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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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Editor  
Yvonne Sidell

## Reflections from the Interim Rector

*Dearest Sisters & Brothers,*

*This year for a reflection during the celebration of a new year of hope, I would like to share the wise words of the Episcopalian monk and prior of Three Rivers Abbey:*

### ***It's All About Compassion***

Several years ago during retreat, I read St. Bernard's liturgical sermons. St. Bernard wrote a lot of sermons on the nativity of our Lord. One of the earliest to survive is about the phrase "Today Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is born in Bethlehem of Judea." That's the entry for the Cistercian martyrology for Christmas. Apparently that's all that is (or at least was) in the martyrology. Those words are his complete text. He goes on for pages – not surprising for someone who could write so many lengthy sermons on the first few verses of the Song of Songs. He quotes St. Athanasius, "God became man that men might become gods."

My cousin was born on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December. He thought it was unfair that other kids got presents on both Christmas AND their birthdays, but they were the same for him. I could say, "Today my cousin Pete was born in South Zanesville." It would never occur to me to say, "Today my cousin Pete IS born in South Zanesville." That wouldn't make any sense. Why does it make sense to say, "Today Jesus Christ, the Son of God, IS born in Bethlehem of Judea."? Because the Incarnation changes everything. In a sense, the birth of my cousin changed things, but essentially for family and friends, not for the entire human race.

Richard Rohr said, "God comes to us disguised as our life." He says that our willingness to find God in our own struggle with life, and to let it change us, is our deepest and truest obedience to God's eternal will. He went on to say, "We are always the 'stable' into which the Christ is born anew. All we really need to do is keep our stable honest and humble, and the Christ will surely be born."

## Reflections from the Interim Rector (continued)

Thomas Merton's friend, Robert Lax, wrote, "Unconditional love. That's the bottom line. Everything is here because of love. That's why we were created – to love. Love keeps things going, not just for now, but forever. Love gives life and makes sure what's around today will be around tomorrow. It's all about compassion. That's what the cosmos best responds to."

For those who are Christians, this is the feast when we celebrate God's unconditional love for humanity by becoming one of us. That means that there is no part of the human experience that cannot be enfolded in Divine Love. For those of other religious faiths – Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, and others – as well as those of no faith or atheist, the statement that "it's all about compassion" rings true with the highest values of humanity. May we all find new ways to live out this holy mystery.

– Prior Aelred

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## **Announcements**

### **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.

### **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!

### **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*

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## Announcements (continued)

### The Search Committee Update

The Search Committee has completed the OTM responses for the Diocese and will finalize the Profile at the January 5 meeting in order to send it to the Vestry for approval. Once the Vestry has approved the documents, we will present it to the Parish at the January General Meeting. Each of these documents will “paint a picture” of St. Ambrose as we are now, and our hopes are 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 12<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup>~~
- ~~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

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## **Announcements (continued)**

### **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](mailto: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*

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## Senior Warden's Report – by Shelley Keefe

# Gifts That Arrived Early This Christmas!



This is my final Ambrosian article as senior warden of St Ambrose. Most of my articles this year have focused on budget, milestones, numbers, and events that are important for the congregation to know. But I want to end this vestry year on a very personal note. Amid the hustle and bustle of Christmas preparations, there were moments that stopped me dead in my tracks, as if God were holding up a stop sign and asking me to reflect and appreciate.

The first of these was our caroling event a couple of weeks before Christmas. Five of us sang for parishioners who cannot attend church in-person and for residents of a local care facility. Simple enough, but making my way home afterwards, it struck me that the two hours we had just spent in community with people, both singers and audience, were a gift of immeasurable value. When my children were little, they often reminded me that the word love is spelled 'T-I-M-E'. Today we gave and received T-I-M-E.

During the weeks leading up to Christmas Eve, Maureen's grandchildren joined us at choir practice. All three are very accomplished musicians and, as we were leaving the church, one of my favorite pieces of music floated out after us. I had to turn back and listen with awe to one of the young musicians playing Chopin's Ballade No 1 in G minor, Op 23, from memory. This is a 9-minute virtuoso piece, and it was beautifully played. Thank you for this gift of standing still and listening. If Christmas had been over right there and then, it would have been a lovely Christmas.

Throughout the year, we have the joy of hearing Frank's preludes to the 10:00 a.m. service, including iconic pieces by Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Saint-Seáns, Schubert. Frank will sometimes play peoples' favorites for a birthday or anniversary.

**We are blessed to have all these talented and dedicated musicians in our lives.** Thank you to Frank, Maureen, the Fromme grandchildren and our choir members for helping us to worship through music.

Mark Your Calendar:

- ✝ January 30, 2022 Annual General Meeting (after the 10:00 a.m. service)
- ✝ February 6, 2022 Safe Church Training (for key holders)



Respectfully Yours,

Shelley Keefe

## Youth Ministry and Youth Group News – by Daniel Tate

*Goodbye 2021. Welcome 2022! Happy New Year!* There is much to be thankful for.

Thank you everyone who participated in the Christmas Pageant during the Christmas Eve Vigil service! A wonderful combination of children, youth, and adults, all participated in telling the story of the birth of Jesus. Thank you also to Irei, Isaac and Isabelle Fromme for their piano and cello performances during the pre-service Musical Offering, and during the service. We look forward to enjoying more musical performances from our youth during the coming year.

### Service Project Sandwiches on Sunday / Food Preparation Saturday

On Saturday, January 29, from 12:00 to 2:00 p.m., we will be preparing lunches for Sunday's Sandwiches on Sunday that happens the next day at the Fair Oaks Community Center in Redwood City. Youth and their families are invited to come and help out. We will be making peanut butter and jelly, lunch meat and cheese sandwiches, with fruit and other goodies to put in lunch bags for handing out. We will be practicing safe distancing, with gloves provided. This is a great opportunity to be at the church doing something together in person.

### Youth Group Meets Sunday Mornings at 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!

### Virtual Sunday School for Preschoolers and Kids in Elementary School

This year, Teacher Fe and Teacher Raphaelle will take your child through the stories of Jesus, with songs and fun! You can send an email to [saintambrosesundayschool@gmail.com](mailto:saintambrosesundayschool@gmail.com) to be added to the distribution list.

### Acolytes, Readers, and Livestream Technicians

We are now resuming in-person service and need volunteers for Worship Leaders. We will need Intercessors, Lectors, Greeters, Ushers, Acolytes, and Livestream Technicians. Please email us at [Stambrose@mindspring.com](mailto: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

## Hymn for January – by Maureen Fromme

### “EARTH AND ALL STARS” – Hymn #412

#### Welcome to 2022!

In searching for hymns that are recommended for the season of Epiphany, there are several that are very appropriate (Epiphany is January 6, followed by eight Sundays after Epiphany, until Ash Wednesday and Lent). There is one hymn on the list that was a bit of a surprise to me, and that is the one I have selected.

One of the Psalms that will be read during Epiphany is Psalm 96, which begins “O, Sing to the Lord a new song...” That phrase is in all six verses of this song.

There are numerous examples as to whom and what should praise Him:

Verse 1: Earth, stars and planets

Verse 2: Nature-- hail, wind, rain, snow, flowers, trees and dry leaves

Verse 3: Instruments-- trumpet, pipes (flutes), cymbals, harp, lute, lyre and cellos

Verse 4: Manufacturing and building-- engines, steel, hammers, limestone, beams and workers

Verse 5: Education and school-- classrooms, labs, test tubes, athletes, band and cheering people

Verse 6: The Church-- knowledge, truth, wisdom, daughters and sons, praying members

<https://youtu.be/KYoFYkogyEU>

In other words, an exuberant 20<sup>th</sup> century song that speaks of the marvelous things God has done and continues to do.

The author of the text is Herbert Brokering (1926-2009), a Lutheran minister, poet, hymn writer and author of over 40 books. He was born in Nebraska in 1926, graduating from colleges in the USA and Germany. He was a minister in Pennsylvania and New York. The words were written for the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St. Olaf College in 1964. The composer was David N. Johnson, (1922-1987) a professor and organist at St. Olaf college.

As we begin the Year 2022, may we rejoice in this new year and in the marvelous things that God continues to do.

Respectfully Yours,

Maureen Fromme



## January Outreach Report – by Steve Yuen

### El Buen Pastor

Those of us who have access to our own washing machine and dryer for years may have forgotten what a hassle it is to haul dirty clothes, laundry bags, detergent, and quarters (\$8 for a large load) to the laundromat, sit on hard plastic chairs, and wait for a machine to become available. It's even more difficult if one takes public transportation, which many laundromat customers in Redwood City must do.



[El Buen Pastor](#), the Episcopal Church's Spanish-speaking congregation on the Peninsula, serves this community. Before winter break, staff and parents of Sea Breeze School and members of St. Ambrose brought laundry supplies, rolls of quarters, and children's books and toys to the church office.

On Saturday, December 18, we delivered the donations to the gathering place--a laundromat of course--in Redwood City. Pictured are Shelley Keefe, Jim Neubert, Pamela Stevens, and Steve Yuen.

All told, we paid for **20 loads of laundry** and distributed detergent, softener, and children's gift items. Everything that was donated found its way to a proper home.

Pamela Stevens from the Diocese thanked us for our support of El Buen Pastor and wrote that plans for a similar Outreach event in East Palo Alto are in the works.

### Family Sharing

The Samaritan House asked us to make Christmas a little brighter for a family of four in San Mateo. We bought warm jackets, pillows, gift cards, and drawing/painting sets to support the children in their artwork. Thanks go to Clara Padilla, who interviewed the parents about what the children wanted, and wrapped and delivered the gifts. Thanks go especially to St. Ambrose parishioners, who **contributed \$846**. The gifts cost \$378, and the excess of \$468 was donated to Samaritan House.

### Sandwiches on Sunday

Our next Sandwiches on Sunday will be on **January 30**. We will again put the brown bags together the day before, i.e., Saturday, January 29, at the church from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. If you would like to volunteer or have any questions, please contact Steve Yuen (mobile 650-315-9662) or [stevebyuen@aol.com](mailto:stevebyuen@aol.com).

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

### **Sea Breeze Registration School Year 2022-2023**

Beginning Monday, January 24, and continuing through Thursday, January 27, Sea Breeze School will be registering present students, their siblings, children of St. Ambrose parishioners, and siblings of former students for Summer School 2022 and School Year 2022-2023.

Registrations will be accepted in order received and in priority placement for all classes. All current students must register each year. These registrations will be dated and processed in the order in which they were received.

Summer School will begin June 20. Classes will be offered for children who will be three years old by December 2, 2022 up to children who will be eligible to attend Kindergarten in August.

Sea Breeze is open five days a week between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. School Year 2022-2023, begins in late August, full and part time classes will be offered for three, four and five year olds for Preschool and Transitional Kindergarten. After School Care is available for children attending Foster City School Kindergarten and/or Grades 1 through 3.

For applications and additional information, please email Wendy Walker, Admissions Director at: [wwalker@seabreezeschool.com](mailto:wwalker@seabreezeschool.com).

Respectfully Yours,

Jerelyn Weber

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## The Editor's Corner – by Yvonne Sidell



*“... no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love Him...”*

*--1 Corinthians 2:9*

Is your life everything God expects it to be? Are you living the life that you desire to live in Christ?

If not, you need to know that there is an essential spiritual key that will change your life forever. That key is to be spiritually engaged with Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit! As you become increasingly engaged through the power of the Spirit, he begins a process of renewing, reinvigorating, and restoring every aspect of your life.

Through the Holy Spirit, you'll pray with renewed passion and power. You'll worship with greater joy and adoration. You'll feel more confident to share your faith. You'll even become a better spouse and parent.

But the changes won't stop with just your life... you will find that your world will change, too!

If you doubt it, just consider that first group of believers two thousand years ago. They were armed with nothing but the simple yet powerful message of the Gospel... and the power of the Holy Spirit. And they turned the world upside down!

Don't you long to see that happen? God does...and He desires it even more that you do! All you have to do is yield control of your life to the Holy Spirit.

Experience all that Jesus has for you! Yield to the Holy Spirit today and watch him transform your life in a powerful way... forever!

# January Birthdays & Anniversaries

## Birthdays

Diane Robertson	1
Lauryn Adolph	4
Edward Avakoff	4
Daniel Tate	5
Sandy Schowengerdt	14
Teresa Murakami	15
Jean Ozeki	22
Rev. Karen Swanson	26
George Gardiner	30
Ali LeBlanc	31



**Happy**   
**Anniversary**

Torrie & Jim McAllister-Miller 21