

The SPIRE

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



2013

Upcoming Events

August 3rd -
Parish Work Party

August 4th -
Mass celebrated by
The Rev'd Jennifer Beal

Sunday, August 4th
@ 5pm

Community of Friends
Evening Service

**SAVE
THE
DATE**

August 10th -
Bishop's Conference/Hands in
Healing ~ Community Safety Forum

August 20th -
Vestry Meeting

August 22nd -
Daughters of the King Meet

August 24th -
Women's Fellowship Potluck
Luncheon

August 25th -
Parish Ministry Council Meeting

August 30th -
LA Episcopal Dodger Night

From the Rector

So what does the Petersen Automotive Museum have to do with the Church of the Ascension? The short answer is not much at all. But you may have read recently in the papers, or heard on the news, that the Petersen Automotive Museum is selling of some of their vehicles in order to raise funds for a building project. The interest in the press seems to revolve around standard practices in the larger museum community, the obligation of trustees to adhere to the wishes of donors, and in a larger sense, the stewardship of the museum and the vision of its founder.

When it comes to gifts made to the Church and stewardship of our endowment and property, we deal with some of the same concerns here at the Church of the Ascension. Your Vestry takes seriously and faithfully its fiduciary responsibility. (The word fiduciary is derived from the Latin word *fide* – faith.) We are in the midst of completing our audit of the fiscal year 2012. We do so under the guidelines of the Episcopal Church and standard auditing procedures. We never “Make it up as we go.” At Ascension, we are very deliberate with the gifts that we have been given over the years. You may have noticed the beautiful new small figure of Our Lady of Walsingham on the mantle in Hawks Hall. It was given by Richard Lottridge and Felix Vega in memory of Catherine Turney. Richard told me to place it where I thought best. Alas, over the years, Ascension has received some gifts which did not prove so agreeable and easily administered. A certain large painting in the Parish House comes to mind. But the point is, we shouldn't receive a gift and not honor the intent of the donor. Sometimes this means being willing to say “Thank you, but perhaps your gift could be used best by some other worthy cause.” Of course, monetary gifts are easier to administrate. In the larger sense, the Vestry is charged with being stewards of the Church of the Ascension – its property and its resources. In times of change and different needs, they still must be true to the mission and ministry of being the Episcopal Church in this community. And while I'm talking about gifts and stewardship, I would encourage all of us to review the arrangements we have made for, as the Prayer Book states on page 445, *“The Minister of the Congregation is directed to instruct the people, from time to time, about the duty of Christian parents to make prudent provision for the well-being of their families, and of all persons to make wills, while they are in health, arranging for the disposal of their temporal goods, not neglecting, if they are able, to leave bequests for religious and charitable uses.”*



Our Lady of Walsingham

And as best as I can recall, the one time Ascension was given a car, was for the purpose of use by a seminarian with a sale at the end of it being needed. And we sold it in the end. It was just what Cathy Turney wanted.

MAB+

Financial Snapshot

January - July 2013

Amount Pledged: \$172,833

Amount Received: \$104,719

Difference: \$68,114



**Is your pledge
current?**



True or False: Pray?

“Man is, at one and the same time, a solitary being and a social being. As a solitary being, he attempts to protect his own existence and that of those who are closest to him, to satisfy his personal desires, and to develop his innate abilities. As a social being, he seeks to gain the recognition and affection of his fellow human beings, to share in their pleasures, to comfort them in their sorrows, and to improve their conditions of life.” Albert Einstein

True or False: Men don't know what it means to be a man anymore.

True or False: Men don't eat quiche.

True or False: Men don't cry.

Historically, men have been expected to solve problems, build things, and be soldiers in a war. They have been the breadwinners for their families, presidents of their companies, and leaders in their communities. In our predominantly patriarchal society, the role of men has always been clearly understood — but that's changing. As we move toward a global community, men's traditional roles have changed significantly. We are not necessarily our fathers' stereotypes.

True or False: Men easily reach out and ask each other for some extra help.

True or False: Men express their spirituality differently from women.

True or False: Men just have to suck it up.

During the last few years, I've spent a great deal of time and invested a great amount of energy into my own spiritual awakening...a journey which I believe we are all called to take and a journey particularly difficult for men. I'm convinced that part of masculine healing is understanding that we (men) are not alone and learning that personal awakening and sharing go hand in hand.

True or False: Men and women come to God in the same way.

Experience tells me that there are different paths because men and women pay attention to different things...ask any marketer. Spiritual awakening is a challenge for anyone, and for men it is especially difficult to integrate more sensitive inner qualities into a way of living without losing touch with our masculine energy. The goal is not to become a sensitive, new age guy, but instead to embrace our wholeness.

I would like to extend an invitation to come together, reach out, and ask each other for a little help. Think of it as a wake-up call to shake us free from our old stereotypes about masculinity. On October 12, 2013, we will be beginning a men's group “**REAL MEN**” to do just that...learn to appreciate our masculinity, face reality, our souls, and our place in the gospel and in society.

8:30 AM – 10:00 AM
Church of the Ascension
Hawks Hall



At the first gathering we'll decide future dates/times that work best for the group and go from there. Please invite your friends; the group is open to any and all male seekers.

True or False: I'm going to contact Deacon Ed today at deaconed@gmail.com and RSVP.

Thanks be to God!

How many times have we heard these words as Episcopalians or for those of us who have been at Ascension for several years? How many times can we remember longtime parishioner Rex Levie saying "Thanks be to God" with a joyous voice at the end of a service? I, for one, can't hear those words without remembering that voice, and it is that memory that gives this year's Stewardship Campaign its theme.

We say these words together, but what do they mean to us individually? In 2 Corinthians we read "thanks be to God for his indescribable gifts" and what better time than during the stewardship season to think about God's gifts and the gifts we, as parishioners at Ascension, share with God. In September you will receive the annual stewardship packet and be asked to return the pledge card sharing your time, talent, and treasures for the 2014 church year. As I begin to reflect on the gifts God has given me, many starting at Ascension, I realize my 35-year "stewardship gift-giving path" has had many curves. It first started out with coins in the offering plate to several years that included both treasures & time and then other years more time than treasures with a little bit of talent thrown in (Fr. Mike used to say I would have been the perfect youth director if I had learned to play the guitar...its our running joke). Guitar or not, I continue to give what I can when I can and know I am blessed to have God and Ascension in my life.

So the next time you hear or say "Thanks be to God," take a moment to consider the gifts in your life and what stewardship gifts you will share next year with your church family.

Susan Clifton
Stewardship Committee



Do you have time to spare?

The next Parish Work Party is Saturday, August 3rd. The focus for this work party is painting. All are welcome for this fun time! Starts at 8:30 am.

Attention Youth...Mark your calendar!

Community Garden Planting

Sunday, August 4th

9-10 AM

****Please wear sunscreen and work clothes****



NOTES FROM THE LOFT

Thanks to soloists Charley Noecker and Susan Beach for enriching our worship this past month and to Geraldine Keeling for substituting for me the last two Sundays of the month – as well as to Paul Stein, Gerry’s collaborator, violinist from the LA Phil.

During August we’ll enjoy soloists Lavette Teague and Mark Riebs, as well as a women’s quartet comprised of Susan Beach, Colette Ostrye, Carol Rasmussen, and Keiko Sakatani.

Enjoy the rest of your summer – before long fall will be upon us. I’ll be back next month with some fall previews for you.

Debora Huffman, Director of Music and Organist



Bedtime Prayers

As a child I was taught to pray each night before going to bed:

*Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep,
If I shall die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take. Amen.*

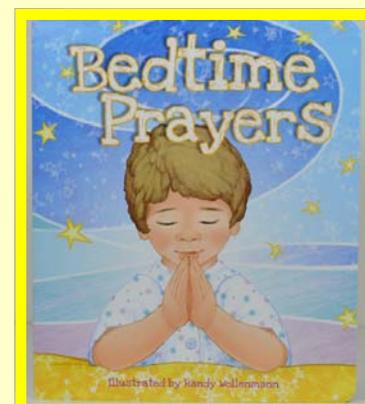
The nightly ritual of reciting it as well as a large needlepoint wall hanging in my room embedded that prayer into my memory. As I grew older and gained more understanding, I became disturbed about praying about my possible death during the night. At some point (around age 8), I decided that no child of mine would have to say that prayer. As I grew in my own faith, the Lord’s Prayer became my default; and that was the first prayer my child was taught.

Father Michael’s recent sermon about the Lord’s Prayer caused me to pause and reflect on the deep impact this prayer has truly had in my own life. As my daughter has grown throughout the years, the Lord’s Prayer has been the one constant. No matter how the day has been, no matter what changes and challenges life has presented, we say the Lord’s Prayer together each night marking the conclusion of our day together. As my daughter continues to grow, I have realized that she is rapidly on her way into truly knowing this prayer and the power of the words she speaks as opposed to just saying the words.

The words of this prayer are truly a gift to us all. I find myself most thankful for the many cherished memories I have acquired while teaching this prayer to my daughter. One thing I have learned myself is that the Lord’s Prayer can be quite a challenge for a little one to learn! Through the years, it has been powerful watching my daughter apply what she has learned during her day as she recites the Lord’s Prayer. The discipline has also yielded many special interpretations during our bedtime ritual. She is growing too quickly, and we are now in a place where she has it down “perfect.” Although proud of her, I’m not ashamed to admit that I will miss many of her varied misunderstandings or substitutions of different words. With that, I have compiled many of her “kids say the darndest things” into one full version:

**Our Father whose art is in heaven,
Halloween be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done
On earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily Gummy-Nummies,
and forgive us for our dresses,
as we forgive those who put dresses on us,
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from Cruella D’evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory.
For ever Endeavour.
Amen.**

Jobi Harrell, Minister to Younger Persons



Our August **Spotlight on Singers** features tenor **Lavette Teague**, who is well-known to many of you. Hopefully this article will give you greater insight into who Lavette is and why he sings in the choir. Lavette began attending Ascension during the summer of 1993 and believes he joined the choir that fall.

Lavette is a professor emeritus of Computer Information Systems from the California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, where he taught systems analysis and design. Following the receipt of his bachelor's degree at MIT, he returned there after becoming involved with computers, receiving a master's degree and a doctorate in the area of computer applications to building design and construction.

Dr. Teague grew up in Birmingham, Alabama, at a time when the public schools taught sight singing in elementary school and has sung with choral groups almost ever since – church choirs, high school and college glee clubs and choruses – in everything from masses to musicals to opera choruses. While at MIT, he sang with the glee club at the dedication of the Kresge Auditorium on campus, including a work commissioned from Aaron Copland for the occasion. He was also in the chorus at the dedication of the War Memorial Auditorium in Boston, singing the first performance of a setting by Daniel Pinkham of the song of the three young men in the fiery furnace.

Also an avid opera goer, Lavette remembers well the visits of the Metropolitan Opera Company to the great barn of the Municipal Auditorium in Birmingham – hearing Pons, Thebom, Milanov, Del Monaco, Stevens, and other stars of the 1960s there. He's seen staged performances of 119 different operas to date.

Retirement has given Lavette extra time to travel. He's visited nearly every country in Western Europe, South America except for the countries on its northern edge, Morocco, Vietnam, Cambodia, India, and Australia. Japan is next on the list.

A favorite quotation of Lavette's ~

*. . . this I know,
that often when I sang
I found my eternity.*

◆ Rabindranath Tagore

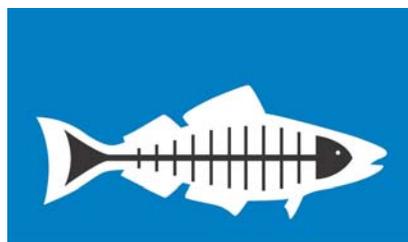
Debora Huffman, Director of Music and Organist



Hands in Healing Community Safety Forums

Bishop Diocesan J. Jon Bruno invites all in the Diocese of Los Angeles to join him in six county-based forums focused on community safety and outreach to reduce violence.

Los Angeles County
Saturday, August 10
10 am - 12 noon
St. Augustine by-the-Sea Church
1227 4th Street, Santa Monica



Heal the Bay

SAVE THE DATE
Coastal Clean Up Day
 September 21, 2013

Ascension is joining the largest volunteer day on the planet!

Coastal Clean Up takes place the third Saturday of every September. Heal the Bay coordinates more than 60 beach, inland, dive and kayak cleanup sites in L.A. County for all to participate. This event is open to every member of the parish, and families and youth are encouraged to participate. If you are interested in other ways to help, we will also be in need of drivers to the beach we are assigned to. More information to come.

Contact: Jobi Harrell 626-710-3021

Ministry Commissioning Sunday

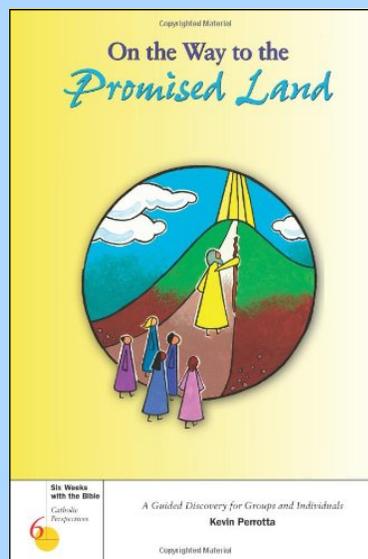
...and Beyond

Ascension's fall season begins on **Sunday September 8** with the commissioning of our core ministry leaders. This commissioning will take place at both services. Over the following six Sundays, the focus will be on publicizing the work of one of the six core ministries during the service and at coffee hour. Look forward to learning more about the fall plans of each of our ministries in the September's Spire.

New Small Groups Study on Sunday's

The Israelites Wilderness Experience

Join Jean Rowe in the Library from
 9am—10am



Los Angeles Dodgers
Episcopal Night

Dodgers vs. Padres
Friday, August 30th, at 7:00 p.m.



The Dodgers Welcome
The Diocese of Los Angeles!
Help put Bishop Glasspool on the
mound for the first pitch!

Tickets only \$15!
Fireworks after the game!!

Call Mike Beach for tickets.
Deadline is Sunday, August 4th

Join us for the next...

Women's Fellowship Potluck Luncheon

Saturday, August 24th
11:30am
Hawks Hall

All women of the church are welcome.
Bring a friend!



You're Invited!

New to Ascension!



Some of you may have noticed that next to the entrance to the parish office, there is now a door bell. What you may not have noticed is the video camera above the door. This system enables our Parish Administrator – Kim Lumino - to see who is coming up to the door. When she is the only one in the building, the door will be locked, and visitors will be able to ring the doorbell.

In light of security concerns around churches, the Vestry believes this is the prudent approach.



*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

August 2013

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 7am Mass 9am Forum 10:30am Staff Mtg	2	3 Parish Work Party 8:30 am Fr. Bamberger at Camp Stevens
4 7:30am Morning Prayer (Rite I) 8am Mass 9am Christian Ed. Hour 10:15am Mass Mass celebrated by The Rev'd Jennifer Beal Community of Friends Service at 5pm	5	6 11am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group	7 5:30pm Yoga 6pm Mass	8 7am Mass 9am Forum	9	10 Bishop's Conference/ Hands in Healing ~ Community Safety Forum *Santa Monica*
Fr. Bamberger at Camp Stevens Aug 3—Aug 10						
11 7:30am Morning Prayer (Rite I) 8am Mass 9am Christian Ed. Hour 10:15am Mass	12	13 11am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group	14 5:30pm Yoga 6pm Mass	15 7am Mass 9am Forum 10:30am Staff Mtg	16	17
18 7:30am Morning Prayer (Rite I) 8am Mass 9am Christian Ed. Hour 10:15am Mass	19	20 11am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group 7pm Vestry Meeting	21 5:30pm Yoga 6pm Mass	22 7am Mass 9am Forum DOK MEETING Contact Jobi Harrell for details	23	24 Women's Fellowship Potluck Luncheon 11:30 am
25 7:30am Morning Prayer (Rite I) 8am Mass 9am Xian Ed. Hour 10:15am Mass Noon PMC Meeting	26 SEPTEMBER SPIRE ARTICLES DUE	27 11am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group	28 5:30pm Yoga 6pm Mass	29 7am Mass 9am Forum	30 LA Episcopal Dodger Night 7:00 pm	31

STAYING CONNECTED THROUGH THE WEEK



SEARCH FOR: Sierra Madre Episcopal Church of the Ascension

Connect with fellow parishioners!



CHANNEL NAME: AscensionSierraMadre (1 word)

Videos of Parish Events, Special Services, and more!