



The SPIRE

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



March 2018

Upcoming Events

March 9th – 6:30pm/Chapel & Hall
Lenten Prayer & Dinner

March 10th – 9am-Noon/Hall
Safe Church Training

March 14th – 6:30pm/Hall
Youth Lenten Dinner

March 20th – 7pm/Hall
Vestry Meeting

March 23rd – 6:30pm/Chapel & Hall
Lenten Prayer & Dinner

March 25th – Noon/Library
Parish Ministry Council Meeting

March 25th – 4pm/Hall
Easter Egg Stuffing/Dying Party

From the Rector

Towards the beginning of the Eucharistic Prayer in the Proper Preface during Lent, we hear these words - "You bid your faithful people cleanse their hearts, and prepare with joy for the Paschal feast; that, fervent in prayer and in works of mercy, and renewed by your Word and Sacraments, they may come to the fullness of grace which you have prepared for those who love you."

During Lent this year, this Preface can serve us well as the focus of our Lenten observance. It seems to boil down to two simple intentions – cleansing our hearts and preparing with joy. How do we live out these intentions? As the preface continues, we hear about being fervent in prayer and in works that give life to others and about being engaged in the liturgical life of the church.

I hope that this Lent continues to be a time for all of us to focus on the basics. Whatever disciplines you may have taken on this year, hold them to this simple test – do they help cleanse your heart and do they draw you toward joy?

I am particularly struck by the concept of joy. Lent is sometimes thought to be gloomy and weighted with reminders of our wretchedness, but these two intentions frame the season as one in which we move closer and closer to joy. Cleansing our hearts and preparing with joy can almost give us the same anticipatory quality as Advent. I look forward to holding in tension the solemnity and the building joy this Lent.

Blessings, MAB+



MARCH 25
ACOLYTE
TRAINING
9AM

Daylight Savings
Begins
March 11



Holy Week/Easter Services

Palm Sunday March 25
Mass (Rite I) 8:00 AM
Mass (Rite II) 10:15 AM

Monday, March 26
Mass 7:00 PM

Tuesday, March 27
Mass 7:00 PM

Tenebrae March 28
Mass 7:00 PM

Maundy Thursday March 29
Mass 7:00 AM
Foot Washing and Mass 7:00 PM
Watch at Altar of Repose 9 PM -11:30PM

Good Friday March 30
Watch at Altar of Repose 7:30 AM -11AM
Stations of the Cross Noon
Good Friday Liturgy 7:00 PM

Easter Day April 1
The Great Vigil and
1st Eucharist of Easter 6:00 AM
Festival High Mass 10:15 AM

*Easter Day Brunches
& Egg Hunts*

8 AM & 11:30 AM

Pledge Payment Snapshot

February 2018

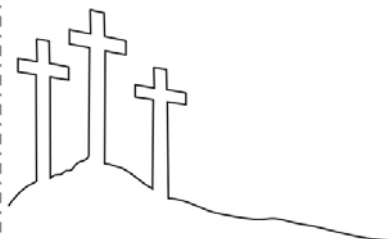


Budget Amount:
\$211,001

YTD Budget:
\$35,166

YTD Actual:
\$47,531

Difference:
\$+12,365



The Vigil at the Altar of Repose — As part of our Holy Week tradition, we invite parishioners to participate in The Vigil at the Altar of Repose. After the foot washing and Communion service on Maundy Thursday, the altar is stripped and the congregation leaves in dark and quiet. Father Michael carries the Reserve Sacrament (the bread and wine that have already been blessed) to a smaller altar adorned with flowers and plants, symbolizing the garden. From that time until midnight and from 6 am until 11:00am Friday morning, we keep The Vigil. Participants volunteer for one hour – remembering that the night before he was crucified. Jesus asked His disciples in the Garden of Gethsemane if they could not watch with Him one hour.



What do we do during that hour? Jesus asked his disciples to watch and pray. According to one internet Anglican (who stayed for two hours), “I read all four Gospels. I read the words of all the hymns listed under Passiontide in the hymnal. I prayed intercessory prayers for the people on the parish and my personal prayer lists. I read Psalm 22 and prophecies from Isaiah. I prayed the Litany and the Penitential Office. I prayed the Collects and read the readings for Good Friday. And I meditated upon the great sacrifice of the King of Glory, the Incarnate Lord, the second Person of the Trinity, the Lord Jesus Christ. He endured a humiliating and excruciating death that I – and you and all who believe on Him – can attain forgiveness of our sins and everlasting life.”

Beginning Sunday March 19 through Palm Sunday, a sign-up sheet designating the hour you wish to come will be provided at the back of the church. There is no limit to the number of people who can watch and pray at any of the hours of the Vigil.

Help Us Enhance Our Garden of Gethsemane!

On Maundy Thursday (**March 29**), we observe the tradition of praying/keeping watch with our Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane. In order to achieve a garden-like setting, we ask parishioners to bring flowers to church to decorate the space for the garden. Flowers may be brought on Thursday throughout the day or brought in when attending the Maundy Thursday night service at 7pm. There will be containers available to deposit your flowers.



For the past several years, we have decorated our “garden” this way and hope this year, with your help, it will be overflowing.

Thank you in advance for enhancing our “garden” with flowers from your Garden. *St. Anne's Altar Guild*



Friday Lenten Dinners @ Ascension

Lent conjures up images of fasting, renunciation, hymns sung in a minor key...

Fasting is not the most exciting part of Christian discipleship. But it also isn't an unhappy thing. This year at Ascension, we are going to share three Lenten meals together. Since it's a season of fasting, these will be meatless, but not flavorless! Last year, we had wonderful soups and tasty deserts. We also got to deepen the relationships we have within our parish community. If you're looking for a spiritual discipline this Lent, or just want to share a great meal, keep our Friday Lenten Dinners in mind.

What: Quiet evening prayer and a meatless dinner

Where: Prayer in the chapel and dinner in Hawkes Hall

When: Friday, **February 23**; Friday, **March 9**; Friday, **March 23**

What time: Prayer at **6:30 PM** and Dinner at **6:45 PM**

Who's welcome: Everyone! Older folks, families with kids, single folk, married folk. Friends who don't have a church. Anyone who wants to share good food and is looking for an opportunity to keep a holy Lent.

Peace, Pastor Josh

I regularly get e-mail from various publications of Forward Day by Day. Upon occasion, an article touches me enough that I save it for a repeat reading. Attached is one of those selections that is particularly appropriate as Holy Week approaches. Maybe it will reach out to you too. **Jean Rowe, Senior Warden**



Dear friends in Christ,

We are just a few days away from Holy Week, without doubt the center of the year for those of us who claim our identity as followers of Jesus. In this week, we not only remember historical events from 2,000 years ago, but we enter into the great mystery of our very salvation through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

It's tempting to skip bits of Holy Week. After all, there's a lot of church. After the week begins with Palm Sunday, we are meant to worship together on at least three occasions, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Great Vigil of Easter. Those who skip the midweek services are missing out on the core of the Christian story and witness, much as if you went to a movie and stepped out after the opening credits and stepped back in only for the closing credits. For we followers of Jesus, there just isn't anything else more important than finding our way to our Christian community for the Three Holy Days.

Back in my parish priest days, I used to promise people that if they came to Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evening services and entered fully into them, their lives would be changed. Every year I made the same promise, and no one ever told me I was wrong. When we edit out part of the story of our redemption, we're chopping away at our ability to comprehend God's great love for us.

We celebrate everything that matters in these three days: Jesus' tender love, his absolute care for others, his challenge to remember him always, his betrayal, his agony, his death, his descent into hell, his disciples' confusion at God's mighty work in the resurrection, and, finally, boundless joy as the Good News becomes clear. It's all there.

I invite you--no, I implore you--to make time in your life for the Three Holy Days next week. You won't be sorry.

Almighty God, whose dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before he was crucified: Mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.



Yours faithfully, Scott Gunn, Executive Director

All Saints Church

**Foster
Care
Project**



Help Parents and Children in Foster Care be Reunited as A Family

Become a trained volunteer coach-monitor who monitors court-ordered supervised family visits, so that children, removed from the care of their parents, can visit their parents in a physically and emotionally safe setting filled with toys, games, books and art materials. These visits are an essential service to increase the family's chances for reunification and reduce the children's anxiety while in out-of-home placement. Learn about the importance of visitation, the role of a coach-monitor and for details regarding an upcoming training in April by attending the orientation dinner on March 15, from 6 to 8 p.m. For more information contact: inbox@fostercareproject.org

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EASTER FLOWERS

Although we are in the midst of Lent, we eagerly look forward to our glorious Easter celebration the first of April. In order to make this celebration as beautiful as possible, we need your generous donations for flowers. Envelopes will soon be placed at the back of the church and on the reception table in Hawks Hall. Checks should be made out to St. Anne's Altar Guild.

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



EASTER MUSIC

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

Thank You for your support.



Oink... Oink... The pigs are coming!

Our Lenten Outreach project will be PIGS with Episcopal Relief & Development. Each donated pig includes training on raising and selling pigs and gives families a better future fast. Pigs reproduce quickly, and piglets are ready for market in just six months. Look for the pig in the back of the church during Lent, and ***please turn in your contributions by Palm Sunday 3/25.***



Scott Callihan, Outreach Ministry Leader



NOTES FROM THE LOFT

Our Lenten journey continues through Holy Week, chorally observed as follows:

March 4

O For A Closer Walk with God by Charles Villiers Stanford;
Austin Lovelace's *None Other Lamb*, a beautiful setting of Christina Rossetti's text;

March 11

The always popular, gorgeous *Cantique de Jean Racine* by Gabriel Fauré;
Walter Pelz' *Psalm 121*;

March 18

Jean Berger's poignant *The Eyes of All*;
Vere Languores Nostros (Truly He Bore our Sorrows) by Antonio Lotti;

March 25 – Palm/Passion Sunday

A Palm Sunday Antiphon by David G. Morgan;
Geoff Weavers' lovely setting of *What Wondrous Love Is This*;
Wash Me Thoroughly by David Halls;

March 29 – Maundy Thursday

Maurice Durufle's *Ubi Caritas*;
I Give To You A New Commandment by Peter Nardone;
The Taizè selection, *Eat This Bread*;

March 30 – Good Friday

Leo Nestor's *Faithful Cross*;
The Passion of St. John, chanted;

Finally, a preview of Easter Sunday on April 1, festival choir, trumpet, oboe

Most Glorious Lord of Life by John Rutter;
Festival setting of *We Know that Christ Has Died*;
Awake, My Lute by Jane Marshall;
Fanfare and Easter Hymn, as always!

May your journey be blessed throughout the month, leading you into the glorious Resurrection celebration on April 1!

*You manifested humility, O Christ, as the way of genuine nobility
by emptying Yourself and taking the form of a slave.
You did not hear the self-praising prayers of the Pharisee,
but you received the broken sighs of the publican as a blameless sacrifice.
Therefore I cry out to you:
"Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me, and save me, O Savior."
~ from Thomas Hopko, *The Lenten Spring**



Debora Huffman, Director of Music and Organist



The Raising of Lazarus, an ancient fresco of a biblical narrative in Jorlunde church, Denmark, July 24, 2017

Ever hear of Lazarus Saturday ?

In the Eastern Orthodox Church as well as the Byzantine Catholic Church, the day before Palm Sunday is celebrated as Lazarus Saturday. At the Liturgy of Lazarus Saturday, the Church glorifies Christ as "the Resurrection and the Life" who by raising Lazarus has confirmed the universal resurrection of mankind even before His own suffering and death. As a result of this miracle, many of the Jews that were present believed in Jesus. Christ was hailed by the masses as the long-expected Messiah-King of Israel. Others went and told the Pharisees what Jesus had done. In response the Pharisees and chief priests met and considered how they might arrest Him and put Him to death.

The resurrection of Lazarus is appointed to be celebrated on the day before Palm Sunday because the early church fathers found this miracle to be the beginning and cause of the fury of the Jews against Christ when He was about to go to Jerusalem to give Himself over to His Holy Sufferings.

There is now provision for the observance of Lazarus Saturday in the Episcopal Church, and once every three years the Lazarus gospel is read on the Fifth Sunday in Lent. If one digs around in the U.S. Episcopal Church's "Lesser Feasts and Fasts - 2000," one finds provided on p. 57 a proper for a celebration of the Saturday of Lazarus (which actually may be used on any weekday of the Fifth Week of Lent).

The resurrection of Lazarus is appointed to be celebrated on this present day, after the forty-day purifying Fast, because our Holy and God-bearing Fathers, especially the Holy Apostles, found this miracle to be the beginning and cause of the fury of the Jews against Christ, when He was about to give Himself over to His Holy Sufferings. For this reason they placed this extraordinary and wonderful event here. In addition, the placement of this feast by the Holy Fathers serves as a necessary rest" and "transition" between the rigors of the Fast and the awesome and saving events of Holy Week

How I spent my Lent – Part 2. ~ Make Your Daddy Proud

Am I making my Daddy proud? Am I in good relationship with “all” of God’s creation without exception, without caring about the inconvenience or the difficulties that may be involved?

I invite you to continue on our Lenten journey of self-discovery. We began on Ash Wednesday, and in part 2 we will continue until Palm Sunday. Each week continue to read the gospel, find some quiet time, and consider the questions as they relate to your renewed relationship with God and answering the question “Am I making my Daddy proud?”.

“You move us to delight in praising you for you have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless till they find rest in you.” (Augustine of Hippo)

A prayer for Quiet Confidence (BCP):

O God of peace, who hast taught us that in returning and rest we shall be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be our strength: By the might of thy Spirit lift us, we pray thee, to thy presence, where we may be still and know that thou art God: through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Third week in Lent: John 2:13-22

- ~ Where and with whom is my primary business?
- ~ What system waits to be overturned by me?
- ~ Usually, am I bystander or a participant?

Fourth week Lent: John 3:14-21

- ~ What do I enjoy about staying in the dark?
- ~ What illusions does the light of awareness threaten?
- ~ What would it cost me to really see?

Fifth week in Lent: John 12:20-33

- ~ What are some of the small, potent parts of my life?
- ~ Do I tend to regret the past or hope for the future?
- ~ How am I making my Daddy proud?

Live well, live blessed, live making your Daddy proud. *Deacon Ed+*





Making the Church a Safer Place

As a parish, one of our most important responsibilities is to protect the vulnerable from any form of abuse. We must see to it that those of us who visit or work with our children, young people, elderly, and infirm recognize the signs of abuse and know the boundaries that we each must follow in our relationships with others.

Throughout our diocese, all churches are expected to train those who work with children and seniors so that each church can become a safer place. Father Michael is one of the diocesan trainers and will be leading workshops for clergy and other parishes in the coming months.

At Ascension, all of us who are involved in youth work or pastoral care are required to receive such instruction every five years. This upcoming workshop will also be meaningful for those of us who have family members in senior care facilities. Indeed, anyone who wants to learn about ways to protect the vulnerable is welcome.

This year's workshop is scheduled for March 10 from 9:00 to 12:00 in Hawks Hall. Please put this date on your calendars.

PHOTO OPPORTUNITY ON EASTER SUNDAY!

2018 Parish Directory Photos



It's that time of year again. When you look at your directory picture, do you recognize yourself? Your kids? Do your friends recognize you? If not, it is time for an update! **Come in your 'best dress' on Easter Sunday and get your picture taken.** They will be taken between the services and after the 10:15 service in the child care room. Please add the photo shoot to your Sunday schedule so that we have an up-to-date picture of you and your family. **Thank You!**



Easter Brunch at Ascension: Family Time Shared Together

We WILL Need Lots of Contributions for the Easter Brunches!

Look for the Easter Brunch sign-up sheets next week. There will be one for each service.

Holy Week and Easter at Ascension Need You! When Can You Serve?

Ascension has lots of opportunities in every role for you to serve during Holy Week (most services) and Easter Sunday (both services). If you have the opportunity to stop by the church, please feel free to sign up. However, I am also going to start my **"Crunch Time"** emails to give you ongoing updates concerning our needs. If you already know what you would like to do, send me an email and I will plug you into the schedule.

A sign-up sheet will be available next week

"Talk" with you soon. Maggie Outhouse,
maggiemyrne@earthlink.net



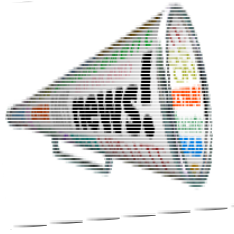
**THANK
YOU**

I would like to thank the following people for a very successful Work Party on February 24;

[Ted & Kathy Calleton,](#)

[Joe Crowley,](#) and [Tim Hayden.](#) We accomplished several tasks: wood chips in the Memorial Garden to retain moisture, painting of hand rails, weeding, and the fixing of two outside doors. We have (2) more Work Parties coming up. March 24 for putting up palms for Palm Sunday, and March 31 for preparation for Easter Sunday. *Sincerely, Mike Beach, Verger*

YOUTH GROUP



EASTER EGG HUNT STUFFING & EGG DYEING PARTY
Thursday, March 29th at 4:00.
Come lend a hand before foot-washing! This fun activity includes both fellowship and community service hours!

CONFIRMATION PREP: Congratulations to all youth who completed the unit on the Old Testament! The worksheet for the New Testament is now available and due on April 8th.

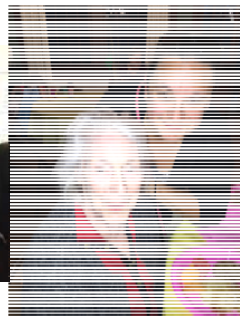
Pi Day! Youth Lenten Dinner
Wednesday, March 14th at 6:30 PM
Menu: Pizza, vegetables and fruit.
All are invited. RSVP to Jobi Harrell

CALLING ALL EGG HUNT DONATIONS!

A blue basket for donations is available in Hawks Hall. The greatest need for our egg hunts include plastic eggs for stuffing, jellybeans, and WRAPPED bite-size chocolate. Other items to consider donating include: Bags with handles for children who do not bring an Easter Basket, stickers, small toys, school supplies, and Easter decorations. Thanks for all of your help!



Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper 2018!



MARCH 2018

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1 7am Mass 8:45-9:30 Gooden K-1 Music/Hall 9:45am Gooden Chapel/Sanctuary 10:30-11 Gooden K-1 Music/Hall 10:30am Staff Mtg	2	3
4 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	5 Fr. Bamberger Out of Office/Clergy Support Group 9:45am Gooden Chapel/Sanctuary Private Spiritual Direction Noon—1:30pm Library	6 10am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group Private Daisy Troop Meeting 4:30—6pm Hall	7 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	8 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	9 Private Spiritual Direction 10:30am Rectors Office Lenten Prayer/Dinner 6:30pm Chapel/Hawks Hall	10 9am-Noon Safe Church Training Hawks Hall
11 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	12 9:45am Gooden Chapel/Sanctuary Pasadena Photochromers Meeting (private) in Hawks Hall 6:30pm—9:30pm	13 10am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group	14 Youth Lenten Dinner-6:30pm 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	15 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	16 Private Spiritual Direction 1:30pm— 2:30pm Library	17
18 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	19 9:45am Gooden Chapel/Sanctuary	20 10am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group Vestry Meeting 7pm Hawks Hall	21 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	22 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	23 Private Spiritual Direction 1pm—2pm Library Lenten Prayer/Dinner 6:30pm Chapel/Hawks Hall	24
Fr. Bamberger Out of Office—Vacation						
25 PALM SUNDAY ACOLYTE TRAINING 9:00am 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 2pm EFM Mtg/Library	26 9:45am Gooden Chapel/Sanctuary Pasadena Photochromers Meeting (private) in Hawks Hall 6:30pm—9:30pm APRIL NEWSLETTER ARTICLES DUE	27 10am Prayer in the Chapel 6pm Dinner Group	28 TENEBRAE 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	29 MAUNDY THURSDAY 8:45-9:30 Gooden K-1 Music/Hall 9am Forum 9:45am Gooden Chapel/Sanctuary 10:30-11 Gooden K-1 Music/Hall Easter Egg Stuffing/Dying 4pm/Hall	30 GOOD FRIDAY	31
HOLY WEEK / EASTER - SERVICE DATES & TIMES ARE NOTED ON FRONT PAGE OF NEWSLETTER.						