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**Interim Editor:**

*CD & S. Rowsell*



The Ambrosian

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Edition

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Dear Members and Friends of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church,

Aloha!  I am looking forward to welcoming everyone back from your summer holidays and trips. Now that school begins and we settle into our “program year” I would like to share with you some reflections about how important your presence and participation is in the life of our congregation.

I recently attended a workshop and learned something both interesting and disturbing, and I would like to share it with you. The Rev. Vincent Pizzuto, Ph.D who teaches at the University of San Francisco shared the reasons why young people leave their Christian roots:

1. They never experienced God in their worship;
2. Their tribal connections are stronger outside the church than in it;
3. The issues being discussed at church don’t matter to them and the issues that matter aren’t being discussed;
4. They didn’t see anything compelling enough in their parent’s lives to make them follow a similar path.

As I mentioned in a sermon, the first and fourth reasons are quite disturbing. And it made me wonder, do you experience God in our worship? Are our lives compelling enough to inspire our children and neighbors to want to follow our path?

What does it mean to find God in worship? Does it mean we experience the grace and love of God in worship, the forgiveness and mercy of God in worship, the challenge and call of God in worship? I have been listening over and again to two long extended sermons by Bishop Michael Curry, the Bishop of North Carolina. I have these sermons on DVD from my trip to Minneapolis in May for the Festival of Homiletics. And in one talk he continually makes the point that God calls God’s people to be crazy and non-conformist to the status quo of society. When the Word of God meets the status quo of the world, something has to change. And when the Word of God meets the status quo of our lives, then we have got to change too. He says we need preaching that drives people crazy; crazy enough to love others when you want to push them away; crazy enough to take risks for the sake of helping someone in need; crazy enough to wake up early on a Sunday morning to worship God, because God is God and we are not.

# Reflections from our Rector

## Rector’s reflections continued…



What is different about our lives because we worship and serve God as Christians in the Episcopal tradition? Are our lives any different because of our faith? What choices in our lives have we made specifically because of our faith in God as revealed in Jesus Christ? The first choice I would invite you to make is to consider the development of your faith to be a top priority in your life, and the living your life faithfully to be equally a priority. If we can make this choice then we will know the joy of giving away our love for the sake of our God and our neighbor.

So I hope you will come to worship this month and invite someone to join you. I encourage you to spend some time with someone you know but would like to know better. Perhaps you can participate in one of our groups this month: choir, Sunday School, youth group, bible study, service opportunities, an outing to a Giants game, preparing for the next earthquake or a class on the Episcopal Church.

If there is something you would like to see happen among us and is not happening, let me know and let’s see what we can do to make it happen. I look forward to hearing about what is happening in your lives and how God is moving in your life.

Yours,

David Ota, Rector

P.S. My wife, the Rev. Karen Swanson was called to serve as the Interim Rector of All Saints Episcopal Church in San Leandro and will begin her ministry there on September 1st. She is grateful for the opportunity she had to serve among us during this period when she was not assigned to serve a congregation.

**Thanks**

Thanks to John Dossett, Don Gundry, Tippy Irwin, Elizabeth Klammer and Charles Saunders who attended the Eucharistic Minister training at Equipping the Beloved Community gathering on August 23rd.

**Bible Studies in September**

The Monday Bible Study group will begin meeting again this month on September 8th, 15th, 22nd and 29th to study the Gospel according to Luke on Mondays, **August 8th** and **15th** from **12:45 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.** in the home of Merilyn Vosburg.  They are reading Luke 19:28-21:38, Jesus’ ministry in Jerusalem. This study is led by the Rector.

The Tuesday evening Bible Study group is also studying the Gospel according to Luke and meets on **September 2nd** and **9th** in the home Warren and Nellie Wong at **7:00 p.m.**

The Wednesday evening Bible Study group meets on **September 3rd** and **17th** in the foyer of the church at **7:30 p.m.**  They are studying book of Revelation and are at 4:1. This Bible Study is led by the Rector.

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

**Activities in September**

**Ice Cream Social:** The Children and Family Ministry is hosting an Ice Cream Social on Sunday, **September 7th following the 10 a.m.** Holy Eucharist as part of Coffee Hour. This will be an opportunity for children to play and for parents to meet one another in the playground and parish hall. For more information, please contact Fe Valentin at [valentin\_fe@yahoo.com](mailto:valentin_fe@yahoo.com) or 925-216-1588.

**Youth Ministry Kick-Off Sunday:** The youth ministry will kick-off its program of Sunday School and youth group with a new schedule on **Sunday, September 7th.** The youth Sunday School will continue to meet in Room 5 from 10 a.m. to 10:40 a.m. They will be using a new curriculum called, “God Talks!” The Middle School Youth Group will meet from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and the Senior High Youth Group will meet from 11:45 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. For more information, please contact Father Jay Watan at [igorothighlander@hotmail.com](mailto:igorothighlander@hotmail.com) or by calling him at 415-309-8968.

**Giants and Dodgers game at AT&T Park:** Members and friends of St. Ambrose will be going to the Giants and Los Angeles Dodgers game on **Friday, September 12th from 7:15 p.m.** There are only two tickets still available. The cost is $32 for an adult or $22 for a youth or child. If interested, call the church office at 650 574-1369 or sign-up in the Parish Hal.

**Commissioning of Sunday School and St. Ambrose Sea Breeze School Teachers and Staff:** Join the teachers and staff of our Sunday School and our Sea Breeze School on Sunday, September 14th at the 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist. The service will follow with a lunch. Members will be asked to bring a dish, yet to be determined, for the luncheon. For more information please contact Jessica Morales at [jesmorales@gmail.com](mailto:jesmorales@gmail.com).

**Congregational Meeting on Disaster Preparedness for St. Ambrose:** Members of St. Ambrose are invited and encouraged to come to a Disaster Preparedness meeting for St. Ambrose to help us prepare for a disaster such as an earthquake. The meeting will be held on **Sunday, September 21st from 11:45 a.m.** in the Parish Hall. The 2013 Diocesan Convention charged each congregation to come up with its own plan. Karin Patterson and Mike Radovancevich who worship at the 8 a.m. service and are also volunteer leaders of Foster City C.E.R.T. will lead the meeting. This will be a general orientation meeting to help us further develop our plan for St. Ambrose. We need your ideas and involvement. Lunch will be provided.

**An Introduction to the Episcopal Church:** The Rector will be leading a class to introduce those who are new to the Episcopal Church about the history, theology, worship, spirituality and outreach of the Episcopal Church and Anglicanism. Those who are interested in becoming confirmed or received are encouraged to take this class. The class will be held on **Sundays, September 28th and October 19th** from **11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m**. in Room 1. Other classes will be scheduled later. Lunch will be provided.

**A new online church directory: The new online church directory will be ready for those with e-mail accounts on Tuesday, September 2nd. We will send out an e-mail to all those in the directory with the password and directions on how to view the directory on-line.**

**Printed copies will be available to those without e-mail and upon request. However, we still need your photos. You can schedule to have your photo taken in the foyer by Father Jay Watan. You can contact him to schedule having you photo taken at** [**igorothighlander@hotmail.com**](mailto:igorothighlander@hotmail.com) **or you can send in a Jpeg photo to our Administrative Assistant, Gina Perez at** [**stambrose@mindspring.com**](mailto:stambrose@mindspring.com)**. She will then be able to upload it to the online directory.**

**We have noticed some hesitancy of people sending in their photos. The Vestry is considering whether or not to create a photo board. If you have any input about this please speak with Rector or a member of the Vestry.**

**Mark Your Calendars:**

* Sunday School and Choir returns: **Sunday, September 7th**
* Ice Cream Social: **Sunday, September 7th**
* Youth Ministry Kick-Off: **Sunday, September 7th**
* Giants and Dodgers game at AT&T Park: **Friday, September 12th,**
* Commissioning of Sunday School and Sea Breeze School Teachers and Staff and lunch: **Sunday, September 14th, 10:00 am** and lunch following the service
* Congregational Meeting on Disaster Preparedness: **Sunday, September 21st, 11:45 am,** Parish Hall
* An Introduction to the Episcopal Church: Sunday, **September 28th, 11:45 am,** Room 1
* Blessing of the Animals: **Sunday October 5th**
* Diocesan Convention at Grace Cathedral: **Friday, October 17th and Saturday, October 18th**
* Sunday After All Saints Day and Commemoration of All Souls Departed: **Sunday, November 2nd**
* Bishop Marc Andrus’ Visitation for Confirmation: **Sunday, November 9th**
* Stewardship Dinner Celebration: **Saturday, November 15th, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.,** Foster City Recreation Center’s Lagoon and Blue Bird rooms
* Organization of the Christmas Pageant: **Sunday, November 30th, 11:30 am,** Chapel

## Outreach Report - by Steve Yuen

**Cambodia Academy of Mongkol Borei (**[**http://www.cambodiaacademy.org/**](http://www.cambodiaacademy.org/)**):**

Since 2008 St. Ambrose, Sea Breeze School, and individual members of our community have sponsored students at the Cambodia Academy of Mongkol Borei. The school was founded by Foster City resident Hans Eide, who was inspired to help children whose families were too poor to attend Cambodian public school. The Academy provides food, transportation, books, uniforms, and English-language teaching. There is a long waiting list for the 350 spots, and all expenses are covered by donations.

Hans Eide attended the graduation ceremonies in July. Below are excerpts from his report:

On July 23rd, I had the pleasure of attending our third annual graduation ceremony, and what a memorable and moving experience it was!

Our friend, province governor E. Long was in attendance along with many dignitaries from the local government and department of education. I was also pleased to see so many parents and our earlier graduates come to join us.

As always, there were speeches, some too long, traditional dances beautifully performed by our students, presentations of awards to our highest achievers and certificates of graduation to our ninth graders.

And then there were hugs and hugs and more hugs, especially for Kerri and Cynthia who are leaving after fulfilling their year of teaching English. The students literally stood in line for the chance to hug their beloved “cha” (Khmer for teacher), whose faces more often than not were streaked with tears.

This year’s graduating class will bring the total number of our students in high school to approximately 60. Their departure will make room for a new first grade class in October, leaving our total enrollment at about 350.

The cost to support one student for the year is $250, remarkably low by American standards; yet the education is superior to that offered by the Cambodian public schools. You may make a donation by writing a check to St. Ambrose Episcopal Church, designated “Cambodian Academy” (100% will be forwarded), or by following the instructions on the website.

**Bread for the World (**[**http://bread.org**](http://bread.org)**)**

During July and August, St. Ambrose parishioners wrote letters to Senators Boxer and Feinstein and Representative Speier to urge continuation of food aid to impoverished foreign populations. The “Offering of Letters” campaign is organized by Bread for the World, a nationwide organization that was founded in 1972 and which is supported by all the major Christian churches.

**Home & Hope** (**http://homeandhope.net/):**

Home & Hope is a group of 30 churches and synagogues on the Peninsula that give emergency shelter for up to four families at a time. (Families can lose their housing suddenly because of family breakup, loss of a job, death of a breadwinner, etc.—for more information see homeandhope.net) About half the churches have sleeping and bathroom facilities—nothing luxurious, guests sleep on cots or sleeping bags—but it’s better than sleeping in a car. The smaller churches, like St. Ambrose, prepare dinner to take some of the burden off the host parishes.

**The Journey Home, September 14th**: The second annual Home & Hope run /walk will be held on Sunday, September 14th, 1:30 p.m. Last year was loads of fun and Home & Hope raised over $20,000 - funds that were critical after funding sources dried up. This year the Journey Home will start at Seal Point Park, 1901 J. Hart Clinton Drive, San Mateo. The goal is to raise $30,000. Individuals and/or teams can register at http://journeyhome.homeandhope.net.

**Serving Dinner at Hope Lutheran, September 30th**: On Tuesday night, September 30th, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., we will be feeding up to 15 people---typically half of them are children--- at Hope Evangelical Lutheran Church, 600 42nd Ave., San Mateo, CA 94403. If you would like to help by preparing a dish (it is not necessary to go to the dinner), serve, and/or clean up, please write your name on the sign-up sheet in the Parish Hall. Please contact Steve Yuen (341-1966, [stevebyuen@aol.com](mailto:stevebyuen@aol.com)) if you have any questions.

**Sandwiches on Sunday:**

We served a hot lunch of lasagna and salad to 60-100 people in Redwood City on **Sunday, August 31st**. (A report will appear in next month’s newsletter.) If you have questions, please contact Rob Richards (577-8924, rob.richards@tensorlabs.com).

## “Enough “– by Rev. Jay Sapaen Watan

I find one of the great paradoxes we struggle with in American culture is that while we bask in the abundance of excess, our need for fulfillment is greater than ever. I remember a toddler, who was obviously full, saying to me that she needed to keep eating because, "my tummy doesn't hurt yet." Must we take ourselves to the extreme limit or can we accept that our limitation is to simply know that we have limits? I find that many of us struggle between having what we need and wanting more than enough. Yet part of the up-sell of our material culture is this message that *there is never enough* for everyone and *we are never good enough* either. Frankly, that worldview sucks! Scarcity seems to add value in our economy. But it also relies on fear rather than faith. What I do know is that when we choose to behave in fear we do not make our best decisions. More so, we make it harder for ourselves to live into the love we were made to be filled by and to give. It’s a challenge to give what we feel we do not have

In Matthew's gospel, Jesus reminds us, "If God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? ...strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." (Matthew 6:30-33, NRSV)

The tension between having what we need and wanting more than enough is an important awareness. Studies on our current generation of youth in America reveal that today's young person is less articulate in the language of faith. In our less religious and more spiritual world, losing the language to evoke or recognize Good News compromises the very spiritually so many of us seek. I believe spirituality is at the heart of everything and that Spirit is the capacity to become aware and responsive to God. God is Love and the Source of all. But if we have no way to articulate the Divine presence in our lives, is it any wonder why so many of us run with empty hearts seeking to be filled? Fear will do nothing to fill our hearts. Only love can do that!

In Eugene H. Peterson's paraphrased translation of the same passage mentioned above, Jesus says, "What I’m trying to do here is to get you to relax, to not be so preoccupied with getting, so you can respond to God’s giving. People who don’t know God and the way he works fuss over these things, but you know both God and how he works. Steep your life in God-reality, God-initiative, God-provisions. Don’t worry about missing out. You’ll find all your everyday human concerns will be met." (MSG)

Bob Perks, a contributor to the "Chicken Soup for the Soul" series, shared a story about a father sending his adult daughter off at the airport, but instead of saying "goodbye" he gave her a blessing, *"I love you and I wish you enough."*

*When asked to explain this, the father began to smile.* *"That's a wish that has been handed down from other generations. My parents used to say it to everyone." He paused for a moment and looking up as if trying to remember it in detail, he smiled even more. "When we said 'I wish you enough,' we were wanting the other person to have a life filled with just enough good things to sustain them," he continued and then turning toward me he shared the following as if he were reciting it from memory.*

*"I wish you enough sun to keep your attitude bright.*

*I wish you enough rain to appreciate the sun more.*

*I wish you enough happiness to keep your spirit alive.*

*I wish you enough pain so that the smallest joys in life appear much bigger.*

*I wish you enough gain to satisfy your wanting.*

*I wish you enough loss to appreciate all that you possess.*

*I wish enough "Hello's" to get you through the final "Goodbye."*

Friends, keep that faith and look for what is right in the world. I have found that if we trust that God will give us what we need, we will have what we need and often times more than enough. Fulfillment is a matter of perspective. Do you see your spiritual cup half-empty, half-full, or how about brimming over the top?

Love is greater than fear... I wish you enough.

## Sea Breeze School News

It is Back to School and we are moving at full speed!

The teachers and children have returned and are getting settled into routines. We are excited to have many new children join us this year and it is always fun to see our returning children arrive with big smiles. After some first day jitters were calmed, everything was smooth sailing. We are excited about the new year and all that it holds!

Summer Session #2 was a success and the children really enjoyed the new and exciting activities that happened, and the special visitors that joined were enjoyed by all. This session, the children enjoyed an Insect Show where they had the opportunity to touch and hold some very interesting critters. The Bubble Lady came and made bubbles of different size and shape; and even put some of the children inside the bubbles! As one of the children said it was “beautiful, amazing and really fun”! The end of the session was shared with the acrobats from the circus and a fun game of baseball.

During the 2014-2015 school year we hope to work on some activities with the church. Each year the Sea Breeze teachers sing Christmas songs at the Atria, and this year we have invited the St. Ambrose Choir to join us.

We said a sad good-bye to 4 of our teachers this summer, and are very excited about the new teachers that have joined our team. Jessica and Kristen joined us and will be teaching pre-school classes; and Anabella will support throughout the program. There will be much learning this year for both the children and teachers.

Each year we welcome volunteers into our program and would love to have some of you join us. If you have an extra hour or so and would like to spend time with some fantastic children, please contact the office and we will be happy to show you around.

Important Dates in September:

September 1st: Labor Day – School Closed

14th: Teacher Installation at 10:00 a.m. worship service

16th: Back to School Night

Have a Wonderful September!