

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

Ascension Highlights What's Happening This Week

- Women's Bible Study Tuesday, Mar 25 @ 5:00 PM
- The Word Wednesday, Mar 26 @ 5:45 PM
- Men's Prayer Breakfast Thursday, Mar 27 @ 7:00 AM
- Vestry Meeting Sunday, Mar 30 @ 12:00 PM

From the Rector...

Several years ago, Simon Sinek delivered a TED Talk entitled "Start with Why." The central idea of his talk was that understanding why we do something is far more compelling than simply knowing what we do or how we do it. The *what* of any action is usually straightforward—it's concrete and easy to communicate. The *how* might be more complex, but it is still generally understandable, even if there's no consensus on the method.

Sinek explores the power of starting with why from a business perspective, using Apple as a



prime example. Apple doesn't just tell you that they offer great products (the *what*); they show you *how* their products can transform your life and *why* you need them. It's not just a phone; it's a tool for a better way of life—helping you capture memories, stay connected with loved ones, and work smarter. When you understand why Apple does what it does, it resonates on a deeper, more emotional level, making you more likely to buy into their vision.

Starting with *what* or *how* rarely evokes the kind of emotional connection that leads to genuine buy-in. But starting with *why* not only engages the mind and heart but can also guide decision-making around the *what* and the *how*. The church, for instance, exemplifies the power of *why-first* thinking.

As Christians, we're not driven by the need to simply increase church attendance or membership. Our commitment to Christianity stems from our deep belief in a Triune God —Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and the hope that belief brings. This is our *why*. The *what* and *how* are the expressions of that belief: *what* we do is nurture our community, and *how* we do it is through church membership, attendance, and active participation in fellowship and Christian formation.

Starting with the *how* doesn't make a strong case for spiritual growth. But when we begin with our *why*—a belief that Christianity is about community and connection to God—we're naturally drawn to be part of that community, especially through church attendance and engagement with the church's mission. Our actions—the *what*—are a reflection of our *why*, not the other way around.

I often try to start with *why* when embarking on something new—whether it's starting an exercise routine, preparing a sermon, or picking up a new hobby. If I understand my *why*, it keeps me focused, preventing distractions and helping me stay on course. When I know the *why* behind writing a sermon, for instance, I have clarity about the message I want to convey, and I can then decide on the *what* and *how* of delivering it. The *why* serves as a guiding principle that brings focus, ensuring I stay true to the purpose while maintaining clarity for both myself and my listeners.

In a world full of distractions, asking *why* you're doing something helps to narrow your focus and ensures that your efforts align with what truly matters to you. Knowing your *why* and engaging in activities that support it not only gives you a sense of purpose but also provides rest and renewal for your mind, body, and soul.

Life is too short, and the opportunities are too vast, to waste time on things that don't bring us joy, wonder, truth, or love. This is why I've always valued and prioritized church—it consistently reminds me of the wonder of God. I find truth in gathering with those who love to worship, appreciate beauty, and find comfort in the presence of other believers. I am a

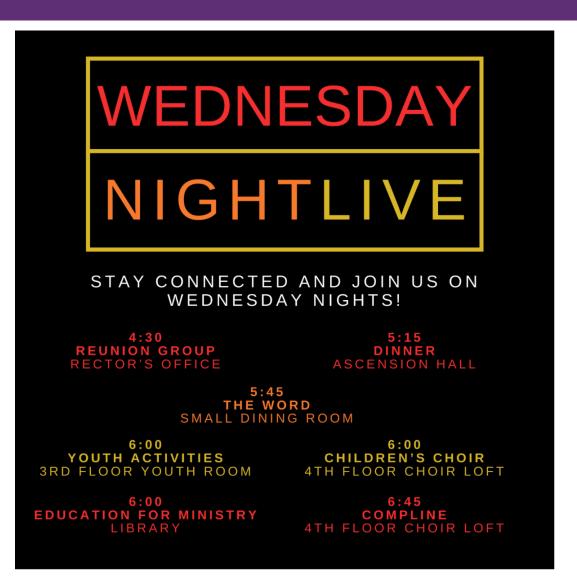
Christian because I believe in God as Creator, Savior, and Redeemer. I am a churchgoer because we all need God and one another. I am a priest because there is power in coming together to worship and glorify the Lord. That's my *why*. What's yours?

Light and Life,

Candice+

candice@coascension.org

CONNECT



Menu This Week:

Spaghetti Salad Bar Italian Bread

\$8 per person or \$20 per family. Cash, check or Venmo accepted!



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 <u>HERE!</u>

Financial Gifts Offered This Week Financial Gifts Offered This Month Financial Gift Target Month Monthly

\$18,809 \$55,781 \$85,500

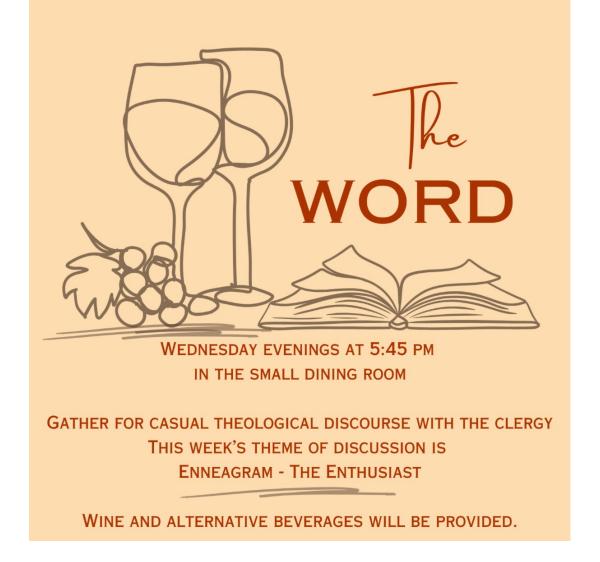
Total Pledged Amount for 2025 - \$912,628 Total Collected Amount for 2025 - \$258,980

Opt-In for Text Notifications!





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.



The Word Wednesdays, January 8 – March 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



RETURN

Mindfulness is an intention. It is also challenging. To be mindful means we must constantly and consistently RETURN to a present awareness. The practice of being mindful is more about RETURNING to awareness than anything else.

When we decide to be mindful, we pay attention to what is happening in the moment. For instance, if we decide to eat a meal mindfully, we chew slowly, noticing the flavors and textures of the morsel we have placed in our mouth. We become aware of how our teeth, tongue, and gums are all affected by whatever we are chewing or drinking. The more aware we become, the more our senses are enlivened by our experience. But we also face the temptation of distractions. As we are eating, we may lose focus. This is not a failure, it is the opportunity to practice the ultimate form of mindfulness.

When we lose focus in a moment of mindfulness, we are invited to recognize our loss of focus, release whatever is distracting us, and RETURN to our mindful practice. This process of recognize, release, and RETURN then becomes the path forward into becoming mindful about all of our life. It is the process of "waking up" to life. When we consistently practice the opportunity to RETURN to mindfulness, we discover that life is not about perfection but balance.

Women's Bible Study

In Trouble and In Wonder The Gospel of St. Thomas Tuesday Nights - 5pm The Library January 27 - April 15 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



The Four Quartets
Thursdays at 7:00 am
Ascension Hall
March 13 – April 17

T. S. Eliot converted to Anglicanism in 1927 on the eve of the Second World War. His poem, The Four Quartets, is a journey of despair and hope through the four primary elements. In this Lenten season, take time to embrace that journey and, like Eliot, find that it leads you closer to God.

SERVE

SPRING WORK DAY SATURDAY, APRIL 12

Bring your gardening gloves and help us give the grounds of Ascension a Spring Cleaning! Come enjoy an a morning of fellowship as we maintain the grounds and spruce up our little corner of God's kingdom.

- 8:30 AM Noon
- Please bring work gloves and tools (weed eaters, blowers, etc.)
- Youth and Children will be spring cleaning the 3rd floor and folding palms in Ascension Hall!





How You Can Help!

- Donate cardboard boxes
- Food bank trips
- Packing food boxes

The Food Box Ministry is in need of volunteers to assist in picking up food from local food banks or packing boxes for distribution. Any amount of time that you can give is appreciated! If you are interested in becoming a part of this rewarding and important ministry, or for additional information, please contact <u>Fay</u>.



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.

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.





WORSHIP

lift up your voice
SINGING THROUGH LENT AND EASTER

In this devotional, each day,

scripture and song inspires our hope in the midst of this season of Lent.

Booklets available in Ascension Hall and the Narthex.

Daily emails contain a link to the hymn of the day.





Sunday Services

8:00 AM - Rite I, 10:30 AM Rite II



Morning Prayer

Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM - Facebook Live



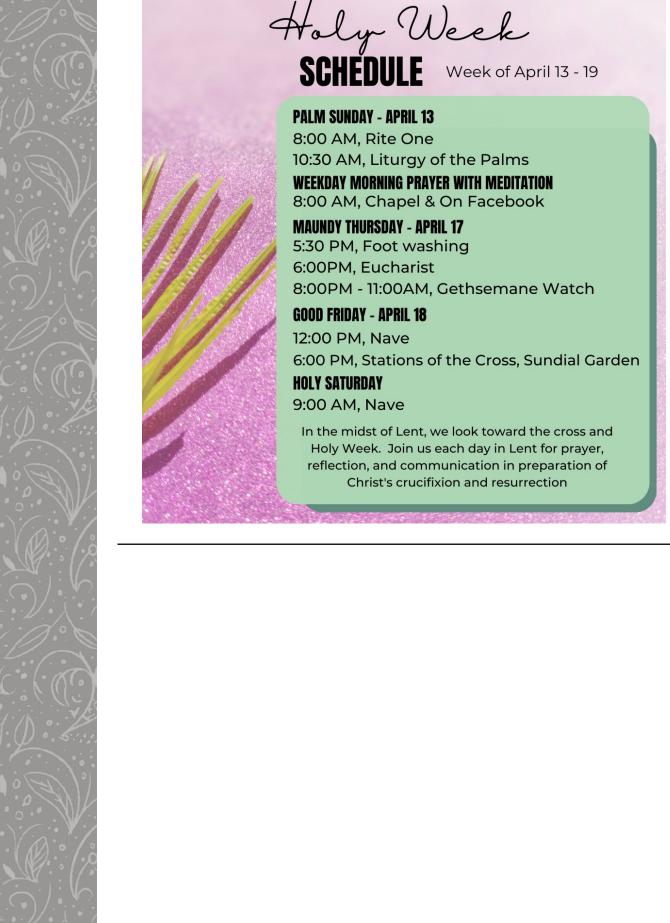
Compline

Wednesday 6:45 PM - Choir Loft & Facebook Live



Sung Compline

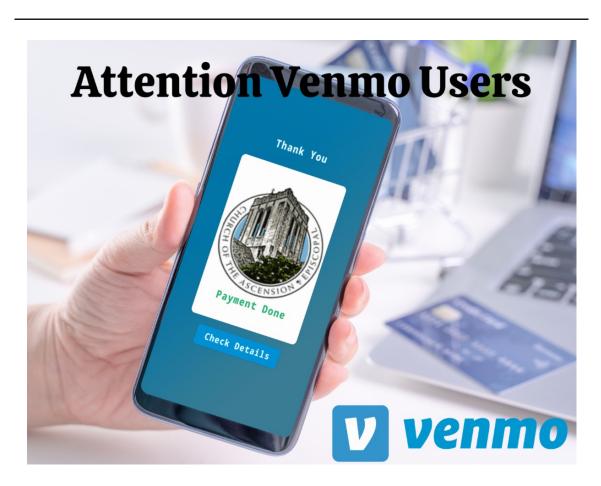
3rd Sundays 7:30 PM - Nave





Sunday April 20

- Sunrise Service at Oakwood Cemetery
 - o 6:30 AM
- Family Festal Eucharist Followed by Easter Egg Hunt
 - 9:00 AM
- Festal Eucharist
 - o 11:00 Am



As electronic payments become more widely used we ask that anyone who uses Venmo to <u>please add a short summary of what the payment is for in the description field</u>. 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
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

Visit Our Website

Church of the Ascension | 315 Clanton Avenue | Montgomery, AL 36104 US

<u>Unsubscribe</u> | <u>Update Profile</u> | <u>Constant Contact Data Notice</u>



Try email marketing for free today!