



The SPIRE

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

Happy New Year
2018

January

Upcoming Events

January 1st – Happy New Year!
Parish Office Closed!

January 7th – Epiphany Celebration
Coffee Hours

January 13th – Bradshaw/Kassabian
Ordination

January 14th – Celebrating
Clergy/Kassabian

January 15th – Annual Reports are Due!

January 16th – Vestry Meeting
7:00pm/Hawks Hall

January 18th – House Church & Dinner
at 6:30pm *location TBD*

January 21st— Noon/Library
Parish Ministry Council Meeting

From the Rector



It was odd having Christmas fall on a Monday this year. It made Advent so short, and then there was the layering of the non-religious hoopla layered onto the Fourth Sunday of Advent.

There's more to come in 2018. Ash Wednesday falls on February 14th. That's right. "Remember you are but dust, and to dust you shall return. But won't you be my Valentine?" (Imagine the dilemma of all the sweets bought and presented, and then being shelved through Lent!) Six weeks later, Easter falls on April 1st. "Alleluia. Christ is Risen! April Fool's." Farther along, Ascension Sunday falls on Mothers' Day.

Reflecting on all this led me to wonder how we do at keeping in perspective our life of faith and the claims of the culture in which we live. Perhaps it is too extreme to categorize the situation as the sacred and the profane. Mundane might be a better word. At a time when popular culture holds a huge part of our attention, we do well to remember what is most important for us. The cycle of the year in our faith can keep us grounded. I wish you all the best as we celebrate the Holy Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. And Happy New Year.

Father Michael

P.S. – On behalf of my clergy colleagues and me, I want to express our gratitude for all your generosity and support for us this past Christmas. We are very blessed to serve here at Ascension.

ANNUAL MEETING
Sunday, January 28th
10:30am
Hawks Hall

- ◇ Only (1) Mass on Sunday, January 28th, at 9:30am.
- ◇ No Sunday School
- ◇ A Structured Potluck will follow the meeting. (A sign-up sheet will be posted on Hawks Hall bulletin board)

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



Pledge Payment Snapshot

January—December 29, 2017

Budget Amount: \$208,437

YTD Budget: \$208,437
YTD Actual: \$218,007

Difference:
\$+9,570

2018 Altar Flowers/ Sanctuary Candle Sign-Up Sheets



Opportunities are available to donate flowers and sanctuary candles in memory of or in thanksgiving for loved ones or for special events in our lives. Please check the sign-up sheets on the bulletin board in Hawks Hall for available dates. Checks for flower donations (customarily \$40.00) should be made payable to St. Anne's Altar Guild. Checks for sanctuary candles (\$12.00) should be made payable to Episcopal Church of the Ascension. All checks may be placed in the offering plate or turned in to the parish office.



\$232 raised for HOSPITALITY!!

Christmas Raffle 2017

Once again Jo Mosier and her daughter created the Christmas quilt, needlepoint nativity and other Christmas hand crafted items for this year's raffle.

Jo and her assistant Jill Wagner raised \$232 for the Hospitality Committee.

Many thanks to Jo and to all of you who participated in this year's raffle.

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. At the present time, two parishioners have agreed to serve. When the other candidate has been selected, we will notify parishioners. As always, there will be the opportunity to make nominations from the floor during the Annual Meeting.

Thank you so much for your donations to the Hillside's Adopt a Family program. Working together as a parish, we were able to sponsor three families in need, including five children that were identified by the Hillside's staff. We dropped off two carloads of items from work boots, clothing, and bedding to superheroes, princesses, and supermarket gift cards. We were able to fully complete the lists for each person. Thanks for your tremendous response. ***We estimate the total in donations at almost \$2,000.***

Thanks,
Scott Callihan, Outreach Ministry Leader



This month's Doers

December was another busy month of activity for many of our parishioners who deserve to be recognized for all they voluntarily **DO**. Thanks go to

- **Our youth**

- ◇ for decorating the Christmas Tree
- ◇ for rehearsing and creating this year's pageant
- ◇ for Charlotte and Violet Beach, Peter Callihan, Faith Keith, Anne Marquardt, Jaxson Tierney and Anna and David Kassabian who sang at the Family Service
- ◇ and to Peter Callihan for providing the piano offering
- ◇ for all those adults who helped alter costumes, helped dress those who were in the pageant, and were supportive in so many ways

- Our **Altar Guild** members who transformed the church in a very few hours
- Our **acolytes, readers, Eucharistic ministers** and **ushers** for their additional hours of service
- Those **choir** members who stayed in town and provided beautiful music at the 10:15 service
- **Mike Beach** and **Deacon Robin** for folding bulletins for four services
- and.. Our Vestry members **Meg Cox, Jessica Meehan, and Carol Rasmussen** who will complete their three years of service on January 30th.

THANK
YOU

Thank you one and all for volunteering your time and talents.

Jean Rowe, Senior Warden



It's All About the Food!

I've been making resolutions. At home, I'm committed to being more organized (HA!). At church, I'm committed to invigorating our social hour. As you know, our child care and kitchen helper position has been suspended--at least for now--so that means I need your help and energy. I'm asking everyone who is able, please commit to providing snacks for coffee hour--which includes helping with set-up and clean-up--on at least TWO Sundays per year. Providing the snack could be as simple or extravagant as you desire--there is NO predetermined expectation. When we take turns providing for and serving one another in any capacity, it brings us closer together. Sign up on the board at church or email Nicole your preferred dates (nhanson123@gmail.com).

Annual Meeting Potluck

Speaking of food, it is a tradition for us to share a potluck meal on the day of our Annual Meeting. Please be sure to sign up to bring something to share on Sunday, January 28. If you prefer to sign up online, email Nicole what you'd like to bring (nhanson123@gmail.com). *Nicole Hanson, Parishioner*

A message from St. Anne's Altar Guild...

WE WOULD LIKE TO SEND A HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO ALL OF YOU WHO CONTRIBUTED SO GENEROUSLY TO THE CHRISTMAS FLOWER FUND THIS YEAR...WE BELIEVE YOU WOULD AGREE THAT THE SANCTUARY LOOKED SPLENDID...

THANKS GO OUT ALSO TO JAY CALLETON, CHRIS BAMBERGER, AND RYAN LAREAU FOR HANGING THE GREENS.



ALTAR GUILD ALSO HAS TWO YOUNG HELPERS THEY WISH TO THANK--GEORGIA DOUGALL AND ADDISON LAREAU- YOUR HELP ON OUR SATURDAY WORKDAY WAS GREATLY APPRECIATED!

THANKS FOR A JOYOUS AND BEAUTIFUL CHRISTMAS SEASON...

Christmas/Advent Youth Activities



NOTES FROM THE LOFT

Heartfelt thanks to our choristers for their glorious music throughout Advent and into Christmas Eve! You may have noticed that our choir was diminished by 50% on the 24th – with half the group traveling to different parts of the country to be with family for the holiday. Kudos, then, to Susan Beach for her lovely solo work on Advent 4, and to Colette Ostrye and Lavette Teague who joined her to enable the Great Litany and the Psalm. Also to the same three, along with Liz Levie, together with five guest singers, for the gorgeous Christmas Eve service! I hope that you who listened enjoyed the service as much as we who presented it – and that you delighted in singing the carols! Finally, my deep appreciation to all who contributed to the Christmas music fund, which made the service possible.

And now Epiphany is upon us. January anthems include:

January 7

In observance of the baptism of Christ, T. Frederick Candlyn's brilliant *Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies* and the hauntingly beautiful *Heavenly Light* by Aleksandr Kopylow.

January 14

Flutist Jessica Pierce and guitarist Almer Imamovic will share their talents with us. The choir will present J.S. Bach's beloved *Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring* and John Rutter's poignant *The Lord Bless You*.

January 21

Martin How's rhythmically exciting *Praise, O Praise* and *My God, My Portion*, the lovely American folk hymn set by James Hopkins.

January 28

Two anthems by Mozart: the thrilling *Gloria* from *Twelfth Mass* and the always appreciated *Ave Verum Corpus*.

May the joy of music fill your hearts and souls throughout the coming year ~

*Come, let us anew our journey pursue,
Roll round with the year, and never stand still, till the Master appear;
His adorable will let us gladly fulfill,
And our talents improve by the patience of hope, and the labour of love.*

~Charles Wesley



Debora Huffman, Director of Music and Organist



Where Does My Money Go?

This month we look at Fellowship, a ministry in which volunteerism is essential since we don't budget this ministry at all but rely solely on fund raising activities such as the Christmas Raffle and the Shopping Party.

For most of this past year, Maggie Outhouse has been our go to person as Parish Ministry Council was in the process of finding a new ministry leader. Since this fall, Nicole Hanson has gradually moved into that position. We welcome Nicole and the new ideas and events she is suggesting for the coming year's program.

Fellowship includes not only our weekly coffee hour, but also special events such as the Easter Brunch, and the annual Thanksgiving Luncheon for the Women's Room of Friends In Deed. These events only happen because of the contributions of Ascension's many wonderful cooks and those who help set up and clean up after the events.

You may have noticed that since June, we have not had a paid kitchen helper. The proposed 2018 budget continues to eliminate this position. A number of folks have stepped in to help, especially Maggie Outhouse, Nicole Hanson, Beth Smith-Kellock, and Jo Mosier.

A generous gift by the Tomaske family helped fund this year's kitchen purchases. Fellowship continues to rely on Mike Beach to pick up all the items that need to be purchased.

Beth Smith-Kellock coordinates the Tuesday Night Dinner Group. And when Beth is not in town, Beverly Clifton fills in.

Please consider being one of our Fellowship volunteers in 2018. You'll be hearing more from Nicole as to the various ways you too can help. **Jean Rowe, Senior Warden**



Sunday School!



New at Ascension!

Have you noticed the new and improved beverage station? Worshippers can relax after mass to a cup of tea or hot chocolate!

Thanks to Nicole Hanson for this great set up. Remember: when you invite a friend to church, sharing a beverage after mass is a great way to introduce them to the community!



"Just Say No" was an advertising campaign, part of the U.S. War on Drugs in the 1980's and early 90's. The phrase lives on and has become part of the American lexicon.

There are plenty of situations in which we should say "NO." However, as we begin a New Year and hopefully consider renewing our spiritual lives, I suggest we do that in the context of "Just Say Yes!"

One of my reflections during Advent was the Blessed Mother's willingness to say "yes" to both shame and glory. Being a pregnant teenager without a husband is pretty shameful, and yet she said "yes." Mary also said "yes" to being the mother of God...not easy I'm sure, but certainly glorious and obviously not forgotten.

All too often our perceptions are based on our expectations, and all too often they can be misleading and hold us back from making difficult decisions or simply from saying "yes" to doing the right thing. What Mary knew, what Mary demonstrated was the importance of faith, the importance of faith as the cornerstone of our decisions.

The New Year will bring many opportunities to say "yes" when what we really want to say is "no." When we look to Mary as a guide and have faith in doing what's good, what's proper, and what's pleasing to God, shame doesn't much matter; and it can open the way to experiencing the divine in new and deeply rewarding ways.

What Mary teaches us is that the way into God's kingdom can be through doors of shame or doors of glory. Faith and trust will always lead us in the right direction. So, just say "yes" to shame and just say "yes" to glory...God will prompt you along. Not to worry.

Live well, live blessed, live saying yes. Happy New Year!! **Deacon Ed+**

Christmas Eve at Ascension

Thank You to Jon Prentice for the beautiful photos!

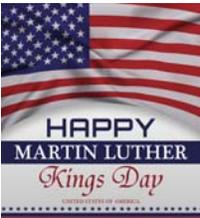




Our vision is that *The Episcopal Church of the Ascension* serves Christ today for those who will come to know Christ tomorrow.

WORSHIP, FORMATION, PASTORAL CARE, FELLOWSHIP, OUTREACH, PRESENCE
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JANUARY 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1  Parish Office Closed	2 10am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group	3 10:30-11:45 Gooden K-1 Music/Hall 3:00 Organist Rehearsal/Sanctuary 5:30pm Yoga/Hall 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal/Hall	4 7am Mass 8:45-9:30 Gooden K-1 Music/Hall 9:45am Gooden Chapel/Sanctuary 10:30-11 Gooden K-1 Music/Hall	5	6
7 Epiphany Celebration Coffee Hours 8am Mass 9am Xian Ed. Hour/Sunday School 9am-10am-Between the Masses Discussion Group 10:00am Childcare 10:15am Mass	8 9:45am Gooden Chapel/Sanctuary Pasadena Photochromers Meeting (private) in Hawks Hall 6:30pm—9:30pm	9 10am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group Private Daisy Troop Meeting 4:30—6pm Hall	10 10:30-11:45 Gooden K-1 Music/Hall 3:00 Organist Rehearsal/Sanctuary 5:30pm Yoga/Hall 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal/Hall	11 7am Mass 8:45-9:30 Gooden K-1 Music/Hall 9am Forum 9:45am Gooden Chapel/Sanctuary 10:30-11 Gooden K-1 Music/Hall 10:30am Staff Mtg	12 Private Spiritual Direction 10:30am Rectors Office	13 Bradshaw/Kassabian Ordination 10am St. John's Pro-Cathedral
14 Celebrating & Preaching Kassabian 8am Mass 9am Xian Ed. Hour/Sunday School 9am-10am-Between the Masses Discussion Group 10:00am Childcare 10:15am Mass	15 9:45am Gooden Chapel/Sanctuary 	16 10am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group 7pm Vestry Meeting Hawks Hall	17 10:30-11:45 Gooden K-1 Music/Hall 3:00 Organist Rehearsal/Sanctuary 3:30-5pm Village Voices/Hall 5:30pm Yoga/Hall 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal/Hall	18 7am Mass 8:45-9:30 Gooden K-1 Music/Hall 9am Forum 9:45am Gooden Chapel/Sanctuary 10:30-11 Gooden K-1 Music/Hall 6:30pm House Church/ Dinner *location TBD*	19	20
21 8am Mass 9am Xian Ed. Hour/Sunday School 9am-10am-Between the Masses Discussion Group 10:00am Childcare 10:15am Mass Noon-PMC Mtg/Library	22 9:45am Gooden Chapel/Sanctuary Pasadena Photochromers Meeting (private) in Hawks Hall 6:30pm—9:30pm	23 10am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group	24 10:30-11:45 Gooden K-1 Music/Hall 3:00 Organist Rehearsal/Sanctuary 3:30-5pm Village Voices/Hall 5:30pm Yoga/Hall 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal/Hall	25 7am Mass 8:45-9:30 Gooden K-1 Music/Hall 9am Forum 9:45am Gooden Chapel/Sanctuary 10:30-11 Gooden K-1 Music/Hall 10:30am Staff Mt	26 Private Spiritual Direction 1:00pm—2:30pm Library FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE	27
28 ANNUAL MEETING/ STRUCTURED POTLUCK 10:30am Hawks Hall ♦ Only (1) Mass at 9:30am. ♦ No Sunday School	29 9:45am Gooden Chapel/Sanctuary	30 10am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group	31 10:30-11:45 Gooden K-1 Music/Hall 3:00 Organist Rehearsal/Sanctuary 3:30-5pm Village Voices/Hall 5:30pm Yoga/Hall 7:30pm Choir Rehearsal/Hall	 Youth!  Acolytes!		