



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

Ascension Highlights What's Happening This Week

- Trawick Scott Advent Recital - Wednesday, Dec. 11 @ 12 PM
- Christmas Tree Trim - Wednesday, Dec. 11 @ 5:30 PM
- EpiscoParty! - Thursday, Dec. 12 @ 6 PM
- Daughters of the King Advent Retreat - Saturday, Dec. 14 @ 9 AM

From the Rector...

Last week Steve and I went to New Orleans for our annual financial meeting. Every year, we go away somewhere, lock ourselves in a room for ten hours, and argue about money. Actually, it is not quite as dreary as that sounds—we accomplish a lot by reviewing where we stand and discussing our goals and dreams for the future. It is a great way to plan the year ahead and check in with ourselves to see if we're on track with our long-term objectives. When we're done, we celebrate with a nice dinner and a fun evening out.



Going out of town to talk finances has helped us shift from constantly arguing about money to only arguing about money one day a year. Being intentional about this conversation annually has helped us clarify what we want out of life and better understand each other person's perspectives on topics like money, retirement, vacations, and major purchases. We review our spending from the last year and discuss how we want to allocate our money in the year ahead. Nothing is off the table—we talk about everything, from investment strategies to whether or not we will renew our Netflix subscription. We don't always agree, but we always manage to find a compromise.

Years of negotiating during this annual meeting have taught me a lot about compromise. Compromise is not about agreement; it is about giving up something. It requires both of us to make concessions. Neither of us get our way entirely, but by working together, we find an acceptable solution. Even though we have to let go of certain things to reach a compromise, I've found that what I give up often isn't that great a loss. Typically, my desires were ego-driven in the first place. When I release them, I often discover that the compromise benefits both of us in ways we didn't expect.

I wonder if that's what a life in Christ is like. God creates us and looses us on the world, relinquishing sole control over us and allowing us free will. When we let our egos drive our free will, we end up living in the brokenness of the world. But when we offer up our free will as part of our compromise with God, we discover peace and fulfillment in ways we never imagined.

Mary, John the Baptist, Peter, Paul, Isaiah, Amos, Moses, Esther, Hannah—the list goes on—all entered into compromise with God. This compromise is summed up in the Abrahamic Covenant: "I will be your God, and you will be my people." Advent isn't just a time of expectant waiting on a big birthday party for Jesus, nor is it simply about getting our act together as we prepare for Christ's return. It's an opportunity for us to remember what it means to be a covenant people—what it means to compromise our free will just as God compromised his divinity to be born in a manger in Bethlehem and die on a cross in Jerusalem.

By the way, we kept Disney+ and Paramount+ but decided to get rid of Netflix—which means I've got a lot of shows to watch before the New Year.

Light and Life,
Candice+

candice@coascension.org

P. S. If you would like to hear more about how to plan your own annual meeting with your spouse, I'd be happy to schedule a time to discuss. It really helps reduce the stress and frustration that often comes with financial discussions and planning for the future.

ADVENT 2024

TRAWICK-SCOTT ADVENT RECITAL SERIES

DECEMBER 4

12:05 PM

JOEL GREGORY, ORGANIST

DECEMBER 11

12:05 PM

PRESTON WINKLES, ORGANIST

DECEMBER 18

12:05 PM

CONCERT IN CELEBRATION OF THE 25TH SEASON
THE ASCENSION CHOIR

CHRISTMAS 2024

DECEMBER 3

MESSIAH SINGALONG

7:00 PM

JOIN THE MONTGOMERY CHORALE, ORCHESTRA, AND SOLOISTS IN THE CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION NAVE IN A GROUP SINGALONG OF HANDEL'S IMMORTAL WORK

DECEMBER 15

THE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

9:15 AM

JOIN CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN ASCENSION HALL FOR THE TELLING OF THE CHRISTMAS STORY.

DECEMBER 19

BLUE CHRISTMAS

12:00 PM

SERVICE FOR THOSE WHO ARE EXPERIENCING GRIEF OR STRUGGLING WITH LOSS

DECEMBER 24

CHRISTMAS EVE FAMILY EUCHARIST

5:00 PM

CELEBRATE THE CHRISTMAS EUCHARIST WITH THE ENTIRE FAMILY

FESTIVE CHRISTMAS EUCHARIST

10:30 PM

ANTHEMS AND HYMNS WITH THE ASCENSION CHOIR

DECEMBER 25

CHRISTMAS EUCHARIST

10:00 AM

THIS SERVICE WILL NOT HAVE MUSIC

DECEMBER 29

CHRISTMAS LESSONS & CAROLS

10:30 AM

HEAR THE STORY OF GOD REDEMPTION WITH CAROLS AND ANTHEMS AND LESSONS READ BY REPRESENTATIVES OF ASCENSION MINISTRIES

JANUARY 6

FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

5:30 PM

BONFIRE & CHILI COOKOFF

CLOSE THE CHRISTMAS SEASON WITH WORSHIP AROUND THE BONFIRE, THEN JOIN US IN THE PARKING LOT FOR THE ANNUAL ASCENSION CHILI COOKOFF



SERVE

Thanks To All Of Our Shoppers!



Milton Lewis Memorial
Christmas Tree Project





Las Posadas

Las Posadas commemorates the journey that Joseph and Mary made from Nazareth to Bethlehem in search of a safe refuge where Mary could give birth to the baby Jesus. When they were unable to find lodging in Bethlehem, Joseph and Mary were forced to seek shelter in a stable, where the Christ Child was born.



During the season of Advent, families are invited to sign up to take in Mary, Joseph, and the donkey for the night to provide them with safe lodging. And on the next day bring them to the next family.

Click here or scan the QR code to sign up!

Use the sign-up genius above to schedule your night to host. The family that had them the previous night will make plans to drop them off to you. After your night of hosting you can contact the next family on the list and make plans to pass them along!



We need help decorating the church for Christmas services on December 21st and 22nd! Below is a list of tasks and you can sign-up by clicking [HERE!](#)

Saturday, December 21 (Prep day)

A person can sign up for one than one of these:

1. Soak oasis, prep containers in Flower Room, 2 people (2 hours)

2. Tie bows, Upper Room, 2 people (2 hours)
3. Organize candles, candlesticks for Nave windows, pull from storage in Upper Room, organize them there. 2 people (1 hour)
4. Cut greenery around the church (Magnolia and holly) 2 people (1 hour)
5. Meet wreath and garland delivery, store them until the next day, 2 people (1 hour)

Sunday, December 22 (decorating day)

If someone is interested in items 1 – 3, they can sign up for more than one!

1. Place candles, copper planters, candlesticks, and oasis in the nave windows (6 people)
2. Transfer poinsettias to nave, gently unwrap and place in copper planters in nave windows, any extras placed around church (4 people)
3. Greenery arrangements for nave windows (flower arranging experience preferred!) (6 – 8 people)
4. Poinsettias on altar (2 people)
5. Hang garlands (3 people)
6. Ladder duty, 2 people to take ladder from place to place and 1 person to climb and hang wreaths. These folks will also move the wreaths and garlands from storage into the nave. So there is lifting and toting involved.

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.



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

Celebration Sunday



Sunday,
December 8th

Thank you for being a part of Ascension and making stewardship an important part of your spiritual journey. As of Celebration Sunday, we have received 109 pledges for a total of \$744, 991. 56. Awesome job!!! It is not too late to turn in your pledge card and we encourage you to do so soon as we are preparing our 2025 budget. Thanks again to everyone who has partnered with God and Ascension to do God's work of mission and ministry. And a special thank you to our Stewardship Team of Andy Akin, Camilla Austin, Casey Bailey, Christine Harrison, Christopher Turner, Jimmy Walter, Smitty Smith, Philip Sellers, and Russ Wishum for running our campaign this year and helping us to celebrate last Sunday.





This Sunday!



Compline with *Encore!*

Sunday - 7:30 PM

ADVENT 2024

25TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON

TRAWICK-SCOTT ADVENT RECITAL SERIES

DECEMBER 4

12:05 PM

JOEL GREGORY, ORGANIST

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THE ASCENSION CHOIR

Blue Christmas



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

This Wednesday! Dinner 5:15, Festivities 6:00!

Christmas Tree Trim

Christmas Tree Trim
Wednesday December
11th after Wednesday
Night Family Supper
in Ascension Hall.



Dinner Menu:

Taco Night!

\$8 per person or \$20 per family

This Thursday!



EPISCO PARTY

JOIN US FOR AN EVENING
OF FELLOWSHIP

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12
6:00 PM

HOSTED BY SMITTY & PAULA SMITH

BRING A DISH TO SHARE - BEVERAGES
PROVIDED - CASUAL DRESS - NO RSVP
NEWCOMERS ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND

EMAIL SMITTY FOR MORE INFO
TONDSMITH@GMAIL.COM



Children's Choir



Christmas Potluck!

Wednesday December 18th in Ascension Hall
5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Bring your child's favorite "snacky side" or holiday sweet to share!
Grilled cheese sandwiches and lemonade will be provided.

***Let's gather for snack supper, our last
choir rehearsal of 2024, and compline.***

*Winter Solstice Party
Sat. 12/21 5:00pm
In Joshua Commons*

Bring your favorite winter dish to share
Look At Saturn Through A Telescope!
Solstice themed crafts for the kids

For more information contact Tina Harstad

RSVP

[Click Here](#)



The Youth are looking for three homes that would be willing to host us for our annual EYC Progressive Dinner and Christmas Party. We are looking to celebrate Sunday evening December 22nd. We need three homes, one to host appetizers, one to host a main course, and one to host dessert where we will also play Dirty Santa. We would be at each of the first 2 stops for about 30 minutes and at the third for about 45 minutes to an hour. The youth will meet at the church at 5:00 pm and head to our first stop shortly thereafter on the bus. If you would be willing to help us out and host this fun event please contact

Follow us on Instagram!
ascension_mgm



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

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

\$6,720

Financial Gifts Offered This
Month

\$6,720

Financial Gift Target
Monthly

\$85,500

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

Total Collected Amount for 2024 - \$805,080



**ALABAMA
CURSILLO**

Episcopal Diocese of Alabama

2025 Cursillo Dates

April 3-6

June 5-8 (Steve & Candice+ on staff)

October 9-12

If you would like to attend contact Steve Frazer or Sharon Massey for more information.

GROW



The Daughters of the King

ARE HOSTING AN ADVENT
PARISH-WIDE SPIRITUAL QUIET DAY

Saturday December 14

9:00 a.m. - Noon

The Upper Room

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT ELIZABETH CONNER



On Saturday, December 14th from 9-12 the Daughters of the King will be hosting an Advent retreat in the Upper Room. The theme will be The Jesus Prayer: A simple yet powerful tool in today's chaotic world. With the assistance of the book *An Altar In Your Heart: Meditations on the Jesus Prayer* written by the Rt. Rev. Robert Hibbs, former bishop suffragan of the Diocese of West Texas, we will explore this beautifully succinct prayer. We will discuss how it encapsulates so much of our theology and understanding of Jesus and His incarnation and subsequently how to incorporate the use of this powerful prayer into our daily lives. We will explore the use of various spiritual tools and even make one ourselves. You are invited to bring a journal if you have one or supplies will be provided to you as there will be time for reflection, meditation and prayer.

This Sunday!



Christmas Pageant 2024

Sunday December 15, 2024 at 9:15 a.m.
Ascension Hall

8:30 a.m. Parents of 1st graders - Youth Age will bring children to the 3rd floor to dress. Signage and volunteers will help you know where to go.

8:45 a.m. PreK & K will come already dressed in an animal costume from home and meet in the 3rd floor Children's Chapel.

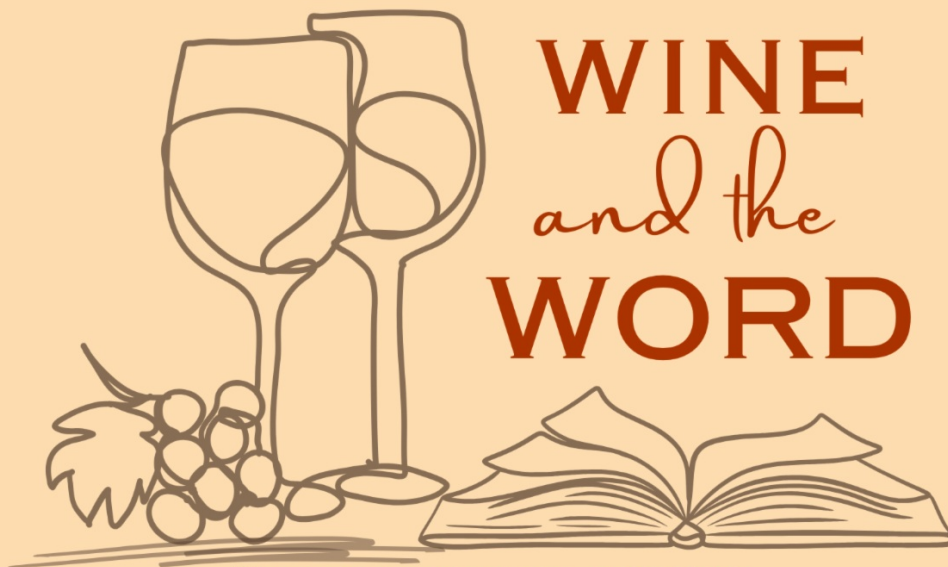
Sunday School on break until January 5th!

A Devotion for the Season of Advent



MAGNIFY

MARY'S SONG +
AND THE MAGNIFICENT +
WOMEN OF ADVENT



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
HOPE

WINE AND ALTERNATIVE BEVERAGES WILL BE PROVIDED.

Returning January 8th!

The Weekly WORD

PEACE

Blessed are the PEACEmakers...

When I think about PEACE I am often tempted to believe it is about avoiding conflict. But PEACE is rarely achieved through conflict avoidance. Instead I think PEACE requires transforming conflict. The only way that is achieved is when we are willing to engage it—not resist, defend, deny, or provoke it—respecting what is at the source of the conflict and broadening our thinking in ways that try to understand another's perspective and bring about positive change that connects us instead of disrupting us.

PEACEMAKERS understand this. They are different from PEACEKEEPERS who enforce PEACE in such ways that only really achieve more conflict. PEACE cannot be achieved through violence, aggression, manipulation, or any of the other ways we attempt to force or control it. PEACE is only achieved through faith that there is good in the world, hope that good will triumph, and a love willing to share what is good with oneself and others.

May that PEACE be with you now and always.

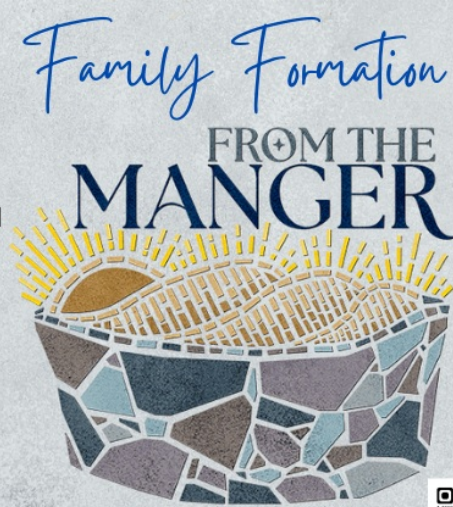
JOIN US THIS ADVENT

This year's "From the Manger" Advent devotional contains a weekly reflection, discussion questions, prayer, and family memory-making activity that easily integrates into already busy schedules.

Digital copies will be emailed to families on November 29, 2024 and hard copies are available upon request.

Laura@coascension.org

Use this QR code to help us stay connected!



Men's Prayer Breakfast 7:00 AM on Thursdays

JESUS AND JOHN WAYNE

*OCTOBER 31 -
DECEMBER 19*

Thursdays

7am
Ascension Hall



MEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST

The myth of the American hero has caused us to "replace the Jesus of the Gospels with an idol of rugged masculinity and Christian nationalism." This class will trace the history of popular culture and how it has transformed our understanding of Christianity and our communal life.

Staff Directory

The Rev. Candice B. Frazer, Rector candice@coascension.org
The Rev. Drew Brislin, Associate Rector drew@coascension.org
Becky Taylor, Music Ministry beckytaylor@coascension.org
Will McQueen, Facilities Manager will@coascension.org

Tracy Hinton, Parish Administrator thinton@coascension.org
Jason Pate, Director of Communications jason@coascension.org
Laura Mielke, Children Family & Faith Formation Minister laura@coascension.org
Nick Mielke, Youth Family & Faith Formation Minister nick@coascension.org
Fay Worriow, 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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