



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

From the Rector...

On Valentine's Day, I got into a fight with a leaf. I had just arrived at the office when I opened the door, and a leaf blew in. I picked it up to drop it back outside, but it blew in again. This happened a couple more times, and I started to laugh at the absurdity of this persistent little leaf. So, I bent down, picked it up, and really noticed it for the first time.

In the very center of the leaf on either side of the central stem that ran the length of its body, two holes had been torn out, leaving the shape of a perfect heart. As I gazed at the leaf, I smiled, realizing that God, in his gentle way and with a bit of humor, was sending me a sign of his presence.



Signs of God are all around us. Usually, we are too busy to notice them, but when we stop and truly gaze at the world and all that is therein, we are more likely to see them. Richard Rohr calls this "gazing", prayer, and says that it is different from "glancing"—seeing the world without really seeing it—or "glaring", which is our judgmental/critical approach to one another and the world. In gazing, we release ourselves from distraction and become aware that there is more to the world than our limited understandings and desires. We become aware that God is with us. When I was trying to just get the leaf out the door, I was only glancing. Once I began to gaze at the leaf, I discovered the joy of the sign God was offering me.

I don't think of signs like crystal balls telling us what the future holds. Instead, I believe signs are God's reminders of his presence with us. They are those little moments when our hope is nurtured and our faith is encouraged. I have known a few signs from God in

my life, none of which told me of things to come, but all of which reminded me that God was right in the midst of my present concerns. There was the perfect cross in the sky over the graveyard when my grandfather was buried; the cloud mass that formed a huge angel filling the sky from one side of the horizon to the other when I was returning from visiting a friend in prison; the pink dump truck that almost killed Steve and me during our IVF treatments; not to mention an assortment of dreams and other mystical occurrences I've experienced throughout my life. The signs of God are all around us if we take the time to slow down and gaze at the world.

I'll admit, the best signs are the ones God insists we notice—like that little leaf last Friday. It was the sweetest Valentine after a sad and grief-filled week. And its delivery reminded me that God does not give up on us. No matter how distracted or self-involved we become, God tries all the harder to remind us of his love for us. So often, it is simply the little things—a perfect heart-shaped tear in the middle of a leaf—that nurture our trust and hope in the wideness of God's love and mercy.

Light and Life,

Candice+

candice@coascension.org

Ascension Highlights What's Happening This Week

- Wednesday Night Live - Wednesday, Feb 19 @ 5:15 PM
- The Word - Wednesday, Feb. 19 @ 5:45 PM
- EpiscoParty! - Thursday, Feb 20 @ 6:00 PM
- Food Box Distribution - Saturday, Feb. 22 @ 8:30 AM

WORSHIP

Children's Activities Available!

Parish Sing-A-Long

*Lift Up
Your Voice*



Sunday, March 2

4:00 - 6:00 PM

Joshua Commons

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



DIOCESAN WOMEN'S RETREAT

C A M P M C D O W E L L

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

FREE ADMISSION
Dine-In or Carry-Out

TEMPLE BETH OR
JEWISH
FOOD
FESTIVAL

& Treasure Market



Live Music by
Miriam Wyman,
Susan Youngblood & Dotan Shvorin

PLATINUM SPONSOR

ServisFirst Bank
Synovus

SILVER SPONSOR

ARO Risk Solutions

Owen Aronov

Bern, Butler, Capilouto & Massey

River Bank & Trust

Total Sports Travel

Southern Steel & Pipe, Inc.

GOLD SPONSOR

CapTrust

Paragon Construction

Regions

BRONZE SPONSOR

Adams Drugs

Fresh, Hot
LATKES

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!



**Cursillo
Open Reunion
Group!**

**Meets Wednesdays at 4:30 p.m.
The Rector's Office**

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 ACTIVITIES
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:

Pizza Night with Salad Bar!

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



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

The JEWISH FEDERATION OF CENTRAL ALABAMA

Invites you to our 2025 Campaign Event

Faces OF OCTOBER SEVENTH

Connecting communities face-to-face
with survivors of the massacre.

Guest Speaker
GAL COHEN-SOLAL

Gal Cohen-Solal is a 37 year old survivor from Kibbutz Reim – the Kibbutz on the border with Gaza where the Nova Music Festival took place. He and his family hid in their safe room for 30 hours as terrorists massacred their neighbors.

This is your opportunity to hear his deeply personal story.



Reception immediately following event.

Sunday | March 2
2 p.m. | 2025

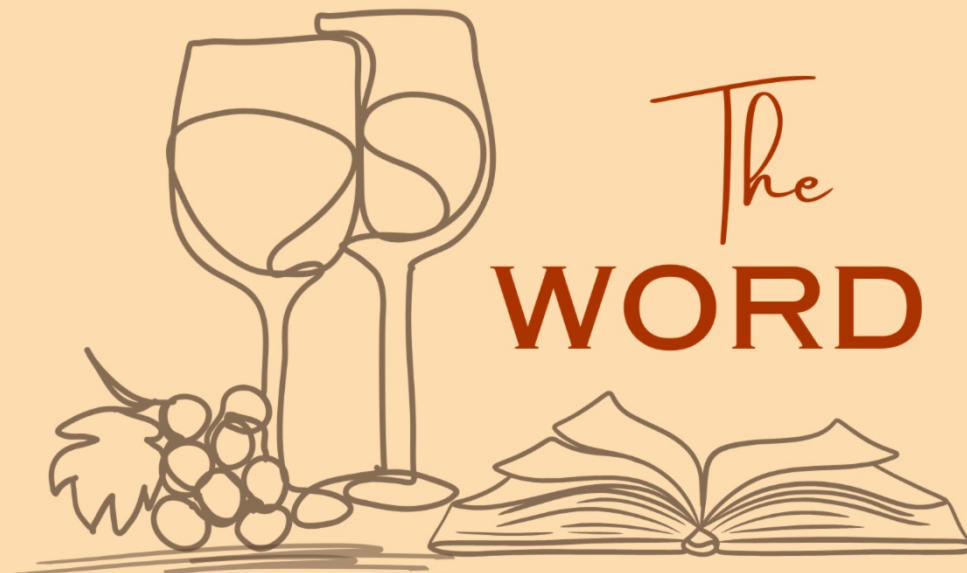
at **Agudath Israel Etz Ahayem**
3525 Cloverdale Road, Montgomery



RSVP BY FEBRUARY 27:

Online at myJFCA.org/FACES (or scan QR code)
(334) 490-8600 or Tara@myJFCA.org

This event is free but space is limited.



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 ROMANTIC

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



RUNNING

Paul tells us to RUN, with patience, the race. (Hebrews 12:1) Whenever I think about that I am reminded of my own discipline of RUNNING.

RUNNING is hard. It takes not only physical prowess but mental fortitude as well. I usually RUN first thing in the morning. In order to even get out of bed and put on my RUNNING clothes, I have to psyche myself up to go for the RUN. Any little thing can dissuade me like a basset hound coming to snuggle in the early morning or if it feels too cold in the room or someone texts me or whatever I can use as an excuse not to get out of bed and go for a RUN.

I think that is a lot like the spiritual life. We can make a plan and then let any number of distractions keep us from following through. An Ordered Life is one that requires us not only to practice our spirituality but also to mentally psyche ourselves up to overcome all the distractions that would try to keep us from our true purpose as followers of Jesus Christ.

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.

SERVE

This Saturday!

Food Box Saturday



SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 22ND
8:30 AM
HULL STREET PARKING LOT
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Get Involved!

COME SERVE AT

Mercy House

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

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



MERCY HOUSE

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.



Staff Directory

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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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