



# The SPIRE

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

March 2007

## Our Core Ministries

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

### *Reminder!*

Daylight Savings Time Begins Sunday, March 11. Remember to turn your clocks forward one hour or you will be late to church.

### Inside this issue:

Youth Group	2
Charitable Contributions	2
Coffee Hour	2
Calendar	3
Notes from the Loft	4
News of Ascensionites	5
Easter Schedule	6
Sr. Warden	6

## ✝ From the Rector

Many of you are aware that after almost fifteen years as our parish secretary and administrator, Karen Conrad is retiring in mid-March. Karen's husband, Neil, retired from the Arcadia Fire Department last December, and they are looking forward to traveling, pursuing Neil's passion for car racing, and a developing ministry of volunteering for the American Red Cross. Words can hardly express how blessed we have been by Karen's efforts and presence. Fortunately, at least for awhile, she will continue on with some of the financial work and be available for help - which I know we will need.

I also want to say how pleased I am that we have hired Hanna Kang as our new Parish Administrator. Hanna comes to us with experience in non-profit organizations. A graduate of Wheaton College in Illinois, she is a parishioner at the Church of Our Saviour in San Gabriel. She is cheerful and has

started work already! Please help me in welcoming Hanna into the life and work of our parish.

—Fr. Michael



*Ascension welcomes Hanna Kang as the new Parish Administrator .*

## Our Own Living Legend

Did you know that Father Wood is the great great grandson of Hannah Hawks who with her children purchased 60 acres of land from Nathaniel Carter and settled in what was then known as the Sierra Madre Tract in 1881? In 1885 Fanny Hawks, his great great aunt, donated the land for our church. Monday March 12 at 7:00 p.m. we have the op-

portunity to hear Father Wood share the stories of Hannah and the four succeeding generations of Hawks and their role as a Sierra Madre founding family from the city's earliest beginnings down to the present day. This is a Sierra Madre Centennial event, so feel free to invite your family and friends. Don't miss this living history event.

## Ascension Youth Group Serves and Celebrates

What a month February was for the youth group! On February 9, the Rite-13 group headed over to Pasadena to serve at the Bad Weather Shelter. We served over 100 people and had a great time. The Youth Group gathered together for a Valentine's Day Scavenger Hunt and Progressive dinner. The youth had a great time playing games and enjoying fellowship together. We also continued our tradition of serving pancakes on Shrove Tuesday to both Ascension parishioners and greater community while earning money to contribute to the Capital Fund Campaign. We also celebrated the coming-of-age of our many Rite-13 youth with a special liturgy on February 18. A special thanks to the Nardoni, Duffy, and Koerber families for opening your homes for the Progressive Dinner, and to all of the parents and volunteers who helped make last month a memorable one for the Ascension Youth Group!

—Allison Rainey



*The Youth Group serving dinner at the Bad Weather Shelter. Pictured left to right: Stephanie Tarr, Bronwyn Dodd, Katalina Gamarra, Jackson Ruble, Elliot Brunwin, and Seamus Dodd.*

## Charitable Contributions

Do you intend to make tax-deductible contributions this year to the Church of the Ascension or to other charities? The church is always happy to receive cash in the plate, but it no longer counts at tax time. The Internal Revenue Service now requires substantiation of all donations, whatever the amount. This can be either a bank record (such as a check) or a receipt from the charity. For more information consult your tax advisor.

If you have pledged, the church records the checks and cash donations received in your numbered offering envelopes and sends you a quarterly statement. If you contribute regularly but do not wish to pledge, please ask for envelopes so that the church can keep a record of your gifts.

—Lavette Teague, Treasurer

## Coffee Hour

Do you enjoy having munchies after Service on Sundays? Do you enjoy mingling with fellow parishioners in the Parish Hall on Sundays? Do you enjoy cooking and/or baking? If you answered “yes” to any one of these questions, then we encourage you to host a Coffee Hour. It's easy; the sign up board is on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall. Or, if the cooking or baking scares you off, you may sponsor a Coffee Hour, (recommended sponsor is \$25.00) just see one of the

Hospitality Committee Members to pass along your sponsorship, and the Hospitality Committee will see that your Coffee Hour is a success.

Hospitality Committee Members: Mary Baffes, Elizabeth Callihan, Richele Duffy, Michelle Parnell, and Lisa Reed. Our numbers are in the Church Directory.

# March 2007

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum	2 Noon Mass	3 9:00 am Altar Guild
4 8:00 am Mass 9:00 Educ Hour 10:15 am Mass	5 6:00 pm Group Leaders Mtg	6 Polling Place	7 Noon Mass 6:00 Mass 6:30 Lent Supper 7:30 pm Choir	8 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum	9 Noon Mass	10 8:00 am Men's Breakfast 9:00 am Altar Guild
11 8:00 am Mass 9:00 Educ Hour 10:15 am Mass 5:00 pm Evensong	12 7:00 pm Centennial Talk—Fr. Wood	13	14 Noon Mass 6:00 Mass 6:30 Lent Supper 7:30 pm Choir	15 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum Spire Deadline	16 Noon Mass	17 9:00 am Altar Guild
18 8:00 am Mass 9:00 Educ Hour 10:15 am Mass	19	20 6:30 pm Vestry	21 Noon Mass 6:00 Mass 6:30 Lent Supper 7:30 pm Choir	22 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum	23 Noon Mass	24 9:00 am Altar Guild
25 Wistaria Fete 8:00 am Mass 9:00 Educ Hour 10:15 am Mass	26	27	28 Noon Mass 6:00 Mass 6:30 Lent Supper 7:30 pm Choir	29 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum	30 Noon Mass	31 9:00 am Altar Guild

## Upcoming Events

- March 6—Polling Place all day in the parish hall
- Lenten Supper & Program every Wednesday following 6:00 mass
- March 10—Men's Breakfast at 8:00 a.m. Work Party
- March 11—Daylight Savings Time Begins; Lenten Evensong at 5:00 p.m.
- March 12—Fr. Wood's Centennial Talk at 7:00 p.m.
- March 20—Vestry Meeting at 6:30 p.m.
- March 25—Wistaria Fete

## Notes from the Loft

In observance of Lent, the choir will be presenting more meditative and retrospective music this month, including:

- \*Mendelssohn's "I Waited for the Lord" sung by sopranos Susan Beach and Colette Ostrye, with choir and organ, plus Andrew Lloyd Webber's "Pie Jesu"
- \*Two glorious new anthems by Walter Pelz for choir, oboe, and organ, featuring Sean Dougall: "O Lord, Throughout These Forty Days" and "Love and Mercy"
- \*Gabriel Faure's hauntingly beautiful "Cantique de Jean Racine" with cellist Michelle Beauchesne
- \*Craig Courtney's poignant "Teach Me Thy Song"

\*\*\*\*\*

On the 11<sup>th</sup> the choir and I invite you to the LENTEN CHORAL EVENSONG at 5 p.m. Works to be included are:

- \*Robert Lehman's "Phos Hilaron" ("O Gracious Light")
- \*"O For A Closer Walk With God" by Charles

Villiers Stanford

- \*Stanford's "Magnificat and Nunc Dimittus" in C Major
  - \*John Ireland's "Greater Love Hath No Man"
- \*\*"Like As the Hart Desireth the Waterbrooks" by Herbert Howells

Finally, especially for those who've requested it, the hymns will include the beloved "Now the Day Is Over."

Do plan on joining us for an evening of reflection and exquisite music. Following the service, St. Mary's Guild will be hosting a reception for the congregation.

--Debora Huffman/Director of Music and Organist

## St. Mary's Guild

St. Mary's Guild will sponsor a reception following the March 11 Evensong. If you would like to help please speak to Ann Polan or Jo Mosier. The Next meeting will be June 9.

## New of Ascensionites

**Ryan LaReau** was born February 13 to proud parents, **Sarah & Bryn LaReau**, and proud grandparents, **John & Lynne Holl**.

**Madeline Withers** daughter of **Wendy & Daniel Withers** and **Michael Ruble** son of **Susan & Michael Beach** were baptized on Sunday February 18.

## Holy Week and Easter Services

*Palm Sunday—April 9—8:00 & 10:15 am*

*Monday and Tuesday in Holy Week—April 2 & 3—7:00 pm*

*Tenebrae—April 4—7:00 pm*

*Maundy Thursday—April 5—7:00 pm*

*Good Friday—April 6—Stations of the Cross noon*

*Good Friday Liturgy—7:00 pm*

*Easter—April 8—6:00 & 10:15 am*

*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*



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## From the Senior Warden—Jim Larew

*“Listen, I will tell you a mystery! We will not all die, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye...” - 1 Corinthians 15:51-52*

Growth is all around Ascensionites these days.

You'd have to be asleep in the pew not to recognize the changes enveloping our church community. Well, meet Rip van Winkle. I'm not naturally good with change. So to avoid it, I escaped to Utah for my annual ski and fly fishing trip.

One can run, but God often makes us face our fear of change. Last week skiing, Kara and I ducked into the ski lodge for hot chocolate to wait out a storm. As we readied to venture back into the whiteout, a man, lunch tray in hand, was desperately searching for a table and we asked him to sit. Striking up a conversation with the kindly, gray-haired fellow, we sat back down to break bread with Art, a fascinating man who was the U.N. Ambassador to Somalia, a 15-year member of the Davos Forum, and currently a Trilateral Commission member. He is also a Christian. A Russian Mennonite and leader in his church, Art told of his commitment to peace and global relevance to God which kept me glued to my seat for hours. We invited Art and his wife, Leona, to continue our discussion at après-ski. Our conversation of peace and healing went through dinner well into the night. Art & Leona are a couple living the gospel through their everyday actions who happen to be relaxing in Utah, not hiding, like

me. Their long-term work in places like Bangladesh and Somalia made it clear: They are not armchair warriors. Their parting words: *Find the “key” to heal the wounds and resolve the conflict impeding love and change relevant to Jesus.*

Days later, fly fishing among the beautiful, bright red willows of the Provo River, I caught a rare and stunning whitefish. He was a treasure. Having fought him for 15 minutes, my catch was hard won and his release seemed too much of a personal sacrifice. Then, a realization...could this be the “key” Art is imploring? Was I impeding my relevance to God? I would not have eaten the fish, so keeping it would be for my own glory. Rewetting my hands in the frigid Provo, I sadly pointed the whitefish upstream and released my prize.

Change is not a rare occasion, but a constant force in nature, humanity, and spiritual life. Why, then, does change catch us by surprise? Perhaps we hold too fast to our expectations. When change does not meet our understanding it breeds conflict within us and with others. When encountering change, let's release our catch and act relevantly to Jesus' great sacrifice on the Cross during this Lenten season and beyond.

P.S. Youth Group: Complete [www.bibledudes.com](http://www.bibledudes.com) quiz, bring the results page to me, and get a candy prize(ask the 'rents first). Band pick = [www.switchfoot.com](http://www.switchfoot.com).