

## St. Mary's Guild

I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you who helped so much with Fr. Delgado's reception on Monday, February 18<sup>th</sup>. The members of the Hospitality Committee and St. Mary's Guild worked so hard to make this reception a success. All those who prepared the fabulous tasting dishes, helped set up the Parish Hall, and cleaned up after the event did a wonderful job; your support and help are very much appreciated.

I would also like to thank my son, Alexander, who was a real trooper through out the day; he set up chairs, helped in the kitchen, and pitched in with the clean-up crew.

Thank you all very much!

Lisa Reed,  
St. Mary's Guild-President

## THOSE WHO CAN NO LONGER DRIVE: AN OPPORTUNITY TO BE PART OF PASTORAL CARE

We have several parishioners who no longer are able to drive themselves to church. They still want to participate in the life of the parish if they could only get here.

If this driving ministry appeals to you, please contact Diane Rhodus for more details. You can make a real difference in someone's life.



*Our vision is that the Church of the Ascension serves Christ today for those who will come to know Christ tomorrow.*

**WORSHIP  
FORMATION  
PASTORAL CARE  
FELLOWSHIP  
OUTREACH  
PRESENCE**

### The Episcopal Church of the Ascension



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## Senior Warden's Blog

One of the responsibilities of the Sr. Warden (and the Jr. Warden, too) of which you may not be aware is that of pastoral care – literally! The Wardens not only assist the Rector with the organization and leadership of the congregation, but we also monitor the physical and emotional pulse of the Rector. Too often, dedicated clergy over-commit their time, energy, and talents to the church and its mission, neglecting their own physical, mental, and even spiritual welfare. Thus, one of the questions that I regularly ask Fr. Michael is "How are you?" I ask this not as a conversation piece but because it is important that he consider his own welfare as well as that of the congregation. We are fortunate that Fr. Michael (and Debbie) have undertaken a regimen of exercise, good diet, and adequate rest. We want to see that they continue to do this, both for their benefit and for ours as a model for our behavior. We encourage care of self as a goal, for if you are unable to care for yourself, how can you care for others?

I have written previously of Stewardship as encompassing time, talent, and treasure. One of our greatest treasures is our

health. As part of our expanded concept of stewardship, we want to assist the congregation in pursuing good health through good diet and exercise. It has been suggested that we continue the Lenten Walks throughout the year, returning to the Church for 6 PM mass. Other suggestions are to provide yoga or other classes that combine physical activity with spiritual activity. Perhaps classes on affordable nutrition would be helpful as well. Whether done in a group or done individually, a commitment to a healthy self is an important step in our commitment to Christ. Please share your thoughts with the Wardens and Vestry as to methods of improving our community's well being.

While you are contemplating how we can benefit ourselves as well as others, here are ten commandments of self-care, as reported by Valerie Burton in her book "How Did I Get So Busy?" (as slightly edited by me):

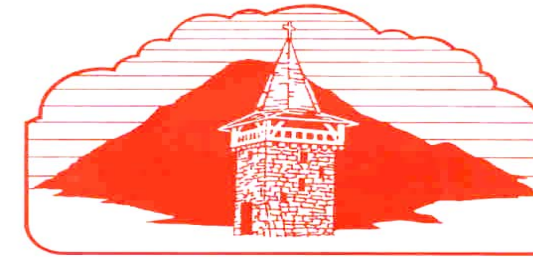
1. Use all your vacation time. (We all need time away from work and stress.)
2. Commit your time off solely to non-work activities. (Do you have a hobby? If not, how about one of our small groups or other activities?)
3. Get adequate rest. (Eight hours of sleep is preferable.)
4. Have fun at least once a week. (You're

5. Eat regularly, preferably sitting down. (Relax and enjoy the meal.)
6. Exercise regularly, preferably standing up! (Walking, swimming, gardening are just a few thoughts - you don't have to run marathons.)
7. Be fruitful and productive; don't just be busy. (Use your time well; we don't have a lot of it.)
8. Use technology to gain time, not waste it. (Ditto number 7.)
9. Connect heart to heart with people who matter-family, friends, your fellow parishioners. (Start by attending coffee hour, join a small group, or?)
10. Be led by the Holy Spirit (Look within as well as without; have courage to follow the Spirit - who can you help and thus spiritually help yourself?)

And for a great article on overcoming physical and emotional pain and regaining well being, read the story about CookSmart Columnist (and minister's wife) Pam Anderson in the March 7-9, 2008 USA Weekend Magazine. [www.usaweekend.com](http://www.usaweekend.com)

Yours in Christ.

Ted



The **SPIRE**

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

APRIL 2008

## Worship

### Sundays

8 am Mass  
8:45 Breakfast  
9:10 Education  
10:15 Mass

### Wednesday

4:30pm Prayer Walk  
6:00pm Mass  
7:30pm Choir Rehearsal

### Thursdays

7am Mass

### Fridays

12pm Mass

## From the Rector

The focus of this issue of our parish newsletter is Pastoral Care – one of our core ministries at Ascension. The term is actually broader than one might think. Certainly it entails the attention paid to parishioners in their times of need by the members of the clergy, but it has a larger scope than this.

Pastoral care is lived out when Christian people care for one another and when they offer care for non-Christians. When we visit someone in the hospital, when we write a note of consolation, when we listen patiently, when we pray for our own needs and those of others in our small groups – whenever we treat another as we would like to be treated – that can be pastoral care. As you can see, pastoral care CAN BE and IS offered by all of the baptized.

I have also been reminded that pastoral care can also mean taking care of ourselves so that we can be more effective ministers of the Good News. To this end, we will be carrying on with the practice we began in Lent of taking a walk on Wednesday afternoons. It is good for the body and the spirit!

I'd like to leave you with a few questions to consider. How do you offer pastoral care in your daily life? How could you be better equipped? How could you be more intentional? How and where do you receive pastoral care? Is it easy, or is it hard for you to ask someone to pray for you? Is it easy or hard for you to pray for someone else?

As Eastertide unfolds, I believe this is a good opportunity for us to learn, as the first Christians had to learn, what it means to care for each other.

MAB+



## Upcoming Events

4/13 Confirmation  
Instruction begins

4/15 Vestry Meeting

4/20 Parish Ministry  
Council Meeting

4/27 Bishop Carranza /  
Baptism & Confirmation

5/3 Safe Church Training  
Workshop

5/4 Ascension Sunday

Liturgically the period of time between Easter and Pentecost is called Eastertide.

**Eastertide**—the six Sundays' following Easter during which we say a lot of alleluias and focus on Christ's Resurrection and its effect on our lives.

## "DEACON RAINEY"

On June 7 our Ministry Intern Allison Rainey will be ordained a Deacon at Saint John's Cathedral in Los Angeles. To help relieve the traffic at the cathedral and to make the trip a parish event, we are going to arrange bus transportation for those who would like it.

At the present time we do not know the cost per person.

If you think you would like to join us on the bus, please put your name and the number of people from your family on the bulletin board sign up sheet. This information will help us determine the size of bus we will need.

## REKEYING AND WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU



Ascension has not gone through a rekeying process for ten years. Just imagine how many times keys have exchanged hands without that exchange being reported to the church office. Other times parishioners have left leadership positions but not turned in the keys they once needed. Other key possessors have moved away, and some have died. We no longer know how many keys are out there or who has them. For the security of our church and its buildings, your Vestry has decided it's time to rekey.

On Friday, March 28<sup>th</sup>, the church, parish house, and church school buildings were all re-keyed. What that means for you is that if you are entitled to have a church key, you should come to the church office to sign the key form and get the type of key you need.

We are trying to contact all those who are on our key list. If we missed you, please give Brenda a call at the church office to arrange a pick up time that works for you.

## New Red Vestments

As many of you know, the Altar Guild is looking forward to purchasing new red festival vestments. Ascension's current red chasuble is in very poor condition. The silk cloth at the shoulders has frayed to the point that you can see the lining, a condition that can not be repaired. Ascension has used this chasuble and the stole, burse, and veil that go with it for 50 to 60 years. Long time parishioners recall seeing this red set as one of their earliest memories of the church. In recent years, we have been using the red chasuble, burse, and veil that Fr. Michael's wife, Debbie, made for his ordination, and that set was made twenty-seven years ago.

Fr. Michael and I have consulted Clifford Challey, a designer and manufacturer of church vestments. During our meetings, we agreed that the vestments should reflect the architectural themes of Ascension. The design we selected incorporates the Canterbury Cross which is set into the floor of our chancel.

Drawings of the proposed new vestments and related articles are on display in the Parish Hall. The drawings include the chasuble, dalmatic, stoles, burse, veil and antependium (explained below). There are also samples of the fabrics to be used: damask silk, plain silk, and the trim.

If you would like to help us purchase these vestments, please make your checks payable to St. Anne's Altar Guild. Be sure to note on the check that the funds are to be used for the new vestments. Contributions can be placed in the offering plate or sent to the church office. Our goal is to have these vestments for Pentecost, which falls on May 11 this year.

Because many parishioners have asked about the use of the various items, I thought a brief explanation of the vestments and related items would be helpful.

The stole is a narrow band of colored fabric. Deacons wear the stole over one shoulder; priests and bishops over both shoulders. At the Holy Eucharist the bishop or priest

celebrating the Eucharist frequently wears a chasuble (a circular garment that envelops the body, rather like a poncho).

The dalmatic is a long wide sleeved tunic worn by a deacon. Like the chasuble, it is an outer vestment and is supposed to match the liturgical colors of the day. It has two horizontal bands of fabric on the front and back. The tunic is very similar to the dalmatic although it may have narrower sleeves and has a single horizontal band on the front and back, as opposed to the double band of the dalmatic.

Each set of vestments also includes a burse (a book-like case which holds linens used at the Eucharist) and a veil (a square of cloth which covers the chalice during the service until the Eucharist). The altar is covered by a frontal (a drape that covers the altar all the way to the floor). Instead of having Mr. Challey create a new frontal, we have chosen to have an antependium that will hang down in the center front of our existing Jacobean frontal. The reason for using the single antependium is to show the Canterbury Cross to full advantage.

Stoles, chasubles, dalmatics, tunics, and altar coverings are usually made of rich fabrics. Their color changes with the seasons and holy days of the church year. The most frequently used colors are white, red, purple, and green. If you have an ordo calendar at home, you will see that each date is printed in the color of the vestments to be used that day.

While some have questioned the costs of these new vestments, the price includes a chasuble, dalmatic, tunic, three stoles, a burse, a veil, and the antependium for the altar. We believe these festival vestments will service Ascension for the next 50-60 years.

Kathy Calleton

Altar Guild Directress

## Youth Group Happenings

What's Coming Up?

### LET'S GO CAMPING!

**On Friday-Saturday, May 2nd-3rd** we are going on a camping trip! Bring your backpack and some good hiking shoes because we are headed to the wilderness. We will camp out and then wake up the next morning for a short, but fun hike. Stay tuned for more details!

**To members of the parish--** we need camping gear!

If you have any camping gear we can use, please let Allison or Mary know. E-mail us at [allison-rainey@hotmail.com](mailto:allison-rainey@hotmail.com) -or- [marybaffes@hotmail.com](mailto:marybaffes@hotmail.com).



## NOTES FROM THE LOFT

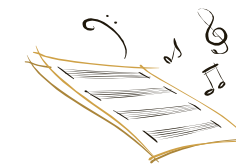
Many thanks to our choristers for their wonderful work during Holy Week, and particularly on Easter Sunday: sopranos Susan Beach, Natalie Dougall, Katie Duffy, Colette Ostrye, and Jen Wang; altos Liz Levie, Keiko Sakatani, and Sandy Whitford; tenors Ted Calleton, Sean Dougall (when he wasn't playing oboe), and Lavette Teague; and basses Mike Beach and Rex Levie. Our guest singers included veterans Camille Couture, soprano and Mary Lyans, alto; and newcomers Bill Ketchum, tenor and Ken Smithfield, bass. And, as has become tradition at Ascension, the wonderful artistry of Sean Dougall, oboe, and Jay Cohen, trumpet, added just the right touch to our celebration. Speaking of Sean and Jay, did you know that Jen Wang wrote the oboe and trumpet parts to "On Earth Has Dawned This Day of Days"?

Because Easter was so early this year, many post-Easter Sundays lie ahead of us before summer, so the choir will be singing beyond Pentecost and Trinity Sundays. To be more precise, they'll be singing through Sunday, June 1, Pentecost 3.

Mark your calendars: an Evensong will be held the evening of June 1, after which the choir will be on hiatus for the summer months.

Debora Huffman

Director of Music and Organist



## CONFIRMATION/ RECEPTION CLASSES TO BEGIN

If you are considering being confirmed or being received into the Episcopal Church, please plan on attending a series of pre-confirmation classes with Father Michael beginning Sunday, April 13 after the 10:15 service and continuing on Saturdays April 19 and 26 from 9:00-12:00.

Bishop Carranza will be at Ascension to officiate at Baptism and Confirmation on Sunday, April 27<sup>th</sup>.

## DID YOU KNOW?

As we go along this journey of life, there are changes we don't plan. Some are decisions we make and some are not; some are losses and some are gains. It is easy to ignore most changes and let the effect bite us at a later date and then try to deal with whatever has occurred and with our response.

Or, you can join our Transitions Group and share, ponder, and pray about these changes so they can be incorporated into a new life that will be less surprising and more beneficial to ourselves and others. We can deliberately take better care of ourselves. Think about it; pray about it. How can your experience help someone else?

Let us begin this new journey together. We will start meeting in April and complete this session of Transitions in June.

Please call me or the church office to help select the day and time we will meet. It will be majority rules, so get your time preference in soon.

If you know people who could benefit from this sort of group, please bring them along (they don't have to be parishioners).

Blessings,

Diane Rhodus

## MAKING THE CHURCH A SAFER PLACE

As a parish, one of our most important responsibilities is to protect the vulnerable from any form of abuse. We must see to it that those of us who visit or work with our children, young people, elderly, and infirm recognize the signs of abuse and know the boundaries that we each must follow in our relationships with others.

Throughout our diocese, all churches are expected to train those who work with children and seniors so that each church can become a safer place. Father Michael is one of the diocesan trainers and will be leading workshops for clergy and other parishes in the coming months.

At Ascension, all of us who are involved in youth work or pastoral care are required to receive such instruction. This workshop will also be meaningful for those of us who have family members in senior care facilities. Indeed, anyone who wants to learn about ways to protect the vulnerable is welcome. Our workshop is scheduled for May 3 from 8:30-2:30. Please put this date on your calendars. Bring a sack lunch. The church will provide beverages.