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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! We had a wonderful send-off for Father Jay Watan. The youth families had a special dinner for him on Saturday, August 25, and the congregation had a reception for him on Sunday, August 26. We thanked him for thirteen years of ministry with St. Ambrose and wish him much success in his next ministry. He begins at St. Matthews, San Mateo on Sunday, September 2.

As we enter the month of September, I have much to report to you. I am still in the process of seeking a Youth Minister for St. Ambrose. I have been in conversations with interested persons, and am waiting to receive letters of application and resumes. In the meantime, the Rev. Karen Swanson will assume the role of overseeing the Youth Ministry in addition to her role of doing the same for the Children and Family Ministry.

Also, Seminarian Daniel Tate will return to St. Ambrose for the academic year between September 9, 2018 and May 24, 2019. He will be assisting with the Youth Ministry on Sundays and the St. Ambrose Sea Breeze School on Wednesdays.

The Tuesday Bible study group begins meeting again on September 4 from 12:45 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. We are still reading the book of Job. The Monday study group meets on September 10 and 24 from 7:00 p.m. They continue their study on reading essays from the journal, "Oneing" on Anger.

On September 9, the regular Sunday School begins. We will commission the Sunday School teachers at the 10:00 a.m. service, and have the Children and Family Ministry planning meeting during the coffee hour in the Parish Hall. The St. Ambrose Choir will be helping to lead worship at the 10:00 a.m. services. The Children's Choir will begin their weekly 15-minute practices.

I will be attending the Global Climate Action Summit at Grace Cathedral from Wednesday, September 12 through Friday, September 14. I hope to learn more about we can participate in taking action as a congregation and as citizens of our communities.

Reflections from our Rector (continued)

On Sunday, September 16, we will commission our St. Ambrose Sea Breeze School teachers and staff, and have our annual Back to School lunch. Following the lunch, the Children and Family Ministry and the Youth Ministry will host a Carnival in the playground.

I will be at the Bishop's Ranch for the annual Clergy Conference from Wednesday, September 19 – Friday, September 21.

On Sunday, September 30, we will once again be hosting the lunch for Sandwiches on Sundays at the Fair Oaks Community Center in Redwood City.

You will also notice that work has begun on installing 16 additional solar panels on the roof of the church office. This was necessary since the church and school installed air conditioners in all the classrooms, the Parish Hall and Chapel. Also, the school has installed new playground structures.

Finally, I hope to be able to produce an updated church directory in September. Please send in any updated information regarding your contact information.

Yours,

David Y. Ota, Rector

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 \$408,470.** 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

Marilyn Canon

April and Grant Cherrington

Bettie Davis

Jeanne DeTorre-Ozeki

George and Janet Gardiner

Leda Girardi

Gwen and Hani Juha

Michael and Dulce Lord

Dorothy Matsuo

Jim Miller and Torrie McAllister-Miller

Carolyn and David Moriarty

David Ota and Karen Swanson

Diane Robertson

Ngoc and Julio Rodriguez

Charles Saunders

Sandy Schowengerdt

George and Merle Silverman

Andy Walker

Christina Brockman and Stan Hui

Angela and David Carducci

Nilda Chong

Kyn Dellinger

Elliott Dun and Teresa Murakami

Raphael and Jacques Gerber

Don Gundry

Shelley Keefe

Judy Marshall

Valerie Mersh

John Miller and Eva Kwong

Jim Neubert

Clara Padilla

The Rev. Patricia and George Robertson

Cathy Rincon and David McIntyre

Frank and Barbara Saunders

Yvonne Sidell

Irene Stead

Yours,

David Ota, Rector

Announcements

THANKS to...

- The Rev. Jay Sapaen Watan who served faithfully as Priest, Youth Minister and School Chaplain for thirteen years.
- Ngoc Rodriguez for organizing the reception for Father Jay Watan, and to Brenda Matsuo for organizing the youth dinner for Father Jay Watan.

Study Groups in August

- **The Monday Evening Study Group** will meet this month on **Mondays, September 10 and 24 at 7:00 p.m.** Where they will meet is to be decided. They are reading a journal from the Center for Action and Contemplation called, "Oneing, an alternative Orthodoxy on Anger." It is a series of reflections edited by Richard Rohr.
- **The Tuesday Bible Study Group** will be on a summer break and begin meeting again on **Tuesday, September 4.** They are continuing to read the Book of Job and will resume at Job 30:1.

The study groups are open to any interested person.

Mark Your Calendars

Commissioning of the Sunday School Teachers: **Sunday, September 9, 10:00 a.m.**, Chapel

Planning Meeting for Children's Activities in 2018-2019: **Sunday, September 9, 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.**, Parish Hall

Rector at Global Climate Action Summit: **Wednesday, September 12 – Friday, September 14,** Grace Cathedral

Deanery of the Peninsula Meeting: **Saturday, September 15, 10:00 a.m.**, Good Shepherd, Belmont, Parish Hall

Commissioning of the St. Ambrose Sea Breeze School Teachers and Back to School Lunch: **Sunday, September 16, 10:00 a.m.**, Chapel and Parish Hall

Family Fun and Blessings Too, Church and School Extravaganza: **Sunday, September 16, following the Back to School Lunch,** Playground

Rector at Clergy Conference: **Wednesday, September 19 – Friday, September 21,** Bishop's Ranch, Healdsburg

Sandwiches on Sundays: **Sunday, September 30, 11:30 a.m.**, Fair Oaks Community Center, 2600 Middlefield Road, Redwood City

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

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

The Desk of Rev. Karen Swanson

Fall Sunday School Starts September 9

Fall Sunday School will begin on Sunday, September 9 with three classes. Children who are in kindergarten, first and second grade, as well as preschool children, will meet in Room 1. The nursery will also continue to meet there. Third, fourth and fifth graders will meet in Room 4. Middle and high school youth will gather in Room 5. To start the year off right, the teachers and students will be blessed during the church service on September 9.

On Sunday, September 2, Labor Day weekend, the youth class will meet in Room 5, and all younger students will gather in Room 1.

Planning for Children's Activities on September 9

All parents and other interested persons are invited to attend an organizing meeting to plan children's activities for the 2018-2019 program year on Sunday, September 9 from 11:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. in the Parish Hall. We will brainstorm about activities, and a tentative schedule of possible activity dates for new and renewed programs will be distributed and discussed.

Carnival on September 16

The annual church and school luncheon will be followed again this year by fun games, activities and prizes in the play yard outside the Parish Hall. Numerous adult and youth or children teams will be needed to "run" the games (each team will be given a break to also participate in them!).

The activities will include a lollipop pull, a water balloon toss, a basketball shooting contest, a digging event, a football toss, and a topple-the-can game, among others. Please sign up in the Parish Hall to run an activity, or contact the Rev. Karen Swanson at karen.2.swanson@gmail.com or 650-200-8449 if you would like to help in other ways. And, please save the date to participate!

The Desk of Shelly Keefe

Back to
School...yes, and
your donations
helped nearly 50
Foster Children!



Our fundraiser was hugely successful. On Sunday, August 12, I dropped off 44 brand new backpacks filled with supplies.

We also mailed a cash donation, enough to cover five more backpacks and supplies.

Thank you to all who participated in this outreach effort.

Shelley Keefe @ 650 787 7614 or
onyourtoz@gmail.com

A Farewell Letter from the Rev. Jay Sapaen Watan

Dear Friends and Family,

People always remember how they felt about a time, a place, and the people in their lives. And I'm reminded of how I would welcome past church and school families who moved away. I would hear stories of how it was important that they made the pilgrimage to return and reconnect to a place they were once before. Their heart felt smiles, laughter, and watery eyes really said it all. The time here and the moments they experienced were indeed special. And the special thing happened not because of programs or curriculums, but because of the people they connected with. Those moments happened because this community shared a vision and helped make the investment of time, talent, and treasure to create a sacred space for sharing a little bit of the Good News of God in the Christ.



My last Sunday at St. Ambrose, Sunday, Aug 26, 2018

After 13 years of ministry serving as Youth Minister and School Chaplain at St. Ambrose Episcopal Church and Sea Breeze School I'm leaving to answer a new call to go where God needs me to be. I depart with the great blessing of being able to call many of you friends and family. The beauty of a solid friendship is that we will always find a way to continue wherever we left off. Each moment of reunion strengthens our bonds and helps us and grows with new insight and inspiration. With family, there's a trust and confidence that comes with having "relatives" everywhere. And even with distance, someone out there thinks of you. That's a good feeling! I find a truth in that song, *"The more we get together, the happier are we."* Now it will be you who will welcome me back on those times of reunion. My family and I will always remember this spot in Foster City as a very special place. Especially since my own children grew up here and are SBS alumni, raised up in our pews and playground, present with people who cared for them.

Though I wish to personally thank everyone, in this small space I wish to share a short list of acknowledgments to the following persons who were an integral part of my journey at St. Ambrose: For Fr. David's mentorship, leadership and faithful heart; and Mother Karen's listening ear. For Margie Lee's thoughtful encouragement. For the musical gifts of Frank Saunders and Maureen Fromme, whose gifts enhanced my prayer and reflection. For the kinship I shared with our school principal, Jerelyn Weber, and Afterschool director, Aida Irizarri. To Rene Sheldon, Rocio Villeda, Nancy Kirk, Jamie Briones, and Elyse Bizon for instilling a love of learning in my children. To Shelley Keefe, Kay Umeda, and Sandy Schowengerdt for leading Sunday School and initiating them into the Christian faith. For Dorothy Matsuo's wisdom, love, and support. For Warren and Nellie Wong's insight and spiritual depth. For Hani Juha's ideas on purpose and meaning. For Troy Ryder's insights on family. For Keith and Lauryn Adolph's good aim. For Teresa Murakami & Elliot Dun for sharing good food and boxing matches. For Eugene Hetzer's inspired piano playing every Wednesday afternoon. To Fe Valentine-Balamiento, Steven Yuen, Jim Neubert, Jim Miller, Ngoc Rodriguez, John Miller, Eva Kwong, Raphaele Gerber, Liva Neyroud, Carolyn Moriarty, and Brenda Matsuo for supporting our youth ministry together. For the many youth and youth alumni who represent the greatest gift we offer to God's kingdom. And especially to my loving family for their support and presence over the years.

A Farewell Letter (continued)

On behalf of my family and I, THANK YOU so much for your love, kindness and generous spirit over the past 13 years and especially throughout this last month. This time has offered so many outpourings of love, opportunities to share good memories, and reaffirmations of our walk together in faith. I realize not everyone gets such a warm and wonderful sendoff, and I truly will cherish these moments in my heart as I start a new ministry with the folks at the Episcopal Church of St. Matthew in San Mateo. The community of St. Ambrose and Sea Breeze School affirmed in me the values of family, faithfulness, and eating well together. And that is what I will share in that new place calling.

My friends... never forget who you are together. We are made in the image of a God who has made us from love for love, and together we do wonders. And in this broken world, what we do together makes it beautiful! Till we meet again... Keep the Faith and God Bless You!

Love,
Jay+

September Outreach Report – by Steve Yuen

Sandwiches on Sunday

Names on the sign-up sheet were a bit sparse on the previous Sunday, but three families (without being asked) contacted us to offer their help. And so it was that twelve cooks and servers showed up at [Sandwiches on Sunday](#) (SOS).

SOS, where five churches take turns serving lunches to everyone who shows up at the [Fair Oaks Community Center](#) in Redwood City, is one of the favorite outreach activities at St. Ambrose. Often, we have as many children participating as we do adults. It's rare in business, and even rarer in volunteer organizations, to hit the sweet spot where everyone steps up and no one needs instruction.



THANKS go to our cooks and server(s):

Keith and Charlene Adolph
 April Cherrington
 Janet Gardiner
 Leda Girardi and her son, Paulo (s)
 David, Cathy, and Lydia McIntyre (s)
 Valerie Mersh
 Clara Padilla (s)
 Rob Richards (s)
 Barbara Saunders
 Shawn and Shai Venkat (s)
 David and Susan Yates (s)
 Steve Yuen (s)

Our next hosting is on **September 30** when we will be preparing chicken & rice and salad. If you can make a dish and/or help with serving and cleanup, please sign up on the sheet that will be posted in the Parish Hall in September. Please contact Rob Richards (rob.richards@tensorlabs.com, 650-577-8924) if you have any questions.

Backpack Collection for Foster Children

Thanks go to everyone who donated to our first backpack drive and especially to Shelley Keefe for organizing an outstanding effort. Her report is elsewhere in this newsletter.

Outreach Report (continued)

Aid to Northern California Fire Victims

As happened last year, the Northern California fires have destroyed homes and forced the evacuation of thousands. At least a half-dozen churches in the Episcopal Diocese of Northern California (EDNC) have been affected. Some are in the fire zone, and some are serving as evacuation centers.

If you wish to aid our sister Diocese with a cash contribution, you may write a check to St. Ambrose Episcopal Church and designate it "Northern California Fires". We will forward all funds to the EDNC to assist in their fire relief efforts.

If you would like to donate to the EDNC directly, please make checks out to "The Episcopal Diocese of Northern California" and write "Disaster Relief" in the memo. 100% of these funds go directly to disaster relief. The address is:

The Episcopal Diocese of Northern California
350 University Avenue, Suite 280
Sacramento, CA 95825

Aid to Kerala Flood Victims

According to Episcopal Relief and Development (ERD),

Episcopal Relief & Development is responding to the critical needs of people impacted by the worst floods to hit Kerala, India in a century. The devastating floods began with torrential downpours on August 8 in the southern state. Working with the ACT Alliance through CASA, Episcopal Relief & Development's support is part of a multi-agency response providing emergency supplies such as food, temporary shelter, hygiene kits, water storage containers, water purifiers and agricultural seeds for 4,000 vulnerable families. As of August 20, approximately 350 people have died in the rising waters and landslides, and more than 700,000 are displaced in overcrowded relief camps around the region. According to state authorities, Kerala usually receives high rainfall. This year, between August 8 and August 15, the flood-hit state has seen over 250 percent more rain than normal.

Several members of our parish have friends and relatives in Kerala.

If you would like to contribute to relief efforts, you may write a check to St. Ambrose Episcopal Church and designate it "Kerala". We will forward all funds to ERD.

You may also contribute online directly to ERD at: (<https://www.episcopalrelief.org/what-you-can-do/give/donate-now/individual-donation>)

Sea Breeze School News – by Jerelyn Weber, Principal

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. The children and their families were very excited to see the new play structures on the playground and could hardly wait to try them out. Summer is a typical time for change for families and we were sad to see some of our families leave the Bay Area. We will miss the families and always look forward to receiving updates from them at a later time. While we said goodbye to some families, we are fortunate to welcome several new children and families to our many different programs. Enrollment is very strong this year and we started the School year with 201 children.

With the continued growth in our After School program, we added a few new enrichment classes to keep the children busy. We had been fortunate over the last couple of years to have Father Jay lead a Life Skills Class on Wednesday afternoons with our School Age children and with him moving to St. Matthews, we had to look for other enrichments for that day. We were fortunate to find a coding class and chess club that will be offered to the children during this time and we will be offering a drawing class and a Bollywood dancing class during the week as well. We will continue to enjoy Mrs. Fromme and the Music Appreciation classes that she teaches on Thursday afternoons.

There are many exciting things planned for this year and we would love to include you in our fun. We will be singing at the Atria, hosting a BBQ at Boothbay Park, hosting Movie nights throughout the year and of course we will have our Annual Family Fun Day in the Spring. Our biggest challenge this year will be learning to play Pickle Ball and then teach the children how to play as well! If you know how to play and would be interested in helping us out, please let me know. Please watch for more information and always feel free to join our fun.

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.

Have a Wonderful September!

Continued Blessings,

Jerelyn Weber, Principal

The Editor's Corner – by Yvonne Sidell



Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast. –Psalm 139: 8-10

Love. It transcends time and makes time stand still. It causes people to do funny things and can break the heart of ones close to us. It fights for freedom and dies for a cause. It gives life to the next generation and gives its life for a generation it will never see. Love is deep, secure, strong, loyal, honest, and true. It is displayed through a touch, a word, a look, or a smile. Love sustains, guides, protects, and is closer than you think.

Children know this intuitively. That's what makes the story *The Runaway Bunny*¹ so endearing. It follows the conversation of a Mother Bunny and her baby and what would happen if the baby bunny ran away. No matter how elaborate the baby bunny's plan was to run away, the Mother Bunny always comes up with a way to find and care for the baby bunny. Frustrated by his inability to get away from the love of his mother, the baby bunny finally gives up, settles in at home and lets the Mother Bunny care for him.

The Psalmist also experienced this type of love. God and His love surrounded him at all times, in all places, and in all circumstances. Psalm 63:3 reads, "Because your love is better than life, my lips will glorify you."

Today, take the time to notice that you are surrounded by the love of God. There is nowhere you can go that He will not be with you. There is nothing you can do that will keep His love from you. God is strangely and persistently accepting of us and readily waits for us with open arms.

*Credit: HomeWord Devotionals