The August 2026 SPIRE

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

Upcoming Events

Please see the calendar on page 4 for an updated list of events.

"Here's a unique way to support our parish! If you have a car, truck, boat or other vehicle that's become a nuisance, you can now donate that vehicle to Ascension. You'll be able to write the value of the vehicle off as a tax deduction and Ascension will benefit from the proceeds of its sale. Simply call **855-500-RIDE** or visit

http://www.careasy.org/nonprofit/the-episcopal-church-of-the-ascension

to schedule a free pickup. All you need is the vehicle's title-- the CARS service will handle the rest."

CARS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

based out of San Diego, California.

JULY 2026 Pledge Payment Snapshot

2026 Budget $165,000

YTD Budget:	$96,250
YTD Actual:	$101,105
Difference:	$+4,855

From the Rector

There is a saying usually attributed to Mark Twain, but actually written by a friend of his – Charles Dudley Warner in 1897 – "Everybody talks about the weather, but nobody does anything about it." I sometimes interchange "talks" and "complains."

It's been hot here recently, and it's been hot all around the country. Christian Keezer, Lynne and John Holl's grandson, went with the Arcadia High School Band to march in parades in Philadelphia and Washington for the Fourth of July; but both parades were cancelled due to the heat.

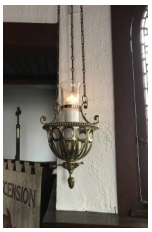
On the global scale, many countries are making efforts to address climate change and global warming. I try to think about ways I can help. I'm trying to drive less and cut back on my energy usage. But somedays, it is so blinking hot that I don't want to get out of the car, and so I sit idling in the drive-thru lane with air conditioning cranked up.

At least it's a dry heat. Shortly, Debbie and I are going to Virgina to see our grand kids and Matt and Lyndsay. There, it will be a wet heat. Yikes…

Blessings,
Father Michael+

Altar Flowers and Sanctuary Candles

The **2026** sign-up sheets for altar flowers and altar candles are now available on the bulletin board in Hawks Hall. **Payment should be made by CHECK (**$50.00 for flowers and $15.00 for a candle**) **payable to Church of the Ascension.**** Please include a note giving the date that you signed up for and any dedication.



FRIENDS IN DEED*

Please join in Ascension's monthly collection of specific "Gold Items" for Friends in Deed. They include canned tuna and chicken, hearty soups, stew, chili, pasta and pasta sauce, peanut butter, cereal, rice, oil, sugar, flour, fruit juice, and vegetable juice (V8).

Look for the donation bin at the back of the church.

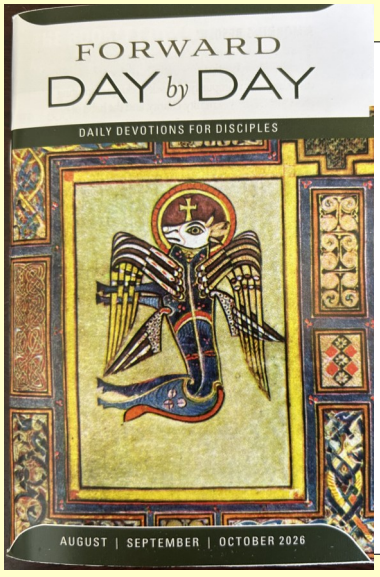
On this past Saturday, July 25th, many of us from Deanery 5 gathered at Church of Our Saviour in San Gabriel for a meet and greet with our new Diocesan Bishop Antonio Gallardo Lucena. Our Dean, the Very Reverend Michael Bamberger, opened the event in prayer. The occasion was a wonderful opportunity to spend time together with folks from other area parishes and with our new bishop and his Canon to the Ordinary John Feuss.

The Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles is a community of more than 48,000 faithful Episcopalians in 133 congregations spanning Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino, Ventura, Santa Barbara, and part of Riverside Counties. The Diocese also serves a broader population through its twenty-nine schools and six service institutions.

Bishop Antonio shared with us some of his hopes for the future of our diocese. We also had the opportunity to ask him many questions, and then he had a question for all of us. He asked us where we are seeing God at work in our parishes. It was a very uplifting experience to hear about what the Spirit is doing in each of our parish communities.

Thinking about last Saturday's sharing leads me to reflect on what God is doing here at Church of the Ascension. As noted by Deacon Ed, who spoke on our behalf, we are in a time of transition. We are entering into that liminal space of no longer and not yet. Such times are often met with sadness at what (and who) we will say goodbye to and also maybe a little anxiety about the future. But we also have the opportunity to discern together what this next chapter might look like for us at Ascension. This is a time to celebrate Fr. Michael and Debbie and all that we have shared together over the years. And it is a time to look forward with hope and faith that God is indeed doing wonderful things in our midst.

Faithfully, Mother Robin



Pick up a copy of the new Forward Movement Day by Day Booklet. Copies can be found at the back of the church and on the reception table in Hawks Hall.

A $2 donation is requested.

Parish Survey

The first step in the transition/search process is the completion of a Parish Survey. Completing this survey is your opportunity to voice your opinions and desires. The views you share with us are very important as the accuracy of the combined surveys will help guide the committee in the compilation of the Parish Profile, which is in essence our PR piece to be posted.

This survey will be available online beginning on August 11. Paper copies will also be available on Sundays.

On August 30 we will have ONE service at 9:30 and then hold a discussion group on the survey to answer your questions. You will also be able to complete a survey at that time.

If you have questions in the meantime, please feel free to ask any of the Transition Committee members: Scott Callihan, Susan Clifton, Lynne Holl, Jon Prentice, Jean Rowe, Rob Stockly, and Walker Williams.

Transition Committee

Forward Movement
inspire disciples. empower evangelists.

Forward Today: Our hope and strength

August 9, 2017

Dear friends in Christ,

Regardless of one's political affiliation, the news has been frightening recently. World leaders are speaking about nuclear war in a way we haven't heard for decades. Terrorists have been, well, terrorizing people in many nations. Every day seems to bring about a new outbreak of violence, famine, or disaster. We can remind ourselves that, statistically speaking, most readers of this message will be quite safe, but that may not calm our fears.

What is a Christian to do? Certainly, we ought to work and pray for justice, freedom, and peace for all people. We Christians are called to serve Jesus Christ in strangers, the sick, prisoners, and all those who are at the margins of our society. I also think we do well to anchor ourselves in prayer, trusting that God will guide our actions and shape the hearts of people everywhere.

I am not suggesting that we should ignore our fears. Far from it. Fear is a natural human response to what threatens us, and it is even essential for our survival. But we are not mere animals, and we must not be governed by our fears along. Particularly for a people who profess faith in a God who said, "Be not afraid" again and again, we must face our fears squarely and then see our fear in perspective.

Today I ran across a lovely prayer in Saint Augustine's Prayer Book. I commend it to you, and I know that I will be praying this prayer regularly in the hours, days, and weeks to come.

> O God, thou art my hope and strength, a very present help in trouble; grant me faith and courage, that I may not fear, though the earth be moved, and the hills carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof rage and swell, and the mountains shake at the tempest of same. O be in the midst of my soul, that I may not be moved, but may be still and know that thou art God. Amen. (Based on Psalm 46 and a prayer attributed to Archbishop William Laud)

Yours faithfully,

Scott Gunn
Executive Director

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

WORSHIP, FORMATION, PASTORAL CARE, FELLOWSHIP, OUTREACH, PRESENCE

25 E. Laurel Avenue, Sierra Madre, CA 91024 ~ 626-355-1133 www.ascension-sierramadre.com

AUGUST 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
	Father Michael Vacation					
2 8am Worship w/Eucharist *Facebook Live* 10:15am Worship w/Eucharist *Facebook Live*	3 8:30am Yoga/Hall	4	5 8:30am Yoga/Hall 5:30pm Yoga/Hal 6Pm-Wed Night Dinner Group Meets	6	7	8 9:00am—Transition Committee Meeting/Library
Father Michael Vacation						
9 8am Worship w/Eucharist *Facebook Live* 10:15am Worship w/Eucharist *Facebook Live*	10 8:30am Yoga/Hall	11	12 8:30am Yoga/Hall 5:30pm Yoga/Hal 6Pm-Wed Night Dinner Group Meets	13 8:15am Mass 9am Rector's Forum 10:30am Staff Mtg	14	15
16 8am Worship w/Eucharist *Facebook Live* 10:15am Worship w/Eucharist *Facebook Live*	17 8:30am Yoga/Hall	18 Parish Administrator Out of Office	19 8:30am Yoga/Hall 5:30pm Yoga/Hal 6Pm-Wed Night Dinner Group Meets	20 8:15am Mass 9am Rector's Forum	21	22
23 8am Worship w/Eucharist *Facebook Live* 10:15am Worship w/Eucharist *Facebook Live*	24 8:30am Yoga/Hall	25 7pm Vestry Meeting/Hall	26 8:30am Yoga/Hall 5:30pm Yoga/Hal 6Pm-Wed Night Dinner Group Meets	27 8:15am Mass 9am Rector's Forum 10:30am Staff Mtg	28	29
30 9:30am Worship w/Eucharist *Facebook Live* 10:30am—Parish Survey Question & Answer/Hall	31 8:30am Yoga/Hall					

Spire Creator: Kim Lumino, Parish Administrator