

December

2021
Edition



The Ambrosian

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

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Editor
Yvonne Sidell

Reflections from the Interim Rector

Dearest Sisters & Brothers,

Time fascinates me. When we are enjoying ourselves, *tempus fugit*; when we are suffering, *tempus cessat*. For example, I am amazed at how quickly nearly a year and a half has passed here at St Ambrose.

As we are in the waiting-season of Advent; in the liminal period between pandemic lockdown and returning to normal; and in a time of transition of interim ministry, I am very aware of my own struggles with living in the “now”. I’m not always as patient as I wish I were. It is all too easy to focus on the “what next” of the future and miss all the blessings of the right now.

For the past couple weeks, our contemplative meditation group has been ruminating on Eckhart Tolle’s [A New Earth](#). It has been very enlightening and I hope a few quotes might prove useful to all of us:

“The most important, the primordial relationship in your life is your relationship with the Now, or rather with whatever form the Now takes, that is to say, what is or what happens. If your relationship with the Now is dysfunctional, that dysfunction will be reflected in every relationship and every situation you encounter...”

“Do I want the present moment to be my friend or my enemy? The present moment is inseparable from life, so you are really deciding what kind of relationship you want to have with life. Once you have decided you want the present moment to be your friend, it is up to you to make the first move: Become friendly toward it, welcome it no matter in what disguise it comes, and soon you will see the results... The stronger your ego, the more time takes over your life. Almost every thought you think is then concerned with past or future, and your sense of self depends on the past for your identity and on the future for its fulfillment. Fear, anxiety, expectation, regret, guilt, anger are the dysfunctions of the time-bound state of consciousness...”

“Am I treating the Now as no more than a means to an end? Do I see it as an obstacle? Am I making it into an enemy? The present moment is all you ever have.” [pp. 200-204]

Now, in the time of this present life, I wish you all every blessing for a good and holy season of Advent as we wait for the coming of Christ into our lives – who already is here waiting with us. *“As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.”*


Devotedly, Fr. Shane Scott-Hamblen

Announcements

See's Candy YUM-raiser for St. Ambrose

Treat yourself to the yummiest candy on earth AND support our Fall Fundraising event at the same time! Shop online at the link below to help us reach our fundraising goals before Friday, December 3, 2021.

https://www.yumraising.com/secure/seabs_sea_breeze_school_sees_candies_fundrais32/candy?h=Lis_Wal7788&c=ot2059

 See's CANDIES. Yum – Raiser
SEA BREEZE SCHOOL <hr/> <small>NAME OF SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION</small>
<p>Dear Parents and Friends:</p> <p>We are excited to begin our See's Candies online fundraiser - Yum-Raiser! We are raising funds for</p>
<hr/> UPDATING CLASSROOMS AND PLAYGROUND <hr/>
<p>Since all of the students will benefit from this Yum-Raiser, we greatly appreciate everyone's participation. Please look for our Yum-raising shop link in an upcoming email and help us reach our goal by visiting our online Yum-raising shop front to purchase your Holiday candy.</p>
<p>Please forward the our link to family, friends, relatives, neighbors and co-workers so they can enjoy the delicious, American made, See's Candies while supporting our fundraising effort!</p>
<p>Important dates:</p> <p><u>NOVEMBER 5</u> Yum-Raiser starts.</p> <p><u>DECEMBER 3</u> Yum-Raiser ends (all orders must be placed).</p>
<p>https://www.yumraising.com/secure/seabs_sea_breeze_school_sees_candies_fundrais32/candy?h=Lis_Wal7788&c=ot2059</p>
<p>Helpful Hints:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email shop link to at least 5 friends & family to help us hit our goal. • Buy all your holiday gifts and send directly to loved ones. • Leverage low shipping cost and free shipping for orders over a certain threshold. • Be sure to thank your supporters.
<p>Sweet!</p>

Announcements (continued)

Reflection and Gratitude

We hope you can share Love and Joy with family and friends!

St. Ambrose would like to invite you to a time of reflection and gratitude, especially after the pandemic. Our community has indeed been impacted in many different ways in the past 18 months – from illness/death to job loss, isolation, racism, violence of all types, overwhelming family care or work and anxiety. Situations have been very hard to handle. Still, when facing those, God is always with us. With this in mind, Saint Ambrose would like to invite you to pray and reflect.

Scope of reflection:

- 1. Reflect on how the pandemic has impacted you*
- 2. Reflect on blessings received and how church (and St. Ambrose more specifically) has helped you navigate through this unprecedented time*

If you like, please share your thoughts! Come and write them on post-its for a poster board located in the Narthex of St. Ambrose or send an email to: St Ambrose Reflections and Gratitude (reflections.gratitude@gmail.com). We will copy your email on a post-it that will be displayed on the board. This way, as a community, we can be more mindful about what we went through, pray together, and share gratitude.

Thank you for joining this project!
Raphael Gerber and Valerie Mersh

Virtual Sunday School for Preschoolers and Kids in Elementary School

Starting December, Teacher Fe and Teacher Raphael Gerber will take your child through the stories of Jesus, with songs and fun! YouTube link will be updated each week via the bulletin:

(First lesson: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I4nrQ0ayuQ4>)

Please send your comments to saintambrosesundayschool@gmail.com

Thank you so much!
Raphael Gerber and Fe Valentin

Announcements (continued)

The Search Committee Update

The Search Committee has completed the OTM responses for the Diocese and are currently working on the Profile. Each of these documents will “paint a picture” of St. Ambrose as we are now, and our hopes for the future. The list below shows the order of the tasks.

- ~~1. Form the Search Committee~~
- ~~2. Organize and review discernment process tasks~~
- ~~3. Create and pilot questions for Town Hall Meetings~~
- ~~4. Hold Town Hall Meetings on September 12th and 15th~~
- ~~5. Analyze data gathered from the Town Hall Meetings~~
6. Write Parish Profile and OTM Portfolio
7. Parish Profile and OTM Portfolio approved by Vestry
8. Open Rector position.
9. Evaluate application materials
10. Two or three Interviews with applicants
11. Check references
12. Submit two or three finalists to the Vestry

The members of this committee are:

Father Shane
 Canon Denise Obando (Diocesan Transition Minister)
 April Cherrington
 Nilda Chong
 George Gardiner
 Carolyn Moriarity
 Liva Neyroud
 Yvonne Sidell
 Warren Wong
 Steve Yuen

Father Shane’s Schedule

We have been working on setting a regular work schedule for Father Shane so that we can all know when it is best to contact him, and also so that he can have some routines (which include day off, Sabbath and study day).

It seems that the best days to have off are Friday and Saturday. From Monday through Thursday, he will be working at the office or from home. While we all know he is available to us when necessary, it would be best to keep communication to emergencies during his days off. Thank you!

Announcements (continued)

St. Ambrose Choir

The choir will resume rehearsals on Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. We will be masked and correctly distanced, and would be happy for anyone who wishes to join us. If you wish to join us, please let Maureen Fromme know so she can prepare a folder for you. You may contact her at mhfromme@yahoo.com OR 415.990.6758.

Intercession Prayers

The apostle James tells us to “pray for one another, that you may be healed” (James 5:16).

If you would like the St. Ambrose community to pray with you, please write your intercession in the Blessing book placed in the Narthex or send your request to stambrosefc@att.net. Your prayer will be included at the following mass service. Please leave your name and contact information in the booklet, in case clarifications are needed.

Thank you!
Raphael Gerber

Contemplative Meditation Group

St. Ambrose has a wonderful "Contemplative Meditation" group who meet each week on Hump Days. That's right! After the first two hectic days of the week, it's just time for a much needed 30+ minute break.

Beginning with his monastic early life, Father Shane has a lifetime of meditation. From this wealth of experience and knowledge, Father Shane draws inspiration from various forms of contemplation as well as meditation.

Of course, we all know that schedules can get in the way of participating...even on Zoom. We have been recording some of the sessions and are making them available for your practice on your own time. How about that?!

Please email me at hfongster@gmail.com if you have any questions or would like to request access for the recordings...maybe even the Zoom link to join us.

Thank you!
Hamilton Fong

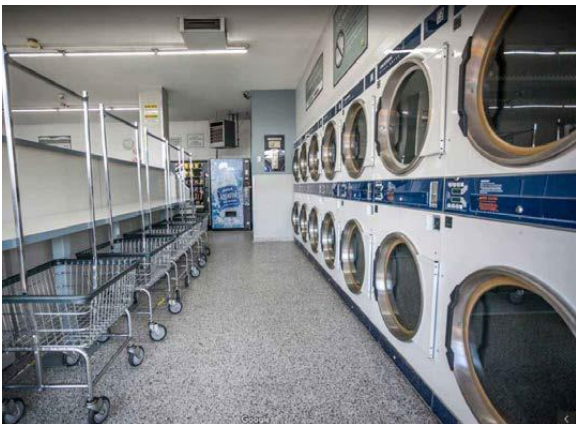
Vestry Report – by Jim Neubert

***El Buen Pastor de Belmont
December 18, 2021
Woodside Laundry – 8:00 a.m.
512 Woodside Drive, Redwood City***



El Buen Pastor (the Spanish-speaking Episcopal community that meets at Good Shepherd) is organizing an Advent community outreach event. In this season of preparation, the community will visit a local laundromat, pay for laundry and soap and bring toys for children (offering conversation and snacks).

You can help! Offerings of quarters, mini-laundry soaps (easy to carry on public transportation), and toys for small children are most welcome. Reach out to Fr. Michael or John Stockman OR bring offerings / donations to St. Ambrose on Sunday and they will be collected. Contacts for questions are Jim Neubert or Steve Yuen.



*“Where two or three are gathered in my name...”
-- Mathew 18:20*

*“Begin by doing what is necessary, continue doing what is possible, and suddenly you will be doing what is impossible.”
--St. Francis of Assisi*

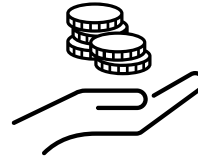


Respectfully Yours,

Jim Neubert

Senior Warden's Report – by Shelley Keefe

More Than Enough



Every Sunday, it is my privilege to sit in church and look around at my fellow congregants. Although it is not yet Spring, I see signs of new life in our church community.

After almost two years of isolation, it is heartening to observe the gradual in-person regathering. Most recently we have welcomed back Keith and Charlene Adolph, George and Janet Gardiner, Jean DeTorre-Ozeki, Susan Sullivan, Eunice and Karen Chee, Reena Davis along with Simran and Samaira, Steve and Daniel Yuen. We even welcomed out-of-town visitors at the 8:30 a.m. service last week. Some wonderful new faces have appeared; Kristen Padgett and her father, Wayne, Larry and Yali Buyers, Scott and Summer Chang. With each new and familiar face, we become a stronger and more vibrant congregation.

And it does not stop at attendance. Many of our initiatives have grown deep (or deeper) roots. Bible Study and Meditation programs are beloved and well-attended, the 'Reflections and Gratitude' board in the Narthax is filling up and is a testament to the reach of our livestreamed services. You may notice that the Sacristy is wearing a brand-new outfit and that a beautiful Yamaha grand piano is in place. So many gifts!

Only this week an exciting new initiative was launched by Fe Valentin and Raphael Gerber – YouTube Sunday School. A link to their first lesson, the Angel's Visit, is included in the Ambrosian and we encourage young and old to check it out. In the Advent and Christmas season, you will also see changes in our floral displays and in our musical offerings, all resulting from the many willing hands and hearts at St. Ambrose.

Continuing our collaboration with El Buen Pastor, 'Two or Three' will be an opportunity to engage with the community on Saturday, December 18, at Woodside Laundry in Redwood City. Please see the flyer in this edition of the Ambrosian for details and contact Steve Yuen if you would like to participate.

An old favorite will also return. On December 5, we will once again have the Altar Guild Bake Sale, a great opportunity to stock up on delicious, home-baked holiday cookies and to mingle after the 10:00 a.m. service for coffee and treats.

December 5 is also our pledge ingathering day. So far, our 2022 pledges total \$60,364. We ask you to prayerfully consider what pledges of time, talent, and treasure you can give to St. Ambrose.

Respectfully Yours,

Shelley Keefe

Youth Ministry and Youth Group News – by Daniel Tate

Christmas Pageant

Actors! Singers! The Christmas Pageant this year is going to be an all-congregation event. Children, youth and adults are all invited to join in the celebration. No auditions! All who are interested can participate. All parts are open. We are welcoming all to come celebrate the birth of Jesus.

The pageant will take place on Christmas Eve, December 24 (Friday) at 4:00 p.m. There will be two rehearsals after the Sunday church services: December 12 and December 19.

If you have questions, please contact Daniel Tate by e-mail, ym_stambrosefc@att.net, or by phone 650-799-7084. Be a memorable part of telling the Christmas story this year at St. Ambrose.

Youth Group Sunday Meetings 10:00 a.m.

Bishop Marc established May 23, 2021 as our post-pandemic re-gathering date, and so, the Youth Group has been meeting again too. We maintain protocols that protect everyone in the church (mandatory face masks, social distancing, cleaning). Join us and re-establish connections with your St. Ambrose friends and invite your friends!

Acolytes, Readers, and Livestream Technicians

For our in-person services, we need volunteers for Worship Leaders. We will need Intercessors, Lectors, Greeters, Ushers, Acolytes, and Livestream Technicians. Please email us at Stambrose@mindspring.com. No experience is necessary. The Signup Genius link is: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0d4fa5a82ca0f94-worship> I'll also be sending a distribution email with this information. This is a great low-key way to be of service, and to learn about (and be a part of) the history and tradition of our church.

Musicians

If you like to sing or play an instrument, there are plenty of opportunities to do that at St. Ambrose. During the service, the prelude, postlude, main anthem, offertory, and hymns all offer a chance for singing or playing an instrument. If you are a beginner or expert, either one, Maureen Fromme and Frank Saunders, our music leaders are happy to teach, assist, and accompany.

Respectfully Yours,

Daniel Tate

Hymns for December – by Maureen Fromme

“Prepare the Way, O Zion” – Hymn ##65

At this time of year, it seems that we are always preparing for something! Many of us prepared a feast for Thanksgiving – now we are preparing for Advent, for Christmas, and for 2022. Busy times! Hopefully, we will not be so busy with 'things' that we forget what Advent really is really about.

There are several hymns in the Advent section of our hymnal. The one I have chosen is a rather exuberant hymn, “*Prepare the Way, O Zion*”, a hymn about 'preparing':

*Prepare the way, O Zion, your Christ is drawing near!
He comes bringing peace, freedom, justice, truth, love, grace, joy and salvation: the gifts of God.*
<https://youtu.be/yZDqBt7qqsg>

The words for this hymn were written by the Swedish-Finnish poet and clergyman, Frans Michael Franzen (1772-1847). It was translated into English by the Episcopal priest, Charles P. Price (1920-1999). Fr. Price taught at Harvard and served on the committee that prepared “The Hymnal 1982”. The texts of sixteen hymns in our hymnal were translated or written by him. The text that provided inspiration for this hymn was *Isaiah 40: 3-5- (NIV)*:

*A voice of one calling:
“In the wilderness prepare a way for the Lord;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low;
the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places plain.
And the glory of the Lord will be revealed,
and all people will see it together.
For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”*

The melody for this hymn comes from “Then Svenska Psalm-Boken”, or a Swedish hymnal, published in 1697.

As you listen to and sing with the recording, may it brighten your days as we prepare for Advent and Christmas. May our lives exemplify the eight gifts from God that are mentioned in this song.



Respectfully Yours,

Maureen Fromme

December Outreach Report – by Steve Yuen

Sandwiches on Sunday

Seven intrepid volunteers assembled lunches on October 30 for Sandwiches on Sunday (the day before Halloween).

In under an hour, the efficient assembly line put together **86 brown bags** that contained sandwiches, high-fiber snacks, and fruit. They even tossed in a candy bar to celebrate the unofficial holiday (Episcopalians are diet conscious, but as anyone can tell you who has been to coffee hour, we are not fanatics about it).

On the assembly line were:

Elliott Dun
 Elliott Dun, Jr.
 Valerie Mersh
 Carolyn Moriarty
 Lily Moriarty
 Daniel Tate
 Steve Yuen



Special thanks go to Rob and Anita Richards for purchasing the supplies and dropping them off at the church.

On Sunday, the sandwiches and bottled water were set out on the tables of the Redwood City Community Center. Within a half an hour, everything was gone. Most of the 50 people served asked for an extra bag, and we were happy to accommodate them.

The next sandwich-making is January 30. The last time we served hot lunches was in December, 2019, and the community center director said she didn't know when COVID-19 safety protocols will be lifted.

We had been running low on bulk supplies like brown paper bags (500 count) and plastic sandwich bags (300 count) and had been delaying replenishment in case we went back to normal cafeteria-style meals, but it looks like normal is still far, far away.

El Buen Pastor

On Saturday, December 18, St. Ambrose will participate in a benefit program to help make Christmas a little brighter for El Buen Pastor, the Spanish-speaking congregation on the Peninsula. Please see Jim Neubert's post in the "Vestry" section of this newsletter.

Sea Breeze School News – by Jerelyn Weber, Principal

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Sea Breeze School will share an update next month.

Respectfully Yours,

Jerelyn Weber

The Editor's Corner—by Yvonne Sidell



“Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.”

—Mark 1:35

Most of us aren't mean. We aren't trying to stay away from our Heavenly Fathers on purpose. We just keep racing from morning to night trying to keep up with the pace of our lives. And sometimes, we may get too busy to pray. Can you identify with this? Have you ever had a conversation with God like this?

God: I'd like to spend some time with you today, Yvonne.

Yvonne: Great, I'd love to!

God: How about right now beloved?

Yvonne: Right now? Uh, I'm already late for an appointment. I'll catch you later, though. I promise.

God: OK, I'll be waiting.

Yvonne: Maybe I'll have some time during lunch.

God: OK, I'll be waiting.

(-----Lunch-----)

God: Yvonne, I missed you at lunch. Your body was there but your mind wasn't.

Yvonne: I'm sorry Lord. I've got so much to do and so much on my mind. I just forgot to pray.

God: Are you ready to spend some time with me now? I know you only have a few minutes before your next meeting.

Yvonne: Well, uh, I'd like to, but I need to review my agenda. I'll have to catch you later.

God: Okay, I'll be waiting.

(-----Before Bed-----)

God: Yvonne, I love you and I miss you. I've been waiting all day to be with you. Let's just focus for maybe five minutes.

Yvonne: Oh noooo, I'm sorry. I really feel bad. I was so busy. Thanks for being understanding Lord -- thanks for... (Yvonne falls asleep)

God: Maybe she'll have time for me in the morning.

Are you too busy to pray? If you are, then you are simply too busy. **God loves you and wants regular time with you because you are so special in his eyes.** When is your special appointment with God? This may seem overly simplistic but it is true: people who spend a regular time with God will have a closer relationship with Him.

December Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays

Frank Saunders	4
Hamilton Fong	13
Nellie Wong	16
Lydia McIntyre	18
Grant Cherrington	19
Rose Umeda	21
Yvonne Sidell	25
Father Shane	28
Dorothy Matsuo	28
Reena Davis	29
Jacques Gerber	30



**No December Anniversaries –
Stay blessed!**