Church of the
Ascension
315 Clanton Avenue
Montgomery, AL 36104

www.coascension.org

Phone: 334-263-5529

BULK MAIL

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 18
Montgomery, Ala

CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

We believe in sharing the experience of love and grace by seeking relationship with God and one another.

Confirmation

September 13th

Confirmation Sunday and

Holy Eucharist Rite II

9:00 AM Outdoor Service

Bishop Glenda or "Bishop G" will be here Sunday, September 13th to celebrate Confirmation and Holy Eucharist Rite II out on the front lawn. This will be our only service of the day, and will be live –streamed at 9:00 AM.

The Tower

Planting Goodness

Steve and I had been married for three years and just bought our first home together when the knock came on the door. It was Claire and Joe Twardy. They had called us a few days before and asked if they could stop by for a visit and to talk about the church. Claire and Joe were the kind of couple that had good priorities and a solid marriage and we were delighted they wanted to come and talk with us, so we agreed. We weren't really sure why they were coming, but Steve had been recently confirmed at St. Paul's in Selma and we were both getting more involved with ministry at the church.

When Joe and Claire arrived, we sat down in the den and after a few minutes of small chat they jumped into their spiel. They started by talking about why they loved St. Paul's and were committed to the church and her mission. Then they asked us to be a part of that mission with them by making a pledge to the church. It wasn't a tough sell, because it wasn't a "sell" at all: it was an invitation. Steve and I had never been invited to be a part of the church's mission through a financial commitment—but that made perfect sense. The church needed funding in order for her mission and ministries to operate. By understanding that as good stewards we got the opportunity to give back to God through our church, we too were invited into this partnership that Jesus and the members of St. Paul's had formed. We got to be included. That was a great feeling.

We weren't the best stewards in those first years of pledging. At times we didn't budget well or let our priorities get out of whack so that our giving to the church was less than faithful. It took some time for us to learn how to be good stewards; how to develop habitual stewardship habits that prioritized our giving to the church before going on vacation or spending money on date nights and fun stuff. After a few years and a lot of prayer and spiritual discipline, we not only got better at prioritizing our giving, we made a decision to work toward a tithe, the biblical standard of giving, 10%. It took us about seven years to get there and we haven't looked back.

I've heard lots of people say things like they would give their money to the church first and then, somehow, enough money would appear to pay their bills and take care of their responsibilities. That never happened for us—but we gave ourselves time and made the commitment together and found our way on the path toward faithful giving. It wasn't always easy but it was rewarding.

I've also heard lots of people make excuses over the years as to why they couldn't give to the church. Ultimately the decision to give or not give is between you

Continued on page 2

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Music Notes 3
Stewardship Committee 4
Stewardship Committee 5
From the Archives 6
Children's Ministry 7
Confirmation Sunday 8

CLERGY & STAFF

The Rev. Candice Frazer
Rector

The Rev. Drew Brislin
Associate Rector

Rebecca Taylor
Organist/Choirmaster

Tiffany Nishibun
Children's Ministries

Youth Minister

Tracy Hinton-Adams
Parish Administrator

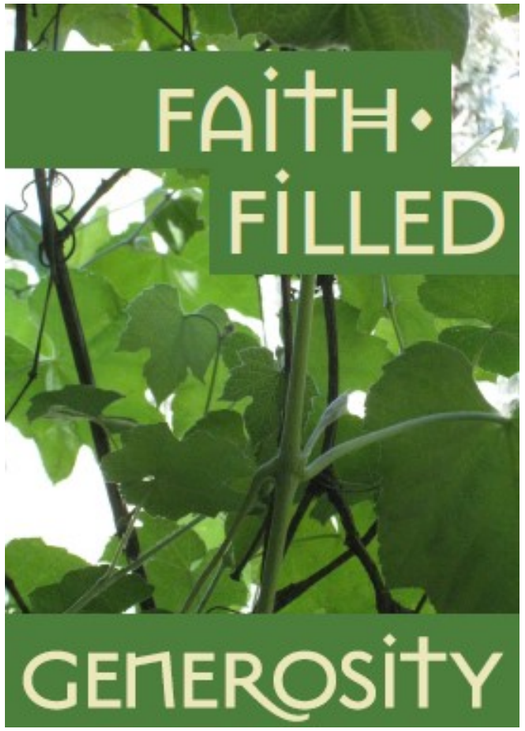
Jessica James
Communications

Laura Walter
Special Events

Will McQueen
Facilities Manager

Octavio Gomez-Jimenez
Housekeeping

Ryan Hall
Housekeeping



and God—but in prayerfully discerning whether or not you pledge I offer a few things for you to consider:

- The hinge moment in our liturgy is the Offertory. The Offertory is the time in which we remember that God has given us all that we have and in return we offer a portion of that back to God… "All things come of thee, O Lord. And of thine own have we given thee."
- The mission of the Church is to partner with God and one another to do God's work in the world. We partner not only through our time and talents, but also our treasure. The various ministries of Ascension require financial support through program, staffing, supplies, as well as a building and all that it takes to maintain and run it. We can't operate the day school without plumbing or livestream services without Wi-Fi. Pledging, and subsequently giving, to the church is part of your role in this partnership.
- To make a first fruits, proportional, sacrificial pledge to the church and then to prioritize that as you pay bills each month keeps God in the midst of the mundane. God is not simply a divine character who we dress up for Easter and Christmas, but the God of the ordinary, everyday aspects of our lives. God is in the midst of our sufferings, our joys, and our daily grind. To practice faithful giving in the midst of everyday living is to center and re-center our lives on Christ in ways that lead to transformation.
- Our giving makes a difference to the kingdom. Lives are changed through outreach and in-reach ministries. We share love and grace with one another be it members of our church or our community. We feed people in Honduras, we shelter the homeless, we tutor kids from down the block, we take flowers to shut-ins, we put signs in the front yards of newborns, we baptize, we bury, we serve lobsters. By doing all these things, and so many more, we build up the kingdom and remind ourselves and others there is more to this world than what we see on tv or social media; there is more hope than fear; there is more purpose than power.

Shakespeare told us that the question was "to be or not to be" but I think the deeper question might be "to give or not to give." Giving is directly connected to our spiritual growth and development. To walk the path God lays out before us includes faithful giving.

Light and Life,
Candice+

Contributions to Clergy

Discretionary Fund

The clergy Discretionary fund is partially funded through the Operating Account, as well as contributions from generous parishioners. This fund is used to offer assistance to those in need in our church and community.

Thank you to all who support the Clergy Discretionary Fund:

Sustainers: Hattie Boo and Frank Johnston

SHINING OUR LIGHT

2020 STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

(As of 8/31/2020):

169 Pledges totaling $940,148.00
2020 Pledges Collected To-date:
$613,863.67

Pledges are important not only in properly budgeting for the church, but in our growth and transformation as we give to God to partner with God in doing his work in the world.

ON THE ROAD

On any given Sunday throughout the year, many of our parishioners are travelling or on vacation. Just because one isn't in Montgomery, doesn't mean you can't go to church. Each month, we will share with our parish family all the places we go!

Ellen Brooks,

St. James Episcopal Church, Church in the Pines, Lake Martin

Children's Ministry

Children's Church

Sundial Garden
During the 9AM outdoor service
Masks required

Tiffany will meet with the children in the sundial garden during the outdoor service for a children's lesson and prayers. This is available to children who can social distance independently though the fourth grade. If you child is preschool age, we recommend a masked parent also attend to help the child keep safe distance.

Brown Bags will go out SEPTEMBER 20

and will have lessons leading up to our pet blessing about God's Creation and caring for it, The Great Flood and St. Francis of Assisi.

Please let Tiffany know if you'd like a Brown Bag for your household so enough materials can be ordered and prepared. Email: tiffany@coascension.org

Brown Bags are available for pick up after the outdoor service or arrangements can be made for delivery or pick up.

SAVE THE DATE FOR A SOCIAL DISTANCED OUTDOOR TRUNK OR TREAT EVENT ON OCTOBER 28!

Memorial Donations Received in the Month of August

Memory of Nancy Dunklin:
Gillette Slaton

Memory of Paul Copeland:
Gillette Slaton

Memory of Hazel Mathis:
Gillette Slaton

Memory of Harold Nicrosi:
Gillette Slaton

Memory of Jo Garrett:
Kitty and Winston Sheehan

VESTRY

2020
Andrew Akin,
Senior Warden
Laura Brendle
Susan Copeland
Henry Weatherly

2021
Mr. Glenn Sylvest,
Junior Warden
Brittney Calhoun
Lacy Gibson
Nick Mielke

2022
Elizabeth Conner
Frank Johnston
Gil Steindorff
Peter Waldo

Robert Gould,
Treasurer

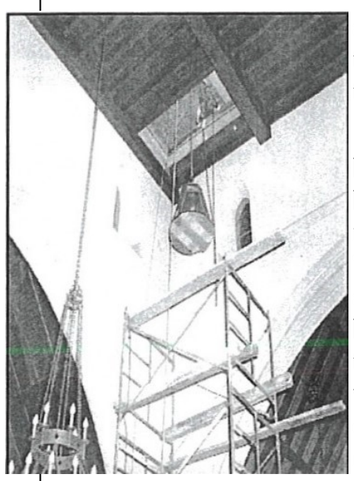
Matt Bledsoe,
Clerk of the Vestry

From the Archives...

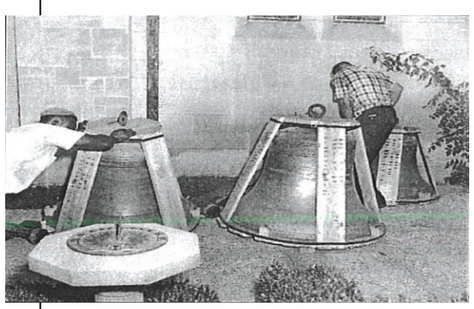
Friends,

The videos of preparations for Ascension Day gave us a good look at the interior of the Blair Tower and the bells which we hear every week. I remembered an article about the bells which was published in the February 2015 edition of The Tower. I thought you might enjoy reading it again.

"There were no bells in the belfry (Blair Tower) at Church of the Ascension until 1965. At that time, three large bronze bells, which were cast by the John Taylor Company of Laughborough, England, were given to the Ascension as memorials. The tuned G bell weighs 1,400 pounds and was given in memory of Edith Hunter Dobbs. The A bell weighs 1,000 pounds and was given in the memory of the Weisenburgh family members. The "tenor," or B bell, weighs 730 pounds and was given in memory of Edith Gayle Miller. The bells were rung by electronic clappers which were controlled from a mechanical device located near the organ console.



After the fire in 1984, the bells were removed and sent to a foundry to be repaired and cleaned. At this time, the decision was made to re-install the bells so that they could be rung by rope pulls located near the pulpit. A metal frame was installed in the tower to support this small "ring of bells" and a "headstock," or holder, was built for each bell. A large wheel with a track was attached to the "headstock," and the rope was attached to the wheel. As the bell moves back and forth, the rope wraps and unwraps in the track around the wheel. This is very much like the equipment used in "ringing changes" which are very popular in Europe and especially in Great Britain. Ringing changes involve at least six or seven bells which are numbered and run in numerical patterns by several people standing in a circle in the "ringing room" where the bell pulls are located. The intricacy of the numerical patterns would depend on the number of bells available.



In a column written by Burns Bennett for the Montgomery Advertiser-Journal for the dedication of the bells in October of 1965, Mr. Bennett wrote the following, "Many of us are born, christened, grow up and marry, die and are buried to the sound of bells. Bells ring out the old and ring in the new.'"

—Hugh Alsabrook, Archivist

2nd Sunday Eucharist Reserved Sacrament

September 13, 2020

You must reserve your sacrament by Thursday, September 10 at noon by calling the church office or emailing **jessica@coascension.org**. Drive thru pick-up stations will be available in the back parking lot (enter through the Hull Street entrance and exit through Clanton Ave) from 10:30AM until 11:00AM on the morning of Sunday, September 13.

MUSIC NOTES

Sing to the Lord a new song

Singing and Stewardship...

Colossians 3:16-17

[16] Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. [17] And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

What does music in worship have to do with stewardship? Yes, this is the time we talk about financial gifts to God's work, but we also emphasize the stewardship of our time and talents. I have written extensively about why God asks us to sing, why he commands it in scripture. But this month I want to look at this passage from Colossians and notice two important phrases.

". . . and with GRATITUDE in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs TO GOD.

At Church of the Ascension, gratitude has been a cornerstone of our theology of stewardship. We hear and know that our gifts are a response to God's goodness and generosity. If I had to read only one passage in scripture that would keep me living in the Kingdom, I thank Colossians 3:1-17 might be it. There is a lot of wisdom and good guidance there. And towards the end we are told to sing with gratitude to God.

When we make ourselves vulnerable by singing, if we sing in thanksgiving, regardless of the song, it's really good for us. There is something about gratitude that is healthy, life-giving, and important.

Then, we're told to sing to God. One of the more amusing things that new singers have said to me over the years is "I only want to sing solos." Hmmm… maybe you could do that somewhere, but that's not why we sing here. [Then, COVID comes along and we can't sing in groups. Oh well, God, I'm confused.] But to God is where we direct our praise, petition, our talents and our deepest selves. I encourage you to sing your thanks to God. Make it up. But sing it, in the shower, in the kitchen, in the car --- wherever! Sing the words of the Psalms. It will change you, and that for the better, healthier, stronger.

Sing to God with gratitude in your heart. Call me if you would like to be part of that ministry here at the Ascension.

—Becky Taylor

CONTRIBUTIONS

The Music Ministry Discretionary Fund has been established to provide special resources for the music program at Ascension. Gifts are welcome in honor, thanksgiving and memory of loved ones.

Thank you to all who support music ministry at the Ascension, by your prayers, presence and gifts. Especially for gifts from the following:

Sustainers

Pat & Jim Franklin
The Hobbs Foundation
Karen & Marvin Campbell
Emily Caruso
Susan & Lavone Dubose
Patty & Carlton King
Diane Williams
Melanie & Dan Morris
The Family of June Scott
Anonymous
Anonymous
Nancy & Lee Ellis
Sally & Young Boozer

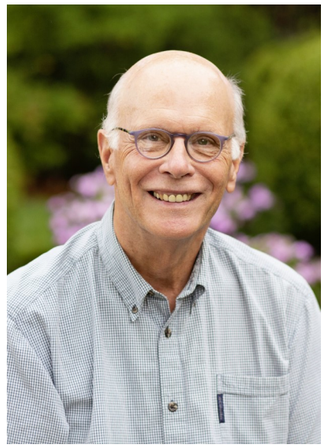
August Contributions

Jan & Paul Davis

FAITH·FILLED GENEROSITY

2021 Stewardship Committee

Henry Weatherly, Chair



Gil Steindorff, Co-chair

Camilla Austin

Stacia Bailey

Margaret Hunt

Richard Norris

Phelps Reid

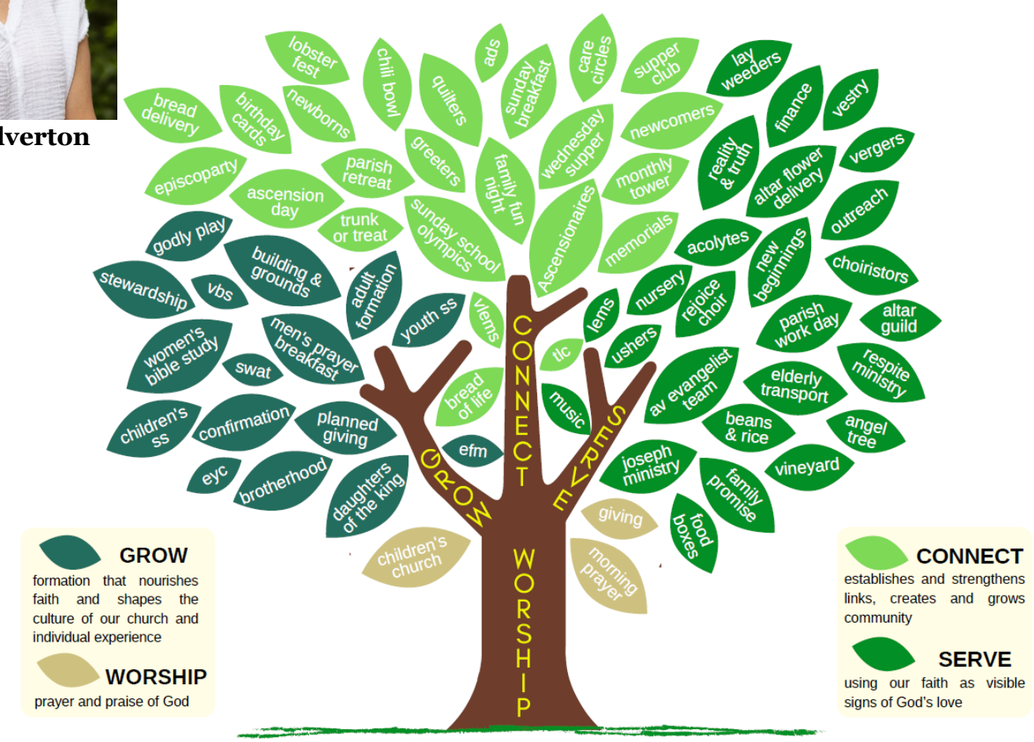
Glenn Sylvest

Jimmy Walter

Mary Lee Yelverton

If you plant goodness, you will harvest faithful love.

Hosea 10:12



Your gifts support more than 70 ministries and programs at Ascension