



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



Ascension

Highlights What's Happening This Week

- Good Vibrations – Sunday, September 7
- Bishop Visit & Confirmation – Sunday, Sep 7 @ 10:30 AM
- Surf's Up Ministry Fair – Sunday, Sep 7 @ 9:15 AM
- Instructed Eucharist – Wednesday, Sep 3 @ 5:30 PM

From the Rector...

People often ask me why suffering exists. The truth is, I cannot fully answer that question—certainly not in the way we wish for when pain is fresh. The church offers a theology of suffering called *Theophany*, but I often find it unsatisfying. No matter how hard we try to explain suffering from an intellectual perspective, our answers always fall short. Suffering is not simply a topic to be studied; it is something to be felt, shared, and honored with empathy and compassion. Most importantly, suffering is something to be held as sacred.



Too often, we try to move past suffering quickly, offering words that minimize another's pain—"It'll be alright, you'll see," or, "It can't be that bad." Even well-meaning phrases like, "Everything happens for a reason," or, "God doesn't give you more than you can handle," can unintentionally silence the person who suffers. In trying to comfort, we risk diminishing their experience and taking away their voice.

When we instead recognize the sacredness of suffering, our calling is to hold it tenderly. We do this most faithfully through prayer. Prayer places suffering in God's hands—not to dismiss it, but to honor it. Prayer restores dignity to the one who suffers, gives agency to

their story, and invites us to see suffering not only as hardship but also as a place where God's presence may be revealed.

Theologian Sam Wells names three ways of praying through suffering: **Resurrection, Incarnation, and Transfiguration prayers.**

- **Resurrection prayers** ask for miracles—healing, relief, or deliverance. These prayers connect us to the power of Christ's resurrection. They are bold, beautiful, and filled with hope. At the same time, if the miracle does not come, they can leave us feeling disappointed or doubting.
- **Incarnational prayers** are prayers of presence. Just as Jesus came to dwell among us, these prayers affirm that the one who suffers is not alone. They remind us of the power of presence, of simply standing with one another before God in times of need. These prayers strengthen us, though they sometimes leave us wishing we could do more.
- **Transfiguration prayers** lift suffering into God's glory. These prayers do not ask for suffering, but they ask that in the midst of suffering, God would be revealed. They echo the moment when Jesus shone in glory before Peter, James, and John on the mountaintop. Transfiguration prayers help us see suffering not as an end, but as a place where God can transform pain into deeper love, deeper faith, and deeper hope.

The next time you walk alongside someone who suffers, let prayer be your gift to them. Pray Resurrection prayers, asking boldly for healing and relief. Pray Incarnational prayers, that they may feel surrounded and never alone. And most especially, pray Transfiguration prayers, that even in the midst of suffering, they may glimpse the glory of God.

The Good News of this practice of prayer in the face of suffering is that you bring hope to others while also feeling strengthened when experiencing your own hardships. Rather than trying to answer the age-old question, "Why does suffering exist?" (that really has no good answers), pray and be present to the sufferings of this world trusting that God is too.

Light and Life,

Candice Frazer+

candice@coascension.org

CONNECT

This Sunday!



Pick out your favorite Hawaiian shirt and join us for our 3rd annual Good Vibrations Sunday! There will be a BBQ potluck, water slides & games, music, and a ministry fair. Ministry fair is at 9:15 and the celebration will begin after 10:30 service! Bring a side dish or appetizer of your choice! Kids don't forget your bathing suits and beach towels!



Celebrate mission and ministry at CoA with our Surf's Up Ministry Fair! At the Ministry Fair you will have an opportunity to check out a variety of ways that Ascension is involved in the community, the neighborhood, and the church. Wear your Hawaiian shirts for a fun photo opportunity as well as pick up some swag from your favorite ministries. Hang ten! Hope to see you there.

*Ministry leaders should be on the lookout for an email describing how your ministry can be involved with the Ministry Fair. If you do not receive one, please contact Fay@coascension.org

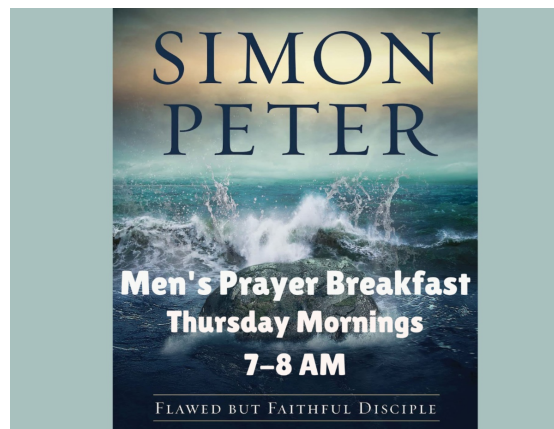
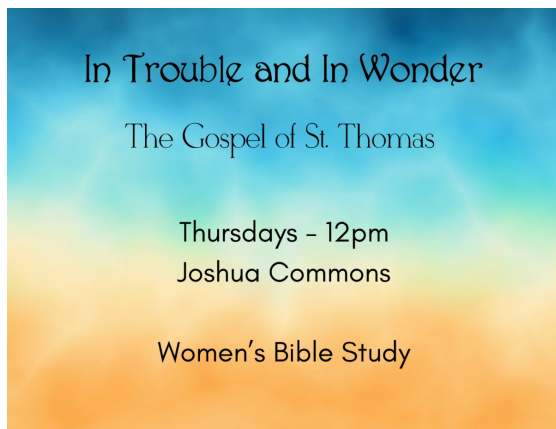


Sunday, September 7 at Grace Episcopal Church in Pike Road!

Opt-In for Text Notifications!



GROW



Church of the Ascension is pleased to provide an opportunity for participation in EfM (Education for Ministry), a "... a unique four-year, small-group formation program based on study and practice in theological reflection ..." that is offered through the School of Theology at the University of the South in Sewanee. "EfM helps the faithful discover the Christian tradition, bringing it into conversation with their experiences of the world. EfM

seminar groups develop theologically informed, reflective, and articulate seekers of God." Ascension's class begins after Labor Day and meets on Wednesday evenings, running through May. For more information please contact Andy Akin (andrewmacakin@gmail.com) or Eric A. Kidwell (ericakidwell31@gmail.com)



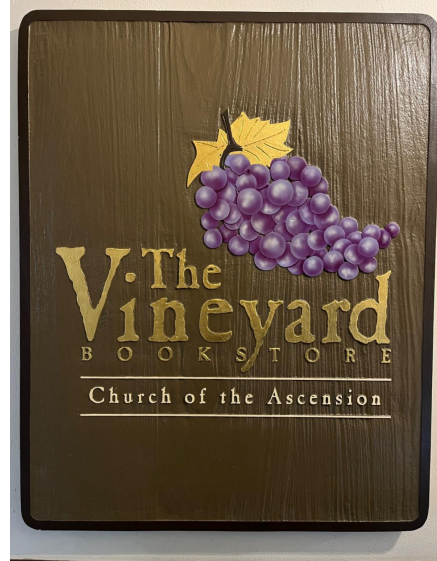
Three Dioceses of Northern New England (Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont) are offering an 11-week study exploring race and faith beginning this fall. Sessions will take place on Zoom and are open to Dioceses around the country. There will be at least three circles that will meet at different times and on different days. Previous offerings of Sacred Ground that involve multiple Dioceses have benefited greatly from the regional diversity and the different backgrounds represented.

Sacred Ground is a curriculum developed by The Episcopal Church to explore the history of racism in our country as well as the economic and social legacies that continue to underlie divisions among us. To learn more about Sacred Ground, please view the Sacred Ground Invitational video "We Bless You" (22 Minutes) [Click here](#), or for more general information, visit the Sacred Ground website [here](#).

To register:
[Registration Link](#)

For more information: Amy Hastings, amymiddlebury@gmail.com

SERVE



New Beginnings for 2025-26 School Year! Volunteers Needed!



New Beginnings is looking for tutor-mentors for the upcoming school year. Ascension volunteers meet with students at the church on Wednesdays for a group meal, conversation/play, and about an hour of one-on-one school-related work, which can be provided by the program. We ask that each mentor commit to being present for most Wednesday evenings during the school year, except for holidays; some serve one year and others develop longer relationships. If you are interested in having a meaningful impact in this way on the life of a child, please call or text Mildred Wakefield (334-201-4854) or send an email (wake7@me.com): we will start the 2025-2026 school year with an orientation meeting for volunteers—tentatively scheduled for Wednesday September 3—before we begin meeting with the children, probably beginning September 10.

WORSHIP

Bishop's Visit and Confirmation – Sunday, September 7



Bishop Prior will be with us Sunday, September 7 at the 10:30am service. He will preach and celebrate and share the Good News of God in the Diocese of Alabama. He will also confirm, receive, or reaffirm all those interested. Confirmation or Reception is necessary for full membership in the Episcopal Church—which means at some point in your life a bishop laid hands on your head and said something about grace and sustenance in a church service. If you are not sure of your membership status, please contact the church office. If you would like more information regarding confirmation or reception, please contact candice@coascension.org.

INSTRUCTED EUCHARIST

Wednesday, September 3rd

5:30 - 7:00 PM

**Learn the history, theology,
and symbolism of our worship**



Sunday Morning Schedule

Rite I Service: 8:00 AM - Nave

Breakfast: 8:30 AM - 10:15 AM - Ascension Hall

Surf's Up Ministry Fair - 9:15 AM - Ascension Hall

Rite II Service: 10:30 AM - Nave

Good Vibrations - Following 10:30 AM Service



MORNING PRAYER

8:00 AM MONDAY - FRIDAY

LIVE ON





Tell Out My Soul

A Special Note from Your Stewardship Committee

Your Stewardship Committee is excited to announce our theme for the 2025-2026 campaign: “Tell Out My Soul” – a call to consider all God has done for us, and to respond with joyful generosity. “Tell Out My Soul” reflects the giving heart of Mary and her willingness and eagerness to serve and remain faithful, even through the unknown.

We invite you to help us jumpstart our stewardship campaign as we head into summer. As this season arrives and we find time for rest, travel, and renewal, it’s important to remember that the life of our church continues – in worship, outreach, and care for our community.

Like many churches, we often see a dip in giving during the summer months, even as our ministries and expenses remain steady. If you are able to continue your current giving or make a gift during this season, it makes a meaningful difference and helps us stay strong and consistent in our work.

Summer gives us many opportunities to “tell out” to friends, family, and the community about the good work of Church of the Ascension. Your support helps ensure that our parish continues to be a place where that story is told boldly – in word, in service, and in love.

Thank you for being part of that witness.

Your Stewardship Committee

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
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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