



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

From the Rector...

Banshee, also known as Church Dog, died on Sunday at noon. I left church right after the announcements so I could be with her and Steve, and I sat by her side, listening to the church bells ring out from First United Methodist as she took her final breath. It was poetic and sorrow-filled, but I knew she was at peace—and she deserved that. Her last few months had become increasingly difficult, and in the 72 hours before her death, she barely moved. She was a good dog, and she loved us well these past seventeen years.



In the months leading up to Banshee's death, I noticed that she would often linger in doorways. Though she slept most of the time, when she did get up and walk around the house, she would stop at a threshold and stand there, blocking the path for everyone else. It was, to say the least, annoying. But I had the impression that her standing in the middle of the doorway was a metaphor for her lingering between life and death.

For a couple of years now, Steve and I joked that Banshee was the dog who would not die, mainly because of her stubbornness. She would become sick, and we would think, "This is it," only for her to bounce back to life and keep going. She grew a large tumor on her leg and we finally decided to have it removed—something we were reluctant to do, as old dogs don't always survive surgery or anesthesia—but she returned with renewed energy and vitality. A year ago, she was diagnosed with a seizure disorder, and we didn't think she would survive the weekend. She did, but the vet told us that she probably only had about three months to live. She lived another year and a week and never had another seizure.

When she was thirteen, we were sure the end was near and decided to go ahead and get the Tweedles—Petunia and Archibald, our basset hounds. By then, Banshee was getting slower, sleeping most of the day, and lacking energy or desire to do much of anything. She was eating less and less, and we had to coax her to finish her food. But once the Tweedles arrived, Banshee found renewed energy and joy. She would romp around the backyard with the puppies, playing with them and teaching them how to live in a pack. She was in her element, and we were delighted.

Looking back, I can see how these last few years were a reflection of her standing in the doorway between life and death. She has had two paws in this world and two paws in the next for some time. As the end came nearer, her lingering in doorways symbolized her existence in the liminal spaces of life—those in-between times when we aren't quite here but haven't quite gotten there.

Liminal spaces are sacred spaces. They represent movement or transition from one time or purpose to the next. When we become aware of them, they become holy moments of wonder and gratitude. They invite peace beyond all understanding. These spaces are not problems or difficulties to be overcome or solved, but moments of mystery that, when held lightly, unfold in ways that deepen our relationship with God and love for one another.

Banshee was a liminal space for me—a sacred time in which I got to care for her and she for me. I admit, I will not miss the inconveniences of caring for her in her final years, but I will miss her. She taught me about releasing control and trusting that things will work out. She taught me about forgiveness and God's unconditional love for us. Most importantly, she taught me how to hold loosely to this life and live in it as I might live in the one to come. She has crossed through the

liminal space of this world into the heavenly one of our eternal hope; and I will linger in the doorways of the already and the not yet of this life.

Light and Life,

Candice+

candice@coascension.org

Ascension

Highlights What's Happening This Week

- The Word - Wednesday, Feb. 12 @ 5:45 PM
- Ascensionaires Luncheon - Wednesday, Feb 13 @ 12:00 PM
- Family Formations Supper Club - Wed, Feb. 13 @ 6:00 PM
- Office Closed for President's Day - Monday, Feb. 17

SERVE

Get Involved!



COME SERVE AT

Mercy House

Thursdays
11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Questions? Call or text
Stephanie Norrell
at 334-467-6989

The background of the poster shows a group of people, likely volunteers, in a kitchen or food service area, with a sign for 'MERCY HOUSE' visible in the background.

Mercy House is a day shelter at 2412 Council Street serving Washington Park and West Montgomery, providing access to food, clothing, shower facilities, and laundry.

St. John's and Ascension members are working each week at Mercy House to help package and distribute a hot lunch to those in need every Thursday from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. and we would love for you to join us! The staff at Mercy House prepares the food and handles the distribution, but they can always use help getting the prepared meals bagged and out the door. The link [HERE](#) will take you to the sign-up sheet, but if you aren't comfortable with using Sign Up Genius, you can call or text Stephanie Norrell to sign up at 334-467-6989.



McDowell Summer Camps at
Bethany Village invites you to a

MARDI GRAS BALL

supporting Special Session

**Saturday, March 1st
4-7PM**

**Good People Brewing Co.
114 14th St. S.
Birmingham, AL. 35233**

Purchase tickets, donate, become a sponsor here:
<https://mardigrasball.swell.gives>



The Food Box Ministry is asking for donations of empty cardboard boxes. Boxes around the size of office paper boxes are best and they need to be sturdy enough to hold about 40 pounds of food. Boxes can be dropped off in the foyer of Ascension Hall. Thank you!

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.



Children's Activities Available!



*Lift Up
Your Voice*

Sunday, March 2

4:00-6:00 PM

Do you want to have some Mardi Gras! fun that will prepare your heart, mind and body for Lent (and improve your weekly worship, at the same time?)

The staff has chosen a challenging yet different Lenten daily meditation series for Lent. There is power and synergy in our all practicing together, so we want to kick off the series with a parish sing-along, of sorts. If you love to sing, you will love this. If singing is not enjoyable for you or you think that you cannot sing, you do not want to miss this time of fellowship, learning, and growth. Invite your friends! See you there!

We will christen our new space with music in Joshua Commons!!!

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

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



You are invited to lunch with Candice+ and Drew+ on Thursday, February 13 in the Small Dining Room. Reservations are appreciated. Contact Fay@coascension.org to reserve your spot. Ascensionaires is a ministry of fellowship for those who are retired or partially retired to connect with one another in a spirit of joy. We hope to see you there!



DIOCESAN WOMEN'S RETREAT

CAMP MCDOWELL

Fri, Feb 28 - Sat, Mar 1

UPDATED Guest Speaker

Tasha Carter

Certified Life Coach for Women in Business



All women (clergy and lay alike) in the Diocese of Alabama are invited to gather for a time of fun, fellowship, relaxation, and leadership development at Camp McDowell.

Register Here:
bit.ly/DioAlaWomen



SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2025 10am - 2pm

TEMPLE BETH OR

2246 Narrow Lane Road Montgomery, AL

334-262-3314

TempleBethOr.net

TEMPLE BETH OR

JEWISH
FOOD
FESTIVAL

FREE ADMISSION
Dine-In or Carry-Out

& Treasure Market



Live Music by
Miriam Wyman,
Susan Youngblood & Dotan Shvorin



Fresh, Hot
LATKES

PLATINUM SPONSOR

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Regions

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River Bank & Trust
Total Sports Travel
Southern Steel & Pipe, Inc.

FROZEN-TO-GO

Cabbage Rolls, Challah, Kugel, Quajado, Matzah Ball Soup,
Carnegie Deli Cheesecakes & Bites

Scan QR Code to place your Frozen-To-Go order and
to see the full Food Festival menu.

All pre-orders require payment via debit or credit card.



Additional Parking and Shuttle Service at Huntingdon College

Opt-In for Text Notifications!

Stay in the Know!

Contact jason@coascension.org to opt-in for text messaging or click here!

**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.

WEDNESDAY

NIGHTLIVE

STAY CONNECTED AND JOIN US ON
WEDNESDAY NIGHTS!

4:30
REUNION GROUP
LIBRARY

5:15
DINNER
ASCENSION HALL

5:45
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:

Grilled Burgers
Chips
Baked Beans
Salad

\$8 per person or \$20 per family!



**EPISCO
PARTY**

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20
6:00 PM

HOSTED BY RICHARD NORRIS

CONTACT THE CHURCH FOR MORE
INFORMTION AND DIRECTIONS



This Thursday!

FAMILY FORMATION "POTLUCK CLUB"

FOR THE PARENTS OF CHILDREN & YOUTH

2nd Thursday

February, March, April, & May

6:00 pm - 8:00 pm.

in Ascension Hall.

Bring your favorite snack
supper food item to share
and your favorite beverage.

(Tea & water provided)

RSVP TO
NICK@COASCENSION.ORG

Family Formation is excited to introduce "Family Formation Supper Club!" The goal of this supper club is to give the parents of children and youth a chance to get to know one another better without the pressure of having to keep up with our kids at the same time. We are looking forward to seeing you and sharing in God's grace, fellowship, and formation with one another.



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!](#)

Financial Gifts Offered This Week	Financial Gifts Offered This Month	Financial Gift Target Monthly
\$29,182	\$29,182	\$85,500

Total Pledged Amount for 2025 - \$912,628
Total Collected Amount for 2025 - \$185,109

GROW



WEDNESDAY EVENINGS AT 5:45 PM
IN THE SMALL DINING ROOM

GATHER FOR CASUAL THEOLOGICAL DISCOURSE WITH THE CLERGY
THIS WEEK'S THEME OF DISCUSSION IS
ENNEAGRAM - THE PERFORMER

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

Reign

REIGN

Jesus tells us to seek and we shall find; knock and the door will be opened for us. When we find or enter through the open door, we allow ourselves to become somewhat disrupted. Whatever we have discovered in our search now changes us.

The true path of wisdom is not that what we discover brings completion but instead, opens up even greater paths of wonder. The more we allow ourselves to wonder, the less we need absolutes for security and comfort and the more we are able to enter in to the peace beyond all understanding—allowing our questions and mystery to guide us versus our need for answers.

Once we have discovered that peace, we are able to REIGN over our lesser ambitions and desires and one ourselves to God. That kind of sovereignty has nothing to do with the rulers of this world. It is the kind of sovereignty that allows our hearts, minds, and souls to choose freely who we would follow and how we might live according to the promises of God.

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.

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 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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