



The SPIRE

The Newsletter of the
Episcopal Church of the Ascension,
Sierra Madre, California



JANUARY

Upcoming Events

January 1st - Happy New Year!
Parish Office Closed!

January 12th - Noon/Library
Parish Ministry Council Meeting

January 15th - House Church/Dinner
6:30pm/Cox Family Home

January 20th - MLK Day
Parish Office Closed!

January 21st - Vestry Meeting
7:00pm/Hawks Hall

From the Rector



Jobi & Alisson McGuffie
playing the piano at the
Christmas day service.

As we enter a new decade, it's worthwhile taking some time to reflect on what we have to be grateful for as well as to anticipate what lies ahead. Personally, on behalf of my colleagues and myself, we're very thankful for the generosity shown to us in the "Clergy Purse." I'm grateful for the diversity of gifts and talents our parishioners and staff bring to our life together. I appreciate how our congregation responds to missional giving opportunities such as E R & D, Friends in Deed, and Hillsides.

Looking forward, our Parish Annual Meeting is coming up at the end of the month on January 26th. There, we will elect a new Vestry, hear reports, and get a look at our budget. Hopefully, we will have encouraging news of the status of our roofing project. Also, in January, we are looking forward to resuming House Church on one Wednesday evening a month. A new opportunity for men will be starting in January – gathering at a local restaurant for food and fellowship.

All in all, there is much to be grateful for and much to look forward to.

Blessings, MAB+

ANNUAL MEETING Sunday, January 26th

10:30am
Hawks Hall

- ◇ Only (1) Mass on Sunday, January 26th, at 9:30am.
- ◇ No Sunday School
- ◇ A Structured Potluck will follow the meeting. (A sign-up sheet will be placed on the Events Table in Hawks Hall)

Go to page 2 for more
information about the
Annual Meeting.



2019 Ascension Christmas Outreach

Thanks to everyone who participated in the Christmas Outreach project with Hillsides. Together Ascension donated **\$720** worth of Ralphs and Food4Less gift cards. Hillsides distributed them at Christmas-time to the folks that they serve that were in significant need.

Thank You,
Scott Callihan, Outreach Ministry Leader



Hillsides

11th Annual Women's Room Thanksgiving Luncheon



After expenses were paid out for the luncheon, Ascension was able to donate **\$628.76** to the Women's Room at Friends in Deed. Many thanks to the families who donated financially to this year's luncheon.

Bamberger, Cox, Donagan, Rhodus, Rowe, Tobin, Higgins, Calleton, Swan, Dougall, Farrow, Reagan, and Walton.

December 2019 Pledge Payment Snapshot



2019 Budget \$220,881

YTD Budget: \$220,881

YTD Actual: \$215,788

Difference: \$-5,093

House Church Resumes on January 15th

House Church and Dinner resumes on Wednesday, January 15th at the Cox family home at 6:30pm. Look for the sign-up sheet on the Events Table in Hawks Hall.

Please contact the church office if you need the address.



Everything you always wanted to know about *The Annual Meeting (but)*



Why do we have an Annual Meeting? Our parish for legal purposes is a corporation. We have Parish Bylaws

which correspond to the Canons of the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Los Angeles. These state that our parish as well as every parish must have an Annual Meeting to elect “directors” which form the Vestry. The Vestry has responsibility for the “temporalities” of the parish. As in other congregations, it is the custom at Ascension that reports for the previous year are received, the budget for the next year, which the Vestry has already passed, is presented, and other business may be conducted. Occasionally, the Bylaws may be amended. Our Parish Bylaws state that the Rector presides, or in the absence of the Rector, the Senior Warden presides. At the Annual Meeting, we follow standard parliamentary procedure.

Who can attend? Everyone interested in our parish can attend the Annual Meeting. It is required that the time and place be announced beforehand. Our Parish Bylaws require us to have present twenty members who can vote to have a quorum.

Who can vote? The Diocesan Canons were changed a few years ago to include persons sixteen years and older as adult communicants in good standing. The canons were amended this year to essentially specify that in order to be an elector they must be:

- ⇒ An adult member of this parish who has received Holy Communion in this parish at least three times during the preceding year.
- ⇒ An adult communicant of this parish who for the previous year has been faithful in corporate worship, unless for good cause prevented, and has been faithful in working, praying, and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God, in order to be considered a communicant in good standing.

A list of our qualified electors has been published by the Vestry, and *will be* posted on the bulletin board in Hawks Hall. Our Parish Bylaws and the canons do not permit either proxies or absentee ballots.

Who can be elected to the Vestry? Our Parish Bylaws and the Canons state that anyone qualified to vote at the Annual Meeting can be elected to the Vestry. Our Parish Bylaws also state that a member of our Vestry must be a confirmed communicant and cannot be a member of another church. **It is expected (but not required) that anyone serving on the Vestry must be willing to commit the time necessary to serve, be regular in their attendance, be an example of good stewardship, and have a passion for the work of Christ in this parish.** Some folks have already been nominated either by the nominating committee or by indicating their desire to run, and there will be time during the meeting for nominations from the floor as well.

Serving on the Vestry... Each year at our Annual Meeting, the parish elects a new class of vestry members – this year we will be electing three persons for regular three year terms. The “job description” includes being a committed member of the parish who is regular in attendance and giving and who is willing to offer his or her gifts for the leadership of this parish. Vestry members may have particular responsibilities or portfolios and will be serving on such sub-committees as Finance, Insurance, and Operations & Property. Meetings are held monthly, and attendance at the annual workday/retreat is critical.



\$587 raised for the Hospitality Ministry!

Annual Holiday Shopping Party

Thank you to all who enjoyed the private holiday shopping party at Savor the Flavor on November 23rd. Savor the Flavor donated 10% of the proceeds (\$300) back to the church. Thank You to Jean Rowe for organizing the event.

Christmas Raffle

The Christmas raffle raised **\$287**. A BIG THANK YOU goes to Jo Mosier for her talent in making and donating the items listed below.

RAFFLE WINNERS

- Cross Stitch Nativity Set—Elizabeth Cundiff
- Cross Stitch Nativity Scene Picture—Linda Smith
- Christmas Afghan—Beth Smith-Kellock

Thank you to all who participated!

2020 VESTRY NOMINEES



Brian Williams ~ Brian traveled across the continent for most of a lifetime before finding a home here at Ascension Parish. When not discoursing on theology and church history with his dear friends at BTM (Between the Masses) or gratefully worshipping at the 10:15 mass, he can be found at St. John's Cathedral during the Compline service or St. James in the City for Choral Evensong.

Brian has committed his life toward exploring the possibility of understanding the function of the mammalian genome from first principles, as a Functional Genomics research scientist at the California Institute of Technology. He was blessed from birth to live in a loving, intact, working class family with many living ancestors, raised by two graduates of Martin Van Buren High School from Queens, New York. The young family migrated further east on Long Island, where he grew up active in Boy Scouting and athletics and worked part time from the age of 13 delivering the New York Daily News and later pushed loaded pallets around in a warehouse to earn money for college. Brian spent 2 undergraduate years at Tufts University, graduated from UC Berkeley, and earned a Ph.D. at UC San Francisco before arriving at Caltech for post-doctoral work.



Dan Hanson ~ Daniel L Hanson II, "Dan", lives with his wife Nicole and four children (Daniel, Reid, Bennett & Kennedy) in Pasadena. He works as a third-generation member of his family auto parts distribution business in as a Vice President and member of the board of directors. Dan grew up just over the border of Sierra Madre in Arcadia on Sierra Madre Boulevard and attended Maranatha High School while it was still in Sierra Madre. He was introduced to Church of The Ascension by Hal and Charity Barber, nearby neighbors and family friends. Dan earned a BA in English from Azusa Pacific University. He serves on the Executive Board of the California Automotive Wholesalers Association as Vice Chairman, as a member of the Board of Governors of

the Automotive Warehouse Distributors Association, and on the board of directors of Pasadena American Little League. Dan's favorite activities include coaching his children in baseball, reading, and following his beloved Boston Red Sox.



Connie Keith

Connie Keith began attending Ascension prior to getting married here in 1999 to Mark Keith. She and Mark have three girls – Coral (16), Faith (14), and Bailey (10). They all live a few blocks from the church. Connie has worked for many years as a dental hygienist. The girls are regular acolytes, and Connie and Mark serve as ushers at the 8am service. (There have been members of the Keith family on and off the Vestry over three generations for several decades!)



Matt Gorman

Matt Gorman and his wife Jamie and their daughters Lila and Nora began attending Ascension a few years ago. They live just a few doors down from the church on the other side of Baldwin. They are a Gooden family as well, Nora being in fourth grade. Originally attending the 8am service, they now are floating back and forth. Matt is a regular participant in the Between the Masses gathering. He is an attorney in private practice. Matt also is fluent in Mandarin!

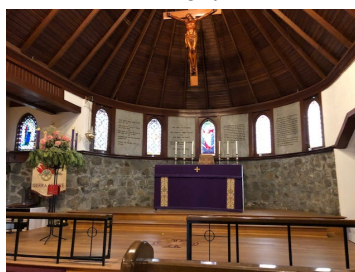
We are electing four members because there is an unexpired term to be filled. Dan Hanson is eligible to run because he filled the unexpired term of Carl Foote.

A message from St. Anne's Altar Guild...

A SINCERE THANK YOU TO ALL OF YOU WHO DONATED SO GENEROUSLY TO THE CHRISTMAS FLOWERS THIS YEAR. AS YOU SAW, THE POINSETTIAS WERE ABSOLUTELY SPECTACULAR. ALL IN ALL, THE SANCTUARY SHONE WITH LOVE, AND IT WAS DUE TO ALL OF YOU.



BEFORE



AFTER



REAL
LIFE. Real
Faith.

We live in a society that has us counting minutes, hours, days, weeks, and years. We count our pennies, dollars, and even our loose change. We count our calories and, for many of us, even our steps. I know I do.

As we begin 2020, some of us are counting the days until 2021; and doesn't that seem a little silly. So, I'm suggesting that we switch things up a bit. Be a rebel and find a little time each day to count your blessings instead of...well as the kids would say "whatever." So ~

Let us give thanks to God our Father for all his gifts so freely bestowed upon us.

For the beauty and wonder of your creation, in earth and sky and sea.

I thank you, Lord.

For all that is gracious in the lives of men and women, revealing the image of Christ.

I thank you, Lord.

For our daily food and drink, our homes and families, and our friends.

I thank you, Lord.

For minds to think, and hearts to love, and hands to serve.

I thank you, Lord.

For health and strength to work, and leisure to rest and play.

I thank you, Lord.

For the brave and courageous, who are patient in suffering and faithful in adversity.

I thank you, Lord.

For all valiant seekers after truth, liberty, and justice.

I thank you, Lord.

For the communion of saints, in all times and places.

I thank you, Lord.

Above all, I give thanks for the great mercies and promises given to us in Christ Jesus our Lord;

To him be praise and glory, with you, O Father, and the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

(Book of Common Prayer p.837)

Live well, live blessed, and start counting.

May the New Year bring you unimaginable blessing.

Deacon Ed+

P.S. And I personally give thanks for the Ascension community that enriches my life day after day.

AS YOU CAN SEE FROM THE PICTURES, IT TAKES HOURS AND MANY HELPERS TO TRANSITION FROM ADVENT TO CHRISTMAS. FROM GREENING ON SATURDAY, DEC. 21 AND THEN DECORATING ON MONDAY, DEC. 23, IT TOOK ABOUT 6 HOURS TOTAL WITH ALL WORKING TO:

- ◇ PUT UP GARLANDS, WREATHS, AND RE-WORK THE ADVENT WREATH
- ◇ SET UP AND GREEN THE BACKDROP FOR THE NATIVITY SCENE
- ◇ PREP AND CHANGE CANDLES AND THE FRONTAL ON THE ALTAR, SET UP IN THE SACRISTY
- ◇ PUT UP BOWS ON BOUGHS AND ARRANGE THE POINSETTIAS
- ◇ TRANSPORT CRECHE FIGURES TO THE BACK OF THE CHURCH
- ◇ ARRANGE HYMNALS IN PEWS AND SWEEP UP



MANY THANKS TO ALL THE HANDS THAT MADE THIS POSSIBLE – MEMBERS OF ST. ANNE'S ALTAR GUILD AS WELL AS CHRIS BAMBERGER, RYAN LAREAU, JAY CALLETON, ADDISON LAREAU, CHRISTIAN KEEZER AND KATHRYN KEEZER.



NOTES FROM THE LOFT

My sincere thanks to Ascension's choristers for their beautiful music throughout Advent and, especially, on Christmas Eve! It's indeed a privilege for me to partner with them in making music unto the Lord.

My appreciation also to Susan Beach, Liz Levie, Carol Rasmussen, and Chris Bamberger for their assistance with the *Classical Christmas* concert by the AlmaNova Duo, Jessica Pierce and Almer Imamovic, on the 14th. If you weren't able to attend this year, you'll definitely want to put it on the calendar for next year ~ it really was a tremendous concert enjoyed by all.

Looking ahead to the first month of 2020 (can it really be?! ~

January 5 ~ Christmas 2

Music of Alfred Burt ~ *O Hearken Ye* and *All On A Christmas Morning*

January 12 ~ Epiphany 1 ~ the Baptism of Christ

Walter Kendall Stanton's *Christ Is The World's True Light* and the hauntingly beautiful *Heavenly Light* by Aleksandr Kopylow

January 19 – Epiphany 2

In 1992 an extraordinary musician by the name of Mark Schweizer founded St. James Music Press in North Carolina, offering a new way to think about church anthems. A subscription service, St. James allows churches online access to its complete library, including permission to print out any of its works for choral use. The library is particularly appropriate for small church choirs such as ours, and many of St. James' works have been presented here at Ascension. In addition to overseeing the press, Mark composed many of its anthems; he also authored the absurd, hysterical liturgical mystery series, featuring the fictional Episcopal choir director/detective Hayden Konig. Sadly, Mark passed away on November 9 at the age of 63. In a tribute to him, churches across the country have been invited to feature one or more of his anthems during January and to send the bulletin to St. James for posterity. Ascension's choir will be presenting his *Canticle of Thanksgiving* and *I Lift My Eyes Unto the Hills*.

January 26 ~ Epiphany 3

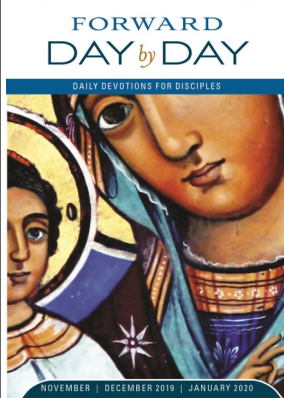
There's A Wideness in God's Mercy by Maurice Bevan and James Hopkins' *My God, My Portion*

May the joy of music fill your hearts and souls throughout the coming year ~

*Come, let us anew our journey pursue,
Roll round with the year, and never stand still, till the Master appear;
His adorable will let us gladly fulfill,
And our talents improve by the patience of hope, and the labour of love.
~Charles Wesley*



Debora Huffman, Director of Music and Organist



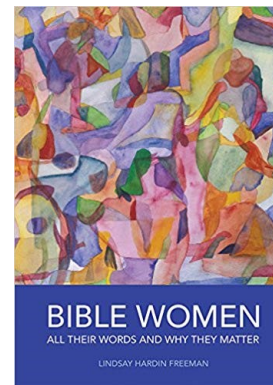
Pick up a copy of the new Forward Movement Day by Day booklet. Copies can be found at the back of the church and on the reception table in Hawks Hall.

A \$2 donation is requested.

New Bible Study begins January 12.

Ever think that women in the Bible are given short shrift? Well, here's an opportunity to focus on these women using Lindsay Hardin Freeman's book **Bible Women: All Their Words and Why They Matter** as the foundation reading material.

Our small group meets in the library between services.



WE ARE HOSTED!

Thanks to the hospitality of six hosts, we will be restarting House Church on Wednesday evening January 15.

So, put the following dates on your January – June 2020 calendar:

January 15—Cox Family
 February 19—Meehan Family
 March 18—Copeland Family
 April 15—Hanson Family
 May 20—McGuffie Family
 June 17—Jean Rowe



Note: We are meeting on Wednesdays this year so that choir members can participate.

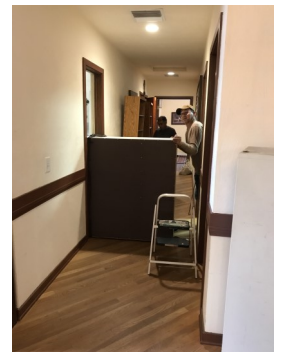
I am so pleased to report this good news. What a great way to start the secular new year. See you at the Cox family home this January. Look for the sign-up sheet on the Events Table in Hawks Hall. **Jean Rowe**

Carpet Replacement Pictures (December 10 –12, 2019)

Thank You to Ray Smith, Chris Bamberger, Lisa Wagner, Lynne and John Holl, Deacon Ed, the Choir, and Gordon and Diane Tomaske for helping out! Next time you are at the church, take a peek at the new carpeting!



Pictures show the old carpeting.





Christmas Services at Ascension 2019



Our vision is that *The Episcopal Church of the Ascension* serves Christ today for those who will come to know Christ tomorrow.

WORSHIP, FORMATION, PASTORAL CARE, FELLOWSHIP, OUTREACH, PRESENCE
25 E. Laurel Avenue, Sierra Madre, CA 91024 ~ 626-355-1133 www.ascension-sierramadre.com

JANUARY 2020

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 NEW YEARS DAY-OFFICE CLOSED	2	3	4
5 8am Mass 9am Xian Ed. Hour/Sunday School 9am-10am-Between the Masses Discussion Group 10:00am Childcare 10:15am Mass 11:45am Discernment Cmt Mtg/Library	6 8:15am—Gr 5-8 Gooden Chapel 9am—Gr K-4 Gooden Chapel 2pm—2:50pm Gooden Mindfulness Class/Hall Fr. Bamberger Out of Office / Clergy Group Retreat	7 10am Prayer in the Library 2pm—2:50pm Gooden Mindfulness Class/Hall	8 8:45am—1:30pm Gooden Drama Classes/Hall 5:30pm Yoga/Hall	9 7am Mass 8:15am—Gooden Chapel w/Eucharist 9am Forum 10:15am Staff Mtg 3pm- 6pm-Organist Rehearsal/Church 7:30pm—Choir Rehearsal/Hall	10 Spiritual Direction Rectors Office 10:30am Private	11
12 8am Mass 9am Xian Ed. Hour/Sunday School 9am-10am-Between the Masses Discussion Group 10:00am Childcare 10:15am Mass 11:45am Discernment Cmt Mtg/Library Noon—PMC Mtg/Library	13 8:15am—Gr 5-8 Gooden Chapel 9am—Gr K-4 Gooden Chapel 2pm—2:50pm Gooden Mindfulness Class/Hall Pasadena Photochromers Meeting (private) Hawks Hall 6:30pm—9:30pm	14 10am Prayer in the Library 2pm—2:50pm Gooden Mindfulness Class/Hall Hall Inspection for new voting requirements Between 9am—2pm	15 8:45am—1:30pm Gooden Drama Classes/Hall 5:30pm Yoga/Hall House Church/Dinner 6:30pm Cox Family Home	16 7am Mass 8:15am—Gooden Chapel 9am Forum 3pm- 6pm-Organist Rehearsal/Church 7:30pm—Choir Rehearsal/Hall	17	18
19 8am Mass 9am Xian Ed. Hour/Sunday School 9am-10am-Between the Masses Discussion Group 10:00am Childcare 10:15am Mass 11:45am Discernment Cmt Mtg/Library	20 MLK DAY OFFICE CLOSED	21 10am Prayer in the Library 2pm—2:50pm Gooden Mindfulness Class/Hall Daisy Troop Meeting Hall 4pm-5:30pm Vestry Mtg Hall/7pm	22 8:45am—1:30pm Gooden Drama Classes/Hall 5:30pm Yoga/Hall	23 7am Mass 8:15am—Gooden Chapel 9am Forum 10:15am Staff Mtg 3pm- 6pm-Organist Rehearsal/Church 7:30pm—Choir Rehearsal/Hall	24	25
26 ANNUAL MEETING/ STRUCTURED POTLUCK 10:30am Hawks Hall ◇ Only (1) Mass at 9:30am. ◇ No Sunday School	27 8:15am—Gr 5-8 Gooden Chapel 9am—Gr K-4 Gooden Chapel 2pm—2:50pm Gooden Mindfulness Class/Hall Photochromers Meeting (private) Hawks Hall 6:30pm—9:30pm	28 10am Prayer in the Library 2pm—2:50pm Gooden Mindfulness Class/Hall	29 8:45am—1:30pm Gooden Drama Classes/Hall 5:30pm Yoga/Hall	30 7am Mass 8:15am—Gooden Chapel 9am Forum 3pm- 6pm-Organist Rehearsal/Church 7:30pm—Choir Rehearsal/Hall	31	

Spire Creator: Kim Lumino, Parish Administrator