



We believe in sharing love and grace with God and one another.

From the Rector...

It's not often that I get to sit in the pew on a Sunday morning. This past Sunday, Steve and I went to church at Holy Spirit Episcopal Church in Gulf Shores. We are here on vacation and have visited the little church on Fort Morgan road about once a year for the last thirty years.

One of my seminary classmates is the rector and as soon as I walked in the door he and I began to give each other a little grief—all in good fun. He tried to ban me from worship and I told him I had brought a score card to grade the service. The others around us quickly caught on that we knew each other and smiled appreciatively at our teasing of one another. We exchanged hugs and went to find a seat on a back pew of the church.



We were barely in the pew when another old friend who we hadn't seen for some time noticed us and flew across the aisle to give us a hug. The procession had scarcely passed when the priest's spouse saw us and also came to hug our necks. Our hearts were filled and we hadn't even sung the second stanza of "O day of radiant gladness."

As is Holy Spirit's custom, we were introduced at the announcement time. Though I generally don't like being recognized in church, this is the exception. I know the custom here and have experienced it every time we come to worship. (Though I do wonder if we might not lay claim to an honorary membership status as there are plenty of people who only attend church once a year and claim to be members.) We were well received by many and after the service those who had smiled warmly at us, made a point to come talk

to us and express their gratitude for our worshipping with them.

Our experience on Sunday was a good reminder as to why coming to church is so important. You cannot have your hand shaken or your neck hugged through a screen. And though you may hear a good message from the preacher or beautiful music being sung, the rush of endorphins and good feelings is limited unless you are physically present.

As a society, we have seen a significant reduction in attendance at church since the pandemic. Most researchers claim that the number one reason for our lack of attendance is the loss of habit. Prior to the pandemic we were in the habit of going to church. It was an accepted social norm and a part of our spiritual discipleship. After a year or two of not attending church and listening to the reinforcing rhetoric of staying home—we stopped engaging with church and have had trouble reengaging since. This is as true of CoA as it is of other churches—Episcopal, Protestant, even Catholic.

The years prior to pandemic were already bearing witness to the decline of organized religion in America. Now, it seems to have sped up a little. When I think of where influence lies and realize the limited access the church has on the world, I am not that surprised by partisan politics and increased global anxiety. You will not find hope in a world filled with woe and scarcity thinking.

This Sunday begins our annual stewardship campaign, and though the church needs money to operate—pay employees, fund mission and outreach, even keep the lights on—I am less concerned with these things than I am with the spiritual health and vitality of our very souls. Giving is about transformation. When we give our money in service of God's purposes, we begin to transform our relationship with money, with God, with ourselves. When we give our time—by coming to church, worshipping, and volunteering—we transform how we understand the world and the role we play as kingdom dwellers in this earth.

Going to church at Holy Spirit reminded me of how transformative showing up can be. To be welcomed and appreciated simply because you showed up fills your heart in expansive ways and reminds you of the ever-present hope that dwelling in the kingdom brings. It truly was a day of "radiant gladness."

Light and Life,

Candice+

[candice@coascension.org](mailto:candice@coascension.org)

# Barefoot Sunday - Oct 20th



Bring your gently loved shoes to donate and kick-off our stewardship campaign by Walking in Love and sharing freely with a world in need.

## SERVE



Episcopal  
Relief & Development  
Working Together for Lasting Change

In the last week we have seen the devastating pictures coming out of North Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, South Carolina, and Florida due to Hurricane Helene. Hurricane Milton is now threatening the western coast of Florida, projecting to land as a Category 3 with significant wind threat and storm surge. Pray for those who have been victims of the severe weather and those who are in the path of the latest threat. If you would like to further support relief and rebuilding efforts, consider giving to [Episcopal Relief and Development](#). This agency works through the national church as our response to devastation throughout the world.

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Come support ADS by signing up to read to our students on Thursday's at noon! Please reach out to Murrey if you are interested.

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## Mercy House Volunteer Sign-up

A new sign up is now available for volunteers to help distribute lunches at Mercy House from August-December. You can view the sign up sheet by clicking [HERE](#). Since August of last year we have been working alongside our friends from St. John's on this outreach project, and two volunteers are needed from 11:00 - 1:00 every Thursday.



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# The Vineyard Bookstore

*Come see what is new at the Vineyard!*

You can now Venmo at The Vineyard! Just search for **@ChurchoftheAscension** and look for our logo. Make sure you tell us it is for The Vineyard and offer a brief description of your purchase. All proceeds at The Vineyard go to outreach initiatives.



## WORSHIP



Be in the nave early this Sunday!

The Prelude will begin at 10:15 with two anthems composed by our guest Preacher and Musician, Dr. Bill Roberts. He will lead a retreat for The Ascension Choir on Friday and Saturday, and the choir will offer this beautiful and important music during the service as we worship.

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# Sunday Morning Schedule

Rite I Service - 8:00 AM - Nave

Breakfast - 8:30 AM - Ascension Hall

Adult Forum - 9:15 AM - Upper Room

EYC & Sunday School - 9:15 AM - 3rd Floor

Rite II Service - 10:30 AM - Nave & Livestream



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**The Sacrament of Order: A Preaching Series on  
the Letter to the Hebrews  
Sundays October 6 – November 17**

# HEBREWS

JESUS  EVERYTHING

The letter to the Hebrews points us toward a future hope grounded in Jesus. Jesus is the one who sustains all things and proceeds from the One who created all things. When our life is ordered around Christ, the changes and chances of this world are less threatening, and we begin to discover opportunity and possibility.

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**Venmo update!**

If you are using Venmo please check and make sure your are sending payments to the Venmo account with the FULL COLOR logo with the name @ChurchOftheAscension-

Montgomery. If you are sending it to the account with the **GOLD** logo with the name @churchoftheascension please change to the other account. The account with the gold logo is an old account and accessing funds from it is becoming more difficult. If you have any questions please contact Tracy!

## CORRECT INCORRECT

< Church Of the Ascension Montgomery



Church Of the Ascension Mont...

@ChurchOftheAscension-Montgomer • 18 friends



Church Of the Ascension

@churchoftheascension



As electronic payments become more widely used we ask that anyone who uses Venmo to **please add a short summary of what the payment is for in the description field**. We now accept Venmo for Wednesday night dinner, Sunday morning breakfast, purchases in The Vineyard Bookstore, as well as for giving. This description will help us allocate the resources appropriately. Thanks!

CONNECT



**The Episcopal Church  
of the Ascension**

*All Hallow's Fest*

**Sunday October 27**

**4:00 till 6:00 p.m. 315 Clanton Avenue**

*Fun for the Whole Family!*







# All Hallow's Fest

October 27 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Church of the Ascension

## Volunteer to Help!

PARISHIONERS:

Host a trunk for Trunk-or-Treat!

ASCENSION MINISTRIES:

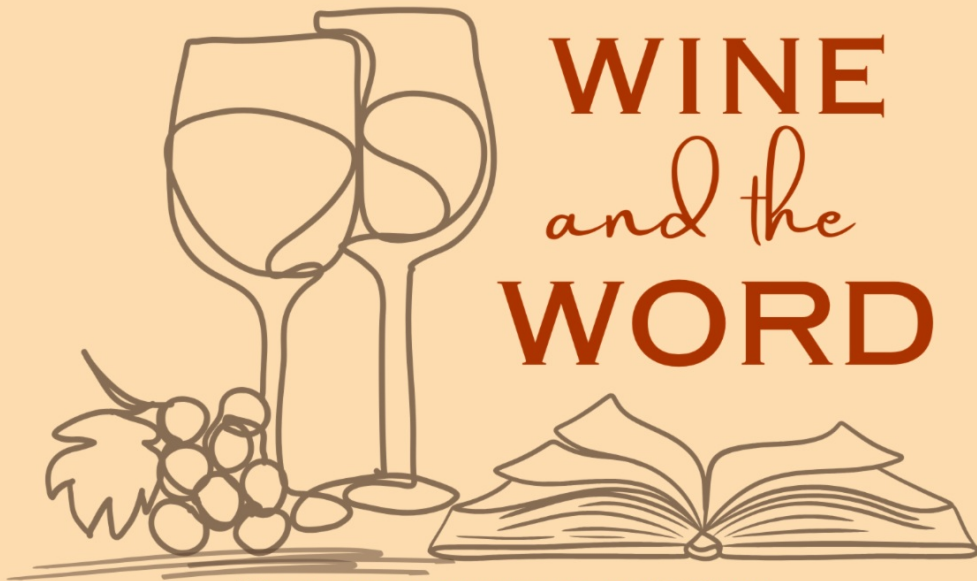
Donate a baked item

for the Cake Walk!

Contact

[Laura@coascension.org](mailto:Laura@coascension.org) or [Nick@coascension.org](mailto:Nick@coascension.org)

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# WINE *and the* WORD

WEDNESDAY EVENINGS AT 6:00 PM  
IN THE SMALL DINING ROOM

GATHER FOR CASUAL THEOLOGICAL DISCOURSE WITH THE CLERGY  
THIS WEEK'S THEME OF DISCUSSION IS  
REFUGE

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WINE AND ALTERNATIVE BEVERAGES WILL BE PROVIDED.

# WEDNESDAY NIGHTLIVE

STAY CONNECTED AND JOIN US ON  
WEDNESDAY NIGHTS!

4:30  
REUNION GROUP  
LIBRARY

5:15  
DINNER  
ASCENSION HALL

6:00  
BREAD OF LIFE  
WALDO GARDEN

6:00  
WINE AND THE WORD  
SMALL DINING ROOM

6:00  
YOUTH ACTIVITIES  
3RD FLOOR YOUTH ROOM

6:00  
CHILDREN'S CHOIR  
4TH FLOOR CHOIR LOFT

6:00  
EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY  
LIBRARY

6:45  
COMPLINE  
4TH FLOOR CHOIR LOFT

Dinner Menu:

Pizza & Salad!

\$8 per person or \$20 per family

Follow us on Instagram!



Our new Instagram account is up and running! Follow us [HERE!](#)

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*They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit. - Jeremiah 17:8*



## Stewardship Update 2024

If you haven't turned in your pledge card it is not too late. You can drop in in the basket during service or bring it by the church office, For more information on pledging click [HERE](#).

Financial Gifts Offered This Week	Financial Gifts Offered This Month	Financial Gift Target Monthly
\$23,788	\$26,125	\$85,500

Total Pledged Amount for 2024 - \$1,025,396  
Total Collected Amount for 2024 - \$677,360

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Dear members of Ascension,

As you may remember, last fall the Vestry and Rector, in consultation with the bishop, hired a consultant to review our governance amongst other tasks. In response to the

governance recommendations made by this consultant, a Governance Task Group (GTG) was appointed by the Vestry. This group consisted of Ellen Brooks (chair), Young Boozer, Elizabeth Conner, Jenny Garrett, Christopher Turner, Candice Frazer (Rector), April McKay (Vestry), Smitty Smith (Vestry), Dorman Walker (Vestry), and Tim Marquardt (Chair of Roles and Responsibilities Committee). The GTG met fourteen times over the course of seven months (February – August 2024). In August they submitted their final report along with a draft of proposed bylaws for The Episcopal Church of the Ascension.

Your Vestry has since reviewed these bylaws as to their efficacy for our governance and ensured that they meet national and diocesan canonical standards. We now submit them to you, the parish at large, for comment, questions, and suggestions as we prepare for final approval by the Vestry. Please feel encouraged to speak with a member of the GTG, the Vestry, Drew, or me for clarifications or suggestions (noting that all comments and their authorship will be shared with the Vestry and clergy). You may also submit any questions or comments via email at [staff@coascension.org](mailto:staff@coascension.org). **There will be two parish wide meetings for open discussion, education, and feedback on the proposed bylaws: Sunday, October 27 immediately following the 10:30am service and on Wednesday, October 30 at 6pm. Both meetings will take place in Ascension Hall.**

Bylaws are an important part of how the church functions and fosters good relationships among members. The Vestry and clergy are eager to receive your feedback and participation in this significant step forward in the life of The Episcopal Church of the Ascension. We invite you to be a part of this process and hope you will join us in discerning this work of the Holy Spirit by reading the proposed bylaws and attending one of the parish wide meetings if at all possible.

Light and Life,

Candice+

CLICK [HERE](#) TO READ THE PROPOSED BYLAWS

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## Investiture of Presiding Bishop-elect Sean Rowe

The planning committee for the investiture of Presiding Bishop-elect Sean Rowe has released a batch of resources to aid Episcopalians in hosting local watch parties during the churchwide virtual event at **11 a.m. ET on Nov. 2**.

The service will be livestreamed on the [event webpage](#) as well as [The Episcopal Church's Facebook page](#).

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# ALABAMA CURSILLO

Episcopal Diocese of Alabama

## 2024 Cursillo Dates

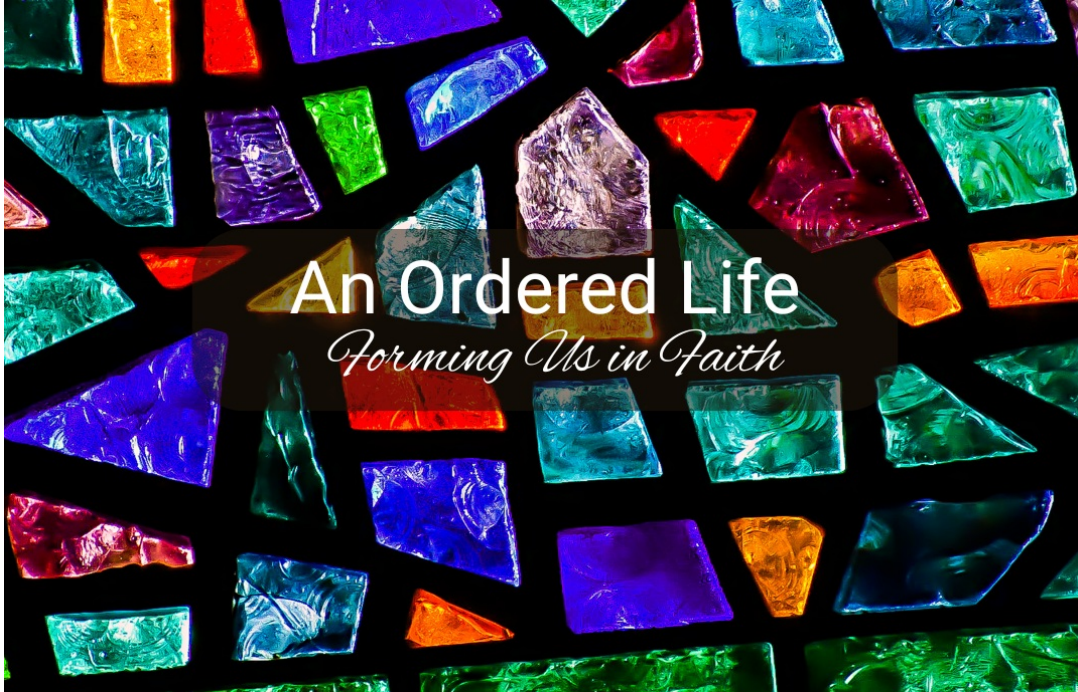
September 12-15 (Drew+ on staff)  
October 17-20 (Will & Amy McQueen on staff)  
Staff Training - November 9th

## 2025 Cursillo Dates

April 3-6  
June 5-8 (Steve & Candice+ on staff)  
October 9-12

Contact Steve Frazer or Sharon Massey for more information.

**GROW**



## An Ordered Life

*Forming Us in Faith*

### New Facebook Group!

*An Ordered Life*

*A place to come and discern how God is crafting your inner disciple. Be encouraged to post thoughts and inspirations related to growing a spiritual rule of life that guides who you are at home, work, play, and church. This is a safe place where we treat one another with reverence and respect.*

Click [HERE](#) to go to the Facebook group page and request access!

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## The Weekly WORD

### REFUGE

There is a story told after the wildfires of Tennessee several years ago. As firefighters walked through the burned forests and fields, they would kick over anything that seemed to be smouldering to ensure all the fires were put out. One firefighter kicked over what looked to be a smouldering mess of debris and a dozen chicks came running out. That is when he realized the mess he had kicked over was a pile of feathers that had once been a hen who had bravely sacrificed her life for the lives of her precious flock. Those chicks had taken REFUGE beneath their mother and she had willingly provided it. Her sacrifice ensured them life.

In Matthew's gospel, Jesus compares himself to a mother hen who gathers her flocks under the shelter of her wings. In Psalm 17:8, the psalmist prays that God will hide us under the shadow of his wings. There is something about God that offers us a security and peace when we seek shelter or safety therein.

God is our REFUGE and our strength. An ever present help in times of trouble. (Psalm 46:1)

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## Men's Prayer Breakfast

7:00 AM on Thursdays



A rule of life is a deliberate set of commitments and practices crafted to enrich one's spiritual journey. In this series, we'll hear from various ecumenical clergy members who will share how they have created their own rules of life and how these practices have deepened their relationship with Jesus.

This week's guest speaker is The Rev. Mark Waldo, Jr., retired Episcopal priest!

#### Staff Directory

The Rev. Candice B. Frazer, Rector [candice@coascension.org](mailto:candice@coascension.org)

The Rev. Drew Brislin, Associate Rector [drew@coascension.org](mailto:drew@coascension.org)

Becky Taylor, Music Ministry [beckytaylor@coascension.org](mailto:beckytaylor@coascension.org)

Will McQueen, Facilities Manager [will@coascension.org](mailto:will@coascension.org)

Tracy Hinton, Parish Administrator [thinton@coascension.org](mailto:thinton@coascension.org)

Jason Pate, Director of Communications [jason@coascension.org](mailto:jason@coascension.org)

Laura Mielke, Children Family & Faith Formation Minister [laura@coascension.org](mailto:laura@coascension.org)

Nick Mielke, Youth Family & Faith Formation Minister [nick@coascension.org](mailto:nick@coascension.org)

Fay Worriolow, Administrative Assistant [fay@coascension.org](mailto:fay@coascension.org)



Almighty and everlasting Father, we stand in your presence, awed and silenced by your goodness and wisdom. We rejoice in the outpouring of your Spirit on the Ascension and our ministries. Help each of us to remember that we are walking in your sight, and that you are present with us at every moment. Through your Holy Spirit, guide us in our prayers and enable us to focus our thoughts on you, so that we may be filled with the knowledge of your will. Grant us the wisdom to ask what you would have us do; the strength and courage to carry out your work; and the grace to show our gratitude through good stewardship of your gracious gifts. We ask all things in the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

Church of the Ascension | 334-263-5529 | [staff@coascension.org](mailto:staff@coascension.org) | [www.coascension.org](http://www.coascension.org)

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