



The SPIRE

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



January

Upcoming Events

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

January 6th – The Epiphany!

January 13th— Noon/Library
Parish Ministry Council Meeting

January 15th – Vestry Meeting
7:00pm/Hawks Hall

ANNUAL MEETING Sunday, January 27th

10:30am
Hawks Hall

- ◇ Only (1) Mass on Sunday, January 27th, at 9:30am.
- ◇ No Sunday School
- ◇ A Structured Potluck will follow the meeting. (A sign-up sheet will be placed on the Events Table in Hawks Hall)

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

2018 Pledge Payment Snapshot



YTD Budget:	\$211,001
YTD Actual:	\$220,881
Difference:	+\$9,880

From the Rector



One of the marvelous elements of our Christmas pageants is the room for artistic license on the part of our kids. This year saw two kings and a queen. Another shepherd had an “I’m in the witness protection program” look about him. Mary and Joseph wandered a bit (not in the script, but definitely in the spirit of the narrative) before settling down center stage.

I find it encouraging that our kids know that Ascension is a safe place for them to engage the Gospel story and still express themselves in whatever way works for them. In fact, there is a lesson here for all of us. We are charged with sharing the Good News with the whole of our being. I find it liberating that I can own my quirkiness and still be effective as a herald of the Gospel.

As we enter another new year, I always anticipate the new opportunities that will emerge for mission and ministry. I am thankful for the vibrancy of our parish.

I know I speak for my colleagues in saying thank you for the generosity shown to us this Christmas. I am also grateful for all the efforts that went into our celebration of the Nativity. The Choir and Dr. Deb were outstanding. The Altar Guild made the sanctuary beautiful. And our youth leaders and the children brought off another amazing pageant. A special thanks to Pastor Josh who covered for me at the last minute on Christmas Eve when the stomach bug got the best of me!

Thanks to everyone who makes Ascension the special place it is! **MAB+**



A huge thank you for your donations to the Hillsides Adopt a Family Christmas Outreach Project. We donated many, many items to one family of eight (mom, dad, and children ranging from 8 to 16 years of age). We covered a lot of ground, from market gift cards to shirts, jackets, pants, shoes, socks, makeup and lotion, a variety of toys, including soccer balls and footballs.

Altogether we donated close to **\$1,500 worth of items**. Thanks so much to everyone! The staff at Hillsides was so very thankful when the items were dropped off again this year. They were eager to get them wrapped and prepared for the family!

Thanks,
Scott Callihan, Outreach Ministry Leader



A message from St. Anne's Altar Guild... ST. ANNE'S ALTAR GUILD SENDS 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 THE COXES FOR HANGING THE GREENS..

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

THANKS FOR A JOYOUS AND BEAUTIFUL CHRISTMAS SEASON...



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.

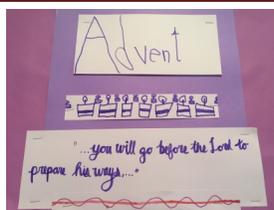
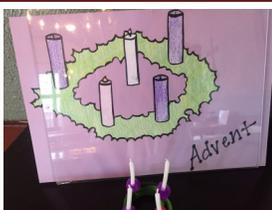
Who can vote? The Diocesan Canons were changed a few years ago to include persons sixteen years and older as adult communicants in good standing. The canons were amended this year to essentially specify that in order to be an elector they must be:

- ⇒ 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.

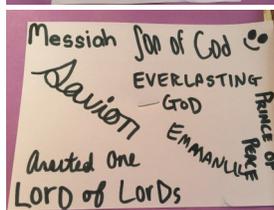
A list of our qualified electors has been published by the Vestry, and *will be* posted on the bulletin board in Hawks Hall. Our Parish Bylaws and the canons do not permit either proxies or absentee ballots.

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.



**Advent at
Ascension**





**Tuesday Night Dinner Group
Christmas Gathering at
the home of
Ross & Beth Smith-Kellock.**

***Thank you to Sandra Dickey
for the photos!***



SO SOME THINGS END, AND SOME THINGS BEGIN.

Financial stewardship is over. We haven't quite met this year's goal as yet, but some folks have yet to pledge, Gooden rent goes up a bit this year, at some point the Wood house will be repaired and rented, and maybe we will have a movie company or two use our property. We have faith the money will be there. At our December meeting, Vestry members expressed their faith that we will somehow meet next year's budget as we looked at the most recent draft of the budget. We will be voting on the final budget at our January meeting trusting that you and God will provide.

Of course, there is always something added every year to the financial worry mix. This time it is the roof. Some of you saw the pulpit side of the church with buckets and plastic during our last rain. It wasn't a pretty sight. As I write this article, we still have not had a report from our insurance agent as to how much of the cost will be covered. We have a \$3000 deductible to start as a minimum. Fortunately, we have been blessed by a donation of \$2000 toward this sum. Don't know what the estimate on the roof is as yet. If it is a lot more than what the insurance will pay, you'll be hearing from next year's Vestry.

I said financial stewardship is over, but not all aspects of stewardship are. During Lent, Vestry will be launching a time and talent stewardship campaign. You will be hearing more on this topic later from the 2019 Vestry.

The three year term of some Vestry members is ending. Many thanks to Bill Voegeli for his work as Clerk of the Vestry and to Mark Keith who has been our Treasurer for the last three years. I will be completing my three year term as well. But the three year term of three new nominees is about to begin. You will find pictures and some biographical information about Charley Noecker, Maggie Outhouse, and Ray Smith elsewhere in this Spire.

Last year your Vestry spent much of its efforts searching for a way to expand Ascension's footprint in the community. Many of you helped by attending the All Parish Retreat and pointing us in the direction of helping the seniors in our church and in the community. By the time of the 2019 Lenten Time and Talent Stewardship Drive, we hope to have found a number of specific ways that together we can volunteer our time and talent to reach out to Ascension members and the various senior facilities in our community. Stay tuned.

We have a lot of memories from the past year to reflect on. I particularly remember with joy the wedding of Pastor Josh and Jobi. (No one complained about going to only one service that Sunday.) This Christmas, how special it was to see the two Cox sons serving together at the late service on Christmas Eve. And how grateful we are to have Father Michael continuing as our shepherd. Hard to realize he has been with us for the past 32 years. What a blessing!

So what was the special event in your family this past year that you will always treasure? Maybe you too have special Ascension moments that you fondly remember as well. I hope that for each of you 2018 has been a good year.

So now, we look to new beginnings. Christmas in the church continues; Epiphany is on its way, and time is getting close for the Annual Meeting at the end of January. Your kids are back to school; a new semester begins. May God guide and bless us all as we face the joys and challenges of 2019.

Jean Rowe, Senior Warden



\$505 raised for the Hospitality Ministry!

Annual Holiday Shopping Party

Thank you to all who enjoyed the private holiday shopping party at Savor the Flavor on December 8th. Savor the Flavor donated 10% of the proceeds (\$200) back to the church.

Christmas Raffle

The Christmas raffle raised \$305. A BIG THANK YOU goes to Jo Mosier for her talent in making and donating the items listed below.



RAFFLE WINNERS

- Cross Stitch Nativity Set—Natalie Dougall
- Cross Stitch Nativity Scene Picture—Susan Clifton
- Christmas Afghan—Veronica Toler Ramirez

Thank you to all who participated!

NOTES FROM THE LOFT

Blessed be the choral singers, for great is their reward in heaven! No, this is not one of the Beatitudes; but it does extend my – and, hopefully, your – gratitude to Ascension’s choristers for their wonderful tonal contributions to the music of Advent and Christmas. Although Christmas Eve is now more than a week behind us, I find myself still singing the anthems and carols of that spine-tingling service. Many, many thanks, choristers - well done! The music of Christmas Eve would not have been possible without the generous fiscal support of the congregation - my deep appreciation to all who contributed to the Christmas music fund.

Thanks also to flutist Jessica Pierce and guitarist Almer Imamovic (the wonderful AlmaNova Duo), who provided instrumental music for the December 30 service – gorgeous!

And now Epiphany is upon us. January anthems include:

January 6

New to Ascension, *Three Kings from Persia* by Gustov von Holst and Alfred Burt’s *The Star Carol*.

January 13

T. Frederick H. Candlyn’s bright *Christ Whose Glory Fills the Skies* and the hauntingly beautiful *Heavenly Light* by Aleksandr Kopylow.

January 20

As the Bridegroom to His Chosen by John Rutter and Lloyd Pfautsch’s *Eternal Grace*.

January 27

One Faith, One Hope, One Lord by Craig Courtney and Bob Chilcott’s *Irish Blessing*.

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

REAL
LIFE. Real
Faith.

I am reminded of a dear friend and mentor who died in the late 80's - one of many that I lost to AIDS. Whenever Gilbert wanted to make a point, he ended his sentence with the words "can you imagine." Well, here we are nineteen years into a new century and so much has changed, so much remains the same, and so much...well can you imagine!

During the last two months, I've been thinking a lot about spiritual renewal, letting go of old beliefs and expected outcomes. You could say that it's about letting go and letting God.

There's always a lot of chatter about New Year's resolutions and what we'll do, what behaviors we'll leave behind, what new attitudes will carry us through a new year, and dare I say how will I improve my relationship with God. Imagine that?

Instead of resolutions, I've decided to set goals for myself in 2019, and I invite you to share in the process. Let's dig deep within and discover what we would like to have happen in our lives this year. This goal will help us each to do our part in creating real change and motivate us to fully living into the year ahead.

So, let's set some goals.... are you ready? Remember that goals give our life direction...imagine that. Here are a few things to consider as you figure out your goals.

What would you like to have happen in your life? What would you like to do, to accomplish? What would you like to attract in your life? What particular areas of growth would you like to see? What blocks or character defects would you like to have removed? What would you like to have happen in your family life? What problems would you like to see resolved? What would you like to see happen inside and around you?

All these are just but a few, and remember we aren't controlling others with our goals. We're just trying to give direction to our life. Imagine that!

Write it down. Take a piece of paper, a few hours of your time, and write it all down – as an affirmation of you, your life, and your ability to choose. Then let it go. Let go and let God, but remember God will only do for us what we can't do for ourselves. God knows only too well that each of us is quite capable of creating real change in or lives and in the world. Imagine that.

Everything that happens this year is just another chapter in our life story. The new year stands before us, like a chapter in a book waiting to be written. We write that story in part by setting goals.

And one last thought...God has given each of us a purpose and the freedom to set the goals which will help to renew our relationship with him. The end goal is clear, but we get to choose the process. Imagine that!

Live well, live blessed and start writing.

Deacon Ed+

YOUTH CORNER NEWS

- Fantastic job and thanks to all who participated in the 2018 Christmas Pageant! A huge thank you to Pageant volunteers Michelle Keith and Nicole Hanson for helping prepare the participants to perform!
- January Sunday School
 - ◊ Youth meet at 9 AM
 - ◊ Pre-school & Elementary Sunday school at 10:15 AM
- No Sunday school January 27 (annual meeting).
- Youth volunteers needed for Shrove Tuesday pancake supper on March 5th. Please see Jobi McGuffie for more information.

Jobi McGuffie



St. Swithin's by the Rev. Jay Sidebotham

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Meet the 2019 Vestry Nominees



Ray Smith

Raymond H Smith

- Born February 9, 1941
- Started attending Ascension 1946
- Attended Ascension Day School from first to eighth grade
- Serviced on the Vestry for a year (filled vacancy) back in the 1970's
- Spent time at St Nicholas in Tahoe City when at our vacation home in Truckee
- Graduated from Cal Poly Pomona in electrical engineering
- Worked at JPL for ten years and then for Xerox, Loral, Lockheed, BAE never changed my desk
- Sierra Madre Search and Rescue team for about 12 years
- Sierra Madre Fire Department for over 20 years
- National Ski Patrol for 50 years



Charley Noecker

Charley Noecker was raised in the Episcopal Church, especially in church choirs. He left the Church for science and atheism during the college years and returned gradually during early fatherhood. He and Carol have three adult daughters living back East. Carol and Charley joined Ascension in late 2011, shortly after moving here from Boulder CO. He works as a scientist and engineer at NASA JPL.



Maggie Outhouse

I do believe I was an Episcopalian from moment #1, which is a little interesting since my mom was a Christian Scientist for a while and my dad was a Catholic. However, through my grandparents and Bishop Gooden, my mom joined the Episcopal Church and the three of us, my mom, brother, and I, have been on the Episcopal path ever since. Not bad for a "...moment one...."

The first time I drove into Sierra Madre, I immediately connected with this town. The flower containers hanging on the street lamps on Sierra Madre Blvd., the (Bishop) Gooden School, and the Episcopal Church of the Ascension all called my name. I bought my first house on W. Laurel just a few houses west of the church in March of 1977 and married my Michael in July 1978 at Ascension.

My years of employment pre-retirement took two directions. During my first "real" job, I worked as a Juvenile Probation Officer for LA County, initially supervising children placed outside their homes. I then graduated to supervising a gang-specific caseload of juveniles and young adults. After 13 years, I decided I wanted to change paths and have a job that invested in new beginnings. I went back to school and then committed to the field of Perinatal Health Education. During my 30 years at Huntington Hospital as a Perinatal Health Instructor and Lactation Consultant, I developed and presented classes for the community, training programs for staff at Huntington and one other hospital, and, along with my partner, established the Breastfeeding Center in 1985. I got my wish. I had the opportunity of investing in the new beginning of many, many families. Such joy and satisfaction....

Although I have attended Ascension since 1977, issues with life and my faith, which I, at that point, compared to "swiss cheese," got me back within the fold. I have been actively involved with my church for about the past 14 or so years. During these years, I have been involved with the following: Formation Ministry leader, Discernment committees, Hospitality opportunities for about 2 years, a coordinator for the Women's Room Thanksgiving Luncheon, preparation of the monthly Lay Ministry Work Schedule, and, most recently the Ascension web site. Usually, the only moments I haven't loved are those when I am questioning myself.

My church has been there for me during the crazy, the sad, and the sane times, and those times that are both down-right hard and fill the heart with joy. I am blessed and honored that the Vestry might be one of my next steps.

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

JANUARY 2019

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1  Parish Office Closed	2 5:30pm Yoga/Hall	3 3-6pm Organist Rehearsal/Sanctuary 7:30pm -Choir Rehearsal/Hall	4 Spiritual Direction 10:30—Noon Rector's Office (Private)	5 Funeral/Kafkaloff Church 1pm-2pm (Private)
6 EPIPHANY 8am Mass 9am Xian Ed. Hour/Sunday School 9am-10am-Between the Masses Discussion Group 10:00am Childcare 10:15am Mass 2pm EFM Mtg/Library	7 8:45—9:20 Gr K-4 Gooden Chapel 9:35—10:15 Gr 5-8 Gooden Chapel	8 10am Prayer in the Chapel Gooden Mtg Q&A 10:15am-11:30am/Hall (Private)	9 9:45am—2:30pm Gooden Drama Classes K-5/Hall 5:30pm Yoga/Hall	10 7am Mass 8:05—8:35 All School Gooden Chapel 9am Forum 10:15am Staff Mtg 3-6pm Organist Rehearsal/Sanctuary 7:30pm -Choir Rehearsal/Hall	11 Piano Rehearsal Hall 4pm-6pm (Private)	12 Piano Recital Hall Noon—3:30pm Or 1:30pm—6pm TBD (Private)
Fr. Bamberger Out of Office/Clergy Retreat						
13 8am Mass 9am Xian Ed. Hour/Sunday School 9am-10am-Between the Masses Discussion Group 10:00am Childcare 10:15am Mass Noon—PMC Meeting/Library 2pm EFM Mtg/Library	14 8:45—9:20 Gr K-4 Gooden Chapel 9:35—10:15 Gr 5-8 Gooden Chapel Pasadena Photochromers Meeting (private) in Hawks Hall 6:30pm—9:30pm	15 10am Prayer in the Chapel Daisy Troop Mtg 4pm—5:30pm Hall (Private) Vestry Mtg Hall/7pm 2018 ANNUAL REPORT ARTICLES DUE	16 9:45am—2:30pm Gooden Drama Classes K-5/Hall 5:30pm Yoga/Hall	17 7am Mass 8:05—8:35 Gooden Chapel 9am Forum 3-6pm Organist Rehearsal/Sanctuary 7:30pm -Choir Rehearsal/Hall	18	19 SGV Habitat for Humanity Mtg Hall 7:30am-5:30pm (Private)
20 8am Mass 9am Xian Ed. Hour/Sunday School 9am-10am-Between the Masses Discussion Group 10:00am Childcare 10:15am Mass 2pm EFM Mtg/Library	21 	22 10am Prayer in the Chapel	23 9:45am—2:30pm Gooden Drama Classes K-5/Hall 5:30pm Yoga/Hall	24 7am Mass 8:05—8:35 Gooden Chapel 9am Forum 10:15am Staff Mtg 3-6pm Organist Rehearsal/Sanctuary 7:30pm -Choir Rehearsal/Hall	25 FEBRUARY SPIRE ARTICLES DUE	26
27 ANNUAL MEETING/ STRUCTURED POTLUCK 10:30am Hawks Hall ◇ Only (1) Mass at 9:30am. ◇ No Sunday School	28 8:45—9:20 Gr K-4 Gooden Chapel 9:35—10:15 Gr 5-8 Gooden Chapel Pasadena Photochromers Meeting (private) in Hawks Hall 6:30pm—9:30pm	29 10am Prayer in the Chapel	30 9:45am—2:30pm Gooden Drama Classes K-5/Hall 5:30pm Yoga/Hall	31 7am Mass 8:05—8:35 Gooden Chapel 9am Forum 3-6pm Organist Rehearsal/Sanctuary 7:30pm -Choir Rehearsal/Hall		