



The SPIRE

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

July 2014

Upcoming Events

July 4th-
Happy 4th of July! - Office Closed

July 6th-
Summer Sunday School Begins

July 10th-
Church in the Park followed by a Parish Potluck Picnic

July 15th-
Vestry Meeting 7:00 pm

July 20th-
• *Summer Choir*
• *Deadline for Back to School Supplies Drive Donations*

July 27th-
• *PMC Meeting @ Noon*
• *Youth Group trip to Six Flags Magic Mountain*

August 3rd-
Deadline for ordering LA Episcopal Dodger Night Tickets

August 16th-
Youth Group trip to Knotts Berry Farm

From the Rector

Envisioning ministry is sometimes like looking at the glass through the eyes of the pessimist and the optimist. Is it half full or half empty?

What ministry are we already doing, and what more can we be doing? And where are the activities and ministries already taking place, and where would new ministries be housed? What resources do we have, and what resources do we need to develop?

Your vestry is engaged in looking at some of these questions. But in some respects, these are questions for all of us. At a deeper level, we all have to be asking what more God would have us do. The sense that there is more for us to be doing can be daunting, and even a bit fearful. In one sense, if we admit to the "glass" being somewhat less than full, we are challenged by the image that we are somehow hollow. But God wants us to be full. In fact, that is one of the Biblical images of holiness. God always views us as half full and longs to complete us. As we consider the work our congregation is doing and the ministries to which we may be further called, let us remember that God always has more in store for us. Let us also remember that God will provide for us in the endeavors we pursue in His name.

-- Fr. Michael

Happy 4th of July!



Pledge Payment Snapshot

January - June 29th, 2014

2014 Budget Amount: \$200,000

YTD Budget: \$91,484

YTD Actual: \$97,930



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. Please place your donated items in the 'Food Donation' basket in Hawks Hall.



Feeding the Community

“I go far, but stay near.”

Part II – Important Markers



Get those pencils sharpened and let's continue our spiritual self-exploration. Last month I challenged you to write your spiritual autobiography in six words. “I go far, but stay near” were the six words that I felt best described my spiritual journey. By the way, as we continue this exploration, you may want to find someone to partner with. Sharing the experience with someone or a group will provide more meaning and depth to the writing process as you share your journey with others.

In order to understand the general description of our journey in six words, we need to dig deeper and explore how we got there. What do the six words really mean? Maybe in the end we will discover different words to summarize our journeys.

There are lots of different methods available in writing a Spiritual Autobiography. I've chosen the “Important Markers Method.”

Quickly list the important markers of your life. This list should not be made with careful consideration and extensive reflection. Rather, it is a “this is what comes to mind when I reflect upon my life.” Below are a few possible areas you may want to consider

- ◇ experiences of finding God in your life
- ◇ experiences of prayer, church, sacraments, etc.
- ◇ experiences of school, work, volunteering
- ◇ Family
- ◇ frailties and weaknesses
- ◇ significant decisions you have made
- ◇ significant events in your life
- ◇ significant persons in your life
- ◇ special teachers
- ◇ significant turning points in your life
- ◇ struggles and conflicts
- ◇ successes and failures
- ◇ talents and accomplishments
- ◇ people who ministered to you, taught you, helped you grow

Note: an event is a one-time episode: the birth of a child, graduation from college, a wedding day, the death of a parent. An experience is a process: pregnancy, your first job, serious illness.

In Part III, we'll group the experiences, trends, and events of our life and start to draw connections, looking for trends or patterns that define our spiritual beings. Finally, in Part IV, well, let's get through the next part first.

And don't forget to have fun. In the words of Voltaire: “God is a comedian playing to an audience afraid to laugh.”

*Live well, live blessed,
Deacon Ed+*

Don't miss this ONE-TIME OPPORTUNITY!

*SINGERS
WANTED!*

*Summer Choir
Sunday, July 20th*

- No Prior Experience Necessary
- No Vestments
- No Stairs to Climb (*We will sing from the chapel!*)
- No Week Night Rehearsal



Intended for those who like to sing but can't commit to a regular week night rehearsal.

Rehearsal on Sunday, July 20th at 9:10 a.m., in preparation for the 10:15 service.



Summertime Fun and Fellowship

During this summer, Fellowship Ministry is planning several events. I certainly hope that you and your family and friends will be able to join us in as many as you can put into your schedules. These events are

- **Thursday, July 10, 2014:** Parish Wide Potluck Supper Picnic at Memorial Park following "Home Church" (aka "Park Church") at 6:30 pm. Father Michael will be firing up the barbeque and grilling a variety of hotdogs and sausages. Bring a side dish such as a pasta or a green, potato, or macaroni salad or a salad of your choice. Love to bake! How about some brownies, cupcakes, or cookies, or a stop off at a local bakery or deli. Lemon-Aide and ice water will be provided.
- **Sunday, August 10, 2014:** Following the 10:15 Service, come into Hawks Hall for an Ice Cream Social. Make your own Sundae, lots of toppings to choose from!
- **Saturday, August 23, 2014** is the Women's Fellowship Potluck Luncheon. Bring a dish to share and enjoy great company, good food, and plenty of fellowship.
- **Sunday, September 7, 2014:** Following the 10:15 Service, join us for our Kick-Off Fall barbeque and much more provided by the Hospitality Committee.

If you have ideas about any additional Fellowship events, please contact me.

Happy Summer, Happy Times, and Lots of Fellowship,

Lisa Wagner-Reed
Fellowship Ministry Leader

SAVE THE DATE

Join us for...

Church in the Park!

When: Thursday, July 10th

Where: Memorial Park, Sierra Madre

Time: 6:30 p.m.

followed by a

Potluck Parish Picnic

Sign-up sheet on Hawks Hall bulletin board.

SUNDAY, JULY 27th



- Students will meet at church for the 8 am service to have Eucharist before departing.
- Bringing friends is encouraged! (6th grade and up...)
- The final ticket cost will be determined by the size of our group. (The reduced rate occurs with 15 or more attendees.)
- We also will need drivers for the day. If any parents would like to chaperone this excursion, your ticket will be comped by the church.

NOTES FROM THE LOFT

This month's loft notes are distinctly unique as the choir enjoys its hiatus and is replaced by solos and vocal chamber groups. Unique, yet never-the-less inspirational ~ With thanks to Susan Beach for kicking off the season on June 22, here is the roster for July:

July 6 – Our women's quartet, consisting of Susan Beach, Colette Ostrye, Carol Rasmussen, and Keiko Sakatani

July 13 – Lavette Teague

July 20 – SUMMER CHOIR!! Come join us in the chapel for rehearsal at 9:10 in preparation for the 10:15 service. If you'd like to prepare the music beforehand, please see me for scores on either the 6th or 13th. If you're on the fence regarding participating, I encourage you to dip your toes in the water, so to speak, and try us out – you'll be amazed how rewarding it is to make music together in God's house!

July 27 – Mark Riebs

*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

Los Angeles Dodgers
Episcopal Night



Dodgers
vs.

Diamondbacks

Friday, September 5th,
7:00 p.m.

The Dodgers welcome
The Diocese of Los Angeles!

Friday, September 5th, 7:00 p.m.

Help put our Bishops on the mound
for the first pitch.

Tickets only \$21!

Fireworks after the game!!



**Sign-up sheet on Hawks Hall
bulletin board.**

**Deadline for ordering tickets
is Sunday, August 3rd.**



2015 Stewardship Theme Contest

We have a Stewardship Theme winner! Thanks to all who submitted theme ideas for the 2015 Stewardship Theme contest! We received a wonderful response and great theme ideas. The winning theme submitted by Kathy Calleton is



Joyful Giving, Joyful Living!

Kathy received a \$20 Starbucks gift card for her winning entry! Congratulations Kathy!

Rough Divisions

Leviticus 19:18 The Message (MSG)

18 "Don't seek revenge or carry a grudge against any of your people. Love your neighbor as yourself. I am God."

The longer I live and the more people I am around, the more I've noticed a trend to categorize people into "2 types." When we find ourselves faced with differences of opinion, lifestyle choices, or core beliefs from our neighbors, it is perhaps a comforting default mode to make such generalizations as

"Let's agree to disagree"

"I am of one belief, (S)he is of another."

The notion that there is not one single unified understanding, approach, or application of practice continually leads to debate, discomfort, and at times discord.

Recently while listening to a moving homily, I was struck with a "RIGHT ON!" feeling during the portion in which the speaker addressed "2 types:" *"There are two kinds of Christians, two types of Jews, two types of Muslims, two kinds of Agnostics, two kinds of Atheists ..."* and so on. The main idea that was being expressed was that, despite belief structure, in each group there are those that are driven by fear and those that are driven by love.

As I reflected on this notion, I began to realize that I am not entirely comfortable with such a clear division within all sects of humanity. Such a narrow view seems divisive and does not allow the possibility for us to begin to understand those who differ from us. "2 types" doesn't just apply to religion either: politics, patriotism, social views, child rearing... this list goes on and on.

God made us each so very different. When we find those we click with, there is a sense of validation and inner-peace (dare I say healing?) that occurs. When we find ourselves faced with conflicts (particularly with those we love), there is the fear of losing the relationship, (or perhaps a sense of losing our self) that is quite threatening. I'm still trying to come to some sort of clear understanding of how I feel about understanding the differences I have from others, how and when to express myself, and when to keep my mouth shut. But I am finding that I seem to have a conviction that despite any difference that I have from another, we still are the same in the fact that God made each of us and loves us beyond all knowing.

As our country celebrates its independence this month, I find the "2 types" again creeping into media and in life within our communities.

"There are those who fight for our country and those who don't."

"There are those who appreciate what it is to be American and those who take it for granted."

"There are liberals and there are conservatives/fundamentalists."

Perhaps there are truths to these generalizations...but the only thing I really feel sure of is that we all share the same home. That in itself is a unifier, and I feel that I am just more ready to celebrate what we each have in common no matter what our differences may be.

Submitted by Jobi Harrell, Minister to Younger Persons





Vestry Notes

On behalf of the Vestry, I hope all have an enjoyable summer planned - even if your plan is not to make plans. The Vestry is undertaking a third option, planning to plan. At our May meeting Father Bud Williams presented us with an alternative strategic planning approach based on Kennon Callahan's Twelve Keys to an Effective Church. This approach focuses on playing to our strengths rather than fretting about our weaknesses. Our summer reading assignments have expanded accordingly.

Other Vestry work includes the beginning of our stewardship planning which has kicked off with selection of this year's theme – Joyful Giving, Joyful Living suggested by Kathy Calleton. Thank you to her and to our stewardship chair Pam Harrison. In addition, the Vestry continues its efforts to grow our relationship with the Gooden School, which will include greater school involvement in our Sunday services. Other tasks include replacement of the Church sign out front, an effort (albeit a slow one) by yours truly to update the Parish bylaws, and consideration of permanent funding for our Youth Program.

Lastly, I want to make note of the recent “Safe Church” training provided by the rector to vestry members from Ascension and neighboring parishes. This training is not about emergency response systems and evacuation routes. It is about how we treat and protect those who attend, visit, or work at the Church, especially those who may be particularly vulnerable to unwelcome behavior. It is not a subject one much wants to contemplate, especially when thinking about our place of worship. Yet, looked at another way, such training is not only good practice from a legal perspective; it is another expression of and support for our ministries. It aids our outreach, strengthens our formation as Christians, and makes our worship that much more inclusive. How we care for all human beings begins with how we love and protect those closest to us. As a labor and employment lawyer, I see this training (and sometimes deliver it) from a legal viewpoint, which constrains my appreciation for it. “Safe Church” training is a more fulfilling rendition because it is an expression of our mission as a Parish.

John Buchanan
Senior Warden



Looking for a way to celebrate a milestone birthday, a special anniversary, a child's birthday, or another special occasion?

Consider hosting a Coffee Hour after one of the Sunday services. There are (2) options:

Host a Coffee Hour:

1. Sign up on the bulletin board in Hawks Hall
2. Bring snacks for 50-75 people to the kitchen on your chosen Sunday morning (be sure to indicate which Coffee Hour they are to be used for)
3. A member of the Hospitality Committee will help you set up your table and assist you in putting your treats out.

Sponsor a Coffee Hour:

1. Contact Lisa Reed, Fellowship/Hospitality Ministry Leader, after a Sunday Service to give your sponsorship (**recommended donation is \$35**). If you don't see her in church, you can contact Lisa at 626.710.8909 or by e-mail at lisareed4@verizon.net.
2. Sign up on the bulletin board for which date and service you would like to sponsor.

A member of the Hospitality Committee will be sure to have refreshments prepared and set up for your “Coffee Hour”.

Checks should be made out to Church of the Ascension.



It's that Time Again -

Friends in Deed Backpack/School Supply Drive

With your help, ECPAC/Friends in Deed would like to provide school supplies for children in need in the Pasadena area.

**Items should be dropped off at the Church
by Sunday, July 20th.**



Back to School Supply List 2014-2015

- Backpacks—should be sturdy enough for a high school student and the colors red and blue should be avoided.
- 3 Ring Binders - 1" - 3" (Prefer with Clear View pocket on front)
- Tab Dividers for Binders
- College ruled notebook paper
- Spiral notebooks
- Copy paper (for printing on computer)
- Composition Notebooks, hardcover
- Pens; red, blue and black
- Pencils, including #2 yellow 6-sided for younger grades; mechanical pencils Erasers
- Pencil-top Erasers
- Zipper pouch for pens and pencils (3 holed to go in binders)
- Dry Erase Markers
- Colored Markers (NO Sharpies or Permanent Markers)
- Highlighters, all colors
- Colored Pencils
- Sharpener for colored pencils (must hold shavings)
- 24 Colors Crayons (prefer Crayola Brand)
- 2 Pocket Folders (prefer polyfolders)
- Student scissors (such as Fiskar)
- Rulers (metric & customary)
- 3" x 5" index cards
- Glue Sticks

**THANK
YOU**

From the kitchen crew:

Thank you to all those who
donated dish towels!



*House Church
at
the Meehan
home on
Thursday,
June 12th.*



SUMMER SUNDAY
SCHOOL BEGINS JULY 6th

All ages are invited to
meet in Hawks Hall from
9 am – 10 am for games,
crafts, and fellowship.

See you there!

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

July 2014

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3 7am Mass 9am Forum	4 Parish Office Closed 	5
6 8am Mass 9am Summer Sunday School 10:15am Mass Summer Youth Program Begins	7	8 10am Prayer in the Chapel	9 5:30pm Yoga 6pm Mass	10 7am Mass 9am Forum 10:30am Staff Mtg Church in the Park Potluck Parish Picnic	11	12
13 8am Mass 9am Summer Sunday School 10:15am Mass	14	15 10am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group 7pm Vestry Meeting	16 5:30pm Yoga 6pm Mass	17 7am Mass 9am Forum	18	19
YOUTH MINISTER VACATION						
20 8am Mass 9am Summer Sunday School 10:15am Mass • Summer Choir • Last Day for Back to School Supply Drive Donations	21	22 10am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group	23 5:30pm Yoga 6pm Mass	24 7am Mass 9am Forum 10:30am Staff Mtg	25 AUGUST SPIRE ARTICLES DUE	26
27 8am Mass 9am Summer Sunday School 10:15am Mass • PMC Meeting Noon • Youth Group-Six Flags Trip	28	29 10am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group	30 5:30pm Yoga 6pm Mass	31 7am Mass 9am Forum		
FATHER BAMBERGER VACATION						
VERGER VACATION						

Spire Creator: Kim Lumino, Parish Administrator