



The SPIRE

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

February 2006

Our Core Ministries

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

St. Mary's Guild

Our next meeting will be on Saturday, February 11 at 11:30am in the Parish Hall. After our usual delicious potluck lunch, Mr. Lavette Teague will entertain us with a talk and slides of his foreign travels.

All Ascension women are invited and encouraged to attend. Friends are also welcome. Bring your favorite food to share.
—Ann Poland, President

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✝ From the Rector

As Episcopalians, one of the outward signs of our belonging to a larger community of Christians – that we belong to something bigger than just our own congregation – is our relationship with our bishops. On the first Sunday after Easter, April 23rd, we will be welcoming Assistant Bishop Robert Anderson. His visit will also be an opportunity for Confirmation, Reception and Renewal of Baptismal Vows. So....

Q. What is Confirmation?

A. Confirmation is the rite in which we express a mature

commitment to Christ, and receive strength from the

Holy Spirit through prayer and the laying on of hands

by a bishop. The Book of Common Prayer p. 860

Reception is the way that a person who has been confirmed by a bishop of another tradition, for example in the Roman Catholic Church, is “recognized and greeted” by a bishop in our tradition. Over the next few months, we will be having several opportunities for newcomers and folks who have been settled here for some time to gather for dialogue and learning about what it means to belong to Jesus Christ, to the Church of the Ascension, and to the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion. I invite you all, whether you were born into our church decades ago or have recently started to attend, to come and find out more about what this all means.

—Fr. Michael Bamberger

P.S. I will be away at the General Ordination Exams in Texas February 6–10 and I will be on vacation in Hawaii February 15–22.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

February 28

5:30 p.m.

In the parish hall

Join the Parish for the annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper in the parish hall, hosted by the Youth Group. The cost is \$8.00 per person, children 7 and under are \$5.00. A sign up sheet will be available Sunday, February 12. Proceeds will be donated to the churches of the Gulf Coast that suffered damage during Hurricane Katrina.

Curate's Comments

It is said that it takes a village to help raise our children, but it takes a **church** to help heal the people. At Ascension we are so blessed to have both Lay people and Clergy ready to bring communion to your home or hospital room, to pray with you and your loved ones, and to be there as part of a support team sharing the presence of God with those who are in need.

Every week parishioners can look at the Pastoral Care board in the Reception Office and see those in need of prayer, visitation and/or communion. All Eucharistic Ministers will pick up the weekly Pastoral Care

Call List in our Reception Office to see who is assigned to each minister and their status. Those needing pastoral care who do not wish communion or any visitation at this time receive a special "love note" to remind them of our prayers at Ascension along with the most recent Sunday bulletin.

I am personally very excited about our growing Lay Eucharistic team and their individual gifts. We want to spread the word of the wonderful ministry available to all in our parish who desire such Christian care and service. If we can help you or your loved ones in any way by

delivering a care call or communion, please contact me at the parish or call me on my cell phone. Family or friends wanting visitation can write down the information and put it in our special file box in the Reception Office marked Pastoral Care Needs. Please make sure to include all contact information. We will make sure to get right back to you. If you wish a name to be included in the Prayers of the People, contact me during the week. Together as members of the body of Christ, let us be a part of the care and healing that our Lord has instructed us all to do. —Deacon Barrett

Youth Happenings

We are continuing to discover "Christ in our lives" and February will prove to be a month of variety in our discovery together. Below is the calendar of activities that will bring about fun & fellowship. Hope you can join us!!

Along with our Sunday Morning program from 9:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m., we also will be doing the following:

Saturday, February 4th ---Sr. High Bishop's Ball At All Saints, Pasadena

Saturday-Monday, Feb. 17-20—Deanery 5 Mid-winter Retreat for Sr. High

Sunday, February 26—Surprise Museum Outing and lunch at Noon in Pasadena area

February 28—Pancake Supper for Shrove Tuesday. Please be a part of a tradition of Ascension that will provide fellowship and good food at the eve of Lent. All monies will go to the Episcopal Churches of the Gulf Coast that

suffered destruction from the Katrina storm. The cost is only \$8.00 per person and will begin at 5:30 PM.

Please note on your calendars three **upcoming "Youth Happenings"** you cannot miss in March-May:

Sunday, March 26th---Art appreciation of Christ at Forest Lawn, Glendale

Saturday, April 22nd—Ascension Youth at Knott's Berry Farm

Sunday, May 21st—An afternoon at Boomer's

Small Groups

The concept of small groups as a place where relationships are built and faith developed is based on a firm biblical foundation. Jesus and his "small group," the disciples, met together regularly. In this small group, relationships, not organization, were central to Jesus' method. Jesus spent time with people, caring, healing, listening, encouraging, forgiving, teach-

ing and preaching. He taught and modeled spiritual knowledge, attitudes and behavior. He used this small group for leadership training to develop a select group, the apostles, to carry on his work after he returned to the Father. Jesus selected common men; people like you and me, who were ready to follow him. In Acts 2 we read that Paul started churches in people's homes where the

early Christians "continually devoted themselves to the Apostle's teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and prayer." We have several small groups currently meeting. Please see our web site, the Sunday white board that lists the day's schedule, Halcyon Koerber, or any small group leader to become a part of this ministry. We look forward to welcoming you.

—Halcyon Koerber

February 2006

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|---|-----------------|--------------|--|
| | | | 1 10:30 Staff Mtg Noon Mass 6:00 pm Mass 7:30 pm Choir | 2 7:00 am Mass | 3 Noon Mass | 4 9:00 am Altar Guild 7:00 pm Bishop's Ball |
| 5 8:00 am Mass 9:00 Educ Hour 10:15 am Mass- Noon PMC Mtg | 6 6:00 pm Small Group Leader Mtg | 7 | 8 Noon Mass 6:00 pm Mass 7:30 pm Choir | 9 7:00 am Mass | 10 Noon Mass | 11 9:00 am Altar Guild |
| 12 8:00 am Mass 9:00 am Educ Hour 10:15 am Mass | 13 | 14 | 15 10:30 Staff Mt Noon Mass 6:00 pm Mass 7:30 pm Choir | 16 7:00 am Mass | 17 Noon Mass | 18 9:00 am Altar Guild |
| 19 8:00 am Mass 9:00 am Educ Hour 10:15 am Mass | 20 Office Closed President's Day | 21 | 22 Noon Mass 6:00 pm Mass 7:30 pm Choir | 23 7:00 am Mass | 24 Noon Mass | 25 9:00 am Altar Guild 8-3 Vestry Plan- ning Day |
| 26 8:00 am Mass 9:00 am Educ Hour 10:15 am Mass Noon Inquirer's | 27 | 28 5:30 pm Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper | | | | |

Special Dates

- February 4—Bishop's Ball at 7:00 p.m. for Youth Group
- February 5—Parish Ministry Council Meeting at Noon
- February 17-20—Youth Winter Retreat
- February 25—Vestry Planning day
- February 26—Inquirer's Forum at Noon. Youth Museum Happening at Noon
- February 28—Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper at 5:30 p.m.
- March 5—Who is Jesus? Class at Noon.

Notes from the Loft

The Parish Choir and I invite and encourage you to attend "Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs," which will be presented on Sunday evening, February 26, at 7 p.m. at the Cathedral of our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles. Sponsored by the Cathedral and the Mark Thallander Foundation, the concert will feature conductors Anton Armstrong of St. Olaf College and Eric Dale Knapp of Mid-America Productions, as well as organist Frederick Swann, President of the American Guild of Organists. The festival chorus, to number approximately 700, will be comprised of thirty-seven choirs, including Ascension's own.

Pre-concert activities include the "Friends of the Foundation Dinner" at 4 p.m., a tour of the cathedral at 5:30, and an organ prelude by Samuel Soria, cathedral organist, at 6:30.

On August 3, 2003 Los Angeles organist Mark Thallander lost his left arm in a tragic automobile accident. In

the difficult months of recuperation that followed, friends established a benefit group to assist with his massive medical expenses. Eventually this group evolved into the Mark Thallander Foundation, with the broader goal of celebrating sacred music. The February event will be the third gala festival of sacred music sponsored by the foundation, the first to be held at the Cathedral of our Lady of the Angels. An inspiring testament to faith, Mark continues to readjust to life with amazing grace and indomitable spirit, even resuming playing the organ. He will, of course, be in attendance on the 26th.

Do plan on joining us for a wonderful evening of song along with great organ music played on the incomparable Dobson instrument in a stunning architectural setting! For further details, a flyer has been posted on the bulletin board by the church office.

—Debora Huffman, Organist/Choirmaster

Upcoming Classes

February 26—Inquirer's Forum

We will discover together who we are as a church and what membership at Ascension means to you.

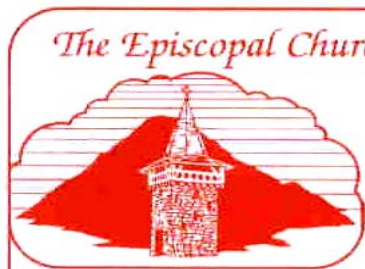
March 5—Who is Jesus?

An adult class led by Father Michael will be from Noon -1:00 p.m., exploring how we relate to Jesus

New of Ascensionites

Faith Sierra Keith was baptized on January 8 along with her cousin **Jaxson Ryan Tierney**. Proud parents are Connie and Mark Keith and Michelle (Keith) and Alan Tierney.

Twenty-six volunteers from Ascension fed over 60 homeless at the Bad Weather Shelter on January 6. Pictured from left to right are: Jo Mosier, Kara Larew, Sarah Duffy, Katie Koerber, Deacon Barrett and Susan Clifton..



The Episcopal Church of the Ascension

25 E. Laurel Avenue
Sierra Madre, CA 91024
626-355-1133
www.ascension-sierrramadre.com

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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**

Notes from the New Senior Warden

A lifelong Episcopalian, I have been a member of Ascension for the past 14 years. Months before I retired after 39 years of teaching English at Arcadia High School, Ethel West invited me to a small group. Since that time I have become a small group leader, member of Vestry, and the Rector's Forum. My husband Steve and I live in Sierra Madre, close enough so that I can walk to church. The daughter of a Organist/Choir Director, I learned early the importance of church service. It is a great joy to me to be asked to serve the parish as Sr. Warden.

I would like you to meet our newly elected Vestry members.

Chris Brunwin, his wife Deana, and their son Elliott are long time members of Ascension. An usher and lay reader at 10:15, Chris has also been a small group leader, a member of the Vestry, and Senior Warden. Chris is an attorney at the Department of Justice.

In his spare time he loves to pick guitar and has threatened to be part of an Ascension group to be called Flat Pickin' for Jesus. Chris is our newly elected Jr. Warden and will serve the two year term.

Rosemary Burnett and her husband Bob are ushers at the 8:00 service and support all the youth activities in which their daughters Amanda and Paige participate. Rosemary is an administrative consultant at Bearingpoint Inc, a large financial consulting firm. One of ten children, Rosemary is used to hosting large family gatherings. She loves Ireland and everything Irish, likes working in her home and garden, and going boating with the family.

Liz Delgado sings in the choir, has been a small group leader, and is Vice President of Daughters of the King. Formerly an attorney in the LA District Attorney's office, she has also

had her own computer software and consulting business. Liz attends the 10:15 service, has a cat, is a gadget geek, and is the daughter of Father Bob Delgado. She recently traveled to Peru to see her sister and brother-in-law Susan and John Park, the missionary family we regularly pray for.

Jim Larew and his wife Kara are relative newcomers to our parish, but they have been active in church work for many years. Jim is a lay reader and a member of a small group. He works as an investment and financial advisor. He grew up in Arcadia and graduated from Arcadia High School the same year as Chris Brunwin, a fact Jim did not know until he came to Ascension and both men thought they had seen each other before. Small world!

—Jean Rowe