

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



MAY 2015

Upcoming Events

May 2nd -

Memorial Eucharist for Ray George - 11am

May 10th -Happy Mother's Day!

May 14th -

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

May 16th - 8:30am

Vestry Strategy Planning Meeting/Offsite

May 16th -

Victorian Tea/Silent Auction - 2pm

**May 17th-
 ASCENSION SUNDAY**

**Starting at 9am
 (after the 8am Mass)**

- Special Coffee Hours
- Displays from the Archive Committee
- Ascension Jeopardy 'Mini'

**Starting at 5:30pm
 (in Hawks Hall)**

- Potluck Dinner
- Youth Talent Show
- Ascension Jeopardy

May 19th -

Vestry Meeting 7:00pm

May 24th— Pentecost Sunday

Parish Ministry Council Meeting - Noon

May 25th - Memorial Day

May 30th -

Disaster Preparedness Training - 8:30am

From the Rector

I know I'm not alone in sometimes being hard on myself about unfinished tasks and challenges I keep putting off until I can do them perfectly. Many of us have a tendency to look with a certain element of negativity about our performance, particularly when it comes to things about which we are passionate.



At the training I have been attending in Oklahoma, I was reintroduced to a method of reflection and conversation called Appreciative Inquiry. It encourages folks to look for successes,

however small. It is focused on the assets you have, rather than the needs which are almost always surrounding us. In terms of conversations, it encourages an active listening in which the person telling the story is asked open-ended, non-judgmental questions. When the conversations slips towards the negative, the listener asks something to the effect of "what went well?" or "what good could you hope would come out of this?"

As your Vestry heads into a season of reflection and goal settings, it is my hope that we will build on what we have done well and look for opportunities that will match our strengths. And maybe, I'll try a bit of positive self-reflection.

Blessings, MAB+

**ASCENSION NEEDS
 SOMEONE TO CREATE
 A VIDEO** (with audio) of

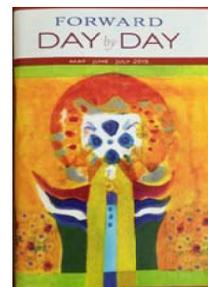


Church assets as part of our Emergency Planning effort. This video would be very useful to establish any insurance claims or to facilitate rebuilding efforts. The time commitment would be maybe one hour to walk the Church property with Fr. Michael who can help to describe assets. If you have a camera and can help, please contact the parish office at 626-355-1133.

Don't forget to pick-up a copy of the new Forward Day by Day booklet published by Forward Movement . Copies can be found at the back of the church and on the reception table in Hawks Hall.

A \$2 donation is appreciated.

Thank You.



Pledge Payment Snapshot

January - April 30th, 2015



2015 Budget Amount: \$235,000
YTD Budget: \$109,584
YTD Actual: \$97,720



In Loving Memory

Ray H. George, MD
January 27, 1927— April 21, 2015

A Memorial Eucharist will be held here at Church of the Ascension on Saturday, May 2nd at 11:00am. The service will be followed by a reception held at the Tournament of Roses House at 391 South Orange Grove Boulevard in Pasadena. Both gatherings are public.



Some of you may have noticed that I wasn't around the end of April or beginning of May. Well, where were you, Ed?

I was at the Duncan Conference Center in Delray Beach, Florida, attending a CREDO Conference for retired clergy. For 17 years, the CREDO conference experience has provided participants in the Church Pension Plan with an intimate, collegial opportunity for personal reflection and discernment. The Church realizes that its clergy have made a commitment to the spiritual well-being of others. CREDO offers the opportunity to make that same commitment to oneself. CREDO conferences have helped participants to rediscover the passion that initially drew them into their ministry and to help them rekindle their commitment to their own overall health and wellness as well as their commitment to those they serve.

CREDO conferences concentrate on four inter-related areas that affect overall health and wellness: Spiritual, Vocational, Financial, and Health. **Spiritual:** offering a sacred place to contemplate one's interior life and relationship with Christ. **Vocational:** offering a time to discern more clearly the confluence of who God calls you to be and the ways in which your call is lived out. **Financial:** providing the time to explore personal financial management, reflecting on one's God given resources, and discerning how to use these gifts in response to God's call. **Health:** promoting holistic reflection on one's physical and psychological health and well-being.

CREDO Conference Facts:

- ⇒ CREDO is a benefit of the Clergy Pension Plan
- ⇒ CREDO is for both active and retired clergy participants in the Clergy Pension Plan
- ⇒ CREDO has conducted nearly 300 conferences for priests, deacons, and bishops since 1997
- ⇒ Nearly 6,000 clergy have attended a CREDO conference
- ⇒ The CREDO faculty consists of more than 120 clergy and lay persons from across the Church

Live well, live blessed, Deacon Ed+



Education for Ministry is coming soon to Ascension. EFM is a four year study program that goes through the Old and New Testament, Church history, and a process to clarify your beliefs. It is sponsored by the School of Theology at the University of the South and mentored by locally trained people. The goal is to develop an informed and knowledgeable laity. Its program offers an excellent opportunity to solidify your thinking about your religion, your beliefs, and your faith in a strong community of fellow learners.

I will be creating a display about the Education for Ministry program in the near future and will be available to answer any questions; so if you are at all interested, please speak to me or Deacon Ed.

Mike Beach, Verger

Additional notes:

This program is not oriented toward a particular ministry like the Stephen Ministry program is for pastoral care, but is oriented to developing an informed and knowledgeable laity. It is a program that will solidify your thinking about your religion, your beliefs, and your faith. This is a program that has been around since 1975 and is used by congregations all over the world. Over 80,000 people have participated in this program and 7300 enroll every year. CEU units are also available if you are interested. The application uses the small group approach and thus develops a small tight community of faith and study. It is not exclusive but limited for effectiveness and new members may join every year. Resources for worship and study are furnished with the course materials.

NOTES FROM THE LOFT

Did you enjoy the music of Easter Sunday? Did you notice the surprise addition of the cymbals – could you hear them over the bell-ringing and zymbelstern? Thanks to Thomas Ruble and Mike Beach for clanging at just the right times! And thanks to the choir for their heroic musical offerings of the day (my spine shivered more than once during the service . . .)!

Although May signals the beginning of travel season for our singers, our ranks will persevere through Trinity Sunday, May 31, before going on hiatus for the summer. Themed Sundays are the norm for the month of May as we celebrate Rogation, Ascension, Pentecost, and Trinity. Choral music for the month will include:

May 3

Gloria from Twelfth Mass by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
If Ye Love Me by Thomas Tallis

May 10 – Rogation Sunday

King Jesus Hath A Garden by Charles Wood, arranged by Richard Shephard
O Wheat Whose Crushing Was for Bread by Shirley W. McRae
(Geraldine Keeling will be at the organ while I'm in Chicago.)

May 17 – Ascension Sunday

Hark! Ten Thousand Harps and Voices by Robert J. Powell
O Saving Victim by Roland E. Martin

May 24 – Pentecost Sunday

Come, Holy Spirit by Ernst Friedrich Richter
Draw Us In the Spirit's Tether by Harold Friedell

May 31 – Trinity Sunday

Come, Join the Dance of Trinity by Daniel Nelson
Gracious Spirit, Dwell With Me by K. Lee Scott

Continued Easter blessings ~

*Rise, heart, thy Lord is ris'n; sing his praise without delays,
Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise with him may'st rise;
That, as his death calcined thee to dust,
His life may make thee gold, and much more, just.
~George Herbert*



Debora Huffman, Director of Music and Organist



Pentecost Sunday
May 24th

DON'T FORGET TO WEAR RED!

TIME



**Not Enough of It!
Too Much to Do!
Prayer? Quiet? Listen?**

An Opportunity: d365 : A Daily Devotional Site

www.d365.org

This daily devotional website offers the opportunity for reflection and prayer using a cleanly designed modern format. Instrumental music, much of which was recorded especially for this site, is available if you would like to add it (or not) to your experience. The amount of time it takes for you to go through the steps of Pause, Listen, Think, Pray, Go will totally be determined by the amount of time you wish to spend with each step, beginning with just minutes. “Let the writer’s words serve as background for your own conversation with God.”¹

This site was originally created with young people in mind by Passport, Inc. in response to the attacks of 2011.² **Although the focus remains young people, I find that this site offers opportunities for reflection for all children of God, regardless of age.**

The following example is the devotion for April 29, 2015 ³. The instrument used to play the optional music is an acoustic guitar. The title of the composition is *Jesus, Giver of All Good Things*. The musician is Jim McConnell.

Pause

As you pause to begin your devotion, you will find a statement that will help you take time away from your busyness to center and listen to what God is saying.

Bad news seems to be all around us. We hear grim predictions about the economy and the environment, learn about hostilities and divisions within communities, listen as our friends tell us their troubles. Everywhere we turn, the news seems to be negative. Even the prayer list at church can get us down.

But our faith in Christ speaks of good news – good news for the poor and oppressed, healing for the sick and broken, freedom for captives, redemption from sin, and hope for us all.

How do we discover and experience this good news that Christ has come to proclaim? And once we have found it, how will it make a difference for us and for all the world?

~~~~~

## Listen

*As you read the scripture for the day, read it through a few times or pray the scripture as you listen for God’s voice..*

Running up to the carriage, Philip heard the man reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, “Do you really understand what you are reading?”

The man replied, “Without someone to guide me, how could I?” Then he invited Philip to climb up and sit with him. This was the passage of scripture he was reading:

*Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter and like a lamb before its shearer is silent so he didn’t open his mouth. In his humiliation, justice was taken away from him. Who can tell the story of his descendants because his life was taken from the earth?*

The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, about whom does the prophet say this? Is he talking about himself or someone else?” Starting with that passage, Philip proclaimed the good news about Jesus to him.

Acts 8:30-35

# Think

*The devotions found on this site are reflections, voices that will cause you to think. As you read the reflections on the scripture, be open to new thoughts and ideas.*

There's an old saying that God doesn't call the equipped but equips the called.

Philip probably felt rather ill-equipped as he approached the Ethiopian's chariot that day. What was he going to say to someone with such high connections? And one who was so different from him in every way? Why had God sent him here?

But Philip didn't hesitate; and when he arrived at the chariot and found the man reading the prophet Isaiah, he knew that he was sent there to explain the scripture and share the good news about Jesus.

The God who is both all-powerful and all-loving invites us to become partners in sharing the good news with others. We may not always know what to do or say, or why we have been sent, but if we will remain available and open and listen for God's guidance, God can work through us to share the good news about Jesus in all kinds of circumstances and to anyone we meet.

Elizabeth Jones Edwards



# Pray

*Let your thinking about the text lead you into response through prayer. Remember, prayer is conversation, so take the time to talk to God but also to listen for*

God, there are so many needs in the world and so many situations I don't understand that I often feel overwhelmed. Help me to know what to say or do in order to share the good news of Jesus with others. Amen.



# Go

*While it would be nice to find a quiet space and stay there forever, life always calls us back. There are many things to do, and we are called to go, but never alone. Guided by the Spirit, go with God's blessing sent in the name of Jesus.*

“Were the whole realm of nature mine,  
That were a present far too small.  
Love so amazing, so divine,  
Demands my soul, my life, my all.”

From “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” by Isaac Watts



1. Passport, Inc., [www.d365.org/the-experience](http://www.d365.org/the-experience), 04/29/15.
2. Passport, Inc., [www.d365.org/about\\_d365](http://www.d365.org/about_d365) , 04/29/15.
3. Passport, Inc., [www.d365.org/devotions/good-news-for-all-april-29-2015](http://www.d365.org/devotions/good-news-for-all-april-29-2015) , 04/29/15.

If you decide to take a look at this site, I would appreciate hearing any thoughts you wish to share about your experience. I would also like to know about any sites you find important to your spiritual growth and development.

*Respectfully submitted, Maggie Byrne Outhouse, Formation Ministry*



EASTER AT  
ASCENSION  
2015

Photos by Jon Prentice



*Mark your calendar!*

May 17th

Celebration Activities Include:

Starting at 9am (after the 8am Mass):

SPECIAL COFFEE HOURS

DISPLAYS FROM THE ARCHIVE COMMITTEE

ASCENSION JEOPARDY 'MINI'

Starting at 5:30pm

in Hawks Hall:

POTLUCK DINNER

YOUTH TALENT SHOW

ASCENSION JEOPARDY



Thank you to Nancy Pierson for creating this year's Paschal candle.



Book of Common Prayer partitions made during our All Parish Sunday School on Sunday, April 26th.

Afternoon Tea flyer designed by Jan Keppler-Kudla

**Victorian  
Afternoon Tea**

Saturday May 16th at 2:00 pm

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

**Where:** The Church of the Ascension - Hawks Hall, 25 E. Laurel Ave, Sierra Madre

**Ticket price:** \$35.00 - Tickets are available at the Church office and Savor the Flavor.  
Children age 12 and under are half price.

Sierra Madre's Village Church of the Ascension will be  
hosting it's 3rd 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).

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)

## MAY 2015

| SUNDAY                                                                                                                                                                                                           | MONDAY                                                                                                        | TUESDAY                                                                              | WEDNESDAY                                                       | THURSDAY                                                                                                  | FRIDAY                                        | SATURDAY                                                                                           |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                               |                                                                                      |                                                                 |                                                                                                           | 1                                             | 2<br>Memorial Service for Ray George 11am                                                          |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                               |                                                                                      |                                                                 |                                                                                                           | Deacon Ed Out of Town Through May 4th — Credo |                                                                                                    |
| 3<br>8am Mass<br>9am Xian Ed. Hour<br>10:15am Mass<br>10:15 Sunday School                                                                                                                                        | 4                                                                                                             | 5<br>10am Tuesday Morning Prayer<br>6pm Dinner Group                                 | 6<br>5pm Mass<br>5:30pm Yoga<br><br><b>*No Choir Rehearsal*</b> | 7<br>7am Mass<br>9am Forum<br>10:30am Staff Mtg                                                           | 8                                             | 9<br><br>Fr. Wood Out of Town Through May 18th                                                     |
| Deacon Ed Out of Town - Through May 4th — Credo                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                               | Starting at 4pm: Fr. Bamberger Out of Town — Clergy Conference, San Pedro            |                                                                 |                                                                                                           |                                               |                                                                                                    |
| 10<br>8am Mass<br>9am Xian Ed. Hour<br>10:15am Mass<br>10:15 Sunday School<br><br>                                            | 11                                                                                                            | 12<br>10am Tuesday Morning Prayer<br>6pm Dinner Group                                | 13<br>5pm Mass<br>5:30pm Yoga<br>7:30pm Choir Rehearsal         | 14<br>7am Mass<br>9am Forum<br><br>House Church/Dinner 6:30pm<br><br>*contact parish office for location* | 15                                            | 16<br>Victorian Tea/Silent Auction 2pm<br>Hawks Hall<br>8:30am - Vestry Strategy Planning/ Offsite |
| Fr. Wood Out of Town—Through May 18th                                                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                               |                                                                                      |                                                                 |                                                                                                           |                                               |                                                                                                    |
| 17<br>8am Mass<br>9am Xian Ed. Hour<br>10:15am Mass<br>10:15 Sunday School<br><br>ASCENSION SUNDAY<br>*See page 6 for event details*                                                                             | 18                                                                                                            | 19<br>10am Tuesday Morning Prayer<br>6pm Dinner Group<br><br>7pm Vestry Meeting      | 20<br>5pm Mass<br>5:30pm Yoga<br>7:30pm Choir Rehearsal         | 21<br>7am Mass<br>9am Forum<br>10:30am Staff Mtg                                                          | 22                                            | 23                                                                                                 |
| 24<br>PENTECOST SUNDAY<br>8am Mass<br>9am Xian Ed. Hour<br>10:15am Mass<br>10:15 Sunday School<br><br>PMC MTG AT NOON<br><br> | 25<br>Memorial Day<br><br> | 26<br>10am Tuesday Morning Prayer<br>6pm Dinner Group<br><br>JUNE SPIRE ARTICLES DUE | 27<br>5pm Mass<br>5:30pm Yoga<br>7:30pm Choir Rehearsal         | 28<br>7am Mass<br>9am Forum                                                                               | 29                                            | 30<br>Disaster Preparedness Training 8am<br>Hawks Hall                                             |
| 31<br>8am Mass<br>9am Xian Ed. Hour<br>10:15am Mass<br>10:15 Sunday School                                                                                                                                       | SPIRE Newsletter Creator: Kim Lumino, Parish Administrator                                                    |                                                                                      |                                                                 |                                                                                                           |                                               |                                                                                                    |