



The SPIRE

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

May 2007

Our Core Ministries

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

Mother's Day
is Sunday, May 13th



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✝ From the Rector

By the time you receive this, I will have embarked upon a short time of sabbatical rest. As I mentioned last month in my article, I will be attending CREDO in mid May. My plans for the rest of the eight weeks include rest and gardening therapy. Some time spent on retreat as well as some time spent on writing. In my absence, the Reverend Jennifer Beal will be the priest "in charge," and a sabbatical committee for overall leadership has been named. The committee is made up of Jim Larew—the Senior Warden, Susan Clifton—the Junior Warden, Halcyon Koerber—the convener of our Parish Ministry Council, and Michael Beach—our Verger, as well as Mother Beal.

After my announcement on Easter, a few kids have asked their parents, "Is Father Michael leaving us?" The answer, of course, is no. I am just taking time for rest, reflection, and renewal, and I'll be back on the 22nd of June.

Sabbaticals are not just meant for the member of the clergy to explore new things. These eight weeks are an opportunity for our congregation to take stock of life without the personality of the Rector barging in on everything. While it pains me to admit it, I suspect the congregation can do with a rest from me. I have confidence that we will all be reenergized for mission and ministry when we reunite at the end of June.

I would ask that you pray for me and for my family during this time of rest and renewal. Please keep our parish leadership in our thoughts and prayers. And finally, consider how this sabbatical time can be an opportunity for growth in our life in Christ together.

— Canon Bamberger

Getting to know The Reverend Jennifer Beal

- ◇ Born and raised near Boston, Massachusetts
- ◇ B.A. in Music, minor in religion and art history from Oberlin College. Oberlin, Ohio. Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, Oxford, England
- ◇ 2 years: "Ministry Intern" year at Trinity, Concord, MA to learn the work of the church on the three levels of the life of the priest, the parish, and the diocese. A year of "secular work" as an apprentice in a fifth grade classroom in New Canaan, CT.
- ◇ Began three years at Berkeley Divinity School at Yale and the Institute of Sacred Music, Worship, and the Arts. Attended two European Study Tours with the Institute to Trier, Germany to see the movement of the very early church into Europe, and to Istanbul and Venice to see the move of the church from East to West. Masters thesis entitled: A change in theology in the Eucharistic prayer from 1928 to 1979.
- ◇ Two years: more secular work
- ◇ Ordained in 1990: Cox Fellow on staff of Cathedral in Boston. Assistant: St. Paul's Brookline, St. Stephen's Cohasset. Trained in Godly Play. Non-stipendiary: St. Stephen's South End. Rector: Emmanuel Braintree. 1999 moved to Los Angeles. Assisting: Church of the Angels, Pasadena. Interim Priest-in-Charge: Trinity, Fillmore. Trained by Interim Ministry Network. Consultant and Choir Director: First Presbyterian in Altadena.
- ◇ Came to Church of the Ascension on Advent I, 2004.

NOW AND THEN...



Four of the graduating class of 1955 were at the University of Redlands Chapel Singers Concert on April 23.



Clockwise from Top Left: Diane Rhodus, Gail Anne Skiles, Jeff Rickard, and Raymond Smith.

ASCENSION YOUTH GROUP HAPPENINGS

- Bake Sale -

Make sure to mark your calendars for the Bake Sale Fundraiser. We will meet on SATURDAY, May 5 from 1:00pm-3:00pm to bake some treats together. On Sunday, May 6, we'll gather together and spend fellowship time after the 8:00 and 10:15 services selling the treats!

- Summer Camp -

Now is the time to sign up for summer camp at Camp Stevens! It's a great time to spend with church friends while meeting new friends. Don't miss out on this exciting summer opportunity for worship, fellowship, and fun. Please pick up an information folder outside the office or see Allison Rainey or Mary Baffes for more information.

Did You Know ???

- ◆ Mother Jennifer Beal will be priest in charge while Father Michael Bamberger is on his mini-sabbatical. Her able advisors will be Senior Warden—Jim Larew, Junior Warden—Susan Clifton, Verger—Mike Beach, and Halcyon Koerber. Assisting will be Fr. Roger Wood and Fr. John Larson. This will be from May 1-June 22.
- ◆ Mary Baffes is our new capable Sr. High leader and having as much fun with this group as Diane.
- ◆ The next Parish Ministry Council meeting is scheduled for May 6th.
- ◆ Next LEAD meeting is Thursday, May 17th (Ascension Day). See Halcyon Koerber if interested.
- ◆ We are beginning our plans for Mass on the grass—Sunday, July 1. Please see Halcyon Koerber or Susan Clifton to reserve your place on the assorted committees required for this wonderful event.
- ◆ We still need readers for Prayers of the People. Please see or contact Diane Rhodus if you are interested. Otherwise, she may be contacting you!

—Diane Rhodus

Daughters of the King Welcome to Amy McLaughlin and Allison Rainey

On Sunday, April 15, the Sisters of Joanna inducted two new members into our Chapter of Daughters of the King: Amy McLaughlin and Allison Rainey. These two ladies have completed the training, and have now joined this Women's Lay Order of the Episcopal Church, which is dedicated to prayer and service. When you notice their DOK crosses, please remember to congratulate them for taking this additional step in the Service of Our Lord.

Amy is a fairly new member of our Church. You have probably noticed her in the 8 am service with her husband Leo, her darling red-headed

daughter Kiley and adorable one-year old Ian.



Allison Rainey and Amy McLaughlin (Parish Hall)

Allison is the Postulant here at the Church of the Ascension, and the leader for our Youth Group. Both the Church of the Ascension, and the Daughters of the King are blessed to have her spiritual dedication.

A warm welcome to both of you.

—Kathy Anderson

May 2007

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|---|---------------------|----------------------|---|--|-----------------|--|
| | | 1 6:30 pm Vestry | 2 Noon Mass 6 pm Mass 7:30 pm Choir | 3 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum | 4 Noon Mass | 5 <i>Cinco de Mayo</i> 9 am Altar Guild 5 pm Young Families Dinner |
| 6 8:00 am Mass 9:00 am Educ Hour 10:15 am Mass Parish Council Mtg | 7 6 pm Group Mtg | 8 | 9 Noon Mass 6 pm Mass 7:30 pm Choir | 10 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum | 11 Noon Mass | 12 8:00 am Men's Breakfast 9 am Altar Guild |
| 13 <i>Mother's Day</i> 8:00 am Mass 9:00 am Educ Hour 10:15 am Mass | 14 | 15 6:30 pm Vestry | 16 Noon Mass 6 pm Mass 7:30 pm Choir | 17 <i>Ascension Day</i> 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum LEAD mtg | 18 Noon Mass | 19 9 am Altar Guild |
| 20 8:00 am Mass 9:00 am Educ Hour 10:15 am Mass | 21 | 22 | 23 Noon Mass 6 pm Mass 7:30 pm Choir | 24 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum | 25 Noon Mass | 26 9 am Altar Guild |
| 27 8:00 am Mass 9:00 am Educ Hour 10:15 am Mass | 28 | 29 | 30 Noon Mass 6 pm Mass 7:30 pm Choir | 31 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum | | |

Upcoming

- May 1—Vestry Meeting at 6:30 p.m.
- May 7—6 p.m. Group Meeting
- May 5—Cinco de Mayo; Young Families Dinner at 5 p.m.
- May 6—Parish Council Meeting
- May 12—Men's Breakfast at 8:00 a.m.
- May 13—Mother's Day
- May 15—Vestry Meeting at 6:30 p.m.
- May 17—Ascension Day; LEAD Meeting

Notes from the Loft

My deepest appreciation to the choir for their glorious music throughout Holy Week and Easter! I don't know about you, but I experienced several definite goose-bump moments during the services!

As we continue our Easter celebration into May, the concept of love is emphasized on the sixth. In keeping with this theme, the choir will sing Anne Krentz Organ's "Love One Another" and Hal Hopson's "The Gift of Love," based on I Corinthians 13 and set to the tune, *O Waly Waly*.

The Rogation theme of May 13 will include John Rutter's "For the Beauty of the Earth" as well as his beloved "A Gaelic Blessing."

On the 20th, the Sunday after Ascension, Hal Hopson's "God Has Gone Up With A Shout" and Walter Pelz' gorgeous "Peace I Leave With You" will be featured.

Finally, for Pentecost on 27th, the choir will be

singing "Built on the Rock" by Hal Hopson and William J. Harris' exquisite "Behold, the Tabernacle of God."

You may be wondering about the prevalence of Hal Hopson's name this month. While the selection of this literature was based on theme and not on composer, it's really no surprise that this composer appears frequently in our repertoire. A prolific writer of our time, with more than 1300 works in print, he has specialized in composing for the small choir; hence, his works are quite well-suited to a choir of Ascension's size. I find many of them to be not only tastefully written but also quite relevant to the liturgical year.

Finally, be sure to mark the date: Sunday, June 24, 7 p.m. — "COMPOSERS OF 1907"! More details will follow in next month's Spire.

--Debora Huffman
Director of Music and Organist

St. Mary's Guild St. Mary's Guild will meet for a potluck lunch on Saturday, June 9th at 11:30 am. We will have our annual "bring a silly white elephant" exchange. Location will be announced later.
—Ann Poland, President

New of Ascensionites

Brixton Patrick Berry, son of **Dylan Berry & Maria Wye**, was baptized at the Easter Vigil service, Sunday, April 8. **Marcus Baffes**, son of **Curtis & Mary Baffes**, **Katie Duffy** and **Sarah Ruffe**, daughters of **Thomas & Richele Duffy**, **Richele Duffy**, and **John Buchanan**, were baptized at the 10:15 am service on Easter Sunday, April 8.

Ryan LaReau, son of **Sarah & Bryn LaReau**, and **Susannah Tomlin** and her son, **Ian Tomlin** were baptized on Sunday, April 22.

Building on the Vision: Update

We still have a long ways to go in our fundraising efforts, but plans are proceeding to implement Phase 1. The landscape and hard-scape project this summer. By the time you read this, we will be obtaining bids with the intention that construction will begin on June 11th. Our thanks go to Scott Callihan, Jim Larew, Mike Beach, and Lavette Teague for working together on planning and implementing the project. This summer will be a time of disruption on the exterior, but the life and ministry of our parish will go on. We believe that having “a construction zone” at the church sends a powerful message to the larger community.

— Canon Bamberger

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

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted...a time to break down, and a time to build up...a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together...- Ecclesiastes 3:1-3,5

The climax of Easter, it seems, has come and gone with great glory (thanks to the choir, Dr. Huffman, Altar Guild, and a mighty host of earthly angels). As we are “off to the races” towards Ascension Sunday and Pentecost, I am, again, humbled by this realization: this season emphasizes more the *beginning* of our journey with Christ, then the last station of the Cross. Ascension Sunday and Pentecost serve as a reminder that we, as Ascension, will thrive if we balance lessons of the past, mindfulness of the present, and vision for the future. With that in mind, I have a few announcements:

I am melancholy to report that my friend, Christopher Brunwin, is concluding his tenure as vestryman one year earlier than expected. We are grateful for his service and dedication and I look forward to his counsel as his time allows and to hearing him from the choir loft. My thanks to Deana and Elliot for having given Chris up all these years. When you see Chris, please take a moment to thank him for his devo-

tion to Ascension.

Christopher's term will be finished by Ted Calleton in accordance with Article IV, Section 3 of the church bylaws. Ted has previously served on vestry and currently serves on the Capital Campaign committee. Chris was our legal eagle and Ted will provide this oversight as well as continuity of vision. It is a tremendous commitment of time and I thank both Kathy and Ted, in advance.

I am pleased to announce that Hal Barber and I have scheduled a joint dinner of the Vestry and the Gooden Board taking place early this month. The purpose of the dinner is to foster good relations and begin to envision synergies with our neighbor, tenant, and partner in Christ.

Regarding the Building on the Vision project, we are ready to break ground soon. In the spirit of “I’ll see it when I believe it,” some parishioners have expressed they’ll pledge to the campaign when they see we’ve broken ground. This presents a challenge of planning and soliciting foundations. The challenge of planning is accurately setting scope and allocating potential dollars to the project when we cannot estimate what our pledge potential

will be. The challenge of soliciting foundations is that many foundations grant (or don't grant) based upon the percentage participation of the Church members. You can understand that delaying your pledge presents some obstacles. I am asking the Development Committee to present the parish with the case for giving as well as a concise “how-to” guide for giving for both annual stewardship and the capital project. In the meantime, if you feel so compelled and are wondering what to do with your tax refund, pledges and immediate donations are being enthusiastically accepted! Feel free to speak with any member of the Vestry, if we can clarify the need or discuss your gift in any way. With that, I'd like to thank Scott Callihan, Mike Beach, and Lavette Teague for their hours of service getting this project off the ground.

Lastly, I wish our Rector strength and courage on his much needed, much deserved sabbatical, to be contemplative and circumspect in the mighty presence of the Lord requires us to face ourselves and the future. A daunting task, indeed! God-speed, Father Michael! May this be an example to us all. Return to us soon, rested, reflected and ready to roll!

P.S. Youth Group Band Pick:
www.dayoffire.com/main.php