



## The April 2023 SPIRE

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



### Upcoming Events

**\*Please see the calendar on page 8 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.

### From the Rector

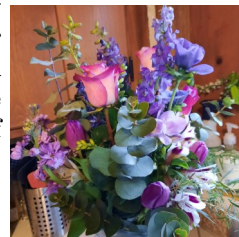
Each year, the City of Sierra Madre and the Sierra Madre Chamber of Commerce hold an Awards Dinner at which different folks are recognized for their contributions to our life as a community. One of the awards goes to the Citizen of the Year.

Over the years, I've known most of the recipients. A few have been (and are) parishioners. I've buried some of the recipients. I have officiated at the weddings of three of them. I've worked alongside some of them, both on community projects and on the fire department.

It was something of a surprise last week when Carol Canterbury and Susan Henderson came to my office with a beautiful flower arrangement. Carol and Susan are very involved with the Sierra Madre Chamber of Commerce. They informed me that I have been selected as this year's Citizen of the Year. I was caught off guard, but I am humbled and honored by this award.

I guess I'll be riding in the Fourth of July Parade one more time.

**Father Michael+**



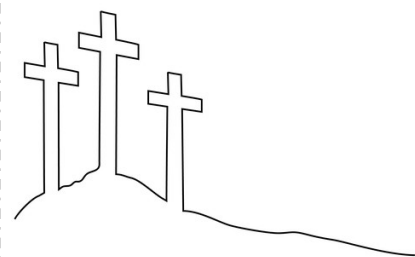
## Holy Week, Easter Services

### Palm Sunday April 2

Mass (Rite I) 8:00 AM  
Mass (Rite II) 10:15 AM

### Tenebrae April 5

Mass 7:00 PM



### Maundy Thursday April 6

Mass 8:15 AM  
Foot Washing and Mass 7:00 PM  
Watch at Altar of Repose 9 PM - 10:30 PM

### Good Friday April 7

Stations of the Cross Noon  
Good Friday Liturgy 7:00 PM

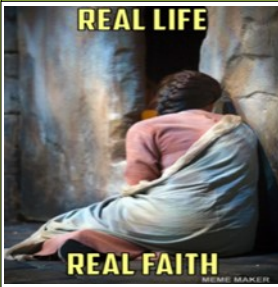
### Easter Day April 9

The Great Vigil and  
1<sup>st</sup> Eucharist of Easter 6:00 AM  
**Easter Brunch/Egg Hunt** 8:00 AM  
Festival High Mass 10:15 AM  
**Egg Hunt** after the service

### MARCH 2023 (through March 20th) Pledge Payment Snapshot



YTD Budget: \$50,284  
YTD Actual: \$56,938  
Difference: \$+6,654



Very early in the morning, when the human eye still struggles to see, resurrection comes. While it is still dark, God arises, greets the day, and stirs up some new creation. God mixes up a hearty bowl of resurrection light, serving it all around. Will we join this feast of a new day?

While she is in the dark, without hope, Mary comes to the tomb to search for hope. She comes to confirm the current darkness, and what does she find? Light! Resurrection means that even in the dark, the dark is already absent. Even in grief, if we can see beyond ourselves, comes a suspicious lightness of being. Mary runs to the other disciples, who in turn race to see for themselves this darkness that is suffused with light.

Resurrection always reminds us that darkness always contains more light than we are immediately able to see. Once our eyes adjust, we begin to notice, very gradually, what – and who – is really there. What had seemed empty is actually filled: angels, a gardener, Jesus.

What if we assume we will find always and only darkness? Might we end up missing the emerging contours of light? What a loss it would be if we resigned ourselves to seeing only loss, if we gave loss a preeminent place and more power than it deserves.

Resurrected Lord, God of power and light, help us to see you even in your absence, and to recognize you when we do.

Be well, be blessed, embrace the light.

**Deacon Ed**



**Thank you to Debbie Bishoff and Lynne Holl for decorating the Paschal candle this year!**



## Afternoon Tea Fundraiser

Saturday, the Twentieth of May

In the year of our Lord,

Two Thousand Twenty-Three

One O'clock in the Afternoon

Church of the Ascension

Hawks Hall

\$30.00 per person (12 yrs & up)

\$15.00 per child (ages 6 -11)

Children 5 yrs and younger, free

Payable at the door

Please sign-up for this event on the sheet posted on the bulletin board in Hawks Hall. Your signing up in advance will ensure that we have plenty of food for everyone.

*Fifty percent of the proceeds will benefit our Hospitality Account & the other  
fifty percent will be donated to the Interfaith Refugee and Immigration  
Service (IRIS)*







# MUSIC<sub>AT</sub> ASCENSION

NOTES FROM THE ORGAN BENCH  
Mr. Robert L. Williamson  
*Organist-Choirmaster*

## *An Afternoon with Rachmaninoff was a success!*

On Saturday March 25, 2023, Nicholas Galinitis played a recital in honor of the 150th birthday of Rachmaninoff.

Hawks Hall was filled with 35 to 40 people from our church and outlying areas who gathered to witness the wonderful music and commentary about the composer.

The program consisted of work by Rachmaninoff and his musical contemporaries. Our guest recitalist played the program from memory and his showmanship was outstanding.

After the program, we had a social hour with wine and cheese to celebrate the event and the performer. Many thanks to Lynne Holl for assisting with the social hour.

*If all goes well, we will have another concert in the fall of 2023.*



*Soli Deo  
Gloria*



## Forward Today: Surely God's goodness and mercy shall follow us March 15, 2023

Dear friends in Christ,

This coming Sunday, the lectionary offers us the gift of Psalm 23. Each liturgical year, we enjoy Psalm 23 at least two times, and it never gets old.

There's a reason this psalm is the most popular one of all 150. Psalm 23 offers lovely, poetic images to assure us that God abides with us always. We can all use this reminder. God doesn't promise that we won't have problems, but God does promise that when we struggle, God will be with us. As the psalm says, "for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me."



Photo by [Jaka Škrlep](#) on [Unsplash](#)

We might be so used to the imagery that we miss its significance. When we say the Lord is our shepherd, we are making important claims about God and our relationship with him. Shepherding is risky business. Shepherds stay with their sheep in fair and stormy weather. Shepherds have to fight off attackers. Shepherds have to chase down wayward sheep. Shepherds have to drive the sheep to the places where there is ample food and water. We're saying quite a lot about God when we think of ourselves as sheep and God as our shepherd.

Read and meditate on Psalm 23. How has God sustained you? Does it encourage you to know that God will abide with you in good times and in difficult times?

Yours faithfully,  
Scott Gunn  
Executive Director



## Forward Today: Nothing will be impossible with God March 22, 2023

Dear friends in Christ,

This Saturday, the church celebrates the feast of the Annunciation of Our Lord Jesus Christ to the Blessed Virgin Mary. For a moment, the solemnity of Lent is set aside for the radiant joy of the Incarnation.

It wouldn't be hard to write a whole book on this liturgical feast day and its assigned scriptures. For today, let's just observe two things. First, Mary's courage and strength are a witness for us all. She had the faith to say yes to the angel's invitation in circumstances that must surely have been puzzling or, more likely, terrifying. We should all follow Mary's example when God calls us to new and uncomfortable places. Her "yes" is a one-word testimony to faithfulness: God's faithfulness to us, and our faithfulness to God.

Second, God can do the seemingly impossible. Too often, I see us give up on situations that seem impossible. We think those two nations will never live in peace. We imagine an estranged relationship cannot be repaired. We think the church will shrink into irrelevance. We accept the idea that there must be very rich and very poor. But the Annunciation is our annual reminder that with God, all things are possible.

As we approach this numinous feast, I wish you every blessing. May we all have the faith to join Mary in saying, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word."

Yours faithfully,  
Scott Gunn, Executive Director



Annunciation from the Basilica of Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome. Image by [Lawrence OP](#) (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

# Happy EASTER

Let's meet together in Hawks Hall following the early morning service to celebrate Easter. The Church will provide the main course of Ham; the sign-up sheet for other potluck food items is posted on the bulletin board. Please be sure your dish serves 10-12 servings, disposable aluminum pans preferred.

There will be only be one brunch in between the two services. Jamie Gorman has graciously agreed to step in to coordinate the brunch as your Hospitality Hostess will be out of town.

Respectfully,  
**Lisa Wagner**  
**Hospitality Hostess**



## Another Way to Welcome Refugees: Help Them Keep Clean

We have a new opportunity to help refugees who have just arrived in America and are settling in the Los Angeles basin. The volunteer coordinator at the Interfaith Refugee and Immigration Service (IRIS) is looking for donations of welcome bags containing essential paper products and cleaning supplies that we could give to families when they get an apartment. As you're probably well aware, these items aren't cheap. A welcome bag containing one package each of dish detergent, bar soap, laundry soap, dish cloths, scouring pads, toilet paper, and paper towels adds up to almost \$50 at Von's or Ralph's.

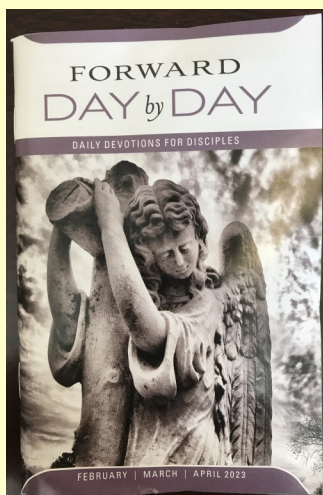
I believe our parish could supply at least three welcome baskets to begin with. If you'd like to donate the cost of one, or part of one, make your check payable to Church of the Ascension and put Refugee Welcome Basket in the memo line. If you'd like to shop for a basket yourself, that's great! Use the list above. Please do not buy large packages that would need to be split among multiple bags so that each family can receive an intact package of everything. Smaller packages are fine—a four-pack of toilet paper or 36-ounce bottle of laundry soap, for example. Bring donations to the church and leave them in Hawks Hall. We'll furnish colorful shopping bags to carry the items to our new neighbors.

IRIS will be letting us know of needs for furniture, kitchen wares, etc., as the new families arrive.

**Submitted by Carol Rasmussen**







Pick up a copy of the 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 appreciated.

### EASTER MUSIC



Please consider making a contribution to our Easter music program. Music offering envelopes are available at the back of the church and on the reception table in Hawks Hall.

*Thank You for your support.*

### EASTER FLOWERS



Although we are still in the season of Lent, we eagerly look forward to our glorious Easter celebration in April. In order to make this event as beautiful as possible, we need your generous donations for flowers. Envelopes are at the back of the church, and checks should be made out to Church of the Ascension with Easter Flowers on the memo line.

St. Anne's thanks you in advance for your generosity in helping our Sanctuary look splendid for a Joyous Easter.

**Lynne P Holl, Altar Guild Directress**

### EASTER EGG HUNT SUPPLIES NEEDED!

We kindly request for Easter Egg hunt supplies to be **PRE-FILLED & SEALED** Easter Eggs. These specific eggs can be found in most stores with an Easter aisle.



## Altar Flowers and Sanctuary Candles

We would like to remind everyone that you can now sign-up for altar flowers and sanctuary candles online through Signup Genius. You can also sign-up on the sign-up sheets in Hawks Hall.

**\*\*Payment should be made by CHECK (\$40.00 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.

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>



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](http://www.ascension-sierramadre.com)

## APRIL 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 Choir Rehearsal 11am-12:30 Hall
2 <b>PALM SUNDAY</b> <u>8am Worship w/Eucharist</u> *Facebook Live*  9am Between the Masses Discussion Group  9am Choir Rehearsal  <u>10:15am Worship w/Eucharist</u> *Facebook Live*	3 8:30am Yoga/Hall  Fr. Michael out of office/Clergy Support Group	4 6Pm Tuesday Night Dinner Group Meets	5 8:30am Yoga/Hall 5:30pm Yoga/Hall	6 8:15am Mass  9am Rector's Forum  10:30am Staff Mtg	7	8
HOLY WEEK SERVICE DATES & TIMES ARE NOTED ON THE FRONT PAGE OF THE NEWSLETTER						
9  SEE 1ST PAGE FOR THE WORSHIP, BRUNCH, AND EGG HUNT SCHEDULE.	10 8:30am Yoga/Hall	11 6Pm Tuesday Night Dinner Group Meets	12 8:30am Yoga/Hall 5:30pm Yoga/Hall	13 8:15am Mass 9am Rector's Forum	14 8am Gooden Chapel 1:15pm Gooden Chapel	15
16 <u>8am Worship w/Eucharist</u> *Facebook Live*  9am Between the Masses Discussion Group  9am Choir Rehearsal  <u>10:15am Worship w/Eucharist</u> *Facebook Live*	17 8:30am Yoga/Hall	18 8:15am Gooden Chapel 6Pm Tuesday Night Dinner Group Meets Vestry Meeting 7pm Hawks Hall	19 8:30am Yoga/Hall 5:30pm Yoga/Hall	20 8:15am Mass 9am Rector's Forum  10:30am Staff Mtg	21	22
23 <u>8am Worship w/Eucharist</u> *Facebook Live*  9am Between the Masses Discussion Group  9am Choir Rehearsal  <u>10:15am Worship w/Eucharist</u> *Facebook Live*	24 8:30am Yoga/Hall  6:30pm- 9:30pm Photochromers Mtg-Hall Private	25 8:15am Gooden Chapel 6Pm Tuesday Night Dinner Group Meets  Noon Clericus Mtg Hall	26 8:30am Yoga/Hall 5:30pm Yoga/Hall	27 8:15am Mass 9am Rector's Forum	28 8am Gooden Chapel 1:15pm Gooden Chapel	29
30 <u>8am Worship w/Eucharist</u> *Facebook Live*  9am Between the Masses Discussion Group  9am Choir Rehearsal  <u>10:15am Worship w/Eucharist</u> *Facebook Live*						