



# The SPIRE

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



## Upcoming Events

April 5th -

Parish Work Party 8:30am

April 6th -

◇ Short Church 5:00pm

◇ 'Decadent' Lenten Potluck  
5:30pm

April 8th-

Voting Day

April 10th-

House Church 6:30pm - contact  
parish office for location.

April 15th-

Vestry Meeting 7:00pm

April 19th-

Youth Group Egg Decorating  
Party 10:00am

April 20th-

◇ 1st Easter Brunch/Egg Hunt  
8:00am

◇ 2nd Easter Brunch/Egg Hunt  
Noon

April 27th-

PMC Meeting Noon

## April 2014

## From the Rector

"In sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life through our Lord Jesus Christ...." These are Easter words I say throughout the year at each and every burial service at which I preside. Sometimes I am privileged to have known the person well, sometimes for many years, and have observed their faith lived out in their life. Others I may not have known well, but at least I have had the opportunity to maintain some relationship with them. Still others, I may have met on occasion or seen a few times but have known primarily through my relationship with a family member or loved one. And sometimes I am called upon to say these words at the burial of a complete stranger.



In every case, the words are still part of our core belief. While it is true that when I have known someone, it is easier to be of comfort to the family; but the proclamation of faith is always the same. That is one of the great mysteries of sacramental activity. The outward and visible sign is consistently the same, and God's grace and mercy are beyond any consideration of how well I knew someone or didn't, and what kind of believer the deceased was. In all of the sacraments – those outward and visible signs of an inward and spiritual grace – we can rest assured of the truth that God knows all of us, and God's Love is greater than anything we can hope or imagine. Thanks be to God.

MAB+

## Holy Week/Easter Services

<b>Palm Sunday</b>	<b>April 13th</b>	<b>Maundy Thursday</b>	<b>April 17th</b>
Mass (Rite I)	8:00 AM	Mass	7:00 AM
Mass (Rite II)	10:15 AM	Foot Washing and Mass	7:00 PM
		Watch at Altar of Repose	9:00 PM -12 AM
<b>Monday,</b>	<b>April 14th</b>	<b>Good Friday</b>	<b>April 18th</b>
Mass	7:00 PM	Watch at Altar of Repose	7:00 AM -11 AM
<b>Tuesday,</b>	<b>April 15th</b>	Stations of the Cross	Noon
Mass	7:00 PM	Good Friday Liturgy	7:00 PM
<b>Tenebrae</b>	<b>April 16th</b>	<b>Easter Day</b>	<b>April 20th</b>
Mass	7:00 PM	The Great Vigil and	
		1 <sup>st</sup> Eucharist of Easter	6:00 AM
		Festival High Mass	10:15 AM

## Pledge Payment Snapshot

January - March 30th, 2014

2014 Budget Amount: \$200,000

YTD Budget: \$44,248

YTD Actual: \$47,976





There have been many times in my life when I've wondered what I was going to say: to someone, about something, in response to something, or about myself. What am I going to say? Sometimes when I'm expected to say something, I genuinely struggle with what to say. Do I say what they're expecting to hear? Perhaps I should impress them with fancy words that don't really mean anything. Maybe I should shock them...that's always fun. Should I be honest and speak from my heart and not worry about the reaction of others? Do I even know what to say?

Singer, song writer Sara Bareilles' song "Brave" was intended to offer strength to a friend who was finding it difficult coming out to his parents. The song has become a sort of anthem for anyone facing a difficult situation and needing to be honest, brave, and courageous enough to talk about it.

*You can be amazing  
You can turn a phrase into a weapon or a drug  
You can be the outcast  
Or be the backlash of somebody's lack of love  
Or you can start speaking up  
Nothing's gonna hurt you the way that words do  
When they settle 'neath your skin  
Kept on the inside and no sunlight  
Sometimes the shadow wins  
But I wonder what would happen if you  
  
Say what you wanna say  
And let the words fall out  
Honestly I wanna see you be brave*

*Everybody's been there, everybody's been stared down  
By the enemy  
Fallen for the fear and done some disappearing  
Bow down to the mighty  
Don't run, stop holding your tongue  
Maybe there's a way out of the cage where you live  
Maybe one of these days you can let the light in  
Show me how big your brave is*

*Say what you wanna say  
And let the words fall out  
Honestly I wanna see you be brave  
  
And since your history of silence  
Won't do you any good  
Did you think it would?  
Let your words be anything but empty  
Why don't you tell them the truth?  
  
Say what you wanna say  
And let the words fall out  
Honestly I wanna see you be brave*

Prayer can be like that too...wondering what to say, choosing the right words, and being afraid to be gut wrenchingly honest. I think God is singing to me this Lent, and He chose the song "Brave."

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUQsqBqxoR4&feature=kp>

***Live well, live blessed, Deacon Ed***

As the end of lent draws near, we start looking forward to holy week and the joyous season of Easter. At altar guild we eagerly await the time when we transform our beloved sanctuary to a small part of the *Garden of Gesethmene* and then to an outward sign of our inner joy on Easter Sunday. In order to accomplish these transformations, we need your help. First, with flowers from your garden for our altar of repose garden on Maundy Thursday (*bring your flowers with you on Maundy Thursday*) and then your monetary donations now for the flowers we will purchase and arrange for Easter Sunday. Envelopes for flower donations are available at the back of the church and in the hallway to hawks hall.

***St. Anne's altar guild thanks you in advance  
for your continued support of our ministry.***





## An Opportunity for Giving

Please consider making a contribution to our music program for the special music we enjoy here at Ascension.

Music offering envelopes are available at the back of the church and on the reception table in Hawks Hall.

Thank You for your support.

### NOTES FROM THE LOFT

This month we continue our journey through Lent into Holy Week, culminating with a glorious Easter celebration. April 6 will feature two American composers: Douglas E. Wagner (b. 1952) and Austin Lovelace (1919-2010). Originally from Chicago, Wagner currently resides in Indianapolis; Lovelace, affectionately known as the “Dean of American Church Music,” worked primarily in Denver with a short stint in Dallas. The choir will sing Wagner’s arrangement of “When Jesus Wept” and “None Other Lamb” by Lovelace.

On the following week, Palm Sunday, we’ll begin with “A Palm Sunday Antiphon” by David C. Morgan (b. 1946, UK); the remainder of the service will focus on Christ’s Passion. The offertory anthem is “Behold, the Lamb of God” by the American Craig Courtney (born in Indiana, now residing in Columbus, OH); for communion a lovely setting of “Were You There” by David Ogden (b. 1966, Hertfordshire, England).

Maundy Thursday will include Maurice Durufle’s beloved “Ubi Caritas” as well as a new setting of “I Give You A New Commandment” by Peter Nardone (b. 1965), Scottish countertenor, organist, choirmaster, and composer.

Good Friday will feature the chanting of the St. John Passion by Charley Noecker, Keiko Sakatani, and Father Bamberger as well as a beautiful new setting of “Faithful Cross” by American Leo Nestor, USC grad, professor at Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

Easter Sunday will indeed be a glorious day of celebration as we join together to sing “Jesus Christ Is Risen Today,” complete with Alleluias! Our festival choir will be joined throughout the service by Jay Cohen, trumpet, and Sean Dougall, oboe. The exciting, rhythmic “Arise, My Faithful” by Mark S. Repasky (Tallahassee, FL) is the offertory anthem, followed by the anthem/hymn “The Tree of Life” by K. Lee Scott (b. 1950, AL). It’s been said that this particular selection has become one of the important hymn settings of our time – powerful poetry coupled to powerful music; you’re bound to be moved. During communion we hearken back to the seventeenth century and present “Awake, My Heart, With Gladness” by Johann Crüger (Germany, 1598-1662), with instrumental obbligato. This year’s final hymn will be SALVE FESTA DIES, “Hail Thee, Festival Day!,” followed, as always, by Widor’s brilliant Toccata in F Major.

Our April worship concludes on the second Sunday of Easter with the joy of “Coronation,” another anthem by Craig Courtney, and the ethereal “Peace I Leave With You” by the wonderful Lutheran composer Walter Pelz (b. 1926, Chicago).

May the deeply meaningful journey of April burst into ecstasy as we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord!

*O God, whom Saints and angels delight to worship in heaven:  
Be with us, we beseech thee, as we seek to perfect the praises of thy children on earth;  
and grant to us even now such glimpses of thy beauty  
that we may be made worthy at length to behold it unveiled for evermore;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

~ The Royal School of Church Music



**Debora Huffman**  
Director of Music and Organist

**Egg-Citing Opportunity!**

Donations of plastic eggs, candy, stickers, and small toys would be greatly appreciated to offset additional costs.

Please bring them to the youth table outside of church by April 13<sup>th</sup>.



**From our Verger, Mike Beach...**

The three kinds of services you generally find in Episcopal Churches. I call them either:

- Low – and – Lazy
- Broad – and – Hazy
- High – and – Crazy

*Willa Gibbs (1957)*

Aspire to Inspire before you Expire.



**30 Hour Famine  
New Date!**

**APRIL 18<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup>**

Students will begin their fast after lunch on April 18<sup>th</sup>.

At 5 PM on Good Friday, students will meet in the Parish House for worship, Easter season preparation and lots of juice! Friends & family are invited to join the final worship at 5 pm on Holy Saturday.

**EASTER ACTIVITIES  
at ASCENSION**

YOUTH GROUP  
EASTER EGG COLORING &  
STUFFING PARTY  
April 19<sup>th</sup>  
10 am – 12 pm  
Hawks Hall

EASTER EGG HUNTS  
April 20<sup>th</sup>  
8 am & 12 pm



The Internet has become a tool through which people can communicate and share ideas and opinions, and, it seems to me, the “*Where two or more are gathered, I am with you*” quote fits. God continues to find ways to meet us where we are, and the Internet with all of its flaws has become another place where God has been able to reach us. One study I read years ago concluded that millennials and future generations will use the Internet to gather information on spirituality and even to worship.

In mid-March, Father Michael shared a portion of a blog post, *10 WEIRD THINGS KIDS DO AT COMMUNION I WISH MORE ADULTS WOULD DO* that received several “shares” on Facebook. Author Jason Valendy, Co-pastor of **Saginaw United Methodist Church** in Saginaw, Texas, validated much of what I have personally witnessed and experienced during Eucharist.

1. Run down the aisle. It is okay to run down the aisle for communion. In fact shouldn't we all be running to feast with Christ? Next time, don't walk to communion - run.
2. Take communion with a stuffed animal. This should be acceptable, as long as the stuffed animal is served communion as well. Kids understand that everyone is welcome to the table. Human and teddy bear alike.
3. Drink every drop. It is critical that every drop of grape juice and morsel of bread is consumed at communion. Who cares if people are waiting behind you to move back to their pews, you do not leave that table until you have been able to take every last moment you can with Christ.
4. Ask for a "big piece." Why settle for just a little bit of Christ? Don't we all want a "big piece" of Christ?
5. Dunk the whole piece into the cup. If you get to dip the bread into the juice, soak that bread and be sure to not worry about drips or stains (see points 3 and 4 for justification).
6. Seek out the leftovers. The Bread of Life is too good to discard in the trash or fed to the birds. That is why we eat all the bread after worship.
7. Being shy is okay. Kids understand that it is an honor to be at the table of God, and they do not demand a place but know that it is a treat to be there. Being shy to kids is like being humble to adults. Humility at the table of God? Great idea.
8. Laugh. Partaking in the banquet of God is a joyful event! Smile, laugh and if you need to, put a rubber crocodile on your head and make the pastor laugh with you.
9. Express thanks. One thumbs up at the meal is something, but two thumbs up is great.
10. Save some for later. Putting bread into your pocket seems like a reasonable way to take Christ into the world.

The piece received many “likes” and positive comments but, just like everything else that is put on the Internet, there were also those who criticized. Comments on pictures, articles, videos etc. have allowed people to appreciate the work of others and offer their own opinions. The Internet has also become a way for some to anonymously air their own issues, perhaps, operating out of cowardice, writing things they would not say to another’s face.

One reader posted the following comment: *“I find this troubling. Although some of the kids’ actions are cute, the crucifixion wasn't cute. I am all for joy and laughter in the church, but remembering at what cost my sins were forgiven is time for solemn reflection. As a teacher, running inside a building is something always we taught kids not to do. My stepfather was knocked over in church and broke his hip by kids running in the church.”*

The author, in my opinion, did a decent job of acknowledging and responding to the comment: *“Indeed the crucifixion was not a cute thing at all. I believe the connection of communion and the crucifixion is just one connection that can be made, but it is not the only connection. Of course I am sorry to hear that your step-father was injured. I do not condone reckless running in church either.”*

As we continue to marvel at the advancements that technology has offered us, I am finding myself using the Internet to enhance my life and not replace it. By committing myself to less screen time and more face to face time, this Lent I am learning (yet again) that often the miracles of life occur when God acts through God’s people. I look forward to the culmination of Lent 2014 so that I can take my newest re-learnings forward in my journey. What that ultimately means is that I am very excited to wish each of you Easter peace and joy in person!

*Submitted by Jobi Harrell, Minister to Younger Persons*

*Do you have time to spare?*



The next **Parish Work Party is Saturday, April 5th**. The focus for this work party is painting, caulking, and wood restoration on the south side area of the main church building. Starts at 8:30. Free coffee and donuts.

All are welcome for this fun time!

**it's a POTLUCK**

**Sunday, April 6th**  
**5:30 PM — 7:30 PM**  
**Hawks Hall**

The price of admission is a dish to share — something delicious, decadent, and thoroughly un-Lenten!

Please be sure to let us know what dish you will be bringing and how many people are in your party. The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board in Hawks Hall.

**SHORT CHURCH**

**5:00 PM**

**SUNDAY, APRIL 6TH**

**HOUSE CHURCH on Thursdays in Lent**

This year we introduced a tradition from the past to our Lenten experience. On March 20<sup>th</sup>, and March 27<sup>th</sup>, we gathered for Eucharist at the homes of parishioners. That was followed by a simple dinner and fellowship. (Thank you to Karen Mooradian and Carol Rasmussen & Charley Noecker for offering their homes!) We will have one more House Church on Thursday, April 10<sup>th</sup>. (*Contact the parish office for location*). If you would like to attend, please let us know how many to expect by signing up on the sheet in the parish hall or by calling the office. The Eucharist will begin at 6:30 p.m.

**house church**

**Women's Fellowship Potluck Luncheon**

**Saturday, May 3rd 11:30am**

**Hawks Hall**

# Black & White Afternoon Tea

Saturday May 17th at 2:00 pm

Join us for an afternoon filled with savory sandwiches, aromatic teas, champagne, decadent desserts and more. Featuring a silent auction generously sponsored by local merchants!

**Where:** The Church of the Ascension - Hawks Hall, 25 East Laurel Avenue, Sierra Madre

**Ticket price:** \$35.00 - Tickets are available at the Church office and Savor the Flavor.

Sierra Madre's Village Church of the Ascension will be hosting it's 2nd annual afternoon tea and silent auction this year to raise money for the church and for The Women's Room at Friends in Deed Pasadena.

Ticket sales will be limited and must be purchased in advance (no ticket sales at the door).

## Pictures from our SHROVE TUESDAY PANCAKE SUPPER on March 4th, 2014

Proceeds (after costs) from this year's supper are approximately \$290. A check will be written to Friends in Deed. The food bank, located in Northwest Pasadena, serves hundreds of families every month. Thank you to all those who helped to make this annual event a success!

*Thank You!*



## 2014 Parish Directory Photos

When you look at your directory picture, do you recognize yourself? Your kids? Do your friends recognize you? If not, it is time for an update! **Come in your 'best dress' on Easter Sunday and get your picture taken by Jay Packer.** He will be taking photographs between the services and after the 10:15 service in the child care room. Please add the photo shoot to your Sunday schedule so that we have an up to date picture of you and your family. **Thank You!**

## FOOD INGATHERING GROCERY REMINDER

**ECPAC / FRIENDS IN DEED FOOD DONATIONS WILL BE COLLECTED THE FIRST SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH**

**(THAT'S NEXT SUNDAY!)**

**THE PANTRY IS VERY SHORT OF SUPPLIES AND THERE ARE MORE FAMILIES BEING SERVED.**

(Peanut butter, canned meats, cereals and protein based foods are always needed. For the homeless, pull top cans work best. You can also donate fruits and vegetables from your garden.) Please place your donated items in the 'Food Donation' basket in Hawks Hall.

**IF YOU WOULD RATHER DONATE CASH--THAT WOULD BE VERY WELCOME TOO!**

**MAKE YOUR CHECKS OUT TO FRIENDS IN DEED AND PUT THEM IN THE OFFERTORY BASKET.**



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)

## April/May 2014



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2 5:30pm Yoga <b>6pm Mass</b> 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	3 <b>7am Mass</b> 9am Forum 10:30am Staff Mtg	4	5 <b>Parish Work Party</b> 8:30 am
6 8am Mass 9am Xian Ed. Hour 10:15am Mass  <b>Short Church ~ 5pm</b>  <b>'Decadent' Potluck Luncheon ~ 5:30pm</b>	7	8 11am Prayer in the Chapel	9 5:30pm Yoga <b>6pm Mass</b> 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	10 <b>7am Mass</b> 9am Forum  <b>House Church at 6:30pm— contact parish office for location.</b>	11	12
13 	14	15 11am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group  <b>7pm Vestry Meeting</b>	16 <b>Tenebrae</b> 5:30pm Yoga 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	17 <b>Maundy Thursday</b> 9am Forum 10:30am Staff Mtg	18 <b>Good Friday</b>	19 <b>Holy Saturday</b> <b>Easter Egg Decorating Party 10am</b>
30 HOUR FAMINE						
<b>*HOLY WEEK / EASTER - SERVICE DATES &amp; TIMES ARE NOTED ON FRONT PAGE OF NEWSLETTER.*</b>						
20   ◇ <b>1st Easter Brunch/Egg Hunt</b> 8:00am ◇ <b>2nd Easter Brunch/Egg Hunt</b> Noon	21	22 11am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group	23 5:30pm Yoga <b>6pm Mass</b> 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	24 <b>7am Mass</b> 9am Forum	25  <b>MAY SPIRE ARTICLES DUE</b>	26
27 8am Mass 9am Xian Ed. Hour 10:15am Mass  <b>PMC Meeting ~ Noon</b>	28	29 11am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group	30 5:30pm Yoga <b>6pm Mass</b> 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal	1	2	3 <b>Women's Fellowship Potluck Luncheon</b> 11:30am