



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

From the Rector...

We are near the end of our *The Way, The Truth, and the Life Capital Campaign* renovations. We started more than two years ago and phased the renovations in three parts: the choir loft, ADS, and Joshua Commons. All the interior renovations are complete and we hope to finish our labyrinth garden and outdoor space in the next several months.

The renovation of the fourth floor as our new choir loft was our first phase. Whereas the choir once rehearsed in a cramped, low ceiling room, they now enjoy a spacious rehearsal hall with amazing acoustics and plenty of room for our two children's choirs to rehearse as well. Compline is prayed in the space on Wednesday nights at 6:45pm with children leading the service and adults, youth, and kids all worshipping together. The completion of the choir loft realized an unexpected increase in people—both adults and children—in choir, and we were inspired to begin an ASU choral scholars program that is enjoying its second year at CoA. Amazing results for a worthy investment.



Phase two was the renovation and expansion of Ascension Day School. The project included not only more classrooms but a sensory/gross motor skills room complete with climbing wall as well as The Breathing Space—a soundproof room dedicated to helping children in emotionally agitated states to calm down. The space will also host the MindUp Program instituted by church volunteers to teach preschoolers mindfulness and improve attention span and emotional awareness. Just as the choir noticed particular benefits related to its renovation, ADS has as well. The school has adopted an intentional curriculum to prepare children academically as well as a STEAM program, Spanish, and

music extracurriculars. The school continues to grow and is considered one of the best in Montgomery with almost 100% of our kids testing into the magnet program or the private school of their choice.

The last phase of the campaign has focused on the renovation of Joshua House now known as Joshua Commons. As we began the renovation, we discovered significant termite damage in the main hall of the building. Our timing was perfect. Had we not renovated the building, it would have become a significant danger in the very near future. Instead, providence won out and our renovations have offered a beautiful space with windows in the north and south walls and significantly improved acoustics allowing for a multi-purpose space to host the many community gatherings and meetings that populate our calendar including the Garden District Preservation Association, AA, our Boy Scout Troop, and many others.

The last piece of the project is our labyrinth garden. The plans for the original garden are on display in Joshua Commons. However, since the plans were drawn, we have been given the opportunity to purchase the property directly north of the building. This additional property helps us to expand our original vision and (hopefully) deal more effectively with our water run-off problem. We hope to close on the property in the next few weeks and will revisit our vision around the new outdoor space. Currently, the vision is to utilize this green space as an extension of our mission as a place of prayer, peace, and hope in our neighborhood.

Jesus enters the world—maybe not as a renovation project, but the similarities are amazing. He comes to help us realign who we are and remember what we truly desire. He comes to help us renovate our lives. Sometimes that means we have to gut everything and start all over, sometimes it means we get to improve on what we already have, but always it means fresh opportunity and a potential for a new way of being in the world. Though I am not sure what those new ways of being might be for Joshua Commons (JC), I am trusting that the growth and opportunity we have realized in the first and second phases will be no less in this final one. I am excited to see what the Holy Spirit has in store for us.

Light and Life,

Candice+

candice@coascension.org

P. S. There are two years left in the financial aspect of the campaign for those who have already pledged. If you would like to make a two year pledge or give a one-time donation, we would love for you to be part of the campaign with us. Simply contact Tracy Hinton-Adams (thinton@coascension.org or 334-263-5529) for more information on how to give.

Team Registration ends Friday, January 3rd!

A graphic for a chili cook-off event. It features a white chili pot with a handle, set against a black background with yellow stars. The pot has flames at its base and is surrounded by chili peppers and a spoon. The text "Chili COOK OFF!" is written across the pot, with "Chili" in red and "COOK OFF!" in white. Below that, "January 6th!" and "5:30 PM" are written in green. A QR code is located to the right of the pot, with a "Sign Up" button above it and an arrow pointing to the QR code.

Chili
COOK OFF!
January 6th!
5:30 PM

Sign Up

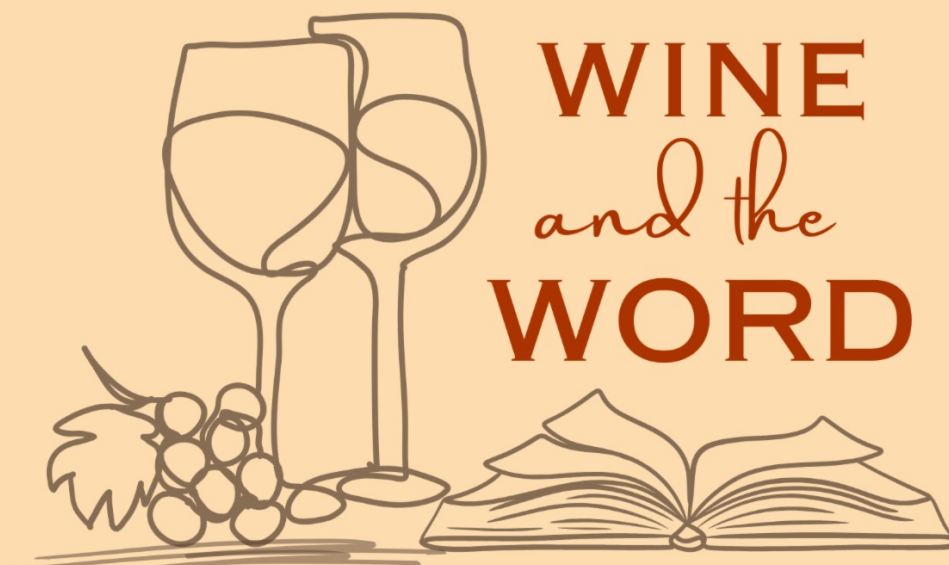
& Bonfire for The
Feast of the Epiphany

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](#). For more information click [HERE!](#)



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!](#)

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
HOPE

WINE AND ALTERNATIVE BEVERAGES WILL BE PROVIDED.

Returning January 8th!

The Weekly WORD

RE-GIFT

I'm not sure when it became less of a faux pas to RE-GIFT a present, but we seem to have come a long way since the Seinfeld days of Elaine calling out anyone for RE-GIFTING and judging them harshly.

As I think about an ordered life, I am aware of all the ways God has RE-GIFTED me to others and others to me. Each of us has a unique way of being our selves but that uniqueness is not always appreciated. When we are not appreciated for the unique human God made us to be, instead of changing ourselves to fit into another person's expectations, we seek those who will take us as we are—we REGIFT ourselves.

Instead of trying to become someone you aren't in order to fulfill someone else's desires, consider yourself a gift given by God in order to follow the particular call God has for you. Own who you are and REGIFT yourself to those who can and will appreciate you just the way you are.

SERVE



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.



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!

Staff Directory

The Rev. Candice B. Frazer, Rector candice@coascension.org
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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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