

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

Ascension Highlights What's Happening This Week

- Women's Bible Study Tuesday, April 1 @ 5:00 PM
- Wednesday Night Live Wednesday, April 2 @ 5:15 PM
- The Word Wednesday, April 2 @ 5:45 PM
- Men's Prayer Breakfast Thursday, April 4 @ 7:00 AM

From the Rector...

Petunia loves to go for walks, but she despises wearing the lead that goes over her nose which allows me to control her. This lead, called a "gentle lead," is designed to apply slight pressure to the top of her nose—the most submissive part of a dog—much like the lead used on a horse. The principle is simple: control the nose, and you control the dog.

Although Petunia enjoys the walks, she eagerly anticipates being liberated from the lead. As soon as we reach the back door. she starts pawing at it. Once it is released, she



dramatically drags her face across the floor in a bid for "Best Actress in Motion Picture -Drama" category. As comical as her behavior is, I get it—no one wants to be controlled.

Often, we associate liberation with being free from control. Yet, scripture is pretty clear that true liberation doesn't mean freedom from all control, but rather freedom from a false god in order to serve the true God.

Take Moses for example. God commands him to set the captives free. Specifically, he tells Moses to go to Pharoah, the false god, and request that the people be allowed to embark on a three-day journey to worship YHWH. Pharoah refuses, leading to a series of escalating demands until Moses finally secures the Israelites' release through YHWH's devastating plagues and Pharoah's eventual surrender. That liberation is not simply that the Israelites are now free from Pharoah's rule—it is a shift in allegiance. The Israelites were once forced to do serve a false god, but now they are called to serve the one true God. Throughout Exodus, God emphasizes that he is liberating them not simply from slavery but to worship him.

Jesus is often referred to as the new "Moses." His message of liberation echoes the same principle: our false gods are the sins and distractions that keep us from fully knowing and serving God. Through his sacrifice on the cross, Jesus liberates us from the power of sin and the devil that we might be reconciled to God.

The joy in being liberated to serve the true God is that this God is a God of free will and choice. He is the God who desires our well-being, not for his own glory, but for ours. When God offers liberation, it is not about escaping suffering or gaining the freedom to do whatever we want. True liberation is the freedom to trust God, to center our hopes and lives around his promises to us. This is the essence of the Good News.

When we misunderstand liberation, we become trapped in ego-driven desires. These desires skew our expectations of the world, of others, and even of God. True liberation is not self-centered or hedonistic. It is about restoring right relationships--relationships that draw us closer to God and one another, not ones that imprison us or others.

True liberation is not about what we gain or a matter of our own self-interest, but about being set free to serve. It's about embracing a relationship of love and trust with the one true God. It is through this liberation that we are set free—not to whatever we want, but to live according to God's will, finding peace in his promises and joy in his service. Just as Petunia finds freedom when released from her lead, no longer controlled, and with the freedom to choose to be in full relationship with me; we, too, are liberated to choose a deeper relationship with God. A relationship in which our lives are centered on his love and purpose. Light and Life, Candice+ candice@coascension.org

GROW



Click either link below and let Laura@coascension know if you have any questions.

It's here! The moment everyone looks forward to that marks the end of another school year and the start of Summer! Vacation Bible School! This year, our parish will be hosting God's children in Ascension Hall for a journey with Joseph!

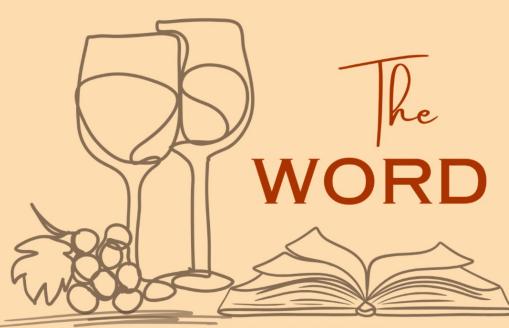
Right now, use the links provided below to register children for VBS. Adults and Youth who wish to serve as volunteers, please register and fill out a form also!

More information will follow in the coming days on specific ways you can serve in this ministry. Whether you are gifted in leading a small group, preparing snacks, or "floating" we welcome your talents!

Thank you in advance for making VBS 2025 so special!

Click here to register your child.

Click here to register as an adult or Youth Volunteer.



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 REPENT

WINE AND ALTERNATIVE BEVERAGES WILL BE PROVIDED.

The Word Wednesday Nights 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



REPENT

Everyone remembers the great scene from Indiana Jones and The Last Crusade when mere seconds before Indiana is to be sliced in quarters, he remembers that the penitent man kneels before the Lord.

Kneeling is often associated with REPENTANCE. When we REPENT of our sins we often assume a humble posture such as kneeling. It is a posture that expresses humility and helps us to embrace that what we have done or left undone marks us as less than worthy.

We don't stay on our knees for long—it starts to hurt. I wonder if God didn't design that little flaw just so we might remember that we are not measured by the worst things we ever do, nor are we to spend our life groveling on our knees. To REPENT, is to offer to God our mistakes from the humble places of our hearts and to accept God's forgiveness that we might stand and do better.

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

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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

Come one! Come all! Please come join us as spruce up the campus before Holy Week! We will be cleaning up the new property on Hull Street so if you have them bring gloves, loppers, limb saws, etc. We will also be removing an old fence behind Joshua Commons to open up the property!

- 8:30 AM 11:00 AM Meet in Joshua Commons
- Youth and Children will be spring cleaning the 3rd floor and folding palms in Joshua Commons!



Sawyerville In-Gathering

Help us minister to Sawyerville Camp participants by filling the following needs:

- 20 Girls Swimsuits
 One Piece Size L (10-12)
- 20 Boys Swimsuits Size L
- 40 Thin Pool Towels
- 40 Pool Noodles

Donations can be dropped off in Ascension Hall!

It takes a village to make three sessions of Summer Camp happen, welcoming over 500 campers and nearly 300 staff members—and with 80 days left until the first bus unloads those excited campers at the front of Greensboro Elementary School, we have much to do to prepare for their arrival! We need snacks, cleaning supplies, swimsuits, towels, pool noodles, laundry detergent and more.

Our theme this summer will be **"Thanks be to God"**, where we will examine and practice gratitude—gratitude for creation, friendships, family, answered prayers, and even challenges. As we look forward to seeing how you will make an impact at Sawyerville this summer, we want to say, "thanks be to God for **"YOU!"**

come serve at Mercy House

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

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



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 <u>HERE</u> 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

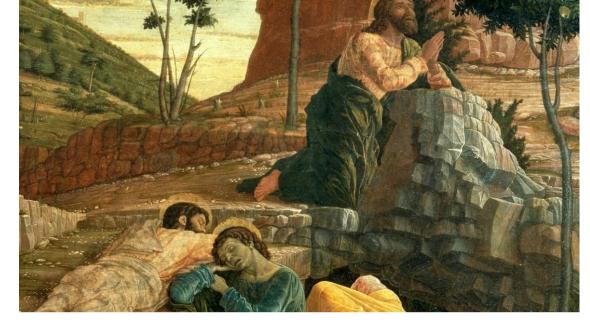


lift up your voice

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.



The Gethsemane Watch: A Maundy Thursday Vigil

"Could you not keep awake one hour?" were the words of Jesus in reproach to his hapless followers in the first Gethsemane. Ever since, his disciples of subsequent generations have attempted to do better, and in some small way to make up what was lacking in

the first bunch.





SCHEDULE Week of April 13 - 19

PALM SUNDAY - APRIL 13 8:00 AM, Rite One 10:30 AM, Liturgy of the Palms WEEKDAY MORNING PRAYER

8:00 AM, Chapel & On Facebook

MAUNDY THURSDAY - APRIL 17 5:30 PM, Foot washing 6:00PM, Eucharist 8:00PM - 11:00AM, Gethsemane Watch

GOOD FRIDAY - APRIL 18 12:00 PM, Nave 6:00 PM, Stations of the Cross, Sundial Garden **HOLY SATURDAY** 9:00 AM, Nave

In the midst of Lent, we look toward the cross and Holy Week. Join us each day in Lent for prayer, reflection, and communication in preparation of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection

Easter Schedule

Saturday April 19
Easter Vigil (Taize Service)
7:15 PM

Sunday April 20

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



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

The Church of the Ascension Choristers and Friends from Rejoice! present



Sunday April 27, 2025 9:30 a.m. in the Nave

WEDNESDAY NIGHTLIVE

STAY CONNECTED AND JOIN US ON WEDNESDAY NIGHTS!

4:30 REUNION GROUP RECTOR'S OFFICE 5:15 DINNER ASCENSION HALL

5:45 THE WORD SMALL DINING ROOM

6:00 Youth Activities 3rd floor youth room

6:00 EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY LIBRARY 6:00 CHILDREN'S CHOIR 4TH FLOOR CHOIR LOFT

6:45 COMPLINE 4TH FLOOR CHOIR LOFT Menu This Week:

Taco Soup Cornbread Salad Bar

\$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	Financial Gifts Offered This	Financial Gift Target
Week	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!

Stay in the Know!

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

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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 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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