

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT SHROVE TUESDAY

Thank you to all of you who helped make Shrove Tuesday a success. We were able to raise \$160 for ECPAC, while Richele Duffy and her group fed over 145 people at the Bad Weather Shelter. What a night for the Church of Ascension!

A special thank you to those who helped decorate; prepared and cleaned up for the Pancake Supper; our Master Pancake Flipper (aka) Fr. Michael; Debbie and Chris Bamberger, Ted and Kathy Calleton, Kristi Mooradian-Barrett, and my sons, Christopher and Alexander Reed.

Respectfully, Lisa Reed – Fellowship Ministry Leader

Easter Flowers

Easter is on April 4th this year. Please help St. Anne's Altar Guild beautify our sanctuary by giving generously for Easter flowers. Donations in any amount may be given in memory of or in thanksgiving for loved ones and special occasions in your lives. Flower envelopes will be included in the service bulletins commencing February 28th and continuing each Sunday thereafter through March 28th. They will also be available in the back of the church or from the church office during the week. Contributions must be received in the church office by Tuesday, March 30th to be listed in the Easter bulletins. Please make checks payable to St. Anne's Altar Guild.

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
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The Episcopal Church of the Ascension



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FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT AT ASCENSION

Come one, come all! Bring your children, your spouses, your friends and family and watch the wonderful movie "UP" on Sunday, March 7, 2010 at 5:00 pm in the Parish Hall. Hot dogs, popcorn, soda, candy, etc. will be available for a small fee. All proceeds will go to the water well fund.

This fund raiser will give everyone of all ages an opportunity to participate in raising money for a well which will benefit a village of all ages in a place many, many miles away.

If you and the kids want to get comfy on the floor, bring a blanket or sleeping bag and a pillow. A sign-up sheet for this event is on the bulletin board in the Parish Hall.

NOTICE: It looks like the next work party is scheduled for April 3rd. Since I do not have the authority to move Holy Saturday, we will postpone the work party until the following Saturday, April 10. So sorry for the disappointment, but live with it....The Verger.

Is One of These Your Task?

Our Verger has posted a list of projects that need to be done. Check to see if your skills match any of these projects. Mike Beach will be happy to talk and make plans with you.

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

Would you like to go on a field trip? We are planning a Sunday trip to Church of the Angels to learn more about - and experience - Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. The Church of the Angels offers Catechesis of the Good Shepherd at all three levels (ages 3-6, 6-9, and 9-12), and is one of the most recognized programs of its kind *worldwide!* And they're just a short hop down the freeway. At Church of the Ascension, we currently also offer Catechesis of the Good Shepherd for ages 3-6. We meet in the "Atrium" (the classroom closest to the playground) every Sunday morning from 9am to 10am.

If you would like to go on a field trip, please contact Cameron Cox at 626.797.0639 or via email at thecox-clan@sbcglobal.net. We are hoping to set a date sometime during the Easter season.

Youth Group 30-Hour Famine

On Feb. 26 and 27th the youth of Ascension went without food for 30 hours and raised money to help end world hunger. The 30 Hour Famine is complete, but we are still on a mission to pink up the San Gabriel Valley!

Our chief fund raising adventure was Flamingos...and we intend to continue until everyone on the list has gotten their flock. Unfortunately, we are no longer taking new "clients" for flocking. Thanks to all for making this a great success and so much fun too! Coming next month...We will calculate and announce the total amount of money we raised!



The **SPIRE**

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

March, 2010

Worship

Sundays

8:00 Mass
8:55 Coffee Hour
9:10 Education
10:15 Mass
11:30 Coffee Hour

Wednesday

6:00pm Mass
Wednesdays in Lent
(continuing through 3/24)—
see below for speakers

6:00 Eucharist
6:30 Lenten Supper
7:00 Lenten Series

Thursday

7:00 am Mass
Friday

From the Rector

I am amazed when I think about how much the mediums of communication have changed even in the last thirty years. I realize it makes me sound "old" when I reminisce about how we used to write letters (mostly by hand) because it was too expensive to linger on the telephone "long distance." But the fact is that now people have more tools and mediums with which to communicate than ever before. And most people are embracing those tools to some extent.

Last Sunday I was chastised by one of our ninety-plus year old parishioners for not replying to her e-mail. Between cell phones, e-mail, and social networking programs like Facebook and Twitter, almost everyone is connected. And while some of us would like to take a stance against over intrusive (and sometimes bewildering) technology, the real question is about how we want to stay connected to folks.

At our Annual Meeting at the end of January, Jennifer Jesser distributed a form to assess how the parish can best be connected with our parishioners in terms of communication. If you haven't filled out this needs assessment, please take the time to do so. If it would be easier, feel free to call the parish office and we'll fill it out for you. The main point of all this is the same as ever – we want to make sure that everyone is in the loop.

Yours in Christ,

MAB+



Attention Youth Group—Easter Egg Decorating

Join us on Saturday, April 3rd from 10:30 to 12:00 in the Parish Hall as we continue the Youth Group's tradition of preparing for the children's Easter Egg Hunt. (Please bring one dozen hard boiled, undyed eggs.)



Monthly Financial Update

One of the goals of the 2010 Vestry is to increase our financial transparency so that parishioners can see for themselves how we are doing in meeting our budget goals. We hope to accomplish this objective by including a financial column in our monthly Spire.

February, 2010

	Actual	Budget
Income		
Pledges	11,521	16,250
Plate	982	2,083
Other	10	8
Total:	12,513	18,341
Expenses		
Planned	15,289	23,809
Unplanned	419	-0-
Total:	15,708	23,809

Holy Week and Easter

*Palm Sunday—March 28—
8:00 & 10:15 am*

*Monday and Tuesday in Holy Week—
March 29 & 30—7:00 pm Mass*

Wednesday Tenebrae—March 31—7:00 pm

Maundy Thursday—April 1—7:00 pm

*The Watch at the Altar of Repose
begins after the 7:00 pm mass on
Maundy Thursday and continues until
noon on Good Friday*

Good Friday—April 2—

Stations of the Cross at noon

Good Friday Liturgy— 7:00 pm

*Confessions will be heard by
appointment*

Easter—April 4—

6:00 am Sunrise Service

*The Great Vigil of Easter and Solemn
Mass*

Easter Brunch

Easter Egg Hunt

10:15 am Festival High Mass

SENIOR WARDEN'S BLOG

From time to time, I post on the Parish Hall bulletin board what I perceive to be interesting articles from the WALL STREET JOURNAL, N.Y. TIMES, or L.A. TIMES. Rather than political or economic commentary, these articles usually analyze the spiritual and ethical conundrums of contemporary life and institutions. Recently I posted a most unusual commentary penned by a seventeen year old in June of 1938 and published by the author's son as a posthumous tribute to his father on his passing last December. I thought that this story deserved wider publication.

Remarkable for its maturity, the essay by young Edmund Carpenter attempted to identify those items that he believed were essential to happiness and complete enjoyment of life - things he hoped to accomplish before he "left this world."

His first goal was to do something "great," to accomplish a glorious achievement, to feel that he had been an addition to this world, to achieve distinction for something about which he could be proud. Carpenter's second goal was to have brought great happiness to others, to experience the sincere pleasure of pleasing others and, thus, to have achieved happiness for himself.

The third goal was to visit a large portion of the globe, to live with "foreign races" in their own environment and, thus, to broaden and improve his "outlook on life." His fourth goal was to experience great love - to feel a love that surpasses any other emotion ever felt. His fifth was to experience great sorrow - for sorrow "molds us and teaches us that there is far deeper significance to life than" simply passing through life "happy and carefree. . . its dregs often leave us a better understanding of this world of ours and a better understanding of humanity."

Carpenter won the Bronze Star for service in World War II, graduated from Harvard Law School, and became the head of the largest law firm in Delaware. He was survived by six children and fifteen grandchildren. Whether he believed that any (or all) of the foregoing achieved his goals we are not told. On the other hand, we do know that the process of serving others in the armed forces, in commerce, or through public service, as well as nurturing a family is distinction in and of itself. For those of us fortunate enough to have experienced great love, of partner and/or family, the sorrow of losing one or more of those whom we have loved and cherished is a given. Indeed, our faith as expressed through the liturgy, the parables, and the example of Jesus himself to love and to serve others offers us the opportunity to achieve all of Carpenter's goals in our own small community. Why not take a moment to assess your goals this Lenten season?

Yours in Christ.

Ted



In Feeding, We Were Also Fed

What do teenagers normally do on a Friday night? Go to a movie with friends or just hang out? On one particular Friday night, January 29th, the Ascension Senior High Youth Group, youth leaders, and parent volunteers spent the evening differently and volunteered at the Bad Weather Shelter in Pasadena. They set up cots and handed out bed sheets and blankets. They planned and served a meal for over a hundred people, including families who rely on the Bad Weather Shelter for a meal and a place to rest overnight. Here are some of the reflections of various youth that attended:

"It was a learning experience for me, because a lot of times I'm not very grateful, and [being at the Bad Weather Shelter] it made me grateful for what I had... seeing people with just a cot and a blanket." *Mike Ruble*

"It felt good to help." *Avery Cox*

"It was important that we helped people in need." *Christopher Reed*

Simply put, and yet profound beyond words— what the teens learned was that when we serve others, we often help ourselves and experience something valuable. On this evening, regardless of who they were, the face of *Christ the Stranger* was in every person coming in to receive the hospitality of the Bad Weather Shelter and was welcome. And in feeding others, we were also fed.

Daylight Savings Time 🕒

Don't Forget Daylight Savings time begins Sunday, March 14. Turn your clocks forward one hour before going to bed Saturday night.

NOTES FROM THE LOFT

I can't imagine a more beautiful way to have ended February than by celebrating the second Sunday of Lent with Sean Dougall (and his oboe) in two of Walter Pelz' wonderful anthems: "O Lord, Throughout These Forty Days" and "Love and Mercy." Thank you, Sean, and thank you, choir!

Music for the month of March combines some traditional favorites along with several new anthems:

March 7 - Mendelssohn's "I Waited for the Lord" for two sopranos and choir, featuring Susan Beach and Keiko Sakatani. At communion Susan and Keiko will be joined by soprano Colette Ostrye in "Suscepit Israel" from the Bach "Magnificat." "He has come to the aid of his servant Israel, to remember his promise of mercy."

March 14 - the incomparable "Cantique de Jean Racine," with cello. Also a new anthem by Walter Pelz, with cello, "Psalm 121."

March 21 - Craig Courtney's "Teach Me Thy Song" and Antonio Lotti's "Truly He Bore Our Sorrows."

March 28 - Palm/Passion Sunday. The sequence hymn will be replaced by a sequence anthem entitled "Hosanna to the Living Lord" by Robert Lau, with trumpet played by Francisco Garcia. As we move into Passion Week, the offertory and communion anthems will again feature the cello: "Were You There" (no, not THAT tune . . . !) by Raymond Haan and "O Sacred Head," arranged by Bradley Nelson.

Following up on last month's "Notes," let me again put out the word for someone willing to record especially our 10:15 services (please see me if interested). Also, another call for gifts to the music fund to support Easter and our May 16 Evensong. Approximately \$2,500.00 is needed to fund the musicians and music for these two services; if you value the music of these celebrations, thank you for contributing as you are able.

Finally, let me cite an additional avenue of possible involvement: if you're interested in singing with the choir for Easter, there are openings, and I'd love to speak with you!

Music speaks what cannot be expressed, soothes the mind and gives it rest, heals the heart and makes it whole, flows from heaven to the soul. - origin unknown

Debora Huffman, Director of Music and Organist

How is Your Lent So Far? Here's an Idea

We are nearly a third of the way through Lent. March 11 marks the midpoint between Ash Wednesday and Easter. Is your Lent so far a period of spiritual growth? Are you preparing yourself to experience the fullness of Easter? Or have the responsibilities of daily life bogged you down?

You still have an opportunity to strengthen your Lenten preparations by adding just one hour each Sunday for small group Bible study or group prayer in *Lectio Divina*.

Three Bible study groups meet from 9:10 to 10:10 a.m. in the parish house for prayer, bible study, and fellowship. One, in the front room, uses scripture to grow in Relating to Others as Jesus Would. A second, meeting in the dining room, continues it's study of Women in the Bible. A third group is discussing My Peace I Give You — a look at the gospel according to John chapters 11-21.

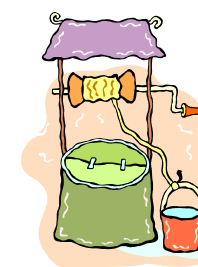
If you want to draw closer to God in your personal prayer life, join parishioners meeting in Fr. Mike's office from 9:10 to 10:10 a.m. for *Lectio Divina*. After someone reads the day's Gospel, we use a combination of meditation, prayer, and optional sharing to strengthen our connection to Christ.

Sure, you can accomplish these goals at home. But why not enjoy the support of friends and the fellowship of community? You'll probably find, as we have, that you'll experience a lot of God's love in the process.

--Barbara Larson

CHEF'S DINNER 2010

Fellowship and Fundraising for the Well Outreach Project



Tickets are currently on Sale for the Chef's Dinner!!

On March 23 Chef Claud Beltran is coming back to Ascension for another multi-course and multi-wine feast event! Don't miss the talk by special guest Gil Garcetti, former LA District Attorney turned acclaimed photographer, describing how one well can change the life of an entire village.

This dinner is an exciting opportunity to combine fund-raising for a worthy cause with having fun, and we hope to see you there! Please see Scott Callihan or Anna Thomas for more information.