

## New of Ascensionites

Several students from Catechesis I graduated on March 4th and moved up to Catechesis Level 2.

**Congratulations to all who graduated!**

## Holy Week and Easter Services

*Palm Sunday—April 1—8:00 & 10:15 am*  
*Monday and Tuesday in Holy Week—*  
*April 2 & 3—7:00 pm Mass*  
*Tenebrae—April 4—7:00 pm*  
*Maundy Thursday—April 5—7:00 pm*  
*Good Friday—April 6—Stations of the Cross noon*  
*Good Friday Liturgy—7:00 pm*  
*Easter—April 8—6:00 & 10:15 am*

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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## From the Senior Warden—Jim Larew

*"The greatest sin of man is to forget that he is a prince – that he has royal power. All worlds are in need of exaltation and everyone is charged to lift what is low, to unite what lies apart, to advance what is left behind. It is as if...all worlds are full of expectancy, of sacred goals to be reached, so that consummation can come to pass. And man is called to bring the climax slowly but decisively."*  
— Abraham Joshua Heschel

This month begins with a quote from a Judaic theologian. How will it end? My last two columns focused on *renewal* and *preparedness for change*. In the spirit of the Resurrection, I hope you get a sense of the revival occurring at Ascension. Father Michael, at the 2005 annual parish meeting remarked how Ascension was migrating from a "matriarchal/patriarchal" church to more of a "program" church. It's no accident Ascension is alive with baptisms, well attended small groups and trips to the Getty, outreach to the homeless at the Bad Weather Shelter, the laughter of children and the BEST coffee hour to mention a few. Together, we are living our vision: *Serve Christ today for those who will come to know Christ tomorrow*. Yet we have miles to go before we sleep.

How do we effectively continue our journey to becoming the church we want to be programmatically and carry forward the spirit of kinship? How will Ascension continue to deeply enrich the lives of parishioners and the community while maintaining our identity? As Ascension gradually shifts to fulfill our collective vision, so must the Vestry align vision with sound governance.

Vestry will be closely integrating with and informed by the Parish Ministry Council (PMC). To be clear, the Vestry

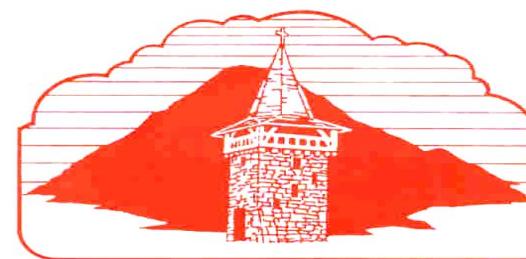
provides governance, fiduciaries, strategic planning, and oversight. Parish Ministry Counsel provides ministry and program development, planning, implementation, and lay and volunteer coordination. The Vestry and PMC are extensions of each other and will work this year to synchronize their efforts to fulfill our God-given mission.

Vestry Committees have been formed for each core ministry area. The committees are: *Worship, Presence/Buildings & Grounds, Adult Formation, Young Ascensionites Formation (infants to college), Outreach, Fellowship, and Pastoral Care*. Additionally, there are foundational Vestry Committees that support the work of these ministries. They are: *Finance (including Audit, Legal, & Insurance sub-committees), Development & Capital Funds, and Vestry Leadership*.

Every committee is expected to achieve specific goals for 2007 and beyond. Though outcomes are important, we value the Christian process of how we get there as much, if not more, than the outcomes itself. The Vestry is grateful to all volunteers in the church and is committed to making the time you dedicate to Ascension enriching, educational, and gratifying.

Kara and I wish each of you a contemplative Holy Week and a glorious Easter. I look forward to the Alleluias to come!

*Ascension Youth: Check out this 15-year old dude, Zach Hunter <http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/story?id=2951434&page=1>. Band pick: [www.familyforce5.com](http://www.familyforce5.com).*



# The SPIRE

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

April 2007

### Our Core Ministries

- Worship
- Formation
- Pastoral Care
- Fellowship
- Outreach
- Presence

University of Redlands  
Chapel Singers  
presents  
"The Office of Compline"

Monday April 23,  
7:30 pm

### Inside this issue:

Youth Group	2
Small Groups	2
Announcements	2
Calendar	3
Notes from the Loft	3
News of Ascensionites	4
Easter Schedule	4
Sr. Warden	4

## ✝ From the Rector

Next month (May 13- 22) I will be attending for the second time a program of the Episcopal Church for clergy called CREDO (Clergy Reflection, Education, Discernment Opportunity). I went previously in the fall of 2001, and it renewed my energy, vision, and sense of direction in ministry. For me, as well as for almost all of my colleagues who have participated in a CREDO conference, it was one of the best things I have ever experienced in the Church.

The work of CREDO is organized around four major areas in each person's personal and professional life. Each of these components is explored as an integral part of the whole.

- **Spiritual** – offers CREDO as a sacred space where each participant can reflect on his or her interior life and relationship with God in Christ.
- **Vocational** – provides opportunities for reflection, discernment and planning in the professional areas of vocation, career and work.
- **Health** – encourages reflection on physical and emotional health and well-being, stewardship of the body and development of a plan to address the individual's health needs.
- **Financial** – explores all aspects of personal financial management and encourages reflection on God-given resources and how best to use them in response to God's call.

Through this discernment and visioning process, and with the help of a faculty team of professionals, each participant builds a CREDO Plan – a personal covenant based on his or her CREDO work and a formal expression of the CREDO experience.

CREDO was founded in 1997 as a pilot program funded by The Church Pension Group. The number of participants has grown each year, with more than 500 clergy and bishops attending a conference in 2005. More than 2,300 Episcopal clergy, deacons and bishops from virtually every diocese in the country have taken advantage of the CREDO benefit. Participants are selected at random from all active clergy with more than one year in the pension fund. The Church Pension Group pays all but \$500 of the conference costs.

For me personally, this opportunity is coming at a great time. In the short term, the past year has been stressful and challenging. I feel a deep need for some time of rest and reflection. Looking forward, I realize that in the fall we will "empty nesters" for the first time in twenty-two years. Retirement from parish ministry will be an option I can explore in about six years. Time to discern the hand of God in my life at this stage will be a great blessing.

— Canon Bamberger

## Ascension Youth Group Happenings

First, I'd like to extend a warm and hearty THANK YOU to Diane Rhodus for her several years of dedication to Ascension Youth Group. Diane's committment to the youth is very evident, and her leadership will be greatly missed.

Make sure to mark your calendars for Saturday, April 7. We will gather together to decorate eggs for this year's Easter celebration. This is a great time to hang out with friends and enjoy this meaningful season in a fun way! Time and location to be announced.

Also, make sure to join us for meetings each Sunday morning from 9:00am-10:00am in the Parish house. Always feel free to bring a friend along!

—Allison Rainey

## Small Groups

“The purpose of small groups is to foster Christian formation and spiritual fellowship through community, bible study, prayer and mission.”

“Christian formation” is another way of saying “disciples”. Disciples are those who are committed to following a path of spiritual maturity, of growing in Christ. Committed Christians, disciples, practice several habits to help them on this path. These habits include daily prayer, weekly worship, Bible reading, service, spiritual friendships, and giving. These habits, while requiring discipline, are meant to be enjoyed, not endured.

Participation in a small group is a wonderful and enjoyable way to develop the habits of a disciple. Encouragement, prayer, laughter, and a caring community are all parts of a small group. If you are interested in joining a small group, please contact Halcyon Koerber or any other small group leader.

— Halcyon Koerber

## Did you Know???

Two Women are being installed as members in our Daughters of the King chapter at the 8 am service on April 15th. Our new members are Amy McLaughlin and Allison Rainey.

We are reminding everyone to take the gift surveys in order to help us all do what we do well and leave what we don't to someone who does. Please see Diane Rhodus for information.

— Diane Rhodus

## General Announcements

\* There is room on the **Hospitality** committee for more members. If you are interested, please contact Lisa Reed.

\* **Youth Group** (Rite 13 & Senior High) will meet Saturday April 7th to color and stuff eggs for the annual hunt Easter Morning. See Mary Baffes with questions.

\* Various parishioners are being asked to **read the Prayers of the People** during the 10:15 service. If you are interested in participating, please contact Diane Rhodus.

## St. Mary's Guild

St. Mary's Guild would like to thank all those who helped with the Evensong reception. The music was great and so was the food. We also thank all those who brought dish towels for the kitchen. We have an abundant supply for now.

St. Mary's next meeting will be in June.

—Ann Poland, President

## Calling All Ascension Cooks

Please submit your recipes for inclusion into the Ascension cookbook; you give it to us, and it will be in the cookbook (except Carol George's recipe for "Burnt Water")!

The more recipes we have, the wider audience we will appeal to and the more books we will sell. We have lots of wonderful cooks out there (Karen Mooradian's Beef Pot Pie, Jo Moiser's husband's Deviled Eggs, Susan Beach's room temperature spaghetti salad, and Meg Cox's Chicken and Broccoli casserole from the annual meeting, and Halcyon Koerber's Sugarfree Scones immediately come to mind), so please, take a moment to submit those recipes.

The forms are in the Parish Hall and you can just tape on a copy of your recipe if you don't want to write it out. Be sure to put your name on it because your name will appear next to the recipe and in the contributors' index in the back of the book.

Everyone loves a good cookbook, especially one with real life recipes in it. Let's make this the best church cookbook around!

— Richele Duffy

# April 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 Palm Sunday 8:00 am Mass 9:00 am Educ Hour 10:15 am Mass	2 6 pm Group mtg. 7 pm Mass	3 7 pm Mass	4 Noon Mass 6 pm Mass 7 pm Tenebrae	5 Maundy Thursday 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum 7 pm Mass Altar of Repose	6 12 pm Stations of the Cross 7 pm Good Friday Liturgy	7 9 am Altar Guild
8 Easter Sunday 6 am Easter Vigil 8 am Brunch 10:15 am Festival High Mass	9	10	11 Noon Mass 6 pm Mass 7:30 pm Choir	12 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum	13 Noon Mass	14 8:00 am Men's Breakfast 9 am Altar Guild
15 Spire Deadline 8:00 am Mass 9:00 am Educ Hour 10:15 am Mass	16	17 6:30 pm Vestry	18 Noon Mass 6 pm Mass 7:30 pm Choir	19 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum	20 Noon Mass	21 9 am Altar Guild
22 8:00 am Mass 9:00 am Educ Hour 10:15 am Mass	23 7:30 pm University of Redlands Chapel Singers	24	25 Noon Mass 6 pm Mass 7:30 pm Choir	26 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum	27 Noon Mass	28 9 am Altar Guild
29 Outreach Sunday 8:00 am Mass 9:00 am Educ Hour 10:15 am Mass 11:30 am Newcomer's	30	31				

## Upcoming Events

- ◆ April 1—Palm Sunday
- ◆ April 4—7 pm Tenebrae
- ◆ April 5—Maundy Thursday, Altar of Repose
- ◆ April 6—Good Friday Liturgy
- ◆ April 14—Men's Breakfast at 8:00 a.m.
- ◆ April 17—Vestry Meeting at 6:30 p.m.
- ◆ April 23—U. of Redlands Chapel Singers Concert
- ◆ April 29—Outreach Sunday, 11:30 am Newcomer's Lunch

## Notes from the Loft 🎵

My sincere thanks to:

The choir for their inspirational presentation of Evensong choral works . . . St. Mary's Guild for their magnificent Evensong reception . . . Sean Dougall for his exquisite oboe renditions . . . Michelle Beauchesne for her superb cello contributions.

The music of April appropriately reflects the liturgical calendar:

On the first, Palm/Passion Sunday, the choir will present two passion anthems new to Ascension. *I See His Blood Upon the Rose*, by Michael Bedford and published in 2006, is set to poignant text by Joseph Mary Plunkett:

*I see his blood upon the rose and in the stars the glory of his eyes,  
His body gleams amid eternal snows, his tears fall from the skies.  
I see his face in ev'ry flow'r, the thunder and the singing of the birds  
Are but his voice and carven by his pow'r rocks are his written words.  
All pathways by his feet are worn, his strong heart stirs the ever-beating sea,  
His crown of thorns is twined with ev'ry thorn, his cross is ev'ry tree.*

*At the Cry of the First Bird*, by Robert Jordahl and set to traditional Irish text, likewise is very moving:

*At the cry of the first bird, they began to crucify thee.  
It was not right ever to cease lamenting,  
It was like parting of day from night.  
Ah, those sore, the suff'ring put upon the body of Mary's son,*

*Sorer to him was the grief that was upon her for his sake.*

Maundy Thursday will feature a setting of Mark 9:35, “If anyone would be first they shall be the last of all,” in *The Servant Song*, by David Schwoebel. The music is based on *Beach Spring* from *The Sacred Harp*. In addition, the choir will be singing settings of *Ubi Caritas*, including the ethereal Durufle.

On Good Friday as the cross is venerated the choir will reprieve what has become traditional: David Evans' *O Cross of Christ*. The Passion will be sung by our talented clergy: Father Bamberger, Mother Beal, and Alison Rainey.

Finally, with the dawning of Easter, we will celebrate with K. Lee Scott's *O Sons and Daughters of the King* and, appropriately, Randall Thompson's *Alleluia*. Trumpeter Jay Cohen once again will be joining us to heighten the festivity, and the service will conclude with Widor's *Toccata in F Major*.

May you experience a meaningful Holy Week and a glorious Easter!

--Debora Huffman/Director of Music and Organist