

The SPIRE 2021

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 'outdoor' and 'virtual' events.

PLEASE NOTE

The Annual Parish Meeting originally scheduled for April 25th has been postponed. When a new date is determined, we will let you know.

Easter Sunday



A Word about Fr. Michael

If you have been virtually or in person at services during Holy Week, you know that Father Michael has not been feeling well enough to be with us.

For some time, he has had a low grade fever and more recently some abdominal discomfort. Thursday he had a CT scan and tests at Huntington Hospital that showed a very high white blood cell count and two lesions on his liver. On Friday, he had a biopsy of the lesions and two draining tubes were put in. Good news is that there is no sign of cancer.

The goal now is to clear up the infection and to determine what is the cause. An infectious disease doctor and a liver specialist will be making the diagnosis as to the cause and what next steps to take. At the moment (not yet set in concrete), the thinking is that Father Michael will remain in the hospital for another week and then be home for an additional four weeks while he is on IV antibiotics at home.

Father Michael gets tired very easily. He is in some pain due to the placement of the draining tubes. Despite his discomfort, he still keeps track of us through calls to Kim and Deacon Ed.

One of the great things about Father Michael is his determination to prepare clergy and lay leadership to function without him. Based upon the Holy Week services and all the details that those services required, clergy and lay folk have stepped up to the plate. Hooray for them and Father Michael.



So what can you do to support Father – you know the answer. Pray. Pray for his recovery, his medical support, his family, the church. Best to send cards if you want to communicate with him. He really is not up for conversations as yet.

Worship Schedule and Important Information

Beginning this Sunday, April 11, 2021 and tentatively through the end of May, the 8:00 AM and 10:15 AM services will be held outside and broadcast via Facebook Live. Zoom access will not be available due to the technical challenges of outdoor worship. Please remember to bring your own chair. For your continued safety, be assured that all covid protocols will be strictly observed including social distancing and wearing masks.

Direct all pastoral concerns and needs to the parish office. Contact Deacon Ed for any pastoral emergency.

MARCH 2020 (through March 22) Pledge Payment Snapshot



YTD Budget:	\$55,250
YTD Actual:	\$58,721
Difference:	\$3,471

NOTES FROM THE LOFT

Blessed Eastertide greetings to you all! A special note of thanks to Charley Noecker and Chris Bamberger for installing a new dolly so that the Baldwin Acrosonic can now be easily wheeled outside for our outdoor worship. And particular appreciation to our choir for offering hymns of praise on Easter morning!

The 10:15 outdoor service will feature a piano prelude and postlude with the choir continuing to sing live. Hymns for the month include:

April 11, Easter 2

#209, ST. BOTOLPH, We Walk by Faith and Not by Sight
#213, MIDDLEBURY, Come Away to the Skies

April 18, Easter 3

#305, ROSEDALE, Come, Risen Lord, and Deign to be our Guest
#208, VICTORY, Alleluia! The Strife Is O'er, the Battle Done

April 25, Easter 4, Good Shepherd Sunday

#343, ST. AGNES, Shepherd of Souls, Refresh and Bless
#646, DOMINUS REGIT ME, The King of Love My Shepherd Is

Thanks be to God for bringing us together for outdoor worship and for limited choral song ~ I, along with you I'm sure, cherish this step towards our full return to indoor worship, complete with choral anthems and organ!

*Rise heart; thy Lord is risen. Sing his praise without delays,
Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise with him may'st rise;
That, as his death calcined thee to dust his life may make thee gold, and much more, just.
Awake, my lute, and struggle for thy part with all thy art
The cross taught all wood to resound his name who bore the same
His stretched sinews taught all strings, what key is best to celebrate this most high day
Consort both heart and lute, and twist a song pleasant and long:
Or since all music is but three parts vied and multiplied;
O let thy blessed Spirit bear a part and make up our defects with his sweet art.
~ George Herbert*



Debora Huffman, Director of Music and Organist

NEW and IMPROVED flower and candle sign-ups for 2021!!!!!!!

Beginning January 2021, sign-ups for Flower Donations and sign-ups for the Sanctuary Candle will be available on Sign-Up Genius (online) as well as in person in the hallway going into HAWKS HALL.

****Payment will continue to be made by mailing a CHECK (\$40.00 (flowers) and \$15.00 (Sanctuary candle) -- **now payable to Church of the Ascension.** **** Please include a note giving the date that you signed up for and any dedication.

We are looking forward to being able to offer this new way to sign up for flowers and candles and hope it will make donations more convenient for you.

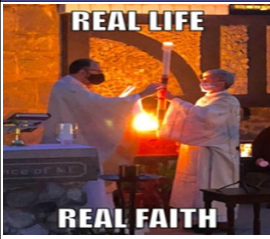
In Christ,
St. Anne's Altar Guild

Here are the sign-up genius links:

Sanctuary Candles: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0e44a4a628a7f94-sanctuary>

Altar Flowers: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0e44a4a628a7f94-altar>





There's a line I love from the Old Testament Book of Numbers (21:4) describing the frustration of the Israelites on their journey around the land of Edom: "but the people became impatient on the way."

'But the people grew impatient.' That line from scripture always reminds me of being a kid sitting in back of the car on a family vacation. I couldn't wait to get to our destination; and the closer we got, the more impatient I became. Sound familiar? Every five minutes for the remainder of the drive, I cried out, "Are we there yet?"

Some things never change. We spend much of our lives impatient and crying out, "Are we there yet?" The bigger question is what gets lost because of our impatience. What are we missing out on in those moments that it takes to ask the question? Are we so anxious to get from here to there that we are willing to be blind to the actual journey? Are we so anxious to get from here to there that we allow the process to become meaningless?

Jesus never worries about whether or not he's there yet because Jesus is always "there." Jesus can't be anywhere else but there because there is where Jesus always is...there in the moment.

That's what Jesus is trying to tell us again and again...be there in the moment and you won't miss a thing. Be there in the moment and we'll be equal partners. Be there in the moment and you'll really understand that you are my light in the world. Be there in the moment and you'll see just how powerful you are in my name. Be there in the moment; that's where you realize that you are the Light of Christ.

All we really ever have is a life full of moments. Use them wisely; shine brightly.

Be well, be blessed, be an illuminator for Christ.

Deacon Ed+

Still a Time for Giving

With the recently passed Covid relief bill, many of us will be receiving stimulus payments of up to \$1,400. For those of us who have been struggling during this difficult period, this payment represents a welcome relief. However, for those of us who have readily weathered the recent economic storms, the stimulus may feel more like a lottery win than a lifeline. If you are in this latter category, we would like to suggest you consider donating a portion of this gain to those who have been less fortunate. A local foodbank, homeless shelter, and, yes, the Church of the Ascension could all use your support.



So remember, please give prayerfully and gratefully; and together we will all come out of this stronger.

God's blessings,

Gordon Tomaske, Sr. Warden, Church of the Ascension

EASTER SUNDAY

APRIL 4, 2021



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
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APRIL 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1			1	2	3
4 EASTER SUNDAY 6am Outdoor Worship Great Vigil and First Eucharist of Easter *Facebook Live* 10:15am Outdoor Worship Mass of the Resurrection *Facebook Live*	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 8am Outdoor Worship w/Eucharist *Facebook Live* 10:15am Outdoor Worship w/Eucharist *Facebook Live*	12	13	14	15	16	17
18 8am Outdoor Worship w/Eucharist *Facebook Live* 10:15am Outdoor Worship w/Eucharist *Facebook Live*	19	20 Vestry Meeting 7:30pm Zoom Call	21	22	23	24
25 8am Outdoor Worship w/Eucharist *Facebook Live* 10:15am Outdoor Worship w/Eucharist *Facebook Live*	26	27	28	29	30	