

# ASCENSION TIDINGS

## EASTER TO PENTECOST

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

I am grateful to Pam S. and John E. for stepping up again to cheerlead and coordinate the Lenten Bible readings. The most important part of the process was the people who showed up. Occasionally, I would walk through the church to hear the beautiful sound of Hebrews names pronounced terribly! But, we did it as a community. Thank you to DOK, Altar Guild, Parish Life, Sunday School, and AES Teachers for the delicious soups on Wednesday nights.

I am so grateful to the Altar Guild for building the Lenten desert scene behind our Altar. Two years ago we did a Palm Sunday cantata without communion; and in a similar vein this year's Palm Sunday's service at 10am offered worship in all the right ways. It was beautiful, thoughtful and we changed things just enough to make you a little uncomfortable to provoke you to think about Jesus' passion journey in a new way.

Thank you to Libby for working closely with me on preparations for Maundy Thursday. We had the musical classics and couple of new pieces; the choir and Altar guild brought alive the whole service and Deacon Mary's preaching was spot on. You can't come to this service and not be changed.

Miranda, our DRE, had her first run at the holy chaos of Easter and the egg hunt. We have had a couple of years of the new and improved egg hunts thanks to Chuckie Cheese / Dave & Busters who inspired the ticket redemption model. No chocolate bunnies were left to slowly ooze into AES playground or were harmed or in this year's production

Easter Sunday was excellent. The energy, singing and joy has yet to disappoint. We had some veteran brass players who were real professionals. As always, I reassured the 8 o'clockers, we won't make them sing until Easter 2018. Thank you to all who donated to lilies and brass.



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### Looking Ahead to Pentecost

- May 14th - Mother's Day - Please, moms drag as many family members to church as possible.
- May 28th - Ascension Day - This year we will celebrate Ascension Day with out side kids Sunday school. We will have kites, and balloons, and maybe even paper airplanes.
- June 4th - We are building to "Thankful Sunday" which is also Pentecost Sunday. It's gonna be a big deal. We will have a slideshow of your gratitudes, celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit, and eat in honor of the "Birthday of the church." If that was not enough, it is also the kick off for Summer Fest! (see Miranda's article for more details).

Can't wait to see you there!

Peace,



Pastor Todd Bryant

## VISION UPDATE

It is the vision team's ministry to take this updated mission, vision and core values and use it as the means to align all of our ministry to our values. They will help Ascension become who we are called be. Please pray for your vision team and think about how your individual and group ministry can be fed by this vision. What can you do to help us achieve these goals?

Pray for key leaders who will meet on June 3 to help us move from dreaming to achieving.

## Ascension Episcopal Church

Vision Document

April 2017

### MISSION STATEMENT

To love and worship Jesus Christ through scripture and prayer.

To love and serve one another through fellowship and community outreach.

To prepare and send disciples to grow God's kingdom.

## CORE VALUES

### **Worship**

We adhere to the living traditions of Biblical Teachings, the Book of Common Prayer, the practice of the Sacraments and Joyful Praise.

### **Spiritual Formation**

We grow spiritually through Bible study, worship, fellowship and education.

### **Fellowship**

We build relationships and nurture one another in the love of Christ and welcome the community into our family of faith.

### **Mission and Outreach**

We proclaim the love of Christ through prayer and compassionate service to the larger community.

### **Diversity**

We welcome all in sharing our common faith.

## VISION (Strategic Priorities)

### **Welcome and Embrace**

Ascension is a loving church that attracts and welcomes all into a relationship with God and each other. All members are encouraged to use their talents in active ministry.

### **Forming Disciples**

Ascension is a community that celebrates its life in Christ, providing many opportunities for Bible study and spiritual growth as we share our faith.

### **Into the Community**

Inspired by the Holy Spirit to serve God, we are the hands and feet of Christ in our community. We know our neighbors and are known by them. We provide opportunities for everyone to work together to restore relationships and build new ones.

### **Youth and Young Adults**

Ascension's ministry to its youth and young adults is powerful, vital, growing, and exciting, where our youth and young adults, with their families, are shepherded to develop into disciples of Jesus. We enjoy Christian community, and worship in services that are youth and young adult friendly.

### **Ascension Episcopal School**

Ascension financially, spiritually and publicly supports the mission of Ascension Episcopal School, and continually seeks ways to create closer bonds between church and school families.

*Approved by vestry during the April vestry meeting.*

## REACH OUT

After a faithful Lenten season and a joyous Easter celebration, we awaken to a renewed world around us. Drawing closer to God does adjust our perceptions of our world. Now comes the season we often call "spring cleaning"-that time when we clean out our closets, drawers and garages emptying them of those things we will not need. Ever wonder why spring for this? I do....I could clean out my closets all year long actually. Perhaps after we see our personal world anew after Lent, we are ready to shed the trappings of the old self.

Which brings me to spring cleaning of our spiritual life. That seems like a logical thing to do after our Lenten study and renewal. If we have taken on a new discipline or spiritual activity-it might be time to realign the whole spiritual closet. Did you find a new pattern to study the scripture or schedule your prayer time this year? A new call to explore? Change often follows growth. I encourage you to embrace rethinking how you relate to God as well as others. Last year, I completely reworked my daily pattern of Bible study, prayer and reading...changing the time of day, how I did them all as well as adding some things. The shuffle recharged the whole effort, making the same disciplines interact in very meaningful new ways. Perhaps it is time for you to review your patterns...add a ministry, a Bible study, an Outreach group. It can add a real breath of fresh air, adding to all you do.



Ascension sent another team into Walnut Bend Elementary School this year to participate in Read Aloud month. Tom Sutton appears with his class in the photos. He not only reads during the month allotted, but also continues on with his class. This year Janis and John Edel, Wanda June and Lesley Brouse also participated. We also send volunteers to the Reading Intervention program as well as Lunch Bunch. These two programs are once a week each week all year long-allowing us to have a more personal impact on the lives of the children we work with. The children and the school welcome us with open arms. The smiles are huge, hugs abound...I encourage you to consider joining us over there next year!

The work at the Mission of Yahweh is growing. We have a couple of mother daughter teams now as well as a family who come to serve and chat with the residents and children. Ascension is a group the residents look forward to seeing, both for the Lunch with Friends on the first Saturday of the month, as well as the occasional additional efforts.

A big shout out to David and Jackie Bergquist! David fashioned the collection center in the Parish Life Building. We collect items that WHAM needs...items you normally toss out. We need egg cartons, paper grocery bags, plastic grocery bags, small containers of toiletries from hotel rooms (that you have

not opened), and condiment packages from your takeouts. Jackie is the unseen angel who gathers up the items from the box in the Narthex as well as the collection center to take them to WHAM. Small changes-big impacts. Thank you for caring and helping!



As this newsletter goes to press, we are preparing for ReachOut days off and on campus this year. This is one of our opportunities to enrich our relationships with our partners in the community as well as add new partners. We are making get well cards for patients in West Houston Hospital, which is the closest hospital to us. In



preparation for this semiannual event, we consult with our partners to see what they might need...and then make it happen. This year, we will provide washcloths and tube socks for the homeless at WHAM; a Mother's Day remembrance for mothers at Mission of Yahweh as well as the get well cards. And along the way...we will enjoy the company of our brothers and sisters at Ascension. I pray you joined us...and will join us as we venture out personally in our community.

Faithfully,

Deacon Mary



### Service Day on campus

We assembled packets for the homeless (WHAM), did a Mother's Day craft for Mission of Yahweh, made greeting cards for West Houston Hospital patients, shared our blessings for a power point, polished the wood in the sanctuary and cleaned up the gardens plus enjoyed some lunch and fellowship as a church family.



Dear Friends,

Some of you are aware that I have scheduled two “maintenance” surgeries in June of this year. For medical reasons, both need to be done within a week of each other. The first one will be on my right foot to repair a problematic bunion and the toe next to it....the second one will be the second part of the gastric sleeve surgery I had last year. That surgery will be more involved than the one performed by scope last year.

Todd, the Archdeacon and I have been in discussions about this and have reached the decision that leave is appropriate during this process and recovery. Doctors simply do not know how long it will take my driving foot and abdomen to heal enough to be back with you in my normal capacity. Late summer is the anticipated time frame however.

My leave will begin Monday, May 1st. I know there are some among you who will carry on the work we have begun while I am away. Each and all of you will be in my prayers during this time...and I certainly welcome your healing prayers in return. I will be with you this Sunday to gather that last hug for a bit.

Faithfully,

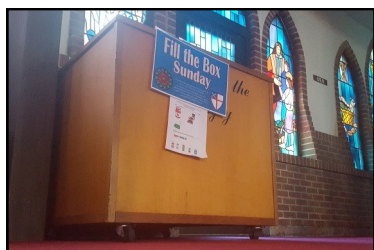
Deacon Mary



## MISSION AND OUTREACH EVENTS

### Lunch with Friends

Lunch with Friends at Mission of Yahweh occurs each month on the first Saturday. We cook the Friday before and serve on Saturday. We have a great time 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.



### Fill the Box

Don't forget. Fill the Box Sunday is the First Sunday of each month. This month we will the box on May 7th. Let's fill the wooden box in the Narthex with non perishable foods for WHAM. Focus on PEANUT BUTTER AND JELLY.

### WHAM Volunteering

On the third Saturday of each month, we 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 this month's team on May 20, 9am to noon.

### WHAM Recycling Center

Please bring your unused travel toiletries, condiment packets, bags, both paper and plastic, and egg cartons to donate to WHAM. Don't throw these things away! Look for the recycling center in the Parish Hall.

### 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 John Searle and he will happily provide you with one.







Greetings in the name of our Lord,

Today marks one week since I commenced as your new CEO. Last night as I prepared for this week, I found myself incredibly excited at the prospect of heading to work!

So the old expression goes, try and find a job where you don't have to work another day in your life. And for me, this role is both head and heart. Head in that there are many practical, strategic decisions that need to be made. But also heart in that there are so many people in West Houston who need our help.

Easter for me was a clarion reminder that we are in the business of transformation. The story of Easter is about life overcoming death. Of pain and crisis being transformed into new life. And as you know so well, this is also our work here at WHAM. We were created out of 7 churches to embody the Easter story. Whether its food, household goods, financial help or to assist with finding employment, we bring short term assistance to those in crisis.

And this is a story that needs to be told. I fully intend to be a 'loud mouth for WHAM'! We need more funds and more volunteers so that we can provide more care and fulfill our calling here in West Houston.

So my 30,000 feet plan for this my second week is to :

- Continue to learn about WHAM (talking to board, staff and vols)
- Create a draft Fundraising Plan (in conjunction with Ralph)
- Begin to establish structure including setting up a recurring meeting schedule with staff and board
- Establish CEO goals in conjunction with Board HR committee

I welcome your thoughts and comments! Feel free to either email me or give me a call on 832 341 2440. I very much look forward to meeting you at our next board meeting on 4/27 if not before.

God bless,

Mark Brown  
Chief Executive Officer  
[www.whamministries.org](http://www.whamministries.org)  
Caring.Community.Compassion

## JUNIOR WARDEN'S REPORT

BY: LEE NIRIDER

It is the responsibility of the Jr. Warden, to maintain the building and grounds of Ascension Episcopal Church. As your Jr. Warden for 2017, I attended the Warden's and Vestry Conference held February. My attendance was rewarded by a workshop specifically aimed at the task of maintaining our parish's buildings, grounds and other physical facilities.

The title of this workshop was **Is Your Building Ready for Hospice?**, and was described as follows:

*"Is deferred maintenance becoming a visible, but unstated core value in your congregation? Have you become attached to the frayed carpeting in the Nave? Does the peeling paint give your building a 'historic feel'? Let's talk about how we can become better stewards of the facilities we inherited from those who came before and assure we leave well-maintained facilities to those who follow."*

The workshop was presented by Bob Shore, the Manager of Church Plants and Strategic Development, for the Diocese of Texas. I was struck by the fact that our diocese believes this topic is important enough to employ a full time manager. The workshop attracted 28 attendees.... so this topic must be of interest to a number of parishes. While it is important to guide our efforts with values, mission, and vision it seems to me that we also need to maintain the church and school to be a good member of our community and accomplish the vision we have claimed.

### **Your Property Committee has been busy so far this year with the small projects listed below:**

- Replacement of the light which shines on the rose window from the inside so it is illuminated and therefore part of how the public views our sanctuary during hours of darkness.
- Repair of leaking toilet in the men's restroom in the narthex
- Repair and replacement of a large number of plumbing components in the Ascension Episcopal School's (AES) buildings. We are thankful that the school paid for these repairs and they did not have to stay on the list of deferred maintenance below.
- Thorough cleaning and re-calibration of both the refrigerator and freezer in the parish hall kitchen.
- Completed quarterly planned preventative maintenance on all of the heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) systems on the entire campus.
- Replacement of the griddle in the parish hall kitchen. It failed after thirty plus years of service. Fresh bacon shall return to the breakfast menu!

### **Deferred Maintenance and other outstanding projects which remain to be addressed:**

- Repair of portions of the lawn watering system which have been unusable for many months. This repair could help prevent further loss of bushes and other landscaping.
- Replacement of high wattage lights on the ground outside the west and north-east sides of the sanctuary. These lights illuminate the exterior of our primary worship building and make it more visible from Seagler Rd.
- Replacement of interior lighting in several areas of every building on campus. *"under-lighted rooms naturally reduce the energy of the people in the room, particularly in worship spaces "* Bob Shore. Visitors notice this and may decide not to return.
- Cleaning of air conditioning duct work in each of the AES buildings.

- Investigation of ceiling tile stains in parish hall to determine if an active leak is present.
- Replacement of several exterior lights around campus. *Exterior lighting is the cheapest security measure available.*

As with your personal household, the primary factor delaying progress on these projects is financial. If you have skills to use in maintaining our church home, please volunteer your time and talent. If you are in support of any of these tasks, or others you have noticed, please consider making a contribution to the Building Fund or Major Maintenance Fund. If you have a preference on which projects should take priority, please let any of us know. We all thank you for your continued good stewardship of our Parish's earthly buildings and grounds.

Lee Nirider, 2017 Jr. Warden,

and your property committee members:

Alan Burton, Glenn Criswell, Doug Meyers, Miranda Griesbaum, Tom Sutton

## FINANCIAL CORNER

### Pledge Statements

The first Quarterly Statement for 2017 (through 3-31-17) was mailed in the beginning of April. Please review it to verify that we have recorded pledges correctly. Don't hesitate to contact Leslie Nirider at the church office [713-781-1330](tel:713-781-1330) or via email to [membership@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org](mailto:membership@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org) if you have any questions or corrections. Thank you for all the support you give to Ascension Episcopal Church.

Below are the financial results for the Church for the month of March 2017. If you would like to see a more detailed statement, please e-mail Glenn Criswell at [gcriswell@gmail.com](mailto:gcriswell@gmail.com)

|                      | <b><u>2017<br/>Budget</u></b> | <b><u>March 2017</u></b> | <b><u>Year to Date<br/>Total - 2017</u></b> |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| Pledges              | \$346,500                     | \$30,837                 | \$110,187                                   |
| Other Income         | 139,126                       | 6,831                    | 22,294                                      |
| Total Income         | 485,626                       | 37,668                   | 132,481                                     |
| Expenses             | 500,667                       | 33,983                   | 122,153                                     |
| Surplus or (Deficit) | <b>(\$15,041)</b>             | <b>\$3,685</b>           | <b>\$10,329</b>                             |
| Debt Outstanding:    |                               |                          |   |
| Line of Credit       |                               | <u>\$25,000.00</u>       |   |



## DIRECTOR OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

### Thank You For A Wonderful Easter!

This year's Easter Egg Hunt was fantastic! Children of all ages had a blast and there are a ton of people we should thank for helping to make it all happen. So, without further delay, thank you to:

- Ascension Episcopal School's 5<sup>th</sup> graders for stuffing 1,000 eggs.
- Sam, Makalya and Madison King, and Isaac Griesbaum for hiding those eggs, setting up the prize tables and helping with the ticket counting table.
- Pam Schawbrow, Liz Goodman, Margo Kaplan, Kimberly Bryant, and Geraldine Liborio for working the prize table.
- Olivia Nirider for being our photographer.
- Pastor Todd for being the Director of Crowd Control.



### Communion Class

We're having a communion class May 14, May 20, May 18, and June 4<sup>th</sup> during the 9:00 hour.

The class is geared towards children and their parents but all are welcome to join us. We'll be looking at how baptism and communion are related, why we take communion, the mystery of communion, and taking communion into your week. Please RSVP to Miranda at [DRE@ascensionepliscopalchurch.org](mailto:DRE@ascensionepliscopalchurch.org)



### May Sunday School

Our PK4 – 1<sup>st</sup> graders will wrap up the school year by studying Peter. We'll take a look at how Peter and John healed a lame man, what happened when Peter healed Tabitha, what it meant for Peter to visit with Cornelius and what happened when Peter was imprisoned.

Our 2<sup>nd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> graders are starting a unit on the meaning behind the scenes depicted in our sanctuary's stained glass.

Our Youth Group will continue to take a look at how to apply the scriptures from the Sunday service to their daily lives.

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Want to know what's going on with Christian Education? Check out Miranda's (The Director of Religious Education) blog. She updates regularly with announcements and upcoming activities for children and adults alike. You may also find the Sunday School Teacher's schedule on this blog. You can:

- Go to the front page of the website,
- go to the site: <http://christianinformationataec.weebly.com/>
- or click [HERE](#).



### Looking Ahead - Summer Fest!

We're in the process of planning some fantastic opportunities for fun and fellowship for kids aged 5 through 100! We're still working out the details of what exactly we'll be doing, but for now take a look at this exciting schedule.

- May 28 – Ascension Day. This is the last day of formal Sunday School instruction for children, youth, and adults. We'll have a special blessing for our of our Sunday School volunteers and celebrate our Feast Day. Join us after to service to fly kites in the big field! Look for more details soon.
- June 4 – Pentecost Sunday. We'll kick off Summer Fest with our annual Happy Birthday Church celebration. In addition, it will be Thankful Sunday and we'll also be honoring graduates. There will be food, a bouncy house and other fun activities.
- Other Summer Fest dates during the summer - June 18, July 9, July 23, August 6
- August 20 – Back to School Blessing and our last Summer Fest. We'll celebrate going back to school by blessing our children and their backpacks. After the service there will be food, a bouncy house and exciting games.
- August 27 – 2017/2018 Sunday School Kickoff Party
- September 10 – First day of formal Sunday School instruction for children, youth, and adults.



### Graduate Recognition Sunday June 4th

Share your good news!

We'll 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 10am service.

We need to hear from you by May 23rd 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 also include where the student graduated from. Send your information to Miranda at [dre@ascensionepisopalchurch.org](mailto:dre@ascensionepisopalchurch.org).

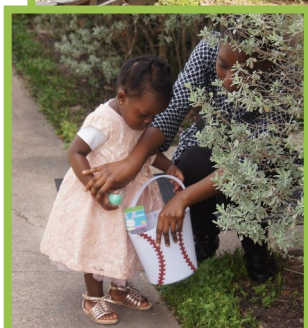
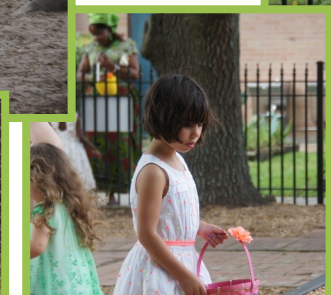


# THE EASTER EGG HUNT

## The Anticipation



## The Hunt!!





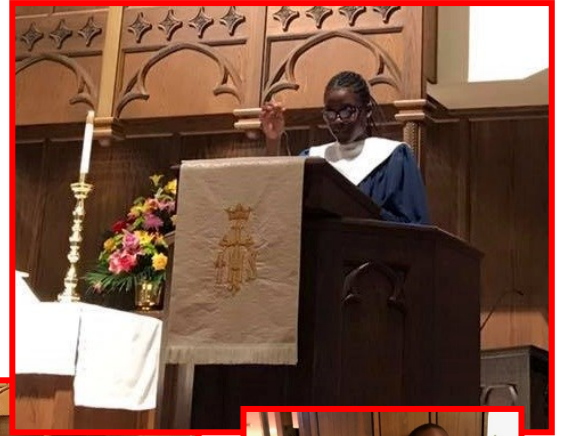




**Counting Tickets  
and Redeeming**







## **Youth Sunday**

Youth Sunday was a wonderful event - many of our children and youth came together to serve in all capacities during the service and all who served have said that they'd love to do it again! Our next Youth Sunday will be on July 30th; this is a great time for your child to serve for the first time, or to try serving in a new position. We'll need ushers, jr. acolytes, acolytes, a lector or two, an intercessor, musicians and a youth preacher. Please let Miranda ([dre@ascensionepisopalchurch.org](mailto:dre@ascensionepisopalchurch.org)) know if your child would like to serve.

### **Thank you for the Lilies**

Thank you to all for who donated Easter lilies and flowers. The church looked beautiful; your support made it possible.

### **Thank you for Soup**

Thank you to DOK, Altar Guild, Parish Life, Sunday School, and AES Teachers for the delicious soups on Wednesday nights.

### **Thankyou Altar Guild**

Thank you Altar Guild for a beautiful desert scene, for Maundy Thursday, and really, for all you do each and every Sunday, wedding, and Funeral. This group of ladies are very busy behind the scenes!

### **Thank you to those who updated their family photos for the directory.**

If you have new information to pass on to the Membership Office you can use the Newcomer card insert to update you address, phone number, email or even your favorite color. Just put it in the plate. Leslie usually gets it. Also: we saw all those cell phones out capturing events of the Easter celebration. Send us your photos! We would love to have them for the directory, or just to add to our library of photos, email [membership@ascensionepisopalchurch.org](mailto:membership@ascensionepisopalchurch.org)

### **Lenten Reading Thank You**

Thank you to all who signed up and read during Ascension's traditional Reading of the Bible during Lent. Each year our participation increases. We look forward to next year.

### **Thank you for the Brass donations**

Thank you to all for who helped underwrite the Brass Ensemble. They sounded amazing and added so much to the Easter service. It wouldn't have happened without you.

*Thank you!!*



Dear Parishioners,

We welcome the month of May and all the activities that will take place in this month. We start with our last Communion Chapel on May 2<sup>nd</sup> at 8:30 am. On Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup>, our Pre-K 3 students for the 2017-18 school year will meet and greet on the playground from 9-10:30 am.

On Sunday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, our Summer Book Fair will be available to parishioners, please stop by and buy some summer reading for family and friends. On Thursday, May 11<sup>th</sup>, our students in Grades 1-5 will present an Elementary Program in the church at 9 am. During the reception that follows, our 5<sup>th</sup> grade students will have a presentation on National Parks and serve as tour guides. This will be in the senior high classroom. On Friday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, we celebrate all our mothers, grandmothers, at Mother's Day Chapel at 9 am in the church. The Book Fair will still be open and a reception follows the chapel service.



On Tuesday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, we have our Awards Chapel and the recipient of the Donnie Hollowell Scholarship is announced at this time. The Chapel begins at 8:30 am.

On Friday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, we honor our retiring teachers, Mrs. Roxanne Haase, Mrs. Karen Maness, Mrs. Valerie Varhaug, and Mrs. Pam Warak. These teachers have given Ascension many years of hard work, dedication and love to many children and their families. Please stop by the Parish Hall on the 19<sup>th</sup>, from 3:30 to 5 to help us celebrate.

On Sunday, May 21<sup>st</sup>, our Fifth Grade students will graduate. We have 15 graduates this year, a remarkable group of students who we say good-bye to. The ceremony starts at 3 pm with a reception in the Parish Hall. We are truly a stronger school and community because of these families.

Our last day of School is Tuesday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>, with KidVenture Summer Camp starting on Tuesday, May 30<sup>th</sup>.

Faithfully,  
Nancy Clausey  
Head of School

## Ascension Episcopal School HALL OF FAME



Roxanne Haase



Pam Warak



Valerie Varhaug



Karen Maness

Please join us to honor and show our appreciation for our retiring teachers!

FRIDAY, MAY 19<sup>TH</sup> at 3:30 pm



# "NIGHT ON THE BOARDWALK"



AES & AEC families came out in full force for a Night on the Boardwalk, celebrating and supporting AES. Kids enjoyed a kids' carnival and prizes. Adults enjoyed dinner, silent auction and music. At 8pm, we turned the place into a full blown family carnival and dance. We all loved the basketball toss, football toss, washers, bean bag toss, putting green and corn row. It was a spectacular night of family, fun, fellowship and fundraising!

## THE PEOPLE'S SONG



Here we are in the middle of Eastertide, in the 500th anniversary year of the Reformation. Let's survey our music for this season. Hymn 183, Christians, to the Paschal victim, was beloved from the Middle Ages throughout the 12th C. Over 60 manuscripts were considered for authorship, and there were quite a few less spiritual parodies from Catholic sources such as 'Christians are fleeing the most wicked deceptions of Luther.' It is likely that this hymn originated in Germany, as a dramatic dialogue between Mary Magdalen and a narrator. Luther's use of the German vernacular interspersed with Latin helped spread Reformation-era hymns and reworked hymns. Hymn 184, Christ the Lord is risen again! was one of his favorites. As he liked to say, one might tire of other hymns, but (this hymn) was 'always fresh.' Luther reworked (183 and its subsequent 184) into a hymn structure that we would recognize. He then used that as raw material for the hymn (185/6) Christ lay in death's strong bands. Luther's basic formula for adapting hymns was to use the original first stanza and then add his own stanzas to that. He wanted to tell the Easter story in a fuller manner, and often wrote 7 stanzas, considering 7 to be the 'perfect' number, the number of 'completion.'

A much easier tune for us is the Dutch Easter carol, Hymn 192, This joyful Eastertide. This 1684 Mennonite hymn was originally titled, Concerning the necessity of Christ's resurrection. The music simply exudes joy, with the rising statements of is arisen, arisen, arisen, arisen!

The text of hymn 193, That Easter day with joy was bright, dates from the 5th C. and is paired with a 16th C. tune. By 1632, it had been edited to the format we sing today, retaining its strong Easter message.

Hymn 180, He is risen, he is risen! comes from the hymnal, A Christian Year for Children, 1846. Hymn 199, Come ye faithful, raise the strain, comes to us from the Greek Orthodox tradition. Hymns 203 and 206 are the same hymn O sons and daughters, separated by texts for specific Sundays. This 15th C. chant-like French noel first appeared in an Episcopal hymnal in 1916.

Hymn 208, Alleluia! The strife is o'er was destined to be popular. The tune was written by Palestrina, who was considered by the Catholic church to be the perfect composer. He wrote melodious tunes that avoided any harsh harmonies or difficult passages.

Please have a look at all our Eastertide hymns. There are too many for me to discuss them all. We have a rich assortment of styles, yet they all convey the same message of the glories of Easter and what it means for us.

Suzanne  
organista-no.1@comcast.net



## **Pentecost Sunday is June 4th!!**

### **Plan to attend this activity filled Sunday!**

**Whitsunday** June 4 is also Whitsunday. In accordance with Canon 14.2 of the Diocese each parish is asked to make an offering for the Episcopal Endowment Fund on that date. If you would like to contribute to this fund Whitsunday, please use the white envelopes designated to this fund. They will be placed in your bulletin on that Sunday. Checks written directly to the Diocese will be forwarded; checks written to Ascension with "Endowment Fund" in the memo line will be recorded and one large check sent from Ascension.

**Wear Red!** - In fitting with tradition, you are asked to wear your best red on Pentecost Sunday, June 4; and then be sure to stay after the 10:00 service for:



**Happy Birthday Church!** - Be sure to join us after the 10am service in celebration of Pentecost, the birthday of the church, complete with bouncy house!! The Altar will be decorated to represent the fire descending onto the individuals with individual tongues of flame. You are invited to stay after the 10am service for lunch and birthday cake!!

**Thankful Sunday** For the past few Sundays Todd and Cindy Breton, with the help of John Searle, have been asking you to submit your name and a photo of various things you are thankful for, such as being:

- thankful for the simple things in life, like coffee, rainy days, kindness, campfires, dishwashers, music, sleeping in, literacy, bluebonnets, etc.
- thankful for those in your life. It may be: God, pet(s), spouse/partner, children, teachers, family, friends, neighbors, caregivers, church family, co-workers
- thankful for the heroes in your life. They may be doctors, teachers, nurses, our military, caregivers, police, fire fighter, volunteers, minister, and coaches.
- thankful for a life event. Maybe you climbed a mountain, witnessed a miracle, graduated or survived a medical scare. Any physical, mental, or spiritual event.
- thankful for God given gifts - things, experiences & people to be thankful for! What about the stranger who turned in something you lost? A photo that brought back good memories or a rainbow after a storm.



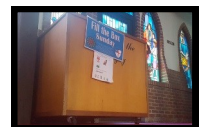
They are putting together a slide show to be presented this day. Please take a few moments to view what your fellow parishioners are thankful for.



### **Graduate Sunday**

We'll 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 10am service. See pg 11 for more detail.

**Fill the Box** It's also "Fill the Box Sunday", so let's fill the wooden box in the Narthex with non perishable foods for WHAM. Focus on PEANUT BUTTER AND JELLY.





## Pentecost Sunday cont...



### Baptism at Pentecost

The Birthday of the Church, Pentecost, falls on June 4 this year. This is a day the church celebrates the beginning of the church; the day when the Holy Spirit was received by the Apostles, empowering them for their mission to spread the good news of Christ. It is also a day we like to celebrate Baptism.

If you or someone you know is ready for Baptism please accept this invitation to join the church, the body of Christ. Take some time to learn about baptism at Ascension by going to <http://www.ascensionepiscopalchurch.org/baptisms.html>. If you have questions about Baptism for you or your child, please ask Pastor Todd. There is an Application for Baptism at the bottom of the Ascension Webpage about baptism. You can print it out, complete it and snail mail it, scan and email the document to [Membership@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org](mailto:Membership@ascensionepiscopalchurch.org), or bring it to church and drop it in the plate. Ascension will be honored to welcome you to a life of grace through Christ our Lord.

### Opting out?

Are you receiving Tidings, The Weekly Reminder, Prayer Requests, or have you opted out of receiving emails? Some have done this intentionally because they didn't want to receive so many emails, and some do not even know they unsubscribed; they just don't receive emails anymore. 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 for help.

Ascension does not want to flood your inbox. We send emails based on 4 groupings: Tidings, Weekly Email, Prayer Requests, and Special Notices. Don't want to get them all? Let us know. 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. You may also fill out the bottom of this page, tear it off, get it to us (drop it in the office, drop it in the plate, mail it ), and we will honor your requests. **Remember we want to keep you informed the way you want to be!!**

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_

List Choice:

☐

Tidings

☐

The Weekly Reminder

☐

Prayer Requests

☐

Special Announcements

## ACTIVITIES AND ONGOINGS

### SCHOOL

**Book Fair Sunday** - Ascension Episcopal School is hosting their spring Book Fair for all of our avid readers. Whether you are young or young at heart, be sure to stop by on May 7th, in the Parish Hall from 9:00 AM to Noon, where someone will be able to assist you. The book fair will remain open all week from May 8 through May 12. Come support our school, and pick up some summer reading.

**Mothers Day and Special Friends Chapel** - You are welcome to come on Friday May 12, for the Mother's Day and Special Friends Chapel, followed by the reception in the Parish Hall. If your young ones go to Ascension, this is a great way to support them.

### 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 9:00-9:45 AM. To schedule a training, please email the office or Miranda Griesbaum.



### Daughters of the King

The Daughters of the King will hold their regular monthly meetings on Saturday, May 13th and June 10th in the parish library, with fellowship at 9:30 AM and the meeting at 10:00. Come and share the fellowship. All ladies of the parish and their friends are cordially invited to join us for fellowship and prayer.

### Can you operate a Smartphone?

If you can operate a smartphone, then you will have no problem operating our sound system. The Sound Ministry is down to just two people. They are in need of a few parishioners to step forward and give one or two Sundays a month. Please do not be intimidated by technology. Alan Burton and Kathleen Hannah are happy to give you all the information you will need. Please email [kathleen.hannah@att.net](mailto:kathleen.hannah@att.net) for more info.

### Recycle Bin

There used to be a Paper recycling bin on the school property. The company has requested that we pay \$150 a month to maintain it. We have chosen to remove it from the property as that is not in the budget. Please note that Frostwood Elementary has several bins as well as other elementary schools near you.



### Altar Flowers

Please sign up to dedicate the Altar flowers. The flower chart is posted in the narthex. The cost of the flowers is \$100 (which includes delivery). Please remember to sign the flower chart, the dedication book below it, and place your donation in the alms basin or send it to the office, marked flower fund. All questions can be answered by Ann Burton [\(713\) 782-6572](tel:7137826572).

### Calendar

Want to know about upcoming events? Check out the church calendar on the Ascension website. This calendar features, the church schedule, school schedules, outreach events, and facility usage merged into one. You may choose to look at only one at a time by clicking on the small downward arrow in the upper right hand corner and selecting which topic to view. If you have any questions, ask Samantha in the office. The calendar is being updated constantly, so check back for new events.



# ORPHANAGE MISSIONS TO NIGERIA FROM MARCH-DEC. 2016

BY: NGOZI ADIMORA

## How it all started:

I give God all glory for laying in my heart this year-2016 (as I was having my regular quiet time) the burden to feed His Children-“The Orphans.” The mandate was so strong that I could not resist it, although fears gripped me immediately. I Questioned- 1. Feed Who? The Orphans? 2. Where would I get the resources? 3. Lord Why now am retired when I don't have the money to do it? Why did you not give me this responsibility while I was working and sure of regular income? Etc. etc. etc. With all my series of questions the consistent mandate was to Feed His Children. After I was exhausted with all arguments, questions, and excuses why it was not apt now, to take on such responsibilities while I had plans in place to enjoy my years of retirement. I broke out in tears-crying, confused, and unsure where, and how to start. I did not want to talk about it, and I did not want to get anyone involved. Little did I know that it was not just my personal business but God's Mandate which must go per His Plan. I am not an Evangelist nor Missionary but I try to support others who are doing it, so I had no firsthand experience how to organize and implement this kind of “Orphanage Mission.”

With prayer supports from the faithful Christian associates, plans began to be clear to me. The awesome God started to overwhelm me with provisions of items for this Mission from my resource, which He provided and through various individuals. I purchased out of pocket the much I could afford-boxes of cereals and noodles. I therefore express my deep heart felt gratitude to all those who have made this “Orphanage Mission” kick off in March 2016 and still waxing strong.

**Donors to the “Orphanage Mission:”** MS Claribbatte Dominguez-6 Boxes (24 Cans in each box) of Canned Milk Formula for Children. These listed items made up the first 2 packed Cartons shipped March 28<sup>th</sup> 2016 from Houston to my contact at Awka-Sir ChukwuEzugo Nwigbo. Sir Nwigbo received the shipment in June. Then he contacted the Vicar of his Church-All Saints Church Amenyi Awka, where these items were presented during a Sunday Church Service. The Six Officiating Priests and all Congregation present prayed over these two cartons each with its seal intact. Then the Senior Vicar invited two women and gave them scissors to cut the tapes off the cartons. The women were directed to share the contents of each carton into three equal parts for the three Orphanages in the City of Awka. At the end the sharing, the Vicar designated A Priest, Sir Nwigbo, and A Church member to send these items that Sunday-June 18<sup>th</sup> 2016, to the three Orphanages at Awka namely:

- Model Motherless Babies Home-Ministry of Women Affairs & Social Development Awka.
- Faith Community Children's Home Awka.
- Tender Love Orphanage Awka.

Information from Sir Nwigbo revealed that in each Orphanage, the Staff who received the items signed off and documented all the inventory received, then these staff, along with the available children prayed over the donations, blessing all those who extended such alms to them.



To my greatest surprise, the Director of each of the three Orphanages called me here in Houston by the end of June 2016, to express their individual gratitude for such a surprise gift, for which they all now call me as Nickname- "Mommy that sends food from America to "The Motherless Children." Literally meaning that the children expressed great joy eating food from "America!" And more so that those they did not even know or have met before, were led to think about their welfare.

Can you imagine the joy your donation's put in these recipient's hearts, and their prayers to bless the donors, and all involved to make sure that the items got to them for their enjoyment? May my Awesome God bless all those who were involved in the process of the first shipment (March-June 2016), delivery, and distribution to the three orphanages and ensured that these children ate and enjoyed the nourishments sent to them.



### Donors to the Second shipment were:

- Mr. & Mrs. Carlos and Maria Torress-4 cans of Infant Formula with some Pacifiers.
- Rev Dr. George Moses
- Rev. & Rev. Mrs. Remy/Margaret Michael
- Pastor Happy Odoemena.

The above men and women of God donated a total of \$100.00 (One Hundred Dollar very close to my departure to Nigeria in July 2016. This trip was to go and visit the Orphanages ahead of time before the arrival of the second shipment.

I then bought various food items-Boxes of cereals. Different kinds of Noodles, and Children's Snacks. These items were shipped in July and they were delivered to the Orphanages Sept. 26<sup>th</sup> 2016 via the same process whereby the first shipment was delivered to them, as described above.

For this second shipment, I gave my contact the \$100.00 (donated)-equivalence of =N=37,000.00 (Thirty-Seven Thousand Naira) which was the exchange rate in July. The Thirty-Seven Thousand Naira was not enough to buy two large bags of rice, so I made it up with extra money to purchase two bags of rice and pay for the transportation to and from market with their delivery to the two Orphanage Homes as well.

When I got to Awka in July 2016, I called the directors of the three Orphanages and made appointment with each for a visit to their individual Centers. I was only given the opportunity to visit and see the children in: Model Motherless Babies Home-Ministry of Women's Affairs and Social Development; and Faith Community

Children's Home. I toured, visited with the children and staff of these two homes at their respective appointed dates and time. It was like a goose chase with the Director of Tender Love Orphanage. At a point, she stopped responding to my phone calls. My further inquiry revealed that the later was a privately-owned Orphanage and maybe she feared that I may have come to "spy" on her. On that note, I decided and instructed to share the second shipment when it arrives, to the two "Orphanages that showed elements of transparency, that the donated items were given to the children for which they were sent. Hence the two bags of rice were distributed-a bag each to these two Orphanages, who threw their doors open to visitation and provided me with the histories about their children's progress/ welfare from one stage to another. They also provided the record of the items that they received June 18<sup>th</sup> 2016 from Sir Nwigbo and his companions. These were great encouragement that the items did not end up in oblivion. Thanks immensely with innumerable Blessings to all of us who made the second shipment happen.





### **Third Shipment to Lagos State Nov 2016:**

I am buying items for the third and final shipment for 2016. Currently I have not received any donations yet. But the Lord's provision is that I got 60 Boxes of Cereals on sale, which I already purchased. I am targeting other food items to go on sale. If not, I am planning to send these third shipment by this Nov. to Lagos State to an Orphanage at Igando Alimosho Local Govt. Area Lagos State. I have already found a contact to oversee that delivery when it arrives, about late January or early February 2017.



### **Selected Needs for The Orphanages:**

**Food & Snacks:** Information from my inquiries about the most desired needs of the Orphanages in Nigeria revealed that it is nourishment (food), because so many organizations who sponsored them in the past had stopped due to hard times, and they are currently being sustained on God's mercies through various individuals. In fact, I observed one of them during the Children's Lunch, and I teared seeing what these children were fed as lunch.

For anyone who desires to donate- Any food for children, for which the expiry date would last beyond June 2017 is welcome. Also financial assistance for shipment and cost for delivery to the orphanages is welcome too.

**Items for Beginning Education:** The children need Educational Materials like: Books for e.g. Counting Numbers, Letters of the Alphabets, Animals, Other Objects (table, Tree, Plate etc.), Rhymes, Exercise Books and Drawing/Coloring Books, Pencils, Crayons, + Other Coloring Materials etc.

### **Items for Socializing & General Child Development:**

Toys for individual and group interactions, CDs' for Cartoons, Children's Fictions, Skits/Dramas, TV/Projectors, and Equipped Play Grounds for Socializations etc.

During my tour of the two Orphanages in July 2016 at Awka, I observed that most often the babies were either "bodied" (carried) by the staff or left in their cribs awake being lonely or asleep. I could not remember seeing a baby who was awake interacting with a toy. There are many needs but the above few are what in my observation, are necessities to consider as an immediate need for these children.

From the brief histories of the two Orphanages I visited, I noted that there was not yet any definite plan/s for transiting the children into the community when they are fully grown, or when the space in the Orphanage may not be enough to accommodate as many as would need such care. I learnt that currently when they are faced with overcrowding, they solicit for the children's' family members e.g. Grandmother or any other willing relative to take them, in order to create space/s for others babies in acute need.

Again, thanks to everyone who was a part of this "Orphanage Mission" to Nigeria in year 2016. May God's favor continue to find you in Year 2017 and many more years of your life Amen! Please I am open to constructive suggestions on how to in "Best Practices" to do this Orphanage Mission to the Glory and Edification of Christ in it all.

Sincerely,

Ngozi Adimora-Nweke.



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



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

**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...**

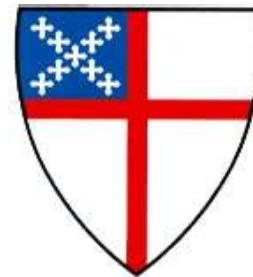
We have a drive **once** a month on the First Sunday and on the 3rd Saturday of the month we go over to WHAM to work to prep food for distribution in the Food Pantry. So bring your non-perishable goods on the First Sunday and please Sign up in the Volunteer Sign Up Log in the Narthex to help on-site. 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**

Tom Sutton (Sr. Warden), Lee Nirider (Jr. Warden), Cindy Breton, Alan Burton, Cheryl Coppock, Glenn Criswell, Clement Falayi, Michelle Feagin, Liz Goodman, Margo Kaplan, Doug Meyers, 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