



# The SPIRE

2013

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



## Upcoming Events

September 29th -  
Fellowship Ministry Celebration

October 5th -  
Parish Work Party

On  
Sunday, October 6th

**Blessing of the  
Animals Service  
at 11:45 am**



**Community of Friends  
Evening Service @ 5pm**

October 12th -  
1st Gathering of 'Real Men'  
Ministry

October 13th -  
Despedida for Larry & Gail Skiles

October 15th -  
Vestry Meeting

October 19th -  
Stewardship Meeting

October 20th -  
Parish Ministry Council Meeting

October 24th -  
Daughters of the King Meet

October 27th -  
Gooden School Sunday  
Youth Halloween Party

November 3rd -  
Birthday Celebration for  
Father Wood  
2013 Crop Walk

## From the Rector

It is so easy to take for granted the basic things in life – water, food, shelter, indoor plumbing, being able to communicate with loved ones. Those of us with even a modest income seldom consider life without these elements. But over the course of a couple of days, and in some places hours, tens of thousands of folks living on what is called the Front Range of Colorado and many more downstream had all of these basics disrupted by torrential rains.

Whole communities were cut off by washed out roads. Water systems, power grids, sewer treatment plants, telephone lines, and cellular towers were destroyed. Seven persons are confirmed to have been killed. And thousands are left homeless. In one area, miles away from the mountains, entire communities were flooded when the swollen rivers breached their levees and overflowed their banks. In Evans, entire mobile home parks were overwhelmed. Living in these were hundreds of families and extended families of Latino heritage who, for the most part, are the working poor.



Evans Colorado

One family I spoke with owned their mobile home and were in the process of trying to buy their first house. They were born in Phoenix and have two daughters. He owns his barbershop in nearby Greely. They lost almost everything but were thankful that they got out. They didn't know where all their neighbors had dispersed to.

I also heard stories that warmed my heart. At an impromptu volunteer coordination center that sprang up on its own in Estes Park, I heard about one couple. Estes Park is a lovely community high in the Rockies, a summer and fall vacation destination. This couple presented themselves at the center and offered to do whatever work there was to do. When asked where they lived, they replied "Kansas." It seems they had been coming to Estes Park for a two week vacation for many years and enjoyed hiking and relaxing there. The place they had rented was unaffected by the flooding, so they decided to come to Colorado anyway. But instead of hiking and relaxing, they came to work helping others.

The process of recovery will be long and arduous. But with people determined to recover and people from all over helping, the "new normal" will emerge. So count your blessings. I know I will. **Blessings, MAB+**

### Attention Ascension Parishioners!

We would like to recognize Ascension Veterans (living and deceased) in our Choral Evensong (scheduled for Sunday, November 10th) bulletin. Please submit your name by emailing the parish office at [parish@ascension-sierramadre.com](mailto:parish@ascension-sierramadre.com) or calling the office at 626-355-1133. Thank You!

## *To be or not to be.....*

Every now and again we step out of our comfort zone to make a point, make an impression, challenge ourselves, challenge others, to set an example, prove a point, and sometimes to make a difference.

Recently I spoke to you about an unlikely role model who had something to teach the church. Some of you were wondering why I chose to do it from the pulpit. Well, I did it for a lot of reasons - many of them mentioned above. However, upon reflection, I'm realizing that the view from the pulpit is second to none; and from where I stood, the vista was amazing. There before me were the faces of role models – some obvious, well at least to me; some unlikely; some auditioning; and some completely unaware of their status. There were even a few in search of a role model and a few whose eyes reflected their strong desire to want to make a difference and be a role model themselves. My guess is that they already are and simply don't realize it. To you I say: "it's time – come out of the closet."

Role models are important. They help us to become the person we want to be and inspire us to make a difference. Choosing role models wisely means that you are influenced correctly as you strive to be the best person you can be. To be like someone, you have to work hard.

LeBron James was asked to comment on what it takes to be a good role model. Here's what he had to say: "Commitment is a big part of what I am and what I believe. How committed are you to winning? How committed are you to being a good friend? To being trustworthy? To being successful? How committed are you to being a good father, a good teammate, a good role model? There's that moment every morning when you look in the mirror: Are you committed, or are you not?"

I think I'll leave it there – "are you committed, or are you not?"

**Deacon Ed+**



### **Thanks and Congratulations!**

On Saturday September 21st, eleven Ascension Parishioners joined 11,000 other volunteers for Heal the Bay's 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Coastal Cleanup Day. More than 24,055 lbs of trash were picked up over 32 miles of Los Angeles County. That figure doesn't include the bulky items (like the chaise lounge found on Cabrillo State beach or the 120 pounds of carpeting found on Dockweiler Beach) that the city of Los Angeles will collect, weigh, and report!



Thomas Ruble, Annie Marquardt,  
and Liz Levie

***Submitted by Jobi Harrell, Minister to Younger Persons***

Emma, Jessica, and Billy Allen, Annie Marquardt, and Maya.

# STEWARDSHIP FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

NOT EQUAL GIFTS BUT EQUAL SACRIFICE

Webster's Dictionary defines "stewardship" as "the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one's care." The annual Stewardship Campaign is the opportunity for parishioners to assume that trust by contributing to the financial well-being of the parish, enabling the continuance of the programs, services, and staff we value. Stewardship is also about volunteering the time and talent necessary for the continuance of the six core ministries that form the framework of the Ascension community. The church's operation and the ministries simply would not exist without our financial, time, and talent contributions!

I remind myself often that we adults are the role models for children and youth in every capacity. They will be the future stewards of Ascension, and we must provide daily examples for them. We can have our children assist us in our time and talent contributions so that they begin experiencing that wonderful feeling that emanates from giving.

If each of us gives what we can in any combination of dollars, time, and talent, our beloved Church of the Ascension will continue through the generations.

**Wendy Stockly**  
**Member, Stewardship Committee**

*When you are most anxious and uncertain, would a warm smile, a caring touch, and a soft voice mean a lot to you? Would you know where to look? Would you expect to find them in a hospital?*

≡ SHARING IS CARING ≡



Anne & Joey

*Since 1996, Anne Shirvanian has been the face behind that smile, the hands of that caring touch, and that soft voice at Huntington Memorial Hospital. Every Thursday, you can find Anne in the surgical lounge dispensing her special brand of caring to anxious family members awaiting word about their loved ones in surgery. Whether it's just holding a hand, sharing information about recovery and discharge, getting a family to a quiet place to meet with doctors, or dispensing a dose of love and reassurance – Anne does it with a smile. In her words "it's my ministry and outreach. It's all about winning hearts with smiles." And to keep Joey happy, Anne volunteers answering the phones here at church on Wednesdays and is a part of our letter writing team. Don't know who Joey is....shame on you.*



## HIGHLIGHTS

We know fall is approaching as the mornings grow cooler and the Halloween décor haunts the aisles of most of the stores. We also know fall is arriving at Ascension with many of the traditional activities scheduled on the calendar. We are looking forward to the Blessing of the Animals, Gooden School Sunday, and the Celebrations of the Ministries.

At the September Vestry meeting, Larry Sawyer, treasurer for the diocese, met with us to discuss activities going on in the diocese and explain his role as treasurer. All congregations are obligated to pledge to the Mission Share fund of the diocese to help support its missions, communications, congregational development, camps, youth ministries, and public affairs. This meeting was an informative and beneficial dialog. As I learn more, I will pass it along. The Vestry is also working on a five year capital plan.

Through input from Mike Beach, Father Bamberger, parishioners, and Vestry members, we have identified 15 projects that need to be addressed over the next five years. Examples of the more immediate projects include replacement of some phone and cable lines, replacement of the Ascension sign facing Baldwin, repairs to low voltage lines, installation of a new fence, and work on the sprinkler system in the Memorial Garden. Over the next few years, we also need to implement systematic repairs to the Parish House which is an underutilized asset.

All these projects will require funding and some sweat equity. Hopefully you have received your pledge card, THANKS BE TO GOD, in your mail box. Special thanks to Pam Harrison, Susan Clifton, Lisa Reed, and Wendy Stockly for their hard work in preparing the pledge information and program for the fall. Please consider adding a little more to this year's pledge so that we can attend to these necessary Capital projects.

As we all notice "the browning" of Sierra Madre, the Vestry reviewed the church's water bills; and I am pleased to report that we are doing well with our conservation targets and not turning brown. Thank you Mike Beach and Father Mike for making these adjustments.

At a reception over Labor Day weekend, the Vestry and Board of Directors of the Gooden School met together to get better acquainted and to discuss mutual benefits of our long time affiliation. The reception was coordinated with Michael Butler, Gooden President, and Patty Patano, Head of the School. We are planning a round table discussion together in the fall to share ideas about how we can help each other grow and reach out to the community. The plans we make will have long term benefits for Ascension and its young families.

If you have not heard, congratulations to Susan Clifton for being recognized as Employee of the Year for Sierra Madre.

*Submitted by David Mole, Senior Warden*

This month's **Spotlight on Singers** completes the current choral roster with a focus on baritone **Ted Bosley**.

Ted grew up in San Francisco, where he sang in his church choir (with mother and sister) from the age of four. At eight he auditioned for the San Francisco Boys Chorus (singing the "Brother James Air"), where for five years he received a foundation in choral repertoire, theory, sight reading, and other skills. When his voice changed at the age of thirteen, he stopped singing. Ted earned degrees from UC Berkeley and UCLA before finding his way to his dream job with USC as Director of the Gamble House in 1990. By then he had not exercised his voice for many years. Ted, with his children, Will (5) and Julia (3), first came to Ascension in 1999. Now in their late teens, his kids don't appear at church much; but Ted discovered that at last he had time to try to revive his rusty baritone in the loft. He responded to an invitation to sing in last year's Christmas program, and he loved it so much he just stayed on. Ted says that when he is singing, he feels closer to God and is worshiping in the best way he knows how.

I hope you've enjoyed these spotlights of your Ascension singers, gleaning insights about what motivates them to share their musical gifts with you. I also hope that some of you have been inspired to consider contributing your talents to the church through the choral program – there still are chairs in the loft reserved for additional singers! In the meantime, when you're speaking with one of the choir members, do take a moment and thank them for their dedicated service.

*Debora Huffman*, Director of Music and Organist



### WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP LUNCHEON

Did you notice that the title does not say "POTLUCK"! That's because for the end-of-year Women's Fellowship group, your lunch will be provided by all the fund-raising events that helped enhance our Hospitality account.

Therefore, I cordially invite all the women of the Church of the Ascension to join me on **Saturday, November 9, 2013 at 11:30 am in Hawks Hall** for an Italian lunch. Please feel free to bring a friend.

I encourage you to sign up on the bulletin board in Hawks Hall (*to be put up at a later date*) so that I may be able to provide ample servings for all.

Peace,  
*Lisa Reed*  
Fellowship  
Ministry  
Leader



### From the Verger

The first of this month I will be attending the annual Vergers Conference in Nashville, Tennessee. This is the fiftieth birthday of the guild in America. Most of the members are from the east coast or Midwest, but we have members from Canada as well. Usually there are about 200 that attend every year.

On another note, the scheduled (first Saturday of the even numbered months) work party is Saturday October 5th. I will not be here, but another one of the vergers will step in and handle the work to be done. Tim Hayden will bring his hedge-trimmer on a pole to attack the overgrown ivy in the Memorial Garden and some of the larger shrubs on the property. He will need all kinds of help with this job. There will also be weeding tasks as well. So let's all come out and support Tim with these tasks.

Submitted by  
*Mike Beach*



### Community of Friends Service

**Sunday, October 6th,  
5:00 pm**

The service will include music, simple songs, highlights from psalms, & moments of reflective silence. Eucharist will also be included. Join us after the service for complimentary pizza & salad. No dishes to wash and home by 6:30!



## Trash & the Holy Spirit

*The gigantic 'plastic soup' of waste floating or semi-submerged is estimated to cover an area of the ocean equivalent to roughly twice the entire land mass of the US. Around 7 million tons of plastic make their way into our oceans each year. The tiniest pieces are swallowed in huge quantities by a wide range of marine life, which mistake it for food. 1*

I really am not a fan of trash. I am not into seeing it, touching it, and I especially hate smelling it. Seeing these pictures a few years back disturbed me enough to get over myself and take action.



Turtle caught in plastic



The Pacific Gyre

1 Act.oceana.org

Although I pride myself for living with a good conscience, my personal global footprint always has room for improvement. I have made so many changes in how I shop and live, not just to create a better tomorrow but so that future generations actually have a planet to inherit. I now buy less plastic, use less plastic, and dispose of less plastic than I ever have before. I can still do better.

Being a part of the Heal the Bay effort this year stirred my soul. It was fun having a group to be a part of and it was disturbing to see how much trash there actually is. I spent the duration of my morning in one small area on the shoreline and picked up more than 600 tiny bits of broken up plastic.

At first my morning thoughts included much of: *"I'm cleaning up God's creation & it feels great!"* That prayer quickly shifted into a *"Dear Lord, I am so sorry...we humans are truly monsters. You really love us?"* It got more difficult as I began to angrily judge my neighbors: *"Surly it is not I that contributes to this kind of devastation?!"* Then came the self-examination during which I faced many times when I could have been a much better Steward of the Earth. I was dismayed when my hundreds of pieces of tiny plastic yielded only about 2 inches within my trash bag. *"Not much of a difference"* I selfishly thought. It was with that thought that I remembered one of those cliché stories that is supposed to inspire you to act:

*A young child was walking along a beach upon which thousands of starfish had been washed up during a storm. When she came to each starfish, he would pick it up and throw it back into the ocean.*

*She had been doing this for some time when a man approached her and said, "Why are you doing this? Look at this beach! You can't save all these starfish. You can't begin to make a difference!"*

*The child bent down, picked up another starfish, and hurled it as far as she could into the ocean. She looked up at the man and replied, "Well, I made a difference to that one!"* - adapted from the Star Thrower by Loren C. Eiseley

The Holy Spirit was with me throughout my time on the beach and has had a lasting impact as well. I told people about my experience. I will participate in the event again next year and encourage more to join me. It was only when walking down the street a few days after that I realized that I had a complete shift in my soul after the experience. I could not **not** see the piece of trash on the ground. It was a shiny plastic food wrapper. It didn't matter if it fell out of a trash bin or was discarded by a careless individual. It was the really bad kind of un-biodegradable trash that causes so much trouble in landfills and the oceans. I picked it up and put it in my pocket until I encountered a trash can.

I will need to wash my hands a whole lot more now as the Spirit's newest vocation for me to fulfill is that of a trash picker upper. I'll heed the call to the best of my ability...

**Jobi Harrell, Minister to Younger Persons**

## NOTES FROM THE LOFT

Musically, October is ushered in on the 6<sup>th</sup> with “O Sing Joyfully” by British composer Adrian Batten, a setting of Psalm 81 arranged by American Crawford R. Thoburn, and Rutter’s “The Lord Bless You and Keep You,” a setting of Numbers 6:24. Batten, an organist and composer, lived from approximately 1591-1647. During his lifetime, Anglican liturgical music began to diverge significantly from that of music on the continent, developing a unique English style. John Rutter (b. 1945) is, of course, a favorite, well-known to the congregation.

The UK connection continues on October 13 with Charles V. Stanford’s “Glorious and Powerful God,” Op. 135, No. 3. Stanford (1852-1924) was an Irish composer, music teacher, and conductor whose body of choral works are recognized as classics throughout Anglican tradition. This particular anthem epitomizes its title, being both glorious and powerful with a taste of lyricism. The anthem at communion is a setting of “Bread of the World,” arranged by Alan Bullard (b. 1947), a British composer known primarily for his choral and educational music. With text by English clergyman Reginald Heber (1783-1826), the tune is traditional Scottish.

On the 20<sup>th</sup> we move to the continent and hear “Lord, In Thy Mercy” by the German romanticist Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847) – actually Jakob Ludwig Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy, but known in English-speaking countries by its abbreviated form. Mendelssohn set this prayer, a Martin Luther (1483-1546) text, in a gentle, contemplative manner that bathes the listener in a virtual mystical cloud. This ethereal mood continues with the communion anthem by the French romantic composer, Cesar Franck (1822-1890): the beloved “Panis Angelicus” (“Bread of the Angel Host”), text by St. Thomas Aquinas (1226-1274).

October ends with the students of the Gooden School leading us in worship on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

Finally, two dates of note:

**Sunday, October 20, Chamber Music at Ascension.** Due to unforeseen circumstances, this concert has been postponed and is being planned for next spring.

**Sunday, November 10, 5:00 p.m. Choral Evensong for Veterans Day.** Ascension veterans (living and deceased) will be recognized in the bulletin. If you or your Ascension relative/friend is a veteran, please submit your name(s) to Kim Lumino, parish administrator, at [Parish@ascension-sierramadre.com](mailto:Parish@ascension-sierramadre.com). Alternatively, you may leave a note for her in the parish office.

*Debora Huffman, Director of Music and Organist*



Join us for food, fellowship,  
and fun!

Wear your costume and be  
ready for our ‘church  
basement haunted house!’

**October 27<sup>th</sup> from  
11:30 AM – 1:30 PM**



**A new Men’s  
group at  
Ascension!**

1st gathering is:

**Saturday, October 12th**

**8:30 AM – 10:00 AM**

**Hawks Hall**

**Please RSVP to Deacon Ed by  
September 30th.**

### 2013 CROP WALK

Sunday November 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Flintridge Preparatory School  
Registration 1:00 PM, Walk 1:30 PM  
Ascension Carpool will leave at 12:30 PM  
Bring your own lunch and water bottle!

**Blessing of the Animals  
Service**



**Sunday  
October 6th at 11:45am**



All of God’s creatures are  
welcome! Free pet sitting  
available during the 10:15 am  
Mass.

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](http://www.ascension-sierramadre.com)

## October 2013

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		<b>1</b> 11am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group	<b>2</b> 5:30pm Yoga <b>6pm Mass</b> <b>7:30pm Choir Rehearsal</b>	<b>3</b> <b>7am Mass</b> 9am Forum 10:30am Staff Mtg	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> <b>Parish Work Party</b> <b>8:30am</b>
Fr. Bamberger out of town—Diocesan Convention						
<b>6</b> 7:30am Morning Prayer (Rite I) 8am Mass 9am Christian Ed. Hour 10:15am Mass <b>Blessing of the Animals at 11:45 am</b> <b>Community of Friends Service at 5pm</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 11am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group	<b>9</b> 5:30pm Yoga <b>6pm Mass</b>  <b>7:30pm Choir Rehearsal</b>	<b>10</b> <b>7am Mass</b> 9am Forum	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> <b>'Real Men' Ministry Meeting</b> <b>Hawks Hall</b> <b>8:30am —10am</b>
<b>13</b> 7:30am Morning Prayer (Rite I) 8am Mass 9am Christian Ed. Hour 10:15am Mass  <b>Despedida for Larry &amp; Gail Skiles follows the 10:15 service</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 11am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group  <b>7pm Vestry Meeting</b>	<b>16</b> 5:30pm Yoga <b>6pm Mass</b>  <b>7:30pm Choir Rehearsal</b>	<b>17</b> <b>7am Mass</b> 9am Forum 10:30am Staff Mtg	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> <b>Stewardship Leadership Meeting</b> <b>9:30am—11:30am</b>  <b>Stillpoint Meeting in Library</b> <b>8—5</b>
<b>20</b> 7:30am Morning Prayer (Rite I) 8am Mass 9am Christian Ed. Hour 10:15am Mass  <b>Noon PMC Meeting</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b> 11am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group	<b>23</b> 5:30pm Yoga <b>6pm Mass</b>  <b>7:30pm Choir Rehearsal</b>	<b>24</b> <b>7am Mass</b> 9am Forum  <b>DOK MEETING</b> <b>Contact Jobi Harrell for details</b>	<b>25</b>  <b>November SPIRE ARTICLES DUE</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b> 7:30am Morning Prayer (Rite I) 8am Mass 9am Xian Ed. Hour 10:15am Mass  <b>Gooden School Sunday</b> <b>Youth Halloween Party</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 11am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group	<b>30</b> 5:30pm Yoga <b>6pm Mass</b>  <b>7:30pm Choir Rehearsal</b>	<b>31</b> <b>7am Mass</b> 9am Forum		

### 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!