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The Ambrosian

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Edition

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Dear Members and Friends of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church,

Aloha! As we enter the month of October, we will begin our 2018 Pledge Campaign. The Vestry has decided on the theme, **“Grace abounds; pass it on.”** The theme summarizes our mission and ministry as Christians. Theologically speaking, our life as Christians begin with what God has done for us in Jesus Christ. We call this grace. We are a church community because of the grace of God that abounded in the life of Jesus the Christ and his follows to this day. We are alive because grace abounds and we have been given the gift of life and breath that is “spirit.” Our mission, our purpose, is to pass on the grace we have already received to people who need it in their lives.

One example of how grace abounds and works in our lives is told in the movie, *All Saints* which is a true story about All Saints Episcopal Church, Smyrna, Tennessee. It was a small congregation which was about to be closed due to so few members remaining after a church split. A newly ordained priest thought God wanted to him to help save the congregation. And even though he tried with all his energy, charm and ingenuity to save the congregation, he had to admit he couldn’t do it. He needed grace. He needed to recognize how "grace abounds" despite the apparent failure. We need to see accidents and failures as opportunities for God's grace mediated through faithful people. Sometimes God’s grace abounds despite faithful people who try to accomplish things on their own without depending upon God's help and the help of their neighbors. In the end, it is not our hard work that changes lives, but when we are brought to our knees by tragedy and difficulty, people come together to help one another and community is formed.

The question after accepting "God's grace" for ourselves is what are we to do? We are to pass it on. Ministry requires the acceptance of God’s gracious love for us not because we deserve it, but because we need it. God loves because God *is* love. And our purpose is to pass on the love we have received, and let God love others through our lives.

# Reflections from our Rector

# Reflections from our Rector (continued)

There is an old camp song found in the United Methodist Hymnal called, "Pass it on." Here are the lyrics:

*It only takes a spark to get a fire going,*

*and soon all those around can warm up in its glowing.*

*That's how it is with God's love once you experienced it;*

*you spread His love to everyone; you want to pass it on.*

*What's wondrous time is spring when all the trees are budding;*

*the birds begin to sing, the flowers start their blooming.*

*That's how it is with God's love once you experienced it;*

*you want to sing, it's fresh like spring, you want to pass it on.*

*I wish for you, my friend, this happiness that I've found;*

*you can depend on Him, it matters not where you're bound.*

*I'll shout it from the mountain top; I want my world to know;*

*the Lord of love has come to me, I want to pass it on.*

Our theme, **"Grace abounds; Pass it on"** has two important components. The acceptance of God's love for us and others, and the joy we experience is the first component. But once we have accepted God's grace for ourselves, we must become grace-filled people and want to pass God's grace and goodness on to others for their sake.

As we enter our pledge campaign for 2018, I invite you to consider your pledge of your time, talent and monetary giving as how you intend to pass on the grace of God’s love through St. Ambrose Episcopal Church in the coming year.

Yours,

David Y. Ota, Rector

# Announcements

**THANK YOU to …**

* Alexandra Miller and Lillian Watan for their leadership in planning and preparing for the church and school carnival.
* Lillian Watan for funding the face painter for the carnival.
* The Rev. Karen Swanson for organizing the carnival.
* Raphaele Gerber and family for providing and serving the ice cream and toppings for the Make Your Own Sundae carnival booth.
* The Rev. Jay Watan and the youth group for preparing water balloons for one of the carnival booths, and for manning or helping to man five of the eleven carnival booths, adding fun and excitement to the day.
* Shivangini (Subbi) Patil and Mukund Ambarge; Eva Kwong; Christina and Emily Rodriguez; Honkai and Michael Chang; Dorothy and Nathan Matsuo; Kay Huffman; Philip and Ruben Ajit; Elliot Dun; Emily Miller and the Rev. Jay Watan for “manning” carnival booths – you made it a fun, worry free day for all!
* The anonymous friends who contributed tin cans for the carnival – they worked, and have been saved in the attic for the next time.

**Blessing of the Animals at the Foster City Dog Park**

The annual Blessing of the Animals at the Foster City Dog Park will be held on **Sunday, October 1st from 12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.** This is an opportunity to bring your pets to a comfortable place for a blessing in honor of St. Francis of Assisi. You may also bring your pets to Sunday worship at 8:00 a.m. or 10:00 a.m., although more and more people have preferred to go to the Foster City Dog Park.

**Study Groups in September 2017**

The Monday Bible Study group meets on **October 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th** in the foyer.

The Monday Evening Study group will be discussing the book, America's Original Sin: Racism, White Privilege, and the Bridge to a New America, by Jim Wallis. It meets on **October 9th** and **23rd** at **7:00 p.m.** at Warren and Nellie Wong’s home, 826 Phoenix Lane, Foster City.

The Wednesday Bible Study group meets on **October 11th** and **25th** at **7:30 p.m.** in the   
Rector’s office.

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

**Bishop’s Ranch Weekend**

Some of our members will be enjoying a weekend at the Bishop’s Ranch from **October 6th to 8th** at the Harrison House. Jim Neubert is organizing this event.

# Announcements (continued)

**Town Hall Meeting on Diocesan Convention**

The Diocesan Convention delegation and the Rector will present the proposed resolutions for diocesan convention on **Sunday, October 8th** during the coffee hours **following the 8:00 a.m. and 10:00** **a.m. services**. This is an opportunity to learn about the proposals and to express your opinions to the delegates and Rector. The resolutions can be viewed on the diocesan website, [www.diocal.org](http://www.diocal.org). The titles of the resolutions are:

1. Repeal of mandatory retirement age for priests and deacons
2. Becoming a sanctuary church
3. Becoming a sanctuary diocese
4. Church-wide paid family leave policy
5. Task force on paid family leave
6. Climate change, carbon tax
7. A just peace in the Holy Land
8. Supporting Transgender access
9. Climate change, corporate governance

**The Welcome Lunch**

This year, St. Ambrose has been blessed with many new people. A Welcome Lunch for the entire congregation to welcome those who are new to St. Ambrose within the last year will be held in the Parish Hall on **Sunday, October 15th** following the **10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist**. We encourage as many members to join by participating in this potluck lunch in order to get to know those new to our community. Raphaele Gerber is organizing this event. Following the lunch there be a short program to introduce the new people as to how they can be involved in our ministry.

**The 168th Diocesan Convention**

The Diocese of California will hold its 168th Diocesan Convention at Grace Cathedral on **Friday, October 27th and Saturday, October 28th.** The Convention Eucharist and dinner is open to all. This year, the focus is on Women’s ministries, and the guest preacher is the Rt. Rev. Barbara Harris, retired Suffragan Bishop of the Diocese of Massachusetts who was the first woman elected to be a bishop in the Anglican Communion. If you are interested in attending the Convention Eucharist and dinner, please inform the Rector so he can let the Diocesan Office know how many people from St. Ambrose will be attending. More information on the timing of the Convention Eucharist and Dinner will be forthcoming.

# Announcements (continued)

**Halloween Fun for All Ages**

Following the Sunday service on **October 29th**, the Children and Family Ministry team will host a lunch followed by fun Halloween activities including frosting your own Halloween cookies, family and individual pumpkin carving, ghoulish games, and a haunted house experience created by the youth group. The young and young-at-heart of whatever age are encouraged to participate! Families and individuals will be recognized for the most amazing home grown pumpkin, the scariest pumpkin, the most creative pumpkin, the most intricate pumpkin, and the best family effort in carving a pumpkin together, among other categories. Pumpkins and a carving kit will be provided ***for those who sign up***. Please sign up now on the bulletin board at church, or call the office at 650-574-1369 to reserve your spot.

If your heart is set on a particular size or shape of pumpkin, please bring your own. Please also bring any special carving tools you prefer to use; the tool provided for all participants is basic. Children are encouraged to save their costumes for Halloween day so they won’t get messed up. Adults, however, are welcome to wear costumes if they would like to! Come one, come all, for a fun community event, celebrating God’s power over all that frightens us!

**The Annual Stewardship Dinner**

The St. Ambrose Annual Stewardship Dinner concludes the pledge campaign. It will be held on **Saturday, November 4th from 6:00 to 9:30 p.m.** at the Foster City Recreation Center’s Lagoon Room and Bluebird Room. The dinner celebrates our life together as a congregation. Ning’s Catering will once again be the caterer.

This is our largest festive celebration of the year. Members are invited to perform, and the evening usually ends with a dance. Members are encouraged to donate a gift basket for the free raffle. A buffet dinner will again be served in the Lagoon Room. Children will have their dinner in the adjoining Bluebird Room. Childcare will be provided. The Stewardship Dinner Committee members are Shelley Keefe, Eva Kwong, Michael Lord, Liva Neyroud and the Rector. Plan to come and celebrate with us.

**Holy Baptism on the Sunday After All Saints Day**

Max Lechner and Ava Lechner, the son and daughter of Matt and Jolie Lechner will be presented for Holy Baptism at the Holy Eucharist service at **10:00 a.m. on Sunday, November 5th**, the Sunday After All Saints Day.

# Announcements (continued)

**Mark Your Calendars**

Blessing of the Animals in Honor of St. Francis of Assisi: **Sunday, October 1, 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.,** Chapel; **12:30 p.m.,** Foster City Dog Park

Children’s Choir: **Sundays, October 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29**, **following 10:00 a.m. service**, Chapel

Monday Bible Study: **Mondays, October 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, 12:45 p.m.,** Foyer

Stewardship Dinner Planning Meetings: **Wednesday, October 4, 6:30 p.m.,** Rector’s Office

Adult Choir Practice: **Thursdays, October 5, 12, 19 and 26, 7:30 p.m.,** Chapel

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

Youth Group Meeting: **Sundays, October 8 and 22, 8:00-9:30 a.m.,** Room 5

Town Hall Coffee Hours on Diocesan Resolutions: **Sunday, October 8, following the 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. services,** Foyer and Parish Hall

New Monday Study Group: **Mondays, October 9 and 23, 7:00 p.m.,** at the home of Warren and Nellie Wong, 826 Phoenix Lane, Foster City

Wednesday Evening Bible Group: **Wednesdays**, **October 11 and 25, 7:30 p.m.**, Rector’s Office

United Thank Offering Ingathering: **Sunday, October 15, 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. services,** Chapel

Welcome Lunch: **Sunday, October 15, 11:15 a.m.,** Parish Hall

School Board Meeting: **Tuesday, October 17, 7:00 p.m.,** Parish Hall

Vestry Meeting: **Tuesday,** **October 24, 7:00 p.m.**, Parish Hall

Stewardship Dinner Planning Meeting: **Wednesday, October 25, 6:00 p.m.,** Rector’s Office

Pumpkin Carving and Potluck: **Sunday, October 29, 11:15 a.m.**, Parish Hall

Stewardship Dinner: **Saturday, November 4, 6:00 p.m.,** Foster City Recreation Center,   
Lagoon and Blue Bird Rooms

Ingathering of 2018 Pledges: **Sunday, November 5, 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. services,** Chapel

Commemoration of All Souls Departed: **Sunday, November 5, 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.,** Chapel

All Saints’ Sunday and Holy Baptism: **Sunday, November 5, 10:00 a.m.,** Chapel

Stewardship Dinner Evaluation Meeting: **Wednesday, November 8, 6:00 p.m.,** Rector’s Office

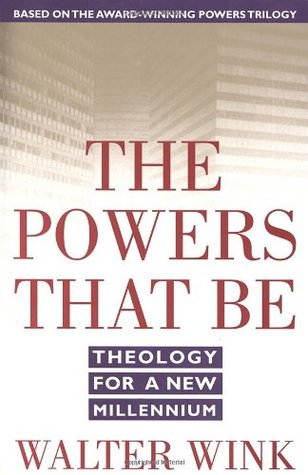
Youth Group Meeting: **Sundays, November 12 and 26, 8:00-9:30 a.m.** Room 5

Thanksgiving Sunday: **Sunday, November 19, 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.,** Mary Bradford, a Senior in High School preaches

# “Mindfulness, Myth and Truth”– by The Rev. Jay Sapaen Watan

I

really enjoy actions films. I grew up in the 1980’s and 90’s, where the Action Film genre was at the apex of cinema popularity. Studios gave us *Rambo, Lethal Weapon, Die Hard, Terminator, The Killer, Pulp Fiction, Jackie Brown, Leon: The Professional, Passenger 57, The Matrix, and Fist of Legend*. These were some of my favorites. Admittedly these films had simple formulas and held a clear line between good and evil, right and wrong, hero and villain. These films supported the ideology of violence as redemptive. That we can literally fight our way toward a just world. I soaked up all that redemptive violence like it was sweet soda water. Allowing the refreshment of the moment hide the unhealthy side effects of tomorrow. Seems our world romances violence as if it really offers the solutions to the peace and wholeness we seek. In a world where we don’t always get what we want and so much of life seems out of our control, redemptive violence feeds into a fantasy where we can solve our problems, even better… the world’s problems with a “healthy” dose of vengeance, brute force and ignorance. It’s strange to make violence pleasurable and entertaining, but it’s everywhere in popular media culture. And because of this, I found myself more and more in need to ground myself in a healthy dose of real life. Truth is, the cinema is entertainment and the real world is much more complex and much more in need of love.

The term *redemptive violence* was coined by the late theologian Walter Wink in the early 1990’s. It is the belief that the use of violence can play a part in eventually bringing about peace and that such violence is morally justifiable; it also is that belief that violence is capable of ending a cycle of violence. Wink was a man of deep faith who was a fierce advocate of nonviolent resistance. He did not want anyone to be a doormat to aggressors, but to challenge power structures that oppress and dehumanize our fellow human beings. For Wink, redemptive violence is tied to a means of oppression and holding power over another. He writes in The Powers That Be, *“The myth of redemptive violence is the story of the victory of order over the chaos by means of violence. It is the ideology of conquest, the original religion of the status quo.”* Violence is addictive stuff. And it can fool us to believe that it is who we are.

I understand the use of violence to stop those who threaten the wellbeing of humanity and creation. I understand the need for arms to ensure the safety of innocent people in the face of those who threaten violence. I understand the need to defend our common interest for the good of the whole. But I do not believe violence can bring us that lasting peace we desire or the wholeness we need for lasting joy. Only love and relationships can do that. Violence ultimately feeds into a cycle that invites more of the same negative outcomes (maybe that’s why many of those action films had sequels that generally were far worse than the first). Though we think our freedom has something to do with the weapons we hold and the walls we build, true freedom for all has a lot more to do with our capacity to live into love and our willingness to forgive.

I trust that the majority of us have or will outgrow the simplicity of redemptive violence. But not everyone will have an easy time letting go of the myth. So how do we teach our kids and ourselves to discern between the myth and truth? When we consider that truth has more to do with wholeness than fact, we can better discover who God is calling us to become. Yes, we can limit what we and our children watch and play. We can guard out mind, body and spirit from the

Mindfulness, Myth and Truth (continued)

harshness of the world. We can keep our families in the safe worldview of suburban life in the San Francisco Bay Area. But I think we need to take a more positive and holistic approach. We can teach and model social intelligence in ourselves and our younger generation. Social intelligence is the capacity to navigate through the complexity of relationships through greater wisdom, empathy, and connection. Some know this as developing “street smarts,” “tact,” or “common sense.” I call it mindfulness. We can create healthy lifestyles by going outdoors, playing a recreational sport, and eating well – another form of mindfulness. We can cultivate our spiritual life at church or in community with others, or in our practice of worship, prayer and meditation – this is also mindfulness.

Violence exists in our world. And there is also a lot of beauty and goodness in this world. The Dalai Lama once said, “Pay more attention to compassion and you’ll find you’re happier. It’s that practical and simple.” Mindfulness ground us to what’s real.

Outreach Report – by Steve Yuen   
 **Home & Hope (homeandhope.net)**   
On Tuesday, September 19th, and Thursday, September 21st, we prepared and served dinner to three families--four adults and seven children---who were being housed at Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church in San Mateo (a fourth family of three was also staying at Hope Lutheran, but due to work schedules, ate dinner on their own). Our cooks prepared plenty of food, and there were leftovers each night. Very little was wasted as H&H families packed bag lunches for school or work the next day.



*Clara and Leda*

Thanks go to our cooks and servers: Lyn Concepcion, Leda Girardi, Shelley Keefe, Valerie Mersh, David Ota, Clara Padilla, Diane Robertson, Irene Stead, Kelly Yee, and Steve Yuen.

Steve was also an overnight monitor on Tuesday. Home & Hope has a shortage of overnight volunteers; if you can help or have any questions, please contact Steve Yuen   
(650-341-1966 or stevebyuen@aol.com).



*Steve didn’t have to share toys Tuesday night*.

Home & Hope is a group of 30 churches and synagogues on the Peninsula that provide emergency shelter for up to four families at a time.

Our next dates to serve dinner, again at Hope Lutheran, are **November 28th** and **November 30th**. A sign-up sheet will be posted in the Parish Hall at the beginning of November.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

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**United Thank Offering**   
Responding to tales of hardship in the church missions, the Women’s Auxiliary of the Episcopal Church started the United Thank Offering in 1889. Initial grants supported the training of missionaries, both men and women, and sent them overseas. They also funded the building of schools, hospitals and church buildings all over the USA.

Today, contributions to the United Thank Offering continue to be 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 1950’s, 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. Our United Thank Offering Ingathering will be on **Sunday, October 15th**. The offerings will be presented at the Diocesan Convention Eucharist on **Friday, October 27th**.

**Sandwiches on Sunday**   
We serve a hot lunch to all comers on the fifth Sundays of the month at the Fair Oaks Community Center in Redwood City. Turnouts have lately risen to about 70 people. On **October 29th,** we’ll be serving chicken and rice, salad and rolls. 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 (650-577-8924 or rob.richards@tensorlabs.com).

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 three year olds and Father Jay is conducting chapel for the 4 year olds, Transitional Kindergarten class, and the After School Program. Father Jay is also coordinating a Life Skills Program with our After School program on Wednesday afternoons and the children seem to be enjoying it. We are excited to have a total of 207 children in our School this year!

The Teacher Installation was held on September 10th 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 and introduced Father Ota and Father Jay, and then to 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 8th and we would love to see some of you there. The picnic is from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. 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!

With the School Year underway, we continue to welcome volunteers to spend time reading and playing games with the children during the afternoons. 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.

Important Dates in October

October 8: School Picnic at Boothbay Park – 11:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

October 9-20: After School Program on Fall Break – Fall Camp held at Sea Breeze

October 31: Halloween Parade

Jerelyn Weber