



# The SPIRE 2019

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



## Upcoming Events

November 3rd – Faure Requiem  
@ the 10:15 Service

November 5th – VOTING in  
Hawks Hall

November 11th – Veteran’s Day

November 15th/16th – Diocesan  
Convention

November 19th – 7pm/Hall  
Vestry Meeting

November 23rd – 6pm/Holiday  
Shopping Party @ Savor the  
Flavor

November 24th – Noon/Library  
Parish Ministry Council Meeting

November 25th – 11th Annual  
Thanksgiving Luncheon for The  
Women’s Room of Friends in Deed

November 28th – 9:30am  
Thanksgiving Day Mass

## From the Rector

The fires this past month have certainly brought a great deal of heart ache to many people. Spread across the whole of Northern and Southern California, it seemed as if the whole world was on fire. Our thoughts, prayers, and hopefully our monetary contributions are with those who suffered loss. We know the lives of hundreds of thousands of people have been unsettled. The power outages imposed by the utility companies are more than an inconvenience – people living on limited means cannot afford to lose the food in their refrigerators and freezers.

In circumstances like these, we do well to ask questions – for many of which there are no easy or simplistic answers.

- How do we respond to disasters as Christian people? Who really is our neighbor?
- How does the lifestyle we choose play a part in this situation? Where do we want to build our homes?
- How does our treatment of the environment contribute to this picture? Does smog contribute to Bark Beetle disease? Do humans contribute to the change in the climate and the droughts we have been experiencing?
- How do we count those affected by the fires? Are the poor, the undocumented, the homeless, and the now unemployed included in the equation?
- What choices will be made in the aftermath? Where and how will the rebuilding happen? What changes in the infrastructure will be made? What are the taxpayers willing to assume to mitigate this in the future?

I don’t pretend to have the answers for these questions. But I do know that our neighbors, all over the state, are hurting. Perhaps we can start there.

MAB+

### REMINDER



Daylight Savings Time ends at 2am on Sunday, November 3rd.

## Are you missing House Church?

I know that I am.

So, if a dozen or so of us in the past were coming on a regular basis, why aren’t we meeting now you may ask?

Well, we stopped because no one was volunteering to host.

I am proposing that we resume this once a month activity again starting on the third Wednesday in January. (We are making the change to Wednesday evenings so that choir members can participate.)

To start, we need to have house commitments for third Wednesdays from January through June if we are to make this ministry become a regular activity again. If we each take a month once a year, we can gather together once again.

Interested? Let me know if you will volunteer your home for any of the dates listed below:

- |             |          |
|-------------|----------|
| January 15  | April 15 |
| February 19 | May 20   |
| March 18    | June 17  |

You can sign up in Hawks Hall or on line. Want more information? Give me a call or see me at church.

Jean Rowe



## October Pledge Payment Snapshot



2019 Budget \$220,881

YTD Budget: \$184,067

YTD Actual: \$172,426

Difference: \$-11,641

## Ascension Stewardship Campaign 2020

### The Story of God's Love

Our Ascension stewardship campaign is in full swing, and we are at that important phase when we begin to assess what we can expect and what the parish budget will look like for 2020. Thank you to all for your pledges and other stewardship commitments!

This year's theme is "Telling Our Story." We each have our own to tell about what connects us to this special historic place. Whether it is how our parish is a spiritual home to our families, a source of comfort in times of discord, a means to help others or something else, Ascension inspires it all.

Our stories are not random, of course. Like the Bible itself, the tapestry woven by our collection of stories is one bonded together by the overarching and powerful message of God's love in the world. That unconditional grace that is there for all is manifest in the stories we each have to share. Please, don't be hesitant to share yours and help others to share theirs.

Your pledges and other forms of stewardship allow all our stories of inspiration to be told, not only among our community of parishioners but also, perhaps more importantly, to the larger audience beyond our doors. In other words, your stewardship exponentially expands our ability to tell the compelling story of God's love.

So when you consider your stewardship commitment for 2020, please take a moment to reflect on your story and those of others that have inspired you. Help us tell them all.

**John Buchanan, Junior Warden**

*Thank You to those who have already pledged!*



### Building our Church Community through Coffee Hours

Though I absolutely do NOT enjoy public speaking, when Gordon Tomaske asked me to speak in church in October, I fearfully agreed. The same was true when Maggie Outhouse asked me to take over the Hospitality position at the church--I agreed, but hesitantly. Most of the work I have done in the greater church, I have done with a hint (or maybe a lot) of trepidation and at least a bit of awkwardness. But that is the beauty of church work--God takes what is offered, no matter how lowly or meager, and turns it into something beautiful. When I feel like I haven't planned well enough or have forgotten something important, things always work out better than I could have anticipated.

My role at Ascension is primarily to facilitate our gathering together--which almost always includes some kind of food. Sitting around the table together is the surest way to bind us as a community. According to the *Journal of Adolescent Health*, "More frequent family dinners are related to fewer emotional and behavioral problems, greater emotional well-being, more trusting and helpful behaviors towards others and higher life satisfaction." Even our Lord Jesus had some of his most compelling interactions around a table.

So I am asking that we commit ourselves--even/especially our imperfect, awkward, possibly shy/introverted selves--to joining one another around the table more frequently. There are many opportunities to do so: attend a house-church gathering and dinner, participate in an all-church potluck, join us for our retreat, but, most importantly, attend coffee hour. Checking in with one another on a regular basis is the best way for us to strengthen our bonds to one another.



There are only 9 Sundays remaining in 2019. Will you consider committing to attending coffee hour for at least 10 minutes every Sunday that you attend services? If it helps, think of it as part of the worship experience. Jesus is surely among us while we pray and adore him and participate in the Eucharist. But we are told in Matthew 18, verse 20 "For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them." Let us extend our communion, not only with one another, but with our beloved Christ.

**Submitted by Nicole Hanson, Fellowship Ministry Leader**



Sitting on my desk for the past few weeks is a Mega Millions lottery ticket. From time to time, I buy a ticket and then get to fantasize about what I would do with all that money until I check to see if I won. You may be wondering why I have a ticket dated September 27, 2019 still sitting on my desk. Perhaps I'm working out the details with my attorney and tax advisor before claiming the winnings. Sorry folks, I didn't win – not even a dollar.

Why keep the ticket? I didn't buy it; I found it on the floor in the back of church. My first reaction was that it must be a sign from God, and it's got to be a winning ticket. Then came all the nagging questions: do I keep it and not say a word, claim the money and give a little or a lot to Ascension? Would the rightful owner look to claim the ticket? Or do I turn it over to Ascension, and we never have to have another Stewardship or Capital campaign EVER!

So why did I keep the ticket. It reminds me that indeed I won the lottery in 2012 when I arrived at Ascension and you welcomed me with open arms and loving hearts...well, I did have to prove myself a little and had to pass sermon muster.

During the past few weeks, I've been listening to some of you share your Ascension stories, each different and yet the same. You're here because it's a special and welcoming inclusive community. Everyone gets to be themselves on their best days and on their worst days. Everyone in our Ascension family knows they're never alone. It's the family we chose.

Being a part of this community is indeed being in possession of a winning lottery ticket. And what do we do with our winnings...we give back! We do all that we can to ensure that that our chosen family can thrive and together we build on a legacy for generations to come.

**Live well, live blessed, live richly.**  
**Deacon Ed**



**BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS**  
**Sunday, October 6**

**Thank You to Jon**  
**Prentice for the**  
**pictures!**



**THANKSGIVING**

FOR EACH NEW MORNING WITH ITS LIGHT,  
 FOR REST AND SHELTER OF THE NIGHT,  
 FOR HEALTH AND FOOD,  
 FOR LOVE AND FRIENDS,  
 FOR EVERYTHING  
 THY  
 GOODNESS SENDS.

-RALPH WALDO EMERSON (1803-1882)



## **11<sup>th</sup> Annual Thanksgiving Luncheon ~ Women's Room of Friends In-Deed Monday, November 25, 2019**

Ascension is blessed with the opportunity to help create memories and traditions through food and friendship during the Women's Room Thanksgiving Luncheon of Friends in Deed. As you give thanks for your Blessings, your traditions, and your family and friends during this holiday season, you will also know you have contributed to passing that experience on to others.

You have 2 ways to sign-up for your donation to the Women's Room Thanksgiving Luncheon.

- Online using the signup option link that will be sent to your email on Monday, 11/4/19
- Sign-Up Sheets located on the Events Table in Hawks Hall available beginning Sunday, 11/03/19.

If you sign up online, you will automatically receive confirmation of your donation as well as timely reminders from the online service. If you sign up at the Events Table, you will receive an email confirming your contribution. The Online sign-up list will also be updated to include those who signed up at the Events Table. All will receive additional instructions containing important dates, times, and transportation instructions for dropping off the 20 Servings of your contribution during the next several weeks.

***Don't feel like cooking? Monetary donations are always welcome!***

You now have two options for donating money to the Women's Room Luncheon.

⇒ Online at <https://www.ascension-sierramadre.com> .

Click on Give.

Click on Make a Donation. This allows you to make a one-time donation.

Under Multiple Choice, click Other and fill in **Women's Room Luncheon** in the Notes box.

Click on Continue to Review the information

Click on Submit

Enter your credit card information and then click on Submit Payment.

You may also make a check payable to the Church of the Ascension. Please write **"Women's Room Luncheon"** on the memo line. Feel free to add your check to the Offering Plates on Sundays.

***Please have monetary donations to the Church by Thursday, November 20, 2019.  
 Any donated money not used for the luncheon will be donated directly to the Women's Room.***

***Please prepare 20 servings of the FULLY COOKED AND READY-TO-SERVE item you sign-up to provide.***

The following are Rough Equivalents of 20 servings of the pre-cooked item.

- ◇ Large Turkey – 20+lb. turkey - The Turkey Must Be Fully Cooked and Carved (NO Bones) before Delivery to Ascension
- ◇ One full size steam pan of carved turkey (without bones) from 1 large turkey = approximately 20 + servings
- ◇ Stuffing – About 20-30 oz. dry mixed bread crumbs or 2 large boxes/bags of dry mix
- ◇ Mashed Potatoes – About 7-10 lbs of uncooked potatoes
- ◇ Green beans in mushroom cream sauce – 5-6 lbs of fresh green beans, or 4-5 lbs frozen green beans, or 10 to 12 16 oz cans of green beans
- ◇ Sweet Potatoes – About 5-8 lbs of uncooked sweet potatoes (Candied or Casserole - please indicate your choice)
- ◇ Gravy – 3 quarts – Prepared
- ◇ Cranberry Sauce – 4 10-12 oz bags of fresh or frozen cranberries
- ◇ One ½ size steam pan of a side dish = approximately 20 servings

### **We will supply:**

- 1/2 size heavy aluminum Steam Pans with lids for side dishes
- Full size heavy aluminum Steam Pans with lids for carved turkey (with no bones) or side dishes, if needed.
- Pie pans with plastic lids

Please use these containers for the transportation of all cooked, carved, and prepared food from your home to Ascension and then to the Luncheon.

Thank you for all that you are doing for those attending the Women's Room Luncheon. You make a difference, and you will have stories to share. **Maggie and Nicole**

**BAPTISM OF ALISSON MCGUFFIE**  
**Sunday, October 13**

Thank You to Jon Prentice for the pictures!



**NOTES FROM THE LOFT**

In observance of All Saints' Day (November 1) and All Souls' Day (November 2), the choir and soloists will be presenting the Fauré *Requiem* on Sunday November 3 at the 10:15 service. Traditionally All Saints' Day commemorates the lives of those designated as saints and All Souls' Day remembers our own loved ones who've passed on. Acknowledging both love and loss, we partake of the Eucharistic celebration that promises a love so great it transcends even death. Although we grieve for those we no longer see, we take comfort that they are not lost.

Gabriel Fauré composed his Requiem in D minor, Op. 48, between 1887 and 1890. This setting of the shortened Mass for the Dead is the best-known of his large works. Its focus is on eternal rest and consolation, assuming salvation and ultimate redemption.

In keeping with the day's themes, my opening voluntaries will be settings of *Requiem Aeternam* and *In Paradisum* by Gerald Near.

Choral anthems for the remainder of the month include:

**November 10**

*Come, Sing Unto the Lord* by Henry Purcell, arranged by Mark Schweizer; Hal Hopson's lovely *The Gift of Love*, based on I Corinthians 13.

**November 17**

James Hopkins' *Praise to the Spinner*, with lyrics by the brilliant Thomas H. Troeger; *Irish Blessing* by Bob Chilcott, made famous by The Priests (check it out on YouTube).

**November 24 – Christ the King Sunday**

*A Song to the Lamb* by David Ashley White, coupled with Roland Martin's beautiful setting of *King of Glory, King of Peace*.

Remember to **SAVE THE DATE**: Saturday, December 14, 7:30 p.m. ~ Concert of Christmas Music performed by the incomparable AlmaNova Duo, Jessica Pierce (flute) and Almer Imamovic (acoustic guitar). Details in the December Spire ~

*How shall I sing that Majesty which angels do admire?  
 Let dust in dust and silence lie; sing, sing, ye heavenly choir.  
 Thousands of thousands stand around Thy throne, O God most high;  
 Ten thousand times ten thousand sound Thy praise; but who am I?*

*Thy brightness unto them appears, whilst I Thy footsteps trace;  
 A sound of God comes to my ears, but they behold Thy face.  
 They sing because Thou art their Sun; Lord, send a beam on me;  
 For where heaven is but once begun there alleluias be.*

~John Mason



**Debora Huffman, Director of Music and Organist**



Believe it or not we are at that time of the year again where your help and contributions allow the Altar Guild to decorate our beautiful space. We count on your generosity to make this happen. Remember during Advent there are no flowers except for the third Sunday.

Envelopes will be available soon. They will be placed at the back of the church and on the reception table in Hawks Hall. Thanking you in advance for your making this another beautiful Christmas season.

**For names to be included in the Christmas bulletins, donations must be received by Sunday, December 15th.  
St. Anne's Altar Guild**



## An Opportunity for Giving

Please consider making a contribution to our music program for the special music we enjoy here at Ascension.

Donation envelopes will be available at the back of the church beginning the Sunday after Thanksgiving.

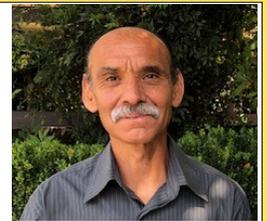
**For names to be included in the Christmas bulletins, donations must be received by Sunday, December 15th.**

## Advent Quiet Day

by **Tim Hamlin, Diocesan Discerner**

I am excited to announce that on Saturday December 14, I will be leading a quiet day (or quiet morning) as a part of Ascension's Advent devotion. The church will be open to provide a space for prayer, meditation, the examen, lectio divina, the rosary, the holy hour and icon prayer; there will be instructions and supplies to explore any of these devotional practices which might intrigue you. The day will start at 8:30am with morning prayer and conclude at noon with the Eucharist. The church will be open all morning so please stop by, whether it be for a few minutes or a few hours, and enjoy a respite in this sacred space as we prepare our selves for the birth of Christ.

Did you happen to notice the new hand rail by the stairs leading up to Hawks Hall? If you did, please say **THANK YOU** to fellow parishioner Hector Ramirez for installing it!



We cordially invite you to our

## Private Holiday Shopping Party

Date: November 23, 2019

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Where: Savor the Flavor LLC 11 Kersting Court, Sierra Madre, CA 91024

*Parking is available on Kersting Court, Baldwin Avenue & Sierra Madre Blvd*

*Come learn about all the hot new food and gift trends of this year and enjoy some champagne, wine, hors d'oeuvres and decadent desserts. This is the time to get a start to your holiday shopping with all the personal attention you'll need. Savor the Flavor will be donating 10% of sales from this evening to Church of the Ascension*

Please R.S.V.P. by November 17. There is a signup sheet on the Events Table in Hawks Hall or you can email the church office at [parish@ascension-sierramadre.com](mailto:parish@ascension-sierramadre.com).



### THE FOG

Thank you to Chris Bamberger for coordinating the (2) screenings of "The Fog" at Ascension on Saturday, October 26. We would also like to thank all the volunteers who helped with ushering in the guests and working the concession stand.

The photo shows the last scene of the film. The inflatable projector screen had just collapsed so we see the scene playing out against the Altar.



On Saturday, December 7, the Sierra Madre Library will host a book reading and signing for a new book authored by former Sierra Madre resident Charlotte Blackmon Collins. Her book is titled A Path Called Tiffany: A Memoir of Raising a Special Child. The book tells the story of the author's efforts to give her daughter Tiffany, a special needs child and then adult, the most full and happy life possible until Tiffany's death at age 42 in 2014. Parishioners may remember Tiffany for the years she attended Ascension.

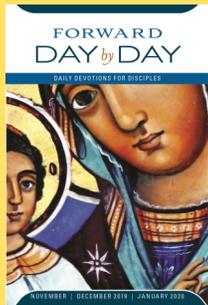


### Do you have any extra Christmas cards??

Please bring them to Church. We need 200 Christmas cards before mid-November.



Cards will be distributed to the guests at the Women's Room Thanksgiving Luncheon.



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 requested.

## AND WHERE HAVE YOUR HANDS BEEN TODAY?

Hand-washing is an easy, inexpensive and effective way to prevent the spread of germs and keep people healthy.

**IF YOUR HANDS ARE VISIBLY DIRTY, WASH YOUR HANDS USING SOAP AND WATER.**

Look for our 3 Alcohol-based Hand Sanitizer Dispensers. Just for You (and for All of Us)!

- Hallway wall by the bathrooms
- Wall just inside kitchen door next to the library
- Stand across from the office in Hawks Hall

*Ascension has your spiritual back  
And your beautiful, amazing  
microbe-inhabited hands*

Respectfully Submitted, Maggie Outhouse



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

## NOVEMBER 2019

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					<b>1</b> Spiritual Direction Rectors Office 10:30am Private	<b>2</b> Garcia Family Party Hall/Kitchen 10:00am—6pm Private
<b>3</b> 8am Mass 9am Xian Ed. Hour/Sunday School 9am-10am-Between the Masses Discussion Group 10:00am Childcare 10:15am Mass 11:45am Discernment Cmt Mtg/Library  <b>FAURE REQUIEM @ 10:15 SERVICE</b>	<b>4</b> 8:15am—Gr 5-8 Gooden Chapel 9am—Gr K-4 Gooden Chapel 2pm—2:50pm Gooden Mindfulness Class/Hall  Fr. Bamberger Out of Office / Clergy Support Group	<b>5</b> 10am Prayer in the Library  <b>VOTING IN HAWKS HALL</b>	<b>6</b> 8:45am—1:30pm Gooden Drama Classes/Hall  5:30pm Yoga/Hall	<b>7</b> <b>7am Mass</b> 8:15am—Gooden Chapel w/Eucharist 10:15am Staff Mtg 9am Forum 3pm- 6pm-Organist Rehearsal/Church 7:30pm—Choir Rehearsal/Hall	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>  <b>Prentice Family Party Hall/Kitchen/Church Grounds Noon—6pm Private</b>
<b>10</b> 8am Mass 9am Xian Ed. Hour/Sunday School 9am-10am-Between the Masses Discussion Group 10:00am Childcare 10:15am Mass 11:45am Discernment Cmt Mtg/Library	<b>11</b> <b>VETERAN'S DAY OFFICE CLOSED</b>  <b>Pasadena Photochromers Meeting (private) Hawks Hall 6:30pm—9:30pm</b>	<b>12</b> 10am Prayer in the Library  2pm—2:50pm Gooden Mindfulness Class/Hall	<b>13</b> 8:45am—1:30pm Gooden Drama Classes/Hall  5:30pm Yoga/Hall	<b>14</b> <b>7am Mass</b> 8:15am—Gooden Chapel 9am Forum 3pm- 6pm-Organist Rehearsal/Church 7:30pm—Choir Rehearsal/Hall	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
					<b>Diocesan Convention</b>	
<b>17</b> 8am Mass 9am Xian Ed. Hour/Sunday School 9am-10am-Between the Masses Discussion Group 10:00am Childcare 10:15am Mass 11:45am Discernment Cmt Mtg/Library	<b>18</b> 8:15am—Gr 5-8 Gooden Chapel 9am—Gr K-4 Gooden Chapel 2pm—2:50pm Gooden Mindfulness Class/Hall	<b>19</b> 10am Prayer in the Library  2pm—2:50pm Gooden Mindfulness Class/Hall  <b>Daisy Troop Meeting Hall 4pm-5:30pm</b>  <b>Vestry Mtg Hall/7pm</b>	<b>20</b> 8:45am—1:30pm Gooden Drama Classes/Hall  5:30pm Yoga/Hall	<b>21</b> <b>7am Mass</b> 8:15am—Gooden Chapel 10:15am Staff Mtg 9am Forum 3pm- 6pm-Organist Rehearsal/Church 7:30pm—Choir Rehearsal/Hall	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>  <b>Holiday Shopping Party at Savor the Flavor 6pm</b> <b>RSVP to Jean Rowe Required</b>
<b>24</b> 8am Mass 9am Xian Ed. Hour/Sunday School 9am-10am-Between the Masses Discussion Group 10:00am Childcare 10:15am Mass <b>Noon—PMC Mtg/Library</b>  <b>BAPTISM @ 10:15 SERVICE</b>	<b>25</b> 8:15am—Gr 5-8 Gooden Chapel 9am—Gr K-4 Gooden Chapel  <b>Pasadena Photochromers Meeting (private) Hawks Hall 6:30pm—9:30pm</b>  <b>Women's Room Thanksgiving Dinner (dinner offsite-morning preparation in Hall &amp; Kitchen)</b>	<b>26</b> 8am—10am Gooden Grandparents Day Service Chapel  10am Prayer in the Library	<b>27</b> 5:30pm Yoga/Hall	<b>28</b>  <b>Thanksgiving Day Mass 9:30am</b>	<b>29</b>  <b>OFFICE CLOSED</b>	<b>30</b>