



ALL SAINTS CHURCH  
PASADENA, CALIFORNIA

### **Celebrating Community!**

Ashley Davis

June 7, 2009 - Youth Sunday (Part II)

What can I say about All Saints? From the moment I arrived, they have guided me spiritually and mentally. I have been going to All Saints for 10 yrs, and I have enjoyed myself very much. I started realizing my faith with God through the youth group. I began my journey to think about my relationship with God and what does it all mean. When I was in youth group I lived in Duarte, but after moving to Upland, I could no longer attend youth group. This did not prevent me from being involved. I decided to join acolytes. As an acolyte captain, I was able to mentor younger team members, which I enjoy, especially seeing themselves grow.

As I approached tenth grade I decided to join Seekers. The seekers experience afforded me the opportunity to explore my inner being, and then I began to explore my relationship with God. Did I really have a relationship with him? I found that I could talk to God just like talking to my parents. Seekers helped to enrich my spiritual life; I learned what having a relationship with God was all about, trust, faith, and love. As I continue to pray, my prayers are more meaningful to me. I learned to seek God more in my everyday life not just when there was a crisis. I made some wonderful friends. On the day I was confirmed I was overwhelmed with joy and serenity. As the Bishop laid hands on me I felt cleansed. This truly was a spiritual day for me as my relationship with God went to new heights. Also this was a special day for me because my mother was confirmed upon her completion of Covenant II.

Sometimes tragedies can bring us closer to God. I remember I was over at my friend's house and I got a call around 7 am from my friend. She was crying and I was getting nervous. She informed me that one of my friends Nick had died in a car accident the night before. Eleven Members were returning home after a week of Bible Teaching and missionary work in Bishop when a ford pickup truck pulling a 5th wheel trailer collided head-on with their full-sized passenger van on Highway. The three-vehicle collision killed five people and injured 10. Four of the fatalities were in the van. One was my friend Nick. I just couldn't understand why God would have something like this happen. This causes me to continue to question God during my journey of faith. This event made me really appreciate my family and friends because you never know what life holds.

Half way through my junior year I got a call from the church asking me if I wanted to be on the vestry board. To be honest I did not know anything about the Vestry, so I put the former warden Rich Llewellyn on hold to ask my parents what I should do. My dad said was that it is an honor to be chosen. I thought about it for a minute and thought, I could handle this -bring it on!

My real first interaction with the board was at our annual conference held in March. I arrived in from a swim meet, smelling like chlorine into this elegant banquet room of adults. I really thought I had the wrong room until I noticed Ed. As he shouted my name from across the room, and I said yep this is it. The next day I was overwhelmed with lots of information. I felt like a huge sponge absorbing it all.

After the long day, David, the former youth minister, decided to go by the downtown area with Laura, the other youth member, and I before dinner. It was nice to get a break. This was the type of moment where I could not stop smiling; the wind coming in and seeing the Queen Mary from a distance with my peers made me happy. I was grateful for all of it, and very lucky to be on the Vestry board. Being a part of the Vestry board has given me insight on how much work it takes to run a church like ours.

As my journey continues into college, I will have my All Saints family as my foundation, and will keep and seek God in my life as I go on my journey. Thank you my All Saints Family.

As I close I can't help but remember a very special classmate, I didn't know her personally but the circumstances that unfold during last Fridays commencement ceremonies will remain with me. They called my classmates name and she proudly walked to receive her diploma. I'm sure her parents were very proud of her as all the parents were. She calmly returned to her seat and suddenly she suffered a seizer. The paramedics arrived quickly and begin to initiate CPR as her heart stopped. We watched in amazement as the ambulance left the field. We feared the worst, prayed for the best and with God's grace she survived.