



The SPIRE

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

June 2006

Our Core Ministries

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

Church Freezer to be Cleaned

Please remove, use, or label any items in the church freezer by June 25th. Any items unused or unlabeled after that date will be disposed.

Inside this issue:

Youth Happenings	2
Calendar Requests	2
Hospitality	2
St. Mary's Guild	2
Calendar	3
Notes from the Loft	3
Small Groups	3
British Home Faire	4
Sr. Warden	4

✝ From the Rector

In the last few years, our parish has made some significant progress in the stewardship of our resources. There have been some very deliberate efforts to address some of our important goals. Almost four years ago, the Vestry embarked upon an ambitious course which led to changing the former rectory into our Parish House to gain program space. In the process the church also invested in a percentage of the Ramona property enabling the Bamberger family to purchase a home in Sierra Madre. All in all, these past few years have seen some important growth, both in our church's life, and in its finances.

But we have some significant challenges ahead. Your Vestry has committed itself to the work of raising a considerable amount of money to accomplish three goals:

1. A Landscape Project, including handicapped accessibility to all our buildings
2. Rehabilitation of the Parish House, including seismic retrofitting and,
3. Interior Remodeling to part of the Parish Hall, including modern and accessible bathrooms.

At present, we are in the "quiet" phase of this fundraising, and I'm very encouraged because we are at almost 20% of

our total goal of \$500,000. **So save a date!!!...** the "public" phase will commence with a parish event on Sunday evening, December 31st – New Year's Eve. We'll have an (early) Evensong and festive celebration of our ministry and our vision. If you have questions, or suggestions, about the Capital Campaign please feel free to talk with me or one of the wardens.

—Father Michael

P.S. – Early in June this year, the triennial General Convention of the Episcopal Church will gather in Columbus, Ohio. I'm sure that there will be considerable attention paid to this meeting in the news. I also want to remind all of us about a couple of facts. First, no matter what happens at the meeting, what actions are taken, or what decisions are reached, there will be some people who are happy, and some who are unhappy. It's always that way after convention. Second, the real life of the Episcopal Church is not lived out at the international level, national level, the provincial level, or even at the diocesan level. It is lived out in the daily life and work of each congregation. In the weeks and months ahead, let's all keep this important fact in mind.

Simply Revolutionary!

Ascension celebrates the 4th on July 2nd at Sierra Vista Park!

Come join us for a day of swimming, tennis, bounce house fun, and Mass on the grass! Mass will start at 10:15 am and will be followed by a picnic (hot dogs and hamburgers are provided; please bring side dishes or des-

serts to share). The pool and tennis courts will be open, and there will be a bounce house and fun games for kids (and adults, too). Stay tuned for more details. Look for the sign-up sheets in the fellowship hall.

Youth Happenings

This year we have indeed been blessed with a great youth group and fun times, especially our recent Knott's Berry Farm trip, with 17 youth attending (see picture on page 4). I cannot believe how fast the year has gone as we are coming to the end of the school year with our final Youth Happening in June.

Special thanks to those parents who participated at our Youth Parents Night in the Parish House. At this meeting we reviewed the year and evaluated what worked and what did not work in order to make the youth program even better for next year. We appreciated the input and suggestions of the parents and youth.

Sunday, June 11th, Trinity Sunday, we will hold a Summer Celebration party. At this event there will be swimming, food, games, prizes (from the black bag) and the opportunity to say goodbye to those graduating from high school. The party will take place right after our second service. This will be our last Sunday Morning Meeting in the Youth Room for the school year. Stay tuned for plans for our Summer pool party and "Bowlingfest" happening in August.

Next year's Sunday morning meetings will commence on Sunday, September 17th. What is really exciting is that we are expecting an increased number of teenagers this fall (at least six more), and our youth leaders are already making plans for our 2006-2007 year.

I wish to say a BIG THANK YOU to Diane Rhodus, Michelle Rohrer and to the parents who have made this year a major success. I appreciate their passion and tireless support ranging from providing transportation to coordinating events. Thanks be to God that our parish has such a vital program available for our youth, who are a very important part of our church now and in the future.

—Deacon Barrett

Calendar Requests

We are indeed a busy parish. Many more activities and events are being held at our parish. As a result, meeting space must be reserved on a "first come, first serve" basis.

Please follow the procedures listed below to reserve meeting space:

- Fill out the green "Calendar Request Form" located on the bulletin board next to the parish calendar and turn it in to the office.
- E-mail or call our Church Secretary, Karen Conrad, to request time and space available.
- Schedule your event as soon as possible.
- Please note that outside groups require Father Michael's approval.

New Hospitality Committee

For many more years than we can possibly recall, St. Mary's Guild has taken on the responsibility of chairing receptions, parties, gatherings, and celebrations.

But due to the expansion of our parish and our growing number of events, it is unreasonable to expect this small group of dedicated women to continue with all of the responsibility for hospitality.

After much thought, discussion, and prayer, your Parish Ministry Council has decided it is time to have a committee devoted strictly to meeting the hospitality needs of our parish. This committee will also guarantee that there is always food at "coffee hour." We have been blessed to find parishioners who take joy in providing hospitality to others. They include: Mary Baffes, Regina Duffy, Lisa Reed, Michele Rohrer, and Carol Meals. If you also feel this call to hospitality service, please contact Diane Rhodus.

We are grateful that St. Mary's has agreed to continue to support, provide information, and chair those events they choose throughout the year.

—Diane Rhodus

St. Mary's Guild

The next St. Mary's Guild meeting will be on June 10, 2006. We will gather at the home of Wilma Clark at 11:30am for a potluck lunch followed by our annual "crazy white elephant" gift exchange. Bring your favorite dish to share and a silly gift to exchange. For more information contact Ann Poland.

—Ann Poland - President

June 2006

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum	2 Noon Mass 7:00 pm Dodger Night	3 8:30 DOK 9:00 Altar Guild
4 Pentecost 8:00 am Mass 9:00 am Educ Hour 10:15 am Mass	5	6 Polling Place	7 10:15 Staff Mtg Noon Mass 6:00 pm Mass 7:30 pm Choir	8 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum	9 Noon Mass	10 8:30 Misconduct Prevention Class 9:00 Altar Guild
11 Trinity 8:00 am Mass 9:00 am Educ Hour 10:15 am Mass Noon PMC Mtg	12	13	14 Noon Mass 6:00 pm Mass	15 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum Spire Deadline	16 Noon Mass	17 9:00 Altar Guild
18 8:00 am Mass 9:00 am Educ Hour 10:15 am Mass	19	20 6:30 Vestry Mtg	21 10:15 Staff Mtg Noon Mass 6:00 pm Mass	22 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum	23 Noon Mass	24 9:00 Altar Guild
25 8:00 am Mass 9:00 am Educ Hour 10:15 am Mass	26	27	28 Noon Mass 6:00 pm Mass	29 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum	30 Noon Mass	

Upcoming Events

- June 2—Episcopal Dodger Night at 7:00 p.m.
- June 3—Daughters of the King Quiet Day 8:30 a.m.
- June 3—The British Home Annual June Faire 10—3:30
- June 6—Parish Hall will be a polling place
- June 10—Sexual Misconduct Prevention Class at 8:30 a.m.
- June 11—Parish Ministry Council meeting at Noon
- June 15—Spire Deadline for the July issue
- June 20—Vestry Meeting at 6:30 p.m.

Notes from the Loft

The first two Sundays of June we'll be celebrating Pentecost and Trinity Sunday with festive choral anthems; then we bid the choir adieu until fall. With gratitude for their service throughout the year, I wish them a well-deserved rest as they take their places in the congregational pews. Although this means that increasingly I'll be relying on the congregation for the hymn-singing to reach me in the loft, you'll be bolstered by choristers sharing the pews with you. As our worship becomes slightly more relaxed during the summer months, let's continue to make a joyful noise to the Lord!

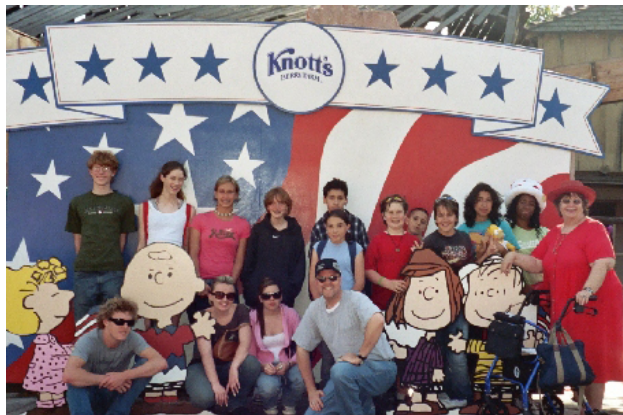
—Debora Huffman, Organist/Choirmaster

Small Groups

One choice for some who would like to go to a small group but cannot for some reason take on a commitment of several weeks is Fr. Larson's group that meets between Sunday services at the Gooden School. Each week the particular lessons for that Sunday are studied and discussed. It is a wonderful opportunity to get a deeper understanding of Scripture whenever your schedule permits. All are welcome. Come across the street to the Gooden School Office entrance. The gate will be open, and we meet in the cozy living room right inside the door.

British Home Annual June Faire

The British Home Annual June Faire will take place on Saturday, June 3 from 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. It features booths with baked goods, arts, crafts, and books as well as Raffles, Scottish bagpipers, and Dancing on the Green. British tea is served at noon. All proceeds go to the British Home.



*Pictured left:
the Youth
Group at
Knott's Berry
Farm on Sat-
urday, May
20.*

*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



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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**NON-PROFIT
U. S. POSTAGE
PAID
Arcadia, CA
Permit No. 110**

From the Sr. Warden

I think all of us pray – at least we do at services on Sundays. And most of us have worked at or stumbled into a way to communicate with God that seems to work for us - at least some of the time. After all, prayer is how we talk to God and how He talks to us. And, whether we know it or not, we need to talk to God if we are to grow spiritually, and He likes to listen and communicate with us.

Perhaps like Christians of every time period, you have had an occasion when your prayers do not seem to be reaching God. The communication line is not there, or the relationship with God lacks the depth that you are seeking. The Daughters of the King have wrestled with keeping the spiritual communication lines open. Prayerful communication with God is particularly important to the Daughters because their primary function as a group is to pray – to pray for our church, for our clergy, for all women and children across the world. In their two years as a DOK chapter, the Daughters have learned to pray in a variety of ways that have worked particularly well for them; and at the Prayer and Quiet Day on June 3, they want to share with us some of the things they have learned about prayer and how to enrich our prayer lives.

The Quiet Day will give instruction in four different types of meditative and contemplative prayer. After being introduced to a prayer form, participants will have time to go off by themselves and try out that type of prayer during a time

of silent reflection. Then all will gather again for guidance in a second form of prayer followed by another quiet time. You get the idea.

The day includes Eucharist and lunch. Lunch is the exception to the agreed upon silence of the day. That will be a time of fellowship and sharing ideas about the day's prayer experiences. Through the generosity of two of our parishioners, there will be no charge for lunch or materials. Please call the church office to confirm your attendance or place your name on the sign up sheet in the Parish Hall.

The Prayer and Quiet Day is on Saturday, June 3 from 10:00 to 3:00. This event is for both men and women; high school age young people are also invited. You don't have to know anything about prayer to come. There are no tests, no right or wrong answers. You do not have to spend the four hours of prayer time on your knees. You just have to have a desire to deepen your relationship with God. You may find it useful to bring a book of meditation, Bible, rosary, book of Psalms – whatever material you have found helpful in your prayer life in the past.

This day of meditation fits in well with our celebration of Pentecost and the coming of the Holy Spirit. What you learn about prayer on June 3 may change the way you talk to God for the rest of your life. I hope you will come.

—Jean Rowe