



Ascension Ministry Magazine

Making Christ Known by Our Love for All



A Message from the Rector

Dear Friends,

20th century reformed theologian, Karl Barth, once wrote, "No one can be a Christian. They can only become one again and again." In other words, our life with and in Christ is a constant return to the God we are prone to leave. Like St. Paul, only a handful of us have a remarkable conversion story and never look back. Most of us, like myself, are more like St. Peter. We need to be converted weekly, if not daily. We need to become a Christian again and again.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, the Church exists to convert us (and the world) toward Jesus and his kingdom again and again. The Church exists to form us as people who reject the death-dealing powers of our earthly kingdoms so that we might embrace the life-giving powers of God's heavenly kingdom which is established in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord.

In the pages that follow, you will see how God is forming Church of the Ascension to embrace and practice those kingdom ways as established under Christ's most gracious rule. As one popular hymn says, God is forming us through wonder, love, and praise to become a community who is an answer to the Lord's prayer - "thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

Faithfully,

The Rev. Jack Alvey
Rector

Volunteer Accelerator

Not sure how you are being called to get involved?
Take our Volunteer Accelerator quiz to see which
ministries are the best fit for your skills and interests.



Formed In Wonder

Christian Education

Children's Ministries

- **Children's Chapel** - Children 3k to 3rd grade are invited to attend a special children's chapel program in the Godly Play room during the 10:30 service. Children return at the peace.
- **Club 345** - Club 345 is formation and fellowship for 3rd-5th graders. This class uses the Be Bold curriculum to help pre-teens explore their faith through thoughtful and supportive discussions.
- **Godly Play** - Godly Play is for ages 4 years old through 3rd grade, utilizing Montessori principles to invite children into the language of their faith. Children hear lessons of sacred stories, parables, and liturgical action and will have an opportunity to respond to the lesson through play and crafts.

Youth Ministries

- **Confirmation** - Classes are held annually for youth who wish to be confirmed in the Episcopal Church. Mentors, already confirmed adults in the parish, help our youth explore their faith.
- **EYC** - Fellowship and outreach opportunities are offered for our middle and high students.
- **Youth Christian Education** - For youth in 6th-12th grades, this class meets from 9:30-10:15 on Sunday mornings.

Adult Formation Offerings

- **Adult Formation** - Classes for adults to deepen and explore their faith life meet Sunday mornings from 9:30-10:15. Topics change seasonally.
- **Ascension Wellness Center** - The Ascension Wellness Center provides holistic programs that nourish the heart, soul, strength, and mind. We offer small group series, both in-person and virtual, and wellness content across a variety of topics.
- **Cursillo** - Cursillo is a renewal movement that begins with a three-day weekend at Camp McDowell focused on the love of God and the Christian life. The Cursillo community at Ascension meets regularly for small group discussions and fellowship.
- **Education for Ministry (EfM)** - EfM is a four-year course of study in theology and reflection. Topics include Church history, liturgy, and the Bible. EfM meets weekly.
- **Episcopal 101** - Once per year, in coordination with the bishop's visit, Ascension offers a class on the fundamentals of the Episcopal Church. Anyone is invited to join. Those seeking to be confirmed, reaffirmed, or received into the Episcopal Church are required to attend.



Other Formation Opportunities

- Children's Fall Festival
- Ascension Episcopal Day School
- Nursery (infant to 3 years old)
- Rector's Bible Study
- Vacation Bible School
- Wednesday Evening Lenten Series
- Women's Bible Study



Formed In Love

Community Engagement



Backpack Ministry

The goal of the Backpack Ministry is to help alleviate child hunger in Vestavia Hills by providing food for children on weekends when other resources are not available. Bags are packed at the church and distributed to schools.

First Light Ministry

Ascension provides dinner for women and children living at First Light Shelter. Volunteers from Ascension prepare meals and serve them at First Light.

Giving Hope Ministry

Each month, Ascension features a ministry supported by our parish and designates items to be donated to that ministry. Donations are collected at the church.

The Abbey Ministry

The Abbey provides a sack lunch each week for those in need. Volunteers from Ascension prepare bagged lunches on Wednesdays and distribute them in Avondale on Thursdays each week.

Connections Ministries

Ascension is a growing, thriving parish. There are several ways for you to meet and assist our newcomers:

- Greeters - Greeters serve on Sunday mornings by identifying and welcoming visitors.
- Newcomer Coffees - Ascension offers newcomer coffees throughout the year to welcome visitors and provide them with additional information about the parish.
- New Member Meal - Once per year, new members are invited to an informational welcome meal.

Other Service Opportunities

Episcopal Place Birthday Party

Food Truck Festival

Gumbo Gala

Higher Education Scholarship

Sawyer'sville Cook Team

Special Session Welcome Packs

Formed In Praise

Worship Ministries

Acolytes

Children and youth ages 3rd grade and older, as well as adults, are invited to serve as acolytes. Acolytes serve as worship leaders throughout the service by carrying the crosses and torches in procession, and by supporting other ministers in the service.

Altar Guild

Altar Guild members help prepare for services and maintain and care for the sacred vessels, altar linens, candles, and hangings.

AV Guild

AV Guild members help live-stream services and manage technology for worship.

Choir

Ascension's Choir provides musical leadership during services and special occasions. Our Sunday morning choir is open to all ages from middle school up.

Eucharist Ministers/Lectors

EMs/Lectors assist in worship by reading lessons, psalms, and prayers, and by administering the chalice during communion.

Flower Guild

Flower Guild members acquire and arrange flowers for Sunday worship and special events.

Ushers

Ushers welcome people to the service, as well as distribute bulletins and help with the offertory and communion.

Other Worship Opportunities

Blessing of the Animals

Blessing of the Backpacks

Blessing of the Keys

Burning of the Greens



Formed In Community

Parish Life

Breakfast Crew

The Breakfast Crew makes and serves breakfast on Sundays throughout the program year. Breakfast is serviced from 8:40-9:20 a.m.

Guild of the Christ Child:

Members support families with new babies over the first year of the child's life.

Hospitality Guild:

This guild provides food and decorations for receptions and special events.

Peer Groups

Peer groups provide fellowship for people in similar life stages. Find your "pier" below:

- Pier 23 - 20/30s, Pier 34 - 30/40s, Pier 45 - 40/50s, Pier 60+ - 60 years and older

St. Bridget's Guild

Guild members provide care for families of the parish who have lost a loved one through a variety of ways: flowers, receptions, and/or meals.

Souper Wednesday

Once per month, all parishioners are invited to gather for a soup lunch in Ware Hall. Parishioners can help by making food, setting up, and/or cleaning up.

Sunday Lunches

Hosts provide entrees and parishioners provide sides, salads, and desserts at lunches throughout the year, following the 10:30 service.

Sunday Social

Ascension offers light refreshments following the 10:30 service. The parish provides the lemonade, and hosts provide snacks and treats of their choice. Sign up online or in Terrill Foyer.

Other Parish Life Events

Ascension Men

Ascension Women

EYC Shrove Tuesday Supper

Holiday Food Sale

Parish Retreat

Parish Picnic

Ministry Fair





Formed In Care

Building and Grounds

Building and Grounds Teams

This group maintains the church's landscaping and interior spaces. Individuals with skills in carpentry, plumbing, and electrical are encouraged to join.

Garden Guild

Guild members help to maintain the Memorial Garden and the Bilbo Hash Cutting Garden.

Formed In Prayer

Pastoral Care

Card Ministry

Members of the card ministry send notes and cards to parishioners who are homebound or ill.

Fix-Its

The Fix-Its are a group of on-call skilled workers from the parish who can make minor repairs at parishioner's homes. Plumbers, carpenters, electricians, and general handymen/women are needed.

Intercessory Prayer Guild

Guild members offer prayers based on requests from other parishioners. The Intercessory Prayer Book, which guides the prayers offered, remains in the Parish Office.





Ascension Clergy & Staff

The Rt. Rev. Glenda S. Curry, Bishop of Alabama

The Rev. John "Jack" T. Alvey, Rector

The Rev. Emily C. Collette, Associate Rector

Sam Herman, Youth Minister

Ashley Monachelli, Director of Family Ministries

Rebecca Posey, Ascension Episcopal Day School Director

Christy Smith, Parish Life Coordinator

Mike Sparks, Organist and Choirmaster

Sarah Stevens, Director of Communications

Karyn Watts, Administrative Assistant



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