

# ASCENSION TIDINGS

ADVENT 2016

**It's the Advent frenzy | sweet baby Jesus | Epiphany newsletter**

Dear Beloved,

I am so happy to be rolling with you all. I have started a blog to help us think through what we are doing with strategic planning. You may not know that we hired a consultant to help us dream about the future, but Nov 12<sup>th</sup> was our first workshop. I have blogging about this ongoing work for a few weeks now. <http://episcopaldreamer.weebly.com/blog> is one way that I am thinking about what God is doing among us and I cherish your feedback.



*I have confession to make - people have nagged me for years to do a blog, and I have had an adamant resistance to it. Because once Seymore starts, he has to keep feeding Morris. I don't want my blog to be a little shop of horrors, so I gave it a shelf life of six months. It is one of tools that will help you catch up with what we are doing, especially if vision stuff comes as a surprise to you.*

## **Advent**

A big goal for our worshipping community is to find peace and breathing room during Advent. Maybe the peace only comes in small nooks and crannies like Sunday morning. I am praying that you can believe again that Jesus is alive and well and wants to gather you to himself. He is the peace we all seek.

More broadly in Advent, Episcopal churches intentionally swim upstream. The worship, scripture, and music are not in-step with 24/7 Santa and silver bells. I am grateful for that. The scriptures are about the Messiah and his renewing the world and the music is full of expectation.

During the 10:30 service we will have family candle lighting of the Advent wreath, like we did last year, also we gonna teach you how to sing the Psalms!

## **Blue Christmas**

I am very, very happy that our music director is offering a musical service called "Blue Christmas" on December 18<sup>th</sup> at 5pm in the church. I will preach and there will be communion with music very different from your Christmas and even Advent fare. The service is especially for those who are exhausted from the jingle jangle of the season. Those who are not in the Christmas spirit can join us for a musical respite mid-way to Christmas. I can't wait to be part of it.

*continued on next page*

## LETTER FROM THE RECTOR...(CONT.)

### Christmas Eve and Day

- 5pm Christmas Eve service with communion, children's pageant and Christmas music
- 9pm Christmas Concert
- 9:30pm worship with communion and Christmas music
- Christmas Day is on a Sunday this year so we are going to only have a 10:30 am service - Rite I with music **NO 8AM SERVICE**. I think I might be alone at 8am on Christmas Day and New Year's if we had an early service.

Don't forget about Bread and Soccer, which has become an Ascension tradition. We will meet on the Big Field at 9 am. Bring your favorite bread to share with others after a rousing game of soccer.

### Epiphany

We are going to be to the Treemont for Epiphany Caroling on Jan 8<sup>th</sup>. Last year was so lovely, we will leave from church after worship to give the residents a lunch time serenade.

### After Epiphany - January Church schedule – it's different

- **Jan 1** - Rite 1 with Music 10:30am (**NO 8AM SERVICE**)
- **Jan 8** - Epiphany Sunday
- **Jan 15** - MLK Sunday
- **Jan 22** - Parish wide, *everybody-show-up* meeting on a Sunday morning. This day is super important, and we want everyone there. There will be only **one Worship service at 9am, followed by breakfast tacos, coffee and fruit and then parish wide vision work. We need everyone's input and participation to shape who we are called to be over the next five years.**

### Further out...

- **Feb 5 - Annual Parish Meeting after 10:30 service.** You won't miss the super bowl but you can you can tailgate during the meeting with Super Bowl themed food. Bring your own anti acid. We will give you a state of the state for Ascension (budget report, vision update, vestry election, etc.)

### Need your thoughts about the process

As we go through the strategic planning process ministry leaders, staff and I are thinking about how our Sunday Schedule can more effectively serve our people. Take a look at a video I made. It is just under 5 mins of me yammering. I would love your feedback <https://youtu.be/h4CK5jmRzs8>.

Peace



Pastor Todd Bryant

## NOTES FROM THE CHOIR LOFT



### Blue Christmas: a service of wholeness and healing

*Comfort, comfort my people, says God.  
I have heard your prayer;  
I have seen your tears.  
Indeed, I will heal you. 2 Kings 20:5*

There are many moments in our lives when we need comfort. There are times when we ache for consolation. We wonder how we will get through the holidays. Sometimes Christmas can be a time when many of us need reassurance and comfort. For some, Christmas is a time of loneliness, sorrow, alienation, sadness. Perhaps it is grief over the loss of a loved one, a struggle with illness, the loss of a job, depression, the feeling of being overwhelmed. Perhaps you can't take one more day of the incessant bombardment of 'holiday' cheer at malls and on TV.

The suffering people who looked for the long-awaited Messiah were given a hope-filled image of God in the writings of Isaiah. No matter what happens to us, God has promised to be there to comfort and support us.

A Blue Christmas service offers a way for people to claim those feelings and still feel surrounded by the compassionate love of God. This service offers a way to observe Christmas in a more subdued, safe, comforting setting. Those looking for comfort, hope, wholeness, and renewal can worship with comforting words and music.

Ascension's Blue Christmas service will be offered on Sunday, December 18 at 5:00 PM. No one needs to be 'blue' to attend. If you would find comfort in this service, please plan to attend. It is open to all.

Peace,  
Suzanne

P.S. We will be chanting the Psalm on Advent two and four (Dec 4 & Dec 18). "How do you chant?" you ask. Check out the instructional on the next two pages to get an idea. And don't worry, it's not as complicated as it might seem.

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### Choir Practice

Choir practice is every Wednesday evening beginning at 7:00 pm. Come to learn new songs, practice the ones you know, and sing in Sunday's choir. Practice lasts about two hours.



## Why sing/chant the psalms?

The psalms are intended for singing. Martin Luther said when one sings, one prays twice. Singing a psalm makes its text more personal. One breathes in the text, internalizing it. Chanting does not require vocal training or musical education. Anyone can sing the psalms with a short tutorial. There is no concern about meter or rhythm, as syllables are chanting in natural language rhythm at the same pace as speech. One can use any psalm tone for any psalm; it is a basic pattern.

### How to chant

Well, first you need a psalm. Let's pick one: Psalm 72: 1-7, 18-19. This is the prescribed psalm for Advent 2 (December 4 this year). We will sing it in an alternatum form. This means one person or group sings the first verse/section, and then when the text changes to bold, the remaining people sing the next phrase. We alternate between the 2 groups. This can be leader/congregation, choir/ congregation, men/ women, left/ right sides of the room...

Second, you need 2 measures of music, each of which has only a few chords. The melody (or soprano line) is the top note of the chords. The lower 3 parts are the alto, tenor, and bass parts. Originally, the top (melody line was known as the tenor line, but today tenor indicates the higher of the 2 men's parts.) We need folks to sing melody, but chant is lovely when there are additional parts sung.

Thirdly, although not strictly necessary, we will include an antiphon. An antiphon can be a phrase or two or an entire stanza of a hymn. It is a line of music which every-one sings at various stopping points in the psalm. An antiphon generally distills the text into the context of the scriptural theme of that day. After singing the antiphon, the next portion of text is recited or sung.

Let's get started:



In his time the right - eous shall flou - rish.

The first note is a fat hollow circle with vertical lines on each side. This 1st note is the reciting tone. We need it to be 'pointed.' This means we need tiny signs for guidance, such as an apostrophe', comma, asterick\*, [bracketed words], bold or underlined words, etc. Any of these can tell us when to move from one note to the next.

ex: 1) Give the king your [justice] O God\*, and your righteousness to the [king's] son;

tone: VENI EMMANUEL



How does this translate?

The 1st note is the reciting tone. You sing that note until a sign of change:

"Give the king your " is all on that 1 note.



Give the king your



ex: 2) [justice] justice is bracketed, so you move to the next tone for any/all syllables inside the bracket, in this case, the 2 syllables of jus-tice.

[jus-tice]



O God\*, after the bracket, you sing each syllable on the remaining notes of that measure. The \* indicates that end of that 1st measure, and the end of the 1st half of the verse.

O God

This completes the 1st half of verse 1: Give the king your [justice] O God\*,

The second half of verse 1: and your righteousness to the [king's] son;



and your ri-teous-ness to the king's son.

Start with the 1st (reciting tone) of the 2nd measure, another circle with vertical lines.



[king's] The bracket tells you to move to the next note, AND the underline tells you to slide the word onto 2 notes instead of just one.

son;

king's son.

the word(s) after the bracket are sung on the remaining note(s) in the 2nd measure.

Now take a breath and apply these treatments to the next line of text.

Then, you listen while the other group chants. One group will sing the odd numbered verses and the other group gets the even numbered verses. When you see antiphon, you sing the antiphon once, after which the chanting resumes.

You'll be surprised how quickly you can do this. Once this seems familiar, you can try singing the parts that harmonize the melody. Chanting is a wonderful way for a church full of individuals to sing as one body, in corporate worship. Chanting brings us together as we internalize scripture in song.

Suzanne

## REACH OUT



What a journey the last six weeks have been! By choice, I focus on the best of things and count on the Lord to bring us through the rest. As a church family we have had a lot to celebrate. I am enclosing some pictures of our recent ventures out into the community. Regrettably I do not have all of you pictured. Adam Brown is shown reading to the children at Family Literacy Night at the Belmont Apartments across the street from Walnut Bend Elementary. This event which promotes literacy is sponsored by Making It Better. Adam is very gifted working with children-it was a joy to be with him that night.

We sent a rock star team to Mission of Yahweh to deconstruct some furniture damaged by water. That effort cleared a house recently purchased by the Mission for remodeling for use to house residents. We also sponsored our first Lunch with Friends for the residents of the Mission. It was a lot of fun to do that. Some amazing bonding happens in kitchens during these events...just one of those things where you just have to be there! The residents and staff at the Mission are very special people. I hope you make the time to join us in this ministry. Lunch happens on the first Saturday of every month.

On the third Saturday of every month, we send a team to help at WHAM in the Food Pantry area. November featured some members of the Daughters of the King. Big food drives for the holidays meant lots of unpacking and sorting of goods for distribution for Thanksgiving. We handled lots of stuffing mix, green beans, canned fruit and cranberry sauce! This is a very close place to serve in our neighborhood.

In December, we will venture down to the Beacon to work on Friday December 2nd at the early shift. They will assign us to work in their kitchen or the laundry. I find both of these fascinating. The Beacon handles so many people in their ministry which means they have some very streamlined organized ways to run the kitchen and the laundry. Time passes quickly there and the fellowship along the way is wonderful.

I also ask that you pray for a very special new ministry we are starting here at Ascension. Open Table is a program where a group of 6 to 8 people will work together with a youth aging out of foster care. We will serve as mentors and a support group, offering our time and expertise in getting this young person started in young adulthood. As a group, we will be assisted and mentored by a national group who have done this for some time. This ministry is new to the Diocese of Texas (other dioceses in Texas have and do work with this program)....and we will be the first in the area. John Searle and Leslie Nirider head the effort and I will also be at the table. We have scheduled an informational meeting in December 27th after the 10:30 service. I invite you to attend to learn about this ministry, even if only to learn more for prayers. I am confident all of you know me well enough by now to know this ministry is very close to my heart. We can all grow in love here.

I pray for each and every one of you and your families. May this Advent be rich spiritually for all. May it bring us all closer together and closer to God. I am thankful for our work together and look forward to next year.

My blessings,

Deacon Mary



## Outreach needs you!

If you have a few hours on a Saturday to spare, or maybe during the week, look in the volunteer sign-up log and see how you can help. There are many opportunities. Every little bit goes a long way.



(Amazing women of Ascension gather to cook and serve the residents of Mission of Yahweh)



(Adam Brown reads to students at Literacy Night)



(Miranda G. destroys flood damaged furniture at the Mission of Yahweh. What a great stress relief!)



(Volunteers help to sort and organize food at WHAM's Food Pantry)



## T-Shirts

Remember we have Outreach T-Shirts still available for purchase. These T-shirts were designed by Janis Edel and identify us in our mission work throughout the community. Cost: \$12.00. Available in most sizes. Just ask Deacon Mary and she will happily provide you with one.



# ASCENSION SCHOOL

Dear Parishioners,

We are into the celebration season. We welcome Thanksgiving with our In-Service Chapel and morning on Friday, November 18th. We talk about the importance of sharing what we have with others and then go to the Parish Hall as we fold newspapers for CAPS, tape bottled water and granola bars and create bags of toiletries for Lord of the Streets, and pack and wrap boxes for Seafarers. It is a small but important time to help those in need. We will continue with a winter clothing drive to help Mission of Yahweh and finish our gifts for Salvation Army Angel Tree.



In December our students in grades 1-5 will present a traditional Lessons and Carols on Thursday, December 8th at 7 pm in the Church. We invite the Ascension Community to join us for this celebration. We also celebrate St. Nicholas on Friday, December 2, at an all school chapel. On December 16th, our K students present Baby in a Manger at 9 am in the Church. We re-tell the Christmas story with our K students in costume and our Pre-K 3 and Pre-K 4 students singing some songs for this play.

Our school continues to support UT Health Pediatric Brain Cancer through the work of Dr. David Sandberg. We will have a Craft Fair on Sunday, December 4th, from 11:30 am to 2 pm. Our choir will sing at 1:30 and there will be many handmade items available from students and vendors. Please stop by after church. Help us support this amazing doctor and his research.

When we return in January, our Pre-K 4 students will re-enact the story of Epiphany on Tuesday, January 10th. We will also have some songs sung by the students. This is an all school chapel at 9 am.

Pastor Todd has started having Communion every first Tuesday of the school year for our students in grades 1-5. We want our students to have a greater understanding of this service and partake of communion as they wish. We had been having Communion two to three times per year. We will have Communion on December 6th, and January 3rd at 8:30 am in the church. This will continue until the end of the school year on the first Tuesday of the month.

We begin to have meetings with our current families about the classes for next year with Kindergarten Round-Up on Wednesday, January 25th. This is a time for our current and future Kindergarten families to meet the teachers and understand our curriculum. We invite all interested families to attend at 7:30 am in the School Library.

Faithfully

Nancy Clausey  
Head of School





## ASCENSION EPISCOPAL

## CHRISTMAS MARKET

**TO BENEFIT DR. DAVID SANDBERG'S WORK WITH  
PEDIATRIC BRAIN CANCER  
PATIENTS AT UTHEALTH**

**HOSTED BY AES STUDENT COUNCIL**

### VENDORS

### NEEDED!

Our student council has made this commitment and hopes you will participate too!

Adult vendors are asked to donate 25% of their proceeds to our fundraising efforts.

Our student vendors donate 100%!

There is no booth fee. We have plenty of tables for your use. We just need to know what your needs are. Market will be outside in parking lot along Seagler Rd, weather permitting. If bad weather, we move inside Parish Hall.

Contact

Kimberly Bryant at  
kharvin@hotmail.com

COME CHECK EVERYONE OFF YOUR LIST AT THE

# ASCENSION EPISCOPAL CHRISTMAS MARKET

AT  
ASCENSION EPISCOPAL SCHOOL & CHURCH  
2525 SEAGLER RD, HOUSTON 77042

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4**  
**11:30AM - 2 PM**

## KID & ADULT VENDORS

CRAFTS • GOODIES • JEWELRY • DÉCOR •  
ACCESSORIES • TEACHER GIFTS • & MORE!

Come do your Christmas shopping and make a difference  
at our Christmas market.

\* A percentage of our proceeds will be donated to  
UT Health (Dr. David Sandberg's work) for children with  
brain cancer! \*



**DAVID I. SANDBERG, M.D., FAANS, FACS, FAAP**  
*Director, Pediatric Neurosurgery, Mischner Neuroscience Institute; Associate Professor, Vivian L. Smith Department of Neurosurgery; Associate Professor, Department of Pediatric Surgery, Dr. Mamie Rose Professorship in Pediatric Neurosurgery at the McGovern Medical School, McGovern Medical School at UTHealth*

### Detecting Pediatric Brain Tumors

Pediatric brain tumors are the second most common cancer in children, with approximately 2,500 to 3,500 brain tumors diagnosed in the United States each year. Brain tumors in children are different from those in adults in cell type, presentation and responsiveness to treatment.

"Because the brain is still developing, it's important for children and adolescents to be diagnosed and treated by a physician team that specializes in pediatric brain tumors," says David I. Sandberg, M.D., FAANS, FACS, FAAP, director of pediatric neurosurgery at Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital and Mischner Neuroscience Institute and co-director of the Pediatric Brain Tumor Program at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. "Tumors present in a variety of ways depending on their location in the brain. The most common signs and symptoms are headache and vomiting due to elevated intracranial pressure. In infants and young children, irritability or a fontanelle that is fuller than normal may signal elevated intracranial pressure."

Other signs and symptoms include motor weakness, sensory changes, personality changes, unsteady gait, difficulty with muscle control, lethargy, seizures, vision changes, speech problems and endocrine disorders.

The Pediatric Brain Tumor Program brings together a team of experts affiliated with Children's Memorial Hermann Hospital and The University of Texas MD Anderson Children's Cancer Hospital to serve physicians, patients and families with new and advanced methods of diagnosing and treating childhood brain tumors. The program team includes board-certified specialists in neuro-oncology, pediatric neurosurgery, radiation oncology, neuroradiology, neuropathology, neuropsychology and survivorship. Additional support is provided by psychologists, nutritionists, social workers and Child Life specialists as well as developmental and education specialists.

For more information about the Pediatric Brain Tumor Program, please contact the division of Pediatric Neurosurgery at McGovern Medical School at 832.325.7242 or visit [childrens.memorialhermann.org/pbtp](http://childrens.memorialhermann.org/pbtp).

## DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

This is an exciting time of the year in Children's Formation. It's always so much fun to be around Ascension's children during the excitement of Advent and we also have the Christmas Pageant to look forward too. In addition, we made some big changes to our Sunday School Program and we are in need of volunteers.

### Program Changes

We have implemented a new classroom structure and curriculum to reduce the pressure on our volunteer teachers, as we have lost a few recently. The new curriculum is designed for a one room classroom with all children hearing the same bible story, then breaking into smaller, age appropriate groups for discussion and activities. With this new structure, we only need two volunteers each week rather than four. Our plan is to expand back into a two (or even three!) room structure once the holidays are over and our wonderful parishioners again feel the call to teach and minister to our children.



In the meantime, December brings an exciting curriculum, The Stories of Christmas, with a deeper consideration and reflection on the individuals involved in the Christmas story. We'll look at Mary's great faith and trust in God's plan. She told the angel "I am the Lord's servant. Let it be with me just as you have said," not knowing how Joseph would react. We'll also examine the obedience of Joseph - he didn't have to listen to the angel who told him to take Mary as his wife; he could have had easy said no, or even had her stoned! Then, in January we'll be taking a closer look at Jesus and what it means to be God's son.

### Joy in Serving

The bottom line is, to achieve our goals with Sunday School and to provide the best learning and spiritual development to the children of Ascension, we need you -- become a Sunday School volunteer -- it truly is a JOY to minister to our children! You don't have to be a Bible expert, the kids are eager to learn and grow in the light of the Lord. Lesson plans and activities for every Sunday are prepared for you -- and with a few moments looking over the lesson before class, you can be an effective and inspiring force in our children's lives. Come help us - volunteer with Ascension's children and bless them with your gifts. You know you will be blessed by the love and joy that our children inspire in you! Call the office or email me at [youth@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org](mailto:youth@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org).

### Christmas Pageant

We are looking forward to the children's Christmas Pageant, which is a joy every year. If your child would like to be involved this year, please bring them to Drama Club at 9:30 beginning on December 4th. The pageant will be held during the 5:00pm Christmas Eve service.

Blessings,  
Miranda

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## MEMBERSHIP

### Pledges and Statements

During Advent we prepare our houses for celebrations and bring closure to our year. For many of us this includes finishing up our pledge, contributing to brass and flowers, or adding a special gift for the church such as the maintenance or building fund. Ascension is grateful for each and every prayer and contribution. God works through you to grow His church. Thank you. Please remember that for tax purposes, any stock, check or cash, or on-line contribution you want to give must be received by December 31, which is a Saturday this year. Please plan ahead if you want to be certain the donation is recorder for 2016 and appears on your year-end statement.

### 2016 Tax Deductions

Please remember that in order to be included in 2016 Tax Deductions the office must receive your contribution by December 31, 2016. If your check is dated December 25, 2016 but is not received until January 2017, it will be credited on the 2017 Statement. Holiday mail may suffer delays due to increased volume and vacation schedules. Give early, give often and gladden your heart.

**Important**

### Directory Update

The update of the Ascension Episcopal Church Directory has been published on the website; [www.ascensionepiscopalchurch.org](http://www.ascensionepiscopalchurch.org). Please go there to see that it is accurate for your household. The password is the same, just ask someone. If you need to learn the password, please contact the office 713-781-1330 or email [membership@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org](mailto:membership@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org). Updates are ongoing, so please tell us when you make changes to your contact information. We try really hard to keep things up-to-date but we cannot do it without your input.

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### Opting out?

Are you receiving Tidings, The Weekly Reminder, Prayer Requests, or have you opted out of receiving emails. Some have done this most intentionally because they didn't want to receive so many emails. Opting Out from the program we use to send email, removes your email address from use permanently. If you want to re-subscribe we have to ask you to go to the website and add yourself to the Ascension mailing list. Contact Samantha or Leslie.

Ascension does not want to flood your inbox. If you know you will never participate in Prayer Requests it is alright to let the membership office know. [membership@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org](mailto:membership@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org). The same is true for other events. We can tailor the emails you receive to your specific request. If you want to receive Tidings and Special Notices, but not Prayer Requests or the Weekly email, we can do that. Yes to the weekly, No to the Tidings? We can do that too. Generally unsubscribing removes you from ALL information. We want to keep you informed of the things that matter to you. If you are not sure which list you want to be removed from please contact the office and we can help you figure which information you would like to receive.

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### Stewardship

It is never too late to pledge. Our goal for the year is receive 120 Pledges to meet the financial goal of \$520,000. Watch the Bulletin for updates. We do not know what the Lord has in store for us but his gifts are outstanding. They are all around us just as Jesus is always with us. "All things are thine oh Lord, and of thine own have we given thee."



# Outreach and Mission

## Thank You!



### Seafarer's Christmas Box Program -

#### 100 boxes on the way to the Seafares

Thank you for your wonderful response to the 2016 Seafarers Christmas Box Program. You can always count on the Parishioners of Ascension for their response. They were packed and wrapped by the students of Ascension Episcopal School.

### Forgotten Senior Victory -

#### We are declaring "Victory"!

Last Sunday, November 20th, all the "Forgotten Senior" bags were distributed. As in the past, we are making a few extra bags to satisfy the over-flow of requests.

#### PLEASE RETURN YOUR GIFT BAGS BY SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4TH

Thank you for your participation in the program that is devoted to the Christmas season for our "Forgotten Seniors" - Alan and Ann Burton, Co-Chairs.

### Fill the Box

Don't forget. Fill the Box Sunday is the First Sunday of each month. This month that lands on December 4!! Let's fill the wooden box in the Narthex with non perishable foods for WHAM. Focus on canned soup, jelly, canned veggies, tuna, and rice and beans. (Bags or boxes)



### A new ministry - Open Table

Members of a Table use their vocational and life experiences as tools to help a young adult to develop and implement plans that create change: economic, emotional, and spiritual change, to direct them toward success in life. This is a new ministry at Ascension and we need your help to get started. Please consider serving as a mentor.

Come to a one-hour informational meeting planned especially for those interested in learning more about Open Table today, Sunday, November 27 after the 10:30 service. We'll present a brief history of Open Table, our next steps, and the time line for launching our first Table as well as answer questions. Please contact John Searle at [jsearle.bcm@gmail.com](mailto:jsearle.bcm@gmail.com) so that we can plan for materials and a light lunch. If you are not able to attend that day, please get in touch. We would like to complete the table sign up and need applications to be turned in by December 4, 2016.





### Return to the Beacon

Friday, December 2nd....a return trip to the Beacon to serve the homeless. We will be working in the laundry and the kitchen. Please sign up in the narthex or tell Deacon Mary you are coming-we have to give them a number of participants.

Early shift reports at 7:15am.



### Lunch with Friends

Saturday, December 3rd-Lunch with Friends at Mission of Yahweh. We will cook on Friday the 2nd and serve on Saturday the 3rd. Great time last month being with each other and the residents. Please sign up in the Narthex and we will send you the last minutes details of when and where we are cooking and arriving.

### Lord of the Streets Drive

Lord of the Streets-this year we will have an Epiphany ingathering of men's coats that are gently used and new or almost new men's athletic shoes for the homeless. Did you know the average life of a pair of shoes for a homeless person is 6 weeks? That is a lot of miles. As you clean and prepare places for your Christmas gifts-please keep this ingathering in mind. We will gather starting December 17th and finish on January 8th.

### WHAM Volunteering -

On the third Saturday of each month, we will send a team to WHAM to repackage food items for their Food Pantry. Be sure to sign up in the Volunteer Binder in the Narthex and be part of next month's team.



The Daughters of the King will hold their regular monthly meeting on Saturday, December 10th in the parish library, with fellowship at 9:30 AM and the meeting at 10:00. The teaching is followed by a time of prayer. All ladies of the parish and their friends are cordially invited to attend.

**Lifeline** is a nondenominational social and support group for widows and widowers. They are unfortunately closing their Ascension Chapter. Their last meeting will be the first Thursday of December. We thank this group for allowing us to provide for them for many years.



### Calendar

Want to know about upcoming events? Check out the calendar on the Ascension website. This calendar features both the church and school schedules merged into one. Or you may choose to look at only one at a time by clicking on the small downward arrow in the upper right hand corner. The calendar is being updated constantly.

# Christmas at Ascension

## Christmas Brass Underwriters



Please make an offering to help underwrite the Christmas Brass Ensemble expense. Checks may be mailed to the church, placed in the offering plate, or brought to the church office. Be sure that your check is made out to the church and indicate "for Choir Fund/Christmas Brass". You may dedicate your the gift in memory of, in honor of, in thanksgiving for, etc., and the contribution will be acknowledged in the Christmas orders of service. Thank you for your support of the Music Department. **As**

***with the poinsettias, the deadline for dedications and donations will be December 18th.***

## Christmas Poinsettia Offerings

You may sign-up to donate and dedicate a poinsettia. We ask that you sign the flower chart in the narthex and write your dedication in the book below the chart. The dedications may be made in honor of someone, in memory of someone or in thanksgiving for all the wonderful things that God has put in your life. The cost is \$25, but any donation amount is welcome. Any questions can be directed to the office or to Mrs. Ann Burton. ***The last day to accept any donations or dedications will be December 18th.***



## Bread and Soccer!

Please join us for the Second Annual Christmas Eve Bread and Soccer. Gathering at Ascension Episcopal Church. We gather at 9:00 am on Christmas Eve morning at the Ascension soccer field to play an intergenerational game of soccer. Grandpa, Auntie Margaret and Baby Jane can all join in!! After soccer, come to the Parish Hall to share bread, coffee, tea or juice. Everyone brings there favorite bread to share (muffins, bagels, bread) as well as any of your "schmears" (jam, jelly, peanut butter, cream cheese, whatever you like). The church will provide coffee, tea, juice, water.

Time: 9:00 to 11:00 am, Christmas Eve



## Christmas Pageant



## Christmas Pageant

We are looking forward to the children's Christmas Pageant, which is a joy every year. If your child would like to be involved this year, please bring them to Drama Club at 9:30 beginning on December 4th. The pageant will be held during the 5:00pm Christmas Eve service. If you can't make rehearsal, but would still like to participate, we have plenty of need for shepherds, angels, and other no speaking roles. Please email Miranda and she will work something out with you.

Join us on **Christmas Eve** at:

- 5pm for a Christmas Eucharist Service and the Children's Pageant. Service will end with the singing of Silent Night by candlelight as we gather under the bell
- 9pm for a Christmas Concert, as our own Ascensionites bless us with their gifts.

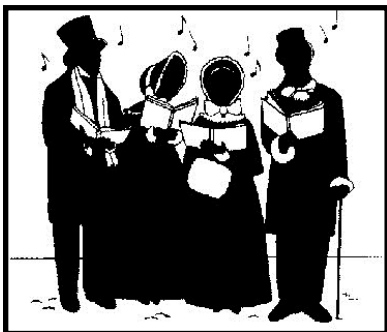
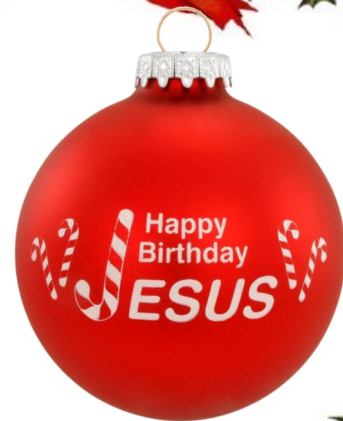
and

- at 9:30pm for a Christmas Eucharist Service with a Brass Ensemble. Service will end with the singing of Silent Night by candlelight as we gather under the bell

And the on **Christmas Day**:

Where PJ's are optional!!

Even though, Christmas Day is on a Sunday this year we will have only a 10:30 am service. It will be a combination of the two services - Rite I with music. There will be no 8am service.



### Epiphany Caroling at the Treemont

Bring some holiday cheer to our neighbors at the Treemont Retirement Village, where several of our parishioners live. In the spirit of Epiphany, we invite you to join us on Jan 8th after the 10:30am service to bring joy to our elderly neighbors. We will meet in the Parish Hall at noon for a light repast and then carpool over. All members and friends of Ascension Episcopal Church and School are invited. We will provide the scarves and songbooks!

### Advent Adult Sunday School

Join Pastor Todd and your fellow church goers in the Children's Chapel to hear Pastor Todd's Advent Preaching Series. Each week he will delve into the why's of worship. The weeks are as follows:

Advent One, Nov 27:

Advent Two, Dec 4

Advent Three, Dec 11

Advent Four, Dec 18

Why do I preach?

Why is worship together important?

Why do I serve?

Why are snacks so important?



## STEWARDSHIP

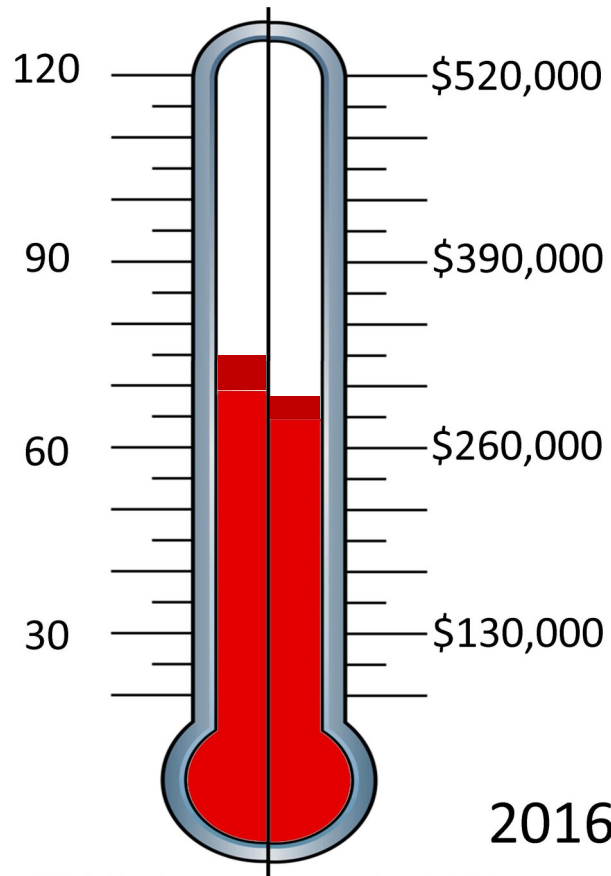
Your 2016 Stewardship Team is always willing to answer your questions. Please seek them out if you need assistance. They are:

Craig Kaplan  
Tom Sutton

Liz Goodman,  
Oladipo Ogunmesa

Mike Black

## STEWARDSHIP PLEDGE GOAL



As of Nov 26th

2016

WHO WILL YOU  
CHOOSE?

### Vestry Nominations

Do you know a person who demonstrates a passion for Ascension and shown themselves to be a leader? We would like the congregation to submit the names of people they think would be good vestry members. Persons can be nominated by filling out the nomination cards or by dropping the nominees' information into the offering plate with the

title "vestry nomination".

Each nomination should include: the nominee's name, contact information and what you think qualifies them for this leadership position. If you do not have their contact info, don't worry, we will get a hold of them. The Nominating Committee asks that you **DO NOT** speak to the person you are nominating before submitting his or her name. The vestry will confirm each person's willingness to serve before their name goes on the ballot. Thank you for your help in this process which is vital to the ongoing life of Ascension.



# GENERAL HOUSEKEEPING

## Acolyte Training

Becoming an acolyte is a wonderful way for our youth to participate in our worship service. Acolytes carry the cross and lead the processions, light and extinguish the altar candles, and assist the pastor during Communion. Training for new acolytes may be conducted on Sundays from 9:30-10:15 AM. To schedule a training, please email the office or Eric Caulcrick.

## Photo Directory

Send us your selfies! Only a few photos have been added to our directory recently; we need add more. The directory program works well with cell phone snapshots or scanned photos and it's a great tool to learning who is who. Please send a favorite to [membership@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org](mailto:membership@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org). You can always send an update later if you tire of the one you send us. Help us in our fellowship. The Directory is password protected on our website or you can ask us for a printed document.



## Editorials

Parishioners are welcome to submit letters to the Tidings for publication. Would you like to recognize someone you think does an outstanding job in the community? Maybe you'd like to share some observations, or recap an event that was held here. If you have participated in an activity that was not reported on in the Tidings, please send us some pictures and an article or quick note telling us what you did or are doing. We would love for the congregation to know all the wonderful things that members of the congregation are doing.

## Altar Flowers



Please consider making a dedication and donation to the altar flowers. Just sign the flower chart posted in the narthex. The cost is \$100.00, but any amount is acceptable and goes toward the cost of the flowers. There may be more than one dedication per Sunday. Flowers are on the Altar every Sunday except during Lent. If you have any questions call Ann Burton. 713-782-6572

## Online Sermons

Missed the sermon last weekend? Wish you could replay it or share it with a friend? Well you can! See the church website and under the Sundays tab, you will find the sermons.

## Let Ascension Pray for You

Do you have a spiritual concern? Pastoral care need? Or just want us to include you in our prayers? Big needs or small things, let us pray for you. We will only list you on the printed prayer list if you specifically ask. Your requests will be kept confidential by the clergy, so if you simply need extra prayers at work, strength for life changing events, or celebrations for answered prayers, please let us know by sending a quick (or long) email to [pastoral@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org](mailto:pastoral@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org). We want to pray with you.

## Remember Ascension Episcopal Church and School in your will.



Contact: Leslie Nirider at  
[membership@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org](mailto:membership@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org)

**Lifeline** is a nondenominational social and support group for widows and widowers. Meetings are the first Thursday of each month in the Parish Hall at 7:30 PM.

For more information please contact

Jackie Clift

281.497.2663 or email [jackieclift5@hotmail.com](mailto:jackieclift5@hotmail.com)

### Disaster Response

The Disaster Response Committee wishes to remind all parishioners of the forms now available on the church website:

<http://www.ascensionepiscopalchurch.org/disaster-ministry.html>

On that page are two downloadable forms:

1. An Equipment/Service sign-up sheet – these volunteers only to be called upon during a disaster response situation.
2. A Member Assistance form for those who may have special needs – due to physical handicaps, living alone, or lack of proximity to friends and/or family. If you do not have computer access, please contact the church office and these forms will be provided.

### Ascension Disaster Response Committee

Lee Nirider	713-464-8544
Jim Jackson	713-785-6909
Faye Armstrong	281-558-6817
Suzanne McMath	832-687-0864

### WHAM Food Drive...

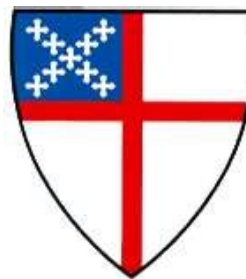
We have a drive **once** a month on the First Sunday and on the 3rd Saturday of the month we go over to WHAM to work to prep food for distribution in the Food Pantry. So bring your non-perishable goods on the First Sunday and please Sign up in the Volunteer Sign Up Log in the Narthex to help on-site. If you have questions or would like more information please contact Deacon Mary at [deacon@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org](mailto:deacon@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org)

### Staff

The Rev. Todd Bryant, Rector; The Rev. Mary Reddick, Deacon; Miranda Griesbaum, Director of Religious Education and Newcomer Minister, Suzanne Anderson, Organist Choirmaster; Leslie Nirider, Membership; Samantha King, Secretary; Ann Seitz, Bookkeeper

### The Vestry

Mike Black (Sr. Warden), Jim Anderson, Cindy Breton, Cheryl Coppock, Clement Falayi, Carol Goulet, Doug Meyers, Matt Murphy, Lee Nirider, Dick Stabell, Tom Sutton, and The Rector.



### The School Board

The Rev. Todd Bryant, Todd Breton (President), Jim Anderson (Vice President), Thom Fenner (Treasurer), Amanda Candler (Secretary), Shay James, Diego Parra, Patrick Gallagher, Tom Konitzer, Tim Gilheart, Marike Owen, Kevin McNulty, and Ex-officio members: Vestry Reps, Mike Black, and The Head of School -Nancy Clausey

## The Mission of Ascension Episcopal Church

Our Mission as faithful followers of **Jesus Christ** is to love the **Lord** and one another unconditionally. We proclaim **God's** truth found in Holy Scripture and make disciples through Evangelism and Christian Education, while ministering joyfully to all **God's** people.