

ASCENSION TIDINGS

EASTER TO PENTECOST

Thank you all for a wonderful Lent, Holy Week and Easter.

Lent

Thank you to Pam and John for shepherding the Lenten bible readings. I was very impressed by this year's level of involvement. Thank you to DOK, Altar Guild, Evangelism, Sunday School, and AES Teachers for the delicious soups on Wednesday nights. Sunday Yoga with Tom Pierson of Tranquil Heart Yoga was beautiful and meditative. It finished perfectly with Compline. I am so grateful to the Altar for building the Lenten desert scene behind our Altar.



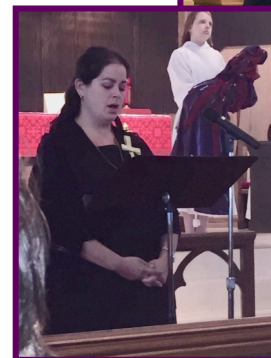
Holy Week

I want to continue the gratitude into Palm Sunday and give a huge thank you to Nancy who worked tirelessly on the Palm Sunday cantata along with the children's choir worship. Sandhya was a delightful addition to worship on the violin. Along with many of you, I was very moved. The choir was

magnificent. Pam, Glorianna, Eric, and Margo's narrations added real depth when they were paired with the chalice (Makayla), the robe (Felicity), and the crown of thorns (Madison). *continued on next page*



Thank you to Libby for working closely with me on preparations on Maundy Thursday. The choir and Altar guild helped bring alive the whole service. My youngest Andrew washed my feet and that moment is firmly planted in my brain as a spiritual high point. Good Friday was packed at Ashford UMC with attendees from the various WHAM partner churches. It was a privilege and pleasure to preach before the faithful.



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LETTER FROM THE RECTOR...(CONT.)



Huge thank you's go to Craig and Chad for manning the grills on Holy Saturday. We had a good turnout and I really appreciate all that Carol and Sam did behind the scenes for food prep. I am so grateful to Andrew, Madison, Makayla and Charlie for filling up all the balloons that were launched at me.

I was most impressed by how we reworked Egg Hunts. Robi and Sam built a redemption booth where kids could redeem the tickets hidden in the eggs for prizes. Katie, Pam and Robi were masters of the booth. Not one chocolate bunny was harmed in the production of this event. The Bretons were great with the kids and I got to learn competition style bocce ball from the master himself, Jeff. Much love to Michael Fox who coordinated the MD Anderson blood bus. My wife, Kimberly, gave for the first time - ever.



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Easter Sunday

Thank you to all who donated to lilies and brass and to Ann for coordinating the donations. Easter Sunday was truly gorgeous and our brass players were great even if half of them aren't driving age yet. They came up all the way from League City. The choir sang for the first time (since I have been here) at the 8am service. Never fear 8 o'clockers, we won't make you sing until next Easter.



Thank you to Paul for building the cross for flowering. Robi and Katie setup the redemption booth for the egg hunt at 11:45am on Easter Sunday morning. Despite the drizzle, we had a great turn out for worship and egg hunt. Because of the weather we moved the hunt into the Parish Life Building. The hunt and redemption was wonderful and without an apparent hiccup.



Looking Ahead

It's not too late to sign up for the Get-to-Know Ascension event. Please join us this Wednesday and Friday evening for a "mini" Get-to-Know Ascension gathering, where we will cover the same material, only slightly more condensed.

- Wednesday, April 15, 6-8pm, in the High School Room
- Friday, April 17, 6-8pm at Todd's house

New Tidings Publication Schedule:

This year we are changing the publication schedule to better follow the seasons of the Church. Look for your Tidings at the following times:

- Epiphany and Early Lent
Published around Jan 5
- Lent to Easter Day
Published around Ash Wednesday
- Easter to Pentecost
Published after Easter
- The Summer Edition
Published at the end of May
- Fall and Back to School
Published Mid August
- Stewardship
Published at the end of September
- Advent Christmas
Published Mid November

We will provide a meal and childcare for both sessions; for the Friday session the kiddoes will get to play outside and then watch "Big Hero 6"! Please RSVP to Paul at newcomers@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org for a dinner count, and let him know if you have a need for childcare. We welcome newbies, long-timers, and sometimes, so if you were thinking about it, but haven't signed up, please connect with Paul.

The Bishop is coming! Bishop Frey will be with us on April 19th. He is retired from full time ministry and resides in the Diocese of West Texas. See his short bio later in this newsletter.

We had a mission Q & A on Sunday April 12th. If you missed it, no worries. There is a lot of good information in this Tidings newsletter. We would like 15 more people to go on the summer mission trip. If you are geared up to go, on the fence, or just want to support us, please contact Robi Lasiter at robilasiter@gmail.com to find out more.

The Vestry and I are excited to invite a small Sudanese church to use our sanctuary for worship on Sunday afternoons and occasional Saturday afternoons, pending vestry and rector approval. On a six week trial basis, about 40 non-Episcopalians will worship in our sanctuary. With the Bishop's blessing and the Vestry's affirmation, they will come soon: likely April 19th. They will not conflict with any of our Sunday morning experience.

This community is made up of Sudanese refugees. They are completely committed to Jesus and have outgrown their house church. They are literally worshipping in a church member's home, which is kind of cool, but not sustainable moving ahead. If we have any issues/problems please let me know, especially during this trial period. We will be giving them a set of keys to the sanctuary and they will not need any support from ministries, such as the Altar guild. They are committed to leaving the church cleaner and better order than they found it.

Looking to Pentecost

Our children's choir continues to prepare for big days. On Pentecost Sunday we might have up to five baptisms. Thursday morning men's bible study resumes on April 16th .

- Ascension Day, May 14th
- Pentecost Sunday May 24th
- Graduation Sunday, 31st

Looking way, way ahead

Sabbatical.

In the Episcopal Church and many other denominations, it is an expected part of clergy development. I will be taking my sabbatical in the summer of 2016 (fourteen months away). The vestry is in fully supportive of this. I very much look forward to returning to share new energy, a renewed spirit and insight into the Kingdom of God.

Sabbatical - What is in it for Ascension?

Sabbatical breaks habitual patterns and empowers lay leaders and staff to lead ministry. My goal is to come back recharged and ready to help us grow in faith, prayer, numbers, and ministry.

And yes, it is good for me

My vision for this time is still forming. But I want to explore preaching in many different locations and cultures. My preaching will benefit from learning from, engaging, and interviewing fellow pastors from different parts of the world. What I want to come back as a better preacher and leader.

My ideal vision, dependent on foundation grants like Lily and the Louisville grants is:

- Travel east to Abuja, Nigeria and spending time with Anglican Nigerian clergy to experience and learn from them.
- Then east again to the Holy Land
- Then head west to Washington D.C.
- Head west again to Wyoming.

This will be the renewal component. I will finish my sabbatical in Wyoming with Kimberly's family. Here I will refresh and reflect on the journey. My hope is to upload all the audio of the clergy interviews and my reflections on a blog that I will build at that time.

In Advent of 2015, I would like to ask the church community to contribute to a sabbatical fund, but it will be a quiet ask. Letters will be sent home. This will be a supplement to the grants. Little, if any, time will be spent asking for money on Sunday morning. In February of 2016 we will hold a two week Sunday morning class to talk about the theory and practice of Sabbatical while fielding any questions you might have.

How will we cope without you?

Here is an example of how sabbatical can be managed while I am gone (much of this is already in place): Pastoral Responsibilities will be divided between the DOK, Tuesday Women's Bible study group, LEV's (people who take communion to the home bound), and the Vestry. Each week we have two Vestry people on duty. They will stay informed of pastoral ministries that are working well or not. The different pastoral ministries will maintain a list of those who are in the nursing homes, homebound and in the hospital. They will make routine pastoral visits.

Five local clergy to take one week of emergency pastoral calls. Three weeks a piece on a rotating basis. This does not include routine hospital visits. These are only non-routine pastoral emergencies that arise during the week, for example, there is a death or injury. Our Junior Warden (volunteer facilities manager), will have a limited spending authority for individual problems that arise with the facility. For issues that are over \$1000, the Vestry will make a decision in my absence on appropriate expenditures. They have full authority to authorize major repairs. The office staff will continue with regular bulletin production and the one summer newsletter that will go out in my absence. Most administrative duties are already performed with minimal input from me. Requests for financial assistance from the homeless and working poor will be referred to our ministry partner – WHAM – West Houston Assistance Ministries. and our we will preferably have Sunday supply clergy – preferably one clergy versus many.

Peace,



Pastor Todd



Thank you for the Lilies

Thank you to all for who donated Easter lilies and flowers. The church looked beautiful and your support made it possible. Please remember, if you have not done so to either place your donation in the offering plate or send to office. Please mark it "Flower fund."

NEWCOMER CORNER

Ministry as an Artform OR What I've Learned in Two Years.

I have been your Newcomer Minister for just over two years now, and I've made a lot of mistakes, from which I have learned a ton! I like to think of ministry as an art form. A painter has to master color and light to create beautiful images. A saxophone player practices day and night in order to let me music flow freely. A poet will write a hundred horrible poems before cranking out that gem that shines above the others. Ministry is the same way. We experiment, we adapt, we do our best to follow our calling where the Spirit is leading us. Just like the painter, we do what we can to perfect our craft of welcoming and incorporating newcomers into the church life. The list below is some of the best things I've learned about this art of ministry, specifically newcomer ministry, in the past two years:



1. Everyone is Different and Nothing Is Ever Straightforward

There is no one pattern for the way people enter, engage and join our congregation. Every person and every situation is different. We try to honor that and not insist on uniformity. This requires flexibility and improvisation on our part, but it enriches our understanding of welcoming and the beauty and diversity of the Body of Christ.

2. Maintain an Expansive Idea of Community

You don't have to be a member of our congregation to be part of our community. Thanks to the internet and social media, people are part of our community long before they arrive at church – even if they never come through our door. The typical answer people give me when they first come is that they found us online. They have a sense of who we are, what we do, and how we live the Gospel through our website, Facebook page and online sermon posts. Our parish certainly extends beyond the boundaries of a few surrounding neighborhoods!

3. Enable People to Participate Right Away

There is no need to wait before jumping in to service and ministry. Part of the joy I get from this job is learning about the gifts and callings on people's lives and helping them use those gifts! We encourage people to get involved before they are members. We believe that you don't need to be a "member" before you can start living out God's calling in your life.

4. Not Joining Does Not Equal Failure

The end result of welcoming is not necessarily membership. If someone only comes for one Sunday, then we have ministered to them in some way. If people are with us for a while and decide not to join, we feel we've contributed to their discernment process in her or his life. If you make welcoming about membership, it's a set up for disappointment. Not everyone will join and there will never be enough new members. Make it about ministry instead and decide how you will measure success. One of the most helpful things a diocesan leader stressed to me at a conference a few months ago is that, yes, we do measure quantitatively, but more importantly, we measure qualitatively. Our numbers may not have grown twenty-fold, but I think our ministry and heart of the church certainly has!

5. Understand People's Passions

Listen for the way God is calling people to live their faith - at work, home, and in the church. Set people free to follow God's call. When we listen to the ideas of others and help them become reality, something of the Kingdom of God gets revealed and all become blessed.

6. The Individual Transforms the Institution, Not the Other Way Around

I hope that one day, when we tell the stories of our congregation, we won't tell time by when priests came and left, but when people came to our church - not "And then Father Todd was called..." but rather, "That's when Clement and Funmi joined the congregation..." We expect newcomers to transform us, not for the church to make everyone the same.

7. Everyone is a Greeter

We still have our official greeters, but from my first day here, I knew that everyone was a greeter! It is a shared responsibility. Every Sunday after church, as I greet people leaving the sanctuary, there are several members engaging visitors in conversation after church. It is a beautiful scene. The warmth of this church is legendary in my mind.

8. Decide to be Assertive

There's always a fear that you will drive people away if you are too assertive. That's a risk we are willing to take. Indifference and indecisiveness are far worse than assertiveness!

With all these things in mind, I'm asking everyone to help make this next season of my journey as Newcomer Minister even better! Great artists, especially musicians, learn from one another when they collaborate and riff off of each other. It is a deep honor to follow alongside you all into the adventure God has for us and to practice the art of ministry with you! Let's make some masterpieces together!

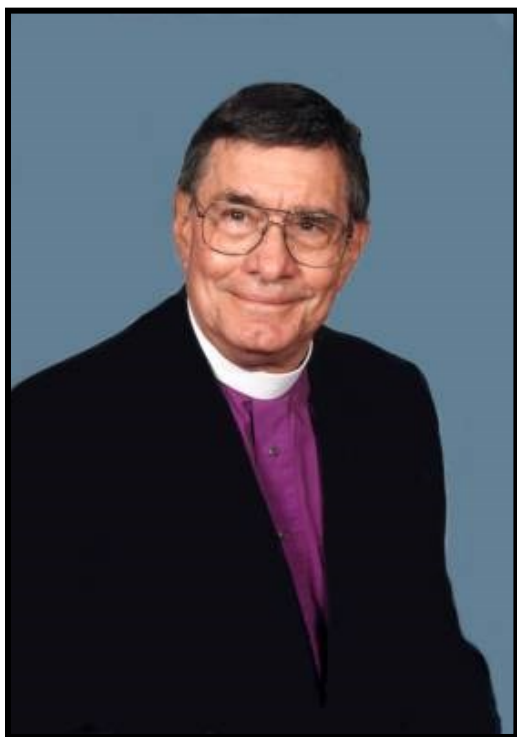


Graduate Recognition Sunday

Share your good news!

On May 31, 2015 Ascension Episcopal Church will be honoring high school, specialty programs, technical school, and college/grad school graduates. This is a very special occasion in your family member's faith journey, so mark your calendars and plan to attend the 10:30am service.

We need to hear from you by May 24th with the student's name and any information (such as a short bio or future plans) you want included in the bulletin in order for us to recognize these graduates' accomplishments. Please contact Paul, newcomers@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org, with the names of any family members or friends of Ascension who are Spring 2015/December 2014 grads. It will be helpful to know your graduate's school, as well as future plans following graduation. Thank you for your assistance as we prepare for this special recognition Sunday.



Welcome Bishop Bill Frey!!

Bishop Frey served as missionary bishop of the Episcopal Church (United States) for the Episcopal Diocese of Guatemala, and later as Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Colorado. As of 2015, he is in retirement in the Hill Country of Texas.

He was ordained to the priesthood in 1956 in the Episcopal Diocese of Colorado. He holds a BA in Spanish and a minor in French from the University of Colorado, and a Master of Divinity from Philadelphia Divinity School.

He became a missionary in Latin America in 1962 and was consecrated as missionary bishop of the Diocese of Guatemala in 1967. In 1971 he and his family were evicted from that country for making public statements about peacemaking during an undeclared civil war. He was elected as bishop coadjutor of the Diocese of Colorado in 1972 and then installed as bishop of the diocese the following year.

In 1990, after 18 years in Colorado, he resigned as bishop to become the dean of Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry in Ambridge, Pennsylvania. He stepped down as dean in 1996 and moved to the San Antonio region in Texas to retire, but remained active in ministry. After the resignation of Bishop Jeffrey N. Steenson, Frey was asked to be assisting bishop for the Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande. He also served as interim rector of Christ Church, San Antonio.

He and his wife, Barbara, who passed away in 2014, have five children, two of whom are priests of the Episcopal Church. He wrote *The Dance of Hope* (2010) and *Cancelada: Why They Threw us out of Guatemala* (2012), in which he tells in more detail about his family's eviction from Guatemala.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_C._Frey

Bishop's Visit

Ascension welcomes Bishop William Frey on April 19th. Newcomers who have attended a Get-to-Know-Ascension-Weekend will have the opportunity to be confirmed/received/reaffirmed during the 10:30am service. There will be a welcoming reception to follow in the Parish Hall. If you have questions or are interested in confirmation/reception, please contact Paul Belk at newcomers@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org.

Traveling Light

The study group for *Traveling Light* by Max Lucado has resumed. This is a great in-depth study of the 23rd Psalm. The study group is open to everyone.

If you have been more of a stampeding bull than a sheep, here's your book. If you have limited God to tour guide instead of shepherd, here's your book.

Join us on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 starting April 8th. Sheep rule!

If you would like more information, please contact Michelle Feagin at mfeagin1@comcast.net

What is your definition of mission?

by: Wanda S. Lee

Have you ever heard people argue about the definition of the word missions? Maybe you hear some of the same questions and comments I do about the difference between ministry and evangelism. Things like: Which is the most important—ministering to someone or witnessing? Isn't giving a verbal witness the only thing God requires of us as believers? Or the opposite view . . . I don't have to say a word because my life tells it all! You do the talking and I will do the serving. And what does the word missions mean anyway? Isn't it just about witnessing to people? Or the best misconception yet . . . missions has nothing to do with evangelism.

While I realize the word missions itself is not found in Scripture, the meaning of the word is woven throughout the Bible. From God's call to Abraham to His calling of the disciples to go and preach, teach and baptize, God has been in the missions business. His book is a missionary book from beginning to end. Missions began in the heart of God and will continue with God until Christ returns. So why all the questions?

The word missions has been defined by many people, written about in hundreds of books, and discussed in many sermons. Somewhere along the way we separated it into two activities—ministry and evangelism. In reality, missions is both/and, not either/or. Missions is what God does through His people, the church, to spread the gospel through word and deed to all people of the world. Missions is evangelism AND ministry, woven together in such a way that people see Christ, hear His call to follow, and invite Him into their lives. Yes, at times their physical needs are met and at other times their emotional and spiritual needs are the priority. Hopefully, whatever their need, they come to know Christ because they see in us, His followers, a living, vital relationship with the One who makes all the difference in how we act, what we say, and where we place our priorities.

Christ Followers have settled the issue and are finding great joy in living out the missions lifestyle everyday through ministry AND evangelism. They have heard the words of Jesus and accepted the challenge. "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me" (Luke 9:23 NIV). As we follow, let's rediscover the meaning of the word missions and find joy in meeting human needs while we share the message of hope through Christ's gift of eternal life.

<http://www.wmu.com/index.php?q=blog/wmu/team-blog/what-your-definition-missions>



Summer Family Mission Trip to Dulac, Louisiana!!!

We are thrilled to announce that we are going on a Mission Trip this year!! And unlike the usual summer mission trip that is aimed at only the youth group, this mission trip is open to everyone from the age of 5 and up. The dates are Sunday, June 7th through Friday, June 12th. We will be traveling to Dulac, Louisiana, which is in the very southern part of the state. Dulac is an impoverished area which suffered devastating blows during both Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005, and Gustav and Ike in 2008. They are still struggling to recover. We will be working



with the staff at the Community Center on our specific duties, but they are likely to include light construction and restoration work. No experience needed! They could also include work at the food bank and outreach center. While youth from 6th grade through high school are able to attend on their own (they will be supervised by Ascension staff), younger children will need to be accompanied by at least one parent.



While in Dulac, we will be staying at the Dulac Community Center. Each participant will be supplied a bunk bed with a mattress and basic bed linens. We will be provided three meals per day Monday through Friday. The cost is estimated to be \$300 per person, but

because we are committed to the Mission of Gospel and Spreading the word of Christ, the vestry has agreed to subsidize half the cost. So the cost out of pocket is \$150 per person as it stands today. However, our Seedlings and Youth group will be holding several fundraisers, and all money earned will be going to help defray some of that costs. If the only reason you are unable to attend is the money, PLEASE talk to Pastor Todd. Space is



limited, so if you think you or your family will be interested in joining us, please email Robi

Lasiter at
robilasiter@gmail.com



DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Lent and Easter were such an exciting, joyous time for our Sunday school students as they learned more about Jesus, His ministry and His expectations for us to follow in His footsteps every day of our lives. We explored the miracles that Jesus performed. We held a parade with palm leaves to welcome Jesus into Jerusalem. We learned about how and why Jesus cleansed the Temple in Jerusalem, and the sacredness of our own worship space. We learned all about Holy Week, and the significance of all of the special days we commemorate during this week. Most importantly, we learned about Jesus' immeasurable love for us, and about how He sacrificed His own life so that we can be with Him for eternity. Our lessons really focused on this great love, and how Jesus wants us to love each other, to show our love for Him by caring, loving and helping those who need us. In this way, they become Jesus' helpers.



Palm Sunday Parade

For the next six weeks, our kids will be learning about Pentecost and the Holy Spirit, and the continuing ministries of Jesus' disciples. They will learn that they, too, are disciples, and about their own responsibilities as followers of Christ. All children ages 3 through High School are welcome to come join us!

Teacher Spotlight : **Katie Kruszka!**



Katie Kruszka has been an incredible addition to our teaching staff this year. She came to us with many years of teaching experience in public schools, and has been a never-ending resource of creative ideas for games, crafts and lessons. She takes the lesson assigned for her week and completely transforms it into so much more than I ever have imagined it to be! I love how she and I will be discussing a lesson, and her eyes will suddenly light up and I'll hear "Oh, wait! Do you know what we could do with this??" because I always know something great is about to happen for our kids. Teaching is definitely her "gift", and we are so blessed that she is sharing that gift with us!

Wonderful Ministry Opportunity!!!! Summer Sunday School Teachers Needed!

I was so blessed to have an incredible group of teachers and assistants to work with during this school year. They have faithfully created wonderful lessons and activities to help lead our children and youth into a deeper understanding of God and our Christian faith. They all deserve a much needed break during the summer months so that they'll want to come back next year to do it all over again!

So....I'm looking for volunteers to serve as teachers or assistants during June, July and August. If you have ever thought of working with our Sunday school department, but were maybe a little nervous about it.....summer is the perfect time to try us out! Many families go on vacations, so classes are much smaller and much more relaxed. You won't have to search for lessons – all lessons and activities will be provided for you! All you will need to do is familiarize yourself with the week's lesson so that you are ready to lead. We will form a rotation so that no one will be expected to teach weekly, and will work your schedule around your own vacations. The more volunteers I have, the larger the rotation! Interested? Please contact Robi Lasiter at robilasiter@gmail.com, or just come talk to me after any service.

Safeguarding Class – Thursday, May 14th

There will be a Safeguarding God's Children class offered here at Ascension on Thursday, May 14th from 6:00 until 9:00 in the church library. Safeguarding is required for all adults who work with our children or youth in any capacity. If you are planning on helping out with summer Sunday school, PNO, our summer mission trip, or any other youth activities and have not yet been through the training, please contact Leslie Nirider at membership@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org so that she can get you started in the process.

Seedlings & Youth Meeting – Sunday April 26 (We'll have Pizza!!)

Calling all youth!!! We will have a meeting of Seedlings and Youth on Sunday, April 26th from 12:00 until 1:30 to discuss and plan fundraising for our summer mission trip. We have some fun ways to raise money planned...and we need as many youth as possible to be involved. Trust me; you'll want to be involved! Even if you are not able to attend the actual mission trip in June, please come join us and help support your friends. Pizza will be served.



Parents' Night Out – Saturday, May 9th

Join us for our last Parents' Night Out of the school year on Saturday, May 9th from 5 to 9 pm. We plan to welcome summer by having a "splashing" good time with lots of outdoor water play! PNO is open to children 6 mos. through 5th grade. The fee is \$10 for the 1st child, and \$5 for each additional child. Registration opens on Tuesday, April 28th and closes on Thursday, May 7th at 9:00 pm. To register, go to ascensionepiscopalchurch.org and click on the PNO registration link.

Volunteers for Parents' Night out are always needed! If you would like to volunteer for our PNO ministry, please contact Robi Lasiter at robilasiter@gmail.com.

MEMBERSHIP

Pledges and Statements

Thank you to everyone who has pledged to the ministries of Ascension Episcopal Church. First Quarter Statements will go out at the end of April. A note of caution, cash in the plate is more secure than cash sent through the mail. I am especially grateful to those who helped me to make corrections in our records. We need your input if we are to stay up-to-date. Ascension is a community and in order to reach out and support each other it is important to have current contact information. Please take a moment to give us changes in address, e-mail, and/or telephone number(s) by contacting Leslie: membership@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org, or call the office. You can also put the information on a Newcomer's Card and drop it in the plate any Sunday.

Baptisms

Baptism Scheduled for Pentecost Sunday, May 24, 2015. When the season of Easter comes to an end Pentecost celebrates the gift of the Spirit and the birthday of the church. It is a most appropriate time to celebrate your first step in your Christian life through the sacrament of Baptism. Please consider whether this is the time for you or for your children to become members of the Christian faith, the body of Christ Jesus. If you would like to learn more or have questions, they may be answered in our baptismal customary found at <http://www.ascensionepiscopalchurch.org/baptisms.html>. Click on the pdf at the bottom of the article, complete the Application for Baptism and send it to the office, e-mail it to membership@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org or drop it in the plate when you next attend a service. We wish to welcome you to a life of grace through Christ our Lord.

Ascension's Remembrance Book

Help us create a living memorial by rebuilding the Ascension Book of Remembrance. Ascension celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 2011. Our church and school are here because of the inspired gifts and dedication of people who envisioned a tabernacle to the Lord. Perhaps you remember a particular gift given to the church for practical use or beautiful embellishment. If you know a story about how the church was constructed or the planting of a particular tree, Ascension wants to preserve our history. Please contact Leslie at membership@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org. Our goal is to form a committee to oversee the physical book we plan to display as well as keep a computer record of the contributions made to the establishment and care of Ascension Episcopal Church. Tell us your story or let us know who we should contact.



Ascension saw 18 donors on April 5, six of whom were deferred. According to Gilda Hart the community representative of MD Anderson Blood Bank, "[this] really is not so bad...You did collect 12 whole blood units, which divided into the components of platelets, plasma and red blood cells could have touched as many as 36 cancer patients on Easter Sunday and the day after. Since the drive was on the Saturday before Easter Sunday, I have to feel like God smiled a little at the "blood sacrifices" Ascension donors made just a day before celebrating the greatest sacrifice of all time. Jesus was really the 1st blood donor. Thank you again and God Bless."

So thank you to all who donated, and all who tried.

NOTES FROM THE CHOIR LOFT



-Dr. Nancy Taylor Ginsburg



Happy Easter! During this glorious Easter season, music ministry at Ascension is HUGE!

We worship together through song. Through the music texts, we grow in faith, understanding, and love. Through the music melodies and harmonies, the texts come alive in a new way...and the music, the musician(s), and the listeners are united in a corporate act of worship.

Ascension Parish Choir: The Parish Choir will be sharing resurrection joys throughout this season. Join us for worship, fellowship, and song! Pentecost is just around the corner!!

In late April, the Parish Choir will begin preparing a special God-centered, patriotic musical that will be presented after worship on the last Sunday in June! This is going to be fun!!

CHILDCARE IS AVAILABLE ON WEDNESDAY EVENINGS!

Please bring your child/children to Ascension and join the choir! We need *your* voice!

Having children at home has been one of the top ten reasons to not be able to join the choir. We will work with you to meet the needs of your child/children...and give you a chance to sing God's praises with the Parish Choir!

Another of the Top Ten Reason To Not Sing in the Choir: I DON'T GET HOME IN TIME TO GET TO CHOIR REHEARSAL BY 7:00 P.M.

People's daily timelines vary. Come when you are able and leave when you must. This is a *flexible* choir. Talk with Nancy Ginsburg. We will find a way to worship together musically!

Ascension Children's Choir: This choir is AWESOME! Did you hear them as they led us in worship on Palm Sunday?!

We are rehearsing our exciting spring musical, Praise Rocks! There are parts for every child! There's still time to join us as we learn about the power of faith and God's love, even when we are in a time of personal struggle or hardship. (Children do best in choir if they were at least four years old in September. If you have a younger child you believe is ready for choir, please remain in the rehearsal area to help us ensure a good experience for your child.)

- Children's Choir Rehearsal: after 10:30 worship each Sunday; Parish Hall.
- Praise Rocks! will be presented on Sunday, May 10th at 9:30 in the Parish Hall.

Blessings & Joy! ... Nancy

ASCENSION SCHOOL

Dear Parishioners,

We have completed our initial enrollment process and start the planning for 2015-16. We are very pleased with our initial number of students, 94, to date of enrollment in Pre-K 3 to 5th grade. Our ELP program re-enrolls in June and most of the classes are full due to the current students advancing to the next class. We look forward to another of growth within our school.

We have approximately six weeks of school remaining until our last day May 22nd. Our students in Pre-K 3 to 4th grade will be out for the summer, but ELP remains in class throughout the summer. Kidventure will return to our campus this summer so that our students and areas students can participate in an amazing summer adventure. We will also offer summer reading programs through the Dan Duncan Summer Reading Program. This will also be open to the entire community outside of church and school.

As we end the year, we look forward to Field Day on April 17th, our Annual Auction, Deep in the Heart of AES, on April 25th, Main Street Theater visiting on April 30th to read Fancy Nancy.

On May 1st in a special Chapel, the first Donnie Hollowell Scholarship will be awarded to a student entering grade 3-5 at Ascension School. You are invited to attend this chapel at 8:30 am.

Our Mother's Day Chapel is Friday, May 8th, a special tribute to all mothers within our community. This chapel begins at 9 am. We honor our volunteers with a breakfast on Wednesday, May 13th, beginning at 8 am and ending at 9:30 am.

Our elementary students in K-5 will perform on Ascension Day, May 14th in the church beginning at 7 pm. We hope you will come and see our students; it is a presentation you will want to see and hear. Our 5th grade Graduation is Sunday, May 17th, at 3 pm in the church. There will be a reception in the Parish Hall after the ceremony.

We honor many students in Awards Chapel on Tuesday, May 19th, beginning at 8:30 am. We have many events to see, hear, and be a part of, we welcome you to all or any you would like to attend.

Faithfully,

Nancy Clausey
Head of School



Dear Ascension Episcopal Church families,

As you may know, the Ascension Episcopal School Board of Trustees recently sent out a survey asking for your valuable input as it relates to the strategic directions of the Ascension Episcopal School. We are grateful for those of you that participated and provided us with critical feedback. We would like however for more families to participate in the survey.

We have extended the survey window to Friday, April 17. The survey will only take an average of 10 minutes.

Thank you very much and we look forward to hearing from you soon:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HTT97CP>

Auction 2015



GIDDY UP, Y'ALL!
for the
**ASCENSION
EPISCOPAL
SCHOOL**
AUCTION & ROUND UP!
APRIL 25, 2015

6:00 - 9:15 P.M. ★ PARISH HALL

\$50 per person

Dinner, Dessert + 2 Drink Tickets
Reserve now! No tickets sold at door!

R.S.V.P. ONLINE:

<http://ascensionepiscopalschool.schoolauction.net/auction2015/register>

or return the enclosed card with your payment
to the school office by Thursday, April 17th

Calendar of Events

- ☆ April 15 - Deadline for donations to be recognized in Auction Catalog
- ☆ April 17 - DEADLINE for ALL donations for RSVPs
- ☆ April 17 - 19 - Online Auction
- ☆ April 24 - All day SET UP
- ☆ April 25 - Day of SET UP & AUCTION NIGHT!

Check your email! On Tuesday, April 14th we sent out the Auction Preview Packet coming... to see what items you want to take home!

Online Auction: Friday the 17th - Sunday the 19th. You will receive an email inviting you to register/log in to participate in bidding wars from the comfort of your own home... or car (if you're the passenger)... or out at dinner...

Please RSVP NOW! Deadline is this Thursday, April 16th.

Thank you for your support!

Onsite childcare is available with **ADVANCED** reservation.

\$15 per child ★ No Walk Ins

Please include your childcare needs and payment
online or with the enclosed **R.S.V.P.** form by April 17th.

Original Artwork on front by AES Art Teacher

JANIS EDEL

Auction

Ascension Episcopal School's Annual Auction and Social will be held on Saturday, April 25, 2015. This year's theme is "Our Stars are bright, deep in the heart of A.E.S. NOTE: We have a limited number of reserved tables available; if you are interested in purchasing a RESERVED table, please contact Kimberly Bryant (kharvin@hotmail.com) for more information. ALL other details are coming soon. We look forward to celebrating our wonderful school with you!

Online Auction begins soon!

The school's online portion of our annual auction will open April 17 at 7pm and close April 19 at 7pm! Please check out all we have to offer! Go to http://ascensionepiscopalschool.schoolauction.net/auction2015/online_auction/ and login (or create a login) to browse and bid. We want to make sure that ALL Ascension families are aware that the ONLINE auction is happening, so that you aren't surprised to find out on April 25th that the one item you really wanted isn't at the event. Please register, log in, and check out what items we are offering at our online auction!

(These items will NOT be available at the event on April 25th.)

Skeeters Offer

Please find below a letter from the Gallaghers, an Ascension School Family:

We want to make this season even more special for you and your children, so we have planned an Ascension Day At The Sugar Land Skeeters on Saturday May 16th at 6 PM. As many of you know we did this last year and it was a blast for everyone. This year we have again arranged for some special events during the game as well as tickets together.

This year there are two different ticket prices: \$12 for children and \$20 for adults. Adult tickets include a meal card. Children 3 and under are free. Tickets are on sale at the school office until April 23rd or we run out of seats. We need to confirm our group events & seats three weeks before the game, so please get your tickets early.

One last thing, this event is open to everyone involved with any Ascension Sport, Ascension Episcopal School, or Ascension Episcopal Church. It doesn't matter where your children go to school; you're invited. We will make arrangement to sell tickets during some practices or games for those that can't make it to the school office. So please start spreading the word that we are going to the newest ballpark in the Houston area on Saturday May 16th.

Thank you,
Kyong & Patrick Gallagher

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.

Altar Flowers

The deadline to sign chart to give a lily and participate in church flowers for Easter is approaching. Remember to sign chart and write dedication in flower book. The cost is \$25. Please put your donation in offering plate or send to church office, marked "flower fund." We have a new florist and after Easter the cost of our flowers will be \$100 but we will not have a delivery charge.

Mahjong Mondays

Monday Mahjong a continuing success. These ladies and gentlemen gather every Monday for a couple of hours to learn the game. Carol Goulet has taught them well. Here are Ann Paulus and Nancy Searle enjoying there first wins!!! If you are interested in learning please send Carol an email.



Senior Bus Trip Info for 4/24 Texas City Tour

The Senior Bus Trip is Friday, April 24. We will have a 5 1/2 hour docent led tour with stops at: The Texas City Museum, including the Galveston County Model Railroad Club with extensive working model trains and layouts; vintage home tour in Heritage Park; Convention Center tour of historical paintings by local artists; Memorial Park – commemorating the 1947 tragic fertilizer explosion; the mammoth Archimedes Screw Pumps that keep the city from flooding; and Bay Street Park with a modern Air Force jet and model of a 1913 aero plane. Lunch cost is on you; we are eating at the Reef Seafood Restaurant at an average of \$10.00 with additional cost for drinks, dessert, tax, and the 15% gratuity. To see if there is still room, please contact Barbara Wiese at 281-496-4740 or barb@blkbox.com.

Please keep the following **future 2015 Senior Bus Trips** on your calendars with details to be provided at a later date:

- May 20 – Wednesday
- June 19 – Friday

Remember Ascension Episcopal Church and School in your will.



Contact: Leslie Nirider at
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

Hurricane Season Is Here

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 now receive nonperishable food items for distribution to those in need in our community every Sunday. These donated items are moved to the West Houston Assistance Ministry facility for distribution by volunteers. Look for the wooden box in the Narthex! Contact:

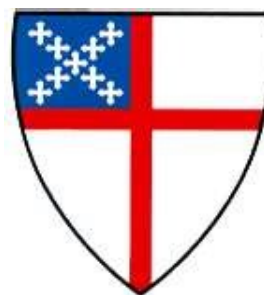
office@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org

Staff

The Rev. Todd Bryant, Rector; Dr. Nancy Ginsburg, Choir Director; Leslie Nirider, Membership; Suzanne Anderson, Organist; Samantha King, Secretary; Reginald Johnson, Sexton; Ann Sietz, Bookkeeper; Paul Belk, Newcomer Minister; Robi Lasiter, Director of Religious Education

The Vestry

Mike Black (Sr. Warden), John Searle (Jr. Warden), Jeri Platt (Clerk), Thom Fenner, John Edel, James Berrie, Matt Murphy, Carol Goulet, Michael Fox, Clement Falayi, Cindy Breton, Cheryl Coppock, and The Rector.



The School Board

The Rector, Amy Criswell (President), Terry Kahn (Vice President), Ann Seitz (Secretary), Gemma Williams (Treasurer), Dana Murphy, Cindy Cadle, Todd Breton, Shay James, Marike Owen, Beatrice Menendez, Patrick Gallagher, and Ex-officio members: The Sr. Warden, The Jr. Warden, and The Head of School

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.