The November 2026 Spire

UPCOMING EVENTS

Please see the calendar on page 8 for an updated list of events.

OCTOBER 2026 Pledge Payment Snapshot

2026 Budget $165,000

YTD Budget:	$137,500
YTD Actual:	$130,200
Difference:	$-7,300

From the Rector

I have to say I have been wrestling for weeks about what to write for my final article for the Spire.

One part of me wants to write about what lies ahead. My own plans for retirement are still very much in the imaging phase. I do know that I intend to travel a few times a year to see my grandkids. I have talked about getting a new dog. I am considering trying birdwatching. I know I need to make walking every day a part of my routine. I am sure it will all be well.

Another part of me wants to write about what I hope for Ascension's future. I know that I will be praying for a healthy and deliberate transition. I know that a new rector is out there somewhere and that through discernment, the Holy Spirit will guide the process leading to that call.

Another part of me wants to write about how grateful I am for the privilege of serving here for all these years. Each year, my love for this community has only grown stronger. Together, we have been through great times, and some hard times.

Finally, a part of me wants to say how much I love you all. May God bless us in what lies ahead.

Father Michael+

Fall Greetings from Your Transition Committee...

In November we will have Father Mark Hallahan as our supply priest.

Fr. Mark started his religious life as a Franciscan friar, leaving the order in 1980. He moved to Los Angeles and was received into the episcopal church in 1987. He has worked for many non-profit organizations and was ordained in 2006. He served as the rector of St. Paul's Pomona for 16 years. Fr. Mark enjoys traveling, reading, and viewing British murder mysteries.

Welcome Fr. Mark!

From Your Vestry

Thanksgiving and the Season of Advent are a time for all of us to reflect and to show our thankfulness and appreciation for all that we have been blessed with in our personal lives as well as in our spiritual community at Church of the Ascension.

As you all know, Father Michael will celebrate his last mass with us on Sunday, November 1st. On behalf of the Vestry, I want to thank our Rector for over 40 years of leadership and dedicated service to our church, parishioners, and community. Father has brought the message of God's word alive in so many ways. His sermons, dedication to our church, and desire to be an example of Jesus's love to others have been a blessing to this congregation.

I also want to thank our dedicated staff and volunteers who are responsible for the efficient operation of our church and the maintenance of our historical facilities.
Thank you for your tireless work behind the scenes to make sure our church is ready and accessible to all who wish to gather and worship at Church of the Ascension.

In addition, I'd like to thank the individuals whose generous donations allowed us to purchase a new organ. This purchase will enhance our already stellar music program led by Stephen Marshall and bring many years of joy to current and future parishioners.

Finally, I want to thank everyone who has supported Church of the Ascension in the past. Your generosity has helped maintain the Anglican tradition in Sierra Madre for decades. As we plan for the future, the goal of the Vestry is to not just maintain the status quo, but to build on our six core ministries of worship, pastoral care, fellowship, formation, outreach, and presence. It will take a commitment by all of us to preserve our beautiful facilities and continue all of the services and programs we currently enjoy.

I encourage you to please take time to fill out and return your pledge card for 2027. Extra copies are available at the church if you did not receive one in the mail.

As always, I look forward to hearing from you as we plan for our future together.

Walker Williams
Senior Warden

wgwilliams757@gamil.com

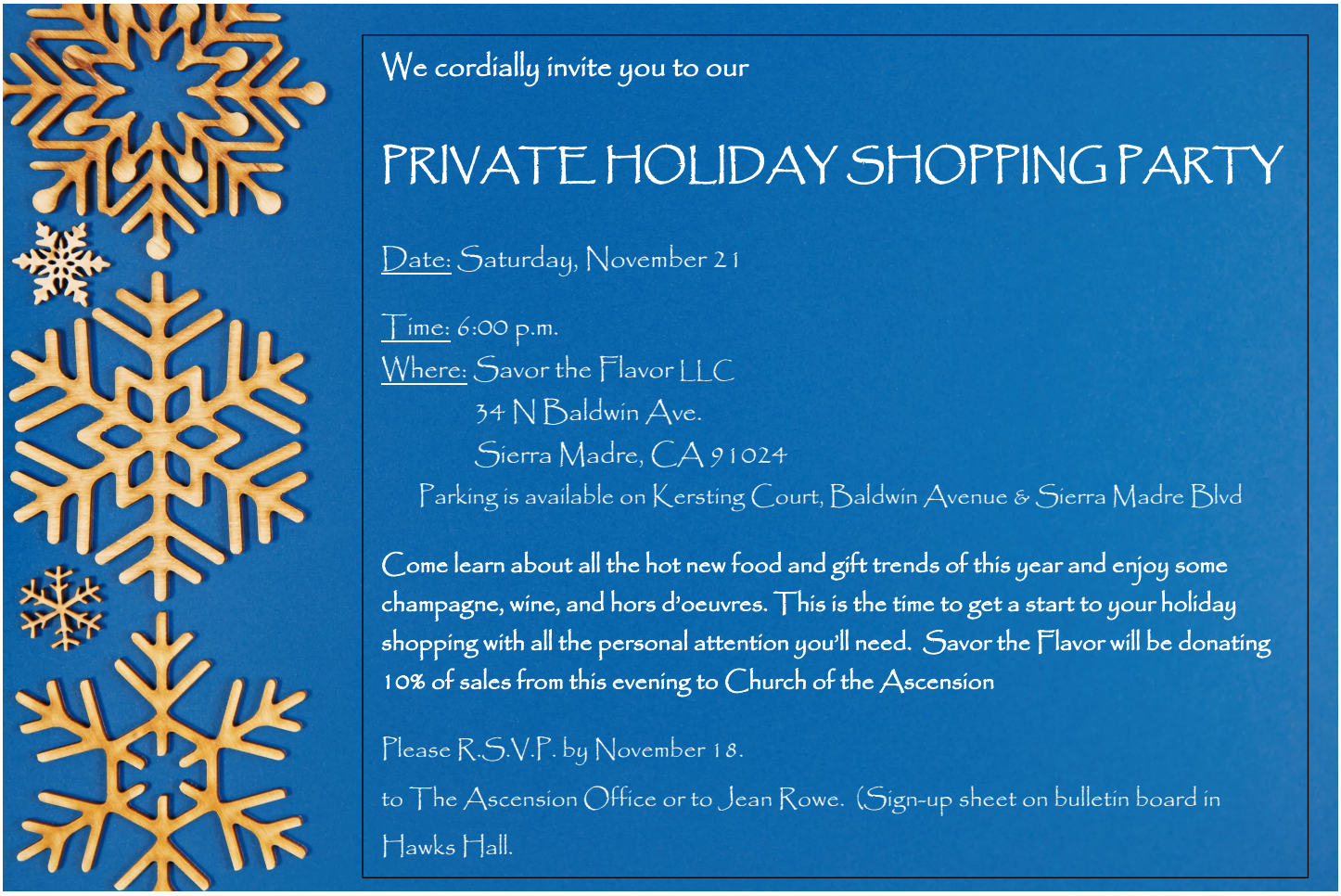
Put Saturday, November 21 on your Calendar!

It's the date for Ascension's Annual Savor the Flavor Shopping Party

Get great ideas and a head start on your Christmas Shopping

Sample the latest award-winning food

Earn money for Ascension with every dollar you spend



Greetings!

Sunday November 1st promises to be a very special day in the life of our parish. We will honor and celebrate the retirement of our beloved rector, and we will also witness the Confirmation and Reception of 4 members of our Ascension congregation.

Regarding Confirmation, The Book of Common Prayer tells us that "In the course of their Christian development, those baptized at an early age are expected, when they are ready and when they have been duly prepared, to make a mature public affirmation of their faith and commitment to the responsibilities of their Baptism and to receive the laying on of hands by the bishop." (p. 412)

Similar to Confirmation, Reception is a rite wherein those who were baptized and confirmed in other Christian denominations are received by the bishop and publicly welcomed into full membership and fellowship in the Episcopal Church.

In both cases, the whole church is truly blessed when members of our faith community present themselves to receive this holy sacrament!

If you have not yet been confirmed, or wish to be received into the Episcopal Church, or if you wish to reaffirm your baptismal vows, please reach out to the church office or one of the clergy for more information.

Let us pray:

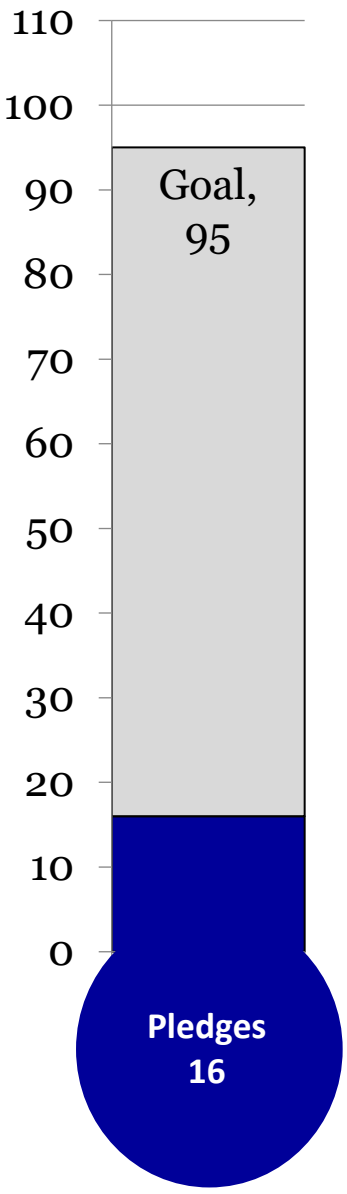
Almighty and everliving God, let your fatherly hand ever be over these your servants; let your Holy Spirit ever be with them; and so lead them in the knowledge and obedience of your Word, that they may serve you in this life, and dwell with you in the life to come; through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen. (PCP p. 419)

Let us all welcome Sophia, Anna, Niall, and David!

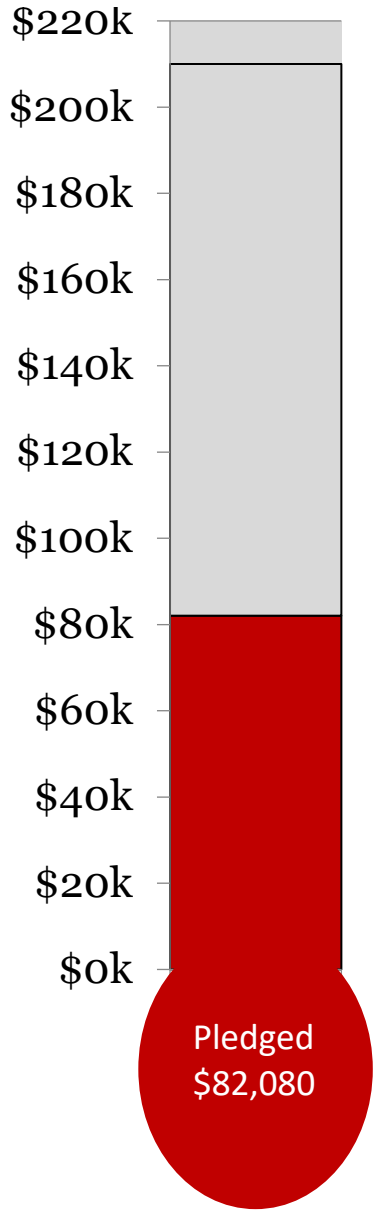
Blessings, Mother Robin+

STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN UPDATE

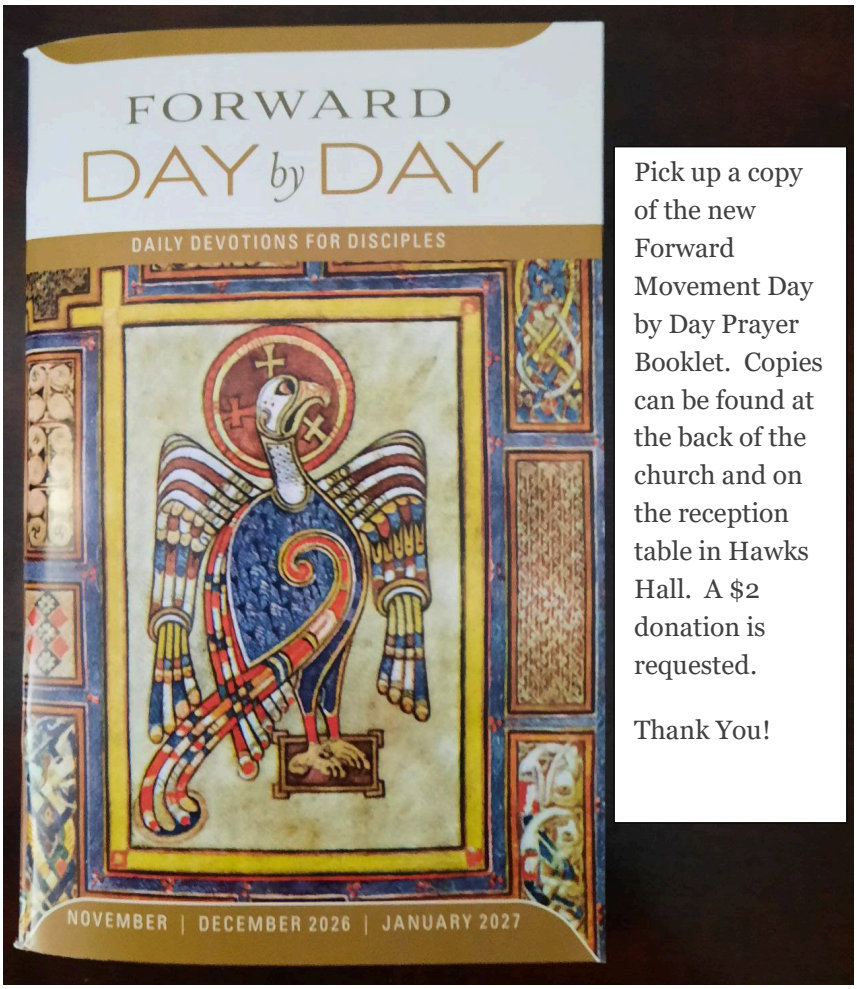
Pledging Households



Pledge Goal $210,000



THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE PLEDGED!



Pick up a copy of the new Forward Movement Day by Day Prayer Booklet. Copies can be found at the back of the church and on the reception table in Hawks Hall. A $2 donation is requested.

Thank You!

MUSIC MINISTRY – THE CONCERT and THE ORGAN

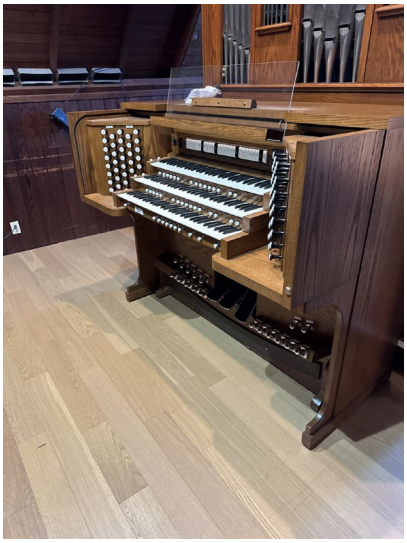
Presented by Dr. Stephen Marshall

IN October's SPIRE, there was an invitation to the Cello & Piano Concert held October 25th. WOW! There was a tremendous response! So many of you not only attended but helped to diligently spread the invitation, put up flyers, send out announcements, and invite your friends. Well done, everyone! There were easily more than 85 people in Hawks Hall with people standing along the back walls and even down the hallway! Benny and I are incredibly grateful to you for the space to share our music and for a community that enthusiastically embraces what we share. Thank you everyone for a wonderful afternoon. While Benny is travelling this week for performances in Amsterdam, he and I have already started talking about when the next concert will be.

The responses to the "enthusiastically encouraged" free-will donations were also extremely successful and generous. The people who gathered for the concert gave enough money to allow us to take the first exciting steps toward using our new church organ to build on already-wonderful community connections through music. I will be working closely with the Vestry to create this exciting path forward.

Then, there is the NEW ORGAN! Monday, October 26th, Ryan Ballantyne of Ballantyne Organ Builders and his team began the process to remove our old organ and replace it with our new organ. This is an exciting time for the music ministry at Ascension.

Over the next weeks and months, I will happily invite congregants to visit the organ loft after the second service so that people can see first-hand this wonderful gift. And, if navigating the stairs is a bit of a challenge, we will also figure out ways to use our phones to help with "virtual visits" from below. This is OUR new instrument – an instrument of teaching, of beauty, and of worship. I'm excited to share this wonderful gift with you.



Pictures from 10/25/26 Concert

Pictures from 10/4/26 Blessing of the Animals

Thank You to Jon Prentice for the 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

NOVEMBER 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 9:30am – Worship w/Eucharist POTLUCK COFFEE HOUR AFTER THE SERVICE 2-5 RECEPTION FOR FR. MICHAEL & DEBBIE IN HAWKS HALL	2 8:15am-9:45am Gooden Chapel 8:30am-Yoga/Hall	3 10:50am-11:20am Gooden Chapel	4 8:15am-9am Gooden Chapel 8:30am-Yoga/Hall 5:30pm-Yoga/Hall Noon-Men's Group Monthly Luncheon/Nano's Café/RSVP to Walker Williams 3-4:30pm Organ Practice 6pm-Wed Night Dinner Grp Meets	5 8:15-Mass 9:00am Rector's Forum 10:30am-Staff Mtg 3:30pm-Organ Practice	6	7 12:30-8pm DBE Hall Rental/Private
8 8am-Worship w/Eucharist 9am-Choir Rehearsal 10:15am-Worship w/Eucharist	9 8:15am-9:45am Gooden Chapel 8:30am-Yoga/Hall	10 10:50am-11:20am Gooden Chapel	11 8:15am-9am Gooden Chapel 8:30am-Yoga/Hall 5:30pm-Yoga/Hall 3-4:30pm Organ Practice 6pm-Wed Night Dinner Grp Meets	12 8:15-Mass 9:00am Rector's Forum 10:30am-Staff Mtg 11-2:30 Funeral & Reception for Robin White 3:30pm-Organ Practice	13 **Diocesan Convention**	14 11-3 Music Recital/Hall Private
15 8am-Worship w/Eucharist 9am-Choir Rehearsal 10:15am-Worship w/Eucharist	16 8:15am-9:45am Gooden Chapel 8:30am-Yoga/Hall	17 10:50am-11:20am Gooden Chapel 7:00pm-Vestry Meeting/Hall	18 8:15am-9am Gooden Chapel 8:30am-Yoga/Hall 5:30pm-Yoga/Hall 3-4:30pm Organ Practice 6pm-Wed Night Dinner Grp Meets	19	20	21 6pm-Shopping Party @ Savor the Flavor/RSVP Required
22 8am-Worship w/Eucharist 9am-Choir Rehearsal 10:15am-Worship w/Eucharist	23 8:30am-Yoga/Hall	24	25 8:30am-Yoga/Hall 5:30pm-Yoga/Hall 3:00pm-Worley Family Baptism/Private 6pm-Wed Night Dinner Grp Meets	26 THANKSGIVING **PARISH OFFICE CLOSED** **Hall reserved for Bamberger family**	27	28 TBD Funeral Reception for Abe Garcia/Hall
29 8am-Worship w/Eucharist 9am-Choir Rehearsal 10:15am-Worship w/Eucharist	30 8:15am-9:45am Gooden Chapel 8:30am-Yoga/Hall					