

Attention: 4th, 5th and 6th graders,

Come and join us for a fun filled year! This will be an exciting year for our Junior Youth (4th, 5th, and 6th graders) as we are welcoming many new children to our class. In our class we do fun art activities, work on science projects, and play games that help your age group understand your place in God's world. Learn to connect with and understand your relationship with God and the bible in this fun and interactive class. Come and join us every Sunday to learn more about our Episcopalian faith.

Laura Wilcox, Group Leader

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

Formation classes for children ages 3-6 and 6-9 begin on September 20. We welcome parents who would like to join their children. Participating with your children is a great way to ease the children in and an opportunity for parents to learn more about this wonderful program for children. We meet in the Upper Atrium, near the playground, from 9am - 10am. For questions about Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, feel free to call Cameron Cox at

(626) 797-0639.

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
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PRESENCE**

The Episcopal Church of the Ascension



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St. Mary's Guild

Now that summer is just about over, St. Mary's will be meeting on Saturday, September 12, 2009 for a potluck brunch at the home of Jill Wagner at 10:00 am. We are looking forward to another year of fun and fellowship.

St. Mary's is a wonderful group of ladies who get together 4 to 5 times a year. We help with social activities and other special events at church. St. Mary's also helps children in need of camper sponsorships; therefore, on occasion, we have fundraisers.

All parish women are invited to attend the potluck brunch. For Jill's address and/or directions, please call me at 626.357.3908.

Respectfully, Lisa Reed, President

ACTIVE MILITARY PICTURES

Every week during Prayers of the People, we pray for our service men and women by name. We hear their names, but few of us know their faces.

We want to know them better. If you have put a name on our "currently serving in the military list," please add your loved one's photograph to our bulletin board display. Attach the name, rank, branch of service, and posting location to the picture.

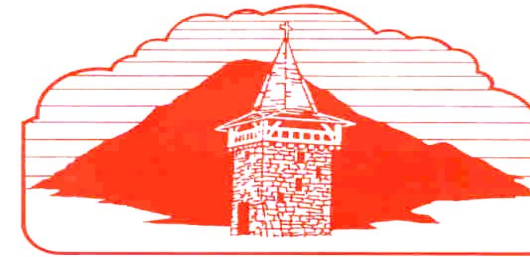
Setting Aside A Portion For Others

Media keeps reporting that our local food banks are running out of food. The Los Angeles Food Bank which supplies these local charities has less and less government surplus to give. Grocery stores discount their damaged goods rather than donating them, and what financial support food banks receive has less and less buying power. At the same time, more and more people are asking for food. Many of these new "customers" are people who can no longer meet their house payments, pay for gasoline, and buy food for their families.

How can we respond? We can help if whenever we go to the grocery store we pick up items for the Friends In Deed Food Pantry, the food distribution branch of the Ecumenical Council of Pasadena Area Churches and bring these items to church on Ingathering Sunday. If each family at Ascension would bring one item, WE can make a significant difference in the lives of others.



Items such as peanut butter, canned meats, and fish are most needed.



The **SPIRE**

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

September, 2009

Worship

Sundays

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

Wednesday

6:00pm Mass

Thursdays

7am Mass

Fridays

12:00 Mass

FROM THE RECTOR

Although others have said it as well, thank you to everyone who helped with our efforts to re-do the floors, trim the trees, fix the roof and tend to all of the other bits of deferred maintenance which were addressed this summer. The response by so many people, both monetarily and with "elbow grease," was heartening. I know that we all share a sense of stewardship for this place.

Over the years, I have had the privilege of twice attending a CREDO conference. CREDO began ten years ago as an effort of the Church Pension Fund to offer to clergy (and more recently, lay church professionals) an experience through which they can reflect on their lives and ministries. The emphasis has been in four areas of wellness – physical, financial, spiritual, and vocational. Over the past year, I have been trying to find a way to apply some of the same methodology to looking at our life and ministry as a congregation. In the CREDO approach, there are four elements to consider:

- Identity – Who am I? (For us as a congregation – who are we?)
- Discernment - Who is God calling me (us) to be?
- Practice – How am I (are we) responding to God's call?
- Transformation – How am I (are we) changing?

I look forward to exploring these elements further with all of you. And again, thank you for the attention you've shown to the physical upkeep of our home. It is a sign of wellness!

Yours in Christ, MAB+

**Celebration of Ministry
Sunday**

Upon reviewing last year's Ministry Fair, our Parish Ministry Council Members concluded that the Ministry Fair concept was no longer meeting the needs of the parish. Most of the members of our church now know about our small groups, altar guild, choir, St. Mary's Guild, Daughters of the King etc. What our church should be doing is celebrating all of these ministries. So, on Sunday, September 13 Ascension will host a celebration of ministry –yours, mine, ours.

We see Celebration Sunday as a time of homecoming and reunion. All the groups of the parish are being asked to personally contact former members whom they have not seen for a while and ask them to join us for a reunion of group members. It will be fun to see some of our old friends once again, catch up on each others' lives, and have the opportunity to invite these folks to rejoin us here at Ascension.

The plan is to begin the morning with one celebratory worship service in the church beginning at 9:15. Following the service, the focus will be on fellowship. There will be food, music, and plenty of time to meet old friends, to share memories of the past, and to talk about our plans and expectations for the coming year.

Celebration Sunday is also a time when we can invite the community to participate. Do invite your friends and neighbors to join us and give them the opportunity to see for themselves what Ascension is all about.

Remember on September 13, there will be only one worship service at 9:15. Mark your calendars now. We want everyone there for our celebration.



**Upcoming
Events**

Wednesdays, 6-7pm Yoga

September 6 –Food

Ingathering Sunday

September 12—St. Mary's

Guild

September 13—Ministry

Celebration Sunday

ONE SERVICE ONLY

AT 9:15 A.M.

September 16—Choir

Rehearsals Resume

September 20—Fall Season

Begins

September 22—Vestry

September 26—Safe Church

Training

September 27—Parish

Ministry Council



SENIOR WARDEN'S BLOG –

I sometimes have bad dreams. The most recent dealt with the cartoon strip Funky Winkerbean and the soldier given up for dead who returns to find that his wife has remarried and has made a new life for herself with her current, loving husband. That morphed into an emergency response by the Sierra Madre Voluntary Fire Department with the Battalion Chief, Father Michael of course, telling me that not only did I have to drive the big truck, but that I also had to perform as an EMT. Without doubt, there is much here for you amateur psychologists, Freudian or not. But the answer is much simpler. We had just embarked on our Tree/Floor Fund campaign (and an internal, silent campaign to raise money for new anthem books for the choir). We needed at least \$6,000 for the trees and floors (just to do the trees on the north of the campus and the parish hall floor) and \$750 for the anthem books. As one might have expected, I had some concerns that we would fall short.

Oh, Senior Warden of little faith! I should not have worried. The congregation's response was magnificent. Not only did we raise enough to do the trees on the north line and the parish hall floor, but we also raised enough to do the entire sanctuary floor (removing all the pews in the process), all the trees on campus, and even repair a leak in the roof over the Mary Altar. At the same time, we raised sufficient funds to purchase 15 sets of anthem books and pay for a good portion of augmenting the choir for the Christmas celebration. We are indeed blessed. The costs were as follows:

Trees	\$ 3,300
Floors	\$ 9,540
Roof	\$ 350
Total	\$13,190

The total Tree/Floor funds raised were \$13,194, and we thank the following for their generous gifts:

Carolyn Allen
Mike and Debbie Bamberger
Glenn and Cynthia Belden
Ted and Kathy Calleton
Cameron and Meg Cox
Elizabeth Cundiff
Barbara Donagan
Michael and Linda Doyle
Tom and Richele Duffy
Alex Eagles
Sebe and Nancy Garton
Ray and Carol George

Curt and Susan Germundson
Gary and Gloria Griffiths
Thayer and Susan Holbrook
Roger Keith
Ross Kellock
Rheta King
Noni Lathrop
Rex and Liz Levie
Richard Lottridge
Dave and Ginny Mole
Sam and Karen Mooradian
Ron and Jo Mosier
John and Elaine Murphy
Collette Ostrye
Maggie Outhouse
Jay and Donna Packer
Jennifer Pancake and Jonathan Fay
Glenn and Michelle Rohrer
Anne Shirvanian
Father Kirby Smith
Beth Smith-Kellock
Frank Spencer
Dot Steeves
Lavette Teague
Mary Tumilty
Scott and Lori Walter
Lois Walton
Corbett and Laura Wilcox
Rosemary Wimmer
Alan S. Wood

The anthem books cost \$750. We raised \$1,300, and we thank the following generous donors:

Dorothy Bush
Ted and Kathy Calleton
Ray and Carol George
Rex and Liz Levie
Jean Rowe
Anne Shirvanian
Lavette Teague
Anna Thomas

(The anthem books were purchased in memory of Jean Rowe and Dorothy Bush's mother, Dorothy Hendrickson, and will be suitably inscribed.)

So -- many thanks to all. It is gratifying that during less than optimum economic times so many opened their hearts and their wallets. The gifts are appreciated, and our campus will be better by reason of all of them. Perhaps bad dreams are not so fearsome after all – or better yet, have faith!

Yours in Christ, Ted

Four Ways to Ask for Prayers

1. Fill out a prayer request form on the last Sunday of the month and return it to the office by the following Tuesday.
2. Add a name to the weekly Prayers of the People which can be found in a folder in the back of the Church prior to services on Sunday morning.
3. Ask one of the clergy to pray for you or call the parish office and ask that your prayer request be added to the Prayers of the People.
4. Email a request to ascensionprays@gmail.com. This address is checked daily, and prayer requests are immediately sent out to people who have offered to pray whenever and wherever there is a need.

Always be aware that all of our clergy are available to you if you would like to talk about any facet of your prayer life.



NOTES FROM THE LOFT

Sincere thanks to:

*Those who provided us with wonderful vocal music throughout the summer months – Susan Beach, Colette Ostrye, Keiko Sakatani, Fr. Kirby Smith, and Lavette Teague

*Those whose generous contributions made possible the purchase of two new exciting anthem books for the choir, including those who donated to the Dorothy Hendrickson Memorial Fund (Jean Rowe's mother) or to the Music Discretionary Fund.

Now that we're prepared with 128 wonderful new anthems for the upcoming year, we need a few more singers to join us in their presentation – especially tenors and basses! If you're looking for an organization that rehearses and presents excellent sacred music from the richest of traditions; that guarantees you a seat at all services, including Christmas and Easter; that provides a unique and breathtaking visual perspective of our beautiful sanctuary; where honest fun and fellowship abound – then Ascension's choir is for you! Come and try us out for a while – I guarantee you'll be enriched personally, musically, and spiritually! The choir will resume rehearsals on Wednesday, September 16, at 7:30 p.m. in the Parish Hall.

Peace and blessing,

Debora Huffman, Director of Music and Organist

Verger's Rant

I am sure that you have noticed the recent improvements made by your generous donations to the tree/floor fund. The floors in both the church and the parish hall have been refinished and with proper care should last 40-50 years, so please be careful with your drinks and food. The trees have been trimmed in the play yard, Memorial Garden, and parking lot. This was a big job and required the removal of ivy from several trees. At least the trees won't come down in the next wind storm. There are still several important projects that need attention, including replacing two weathered doors, plastering in the church, and the ever present weeding of the lawn and flower beds. These projects will be addressed at the next work party October 3rd.

