



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



# Ascension Highlights What's Happening This Week

- Wednesday Night Live - Wed, April 14 @ 5:00 PM
- Men's Prayer Breakfast - Thurs, April 16 @ 7:00 AM
- Episcopal 101 - Sun, April 19 @ 9:15 AM
- Morning Prayer - Mon - Fri @ 8:00 AM Live on Facebook

From the Rector...

*Imago Dei* is a Latin term meaning “the image of God.” Theologically, it speaks to what it means for humanity to be created in God’s image. Over the centuries, however, that idea has often been distorted. God has too frequently been imagined as a white male seated on a throne in the clouds, clad in flowing white robes with a long white beard. This image is not only culturally constructed—it is theologically misleading. Other than his maleness, even Jesus did not resemble this picture.

Jesus was a Middle Eastern Jew with olive skin. He did not sit on a throne. In fact, in both Matthew and Luke’s Gospels, Jesus says of himself, “the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head” (Mt. 8:20; Lk. 9:58). He lived without status, without possessions, and without the trappings we often associate with power. He also died at about thirty-three years old—hardly the age of a white-bearded patriarch. If Jesus does not fit our inherited images of *imago Dei*, perhaps we are not meant to take those images literally.

Instead, *imago Dei* invites us to consider the immaterial dimensions of being human. To be made in God’s image is to bear God’s likeness in how we live and relate. It means that every human being carries inherent dignity and worth. It means we are called to steward



creation—not with domination, but with humility and care. It means we are invited into compassion rather than contempt, into service rather than control. To reflect God’s image is not to remake God in our likeness, but to allow our lives to be shaped by God’s.

And yet, we often do the opposite. We reshape God into our own image—what might be called *imago hominis*—and in doing so, we distort both our theology and our witness. One of the clearest places this distortion appears is in the conflation of church and state.

Christian nationalism, in particular, has blurred the line between faith and political identity. It attempts to fashion a version of Christianity that serves national power as readily as it serves God. But these loyalties are not interchangeable; they are fundamentally incompatible. Jesus himself draws a distinction: “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s.” Those words were confusing and unsettling in the first century, and they remain so today. But they are a necessary boundary. We are not called to render unto political leaders the devotion that belongs to God alone.

Recent cultural moments make this confusion visible in unsettling ways. When political figures are depicted in explicitly religious or Christ-like imagery, it is more than distasteful—it reveals how deeply entangled our theological imagination has become with our political allegiances. Such portrayals are not merely inappropriate; they signal a loss of our ability to discern the difference between the sacred and the civic.

But this is not simply about one person or one image. It is about all of us. We proclaim that God is love, yet we judge others as unworthy and treat them without dignity. We confess God as Creator, yet we exploit and degrade creation for convenience and gain. We name God as Redeemer, yet we declare people beyond redemption. I am as guilty as anyone.

The misuse of religious imagery in political life may be sacrilegious, but it also exposes a deeper spiritual sickness. If we are to recover a faithful understanding of *imago Dei*, we must once again learn to give to Caesar what is Caesar’s—and to God what is God’s. Rather than elevating political power to divine status we are called to bear God’s image with integrity: to speak truth, to act with compassion, and to live our faith by speaking God’s truth in our lives and living it in our hearts.

Light and Life,

Candice+

[candice@coascension.org](mailto:candice@coascension.org)

CONNECT



Friday, May 1st  
6:00pm - 9:00pm

We are in need of sponsors, silent auction donations, and wine donations. If you would be interested in helping please contact the church.



Sponsorship Form [HERE](#)  
Silent Auction Form [HERE](#)

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**WEDNESDAY**

**NIGHTLIVE**

STAY CONNECTED AND JOIN US ON  
WEDNESDAY NIGHTS!

**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

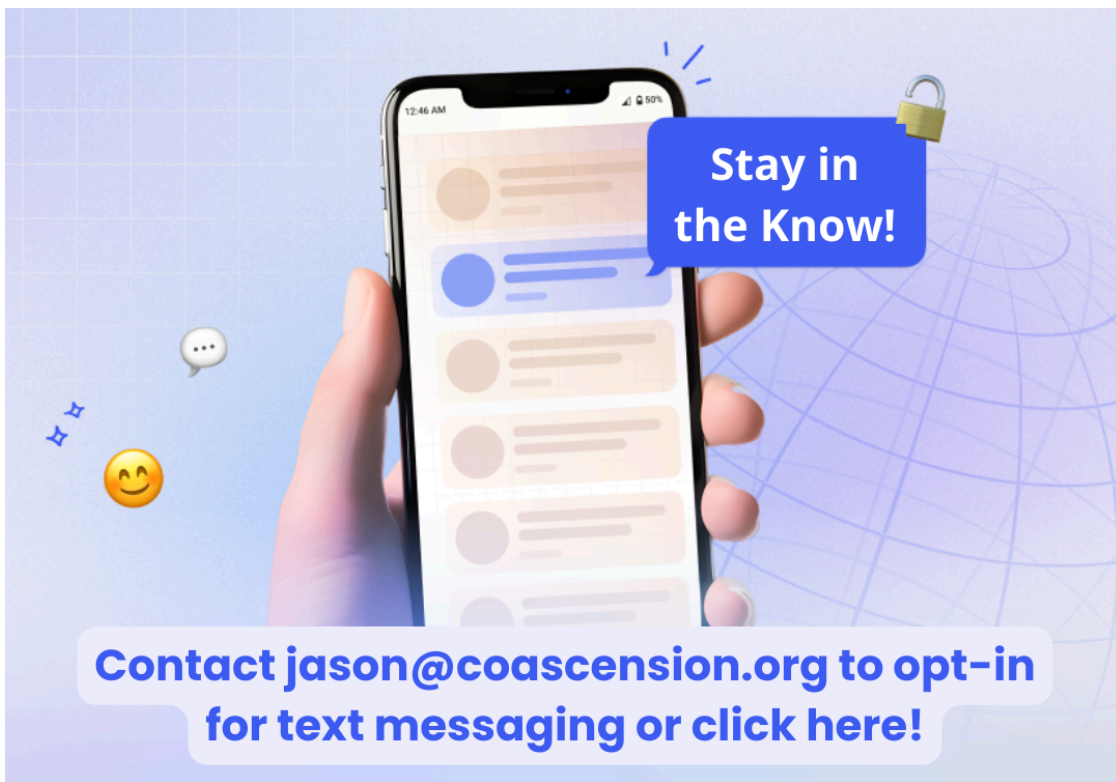
**Dinner Menu:**

**Breakfast for Dinner**

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

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**Get Signed Up Today!**



**GROW**

## **THE WORD**

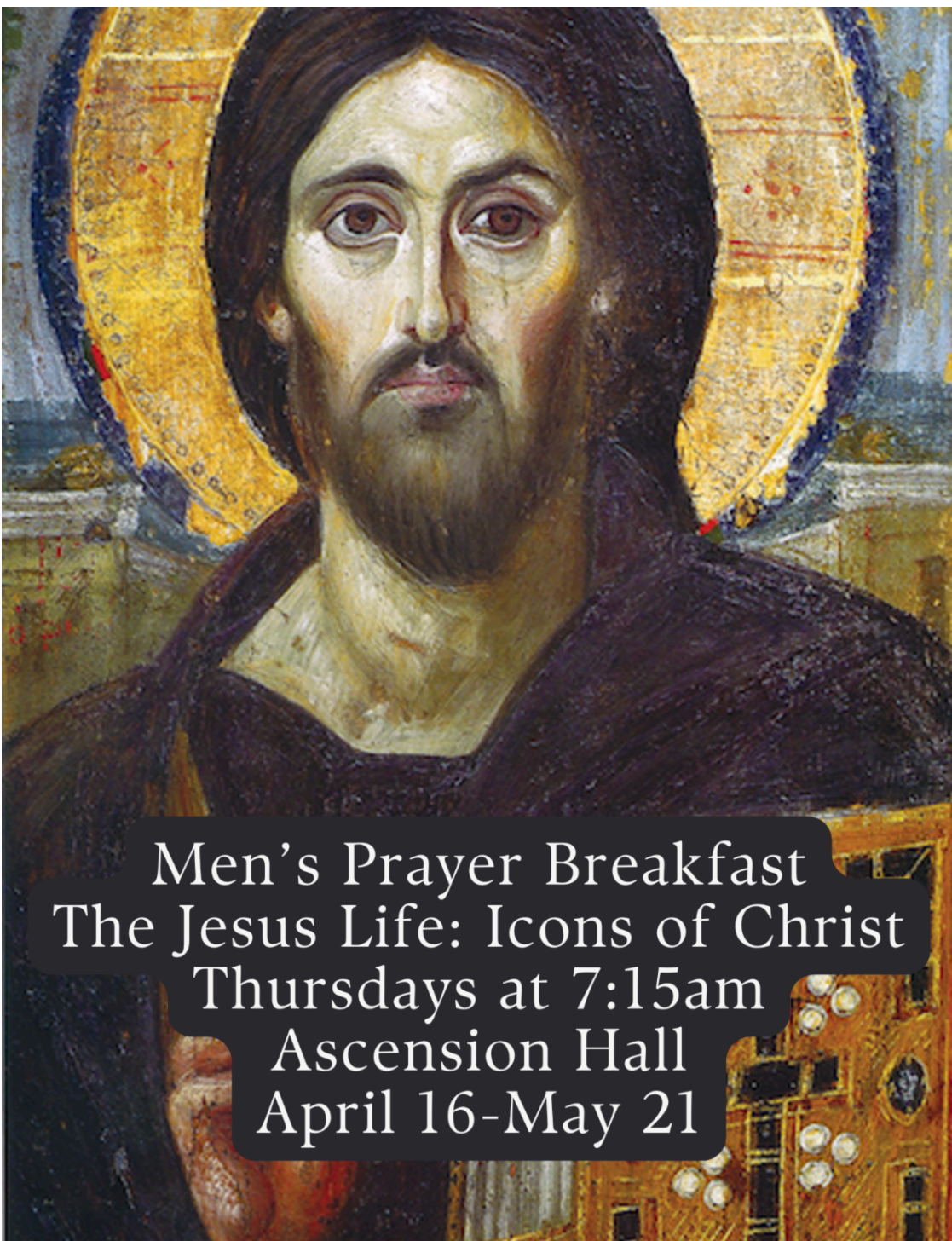
### **Our Jewish Friends**

**Wednesday Nights 6:00 PM**

**Small Dining Room**

Antisemitism is often seeded in our language without us realizing its existence or effect. This two week class will explore the ways that antisemitism has spread historically and culturally as a preparation for the *Being Jewish* course at Temple Beth Or beginning April 29.

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Men's Prayer Breakfast  
The Jesus Life: Icons of Christ  
Thursdays at 7:15am  
Ascension Hall  
April 16-May 21

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**Will Return Thursday April 23rd!**

# In Trouble and In Wonder

The Gospel of St. Thomas

Thursdays - 12pm

Joshua Commons

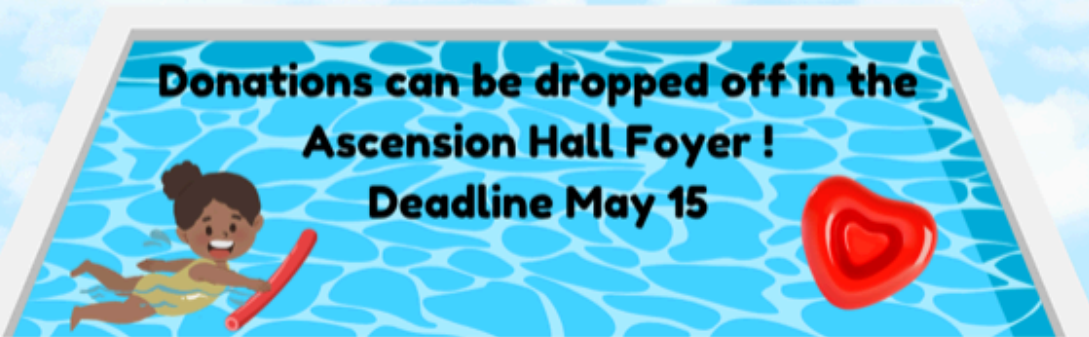
Women's Bible Study

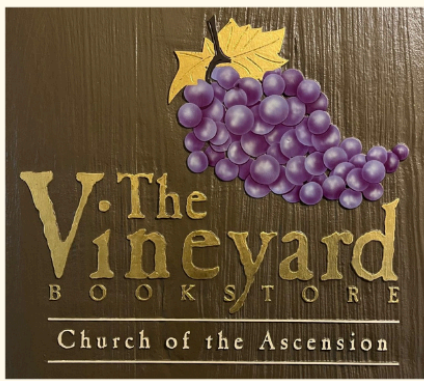
## SERVE

### Sawyerville In-Gathering

- 20 Girls Swimsuits, One Piece Size Large (10-12)
- 20 Boys Swim Trunks, Size Small
- 100 **Thin & New** Pool Towels
- 20 Clorox Wipes

**Donations can be dropped off in the  
Ascension Hall Foyer !  
Deadline May 15**





**Calling All Cooks!**

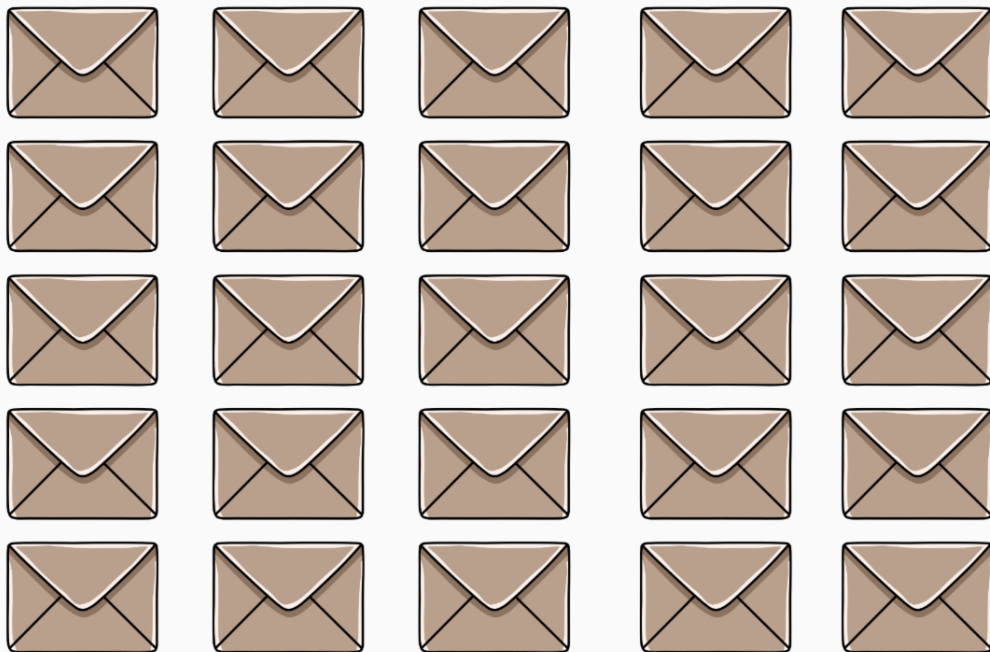
**LA Kitchens Cheese Straws  
from Fairhope NOW in The  
Vineyard.**

**Grab a bag, or two, for your  
spring and summer soirées!**



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**Youth Mission Envelope Fundraiser!**



The Youth Envelope Fundraiser is back! Once again we are raising money for our summer mission trip to Hinton Rural Life Center in North Carolina. We will have 100 envelopes numbered 1-100 and ask members to select their favorite number (or group of numbers) and donate that amount of money to our trip! Each donor will receive a thank you note from our trip as well as updates along the way!

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## WORSHIP

A Wednesday Night Special Series for Children & Youth

# We Pray

- 4.15 We Adore
- 4.22 We Confess
- 4.29 We Give Thanks
- 5.6 We Ask
- 5.13 End of the Year Party!

5:00 Family Supper

6:00 We Pray, meet in Ascension Hall

6:45 Children's Choir Rehearsals

6:50 - 7:00 Compline, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor

## Good Shepherd Sunday

April 26, 2026



# MORNING PRAYER

8:00 AM MONDAY - FRIDAY

LIVE ON



## 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](mailto:candice@coascension.org)

Becky Taylor, Music Ministry [beckytaylor@coascension.org](mailto:beckytaylor@coascension.org)

Will McQueen, Facilities Manager [will@coascension.org](mailto:will@coascension.org)

Tracy Hinton, Parish Administrator [thinton@coascension.org](mailto:thinton@coascension.org)

Jason Pate, Director of Communications [jason@coascension.org](mailto:jason@coascension.org)

Laura Mielke, Children Family & Faith Formation Minister [laura@coascension.org](mailto:laura@coascension.org)

Nick Mielke, Youth Family & Faith Formation Minister [nick@coascension.org](mailto:nick@coascension.org)

Fay WorriLOW, Administrative Assistant [fay@coascension.org](mailto: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.

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