



The Tower

JESUS IN THE DETAILS

One of my favorite television shows is Downton Abbey. It's not really the soap opera-like drama that draws me to the show as much as the Victorian setting and manners. I like that there is a proper way to set the table and that you must dress for dinner. Some British customs may seem stuffy and completely out of place in our current day and age, but in their time the sense of order and structured way of living offered a sense of place and respectability—a decency in manners that we seem to have lost somewhere along the line. Though I am not as fond of the strict social order that marked the Victorian era, I certainly like the idea that one would measure the placement of plate, utensils, and drinking glasses when setting the table. I like the concern with details and the recognition that not only do those details matter but also they were foundational to the order of the day. It might seem a bit shallow to put so much priority on the details of a table setting as foundational to societal order, but I think there is a deeper grounding in the importance of those details.

seem far removed from the right place setting carefully measured in proportion to the edge of the table and the other place settings, but it also serves as a metaphor for how the British understood themselves in regards to their relationships. Your chair was a measured distance from the person next to you at dinner. You conversed with the person on your right for the first half of the meal and the person on your left the second half, or vice versa depending on where you sat. Even the seating chart was ordered. After dinner, the men retired to the drawing room and the women to the parlor. This sense of order might seem restrictive to most of us these days, but for the Victorians, it was life giving in the sense that one understood one's place and function in society.

In some ways, the altar guild serves that Victorian function for the Church. It maintains the order and structure of liturgy in such a way that we know our place and thus our purpose in liturgy. The altar guild does more than keep the silver polished or wash the linens; it maintains the various functions and properties of all the things that are important to our worship. It may not seem like such a big deal to keep the wicks trimmed or the sacristy properly supplied, but its not much of a communion if there is no wine and it would be pretty distracting to watch an acolyte struggle for fifteen minutes to light a candle. The various pieces that

Victorian era England's focus on details and the proper way of doing things offered a structure in which those who understood the rules could succeed. If you knew the rules, there was a simplicity in life marked by knowing your place and thus the expectations regarding your behavior. That might

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Weekly Service Schedule

Sundays: 8:00 am Holy Eucharist Rite I
9:00 am Breakfast
9:15 am Christian Education
10:15 am Holy Eucharist Rite II

Mondays: 8:00 am
Morning Prayer

Tuesdays: 8:00 am Sung
Morning Prayer

Wednesdays: 8:00 am
Morning Prayer

Thursdays: 8:05 am Healing Eucharist

Fridays: 8:00 am Morning Prayer



CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

We believe in sharing the experience of love and grace by seeking relationship with God and one another.

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CLERGY & STAFF

The Rev. Candice Frazer
Rector

The Rev. Mark Waldo
Rector Emeritus

Rebecca Taylor
Organist/Choirmaster

Tiffany Nishibun
Children's Ministries

Laura Walter
Youth Coordinator

Tracy Hinton-Adams
Parish Administrator

Jessica James
Communications

Will McQueen
Facilities Manager

Octavio Gomez-Jimenez
Housekeeping

Ryan Hall
Housekeeping



the altar guild is responsible for assisting worship are vital to the success and thus the spiritual nourishment of our worship.

It is not simply making sure that the altar is set up properly for worship, it is also about maintaining the beauty of that worship. If the silver goes unpolished or wax drips all over the linen cloth, our worship is diminished. If we are anxious that there won't be enough bread or that no one put out a chalice, we lose the sense of Jesus as the center of our worship and place ourselves and our own anxiety in the center of our worship. Whatever distracts us from the liturgy and rite, distracts us from worship and lessening the potential for our worship to draw us closer to God and disrupting our sense of self and purpose in worship.

The altar guild are the hidden, behind-the-scenes folks who strive to assist our worship in maintaining its sense of beauty and integrity that describe something about the true nature of God. God's creation is beautiful and ordered even if it is difficult for us to see or understand at times. Living into the theology of good order helps us all to be successful when we come to worship together—priest, people, LEMs, lectors, acolytes, ushers, everyone. When worship is well ordered, we all know and understand our roles and responsibilities and thus can participate in that worship without having to stress about what happens next or what one's role might be. Without the altar guild we would lose functionality and our worship would suffer. But more than understanding our role in worship, that order helps us grow in relationship

with God and one another—from the practical ways of placing money in the plate to the ethereal mysteries of drinking from the common cup. When the details are attended to, we can engage in our worship more fully and gain even more from it.

This month I would encourage us to celebrate the altar guild and the value they bring to worship. Their time and energy and talents are appreciated. If you haven't, offer a word of thanks and encouragement to those who dedicate so much of themselves to us. And if you are interested in being a part of the altar guild and want to learn more about this vital ministry to our church, contact Elizabeth Conner or me. Finally, the next time you're in church, notice all the details of our worship and how different the experience of worship might be if they were absent. The devil isn't in the details at Ascension—Jesus is. And I give thanks for all those who attend to the details on the altar guild.

Light and Life,
Candice+

Sermons are now online!

Missed a Sunday, but don't want to miss a sermon? Text and audio of Rev. Candice's weekly Sunday sermons can now be found on our website. Go to www.coascension.org/sermons/ to listen to past sermons. We are currently in the process of back logging previous week's sermons to bring us fully up-to-date.



Calling All Cursillistas Diocesan Ultreya March 2 - 3 Camp McDowell

Come, join your fellow Cursillistas from across our diocese for our annual Diocesan Ultreya in the beautiful setting at Wonderful, Wonderful Camp McDowell. Come, enjoy all varieties of fellowship among us, while also refueling your spiritual tank.

You will hear our talented clergy, Candice Frazer (The Church of the Ascension, Montgomery) and Tommie Watkins (St. Andrew's Church, Birmingham), discuss "Beloved Community." You will listen and discuss topics such as living more fully into the promises made in our Baptismal Covenant, and understanding Reconciliation as establishing right relationship in the tangible contexts of our lives. Come ponder how we are all inextricably linked to one another and ways to make those bonds more unified and more

mutually beneficial to all. Come hear about spontaneous, overflowing, surprising and creative Agape love—the love of God operating in our hearts -and what that Agape gift means to our relationships within our communities. Ultreya will begin Saturday morning and end at Sunday at 3:00 pm.

Register online: www.alabamacursillo.org/events. Mark your calendar and bring the family (kids 5+ activities included!). Ultreya!

Questions? Contact J.R. Marshall, cursillo.ultreya@gmail.com

Previous Cursillo attendance required.

TRANSFORMING GENEROSITY

2019 STEWARDSHIP UPDATE (As of 1/29/19):

171 Pledges totaling \$908,146.00
2019 Pledges Collected To-date: \$209,271.00

Thank you to those who have made a pledge! If you have not done so, pledge envelopes are available in the Parish Office or you can contact Tracy at thin-ton@coascension.org. Pledges are important not only in properly budgeting for the church, but in our growth and transformation as we give to God to partner with God in doing his work in the world.

Have you considered Church of the Ascension in your estate planning? For more information, contact Tracy in the Parish Office.

VESTRY

2019
Scott Bamman,
Senior Warden
Paul Davis
Richard Norris
Chris Smith

2020
Andrew Akin
Laura Brendle
Susan Copeland
Henry Weatherly

2021
Brittney Calhoun
Lacy Gibson
Sissy Speirs
Mr. Glenn Sylvest

Robert Gould,
Treasurer

Pat Franklin,
Clerk of the Vestry

WHAT IS THE ALTAR GUILD?

The Altar Guild is a ministry of people who care for the worship and communion vessels, appointments, and altars of the Church of the Ascension. Some of our members primarily design the floral arrangements which grace our church each Sunday. Others rearrange those flowers and deliver them to members of our parish. Some help wash, iron, and repair the linens we place on our elements table, the altar, and use during the Eucharist. If you've attended a wedding, funeral, baptism, or ordination at our church, the altar guild has helped in organizing that service.

Many members of the altar guild prepare for our weekly worship services, cleaning and setting up the beautiful silver, brass, and pottery vessels that hold the water and wine of holy communion. Most members commit to serving at least two services each month in four months of the year, choosing the services which work best for their own schedules. Each monthly director works with the members assigned to her month and with the chairman, treasurer, and secretary to make our worship beautiful and reverent.

If you would like to learn more about the altar guild, please contact our current chair, Elizabeth Conner, at stjmagistra@gmail.com or 334-328-7009. New members are mentored by an experienced altar guild member for a year before being responsible for any duties independently.

CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION 2019 ALTAR GUILD

Stacia Bailey	Libby Weatherly	Virginia Humphrey
Pat Bamman	Stuart Yelverton	Valerie Lee
Lauren Smith	Laura Brendle	Pat Rutland
Ellen Brooks	Elizabeth Conner	Sissy Speirs
Pat Dunn	Jessica Copeland	Tuttie Voltz
Wanda Devereaux	Jan Hodgson	Cara Coreale
Tammy Eskridge	Patty McDonald	Margaret Wooten
Debbie Hackett	Caroline Novak	Linda Cater
Debbie Hobbs	Polly Williamson	Susan Copeland
Anne Kimzey	Daisy Bear	Margaret Cunningham
Gloria Rawlings	Lisa Franklin	Margaret Hunt
Emilie Reid	Nan Barganier	Debbie Mathis
Meri Warman	Alice Blake	Lacy Gibson

SPOTLIGHT ON THE ALTAR GUILD

Thank you for all the polishing, washing, drying, ironing, folding, flower arranging, watering, preparing, ordering, and care you give to this church. Without you our worship would be diminished and not just because the silver might go unpolished.

The gifts you offer are not just the daily care of all the things we use in the liturgical setting, they are the love for God and care of God's people. We appreciate your love and care of us, your time and commitment, and the many wonderful ways in which you attend to us by attending to the altar and setting up for Eucharist on Sunday mornings as well as Thursday mornings, Baptisms, Funerals, Weddings, and all the extra services we celebrate throughout the church year.

Most especially thanks to Elizabeth Conner for chairing the altar guild and all the time, talent, and energy she has so lovingly poured into that role. You are appreciated!

MUSIC NOTES

The Ascension Choir

This reflection was written by Dr. Randy Cook for the January 23 edition of E-News, January's celebration of The Ascension Choir. It is reprinted here for your joy and consideration.

Lift Every Voice and Sing

A lot of people are surprised to learn that singing comes from a completely separate part of our brain than speech. In fact it comes from an area that is much more primitive than the intellect. I like to think it's a place very close to our soul. That would help to explain why chanting and singing has been a part of worship throughout all of recorded history.

Hymns and canticles and psalms are an especially important part of Anglican liturgy. These musical offerings to our Maker help me truly experience the feeling of "corporate worship" or being of one body with Christ. Being a part of the choir elevates that feeling to a much higher level. The blending of all those voices along with the organ (which sings in same way we do) into a single voice of so many colors and tones is a feeling that simply

cannot be matched in any other experience that I know.

When I make my way down the center aisle in the Sunday processional, I hear voices in the congregation on all sides of me that clearly love to sing just like I do. If you're one of those people, you really should come and be a part of our choir. We do have a very small number of professional musicians among us, but the great majority are people just like you: people that love music, people that love to sing, and people that love our Lord. If you have questions or need a little encouragement, speak to Becky Taylor or any choir member.

Thank you to all who support Music Ministry at the Ascension, by your prayers, presence and gifts.

Becky

CONTRIBUTIONS

The Music Ministry Discretionary Fund has been established to provide special resources for the music program at Ascension. Gifts are welcome in honor, thanksgiving and memory of loved ones.

Thank you to all who support music ministry at the Ascension, by your prayers, presence and gifts.

Contributions in January

In Memory of June B. Scott

The June B. Scott Family

In Honor of Marjorie Kohn

Minnie Lee Gill

Pat & Jim Franklin
The Hobbs Foundation
Karen & Marvin Campbell
Emily Caruso
Susan & Lavone Dubose
Patricia T. Guest and her family



Episcopal Youth Community

DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION OF THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

Join us for our next adventure! All students in grades 7 to 12 are welcome to come anytime!

February EYC Events:

- 2.3 SUPER BOWL party @ Greyson's house
- 2.15 Valentine's Dinner
- 2.10 No EYC
- 2.17 Movie Night
- 2.24 EYC @ Joshua House

Brotherhood of St. Andrew Saint Valentine's Dinner

Friday, February 15
Youth will help in the kitchen and serving.
Proceeds are benefiting the Youth.
Parents should plan to attend the dinner!

Diocesan Youth Events:

- March 1-3 Happening #74 @ Epiphany in Guntersville (grades 10th-12th)
- March 15-17 Awakenings Retreat @ Camp McDowell (grades 7th-8th with 10th-12th as staff)
- March 22-24 Rites of Spring/EYC Convention @ Camp McDowell (grades 9th-12th)

Camp McDowell Summer Camp registration is open!

Find dates and information at:
<https://campmcdowell.com/summer-camps-retreats>

WHAT IS 'HAPPENING'?

How can the Church speak to today's Youth?

During the 3-day weekend, the participants spend time seriously considering the person and teaching of Jesus Christ in a relaxed, fun, informal and loving atmosphere. Throughout the weekend, Happeners work and play, sing, share, pray and worship. They are introduced to the sacramental life of the Episcopal Church. The weekend ends with Eucharist on Sunday afternoon.

Contact Laura Walter for questions or information:
334.300.2310
youth@coascension.org

Help the Youth raise money!

We are selling Ascension T-shirts as a fundraiser for a future mission trip. Shirts are on sale in the Vineyard Bookstore.
Short-sleeve \$20
Long-sleeve \$30
Youth short-sleeve \$15



Children's Ministry

Godly Play Teachers (PreK and K)

9:15 Sundays, Third Floor

Feb. 3 - Christine Harrison, Allison Jones
Parable of the Sower
Feb. 10 - Christine Harrison, Elizabeth Conner
Parable of the Mustard Seed
Feb. 17 - Christine Harrison, Allison Jones
Parable of the Pearl
Feb. 24 - Christine Harrison, Allison Jones
Parable of the Good Shepherd

ELEMENTary Teachers (1st-6th)

9:15 Sundays, Third Floor

Feb. 3 - Tiffany Nishibun and Lauren Greene
Psalm Series - singing our psalms
Feb. 10 - Nan Bargainer and Lauren Greene
Psalm Series - art
Feb. 17 - Nan Bargainer
Psalm Series - creative response
Feb. 24 - Lauren Greene
Proverbs and Yoda

Children's Church Helpers, 10:15 Sundays

Feb. 3 - The Thomas Family
Feb. 10 - The Groce Family
Feb. 17 - The Reid Family
Feb. 24 - The Mielke Family

** If you know you are going to be in town during Spring Break and you are willing to volunteer to be the helper, Please let Tiffany know.

Children's choirs meet Wednesdays at 6:00

Family Dinner starts at 5:15 with a max cost of \$15 per family.

Dates to remember....

Feb. 22 - 6:00 pm, Family Movie Night in Joshua House

Mar. 5 - 5:30, Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper and ADS Art Auction

Mar. 6 - 5:30 Holy Eucharist for Ash Wednesday, childcare provided for kindergarten and younger, NO Children's Choirs or Supper.

Mar. 20 - No Children's Choirs (Spring Break)



Family Movie Night

Feb. 22, 6:00pm - 8:00pm

Come hang out in Joshua House and enjoy a pizza party then, popcorn and a movie. Let Tiffany know via email, phone call, text or FB so we can get an estimate of how much pizza to order. Kiddos will want a sleeping bag, pillows or a blanket to hang out on while watching—please bring one from home.

SAVE THE DATE FOR.....

Vacation Bible School

June 3-6, 8:30am - Noon

@ St. John's

This year St. John's will host VBS. We will look at the story of Joseph and God's Faithfulness to Joseph despite many difficult times in his life! We will also "grow our faith" while exploring farms and gardens around the River Region. Remember that even though we are not the hosts, we still need the support of Ascensions AWESOME volunteers! You'll receive more information in the spring, but keep these dates open for our kids to have a great experience!

