



The SPIRE

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

November 2005

Our Core Ministries

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

Stewardship Sunday

November 6

Please remember to bring your pledge card, if you will not be able to attend please mail it to the church office as soon as possible.

Thank you!

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✝ From the Rector

I want to thank everyone for the wonderful acknowledgement in September of my (yikes) 50th birthday and my having served here at Ascension for twenty years. It doesn't seem that long ago that we arrived here with our young family. I want to say a particular thanks to our senior wardens during these years – Richard Lottridge, Hal Barber, Paul Clifton, Sam Mooradian, Lynne Holl, John Russell, Christopher Brunwin, Ted Bosley, and Rob Stockly. Their leadership has been a gift to the parish and a blessing to me.

Many years ago, I remember setting a goal for myself to try and lead a healthy life, and to try to lead our parish into a healthy way of living. This hasn't always been easy – there has been more than one earthquake and a few squabbles, but over the years God has been kind and good, and we have grown healthy and strong. Twenty years ago, as I arrived, Ascension seemed to function

as what church scholars describe as a family chapel. There were several large or extended families and several matriarchs and patriarchs. Soon we transitioned to what is usually described as a pastoral-size church. People were connected to one another and through me in pastoral care. But lately we have begun the transition to what can best be described as a program church. While some folks are still connected through familial ties, and through pastoral care, more and more are connected through our variety of programs and ministries. While the past twenty years have been exciting and challenging, the years ahead hold equal promise. I am privileged to get the chance to be a part of our growth together.

—Fr. Michael

Father's Bamberger's Reception

The reception for the celebration of Fr. Bamberger's 50th birthday and the 20th anniversary of his tenure here at Ascension was a resounding success. Thanks to all of the people who contributed, unfortunately there is not enough room to list them all. We have excellent cooks here at Ascension and this reception more than proved that very thing. The food as delicious! We all had a great time and adding to the fun was the

Roast/Toast that Ted Calleton so aptly gave after the 10:15 service. We all enjoyed his talk and had a lot of laughs. Carolyn Johnson graciously stepped in after the 8:00 service and congratulated Father on his birthday and thanked him for his years of service to our parish family. Fr. Michael also contributed to the festivities with a video taken 20 years ago for the Stewardship Campaign.

—Karen Mooradian

Youth Happenings

We have started off our year with a lot of great events. On September 18 the first social event was held at the Nardoni's including swimming, games, talking, laughing, voting, eating, and a short business meeting. Of course the ever present gift grab bag was in attendance also.

For the Blessing of the Animals on October 2, our youth cared for animals during the service and handed out treats to each dog and cat (donated by Melinda & Jim Monachino) after they were blessed.

On October 9 the Youth enjoyed a Swim Fiesta held at

the Beach residence with the ever present gift grab bag for the dart and twister winners. The food was delicious with all members contributing tasty and nourishing components for a special burrito bar. Mrs. Beach did the meat (two types) beans, rice and strawberries with angel food cake. Paige Jeffries was declared the most energetic, helpful animal wrangler and received the t-shirt prize donated by Melinda and Jim also. The event closed with a very productive planning meeting for the parish, the Halloween Party is planned for October 29, 5:00—

9:00 p.m. It is potluck and costumes are encouraged.

The next Youth Happening will be Sunday, November 20 at 4:00 p.m. in the youth digs for pizza, movies, and games.

See any youth member to buy your calendar and/or note cards for only \$6.00 each.

—Diane Rhodus

Small Group Update

Beginning Sunday, October 30 from 9-10 in the Parish House, Jean Rowe will facilitate a 13 week study of Isaiah. At the same time Paul Anderson will facilitate a study of praying the Psalms in the church library.

Beginning Sunday, November 13 from 9-10 in the Parish House, Halcyon Koerber will facilitate a study of the book of Acts.

Please see any of these group leaders for information on joining their group.

We are pleased to welcome Paul Anderson as a new Small Group Leader. Paul has been a participant in the small group ministry for more than a year and we are grateful for the gifts he brings to this ministry.

We also say "thank you"

and "good-bye" to Les Atchley as he and his wife, Janet, move to Idaho. Les has been involved with small groups at Ascension both as a participant and as a leader for several years. Les' enthusiasm for people and his love of the Lord have been a true blessing for our church. We wish Les & Janet all the best.

—Halcyon Koerber

St. Mary's Guild

Our next meeting will be on Sunday, December 11 following the 10:15a.m. service. We will plan the "ELEGANT ELEPHANTS" sale to be held during the potluck dinner on December 18th. Space is limited, but if you can donate items such as crystal, bric-a-brac, knick-knacks, trinkets, etc. please call Wilma

Clark, or bring them to the church by December 11. Proceeds will be used for camperships for parish children.

There will also be a display of Christmas Creches. Please bring your favorite crèche, labeled with your name, plus any interesting information about it.

Our beautiful Christmas afghan will be raffled during the evening. Tickets will be available beginning November 27 after each service.

—Ann Poland

November 2005

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 4:30 Mass 7:30 Barrett's Ordination in Fullerton	2 10:30 Staff Mtg Noon Mass 6:30 pm Mass 7:30 pm Choir	3 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum	4 Noon Mass	5 9:00 Altar Guild
6 8:00 am Mass <i>Stewardship Sun.</i> 10:15 Mass Noon New Members 5:00 pm Evensong	7	8 <i>Election Day</i> <i>Polling Place</i>	9 Noon Mass 6:30 pm Mass 7:30 pm Choir	10 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum	11 Noon Mass	12 9:00 Altar Guild 2:00 pm Wedding
13 8:00 Mass 8:45 Breakfast 9:00 Educ Hour 10:15 Mass Noon Youth-Stress	14	15 <i>Spire Deadline</i> 6:30 pm Vestry	16 10:30 Staff Mtg Noon Mass 6:30 pm Mass 7:30 pm Choir	17 7:00 am Mass 9:00 am Forum	18 Noon Mass	19 9:00 Altar Guild 1:30 pm Recital
20 8:00 Mass <i>Book Fair</i> 9:00 Educ Hour 10:15 Mass 4:00 pm Youth	21	22	23 10:30 Gooden Mass Noon Mass 6:30 pm Mass 7:30 pm Choir	24 <i>Thanksgiving</i> 9:00 am Mass <i>Office Closed</i>	25 <i>Office Closed</i> Noon Mass	26 9:00 Altar Guild
27 <i>Advent</i> 8:00 Mass 8:45 Breakfast 9:00 Educ Hour 10:15 Mass	28	29	30 Noon Mass 6:30 pm Mass 7:30 pm Choir			

Dates to Remember

- November 1—All Soul's Mass at 4:30 p.m. Barrett's Ordination at Emmanuel in Fullerton at 7:30 p.m.
- November 6—Stewardship Sunday; New Member Forum at Noon in the Parish House; Evensong at 5:00 p.m. with a reception following
- November 13—Youth Hot Topics "Stress Release" Noon to 3:00
- November 15—Spire Deadline for December issue
- November 20—Gooden Book Fair during coffee hour at Gooden; Youth Happening-Pizza and Movies 4:00 to 8:00 p.m.
- November 24 —Thanksgiving Mass at 9:00 a.m.
- November 24 & 25—Office Closed
- November 27—First Sunday of Advent

Notes from the Loft

Please join the Parish Choir for CHORAL EVENSONG on Sunday, November 6, at 5 p.m. in the sanctuary. Choral anthems of the following composers, all born during the twentieth century (and all still living), will be featured: Thomas Pavlechko (1962), Robert Lehman (1960), Robert Powell (1932), Henry Gerike (1948), and Andrew Lloyd Webber (1948).

Thomas Pavlechko is organist/choirmaster at Calvary Episcopal Church in Memphis, Tennessee. We'll be singing his "The Souls of the Righteous," a hauntingly beautiful anthem that incorporates "Agnus Dei." The newest anthem of the evening, it was published in 2004.

Robert Lehman is the Organist/Choirmaster at Christ Church in New Haven, Connecticut. His "O Gracious Light" ("Phos Hilaron"), published in 2003, has become a virtual standard for Ascension's Evensongs.

The music of Robert Powell, a colleague of mine from the Association of Anglican Musicians, is no stranger to Ascension's ears – the choir routinely presents his works, the most recent of which was "Salvation Has Come To Us." The "Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis," published in 1994, alternates strong, rhythmic passages with more sensitive, sonorous sections. Mr. Powell recently retired from his position as Organist/Choirmaster at Christ Church in Greenville, South Carolina, where he served from 1968-2003.

A year ago the choir introduced to Ascension Henry Gerike's "Sing With All the Saints in Glory." This bright anthem of hope, published in 1995, is sure to become an All Saints staple. Rev. Gerike is the Director of Choral Activities at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri.

Andrew Lloyd Webber, who

needs no introduction (Cats, Phantom, Jesus Christ Superstar, and more), published his "Requiem" in 1985. Susan Beach and Jennifer Wang, sopranos, will sing "Pie Jesu" from this work.

This choral music, in combination with scripture, prayer, hymnody, and the organ, guarantees an evening of meditation and spiritual enrichment. A reception, hosted by St. Mary's Guild, will follow the service. Hope to see you there.

All music which reverently approaches the Divine, the Holy, the Ineffable, is truly sacred music in the full meaning of the word.

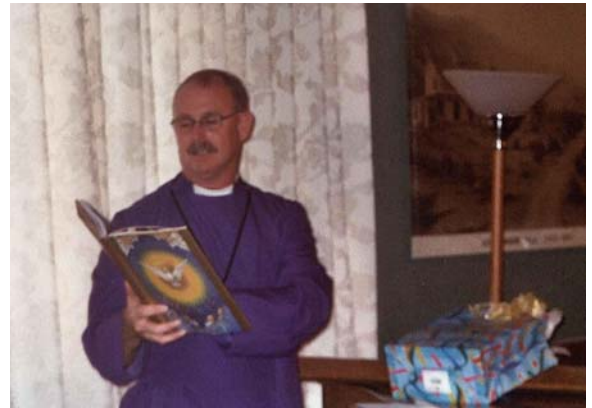
Olivier Messiaen

—Debora Huffman
Organist/Choirmaster

New of Ascensionites

Congratulations to: **Margaret Matthews** who was baptized on Sunday, October 9. Proud parents are Karrie Mooradian & John Matthews. **Evan Lauder** who was baptized on Sunday, October 16. Proud parents are Sara and Todd Lauder. **Tony Brunwin & Janet Middleton** who were married at Ascension October 8 and **Karen Clemens & Jim Moran** who were married on October 22.

Pictured at left: Fr. Michael opening his gifts at the reception for his 50th birthday and 20th anniversary of service to Ascension.



The Episcopal Church of the Ascension



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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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OUTREACH
PRESENCE**

Curate's Comments

A few questions have been asked of me in light of my ordination to the diaconate on November 1st. The first question is *“What is a Deacon?”* And the other question is *“What does it mean to be a transitional Deacon?”*

As a Deacon, my responsibilities are in some ways different than those of the priest. My job is primarily to *serve all the people of God and especially those in need*. In the early church, deacons were ordained *“To the servant ministry of the bishop”*. According to *An Episcopal Dictionary of the Church*, since ancient times the liturgical functions of deacons have suggested the activity of angels – deacons are messengers of the Gospel, leaders of the intercessions, and

act as attendants. As a deacon, I also assist the bishop and priests in public worship and in the ministration of God’s Word and Sacraments to all. During worship, I may assist in various ways, including proclaiming the gospel, leading intercessions, setting and waiting at the Eucharistic table, saying the dismissal and assisting where needed for all services and ministries as assigned. Bishops in the Episcopal Church expect their deacons to promote care of those in need outside the church and in turn translate the needs of the world to the Church. So the ministry responsibilities of both priests and deacons are designed to both serve God’s people, but in different capacities. (By the way, even transitional deacons are not called “Father” or “Mother”,

but are called “deacon”.)

The word “transitional” means that for a period of time (the Canons of the Episcopal Church require at least six months), perhaps a year or more, I will be a deacon preparing to eventually be ordained to the priesthood here in the Diocese of Los Angeles. It is a preliminary step and therefore I am not a *permanent* Deacon, of which we have many in our diocese who have specialized ministries.

—Barrett Van Buren