



The *SPIRE*

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

JUNE 2007

Worship

Sundays

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

Wednesdays

12pm Mass
6pm Mass
7:30pm Choir Rehearsal

Thursdays

7am MP (except for 6/7
Corpus Christi)

Fridays

12pm Mass

Upcoming Events

- June 2—Training Workshop for Volunteers
- June 3—All Parish Party Planning Meeting
- June 9—St. Mary's Guild Potluck Lunch; Men's Breakfast
- June 10—UTO Ingathering
- June 12—Vestry 6:30pm
- June 15—Spire Deadline
- June 16—Youth Breakfast & Boutonnieres
- June 17—Father's Day
- June 19—Vestry 6:30pm
- June 22—Sabbatical concludes
- June 24—Centennial Music Concert, 7pm
- July 1—All Parish Mass on the Grass

✠ From the Sabbatical Priest-in-Charge

MOTHER JENNIFER D. BEAL

Just as Fr. Wood returned from his sailing adventure, we all embarked upon our Sabbatical adventure. Just as Fr. Michael is trying something new, so are we. It is appropriate to have our landscape project begin to show physical changes at the same time that we are feeling the emotional changes of different leadership. I thoroughly enjoy this time anticipating something new. Change stirs energy!

There are so many spokes in the wheels that keep Ascension rolling. We have wonderfully talented leaders who keep us fulfilling the vision and ministry that Christ would have us do. The Season of Easter makes sure that we reach for the stars that the Season of Pentecost brings down into our lives. I thank every one of you who spends time, talent, or treasure for the life of Christ here at Church of the Ascension. Thank you.

The next event in the celebration of our town's Centennial will be held here at Ascension on Sunday evening, June 24th at 7:00pm. Look for news of this event in the "Notes from the Loft" on page three and mark it in your calendar!

Calling All Small Groups

FROM MARY BAFFES, ELIZABETH CALLIHAN,
RICHELE DUFFY, & LISA REED

If you belong to a Small Group, why not gather your fellow members and sponsor a Coffee Hour after a Sunday Service? If each one of the members contributed a platter of mini sandwiches, a dozen donuts or cookies, a platter of fruit, bunches of grapes, a homemade or store-bought cake, the Coffee Hour would be well received and all parishioners would benefit not only from all the goodies, but in the fellowship after the Service.

The Youth Group, the Senior High Youth Group or the Catechesis, both the little class and the bigger kids Catechesis (check with your parents first) can join in as well. Coffee Hour is a terrific way to start out your week, with pleasant conversation, good food, and treats with friends and family. Your Hospitality Committee members are available to help you at any time. Our numbers are in the Church directory.

In order to throw a more perfect 4th of July party...

FROM KATIE KOERBER

More fun than the Monroe Doctrine. More American than mom's apple pie. More attractive than JFK. These phrases are all often used to describe Fr. Mike, but in fact they also apply to Church of the Ascension's Second Annual Fourth of July Party! The party will be held at Sierra Vista Park, which is the same place we had it last year. Join us for Eucharist at 10:15 AM. Afterwards, there will be a barbecue featuring hot dogs, hamburgers, and chicken! Please bring your own cooler of soft drinks and side dishes to share. There will also be a big bounce house, fun games, and the pool will be open too! Needless to say, there will be enough fellowship for all involved, so bring friends and family and those whom you've "pledged to invite into our fellowship." Please sign up in the Parish Hall- it's the American Way.

A training workshop for volunteers on the prevention of misconduct will be at All Saints Pasadena, **Saturday June 2** from 12:30pm to 4:45 pm. Please register at il-eus@allsaints-pas.org or 626-583-2733.

St. Mary's Guild will meet on **Saturday, June 9**, at 11:30am at the home of Jill Wagner, 451 Foothill, Sierra Madre. We will have our usual potluck lunch and our exciting "silly" white elephant exchange. Bring something you don't want - someone else will love it! All women are welcome. Please come and bring a friend. Directions will be provided the previous week, or call Jill. Any other questions, call Ann Poland—President.

The United Thank Offering is a ministry of the Episcopal Church. In the past, money from the UTO has been used to build churches, feed the hungry, clothe the poor, provide shelter for the homeless, and provide care and support for those with physical, mental, and emotional problems. The semi-annual ingathering for UTO will be on **Sunday, June 10**. Please bring your UTO envelopes to church on that day.

Hey Youth! Saturday June 16th, we will be meeting for Breakfast and Boutonnieres. Please meet at Ascension at 9 am and bring money for breakfast at Bean Town. Afterwards, we will be assembling boutonnieres for the dads of our church. Allison and Mary will hear no complaints about being tired that morning, as they are waking before dawn to go downtown to get the flowers! See you there! P.S. to parents- we should be done by 11 am.

Ascension Landscaping Project Update

FROM MIKE BEACH, VERGER



Before (hedges)



After (no hedges)

As you can see by the work done on the side of the church, we are starting to make some progress on our Capital Funds Landscaping project. There are several things that need to be done before we turn the contractors loose to remove the current walkways. The first thing is to fix the main sewer pipes from the parish hall to the street. We seem to have a broken pipe; several root intrusions, and a missing section. The next thing is to remove the palm trees and the liquid amber on the south side of the school rooms. Many of the other plants will also be removed.

We have formed a Parish Plant Committee to review the planting plan for the landscaping project. This

committee will meet and make its recommendations on Tuesday May 22.

The status of the contractors is as follows: we will have received three bids from hardscape contractors to remove the current walkways and install the ADA accessible walkways. This includes a wheelchair access to the parish hall and the church front door.

These bids will be evaluated and a contractor selected to start on June 11. The front of the church will not be demolished before June 25 to accommodate a wedding and the special concert scheduled on June 24. If you have any questions that I may be able to answer, please don't hesitate to stop me and ask.

Did You Know ???

FROM DIANE RHODUS

◇ Please write your pledge envelope number on your check and check amount on the envelope. It's helpful for tracking purposes for donations to have an envelope number. —Vestry Counters

◇ Our web site is: www.ascension-sierramadre.com, and it has a wealth of information about our church home. Sometimes, however, the website is not accurate or quite up-to-date. If you find any incorrect or outdated information on the site, please contact Hanna at the church office and let her know the details.

◇ Have you wondered why your prayer request wasn't in the Sunday prayers? Well, many have been confused. The end-of-the-month pink form found in the Sunday bulletin is designed for the

monthly, blue Fellowship of Prayer that can be found in the racks at the back of the church or in the Parish Hall. In order to place a name in the Sunday prayers, please use a yellow form found at the back of the church or telephone our church office (626-355-1133). Prayer is important, so don't let our logistics befuddle you!

◇ In 1883 a ship called "The City of Dublin" was wrecked off the Oregon coast. The main mast with the ship's bell washed ashore. The Captain and crew were taken care of at the local Army post. To thank them, the Captain gave the bell to the Commandant's wife who gave it to the Chaplain. After the troops were moved to the Presidio, the Chaplain heard about the new little church in Sierra Madre, so he gave the bell to Dean Trew, priest in charge at Ascension 1885-1888. And that is how we got our bell.

Notes from the Loft

FROM DEBORA HUFFMAN, DIRECTOR OF MUSIC & ORGANIST

Normally the observance of Trinity Sunday on June 3 would signal the end of the year's choir season – and indeed it does so in reference to Sunday morning worship. Many, many thanks to all of our choristers who have served faithfully throughout the past year to lead our worship in sacred song! Enjoy your well-deserved rest.

This year, though, the choir's hiatus is being interrupted by a brief, joyful return to help us celebrate the City of Sierra Madre's centennial as Ascension presents "**Composers of 1907.**" Following the concert a reception will be held in the parish hall. Please plan on joining the celebration – this is an event not to be missed on **June 24th at 7pm!**

What's Happening with Ascension Youth

FROM ALLISON RAINEY, YOUTH MINISTER

Over the past year, the Ascension Youth Group has enjoyed a journey of learning, fellowship and growth. The Senior High and Rite-13 groups met each Sunday morning to learn more about the Bible, prayer, and how Christianity applies to everyday teenage life.

Throughout the Rite-13 curriculum, the youth explore the myriad ways people pray. In early May, the Rite-13 group learned more about collective prayer, and the form for writing Collects like the ones we hear each week at Mass and on special occasions. They learned a particular form that dates back to the 8th century and beyond, which includes an Address or Salutation, Ascription, Request, Consequence, and Doxology.

The youth at Ascension have both practical and profound insight on the power of prayer. They even experimented with Old English styles! Below are a couple of examples of the prayers the youth crafted last month:

Dear God, I appreciate your loving kindness and your everlasting mercy. We beseech you to help us with our math tests. Help us with our math tests, so that we can be better laborers one day. In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Dear God, I thank thee for thy loving mercy. I humbly beseech thee to guide my choices in life. My inner spirit will become purer with thy love. 'Tis an everlasting prayer. In the name of love, mercy, and compassion. Amen.

COMPOSERS OF 1907

Sunday, June 24, 7:00 p.m.

Quartet No. 4 in E Minor (written in 1896) George Chadwick
1854-1931

Avanti String Quartet

Songs of Travel (written in 1904) Ralph Vaughan Williams
The Vagabond 1872-1058

Let Beauty Awake text: Robert Louis Stevenson
The Roadside Fire 1850-1894

Christopher Isaak, baritone

Five Mystical Songs (written in 1911) Ralph Vaughan Williams
Christopher Isaak, baritone

Festival Choir of Church of the Ascension

Cello Sonata in G Minor, Opus 19 Sergei Rachmaninoff
(written in 1901)

Andante 1873-1943

Michelle Beauchesne, cello

Maple Leaf (written circa 1897) Scott Joplin

Gladiolus Rag (published in 1907) 1867-1917

Heliotrope Rag (published in 1907)

Avanti String Quartet

Stars and Stripes Forever (written in 1896) John Philip Sousa
1854-1932

Brass Quartet

Current Small Groups at Ascension

FROM HALCYON KOERBER

A Study of Luke: Meets Sundays from 9–10am in the Parish House.
Leader: Jean Rowe

A Study of the parables of Jesus: Meets Sundays from 9–10am in the Parish House. Leader: Halcyon Koerber

A Study of the Holy Spirit: Meets Sundays from 9-10am in the Rector's office. Leader: Sofia Herrera

A Study of the current Sunday's lessons: 9–10am. Meets in the church library. Leader: Fr. John Larson

A Study of Second Kings: Meets Tuesdays from 7:30–9 pm at the home of Glenn and Michelle Rohrer. Leader: Michelle Rohrer

The Rector's Forum: Currently reading "Christianity for the rest of us" by D. Butler Bass. Meets Thursdays from 9–10 am in the Rector's office.

Leader: Fr. Michael Bamberger

Men's Breakfast Group: Meets second Saturday of each month

From 8-9:30am. Leader: Fr. Michael Bamberger

Young Families Dinner Group: Meets monthly for dinner and fellowship.
Contact Erica and John Walton for information.

*Please contact Halcyon Koerber or any small group leader for more information.

FOR CHILDREN

Catechesis Schedule I –ages 3-6

June 3 Practical Life-Cleaning

June 10 Last Day

Catechesis Schedule II-ages 6-10

June 3 Practical Life-Cleaning

June 10 Last Day

For more information
see Diane Rhodus,
Ministry Coordinator

News of Ascensionites

Congratulations to our High School Graduates!

Brian Ruble
Katie Koerber
Matt Bamberger
Sarah Jayne Macintosh

Ted Bosley, parishioner and Director of the Gamble House, was the recipient of

the 4th Annual Dr. Robert Winter Award given in recognition of distinguished and devoted service to architectural preservation.

Father Roger Wood has returned from his global voyage. Stay tuned for a tale from his journeys in next month's Spire.

2007 Capital Campaign

If you have not already received and turned in a **commitment card**, please see the Junior Warden, **Susan Clifton**. All levels of gifts are welcomed and needed for this incredible construction that begins this month - make sure you are a part of this wonderful time in the life of Ascension.

Cooks of Ascension

The Cookbook Committee only has recipes from 15 Ascensionites. To truly represent our wonderfully diverse community, we need more recipes. Please encourage and remind each other to submit favorites by **June 10th**.

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

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The Episcopal Church of the Ascension

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From the Senior Warden JIM LAREW

When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. – Acts 2:1

The heat of June and the fire of Pentecost are upon us and I am connecting more and more with the story of the season. Our Lord rises from the dead, ascends into heaven, and the apostles are left staring at each other having chosen Matthias to replace Judas. I would imagine they were thinking, "Now what?" Before doubt and fear paralyze them, they are blessed by fire and *united* by the Holy Spirit in *community*. More direction and miraculous evidence that their Lord is with them and their mission is clear. Kara and I were married on Pentecost symbolizing our spiritual journey together and into the community. This *unity* represents the hope of the modern world to me.

Within this *unity*, the shape and purpose of Jesus' life and witness provides the pattern for the Ascension's life and witness. The Book of Acts recounts the formation of a *community* quite different from modern definitions and presuppositions. It defines not a voluntary society formed by our individual needs or commitments, but a Christian *com-*

munity resulting from the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Father Michael has asked us individually and as a congregation how we will embody the outpouring of the Holy Spirit for some time now. He's challenged the Vestry on how Ascension will unite to meet the needs of our *community* as we lay a mission and economically sustainable groundwork for the church of our children and our children's children. This is an extension of a visioning exercise the Vestry began under Jean Rowe's leadership last year. Your women and men of the Vestry continue to focus on God as a *community*-forming, *community*-sustaining power. I ask you to pray and contemplate on how Ascension can live out *community* inspired by the Holy Spirit, reflecting God's purpose and character revealed in the ministry of Jesus Christ. This will be the foundation to examine the best use of our relationships, resources, grounds, and assets for God's economy, not just for our own fellowship, but for the outreaching and service to those who will come tomorrow.

Being faithful to the living God who is

actively present in the midst of changing historical situations implies that the church must grow and change – "Behold, I am doing a new thing" (Isa. 43:19). In this context, the truths of our heritage will be explored and tested in conversation with the challenges and opportunities of the current context. Join us by asking yourselves the same questions the Vestry will be pondering:

Who is God and why does it matter?
What is the Church and why does it matter?

Who am I and why do I matter?
What is my place in the Church?

How are we in community and out in the community together?

Praise God for Mother Jennifer who is capably filling in for the Rector. Godspeed to Father Michael as he journeys to CREDO. And high alleluias to Gail Ann Skiles who secured a grant from the Sierra Madre Civic Club for the Building on the Vision Capital Project. Pledge now, if you haven't already!

Youth of the Ascension: check out www.flatfoot56.com/main.html.