

The February 2025 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.



March 5th

Noon
&
6pm

Mass & Imposition of Ashes

ANNUAL MEETING

Sunday, February 23rd

10:30am
Hawks Hall

- ◇ Only (1) Mass on Sunday, February 23rd, at 9:30am.
- ◇ A Bagel Bar breakfast will follow the meeting.

Go to page 2 for more information about the Annual Meeting.

From the Rector

I am incredibly grateful that our congregation has been spared the grievous losses that our neighboring parishes have endured. We know the work of recovery will stretch out years. The Eaton Fire will be one of those events where all of us will know someone who lost everything. While our Ascension family lost very little in comparison, the community trauma affects us all. The opportunities to give support will continue to emerge. I appreciate the contributions you all have made in the last few weeks.

I go to North Carolina in a couple of weeks to join with colleagues from around the national church to work at certifying the proficiency of those seeking to be ordained this year. Since there is a huge variety of ways that people are arriving at a theological education, the standards of expectation are very much in flux. In addition, the cost of offering a national examination is a factor for the whole Episcopal Church. Many dioceses have opted out of using the General Ordination Examination and are using locally created substitutes. Because priests are ordained for the whole Church and not simply for a particular congregation or diocese, and because the teaching ministry of priesthood is so intrinsic to it, I believe there should be a "gold standard" to determine proficiency. There are big questions looming about this process, and I am proud to serve on the national General Board of Examining Chaplains. The bonus for me is the opportunity to see my grandkids in South Carolina as the bookends of my trip to the East coast.

None of the extended work I do would be possible without the community that is our parish family - the Church of the Ascension. For all that I am blessed with, I give thanks to God.

Father Michael+

SAVE THE DATE!
Tuesday, March 4th

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Come have your fair share of Pancakes for Supper!

Time: 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm

Where: Hawks Hall

Cost:

\$6.00 Adults

\$4.00 Children twelve and under or \$20 for a family of four or more!



All proceeds will be donated to Friends in Deed.

JANUARY 2025 Pledge Payment Snapshot



2025 Budget \$205,150

YTD Budget:	\$17,096
YTD Actual:	\$25,214
Difference:	+\$8,118

Everything you always wanted to know about *The Annual Meeting (but)*



Why do we have an Annual Meeting? Our parish for legal purposes is a corporation. We have Parish Bylaws

which correspond to the Canons of the Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Los Angeles. These state that our parish as well as every parish must have an Annual Meeting to elect “directors” which form the Vestry. The Vestry has responsibility for the “temporalities” of the parish. As in other congregations, it is the custom at Ascension that reports for the previous year are received, the budget for the next year, which the Vestry has already passed, is presented, and other business may be conducted. Occasionally, the Bylaws may be amended. Our Parish Bylaws state that the Rector presides, or in the absence of the Rector, the Senior Warden presides. At the Annual Meeting, we follow standard parliamentary procedure.

Who can attend? Everyone interested in our parish can attend the Annual Meeting. It is required that the time and place be announced beforehand. Our Parish Bylaws require us to have present twenty members who can vote to have a quorum.

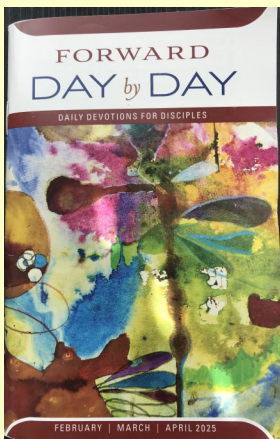
Who can vote? The Diocesan Canons were changed a few years ago to include persons sixteen years and older as adult communicants in good standing. The canons were amended this year to essentially specify that in order to be an elector they must be:

- ⇒ An adult member of this parish who has received Holy Communion in this parish at least three times during the preceding year.
- ⇒ An adult communicant of this parish who for the previous year has been faithful in corporate worship, unless for good cause prevented, and has been faithful in working, praying, and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God, in order to be considered a communicant in good standing.

A list of our qualified electors has been published by the Vestry, and *will be* posted on the bulletin board in Hawks Hall. Our Parish Bylaws and the canons do not permit either proxies or absentee ballots.

Who can be elected to the Vestry? Our Parish Bylaws and the Canons state that anyone qualified to vote at the Annual Meeting can be elected to the Vestry. Our Parish Bylaws also state that a member of our Vestry must be a confirmed communicant and cannot be a member of another church. **It is expected (but not required) that anyone serving on the Vestry must be willing to commit the time necessary to serve, be regular in their attendance, be an example of good stewardship, and have a passion for the work of Christ in this parish.** Some folks have already been nominated either by the nominating committee or by indicating their desire to run, and there will be time during the meeting for nominations from the floor as well.

Serving on the Vestry... Each year at our Annual Meeting, the parish elects a new class of vestry members – this year we will be electing three persons for regular three year terms. The “job description” includes being a committed member of the parish who is regular in attendance and giving and who is willing to offer his or her gifts for the leadership of this parish. Vestry members may have particular responsibilities or portfolios and will be serving on such sub-committees as Finance, Insurance, and Operations & Property. Meetings are held monthly, and attendance at the annual workday/retreat is critical.



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 appreciated.

Thank You!



16th Annual Women's Room Thanksgiving Luncheon

After expenses were paid out for the luncheon, Ascension was able to donate **\$517.84** to the Women's Room at Friends in Deed. Many thanks to the families who donated financially to this year's luncheon.

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

FEBRUARY 2025

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2 <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 8:15am-9:45am Gooden Chapel 8:30am Yoga/Hall Fr. Michael out of office/Clergy Support Group	4 6Pm Tuesday Night Dinner Group Meets	5 8:15am-9am Gooden Chapel 8:30am Yoga/Hall 5:30pm Yoga/Hall Men's Group Luncheon Nano Café Noon—RSVP to Fr. Michael	6 8:15am Mass 9am Rector's Forum	7 Father Michael Out of Town/GOE's in NC	8 Baby Shower/Hall Private—Time TBD
9 <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*	10 8:15am-9:45am Gooden Chapel 8:30am Yoga/Hall	11 6Pm Tuesday Night Dinner Group Meets	12 8:15am-9am Gooden Chapel 8:30am Yoga/Hall 5:30pm Yoga/Hall	13 6pm—Ladies Golf Group Meets-Pam Harrison/Hall	14	15 Music Recording Hall Private/Time TBD
Father Michael Out of Town/GOE's in NC						
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* Music Recording/Hall Private/Time TBD	17 8:30am Yoga/Hall  Presidents Day Parish Office Closed	18 6Pm Tuesday Night Dinner Group Meets 7pm Vestry Meeting/Hall	19 8:15am-9am Gooden Chapel 8:30am Yoga/Hall 5:30pm Yoga/Hall	20 8:15am Mass 9am Rector's Forum 10:30am Staff Mtg	21	22
23 <u>9:30am Worship w/Eucharist</u> *Facebook Live* <div style="border: 2px solid red; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> Annual Meeting & Bagel Bar Breakfast 10:30am Hawks Hall *Vestry Organizational Meeting Follows* </div>	24 8:15am-9:45am Gooden Chapel 8:30am Yoga/Hall	25 6Pm Tuesday Night Dinner Group Meets	26 8:15am-9am Gooden Chapel 8:30am Yoga/Hall 5:30pm Yoga/Hall	27 8:15am Mass 9am Rector's Forum	28	