation is invited to harvest the wheat during the month of October. We'll be doing it in phases. After coffee hour Sunday October 7, we'll cut it down. On the following Sunday, October 14, we'll separate the wheat from the chaff to get to the seeds. After coffee hour on Sunday October 21, we'll mill the seeds into flour, and on Sunday, November 4, we'll plan to bake the flour into bread. It will be a wonderful opportunity for learning and for extending the day of worship with friends and family. Plus, it will be fun!

**Thank you** to everyone who helped with this care of creation project this spring and summer – the kids who did the work of planting, all the kids and teachers from the Sea Breeze school and the St. Ambrose congregation who helped with watering and weeding. All of the work involved in planning, planting, and watering has now come to fruition and now it's time to enjoy the fruit of our labors and while doing it, enjoy being in community together and at the same time give thanks to God for this gift of food.

Yours,

Daniel Tate

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## The Desk of Shelly Keefe

### Pilgrimage to Angel Island – Incarceration Then & Now

*Will you strive for justice and peace  
among all people,  
and respect the dignity of  
every human being?*

*(Seen on a T-shirt at a West County Detention Facility vigil)*

I know those words! From the Book of Common Prayer, the final two questions asked of us as we renew our Baptismal Covenant are these:

*Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?*

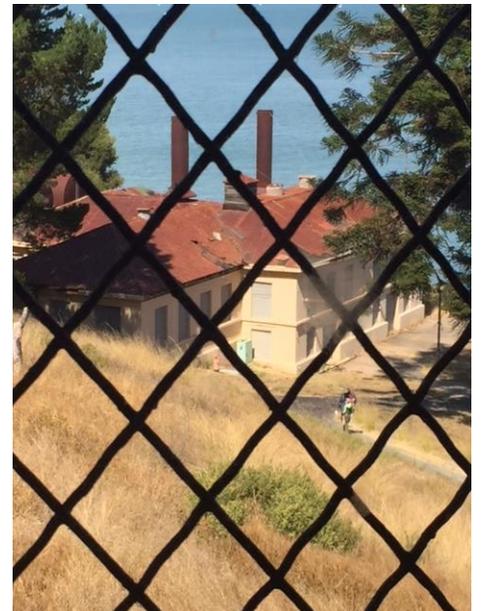
*Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?*

In both cases, our response is ‘I will, with God’s help.’

This past Saturday, September 22, Jim and I pilgrimaged to Angel Island as part of a 200-strong group convened by Interfaith Movement for Human Integrity, Buena Vista United Methodist Church and Asian Prisoner Support Committee.

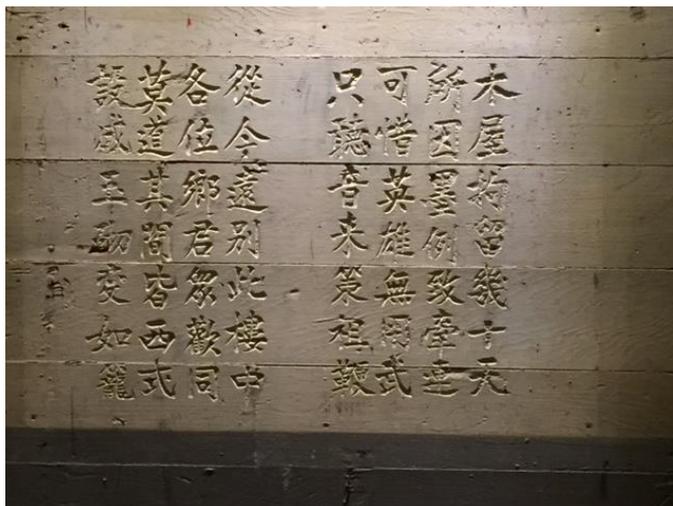
Pilgrimage is an ancient spiritual practice in many traditions and pilgrimages have evolved into modern journeys that evoke layers of meaning, collective memory, healing and ongoing commitment for reconciliation, justice and compassionate service. It is a collective experience; a practice of remembering as resistance, reparations through memory, and emotional catharsis for compassionate action. We journey together experiencing together more than we could alone.\*

The Pilgrimage to Angel Island was both joyful and somber; honoring representatives of all peoples who have lived on, served on, been incarcerated on, processed through and deported from the island. The day was glorious; with stunning views of San Francisco in the late September sunshine and the warmth of a diverse community sharing common goals. From both the ceremony and the tour of the Immigration Station we heard personal stories of suffering, perseverance and purpose.



## The Desk of Shelly Keefe (continued)

We were asked to reflect deeply on our response to the island's history and what actions might grow out of our reflections. I was reminded that we are asked to seek Christ in all persons and love our neighbors as ourselves, and that we don't get to pick our neighbors. That's the hard part. Sometimes our neighbors come in packages described as threatening our way of life and our knee-jerk reaction is to condemn rather than love. Respecting the dignity of every human being and loving our neighbors as ourselves is a very tall order and to do it we need help:



“Help us to see the common suffering of all.

Help us to see that the immigrant and the prisoner is not the enemy.

Help us to see that what happened yesterday is happening today.

Help us to tell your stories and to listen to each other's.”

\* Reference ‘The Archetype of Pilgrimage’ by Jean and Wallace Clift, (NY: Paulist Press, 1996), GTU and PANA courses by Ken Butigan, Ph.D. and Joanne Doi, MM, Ph.D., Rev. Deborah Lee.

Respectfully,

Shelly

## **Youth Ministry – by Fe Balamiento**

Dear St. Ambrose,

First and foremost, allow me to introduce myself – my name is Fe Balamiento. I will be the new youth minister at St. Ambrose.

I return to our congregation after an absence of a few years following my most recent marriage. My daughter who's in college attended St. Ambrose and I look forward to bringing my two-year-old son with me to St. Ambrose as well.

My hope is to have the honor of offering leadership, guidance, and an understanding of how to grow a deeper relationship with God through connections. My goal is to regularly work with youth and children by giving acceptance of diversity which comes from my profession as a special education teacher. I also endeavor to provide St. Ambrose youth with opportunities to nurture and grow through reading of the bible. Additionally, I will strive to challenge them to respond to God's call – to serve in their communities and the world. This can be accomplished through service and mission work.

Upcoming, the Youth Ministry looks forward to these events:

- Fall Parents Meeting
- Haunted House
- Sandwiches on Sunday

Thank you,

Fe

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## October Outreach Report – by Steve Yuen

### Episcopal Relief and Development

One of the organizations we've long supported is Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD), which "provides relief in times of disaster and promotes sustainable development by identifying and addressing the root causes of suffering." In other words, ERD "gives a man a fish" for disaster relief but "teaches a man to fish" to make a permanent difference.



We spent a September weekend at the [Vallombrosa Center](#) in Menlo Park, where we were brought up to date with ERD's mission and operations. Last year's expenditures were \$23.3 million (programs \$19.6, administration \$1.1, fundraising \$2.6). Ninety percent of donated dollars go directly to programs because administration and fundraising are partially funded by investment income and service-subsidies from the Episcopal Church.

That's the principal reason I like ERD – the dollars go where they're supposed to go ([Charity Navigator](#) gives the organization a four-star rating).

Other takeaways:

1) ERD has focused its sustained-development efforts on Women, Children, and Climate. While the latter is fraught with politics in the United States (because, in my humble opinion, the climate-change movement tries to legislate behavior changes based on science that does not yet explain anomalous phenomena), ERD focuses on how families and communities can work together to adapt to the effects of rapidly changing weather patterns. This work includes preparing for and recovering from climate-influenced events such as floods, hurricanes and other disasters. There's no scolding and no politics, just preparation and recovery.



*ERD CEO Robert Radtke*

## Outreach Report (continued)

2) ERD has embraced asset-based community development, which involves analyzing a community's existing assets (e.g., individuals, businesses, non-profit organizations, government) and their relationships. By marshaling these assets and relationships, it's possible to effect positive change. In the United States, "community organizing" has a negative connotation because of its association with wealth redistribution and identity politics, but in the so-called Third World the political element is much less emphasized. There is no rich uncle that can be tapped to save the community, it must save itself.

3) ERD works alongside Anglican organizations who are "close to the ground" in order to make sure funds are spent judiciously. It declines to work in stricken areas where there is no Anglican presence. Such temperance is a point in its favor, in my humble opinion.

4) Nearly half of donations are specified for aid for specific disasters (e.g., Haiti earthquake, Hurricane Sandy). Because funds are received fairly immediately, disaster aid is spent – and it's easy to waste over a period of years since the accounting and ethical administration of these funds is not simple. I was impressed with the ERD leadership, which has clearly thought about this issue. ERD is an example of the Church doing it right.

### Sandwiches on Sunday

We will have a report on the September 30 hosting in next month's Ambrosian.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### *Blessing of the Animals*

*The Feast of St. Francis*

**When:** Sunday, October 7 from 12:30 to 2:00 p.m.

**Where:** Foster City Dog Park  
Bounty & Foster City Boulevard

**What:** Father Ota will bless pets and their owners in honor of Saint Francis, the patron saint of animals.



### United Thank Offering – October 14th

Contributions to the United Thank Offering are a major funding source for the Episcopal Church's missions. The missions not only spread the Good News, but also provide basic needs to people in their local communities. The UTO blue box, which came into existence in the 1950s, has an honored place in many Episcopal households. It is both a reminder of the great blessings that have been bestowed upon us and a call to share those blessings with those who live in poverty. We will have the fall ingathering of the blue boxes and envelopes at the offertory on Sunday, October 14.

## Outreach Report (continued)

### CALL Primrose's Fill a Box, Feed a Family – November 11

We are filling four (4) food boxes this year (due to the high cost of living, especially housing, more families have asked for food aid) for CALL Primrose, a Burlingame outreach venture founded by the Presbyterian and United Methodist churches.

Each box will contain:

- 1 can (15 oz) yams
- 2 cans (15 oz) corn
- 2 cans (14 oz) green beans
- 2 cans (14 oz) fruit (any fruit or fruit cocktail)
- 1 can (14 oz) cranberry sauce
- 1 box (6 oz) stuffing mix
- 1 box (14 oz) instant mashed potatoes
- 1 box (8 oz) cornbread / muffin mix
- 1 bottle (24 oz) vegetable cooking oil
- 1 package (16 oz) pasta noodles
- 1 can/bottle (20 oz) pasta sauce
- 2 packages (3 oz) chocolate jello pudding/pie mix
- 1 (6 oz) no-bake graham cracker pie crust
- 1 can (14 oz) condensed milk

If you can contribute one or more items, please write your name on the sign-up sheet (it contains the above list) on each box in the back of the Parish Hall and bring your item(s) by **Sunday, November 11**.

Thank you for sharing your blessings with some of our neighbors. If you have questions, please contact Steve Yuen ([stevebyuen@aol.com](mailto:stevebyuen@aol.com), 650-341-1966).

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## **Sea Breeze School News – by Jerelyn Weber, Principal**

The School year is off to a busy start and the teachers have been working really hard to welcome new children and their families, as well as greeting our returning children and their families. Everyone seems to have settled into their new routines now, and great things are happening around campus each day. Father Ota has started conducting chapel for our children and he has received some help from Rev. Karen Swanson and Daniel Tate with the chapels for the older children.. We are excited to have a total of 204 children in our School this year!

The Teacher Installation was held on September 16<sup>th</sup> and on behalf of the St. Ambrose Sea Breeze Team, I would like to extend our thanks for your recognition, the yummy lunch and the constant support. The carnival that followed the Installation was a great addition and enjoyed by those that attended.

The Annual Back to School Night was held and was very well attended. Many parents participated and were excited about the new classroom environments and the excitement that the year holds for their children. The evening started in the chapel as the families were introduced to Father Ota and the Amazing Sea Breeze Staff. After a brief introduction to what the children will learn in Chapel and what goals the school has for the children, the parents went into classrooms and learned about “A day in the Life of their Child” at Sea Breeze. Much information was shared and a nice time was had by all.

October is always exciting for us. The Annual Sea Breeze picnic will be held on Sunday October 7th and we would love to see some of you there. The picnic is from 11 -1:00 and is held at Boothbay Park. This is a great opportunity for families to meet and make connections and for some of you to meet the staff and families that make Sea Breeze such a great place to be. At the end of the month we will also have our Halloween costume parade and party for the children. The children are dressed in a costume of choice and they are always excited to parade around the campus for all to see. After the parade they will visit the Sea Breeze Pumpkin Patch to select their very own special pumpkin and return to their classrooms for parties. It will be a spooktacular day for all! This year we will be hosting a Fall Camp, for the children that are enrolled in our school age camp, during the weeks that Foster City Elementary is closed.

With the School year underway we continue to welcome volunteers to spend time reading and playing games with the children during the afternoons. Warren and Nellie Wong joined us in September and spent the afternoon teaching our older children the game of Pickle Ball. The children had a great time and now the net is up on the court every afternoon for the children to practice their skills. If you have some spare time and are looking to make a positive difference in the life of a young child, please feel free to contact the school office. We would be happy to have you visit.

Happy Fall and Happy Halloween~

Jerelyn Weber, Principal

Continued Blessings,

Jerelyn Weber, Principal

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## The Editor's Corner—by Yvonne Sidell



*Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. —Philippians 2:4*

One day, a centipede walked by a tree where a wise old owl was perched.

The owl asked the centipede, “You have so many legs! How do you know which one to move next?” The centipede froze in his tracks. He started thinking. He didn’t know which leg to move so he couldn’t move any. He cried to the owl, “Help me! I’m stuck!” The owl said, “My little friend, you are stuck because you are too focused on yourself. When you are focused on what is going on in the world around you, you have no thoughts about how to move. You simply move.”

The centipede looked out to the horizon and saw the sun setting. “How beautiful,” the centipede said. Just then, his legs were freed and he began to walk again.

It’s been reported that Dr. Karl Menninger, a famous psychologist, once gave a lecture on mental health. During a question and answer session that followed his lecture, he was asked, “What advice would you give someone who felt a nervous breakdown coming on?” He replied, “Lock up your house, go across the railway tracks, find someone in need and do something to help that person.”

Both the story and anecdote above remind me that when we focus on ourselves—on our problems and circumstances—we can become inwardly paralyzed, preventing us from being everything that God intends for us to be, including serving others effectively. We can freeze in our own tracks.

Following Christ is not primarily an exercise in introspection, but rather of reaching out to others and lovingly serving them in His name. In times when I’ve been in tough situations, or have felt sorry for myself for some reason, I’ve experienced release from my anxiety by changing my focus to others and getting myself involved in serving. Routine self-evaluation is healthy. An obsession with self is not.

Today, if you are feeling paralyzed by the weight of a difficult personal situation, I encourage you to shift your focus from yourself to the Son and find someone you can serve in His name. The weight will seem lighter and you will start moving again.