



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

From the Rector...

The first and only time I ever served as an acolyte was in sixth grade. At the time, we were still Roman Catholic, and my father badgered the priest until he finally acquiesced and allowed me to serve. I was to be the very first female acolyte at Queen of Peace. I remember watching the altar boys who served in that role every Sunday. They wore red cassocks with white surplices and performed their duties admirably. I wanted to be one of them, but I knew girls weren't allowed. My father knew my secret desire, as he shared it too. One day, after meeting with the parish priest, he came home to tell me that I would serve at the altar the next Sunday. I was beyond excited.



On my first Sunday as an acolyte, we arrived at church early so I could receive instructions on what to do. The priest and another altar boy showed me how to carry the cross, where to sit, and when to ring the Sanctus bells. I paid close attention and practiced several times before the service began. I especially focused on lifting the cross out of its stand and placing it back in, as the hole in the floor was very narrow, and the cross had to fit perfectly. I still felt a little nervous, but I was also excited to serve at the altar for the first time.

We went to the vesting room and changed into our robes. Then it was time to get the cross and prepare for the procession. The other two acolytes and I went to the front of the church and picked up the cross and torches we would carry, and returned to the back of the nave. The priest, who had been adjusting the altar, soon followed. The procession began and I led the choir and altar party down the aisle. I was beaming, and so were my

parents. Everything felt heavenly—the music, the incense, the sunlight streaming through the high windows—it was a perfect day.

As I stood at the front of the church, holding the cross high and focused on the life size crucifix behind the altar, I felt God’s presence surround me. I didn’t know what God had in store for me in the world, but in that moment, I felt that nothing was impossible. And then, I discovered how very wrong I was.

As we placed the cross and torches in position, I realized something was blocking the cross from returning to its hole in the floor. The two boys with the torches didn’t seem to have any trouble; their wooden poles fit back into place. As they waited for me to adjust the cross, one of them finally leaned down to help guide the end of the pole. But the cross still wouldn’t drop into its hole. The other acolyte knelt down and discovered that, in the time it had taken for me to retrieve and process with the cross, someone had wedged a piece of wood into the hole. Despite their efforts, neither of the boys could remove the wood. The priest, growing frustrated with our efforts, in a voice loud enough to be heard over the music and without leaving his place at the altar, told us to, “Lean it against the wall and go sit down.” I was mortified.

On our way to the pew, one of the boys stepped on my foot, causing me to stumble and kick the Sanctus bells, which went flying across the floor. I fervently prayed that the floor would just swallow me up. The priest glared at us.

It wasn’t until sometime later that I overheard a conversation of my father’s and realized that the priest had set me up to fail that day. My father was so angry about the incident that not long after, we left Queen of Peace and began attending St. Paul’s Episcopal Church. Although I am grateful that we became Episcopalian, I have always carried the lessons of my one and only experience as an acolyte: I can’t achieve my goals if others don’t support my purpose; those in authority must hold great respect for the power they have to encourage or eviscerate another’s self-worth; when things seem bleak, there is always opportunity for something new to happen; and, always carry a pair of pliers when you acolyte.

Light and Life,

Candice+

candice@coascension.org

P. S. Three of our four acolytes served for the first time this past Sunday, and they were all amazing. It is a joy to see our young people stepping out of their own comfort zones and giving of themselves in service of our Lord and CoA.

SERVE

Get Involved!



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.

Food Box Saturday

SATURDAY, JANUARY 25TH
8:30 AM
HULL STREET PARKING LOT
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



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.



The Vineyard Bookstore has made its contributions in 2024 to the following local ministries:

- Respite for all Foundation
- Mercy House
- Family Sunshine Center
- Boys and Girls Clubs River Region
- Dream Court

Thank you for your continued support of our store, your purchases make this possible! We are blessed to be able to give back to those in need in our community.

WORSHIP

Weekly Worship Schedule



Sunday Services

8:00 AM - Rite I, 10:30 AM Rite II



Morning Prayer

Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM - Facebook Live



Compline

Wednesday 6:45 PM - Choir Loft & Facebook Live



Sung Compline

3rd Sundays 7:30 PM - Nave

Compline with *Encore!*

Sunday - 7:30 PM



Attention Venmo Users



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

Cursillo Open Reunion Group!

Meets Wednesdays at 4:30 p.m.
Church Library

Contact Laura@coascension.org for more information

Wednesday January 8, 2025 at 4:30p.m. "Open Reunion" for those who have attended Cursillo is back! For anyone who has not yet attended Cursillo but would like to, please reach out to Steve Frazer or Sharon Massey.

Thank you to everyone who came out and to all the different teams, especially Troop 1 for helping with clean up!



WEDNESDAY

NIGHTLIVE

STAY CONNECTED AND JOIN US ON
WEDNESDAY NIGHTS!

| | |
|---|--|
| 4:30 REUNION GROUP LIBRARY | 5:15 DINNER ASCENSION HALL |
| 6:00 WINE AND THE WORD SMALL DINING ROOM | |
| 6:00 YOUTH ACIVITIES 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 |

WNL Supper Time
5:15-6pm

Each Wednesday night we serve family style supper for parishioners and our New Beginnings tutors and students. Come sup with us and let the staff "dish up" a delight for your tastebuds. \$8 per person or \$20 for a family—cash, check, or Venmo accepted. In this new year, we are trying a different approach with the food line: the staff will serve the main dish, and a salad bar will be available separately.

Menu this Wednesday:

Poppy Seed Chicken
Green Beans
Salad
Rolls



If you haven't turned in your pledge card please do so as soon as possible. Thanks! If you would like to fill your pledge card out online click [HERE!](#)

**ANNUAL MEETING &
VESTRY ELECTIONS**

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 26 - 9:15 AM
ASCENSION HALL**



We will gather for a parish picture at the Annual Meeting. Please make every effort to be present!



EPISCO PARTY

IF YOU ARE WILLING
TO HOST AN
EPISCOPARTY IN 2025,
PLEASE CONTACT
SMITTY @

TONDSMITH@GMAIL.COM



GROW



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
ENNEAGRAM - THE PEACEMAKER

WINE AND ALTERNATIVE BEVERAGES WILL BE PROVIDED.

The Word
Wednesdays, January 8 – February 26
5:45pm in the Small Dining Room

The Enneagram is an ancient understanding of our gifts as children of God. The nine personality types of the Enneagram help a person get out of their own way and become who they were created to be. Some say it helps us to “wake up” to our true selves and escape the prison of our past. Studying the Enneagram is a great way to reclaim your identity and rediscover your purpose. Each week we will discuss a different personality type in hopes that participants will discover and deepen their knowledge of self and others.

The Weekly WORD



RATS

Disappointment comes in many forms but the king of disappointment is Charlie Brown. Growing up, I remember how often Charlie Brown would simply say, “RATS,” sometimes with an exclamation mark and sometimes with just a period.

“RATS” can express a range of emotions from disappointment to frustration to disbelief. Charlie Brown says, “RATS,” when the mailbox is empty or his kite gets eaten by a tree or no one invites him to participate. He verbalizes his feelings instead of bottling them up. He might be thought of as wishy washy but he is honest with himself and his feelings.

RATS—a great expression when your expectations don’t match your reality.

Women's Bible Study

In Trouble and In Wonder

The Gospel of St. Thomas

Monday Nights - 5pm
The Library
January 27 - April 7

The wisdom sayings attributed to Jesus in The Gospel of Thomas open in us new ways of seeing the world. In this ten week study, we will explore various sayings and examine them in relationship to their counterparts in the Synoptic gospels.

Men's Prayer Breakfast



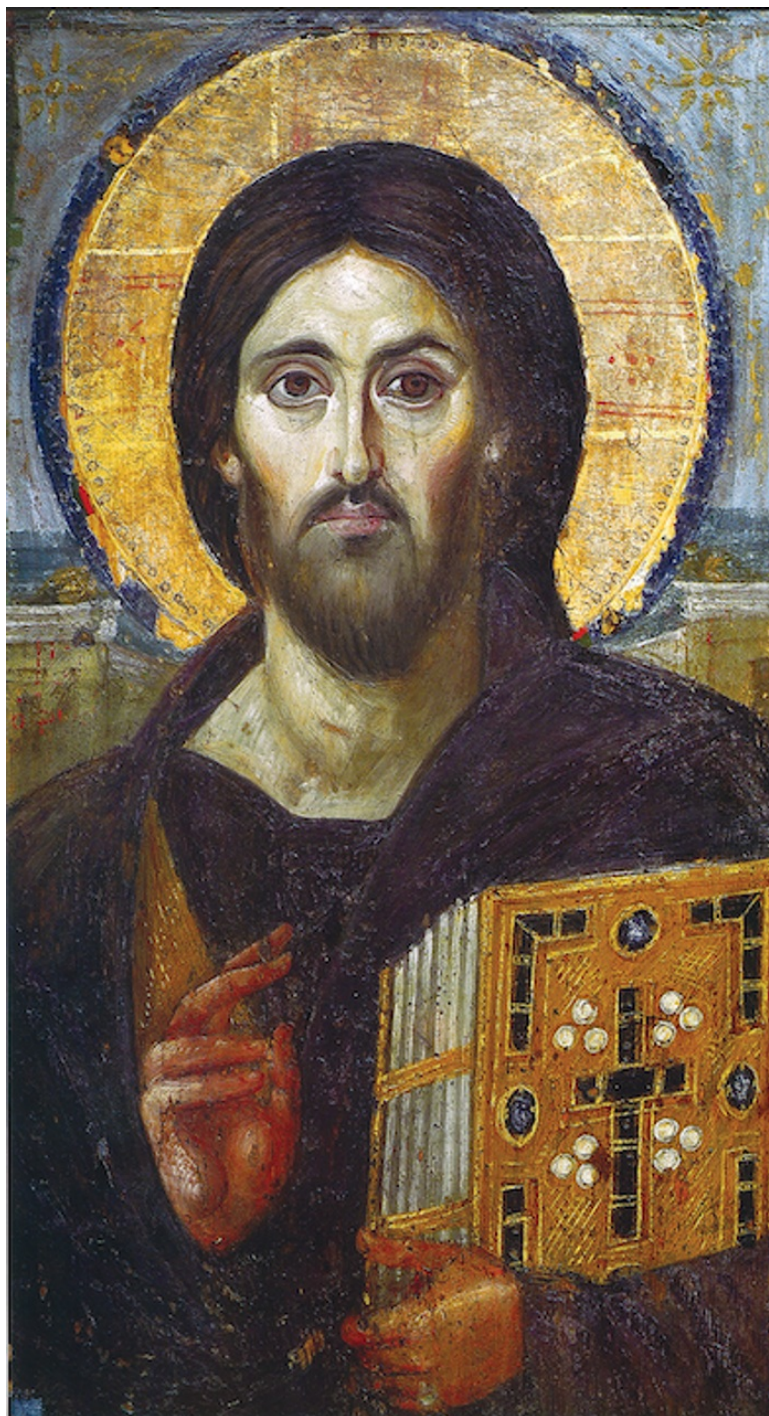
Exodus: Movement of the People
Thursdays at 7:15am
Ascension Hall
January 9 – February 27

Order and disorder, life and chaos, are the means through which God moves his people and liberates them for his purposes. In the book of Exodus, Moses discovers his call in the ordering of God's chosen people and the power of God's purposes over those desired by man. Join us each week to nurture the body, mind, and spirit through breakfast, study, and community.



Cultivating Compassion
Mondays, January 27-March 31
7:00 PM in the Library
Limited Space Available
Candice@coascension.org

Clergy Forum and BoL Sunday School



Jesus' Rule of Life The Upper Room January 5 - February 23

Adult formation will combine this winter to study **Jesus' Rule of Life**. This eight week course will facilitate conversation around understanding Jesus' "Why" and motivation for his ministry and mission as a method of shaping our lives as Christians.

Staff Directory

The Rev. Candice B. Frazer, Rector candice@coascension.org
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Becky Taylor, Music Ministry beckytaylor@coascension.org
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Nick Mielke, Youth Family & Faith Formation Minister nick@coascension.org
Fay WorriLOW, Administrative Assistant fay@coascension.org

PRAYER FOR THE ASCENSION

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 | www.coascension.org

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