



The SPIRE

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

June 2005

Our Core Ministries

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

Watch for an Update on Father . Robert Moon's progress at Lake Arrowhead next month.

Inside this issue:

<i>Parish Activities</i>	2
<i>Small Groups</i>	2
<i>St. Mary's Guild</i>	2
<i>Now Assisting</i>	2
<i>June Calendar</i>	3
<i>From the Loft</i>	3
<i>From the Sr. Warden</i>	4
<i>News of Ascensionites</i>	4

✝ From the Rector

So what happened to the gates in the altar rail? Did they need repairs? Did they go on vacation? Some of you may have noticed that during Eastertide this year they "went missing." I removed them in order to see what it would be like for them to not be there. My reasoning was that they are not actually required or necessary – the gates and the rail itself are hold-overs from the days when churches had "rood screens." Rood is the Old English word for cross. In the middle ages, in an effort to architecturally separate the common people from the clergy (and the Holy Sacrament) elaborate barriers with ornately carved crosses and occasional statues were built between where the congregation gathered and the altar. Over time, most of these have been removed. At Ascension, there was a rood screen which was removed in the late 1940's and replaced with the present communion rail, with the gates. The point in tak-

ing out the gates was to go a step further in reducing the visual barriers between the people of God and the altar of Christ. Granted, it was something of a small, symbolic step, but our tradition is made rich with symbolism. For some who prefer to receive communion while kneeling, the rail is a helpful device in helping to get down and up. One person did want to let me know that some folks rely as well on the gates to get up and down. While what this person said sounds practical, I have to point out that the gates, whether closed or open, are not at all sturdy enough to support someone's weight.

At any rate, the gates are back from their vacation, and I welcome your reflections. I especially welcome conversation around what we all can do to remove those barriers that separate us, and all those who seek Jesus, from drawing closer to Him.

—Father Michael

For Safety and Hospitality

Our handicapped parking spaces have been moved down to Laurel Avenue on Sundays. Its been called to our attention that the grade on Baldwin Avenue has been too steep for safely getting in and out of cars.

In addition, we will now be putting out signs reserving a couple of spaces on Baldwin in front of the Church for first time visitors and Newcomers. Inside of the

church, we will be setting aside a couple of pews where our greeters can direct newcomers if they wish, and welcoming parishioners can assist them if they need help finding their way through our possibly daunting worship. If you'd like to be a greeter or a welcomer, please speak to Diane Rhodus.

Parish Activities

Mark your Calendars for the following parish Activities

Ongoing...

Monday Night Dinner Group

meets at 6:00 p.m. at the Monrovia, all are welcome...an exciting September trip is in the works.

Pending...

Youth Beach Party

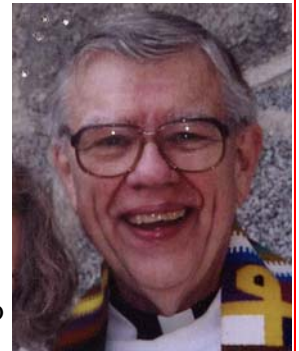
Saturday June 19 3:00 p.m. to ??
all 7th—12th grade students are invited. Please sign up on to be an adult driver/supervisor by contacting Diane Rhodus.

Upcoming...

All Parish Retreat

Last weekend in January at Camp Stevens 2 nights, 5 meals only \$99 per person. We would like to book the entire camp...sounds like fun? Sounds interesting? Would like to participate? Contact Diane Rhodus, Ministry Coordinator.

Now Assisting



With Fr. Moon's recent move, The Vestry has authorized the Rector to invite Fr. John Larson to join with Fr. Wood in assisting with liturgy and pastoral care. Fr. Larson, retired a few years ago and has been attending Ascension for the past year and a half. Fr. Larson will assist primarily at the 8:00 service, preach occasionally and be available for pastoral care. He has some commitments for supply work in other congregations this summer, but we look forward to his steady and experienced presence in the months to come.

Small Groups

Small Groups are about relationships. They are about deepening our relationship with God through Jesus Christ, they are about strengthening our relationships with others in our community; and they are about inviting and developing relationships with newcomers. In the midst of our small groups, we play, pray, work, and eat together. In other words, we have a great time together as we grow in the Lord. One need not be a Bible scholar to join a

small group—all you need is an open heart. We'd love to have you join us.

Most of our small groups meet from 9—10 am on Sunday at church. A few meet during the week. Please see our web site at www.ascension-sierramadre.com for the current listing of small groups.

—Halcyon Koerber

St. Mary's Guild

St. Mary's Guild will meet on Saturday, June 11th at 11:30am at the home of Wilma Clark. A potluck sign-up sheet will be posted the previous week. Bring a white elephant to exchange – try to make it a funny one!! There will be a prize for the silliest elephant. If you have any questions about the guild please call Jo. For directions to Wilma's

please call Wilma or meet at the church at 11:00am to carpool.

Our photo cards have been very popular and will be available at all times. Please call Jo if you would like to purchase more.

—Jo Mosier

June 2005

Upcoming Events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 10:30 Staff Mtg Noon Mass 6:00 pm Mass	2 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum	3 Noon Mass	4 9:00 am Altar Guild
5 8:00 Mass *8:45 Breakfast 9:00 Educ Hour 10:15 Mass	6	7	8 Noon Mass 6:00 pm Mass	9 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum	10 Noon Mass	11 9:00 am Altar Guild 11:30 am St. Mary's Guild
12 8:00 Mass *8:45 Breakfast 9:00 Educ Hour 10:15 Mass	13	14	15 10:30 Staff Mtg Noon Mass 6:00 pm Mass Spire Deadline	16 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum	17 Noon Mass	18 9:00 am Altar Guild 3:00 pm youth Beach Party
19 Father's Day 8:00 Mass *8:45 Breakfast 9:00 Educ Hour 10:15 Mass	20	21 6:30 pm Vestry Mtg	22 Noon Mass 6:00 pm Mass	23 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum	24 Noon Mass	25 9:00 am Altar Guild
26 8:00 Mass *8:45 Breakfast 9:00 Educ Hour 10:15 Mass Noon PMC	27	28	29 Noon Mass 6:00 pm Mass	30 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum		

- June 11—St. Mary's Guild luncheon at Wilma Clark's
- June 15—Spire Deadline for July issue
- June 18—Youth Beach Party at 3:00 pm
- June 19—Father's Day
- June 21—Vestry Meeting at 6:30 p.m.
- June 26—Parish Ministry Council Meeting in the parish hall

Notes from the Loft

For the next few months, while the choir's on summer break, Sunday worship will incorporate vocal solos and duets, instrumental music, and organ music. Since there will be just a few of us in the loft at any one time, I'm depending on the downstairs congregants to partner with me in the singing of the hymns – sing enthusiastically so that your tones will reach me in the loft!

Mid-June I'll be representing Ascension at the annual conference of the Association of Anglican Musicians in Baltimore. Based on my experiences of the past two years, I'm looking forward to a time of renewed acquaintances, stimulating worship, and exquisite music. The conference will include an or-

gan concert at the Naval Academy, performed by one of our members, who serves as organist at the Air Force Academy Chapel in Colorado.

Looking ahead just a bit, in the fall the choir will need a few additional sopranos and tenors. Please take some time this summer to consider whether this avenue of opportunity may be of interest to you. Singing in the choir is a marvelous means of worship, service, musical development, and friendship, which I heartily recommend (as attested to by 41 years of continuous choral involvement . . .). I'll say more as September approaches but want to encourage your consideration of the idea during the summer months.

Enjoy the slower pace of summer – and remember to treat yourself to a concert or two!

—Debora Huffman,
Organist/Choirmaster

Freebies from Fr Bob

Fr. Bob is cleaning out his garage which is chock full of goodies of every kind of craft and hobby! This coming month he has collected together unused stained glass in many colors, clear glass and mirror glass. Anyone who is interested in owning some or all of the glass free, to create their own work of art just needs to contact Fr. Bob.

News of Ascensionites

Congratulations to all of the Ascension Graduates: **Daniel Koerber** from Loyola High School and is planning on attending University of Dayton.

James Calleton from La Salle and planning to attend UC Santa Cruz. **Emily Holl** from Fresno State, Cum laude, with a BA in Family and Consumer Sciences. **Sarah Holl LaReau** will be receiving her teaching credential from Cal State San Marcos.

Sarah & Eleanor Pancake Fay were baptized at Ascension on Pentecost, Sunday May 15.



Left Picture: Fr. Moon and Michelle Parnell Rohrer following his first mass at St. Richard of Chichester Church in Arrowhead. Right Picture: Fr. Moon and Fr. Bamberger at Fr. Moon's send off celebration.



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 Senior Warden

After a season of record rainfall and a bumper crop of weeds in our own gardens, I am sure many of us are spending time reclaiming our yard. At Church of the Ascension, the Lay Weeders have been giving the church grounds much needed "pastoral" care, but we also need to remember that one of the unmet needs of our parish is the implementation of the landscape plan with particular attention to making the pathways safe for young and old.

The landscaping project came forward several years ago, but was set aside while Canon Michael and the vestry worked

to bring the operating budget for the Church back into balance. Because of the heartening growth of our congregation and your increased financial support of the mission of the Church of the Ascension, we are no longer using reserves to fund operations and we can seriously look at the long-term projects that will ensure the Church's presence for many years to come. As a first step, I suggest we all become more aware of the condition of the grounds and notice where improvements need to be made. We have a beautiful church in which to worship and should work to make it not only more inviting to parishioners and visi-

tors, but even more accessible.

This is a preamble to the stewardship campaign that will come in the fall, but it is also a reminder that we have untapped physical resources, such as the rectory, that need our attention and can broaden the Presence of Church of the Ascension for us and those we welcome to this special place.

—Rob Stockly