

Church of the  
Ascension  
315 Clanton Avenue  
Montgomery, AL 36104

www.coascension.org

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CHURCH OF THE  
ASCENSION

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



## Feast of Lights

5:00 pm

Sunday, January 6

In the Nave

Inaugural  
Chili Bowl

To follow

In the lower parking

Non-profit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
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Montgomery, Ala

# The Tower

## ORDINARY TIME

in the tradition of the Roman Catholic Church, Ordinary Time refers to two seasons in the church year—the season after Epiphany and the season after Pentecost. We, as Episcopalians, don't officially call either of these seasons "Ordinary Time" instead referring to them as a particular numbered Sunday "after Epiphany/Pentecost." We know the season of Ordinary Time by its liturgical color—green. When the church hangings and the priest vestments are green, then we are in Ordinary Time. Though there may be some high feast days in Ordinary Time, like the Baptism of Our Lord or Trinity Sunday, these seasons are not major seasons of the church calendar like Lent or Christmas.

I have always enjoyed thinking about the seasons after Epiphany and Pentecost as Ordinary Time because it offers a bit of a quandary. In reading through the lectionary in these two seasons, you hear about some extraordinary things that Jesus did—healings, exorcisms, beautiful teachings like the Beatitudes, the Transfiguration, feeding five thousand, even raising people from the dead. None of that seems ordinary. Jesus, himself, is anything but ordinary. So to think of this

time of year as ordinary gives me pause and forces me to wrestle with what Ordinary Time really is, and not just Ordinary Time, but how I am influenced by the liturgical seasons of the church calendar.

The church year is divided into seven seasons—Advent, Christmas, (after) Epiphany, Lent, Holy Week, Easter, and (after) Pentecost. The rhythm of the church year is reflected in the rhythm of life. We are not quite as aware of that rhythm anymore simply because our culture and modern technology have lessened the meaning of liturgical seasons—not all Christians recognize the liturgical church calendar and with the invention of the light bulb, natural signs of the seasons like the length of days and nights are less apparent. If you think about it, Advent and Lent both offer a darkness that reflects the shortening and then lengthening of days. As the days get shorter in December, we talk a lot about light because that is what brings people who live in darkness hope. So we celebrate the season of Christmas as the liturgical equivalent of theological hope manifested in God made man. As the days begin to lengthen, we need to set our own house in order by purifying our souls and cleaning out the pantry—literally and physically—so we fast or take on

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## CLERGY & STAFF

The Rev. Candice Frazer  
*Rector*

The Rev. Mark Waldo  
*Rector Emeritus*

Pamela Long  
*Seminary Intern*

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*



**SPOTLIGHT ON THE CHOIR**

Thank you Ascension Choir and Children’s Choir for sharing your beautiful voices with us in worship and praise of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

We appreciate your dedication, practice, and commitment. You give 100% of your effort as well as time for Wednesday night rehearsals, Sunday Morning liturgy, and all the “extras” like the Celebration of New Ministry, Christmas Eve, Easter, Evensong, the Advent Procession of Light, and so many other services and celebrations.

Most especially thanks to Becky for her hard work and handling all the craziness that being a choirmaster and organist at a church provides. You are appreciated!

other acts of spiritual discipline in preparation for the spring and renewal of the natural world reflected by the church year in the season of Easter, the season of resurrection. The in-between times then are thought to be ordinary because we are not taking n any special acts of discipline nor are we focusing our attention on the particular events of incarnation and resurrection.

Ordinary Time becomes less about Jesus and more about us; a time when it is easy to get lost in the day-to-day doldrums of our own existence.

Ordinary Time is ordered time. It is the season in which we learn about all the things Jesus did while he walked around on earth fully human and fully divine. There is a certain beauty in thinking of Jesus’ daily life as ordinary even as he did extraordinary things. Remembering his day-to-day life in the lens of his incarnation and resurrection provide opportunity for us to delve deeper into the mystery of Christ and thus even ordinary time becomes extraordinary time.

I pray you will take some time this season to delve deeper into that mystery with me. We will begin this season on Sunday, January 6th with the Feast of the Epiphany Sunday morning and the Feast of Lights that evening at 5pm. The Feast of Lights is a beautiful service of remembrance in which we re-

tell the story of the church from the disciples to the present day as we have passed the light of Christ from one generation to the next. Other opportunities to delve into that mystery include the Adult Forum beginning on Wednesday, January 9. This seven week series will explore Bishop Curry’s “Way of Love: Practices for a Jesus-centered Life.” Beginning January 13th, I will also teach an Inquirer’s Class on Sunday mornings that covers a general outline of the faith, traditions, and history of the Episcopal Church. This class is designed for those who are new to the church and seeking reception or confirmation as well as those who might simply want a refresher course.

However you might chose to spend your “Ordinary Time” this season after Epiphany, I hope that you might reflect on the mystery of Christ in your daily life at home and work and school—not to answer the question WWJD (What would Jesus do) but to live more fully into the awareness of our Creator and Redeemer through his life and his love for us.

Light and Life,  
Candice+

**LATINO MINISTRY**

Grace, peace and joy to everyone from the Latino Ministry! This has been particularly blessed season as we have baptized five more children into God's family as part of our celebration of the feast day of the Virgin of Guadalupe. For Mexicans, the feast of Our Lady is a celebration of the arrival of the Gospel in the New World, even as we begin the holy season of Advent, when Heaven and Earth eagerly await the birth of our Savior. Just a week after Guadalupe, we participated in Las Posadas, accompanying Mary and Joseph in their search for lodging, and enjoying a little levity with a piñata and pozole for supper.

I'm sure you've heard Candice's announcement that the Latino Ministry will be moving from Ascension to All Saints, as the bishop has seen our work and wishes it to grow independently into a larger community, embracing a wider diversity of Latino congregants. So we need to be transplanted to grow! This move will allow us to offer our bilingual services in a space that is more appropri-

ate for worship than Joshua House, and we will be able to use some of All Saint's under utilized space for classrooms and nursery. Our last Sunday at Ascension will be December 30, and our first Sunday at All Saints will be January 13, 2019, the Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord. This will be particularly significant as we will baptize 5 new Christians that day, at the same time we joyfully join our new family.

All Saints has been amazingly enthusiastic in their welcome of this new ministry, and my heart rejoices in the things the Lord has planned for us in the future. Our hope is that, with Candice's assistance, the Montgomery deanery will support the ministry with their attendance at our worship services, and with fundraising and other resources. I'm very gratified to have good relationships with the clergy and lay ministers at St. John's, St. Michael's and All Angels, Holy Comforter and Good Shepherd, and I look forward to collaborating with them in growing this important ministry. - Pam Long

Ascension has been a wonderful home for us for 12 years--but even as Jesus

**TRANSFORMING GENEROSITY**

**2019 STEWARDSHIP UPDATE (As of 12/19/18):**

**164 Pledges totaling \$824,846.00**

Thank you to those who have made a pledge! If you have not done so, pledge cards are available in the Parish Office or you can contact Tracy at 263-5529 or thinton@coascension.org. We will still accept pledge cards throughout January. 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.

PLEGGED AMOUNT	NUMBER PLEDGING
\$.01 - \$5000	116
\$5001 - \$10,000	22
\$10,001 - \$20,000	21
\$20,001 - \$50,000	5

**VESTRY**

2019  
Scott Bamman,  
*Junior 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*

## ADULT FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES

### INQUIRER'S CLASS

Sunday Mornings at 9:15am in the Library  
January 13 - February 17

This class is designed to offer an outline of the Episcopal faith, traditions, and history of the Church. By the end of the course, participants will be able to articulate what it means to be an Episcopalian and how we live out our beliefs in the world. This class is geared toward those who are seeking to know more about the Episcopal Church and are considering confirmation, reception, or reaffirmation of one's faith. For more information contact Candice@coascension.org.

### BREAD OF LIFE

Sunday Mornings at 9:15am in the Upper Room

This class is geared for and taught by the young adults at Ascension. It is the perfect way to begin to make connections and get involved in parish life if you are in your twenties, thirties, and even early forties, though there is no age limit to participate in the class. You'll meet newcomers and old-timers alike. Grab some breakfast, drop off the kids at Sunday School and come join us!

### ADULT FORUM

**THE WAY OF LOVE:  
PRACTICES FOR A JESUS-CENTERED LIFE**  
Wednesday Nights at 6:00pm in Ascension Hall  
January 9 - February 20

This seven week series explores Bishop Curry's call to us to explore our place in the Jesus Movement by developing an Episcopal rule of life. Each week we will learn about and discuss one of the seven tenants of that Rule as we seek and grow in the life-giving way of Jesus. Though you do not have to do any outside classwork to attend the forums, there are copies of each of the seven books that form the Rule in the Vineyard Bookstore.

### WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

**THE REVELATION TO JOHN**  
Mondays at 8:30am or 5:30pm in the Library  
Begins January 7

Women's Bible Study is a deeply reflective, challenging, and critical study of Scripture. Though geared for those who have had EFM, it is open to all women in the church. There are two sessions of this one hour class, though the evening session includes a thirty minute social time from 5:30-6:00pm. The class will require homework and a study Bible, preferably the NRSV version of the Harper-Collins or Oxford Bible. For more information or to get on the email listserve, contact Candice@coascension.org

### MEN'S PRAYER BREAKFAST

Thursday Mornings at 7:00am in Ascension Hall

Enjoy a hot breakfast and a forum-style discussion every Thursday with your favorite group of guys.



## MUSIC NOTES

### The Ascension Choir

The Ascension loves Music, and the heart of Music at the Ascension is The Ascension Choir. There have been several articles in past Towers about the significance of music in worship – its transcendent and inspiring quality, its ability to connect us to our inner selves by all of our senses being engaged, its ability to connect us to the eternal Source of life. And more specifically, scripture commands that we “Sing!” to the Lord – a new song, thanksgiving, for joy before the Lord, of praises to his name, and on and on. The Ascension Choir leads us in our singing.

The choir is blessed. Our ministry in the church is one of time, talent, and, often, treasure. Choir members are dedicated, dependable and absolutely committed to ascribing worth to God through their music.

The Ascension Choir sings 48 Sundays a year, the other 4 being sung by soloists from the choir. We provide music for All Saint's Evensong, Advent and Christmas services, Holy Week and Easter services, in addition to celebrations like 12<sup>th</sup> Night, Ascension Day, Ordinations and Installations, Weddings and Funerals, and others. They rehearse for 2 hours on Wednesday nights, 10 months of the year. The Ascension Choir has been in Residence at two Eng-

lish Cathedrals, Salisbury in 2014 and Wells in 2018, which is an unusual accomplishment for a church the size of the Ascension. They have sung at various other churches, locally and in the Eastern United States, the National Cathedral and St. Philip's in Atlanta.

They have a demanding Director, and have to choose forgiveness and tolerance often in sitting under her direction. We talk about our getting to practice being the Kingdom of God, where we come together from diverse opinions, backgrounds and occupations, as one, loving each other, to sing God's praises. The prayer that we pray together every week is “Bless, O Lord, us thy servants who minister in thy temple. Grant that what we sing with our lips, we may believe in our hearts, and that what we believe in our hearts we may show forth in our lives, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.”

The congregation's support and expressions of appreciation are more meaningful than is imagined. Ascension thanks each of these individuals who indeed sacrifice their time and talent to the Church, beyond just Ascension, in response to God's love. **THANK YOU, CHOIR!**

## 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 December**  
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

We are starting off 2019 with fun-filled month of activities!  
All students in grades 7 to 12 are welcome to join the fun anytime!

### Upcoming EYC Events:

- 1.6 CHILI BOWL 4-7:30 PM\*
- 1.13 EYC at Joshua House 5:30-7:30 PM
- 1.20 Mystery road trip for MLK holiday
- 1.27 EYC at Joshua House 5:30-7:30 PM

\*We are organizing & setting up the Chili Bowl

### 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



## INAUGURAL ASCENSION CHILI BOWL

Sunday, January 6

6:00 - 7:30 PM

(following 5:00 PM Feast of Lights service)

Calling all Chili Chefs! Grab some teammates and join the tailgate in the Church back parking lot for this new annual cook-off! Judging for best tasting chili and other awards. WHO WILL BE THE FIRST CHILI BOWL CHAMPION??!

### Teams to provide:

- Cooked batch of chili to serve a small amount to 50 ppl
- Toppings or anything else you would like to serve
- Burner to keep chili warm (we can help get one)
- Tent for tailgate (we can help get one)
- Chairs for team members
- 'Adult' beverages
- Signs and/or decorations are up to you!

### Church will provide:

- Table for serving
- Bowls and spoons
- Cornbread
- Cookies
- Sodas, water

\*We will have a bouncy house and hot dogs for the kids!\*

Contact: Laura Walter (334) 300-2310 or Jimmy Walter (334) 221-8046

# Children's Ministry

### Godly Play Teachers (Pre-K and K)

9:15 Sundays, Third Floor

- Jan. 6 - Christine Harrison
- Art Lesson in Art Room: Old Befana
- Jan. 13 - Christine Harrison, Allison Jones
- Parable of the Good Shepherd
- Jan. 20 - Christine Harrison, Elizabeth
- Conner Parable of the Sower
- Jan. 27 - Christine Harrison, Allison Jones
- Parable of the Mustard Seed

### ELEMENTary Teachers (1st-6th)

9:15 Sundays, Third Floor

- Jan. 6 - Tiffany Nishibun
- Art Lesson in Art Room: Old Befana
- Jan. 13 - Mary Lee Yelverton, Laura Brendle
- Ruth and Naomi
- Jan. 20 - Mary Lee Yelverton, TBA
- Hannah
- Jan. 27 - Nan Barganier, Lauren Greene
- Esther becomes Queen

### Children's Church Helpers

10:15 Sundays,

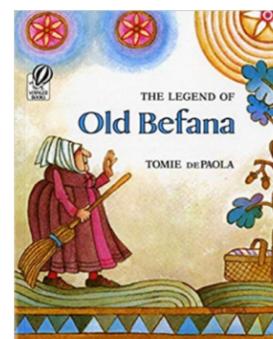
- Dec. 2 - The Reid Family
- Dec. 9 - The Franco Family
- Dec. 16 - The Smith Family
- Dec. 23 - The Perkowski Family
- Dec. 30 - No Children's Church

Children's choirs resume on JANUARY 9 and meet Wednesdays at 6:00  
Family Dinner starts at 5:15 with a max cost of \$15 per family.

### Dates to remember . . .

- Jan. 5 - Tree burning party @ The Johnston's Farm
- Jan. 6 - Feast of Lights at 5:00 pm and Chili Cook Off following the service
- Jan. 13 - Baptism of Anne Fitz Cunningham, at the 10:15 service
- Feb. 14 - Valentines Day Open House at Church Office until 4pm.
- Feb. 22 - Family Movie Night in Joshua House, 5:30 pm
- Mar. 5 - Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper and ADS Art Auction, 5:30pm

### A Book Recommendation for Epiphany



Old Befana by Tommie dePaola

This month the children's are going to share the story of Befana. It isn't a bible story, but an old Italian Epiphany fable. Befana is an old lady who obsesses over a clean house. Everything must be PERFECT. Wouldn't that be nice? The Magi make a stop at Befana's home on the way to see the Christ Child and invite her along. She tells them that once she finishes her house work, she will be able to go. The next day the Magi are gone, and Befana realizing her mistake, runs after them with her broom. Never able to catch up, she roams the world (or Italy) giving gifts to children since she isn't able to get to the Christ Child.

Two things strike me about this tale. One, What comes between me fully following Christ? And Two, the verse from Matthew, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

I love sharing this story with the kids at Epiphany. Sometimes the work we ended up doing instead of the work we planned to do, is still the work of Christ in the world. I wonder what you might think of this story.



### Thanks Ascension!

Friends—Thanks so much for being a part of Ascension's Advent and Christmas celebration. For all that Bread of Life did for our **Tree Trim**. For all of the **Advent Candle Lighters**. For hosting the Holy Family through the **Las Posadas Journey**. For all of the children who participated in our **Pageant**. For the **Children's Choirs**. For the friends who helped in the **Christmas Service**. For all the grown folks with out whom none of this could have happened. So many people made this season glorious worshipful. A heart felt thanks to all of you!