

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



**February 2015**

**Upcoming Events**

**February 1st- Commissioning of  
 2015 Vestry Members**

**February 7th-**

- ◇ **Parish Work Party 8:30am**
- ◇ **ER&D Fundraising Dinner  
 6pm (see page 7 for details)**

**February 17th-**

**Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper  
 Vestry Meeting 7pm**

**Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper**

**Tuesday, February 17th**

**5 pm—7pm  
 Hawks Hall**

**Go to page 7 for more information .**

**Ash Wednesday Services**

**Wednesday, February 18th**

**7am, Noon, & 6pm**

**Mass  
 &  
 Imposition of Ashes**

**February 19th-**

**House Church & Dinner 6:30pm**

**February 22nd-**

**Parish Ministry Council Meeting  
 Noon**

**March 15th-**

**Lenten Evensong 5pm**

**2015 Pledge Payment Snapshot**

**Through January 31st**

**Budget Amount: \$235,000**

**YTD Budget: YTD Actual:  
 \$13,870.67 \$37,657**

**From the Rector**

I am incredibly grateful for the weeks ahead.

I go to North Carolina next week to join with colleagues from around the national church to work at certifying the proficiency of those seeking to be ordained this year. Since there is a huge variety of ways that people are arriving at a theological education, the standards of expectation are very much in flux. In addition, the cost of offering a national examination is a factor for the whole Episcopal Church. Many dioceses have opted out of using the General Ordination Examination and are using locally created substitutes. Because priests are ordained for the whole Church and not simply for a particular congregation or diocese, and because the teaching ministry of priesthood is so intrinsic to it, I believe there should be a “gold standard” to determine proficiency. There are big questions looming about this process, and I am a candidate for election in June at our Church's General Convention to the national General Board of Examining Chaplains.

On Shrove Tuesday, I will get the privilege of flipping pancakes, and burning palms. And on Ash Wednesday, I will impose ashes in what is one of the most solemn moments of our life together. Lent, while penitential, is a deeper season for all of us. I find a different kind of joy in this season of self-reflection and restraint.

In the midst of Lent, I will travel on behalf of Episcopal Relief and Development to Staten Island to celebrate the work that has been going on for the years since Hurricane Sandy. And Debbie and I are getting away for a long weekend at the beach for Valentine's Day.

None of this would be possible without the community that is our parish family - the Church of the Ascension. For all that I am blessed with, I give thanks to God. **Blessings, MAB+**

**HOUSE CHURCH on Thursdays in Lent**

Last year we introduced a tradition from the past to our Lenten experience. This year, on February 19<sup>th</sup>, February 26<sup>th</sup>, March 12<sup>th</sup>, March 19<sup>th</sup>, and March 26<sup>th</sup>, we will gather for Eucharist at the homes of parishioners. That will be followed by a simple dinner and fellowship. *(Thank you to Carol Rasmussen & Charley Noecker for offering their home for February 19th!)* *(Contact the parish office for address)*. 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. If you're willing to host us, please speak to Deacon Ed or Father Michael. The Eucharist will begin at 6:30 p.m.



## 2015 Vestry Members

### Officers:

<b>Rector/CEO</b>	The Very Reverend Canon Michael Bamberger
<b>Senior Warden</b>	John Buchanan
<b>Junior Warden</b>	Ted Bosley
<b>Clerk of the Vestry</b>	Carol Rasmussen
<b>Treasurer (<i>Budget, Investment</i>)</b>	Rob Stockly
<b>Treasurer Emeritus</b>	Lavette Teague
<b>Verger (<i>Archives, Buildings and Grounds</i>)</b>	Mike Beach

### Term of Office

<u>2015 Term</u>	<u>2016 Term</u>	<u>2017 Term</u>
Pam Harrison Ross Kellock John Buchanan	John Murphy Ted Bosley Jon Prentice	Meg Cox Carol Rasmussen Jessica Meehan



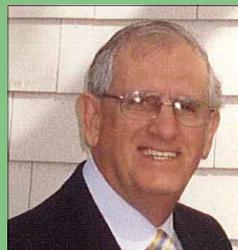
Fr. Bamberger



John Buchanan



Ted Bosley



Ross Kellock



Pam Harrison



John Murphy



Jon Prentice



Meg Cox



Carol Rasmussen



Jessica Meehan

A MESSAGE FROM



### PARISH WORK PARTY!

Everyone should put Saturday, February 7th on the calendar. This is the first work party of the year and we will be digging holes, painting, and most importantly pulling the incessant weeds on the property. Everyone is welcome because everyone can pull weeds. We will start at 8:30 and work toward noon. Do Come. **Mike Beach**

lookingglass

Lent is just two weeks away, and I'm thinking about what I can do differently to make it more meaningful and challenging. I know – I'll give something up. Although a little less sugar and a few less carbs may do me some good, I doubt it's going to get me closer to God and deepen my relationship with him.

A few weeks ago, I stumbled upon a sentence that I haven't been able to forget. Perhaps there are some things we're not supposed to forget. **"God resides in me as me."** I wish I could remember the source; but, nevertheless, if you take those words to heart as I did – they're a game changer. "God resides in me as me" - sit with that a while.

The third century Judaic scholar, Rabbi ben Levi writes: ***A procession of angels passes before every human being wherever he goes, proclaiming: make way for the image of the God.***

What does all this have to do with a Lenten practice? I was going to post a list of 40 things to do to make Lent more meaningful. A little less sugar and a few less carbs makes for another boring and perhaps even wasted Lent. If Lent is going to deepen my understanding of God and my relationship with him, then I need to step out of my comfort zone.

Assuming that God resides in me as me, what does God see that I don't see through my eyes? What should I be seeing and what should I be doing about it? Let's take it a step further and remember what Rabbi ben Levi said: that a procession of angels passes before every human being wherever he goes, proclaiming: make way for the image of the God.

I invite you to step out of your comfort zone this Lent and join me in exercises designed to take a fresh look at ourselves, a fresh look at how God sees us and how we see God reflected in the procession of angels that passes before us every day.

During the first week of Lent, here's the challenge: find a quiet time with no distractions and for a few minutes every day (just a few) sit in front of a mirror and look at yourself. What do you see; what does God see? Are you seeing the same thing? If not, why?

The complete series will be posted on my web site [www.discernwithme.com](http://www.discernwithme.com) weekly. There will also be hard copies available each week outside the parish hall.

*Live well, live blessed, Deacon Ed+*

NEW

**SMALL  
GROUPS  
BIBLE STUDY**

**Sundays,  
beginning  
February 15th**

On **Sunday, February 15th**, our Adult Formation Small Group will begin a new study based on Matthew Chapters 5-7, the Sermon on the Mount. Because the sermon is short and we only look at a small portion of it each week of the study, we will have the opportunity to think carefully about what we are reading and what it means for our lives today.

In our small group we study scripture, we talk about our relationship with God, and we encourage one another through fellowship and prayer. We also have a lot of fun. Won't you join us in the library at 9:15. You don't have to come every week. Come when you can. You will always be welcome. For more information, contact Jean Rowe.

## NOTES FROM THE LOFT

The music for the first Sunday of February, the fourth week of Epiphany, includes a lovely setting of *There's A Wideness in God's Mercy* by Maurice Bevan and the moving *Irish Blessing* by Bob Chilcott. I highly recommend accessing Youtube to hear a performance of *Irish Blessing* sung by The Priests – guaranteed to melt your heart.

On February 8, the anthems include K. Lee Scott's *Have You Not Known?*, which paraphrases the Old Testament lesson of the day. During communion the choir will sing *There Is A Balm* by Bruce Saylor to correlate with the Gospel lesson.

February 15 will feature Craig Phillips' powerful *Transfiguration*, an insightful musical depiction of this significant event, observed this day. The final anthem prior to Lent will be *A Quiet Alleluia* by Kenton Coe – appropriate as we prepare for the Alleluia hiatus that follows. In addition, there will be ample opportunity to sing many more Alleluias throughout this service.

All of the above-mentioned anthems were composed by contemporary musicians. The first Sunday of Lent will feature selections from the Romantic Period (1830-1920) – John Goss (1800-1880) from the early years and Edward Elgar (1857-1934) from the later. We'll hear Goss' *O Savior of the World* and *Ave Verum Corpus* by Elgar – two beautiful meditations to usher in the Lenten season.

May God grant us ears to listen and hearts to hear throughout the coming month.

*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



## February Formation for Young People

**Senior Youth Group** – Our book study of *Embracing an Adult Faith* by Marcus Borg continues. With Borg's recent passing, we will explore a bit more about who Borg was as a person and his other works.

### 10:30 A.M. Sunday School Themes

**February 1 – Football!**

**February 8 – St. Valentine**

**February 15 – Getting Ready for Lent**

**February 22 – The Good News (The Gospels)**

On February 22<sup>nd</sup> participants in Sunday school will adjourn to worship service during the announcements and begin assisting in worship by bringing up the oblations during the offertory. Students will return to sit with their families for Eucharist.

## Formation: A Lifelong Journey of Spiritual Enrichment

### A Possible Resource to Explore

Are you familiar with the quarterly publication entitled *Weavings: a Journal of the Christian Spiritual Life* published by The Upper Room? I started subscribing to this journal about 6 or 7 years ago. I don't remember where I first learned of this publication, but I do remember why I was drawn to it. Each quarterly journal is beautifully presented, well laid out and full of thoughtful essays and prayers, all dedicated to a specific theme. Original art work leads readers into each essay where color and calligraphy are gently used to highlight content. This most recent edition of *Weavings* is about 50 pages long.



Yes, I admit it. During this time of my life, and, more often than naught (I say with a long sigh), I am drawn to short, easily accessed, yet still enriching fuel for my times of contemplation. I don't always agree with the content of *Weavings*, but I always find something that triggers my thoughts and deepens my focus on God and those around me.

What resources do you use to help you on your journey? If you are willing to share some suggestions, please send them to me at [maggiemyrne@earthlink.net](mailto:maggiemyrne@earthlink.net). I will make sure to include them in future editions of the Spire. You never can tell when your suggestion might make a real difference for someone else.



These four verses from Psalm 139 were taken from the back cover of the February/March/April 2015 edition of *Weavings*. I like all of Psalm 139, but I find that the editor's choice of these four verses called to me.

May God continue to wrap His arms around you, His beloved child, and hold you close.

***Maggie Byrne Outhouse***

***Formation Ministry Leader***

## HOUSE CHURCH & DINNER On Thursdays in Lent at 6:30pm



The 1st Thursday: February 19th

Address:

*At the home of Charlie Noecker & Carol Rasmussen  
703 Manzanita Ave.  
Sierra Madre, CA 91024 / 626-355-5135*

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



**WHO:** Youth Group  
**WHAT:** Sleepover  
**WHERE:** Parish House  
**WHEN:** April 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>  
**TIME:** 6:30 PM – 11:00 AM

- ⇒ Join us for Good Friday Worship, Dinner & a movie and help with final preparations for Easter Sunday!
- ⇒ Please bring a sleeping bag and pillow, personal items as well as a dozen hard-boiled eggs for coloring!

# WANTED



This delightful treat was devoured at the annual meeting and received rave reviews (as well as several requests for the recipe)!

Will the maker of this deliciousness please step forward?! We hope you are not shy!  
OR - If you are aware of the chef, please let the parish office know.

We'd love to include the recipe in the March Spire!



## Women's Fellowship Potluck Luncheon

**When:** Saturday, February 28th

**Time:** 11:30 am

**Where:** Hawks Hall

*Please join the Women's  
Fellowship Potluck  
Luncheon for fun,  
fellowship, great food, and  
lots of laughter!*



## Shrove Tuesday Supper

Come have your fair share of Pancakes for Supper!

**When:** Tuesday, February 17, 2015

**Time:** 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm

**Where:** Hawks Hall

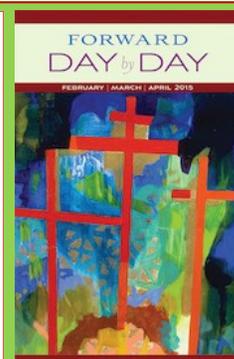
*All proceeds will be donated to Friends in Deed.*



**Cost:**

\$6.00 Adults, \$4.00 Children twelve and under or \$20 for a family of four or more!

Don't forget to pick up a copy of the new Forward Day by Day booklet. You can find copies at the back of the church and on the reception table in Hawks Hall. A \$2 donation is appreciated.



Thank You.

### USHERS NEEDED!

We need ushers (specifically for the 10:15 service). Are you interested? If so, please contact parishioner Geoff Meehan at 626-639-5598.

### SAVE THE DATE!

*All-You-Can-Eat  
Pasta and Salad Bar*

## Episcopal Relief & Development Fundraiser Event

*Saturday, February 7th*

**6:00 pm.  
Hawks Hall**

**Adults: \$10 per person**  
**Children 6-12: \$5.00 each**  
**Under 6: Free**

*Please join us for supper and a presentation given by Fr. Michael.*

*Hosted by the Fellowship Ministry*

**TICKET SALES ARE AT THE DOOR!**

Please sign-up so we know how much food to prepare. Sign-up sheet on Hawks Hall bulletin board.



## CHORAL EVENSONG FOR LENT

**Sunday  
March 15th  
5:00 pm**

**Here at Church of the Ascension**

### Egg-Citing!



Donations of plastic eggs, candy, and non-edible treats (stickers, balloons, erasers, etc.) are greatly appreciated for our Annual Easter Sunday Egg Hunts!

Please drop off contributions to the donation basket marked: EGG HUNT by Friday April 3rd.

*Thank You!*

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

## February 2015

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>1</b> 8am Mass 9am Sunday School 10:15am Mass  <b>COMMISSIONING OF                      2015 VESTRY MEMBERS</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 10am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group	<b>4</b> <b>5pm Mass</b> 5:30pm Yoga	<b>5</b> <b>7am Mass</b> 9am Forum	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>  <b>PARISH WORK PARTY                      8:30AM</b>  <b>ER&amp;D                      FUNDRAISING                      EVENT/DINNER                      6PM</b>
FR. BAMBERGER OUT OF OFFICE - GOE EXAMS NC						
<b>8</b> 8am Mass 9am Sunday School 10:15am Mass  <b>GOODEN SCHOOL                      SUNDAY/                      10:15AM SERVICE</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 10am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group	<b>11</b> <b>5pm Mass</b> 5:30pm Yoga	<b>12</b> <b>7am Mass</b> 9am Forum 10:30am Staff Mtg	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>  
					FR. BAMBERGER VACATION	
<b>15</b> 8am Mass 9am Sunday School 10:15am Mass	<b>16</b>  	<b>17</b> 10am Prayer in the Chapel  <b>SHROVE                      TUESDAY                      PANCAKE                      SUPPER                      5PM—7PM</b>  <b>VESTRY                      MEETING                      HAWKS HALL                      7PM</b>  	<b>18</b> 5:30pm Yoga 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal    <b>MASS &amp;                      IMPOSITION                      OF ASHES</b>  <b>7AM, NOON,                      &amp; 6PM</b>	<b>19</b> <b>7am Mass</b> 9am Forum  <b>HOUSE CHURCH/                      DINNER                      6:30PM</b>  <i>*at the home of Charlie                      Noecker &amp; Carol                      Rasmussen- contact                      parish office for                      address*</i>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
FR. BAMBERGER VACATION						
<b>22 1ST SUNDAY LENT</b> 8am Mass 9am Sunday School 10:15am Mass  <b>PARISH MINISTRY                      COUNCIL MEETING                      NOON~LIBRARY</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> 10am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group	<b>25</b> <b>5pm Mass</b> 5:30pm Yoga 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal  <b>MARCH                      SPIRE ARTICLES                      DUE</b>	<b>26</b> <b>7am Mass</b> 9am Forum 10:30am Staff Mtg  <b>HOUSE CHURCH/                      DINNER                      6:30PM</b>  <b>Location TBD</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>  <b>WOMEN'S                      FELLOWSHIP                      POTLUCK                      LUNCHEON                      11:30AM</b>  

Spire Creator: Kim Lumino, Parish Administrator