



The SPIRE

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

NOVEMBER 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 Mass

Fridays

12pm Mass



**Thanksgiving Mass
will be celebrated on
November 22 at
10:00 a.m.**

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 11/2 All Souls' Day Mass at noon.
- 11/4 Daylight Savings Time
- 11/4 Newcomers Luncheon
- 11/11 Choral Even-song

The fires this past month have certainly brought a great deal of heart ache to many people. Spread across the whole of Southern California, it seemed as if the whole world was on fire. Our thoughts, prayers and hopefully our monetary contributions are with those who suffered loss. As we have gone to press with this newsletter, the fate of the home of our former curate, Robert Moon, is not known. Robert, the vicar of St. Richard's Church in Lake Arrowhead, has been living in Running Springs, and he evacuated down the hill and has not been able to return. His life and the lives of thousands of people have been unsettled.

In circumstances like these, we do well to ask questions – for many of which there are no easy or simplistic answers.

- How do we respond to disasters as Christian people? Who really is our neighbor?
- How does the lifestyle we choose play a part in this situation? Where do we want to build our homes?
- How does our treatment of the environment contribute to this picture? Does smog contribute to Bark Beetle disease? Do humans contribute to the change in the climate and the drought we are experiencing?
- How do we count those affected by the fires? Are the poor, the undocumented, the homeless and the now unemployed included in the equation?
- What choices will be made in the aftermath? Where and how will the rebuilding happen? What changes in the infrastructure will be made? What are the taxpayers willing to assume to mitigate this in the future?

I don't pretend to have the answers for

these
But I do
Robert



questions.
know that
and his
parishioners
are our neighbors. Perhaps we can start there.

Canon Michael Bamberger

Vestry Nominations Now!

Now is the time to nominate next year's Vestry candidates. By definition, the Vestry is the body within a congregation that, with the clergy, leads the parish. According to diocesan guidelines, to qualify, a nominee must be 16 years of age or over, be a confirmed communicant in good standing in the Episcopal Church, regularly attend church services at Ascension, and be a pledging contributor to the support of the parish. A member of the Vestry shall not be a member of another church.

Each year we elect three nominated members at our annual Meeting in January. Vestry members are elected for three year terms.

The Vestry meets once a month throughout the year. Additional meeting are called as needed. A Vestry member must be willing to accept the responsibility of regular attendance at all meetings and be willing to serve on committees which are established by the Vestry.

Names of nominees should be submitted to any Vestry member by December the first.



Congratulations Canon Wood !

Father Roger Wood was made honorary Canon of the Cathedral of St. Paul on October 19, 2007.

Attention Ascension Youth!

Calling all singers and music lovers!

Join us on **Saturday, November 17, from 3:00—5:30 pm** for caroling in Sierra Madre. We will provide music and cheer as a warm-up for the holidays at the Chamber of Commerce Dickens' Village. Make sure to bring enough money for hot chocolate following! Meet at the church, where we will practice songs and then head down to the Village together.

Then, get ready for a ***Mystery Mission Project!*** **Sunday, November 18, noon—3pm** (Lunch will be served.)

Want to know more? Here are some clues:

1. We will be venturing into the community and exploring around the church.
2. Check out Genesis 1:28 and 2:15.

Stay after church to learn more about issues that matter to you as young people journeying into adulthood, and give back to the community in the process! Don't miss out on

this opportunity!

Make sure to have your parents sign and turn in a permission slip on or by this time.

Mary and Allison



NOTES FROM THE LOFT

Are you a veteran? Do you know a veteran? Are you grateful for the day God has given you? Would you like time to meditate on your day and mentally prepare yourself for the nighttime?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, then CHORAL EVENSONG FOR VETERANS DAY is meant for you! On Sunday, November 11, at 5 p.m., we will gather in the sanctuary for music, prayer, and meditation, led by the choir and Canon Bamberger. The service will combine the traditional Evensong themes of reflection upon the day and anticipation of the night hours with the timely honoring of our veterans.

Evensong, a uniquely Anglican form of worship, roughly the equivalent of Vespers in the Roman Catholic and Lutheran traditions, originally was formed by combining the Catholic canonical offices of Vespers (evening prayer) and Compline (night prayers, prayers at the end of the day). The November 11 service will consist of canticles, collects, lessons, sermon, and anthems, framed by organ voluntaries. Choral anthems will include:

I Vow to Thee, My Country by Gustav Holst

O Gracious Light by Robert W. Lehman

Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis by Ralph Vaughan Williams

Prayer of the Venerable Bede by Richard Proulx, with soloist Jennifer Beal

Let the People Praise Thee by Walter Pelz



Following the service a wine and cheese reception will be held in the Parish Hall, sponsored by St. Mary's Guild and Ascension's Hospitality Committee. Included in the festivities will be St. Mary's annual White Elephant fundraiser, complete with Christmas Afghan raffle tickets. This is a truly an event you won't want to miss!

Our November morning worship services will begin with the celebration of All Saints' Day on the 4th, to include Michelle Beauchesne's exquisite cello artistry, and will end with Christ the King Sunday on the 25th, featuring the traditional *Choral Fanfare for Christ the King*.

The choir and I trust that all of our musical offerings during the month will speak to your hearts, drawing you ever closer to God each week.

Debora Huffman

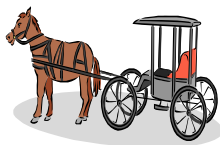
Director of Music and Organist

Did You Know?

The stones in the middle of our newly landscaped property are there purposefully. They are a permanent reminder of our heritage, the stones outline the original carriage path leading up to the then front door of our beautiful church. This door is now the side door on Laurel.

This property was gifted to the church in 1885 by Canon Roger Wood's great-great aunt Fanny Hawks.

blessings,
Diane



It's Time for a Pageant!

Every other year, Ascension celebrates the birth of Christ with a Christmas Pageant. We need children to join our cast, as well as adult parishioners and the youth group to join our production crew!

All interested in acting in and producing this year's Pageant, please join us on **Saturday, November 17 from 1pm-3pm** for an organizational meeting. We will work on assigning parts and running through the script and songs on that day.

Any parishioners interested in assisting with directing, costumes, sets, prompting, or props, please see Allison Rainey or contact her at allisonrainey@hotmail.com or (317) 965-6981.

News of Ascensionites

- **Dustin Jacob Stockly** and **Peter Callihan** were baptized on 10/14/07.
- **Pricilla Lind**, mother of **Wes Lind** passed away on Sunday, 10/14/07.

Calling All Pledge Cards

Do you keep forgetting to bring your pledge card on Sunday? We now have an alternative that you might like to use: fill out your pledge card on line. Whatever way you choose to get the card to us—please complete your pledge card now.

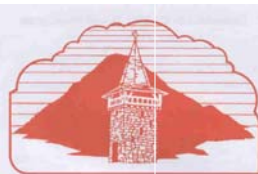
We are also expecting to receive pledges from those who did not pledge last year. Our Vestry needs to hear from you so that we can complete our budget for 2008.

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

**WORSHIP
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The Episcopal Church of the Ascension

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From the Senior Warden JIM LAREW

The fall is here and when the weather changes (will it, already?), it reminds me of how special this time of the year can be. Right now, it's all about little children in costumes, evening walks and the sound of leaves crunching under your feet, good food and friends. Advent is coming right around the corner and soon we'll be celebrating the birth of our Lord. Why wouldn't we be excited about this time of year? Isn't it great? And just as significant as the seasonal things, this begins a special season for the church.

Are you ready? Aren't you wondering? Yes, it's the "S" word season, Stewardship. I get excited about Stewardship season because it allows me to think of all the reasons why we give. Do we give so that the Ascension youth programs can be expanded or so that we can continue to support our Outreach and Pastoral Care programs? Or, how about just making sure we can continue the ongoing operations of the church? Sure, these all may seem to be very good reasons for giving and the list could go on

and on. But, the true reason we give is our faith in Christ and all the joy we receive from what God has provided for us. No matter what reasons you come up with, it is not a matter of economics, it is a matter of faith. Many of you have heard the story of Kara and my first encounter with Ascension, and how we were overjoyed with many random acts of kindness. I'm sure all of us have had someone do something for us that we never, ever expected. Well, we received our fair share from the Ascension folk from the get-go. The warm note from Carol George was enough for us to know that the church was a very special place and made us feel welcomed, loved and in the presence of God.

This past week, Kara and I visited with our friend, Linda, in Chicago. She told us of her travels to Kenya where she witnessed the work of Father Henry, a man devoted to a life-long mission to care for orphaned children decimated by HIV/AIDS and poverty. In listening to her describe the living conditions of these children and the need for basic necessities such as water, it was obvious Linda had seen the significant impact stewardship had on these people. Not only providing things such as a new wa-

ter well, medical care and education, but also giving the people love, affection and a sense of family. We've all heard stories such as Linda's, but what was so significant was the impact this stewardship had on Linda and the joy it brought to her heart. As a matter of fact, it was so significant that she has introduced Father Henry to community leaders in Chicago to expand his programs and she is heading back to Kenya!

Personally, the stewardship journey for us is never easy because we always strive to increase our commitment year to year. And, on top of that, we also are continuing our Capital Campaign commitments. But, this forces me to look to the Lord for guidance and when I do, it reminds me of the abundant blessings and overwhelming grace that God has poured into our lives. How can one not feel grateful? I would also encourage you to look to God as you examine your reasons for giving and deciding on your stewardship pledge for next year.

Kara and I would like to wish everyone a very Happy Thanksgiving. We thank you for your friendship and are grateful for the joy we have received through everyone at Ascension.