

# The SPIRE

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

June 2016

## Upcoming Events

June 5th -  
Episcopal 101 Begins  
9am—10am in Hawks Hall



June 7th  
California  
Presidential  
Primary  
Election

June 12th—  
Holy Land Olive Wood  
Items Sale

June 16th—  
House Church/Dinner  
6:30pm - Location TBD



June 19th  
Happy  
Father's  
Day!

June 21st— Vestry Meeting  
7:00pm— Hawks Hall

### Pledge Payment Snapshot

January - May 30th, 2016

2016 Budget Amount:  
\$235,000

YTD Budget: \$109,581

YTD Actual: \$101,388



## From the Rector

Recently Lew Watanabe, a long-time member of the community, passed away from cancer. Lew, over the course of his long career, went from being a landscaper to being a renowned water sculpture artist. His works can be seen all over town – the Japanese Garden at Sierra Madre School, the Sandy Towner Garden at the Gooden School, the Weeping Wall in Memorial Park, and even here at the Church of the Ascension. When our Memorial Garden was put in in 1983, it had two large pools with a waterfall coming from the pedestal upon which the statue of St. Francis rests. The pools were difficult to maintain; and due to their depth, they presented a risk to animals and children. Eventually they were removed, and former Senior Warden Paul Clifton commissioned Lew Watanabe to create the small waterfall that is in



Ascension's  
Memorial Garden



the northwest corner of the Garden. Lew designed it to be beautiful and to add the sound of falling water to our peaceful place. Some years ago, Lew suffered a terrible injury while working in a large pool. His fall left him in a wheelchair for the rest of his life. His disability didn't stop him from creating. In 2007, when we did the hardscape renovation that made our campus handicapped accessible, Lew was overseeing the garden project at Gooden. We asked Lew to be the one who tried our walkways and ramps for the first time. They passed muster with Lew. May his soul, and the souls of all the faithful departed, rest in peace.

MAB+



Sandy Towner Garden



Lew Watanabe

Photo by Terry Miller



### Summer begins on June 20th!

As you are scuba diving, zip lining, hanging out at the beach, or just having fun, please remember to send in your pledge payments!

It's good  
to be  
HOME!

# HOUSE CHURCH & DINNER

Thursday, June 16th

6:30pm

\*Location TBD\*

\*A sign-up sheet will be posted on  
Hawks Hall bulletin board.\*



In April, the Gooden School held its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala at the Altadena Country Club. In attendance were Father Michael and Debbie Bamberger, Deacon Ed Sniecienski, and Kim and Tony Lumino. In the course of the evening, our loyal sexton José Aguayo and his wife Alicia were honored. (José and Alicia both work here at Ascension, but also serve the Gooden School.) Planned renovations to the basketball court on our side of the street will be dedicated to them.



Fr. Bamberger with former Gooden Board of Trustees member Michael Belter.



## NOTES FROM THE LOFT

Thanks to each of our singers for a spectacular choral year! And now the group is on hiatus . . . the loft is empty, to be filled again come September. Do enjoy their presence in your midst during the summer months – sing heartily with them in the pews!

Over the next few months offertory and communion music will be provided by the organ or by soloists and/or small vocal ensembles. I'm certain that your worship experience will be enhanced by this lovely, albeit abbreviated style of music.

Let me close these abbreviated remarks by encouraging you to express your appreciation to our singers as you greet them throughout the summer – they're a marvelous group of people who dedicate a significant portion of each week to preparing and presenting music for the glory of God and the benefit of our parishioners.



Our June **Spotlight on Singers** features soprano **Collette Ostrye**, who first began singing at Ascension in 2003. Colette's expressed her gratitude to Susan Beach for introducing her to the Ascension Choir via the Sierra Madre Chorale (by extension, we're also grateful for Susan's invitation to Colette!).



Colette's early choir experience was in the elementary school children's choir at Immaculate Conception Church in Monrovia, where she also studied piano with the nuns there and performed in her first piano recital. At San Diego State University she sang in the University Choir while completed her BA in English Literature. At Cal State LA Colette sang and toured (along with Susan Beach) in the university choirs under the direction of William Belan.. While completing her BA in Music she performed in dance and musical theater productions at Cal State LA, Rio Hondo College and Glendale College.

On several occasions Colette's musical and educational journeys have taken her to Europe. In 1988 Colette toured Eastern Europe with St. Philip the Apostle (Pasadena) choir under the direction of Frank Brownstead. At the end of the tour she took the opportunity to travel to northern Poland where she visited relatives in Minikowo, (population 490). In 1996-97 Colette studied at the University of Paris VIII at St. Denis. In 1998 she spent the summer at the University of Provence, Aix-Marseille.

Colette holds an MLS from the University of Hawaii. Her first librarian position was with Brown and Caldwell Engineers; her last was eight years as librarian in the Technical Library at Los Angeles County Dept. of Public Works.

Not only is Colette an anchor in the soprano section, she utilizes her significant library skills by volunteering as the choir librarian, for which I'm particularly grateful. I pull music from the files; after it's been sung, Colette organizes and refiles it. No small task – particularly after festival services such as Christmas Eve and Easter. Ascension is fortunate, indeed, that Colette has shared her gifts with us for the past ten years – and we hope that she'll continue to do so indefinitely!



*Debora Huffman, Director of Music and Organist*

## GREETERS/USHERS NEEDED!

We need greeters/ushers for the 10:15 service. Please consider helping out the existing families who are serving several times a month by committing to one Sunday a month.



Contact parishioner Geoff Meehan at 626-475-5546  
for more information.



## My Mom, Faith, and One Well Used Prayer

### Prayer for Protection

by James Dillet Freeman

The light of God surrounds me;  
 The love of God enfolds me;  
 The power of God protects me;  
 The presence of God watches over me.  
 Wherever I am, God is!

My mom, Jan Byrne, passed away in August of 2012 at the age of 91. I loved my mother dearly. She was my best friend. She knew all my faults and listened to and loved me anyway. Growing up, she made things better with kisses and hugs and her positive belief that God is always with us and that "...this, too, shall pass." Since the day I was born, her guidance and direction started me and supported me on my, at times, erratic path of faith within the Episcopal Church. She became my example of a faith that nurtured as it grew, even when tested during the difficult times that come with life, and even when I was too young or too self-absorbed to know what I was seeing.

One of my last and most precious memories occurred shortly before she died. I walked into her room at The British Home, located here in Sierra Madre. She was seated in her oh-so-comfortable chair, especially purchased for her by my brother Don, and greeted me with smiles of delight just because I walked into the room (Moms are so so special). I leaned over to kiss her, "Hello." She reached up and cupped my face with both her hands, looked deeply into my eyes and said, "Never forget that I love you and that it will all be alright." She knew what was coming; and in that moment, her thoughts were of me and making sure that I understood her peace of understanding. I cannot tell you how many times I think of her and that gift of a moment in time to help me through the varied hurdles of my day. I do miss her.

Well, guess what! Her positive spirit reached out to me yet again to remind me of the love and support that is forever and always with me and with all of us. I was recently going through more of her papers and memories and came upon a gently, but well-used 3" x 1¼" piece of aged paper that had been cut out of some resource. As you might guess, the *Prayer for Protection* by James Dillet Freeman was the focus of that small piece of paper. Once I saw that piece of paper with those words, I remembered seeing it in different places around the home of my parents where she continued to live after my dad died. Those were hard times for her, but she always strived to keep her focus positive and her trust in God strong. I know that this small five line prayer was part of her arsenal of faith. I have only just begun to realize the depth of her faith and that her faith seemed to strengthen with each day that passed.

I feel sure that many of you, especially of "an age," recognize this prayer. James Dillet Freeman wrote an article for Unity discussing the origins of *Prayer for Protection*.<sup>1</sup> In 1940, he actually created a four line verse, the initial version of this prayer, in response to the extreme need for protection during World War II. The most commonly known version was published in 1943 and contained the power of the fifth line, "Wherever I am, God is!" As he said in his article, "Sometimes God speaks to us when we don't even know it is God. I think God has many ways of speaking to us and not only in words that we hear with our ears. I think God speaks to our hearts and minds, and sometimes God's message has nothing to do with words. God is love and intelligence and life. More than anything we say God is, or even imagine God is, God is the one universal Presence and Power and is seeking to express Truth and beauty and good through all of us and for all of us."<sup>1</sup>

This prayer comforts me. It connects me to my mom and her gifts of faith to me and my brother. It holds true and connects me to our church, our friends and families, and all who serve, attend, or just walk through the doors of Ascension. He is there for all of us. The transition is easy.

The light of God surrounds us;  
 The love of God enfolds us;  
 The power of God protects us;  
 The presence of God watches over us.  
 Wherever we are, God is!

Thank you, Mom. I love you and miss you. May God continue to hold you close. Please say, "Hi" to Dad for me.

1. James Dillet Freeman, "Prayer for Protection", [www.unity.org/resources/articles/prayer-protection](http://www.unity.org/resources/articles/prayer-protection), Date unknown

*Submitted by Maggie Outhouse, Formation Ministry*

*Real Life ~*

We've been discussing how addiction doesn't just belong to the individual, but it belongs to the entire family. Unfortunately, all family members participate whether they realize it or not.

*Real Faith*

One common effect of addiction on family members is the phenomenon of *enabling*. The definition of enabling is the behaviors a family exhibits in an attempt to help their loved one out of tough situations. While families may feel that helping their loved ones pay their rent or utilities or covering for them when they act inappropriately is the right thing to do, these behaviors allow addicts to continue their destructive lifestyle. Family members will often engage in enabling behaviors because they may feel guilty about a loved one's addiction and they somehow feel responsible and want to make things right.

Another common effect of addiction on family members is feelings of hurt, anger, and resentment. While enabling behaviors are well-intentioned, some family members will eventually see the underlying motives of their addicted loved ones and can grow to resent them for using them or those family members who do not see what they see. This reaction is especially true when an addict lies or steals from the family. These rifts can still remain even after the addict enters treatment and has substantial clean time. We'll discuss the challenges of forgiveness later this year.

I hope you've been finding these articles informative and helpful. Please let me know; I'd love to hear your personal experiences and answer questions. Next month we'll take a look at specific problems that arise within families suffering from addiction.

*Live well, live blessed, live outside your comfort zones,*  
*Deacon Ed+*



(photo: Bishop Bruno and I celebrating the Eucharist at the Sea of Galilee 2007)

“Jerusalem! Jerusalem! Murderer of prophets! Killer of the ones who brought you God’s news! How often I’ve ached to embrace your children, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you wouldn’t let me. And now you’re so desolate, nothing but a ghost town. What is there left to say? Only this: I’m out of here soon. The next time you see me you’ll say, ‘Oh, God has blessed him! He’s come, bringing God’s rule!’” (Matthew 23:37-39)

A few weeks after my ordination in 2005, I traveled with Bishop Talton and religious leaders of different faith traditions to the Holy Land. The experience changed my life in many ways. In 2007, I returned and continued learning about the plight of Christians living in the West Bank. What was once 63% of the population today is only 2%. That’s a shocking statistic. The lives of the 2% no way resemble the lives of the 1% of Americans that we often hear about. In fact, it’s just the opposite. Their lives are difficult, and things that we often take for granted are extravagances only dreamed about.

One practical way to be of help to the Christian community in the Holy Land is to assist those families who bring their original handcrafted olive-wood art to the United States.

On **June 12, 2016**, **Bethlehem Handcrafts** will be at Ascension and you will have the opportunity to purchase their crafts and learn firsthand about life as a Christian living in the West Bank. You can learn more at [www.bethlehemhandcrafts.org](http://www.bethlehemhandcrafts.org).

**BETHLEHEM  
HANDCRAFTS**



*Live well, live blessed, Deacon Ed+*

## EfM Registration for September 2016



It is time to start thinking about signing up for EfM this summer. The course will start in September. This program is a four year program that starts with the Old Testament, continues with the New Testament, Church History, and concludes with Theology and Ethics. It is a course that will change your life. You will grow into considering problems from a theological perspective and finding where God fits into it. The class is limited to 12 people and needs a minimum of 6 to start. There is a cost of \$350 each year and all books are provided for you. If you have a serious interest, you may contact me at [mbeach99@msn.com](mailto:mbeach99@msn.com) Registration will continue through August, but don't delay. *Mike Beach, Verger*



### SAVE THE DATE!

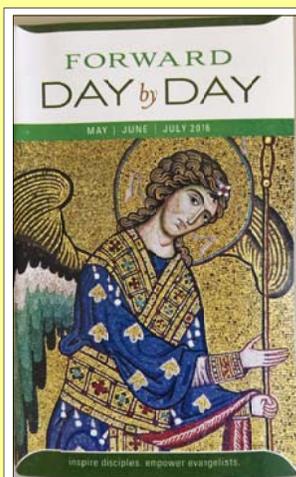
**Sunday, July 17th**

Episcopal Visit by  
Bishop J. Jon Bruno

*\*only one service that day at 9:30am\**



The original painting of **Fanny Hawks** left the possession of the parish in the late 1940's. In 2007, when we named the parish hall Hawk's Hall, we borrowed the original and had two fancy photo copies made. After some negotiating with the Historical Society, the original painting was returned to us on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016.



The new *Day by Day* booklets are available at the back of the church and on the reception table in Hawks Hall.

**A \$2.00 donation is requested.**

*Forward Day by Day* is a booklet of daily inspirational meditations reflecting on a specific Bible passage, chosen from the daily lectionary readings as listed in the Revised Common Lectionary or the Daily Office from the Episcopal Church's *Book of Common Prayer*. The meditations are rich in substance and offer a wide range of witness and experiences. Each month's meditation is written by a different author.

**Sunday School Information**

- \* Elementary class with Brittany Banis, 9 am - 10 am.
- \* Youth Group with Jobi Harrell, 9 am - 10 am
- \* All Ages Sunday school, 10:15 - Peace.

In case you missed it, the 2016 Parish Photo Directory is now available. If you would like an electronic copy in PDF format, please email the parish office at [parish@ascension-sierramadre.com](mailto:parish@ascension-sierramadre.com).

If you would like a printed copy, there are

**Church Photo Directory**



some available on the reception table in Hawks Hall. A \$5.00 donation is requested to help offset the cost of color printing. *Thank You*



A couple of photos from the last House Church at the home of Charley Noecker and Carol Rasmussen on May 19th, 2016.

The Dodgers welcome  
The Diocese of Los Angeles!

**Friday, September 2nd**  
**7:00 p.m.**

Los Angeles Dodgers  
Episcopal Night



vs.

San Diego  
Padres

**Tickets only \$20!**

Sign-up sheet on Hawks  
Hall bulletin board.

*Fireworks after the game!*

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)

## June 2016

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			<b>1</b> 5:30pm Yoga	<b>2</b> <b>7am Mass</b> 9am Forum 10:30am Staff Mtg	<b>3</b>  <b>Private Wedding Rehearsal 4:00pm</b>	<b>4</b>  <b>Private Wedding 4:30pm</b>
<b>5</b> 8am Mass 9am Xian Ed.Hour <b>9am Episcopal 101</b> 10:15am Mass 10:15 Sunday School EFM Meeting at 2pm/Library	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> 10am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group  <b>VOTING IN HAWKS HALL</b>  <b>Presidential Primary Election</b>	<b>8</b> 5:30pm Yoga	<b>9</b> <b>7am Mass</b> 9am Forum	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>12</b> 8am Mass 9am Xian Ed. Hour <b>9am Episcopal 101</b> 10:15am Mass 10:15 Sunday School EFM Meeting at 2pm/Library  <b>Holy Land Olive Wood Items Sale</b>  Dr. Huffman-Vacation	<b>13</b>  <b>Pasadena Photochromers Meeting (private) in Hawks Hall</b>  <b>6:30pm—9:30pm</b>	<b>14</b> 10am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group	<b>15</b> 5:30pm Yoga	<b>16</b> <b>7am Mass</b> 9am Forum 10:30am Staff Mtg  <b>House Church/ Dinner 6:30pm Location TBD</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b> 8am Mass 9am Xian Ed. Hour <b>9am Episcopal 101</b> 10:15am Mass 10:15 Sunday School  <b>Father's Day</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> 10am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group  <b>7pm Vestry Meeting Hawks Hall</b>	<b>22</b> 5:30pm Yoga	<b>23</b> <b>7am Mass</b> 9am Forum	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>  <b>JULY SPIRE ARTICLES DUE</b>
<b>26</b> 8am Mass 9am Xian Ed. Hour <b>9am Episcopal 101</b> 10:15am Mass 10:15 Sunday School	<b>27</b>  <b>Pasadena Photochromers Meeting (private) in Hawks Hall</b>  <b>6:30pm—9:30pm</b>	<b>28</b> 10am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group	<b>29</b> 5:30pm Yoga	<b>30</b>		
Fr. Bamberger Out of Town through July 5th						