



# The SPIRE

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

August 2005

## Our Core Ministries

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

## Fall Events

- Ministry Fair—Sunday, September 11 during coffee hour.
- Fall Program Kick-off—Sunday, September 18.

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## ✝ From the Rector

While it seems that the Episcopal Church is in crisis mode over the ordination of Gene Robinson in New Hampshire and the resulting Windsor Report, there is another, much more immediate crisis which will affect all of us. The fact is there is a looming critical shortage of clergy in the Episcopal Church.

There are many factors which have contributed to this situation. While the average age of persons being ordained is finally dropping again, the trend for the last thirty years has been to ordain older, second-career people who were thought would bring life experience to priesthood. For several years, retirements have outpaced ordinations of new clergy willing to work in congregations, and this has been accelerated by the Church Pension Fund's early retirement option.

So far, Ascension has been insulated from this crisis. We are blessed by the abundance of ordained persons in our midst. We have started doing our part to remedy the situation by being an intentional place of formation for clergy and ordinands. For this reason, we are preparing to welcome this month Barrett Van Buren as our new curate. Barrett is concluding the preparation process and may be ordained to the diaconate this

Fall, perhaps at Ascension. We anticipate him serving with us the next two years, while being formed as new clergy person.

But there is still more to be done. I believe that we need to start to look at the youth in our midst and wonder **aloud** with them whether God and the Church might be calling them to a life of ordained ministry. I believe that in our parish now is a kid, maybe a child, maybe a teenager, perhaps a young adult, who will be a priest for the Church in the next generation. So look at the acolytes, look at the teens in the youth group, look at the little ones in the Sunday School, and envision them grown and standing at your altar. And then tell them of your hopes.

God might need to speak through your heart and lips. And perhaps you might not see that young person as a priest, but as doing something else – teaching, nursing, fixing things, whatever... tell them. Whether ordained or lay, all baptized persons are called by God and God's people to do something with their life. The Church's job, and Ascension's task, is to recreate a culture of call – vocation. We want to be, we need to be a place where all people can discern how they can best apply the gifts that God has given them. —Father Michael+

## Coffee Hour News

Good news to all who are interested in providing a few goodies for coffee hour after the 10:15 service. NO CLEAN UP! Our dear Alejandra has agreed to stay after and do the work, so all we have to do is provide some cookies, etc. Please check the sign up sheet in the parish hall and sign up whenever

you can. No one has signed up for the month of July and August, so we can use you help. Please remember that you do not have to be responsible for clean up!

—Karen Mooradian

## Daughters of the King

As you know, the Sisters of Joanna Chapter of Daughters of the King are continuing to make Anglican Rosaries to give away as a part of our Service commitment to Our Lord. As we have continued to make Rosaries for the Parish and to send overseas, we have learned more about how making them. If you have a Rosary that hasn't held together so well, please put it in the box for Daughters of the King and we will fix it for you! If you don't want it back or have lost a few of the beads, no problem, return it anyway and take a new one.

If you don't have a Rosary yet, what are you waiting for?! Take one!!!

Many people who have never used this type of prayer are finding comfort from just having one, knowing that it was made with prayer, and that the Daughters are continuing to pray for those with our Rosaries. The fact that this style of Rosary was created specifically for those in the Anglican Communion is helpful for some, and while interesting for others, is not the entire reason for their acceptance of this gift. It can also be a source of reminder that there are strangers out there who care, and who are praying for you. You can also try using the Rosary for prayer, there are a few prayers on the inside of the instruction flyer.

—Kathy Anderson

## St. Mary's Guild

After our summer hiatus, the **Episcopal Church Women** (aka St. Mary's Guild) will meet on the 2nd Saturday, September 10 in the parish hall, at 11:30 a.m.

We would love to have you join us. Bring your favorite salad or a Deli's best buy, and bribe your other-half into "doing" for the kids and come away to meet with us women folks!

We will have lunch, a short business meeting, and then a special program is planned.

—Cynthia Belden

P.S. A special thanks to Karen Conrad for typing up and organizing the Spire!

## Meet Our New Curate

Barrett Van Buren and his family (his wife, Penny and his two sons, Kyle and Matt) have lived in the Los Angeles Diocese together for over 18 years. Barrett is a second generation native of California and was born in Norwalk, and raised primarily in Hacienda Heights. He graduated from Cal State, Fullerton with a Bachelor degree in Communications and has worked in post-secondary education for over 20 years in administration, career advisement and recruitment. He and

his family have been active members of Emmanuel Parish, Fullerton.

Answering God's calling to the ordained ministry, Barrett continued his education and discernment at the Episcopal Theological School, Claremont and transferred eventually to the General Theological Seminary in New York City, where he and his family resided for two years to complete his studies and received a Master of Divinity degree in May, 2005.

He is very excited about the

opportunity to serve in our parish as our Curate and to utilize his several years of ministry experience in the Episcopal Church, especially in Christian Education and formation for both children and adults. He is passionate about teaching and preaching and has been told he truly has the gift of hospitality. During his free time, Barrett enjoys playing tennis, volleyball, white-water rafting, cooking/eating, writing poetry, going to the movies/plays and being at home, entertaining with his close friends and family. (See Picture on page 4)

## Fourth of July Party a Success!

What can we say? Again a Success, thanks to all of the wonderful people who were there! At last count, there were 77 people, young and not so young. The potluck, as was provided by you all, was delicious and diverse. At the risk of

sounding redundant—we have some of the best cooks/chefs around. Thank you each and every one. A special thank you to the great crew who helped in setting up before the party—Mary Baffes, Wilma Clark, Nan & Richard Dougall, Sean and

Jennifer Dougall, and Gail & Larry Skiles—you are the greatest!!

—Karen & Sam Mooradian

# August 2005

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> <i>Noon Mass 1-7 Blood Drive 6:00 pm Mass</i>	<b>4</b> <i>7:00 am Mass</i>	<b>5</b> <i>Noon Mass</i>	<b>6</b> <i>9:00 Altar Guild</i>
<b>7</b> <i>8:00 Mass 8:45 Breakfast 9:00 Educ. Hour 10:15 Mass</i>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> <i>Noon Mass 6:00 pm Mass</i>	<b>11</b> <i>7:00 am Mass</i>	<b>12</b> <i>Noon Mass</i>	<b>13</b> <i>9:00 Altar Guild</i>
<b>14</b> <i>8:00 Mass 8:45 Breakfast 9:00 Educ. Hour 10:15 Mass</i>	<b>15</b> <i>Spire Deadline</i>	<b>16</b> <i>6:30 Vestry Mtg</i>	<b>17</b> <i>10:30 am Staff Mtg Noon Mass 6:00 pm Mass</i>	<b>18</b> <i>7:00 am Mass</i>	<b>19</b> <i>Noon Mass</i>	<b>20</b> <i>9:00 Altar Guild</i>
<b>21</b> <i>8:00 Mass 8:45 Breakfast 9:00 Educ. Hour 10:15 Mass</i>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> <i>Noon Mass 6:00 pm Mass</i>	<b>25</b> <i>7:00 am Mass</i>	<b>26</b> <i>Noon Mass</i>	<b>27</b> <i>9:00 Altar Guild Wedding</i>
<b>28</b> <i>8:00 Mass 8:45 Breakfast 9:00 Educ. Hour 10:15 Mass</i>	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b> <i>Noon Mass 6:00 pm Mass</i>			

## Upcoming Dates of Interest

- August 3—Red Cross Blood Drive 1:00—7:00 pm at Gooden School
- August 6-13—Fr. Michael will be at Camp Stevens
- August 7—Fr. Larson will be preaching
- August 14—Fr. Wood will be preaching
- August 15—Spire Deadline for the September issue.
- August 16—Vestry Meeting in the library
- August 19-21—Fr. Michael will be out of town
- August 21—Guest preacher to be announced

## Notes from the Loft

From June 19-24 I was pleased to represent Ascension at the annual Association of Anglican Musicians conference in Baltimore. More than 200 musicians from throughout the country assembled to worship, sing, and discuss trends and issues that affect the collective Anglican worship experience.

As always, the hymn-singing itself was worth the trip – I can't imagine a more wonderful sound even in heaven! Daily we participated in morning eucharist, morning prayer, noonday prayer, or evensong. Other highlights included:

\*a performance of double organ masses of Vierne and Widor, with double choirs, at the impressive Cathedral of Mary Our Queen

\*workshops with Dr. Marilyn Keiser of Indiana University and Dr. David Hurd of General Theological Seminary

\*a composers' reading session at the

Peabody Institute

\*a day at Annapolis, including morning prayer at the historic St. Anne's Church and an organ recital by one of our members, Dr. Joseph Galema, at the Naval Academy Chapel (Dr. Galema is the Music Director of Cadet Chapel Activities and Academy Organist at the U.S. Air Force Academy)

Our social events included a dinner in Little Italy, silent movies accompanied by theater organist Michael Britt at the Cathedral of the Incarnation, and a closing banquet overlooking the marina.

Following the conference my husband and I visited Washington D.C. and had the privilege of attending evensong at the National Cathedral. Because the congregation for Friday evensongs is small, we were invited to sit in the choir stalls – what a marvelous perspective from which to experience that magnificent facility!

From Washington I traveled to the Northeast to visit with members of my family and so enjoyed the beauty of that region with its abundance of wooded areas. Home for a week and off to Snowmass, Colorado for a USC-related conference - another region of spectacular beauty, in particular the majestic Maroon Bells recreation area.

So I've returned home, renewed by great music, architecture, nature, and fellowship. I hope that each of you finds time this summer for the renewal of your spirit by whatever means is meaningful to you.

*The songs of the birds and the sound of music should remind us of the eternal and ever new canticle of heaven.*

Anthony Mary Claret

—Debora Huffman  
Organist/Choirmaster

## News of Ascensionites

Congratulations to **Todd & Sara Lauder** on the birth of their son **Evan Timothy** born on July 13.

Congratulations on the marriages of **Jennifer Boxley & Eric Olson**; July 2; **Beth Smith & Ross Kellock** July 8; **Alison Tymoczko & Pat Jeffries** July 29 and **Stella Nastase & Nick Thorn** July 30.

**Doug Charpentier** passed away Monday, July 11, graveside service was held Saturday, July 16.



*Meet Barrett Van Buren (pictured left) Ascension's new Curate. He will start work August 1, 2005. (See article on page 2 for more information.)*



*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**

## From the Sr. Warden

“Welcome to Church of the Ascension!” As parishioners, we each enjoy this “greeting” as we enter our beautiful church and see familiar faces (or slightly familiar ones if we venture into the “other” Sunday service). I feel a genuine sense of homecoming when I enter the doors of our church.

Canon Michael, the Parish Ministry Council and the Vestry have discussed various ways to convey this same sense of friendly outreach to visitors and newcomers to Church of the Ascension. The designation of a couple parking places on Baldwin in front of the Church for newcomers and visitors was a

first step, but we want to make a concerted effort to create an inviting environment for people in search of a house of worship or simply visiting from their own parish. Walking into a church for the first time can be like finding oneself in someone else's family reunion. It can be overwhelming, but a warm greeting and invitation to coffee hour can change the experience. We are recruiting greeters to officially welcome newcomers to Church of the Ascension. Please talk with Carol George and Halcyon Koerber if you are interested in creating a warm first impression for visitors.

—Rob Stockly

## Small Groups and The Miracle of Jesus

What were some of the miracles of Jesus? What significance did they have in Jesus' day? Are these miracles still relevant for us today? Do miracles still occur?

If you are interested in exploring any or all of these questions, we invited you to join our small group that meets on Sunday mornings from 9—10 a.m.. In the Parish House. No need to call ahead, just show up. We'd love to have you join us.

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

—Halcyon Koerber