



Welcome to
The Episcopal Church of The Ascension
Vestavia Hills, AL

Making Christ Known by our Love for All

The Holy Eucharist | Rite II
Tenth Sunday after Pentecost
August 2, 2026 | 10:30 a.m.

For a hearing assistance device, please ask an usher.

PRELUDE: *From Hyfrydol*

Charles Callahan

THE WORD OF GOD

HYMN: Love divine, all love excelling

Hymnal 657

OPENING ACCLAMATION

BCP 355

Celebrant says Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
People And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen.

The Celebrant continues.

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Children ages 3k to 3rd grade are invited to follow the cross to Children's Chapel. They will return at the Peace.

GLORIA

Hymnal S 280

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Celebrant The Lord be with you.
People *And also with you.*
Celebrant Let us pray.

Let your continual mercy, O Lord, cleanse and defend your Church; and, because it cannot continue in safety without your help, protect and govern it always by your goodness; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Please be seated.

THE LESSONS

A READING FROM ISAIAH 55:1-5

Thus says the Lord:
"Ho, everyone who thirsts,
come to the waters;
and you that have no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without price.
Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
and your labor for that which does not satisfy?
Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in rich food.
Incline your ear, and come to me;
listen, so that you may live.
I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
my steadfast, sure love for David.
See, I made him a witness to the peoples,
a leader and commander for the peoples.
See, you shall call nations that you do not know,
and nations that do not know you shall run to you,
because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel,
for he has glorified you."

Reader The Word of the Lord.
People *Thanks be to God.*

PSALM 145:8-9, 15-22 *Exaltabo te, Deus*

- 8 The LORD is gracious and full of compassion, *
slow to anger and of great kindness.
- 9 The LORD is loving to everyone *
and his compassion is over all his works.
- 15 The LORD upholds all those who fall; *
he lifts up those who are bowed down.
- 16 The eyes of all wait upon you, O LORD, *
and you give them their food in due season.
- 17 You open wide your hand *
and satisfy the needs of every living creature.
- 18 The LORD is righteous in all his ways *
and loving in all his works.
- 19 The LORD is near to those who call upon him, *
to all who call upon him faithfully.
- 20 He fulfills the desire of those who fear him; *
he hears their cry and helps them.
- 21 The LORD preserves all those who love him, *
but he destroys all the wicked.
- 22 My mouth shall speak the praise of the LORD; *
let all flesh bless his holy Name for ever and ever.

A READING FROM PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS 9:1-5

I am speaking the truth in Christ-- I am not lying; my conscience confirms it by the Holy Spirit-- I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my own people, my kindred according to the flesh. They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Messiah, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

Reader The Word of the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

Please stand as you are able.

HYMN: *Shepherd of souls, refresh and bless*

Hymnal 343

THE HOLY GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 14:13-21

Remain standing.

Deacon or Priest The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.
People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Jesus withdrew in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy

food for themselves.” Jesus said to them, “They need not go away; you give them something to eat.” They replied, “We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish.” And he said, “Bring them here to me.” Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Deacon or Priest The Gospel of the Lord.
People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

SERMON

The Rev. Jack Alvey

THE NICENE CREED BCP 358

Please stand as you are able.

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. *Amen.*

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE FORM IV

BCP 388

Please stand or kneel as you are able.

The Leader and People pray responsively

Let us pray for the Church and for the world.

Grant, Almighty God, that all who confess your Name may be united in your truth, live together in your love, and reveal your glory in the world.

Silence

Lord, in your mercy
Hear our prayer.

In the Diocesan cycle of prayer, we pray for Sean, our presiding bishop, for Richard, our bishop, and for our Companion Diocese of Honduras and their bishop, Lloyd. We pray also for all ecumenical ministries across the state, especially for Interfaith Mission Services, Huntsville, for Christian Center of Concern, Fayette, for Grace Harbor, Pell City, and for Greater Birmingham Ministries. In the Anglican cycle of prayer, we pray for the Church of the Province of Uganda, and for Sarah, Archbishop of Canterbury.

Silence

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Guide the people of this land, and of all the nations, in the ways of justice and peace; that we may honor one another and serve the common good.

Silence

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Give us all a reverence for the earth as your own creation, that we may use its resources rightly in the service of others and to your honor and glory.

Silence

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Bless all whose lives are closely linked with ours, and grant that we may serve Christ in them, and love one another as he loves us. We give thanks for those celebrating birthdays and anniversaries this week.

Silence

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit, especially those on our parish prayer list, John and Jackie Clark, Ron and Nancy Rowell, Dick Lounsbury, Cille Spader, Shane Wiley, Paula Stringfellow, Barbara Cochran, Ben Chastain, Donna Miller, and Donna Thompson; we pray also for those on our family and friends prayer list; give them courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of your salvation.

Silence

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

We commend to your mercy all who have died, that your will for them may be fulfilled; and we pray that we may share with all your saints in your eternal kingdom.

Silence

Lord, in your mercy

Hear our prayer.

The Celebrant adds a concluding collect.

CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION

The Deacon or Celebrant says

BCP 360

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Silence may be kept.

Minister and People

Most merciful God,
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you with our whole heart;
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,
have mercy on us and forgive us;
that we may delight in your will,
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your Name. *Amen.*

The Bishop, when present, or the Priest, stands and says

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. *Amen.*

THE PEACE

Celebrant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.
People: And also with you.

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE HOLY COMMUNION

OFFERTORY: *God of Mercy, God of Grace*

Jerry Davidson



Thank you for your generosity! To find out more about how to further support our commitment to make Christ known by our love for all, visit our website at www.ascensionepiscopal.org.

DOXOLOGY: *Praise God from whom all blessings flow*

Thomas Ken, 1709 Geistliche Kirchengesänge, Cologne, 1623

Praise God from whom all bless-ings flow; praise him, all crea-tures here be-low: Al-le-lu-ia, al-le-lu-ia! Praise him a-bove ye heav'n-ly host; praise Fa-ther, Son, and Ho-ly Ghost: O praise him, O praise him, al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia! Al-le-lu-ia!

Please stand as you are able.

<i>The Celebrant</i>	The Lord be with you.
<i>People</i>	<i>And also with you.</i>
<i>Celebrant</i>	Lift up your hearts.
<i>People</i>	<i>We lift them to the Lord.</i>
<i>Celebrant</i>	Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
<i>People</i>	<i>It is right to give him thanks and praise.</i>

Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Because in the mystery of the Word made flesh, you have caused a new light to shine in our hearts, to give the knowledge of your glory in the face of your son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

SANCTUS

Hymnal S 129

Please stand or kneel as you are able.

Then the Celebrant continues

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

At the following words concerning the bread, the Celebrant is to hold it, or to lay a hand upon it; and at the words concerning the cup, to hold or place a hand upon the cup and any other vessel containing wine to be consecrated.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

Celebrant and People

We remember his death,
We proclaim his resurrection,
We await his coming in glory;

The Celebrant continues

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. AMEN.

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

People and Celebrant

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. *Amen.*

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

A period of silence is kept.

FRACTION ANTHEM

Hymnal S 163

INVITATION TO HOLY COMMUNION

The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

All baptized persons are invited to receive Holy Communion, though no one will be refused the Sacrament. Anyone may also receive a blessing by crossing their arms over their chest. Communion will be offered in both kinds with bread and wine. Those taking bread alone receive the full Sacrament. To receive wine, drink from the common cup or intinct (dip the bread).

Parents may intinct for young children.

After Communion, the Celebrant says

Let us pray.

BCP 366

Celebrant and People

Almighty and everliving God,
we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food
of the most precious Body and Blood
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ;
and for assuring us in these holy mysteries
that we are living members of the Body of your Son,
and heirs of your eternal kingdom.
And now, Father, send us out
to do the work you have given us to do,
to love and serve you
as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord.
To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit,
be honor and glory, now and for ever. *Amen.*

BLESSING

RECESSIONAL HYMN: Guide me, O thou Great Jehovah

Hymnal 690

THE DISMISSAL

<i>Celebrant</i>	Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
<i>People</i>	<i>Thanks be to God.</i>

If you wish to donate flowers for future Sundays in memory or honor of a loved one, sign up online or contact the office.

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CHILDREN'S BLESSING BAGS

The blue cloth bags in the Narthex contain quiet ways for young children to engage with the stories of our faith. Please feel free to borrow a bag and a book for your children during the service.

ADDITIONAL PRAYERS

Family and Friends of this Parish: Dixon, Sandy, Mickey, Wes, Lynda, Scott, Linda, Nova, Gordon, Amy, Tony and Rachel, Rosalie, Will, Glenda, Billy, Terry, Terriann, Paula, Lance, Ralph, Ron, Virginia, Mary and Van

Celebrating Birthdays This Week: Justice Allen, Stacey Sparks, Jimmy Young, Jeannie Duke, Olivia Thompson, Amy McKinney, Sterling Evans, and Chris Durst

Celebrating Anniversaries This Week: Anna & Robby Colvin and Kaitlin & Ben Rothschild

Prayer requests will remain on prayer list for 2 weeks unless otherwise noted.

weekly announcements

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

Making Christ Known by our Love for All



The Tenth Sunday After Pentecost | August 2, 2026

On the Road Again Podcast Series | Final Episode Coming this Week!

Listen to last week's episode, "Is the bread really the body? Or is there something else going on?" by visiting our website, ascensionepiscopal.org/podcasts, or by finding us on Spotify, Apple Podcasts or Amazon Music. This summer, we've been wrestling with questions about our faith and offering different perspectives, encouraging you to think deeply and strengthen your spiritual life on the road! On the next episode, our Parish Office Manager, Olivia Hill Sheffield, joins The Rev. Jack Alvey to discuss doubt and how we find God when life falls apart.

Casual Church | TODAY

Join us this evening at 5:00 p.m. in Ware Hall for a Casual Eucharist. Come as you are for an evening of worship and Holy Communion in a relaxed setting. Music will be led by Sam Herman and parish volunteers and will feature hymns and songs from *The Hymnal 1982*, *Alleluia III*, and other contemporary sources.

Education for Ministry: Classic & Wide-Angle | Now Enrolling

The Education for Ministry (EfM) program at Ascension is offering two uniquely different EfM courses for the 2026-2027 year. More information can be found on our website, ascensionepiscopal.org/adults, or by contacting one of our mentors listed below.

EfM Classic: The classic program is a 4 year course that meets weekly on Thursday evenings, and will begin its 20th year at Ascension this Fall. EfM Classic course begins on **August 6 at 7:00pm** in the **Sunshine Room**. For more information and **to register, please contact** Jim Busbin, jybusbin@charter.net (205) 482-3557.

EfM Wide-Angle: The Wide-Angle program is a 1 year course designed to touch on elements of all four years of the classic program. It is a great option for those who aren't ready to commit to four years, but would love to dive deeper in their walk with God or for those EfM graduates who would like to continue the conversation. The **deadline to register is August 30th**. Once the groups are formed, the meeting times can be adjusted according to the availability of participants. For more information and **to register, please contact** Caralyn McDaniel, jeevesgirl@gmail.com (205) 542-9838.

Blessing of the Backpacks & Sundae Sunday Social | August 16

Students of all ages as well as teachers are invited to bring the backpacks to the 10:30 service to receive a blessing as they start the new school year. Everyone will receive a momento during the backpack blessing as a reminder of God's love and blessings throughout the school year. After your backpack has been blessed, join us immediately following the 10:30 service in Ware Hall for ice cream sundaes and fellowship!

August "Souper" Wednesday | August 19

Join us on the third Wednesday of each month for soup and fellowship, 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m. in Ware Hall. No cost—just come and enjoy! Contact Kathy Lounsbury at kathy.lounsbury@ascensionepiscopal.org with any questions!

EYC Kickoff | August 23

Youth in grades 6-12 are invited to join the Episcopal Youth Community (EYC) of Ascension. We are kicking off the 2026-2027 school year with an escape room night on Sunday, August 23rd from 5:30-7:15pm. Bring a friend, crack the clues, and see if you've got what it takes to beat the clock and break out! We will meet in Ware Hall. Dinner from Guthries will be provided and we will close with Compline. Email Sam with any questions, youth@ascensionepiscopal.org.

Newcomer Coffee | August 23

Newcomers and visitors, we are so glad you're here. Join us at 9:30am in the Sunshine Room on August 23rd for coffee and conversation. RSVP to The Rev. Jack Alvey at jack.alvey@ascensionepiscopal.org by August 18.

August Kickoff Series: How We Gather | Save the Dates!

In August we are listening for how God is calling us as a Christian community to gather in worship, education, outreach, and fellowship. In addition to setting our holy intentions for the year to come, we will have breakfast from Panera, starting at 8:45am, and hear from various ministry groups and leaders on what offerings are available for members of all ages and interests. Join us in Ware Hall at 9:30am, during the Sunday school hour, for adult formation centered on the topics listed below. Sunday school offerings for children & youth will also resume on August 16 at 9:30am.

August 16: How We Gather in Education and Worship

August 23: How We Gather in Community Outreach

August 30: How We Gather in Fellowship

News & Notes

Host a Sunday Social | Weekly after the 10:30 Service

Do you love running straight to the lemonade and treats after church? Sign-up to host a Sunday Social this fall! Hosts can share the duties with a friend or do it as a family. You can keep it simple or be extravagant! We will provide the lemonade and you provide the sweet treat. Then you and your team or family serve up these refreshments following 10:30 am worship on our Sunday. Sign up in Terril Foyer or by scanning the QR Code!



Giving Hope August | Ascension Backpack Program

Let's make a difference by spreading joy through generosity. This month, help us stock the shelves with nutritious food **The Ascension Backpack Program**. The goal of the Backpack Program is to alleviate child hunger in Vestavia Hills by providing nutritious, easy-to-prepare food on weekends when other resources are not available. Check the various signage around campus or scan the QR code for more information and to find the list of needed items.

Women's Bible Study | Tuesdays at Noon

The Tuesday Women's Bible Study will continue to meet Tuesdays at noon in the Sunshine Room. Contact The Rev. Emily Collette at emily.collette@ascensionepiscopal.org with any questions.

Rector's Bible Study | Resuming this week!

The Tuesday Rector's Bible Study will start back up on this Tuesday, August 4 at 8:30am in the Sunshine Room. Contact The Rev. Jack Alvey at jack.alvey@ascensionepiscopal.org with any questions.

Cursillo

Consider attending Cursillo at Camp McDowell. The next upcoming weekend **October 8–11**. Each retreat includes worship, study, fellowship, and fun. There is no cost to attend. If you're interested, contact marybethbasu@gmail.com or Rebecca.p.posey@gmail.com.

Feeding Ministries

Volunteers are always needed for our feeding ministries. During the school year, help pack and distribute **weekend food packs** for local students. Year-round, **serve our neighbors in Avondale** through sack lunches and breakfast (in partnership with The Abbey), and help provide a monthly meal for the women and children at **First Light Shelter**. To get involved, contact The Rev. Emily Collette at emily.collette@ascensionepiscopal.org.

Scan to see announcements on website



CLERGY

The Right Reverend Richard T. Lawson, III Bishop of Alabama
The Reverend John “Jack” T. Alvey, Jr., Rector
The Reverend Emily C. Collette, Associate Rector

STAFF

Holly DuBois, Bookkeeper
Sam Herman, Youth Minister
Martin Hoerner, Sexton
Tiffany Jones, Nursery
Kathy Lounsbury, Senior Life Minister
Ashley Monachelli, Director of Family Ministries
Paige Reese, Nursery
Olivia Hill Sheffield, Parish Office Manager
Michael G. Sparks, Organist & Choirmaster
Karyn Watts, Finance & Database Officer

ASCENSION EPISCOPAL DAY SCHOOL

Rebecca Posey, Director
Kelly Gould, Assistant Director

VESTRY

Elizabeth Tanner, Sr. Warden (2026); Tim Burke (2027) and Ben Mims (2028), Jr. Wardens

Kelly Gould (2026); Caralyn McDaniel (2026); Melanie Lee (2026)
Shannon George (2027); Ryan Posey (2027); CJ Searcy (2027)
Justice Allen (2028); Brian Denton (2028); Merry Michael Smith (2028)

Len Skelton, Treasurer; Jeff Lees, Assistant Treasurer
Today's Vestry Person of the Day (VPOD) – Caralyn McDaniel



Episcopal Church of the Ascension
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