



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. 18 @ 12 PM
- Blue Christmas Service - Thursday, Dec. 19 @ 12 PM
- Winter Solstice Party - Saturday, Dec. 21 @ 5 PM
- Hanging of the Greens - Saturday & Sunday, Dec. 21 & 22

From the Rector...

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The other week, as I sat in the lobby of our New Orleans hotel, I noticed how happy people were while taking pictures of other people. Not one person holding an iPhone and focusing on someone else was scowling or fussy. Even the stressed-out parents and the grumpy granddads changed their attitudes immediately when asked to take a photo. Some encouraged smiles from their subjects with dairy-related motivation, while others used made up words or seasonal phrases. But no



one threatened, cursed, or yelled at the subjects of their cameras. They smiled, and others smiled back. It was uplifting and fun to watch.

I pulled out my own iPhone and started taking pictures of people taking pictures. That was even more fun, as I felt secretly to all the positive energy that was electrifying the lobby. Steve and I stayed up way past our bedtime, forgetting to be tired or bored by the world we were immersed in. The next night, we returned to the lobby and indulged in the delights of people-watching again. The results were the same: people taking pictures of other people, were some of the happiest people I have ever seen.

There are snapshots of scripture that bring me the same kind of joy—mainly because of the events described in the story, but also because, if you think about it, the stories themselves were important and inspiring to the one telling them. When Elizabeth greets Mary, her unborn child, John the Baptist, leaps in her womb in response to an in-utero encounter with Jesus, the unborn child in Mary's womb. The telling of that story must have brought joy to the heart of the one doing the telling...a little like the person who takes the picture of another.

The framing and design of a story or picture communicate a message. When that message is one of hope and joy, it stirs within us the same sense of hope and joy. That is what I experienced in the lobby of The Roosevelt—people framing hope and joy.

I feel that same hope and joy when I read the Magnificat—Mary's Song—which begins "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior..." It reminds me to be more thoughtful and intentional in what my soul magnifies and how my spirit rejoices. That's what hope and joy are all about—the things we hold on to and make bigger in our lives so that we, and others, can see them more clearly.

Hope and joy cannot be taken for granted, which is why it is important for us to magnify them. We need hope and joy to be bigger than our challenges and pain, and we can rejoice in hope and joy because, through them, we know that challenges and pain are never the last things.

This past Sunday was Gaudete Sunday, or Rejoice Sunday. It is a reminder in the midst of this Advent season that there is plenty of hope and joy in this world. We celebrate Gaudete Sunday with apocalyptic readings and stinging words like "you brood of vipers" and "unquenchable fire," not because we condemn ourselves to judgment and despair, but because, amid our sufferings, we hold on to hope.

It is not the "most wonderful time of the year" for everyone—Elvis even knew that. But suffering and pain do not mean that hope and joy cannot be found. As Christians, preparing for Christ's coming again, we get to do the work of holding hope and magnifying

it to the world—not in avoidance of pain or because we feel all happy inside, but because we rejoice in God our Savior.

Light and Life,

Candice+

candice@coascension.org



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.

WORSHIP

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



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

A poster for a Chili Cook Off event. At the top, a black pot with a white handle and a red chili pepper on its side is shown. The words "Chili" and "COOK OFF" are written on the pot. Below the pot, the date "January 6th!" and the time "5:30 PM" are written in green. The pot is surrounded by flames. To the right of the pot is a "Sign Up" button with a QR code below it. The background is black with yellow stars.

Chili
COOK OFF

January 6th!
5:30 PM

Sign Up

& Bonfire for The
Feast of the Epiphany

On Monday, January 6, we will assemble for its annual Feast of the Epiphany bonfire liturgy, followed by our 7th Annual Chili Cook-Off! Team registration is open and you can sign up by clicking the link above or by using the QR code! If you have any questions please contact [Gina Curvin](#).

A poster for a Children's Choir event. At the top, the words "Children's Choir" are written in a large, red, cursive font. Below the text is an illustration of seven children of various ethnicities wearing Santa hats and holding yellow books. Below the illustration, the words "Christmas Potluck!" are written in a large, red, cursive font. Below that, the date and time "Wednesday December 18th in Ascension Hall 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m." are written. Below that, the text "Bring your child's favorite 'snacky side' or holiday sweet to share! Grilled cheese sandwiches and lemonade will be provided." is written. At the bottom, the text "Let's gather for snack supper, our last choir rehearsal of 2024, and compline." is written in a red, cursive font.

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](#)



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!



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 Nick via email at nick@coascension.org. Thank you and Merry Christmas!



If you haven't turned in your pledge card please do so as soon as possible. Thanks!

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

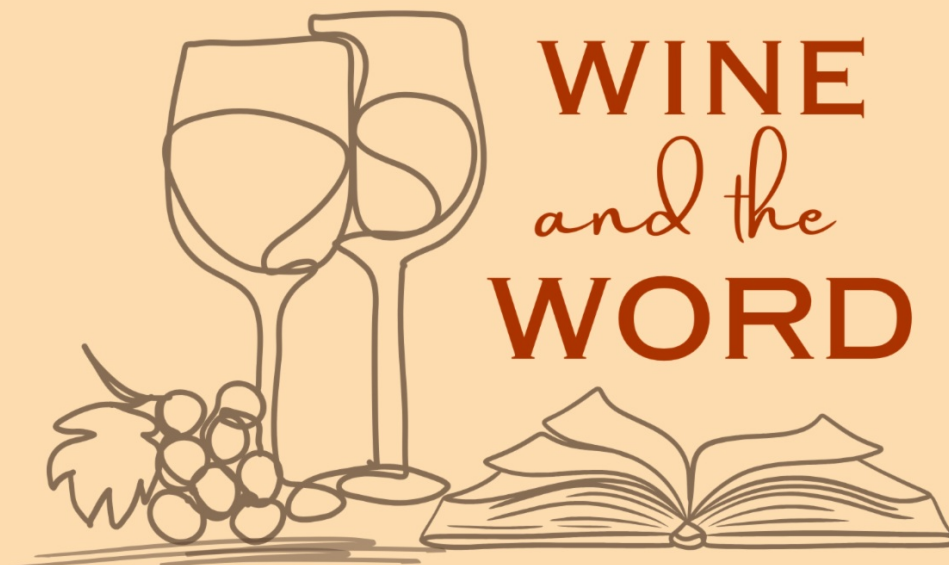
GROW

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

JOY

Week three of Advent begins with Gaudete Sunday meaning rejoice. Traditionally, Advent was a season of fasting in preparation of the Lord's return. Gaudete Sunday offered a day of respite in the midst of a season of penitence.

Rejoice is an opportunity for unfettered JOY. JOY is the word associated with this week of Advent. Prior to the revision of the Common Lectionary, we read the story of Mary and Elizabeth and the Magnificat. (Now we read it on the fourth Sunday.) I have always associated Mary with JOY. Not because I thought she might be delighted to be an unwed, pregnant teenager, but because she trusted her heart and made the difficult and challenging decision to follow God's call for her.

That kind of JOY is not without pain or suffering, neither is it dependent on a person's happiness. That kind of JOY is the deep sense of knowing that your life is connected and centered on God. No longer does your ego manipulate you, but your faith has set you free from the demands of humanity that you might become the creation God has designed you to be.

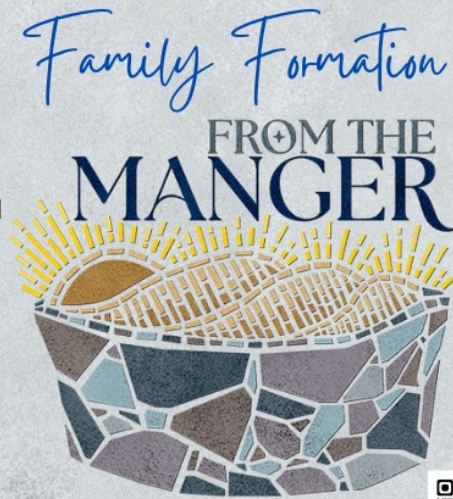
JOIN US THIS ADVENT

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.

SERVE

Food Box Saturday



SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21ST
8:30 AM
HULL STREET PARKING LOT
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



NOMINATIONS

OPEN THROUGH JANUARY 10TH

It's that time of year already. It's time to nominate and elect our class of 2026! The Vestry Nomination form can be found [HERE](#). Forms need to be turned in to Fay and be received by Friday, January 10th. The new Vestry members will be elected at our Annual Meeting on Sunday, January 26th.

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.



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 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.

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