



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

## Ascension Highlights What's Happening This Week

- Messiah Singalong - Tuesday, Dec. 3 @ 7 PM
- Trawick Scott Advent Recital - Wednesday, Dec. 4 @ 12 PM
- Milton Lewis Project - Saturday, Dec. 7 @ 8 AM - Target
- Celebration Sunday - Sunday, Dec. 8

From the Rector...

Over the past several weeks, we have explored our stewardship theme to Walk in Love. As I have listened to the testimonies of our members and read their words in the bulletin each week, I am inspired by the depth of faith and love that so many of you demonstrate in your walk with Christ. Your stories are uplifting and testify to the power of God and the strength of being part of a church community. I feel truly blessed to be among you and to walk in love together at Ascension.

For me, the annual stewardship campaign is



more than a pledge drive, it is a reminder of my hope in God, the mission of his church, and the celebration of our life together. At its core, stewardship is about our spiritual life and development. The cynical side of us might see it as a fundraiser—and that is part of its function—but the deeper commitment and message of stewardship is about how we define our lives in gratitude and growth.

Intentional giving, where we make a pledge to the church and then follows through with financial contributions, reflects a core commitment in our lives. It acknowledges that giving is part of God's call to us, and how we give reflects a first fruits, proportional, sacrificial transformation. In scripture, God always asks for the first of the harvest—not the best, not what is left over, simply the first fruits. When we receive our paycheck, our first act is to honor God by giving to meet our pledge. Proportional giving is way of understanding what we are called to give. It allows us to acknowledge God's gifts to us and return a proportion of those gifts in gratitude. Scripture prescribes a tithe of ten percent. The best way to begin working toward a tithe, is to discern, through wonder and prayer, what percentage of your income God is calling you to give. Sacrificial giving is not about harm but humility. It doesn't mean giving so much that you can't feed your children or pay the mortgage, but it does require us to be more intentional about how we spend our money—perhaps going out to eat one less time a month or passing on buying those adorable pink high heels. First fruits, proportional, sacrificial giving leads to transformation because it helps us become more mindful about our money.

There is a saying that “money is the root of all evil.” I don't think that is true. I believe that our relationship with money is the root of much evil in our lives and in the world. Too often, money defines our values, desires, hopes and dreams, even our identities. When money is the source of our motivation, then clearly, God is not. Reshaping our relationship with money in service to God—and as a grateful response to all that God gives to us—is a powerful way of turning from sin and despair. It opens our hearts in hope and trust of God's promises for us. We learn to lean on God rather than trusting in our own abilities. We stop trying to be the master of our destiny and allow God to shape us into his image. We move beyond a scarcity mindset and embrace the abundance of God that surrounds us. We learn to walk in love by appreciating the gifts of God for the people of God.

As our annual campaign comes to a close, I invite you to consider what percentage of your income God is calling you to give to Ascension and how that giving can renew your life in Christ. Stewardship is a celebration of that life in Christ. To share our joy and gratitude in giving, this Sunday will be a time of in-gathering of all our pledges followed by feasting together at our Celebration Sunday event. We will bless our pledges at the altar during our 10:30am service, consecrating them to God. Our Celebration Sunday feast will follow with shrimp and grits, live music, and fun for the kids. I hope to see you there.

Light and Life,

# 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*



# GROW



# Christmas Pageant 2024

## Walk-through Rehearsal

Sunday December 1, 2024 at 9:15 a.m.

Walk through for pageant participants in Ascension Hall.

## Dress Rehearsal

Sunday December 8, 2024 at 9:15 a.m.

Ages 4 through 5th grade meet in the Children's Wing on the 3rd floor.

6th Grade & Youth meet in the Youth Room.

\*more instructions will be sent

## Pageant

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

Ascension Hall



Stay Connected!

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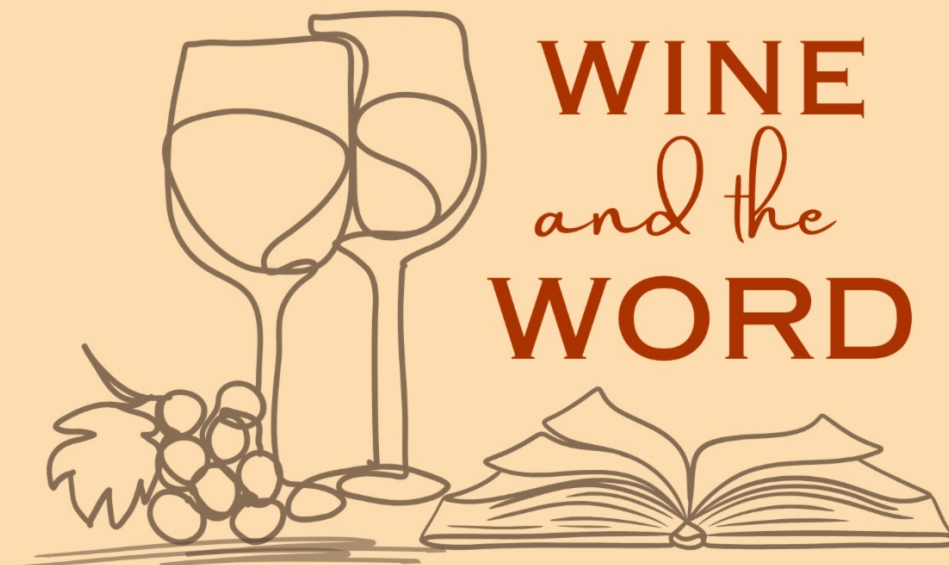
**A Devotion for the Season of Advent**



# MAGNIFY

MARY'S SONG +  
AND THE MAGNIFICENT  
WOMEN OF ADVENT

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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  
HOPE

WINE AND ALTERNATIVE BEVERAGES WILL BE PROVIDED.

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## The Weekly WORD

### HOPE

In honor of Advent and our devotional series, "Magnify," we would like to reflect on the devotional word for each week of Advent. This week we are reflecting on HOPE. I grew up in the eighties and the era of the blockbuster movie in which the hero comes to save the day. As great as that might be in the world of Hollywood, I've noticed that rarely does a hero show up to save the day in reality. Placing our HOPE in heroes might leave us in despair. Instead, I wonder if HOPE is about the righteousness of God.

When we allow God to do the work of making us righteous, we are brought to a deeper sense of HOPE—one born out of our sufferings. That HOPE can only be realized when we move into deep darkness and discover that the light of Christ still glows. It is a realization born from being stripped of our own desires and egos and discovering that there is something beyond the self. Tapping into that discovery brings renewed sense of purpose and that peace beyond all understanding. When the world has failed us and those we trust have disappointed us—we turn to God as our HOPE and our promise.

(If you have not received an Advent devotional booklet via your email, contact the church and we will get one to you. )

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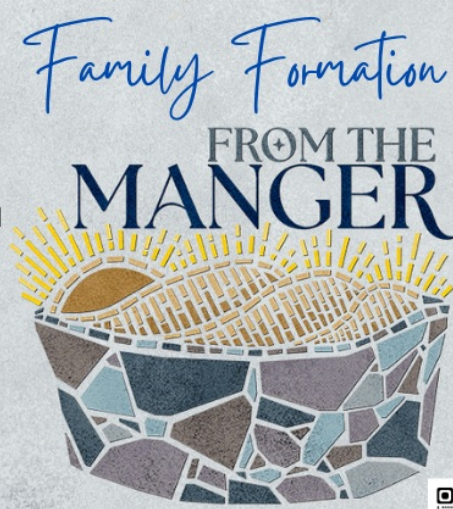
## JOIN US THIS ADVENT

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](mailto: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

**This Saturday!**



# Milton Lewis Memorial Christmas Tree Project

Saturday, December 7th at 8:00 AM

Target @ Eastchase

Planned Give is \$100 per child

To Donate Contact Tracy Hinton

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



## 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!**





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.

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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.



## 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.



Tonight!



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This Sunday!

# Celebration Sunday



Sunday,  
December 8th

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# ADVENT 2024

25TH ANNIVERSARY SEASON

## 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

## 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

# 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

Dinner Menu:

Breakfast for Dinner!

\$8 per person or \$20 per family

## Christmas Tree Trim

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



# 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



**Progressive Dinner & Christmas Party**

**Sunday December 22, 2024**

Wear your favorite tacky Christmas sweater, bring a Dirty Santa gift (valued \$10 or less), and let's go eat some fun food and celebrate the season. We will meet at Ascension at 5:00 p.m. and your parents can pick you up there at 8:00 p.m.

**Follow us on Instagram!**



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	Financial Gifts Offered This Month	Financial Gift Target Monthly
\$6,720	\$6,720	\$85,500

Total Pledged Amount for 2024 - \$1,025,396  
Total Collected Amount for 2024 - \$805,080

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# 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.

### 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 Worrilow, 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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