

Ascent

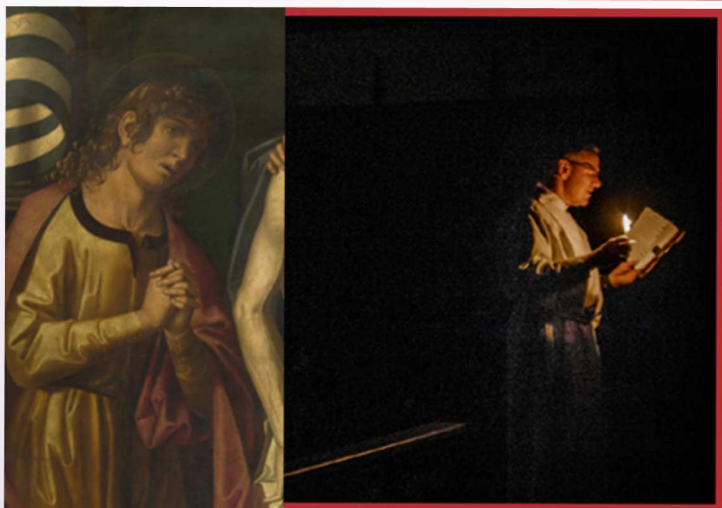
2018
March



PALM SUNDAY

March 25 at 9am or 11am

Both of our services will feature the Liturgy of the Palms, a Festival Procession and a dramatic reading of the Passion narrative.



MAUNDY THURSDAY

March 29 at 7pm

The worship of Maundy Thursday is rich in symbolism and will include washing of feet and the dramatic stripping of the altar in preparation for Good Friday. The service concludes in total darkness.



GOOD FRIDAY VIGIL

March 30 from Noon – 3pm

Because these are the hours Jesus hung on the cross, we encourage worshippers to keep vigil for the entire three-hour period, but the service will easily allow people to spend any one hour (Noon, 1pm or 2pm) without loss of continuity.

Why Anglicanism?

Adult Confirmation Course

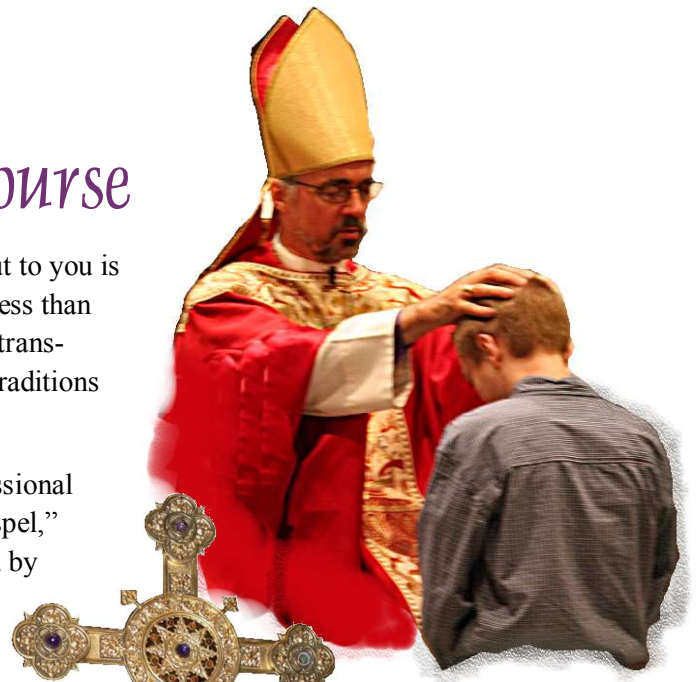
If you are new to Anglicanism, one thing that might stand out to you is the emphasis we place on the sacraments. Our tradition no less than other evangelical traditions places great emphasis upon the transformative power of grace, but more than other evangelical traditions we place great weight upon the sacraments as the means of grace.

By sacraments we primarily mean what the 39 Articles, the confessional or belief statement for Anglicans, calls the “sacraments of the Gospel,” the sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist which were ordained by Christ himself and which “are generally necessary for our salvation” (*To Be a Christian*, q. 104). But like Roman Catholics and the Orthodox churches, we also recognize five other rites - confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony, and extreme unction - which are “commonly called sacraments” (*Articles of Religion*, XXV). These are not necessary for salvation, but “God clearly uses them as means of grace” (*To Be a Christian*, Q. 117). Confirmation, then, is one of the rites sometimes called a “sacrament of the Church” (*To Be a Christian*, Q. 116).

Above all, confirmation is, as our catechism *To Be a Christian* tells us, a sacramental rite that seals your “mature commitment” to your baptismal covenant (*To Be a Christian*, Q. 118). When you are baptized in the Anglican church, the celebrant after baptizing you in the name of the Holy Trinity, makes the sign of the cross on your forehead with chrism oil to seal that you belong to Christ forever. The celebrant then prays that in being marked with the cross, “you shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, to fight bravely under his banner against the world, the flesh, and the devil, and to continue as his faithful servant to the end of your days” (ACNA, *The Order for Holy Baptism*).

Confirmation attests to your consent to live out this baptismal vow and to be attentive to the particular ways that the Holy Spirit is equipping and empowering you to live it out among the local body of Christians in which God has placed you. The ‘Why Anglicanism?’ course at Ascension will not only introduce you to the rich pattern of devotion to Christ that has developed within Anglicanism over the centuries, but it will also introduce you to the various ministries and ways to serve at Ascension and help you identify your own spiritual gifts and how they might find expression in this local expression of the body.

As our Rector Jonathan Millard says, however, confirmation is not just something you do for yourself, it is also something that is done to you and for you. Anyone who is a Christian has received the Holy Spirit, but in confirmation our Bishop lays hands upon you and prays for “daily increase in the Holy Spirit” to strengthen you for the calling of baptism (*Preface to Confirmation*). In Scripture there is a rich theology that grounds the liturgical



practice of the laying on of hands. Laying hands upon a person is a way of giving them a particular job or office (Numbers 27:18ff; Deuteronomy 34:9; Acts 6:6). In this sense the bishop solemnly enjoins all confirmands to carry out their worldly vocations to the glory of God, to fulfill their baptismal covenant (1 Cor. 10:31).

The laying on of hands is also closely associated in Scripture with blessing. For instance, Jacob blessed his grandsons Ephraim and Manasseh by laying hands on them (Gen. 48:13-20). In the New Testament, it is the blessing of the Holy Spirit that is imparted to newly baptized believers by the laying on of hands (Acts 8:17-18; 19:5-6). Confirmation draws these scriptural threads together in a single liturgical act, summoning confirmands to carry out their baptismal calling and empowering them to do it with the blessing and power of God.

“Why Anglicanism?” Course

The course will run for five consecutive Wednesdays beginning April 11 from 6:30pm – 9pm, and each session will be led by a member of our clergy at Ascension, Bishop Grant LeMarquand (our Priest-in-Charge while Canon Jonathan is away on Sabbatical), and our co-Associate Rectors Tish and Jonathan Warren.

Ascension Sunday, May 13

Bp. Hobby will join us to celebrate confirmations at both the 9 & 11am services.

Interested in being confirmed?

We would ask that you make every effort to attend all of the course sessions. Each of the individual sessions is, however, open to all who are interested in a deeper look at Ascension or at Anglicanism more generally. Childcare is provided.

Wednesdays beginning April 11 from 6:30pm – 9pm

- April 11** Understanding Anglicanism: History, Theology, Liturgy
- April 18** Understanding Ascension: Staff and Ministries
- April 25** Your Gifts, Ministry, and Commitments: Service in the Church
- May 2** Spiritual Practices
- May 9** Instructional Eucharist and Tour of the Nave



Jonathan Warren

Newcomers' Dinner

Sunday, March 18 from 5 – 7pm



Join Clergy and Staff for an **informal pizza dinner**, Sunday, March 18 from 5 – 7pm. We'll meet at the Common Room of the Summerset at Frick Park Community Center located at 1425 Parkview Boulevard (15217). This is in Squirrel Hill, about 12 minutes from the church. Bring the kids! It's a relaxed time to get to know one another better. We would love to know you plan to come.

You can text Marilyn at 412-953-7050 or email her marilyn.chislaghi@ascensionpittsburgh.org.
You can also sign-up on-line at www.ascensionpittsburgh.org.



Marilyn Chislaghi

Family News

March Birthdays

- 2. Bethany Sederdahl
Jack Walsh
- 3. Chris Thieman
- 4. Julia Emrock
Isaac Maddalena, Yuyu Zhou
- 6. Sima Weaver
- 7. Marc Gauthier
Jonathan Millard
Phil Mollenkof
Mary Louise Russell
- 8. Clara Holt, Emily Welsh
- 9. Juliet Millard
Todd Wahrenberger
- 10. Betsey Fritsch, Mari Ito
Kate Stewart
- 11. Hallie Harger
- 12. Allison Mollenkof
- 13. Paul Fuener, Dieter Pearcey
- 14. Noel Jabbour, Jane Millard
Lydia Miller, Maya Weaver
- 15. Phil Cox, Tim Raufer
- 17. David Kornfield
- 19. Angela Sapienza
- 20. Jack Crotty, Jamie Walsh
- 21. Laura Childs
Susan Glotfelty, Kelsey Regan
- 22. Kyle Sutton
- 24. Jack Arango, Katie Young
- 26. Jill Amber Graham
- 28. Kristin Dickerman
Arnold Fritsch, Jordan Markley
- 29. Peter Feiler, Erika Twichell
- 30. James Entner
- 31. Daniel Carlton, Alan Komm
Connor Smith, Oscar Sutton

March Anniversaries

- 2. Conn & Maria Thieman
- 5. Chris & Elise Massa
- 9. Dave & Bonnie Liefer
- 22. Michael & Claudia Mulock
- 26. David & Cathy Van Every
- 27. Dieter & Jessica Pearcey
- 30. Bill & Barbara Roberts

Not listed? Email Birthdays and Anniversary details to stacey.regan@ascensionpittsburgh.org

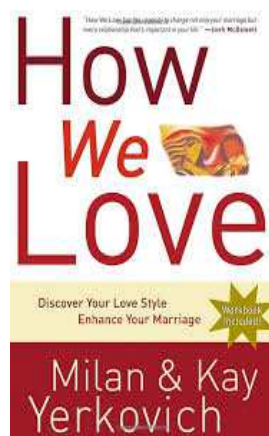
Two Classes Beginning in April

How We Love

A Marriage Enrichment Course:

Marriage is hard and we need each other. This course, which will run for 7 weeks, is an opportunity to press into the challenges of our marriages together, and grow in learning how to love well.

Designed by Milan and Kay Yerkovich, *How We Love* looks at marital patterns through the lenses of Attachment Theory, a theory that suggests that our relational styles are formed (for good or for ill) through our early life experiences. This course looks at how these styles impact our marriages, and offers insights and practices to help shift unhealthy patterns and grow in intimacy.



As the Yerkovich's put it:

“For 14 years, our marriage was stuck in the same old frustrating patterns. When we looked at our first lessons in love from our families, we immediately recognized the unseen forces governing how we loved. For the first time, we understood the source of our frustrations and why we were stuck. Deep change was possible at last.

The insight we offer comes from making many mistakes, and years of praying for wisdom. Our prayer is that soon you will discover what we have—the relief that comes from resolution, deep understanding and comfort.”

-Milan and Kay Yerkovich

Course facilitators: Jim and Mari Stout

Course dates: Friday evenings April 6 through May 25
(will not meet on May 18).

Time: 6:30 to 9pm

Childcare: Childcare will be provided for Infants through 5th grade

Questions? Feel free to contact Mari: macstout@gmail.com or
Jim: jmstouts@gmail.com

Registration: Please sign up by March 25th at www.ascensionpittsburgh.org.

Course Fee:

No payment is required, however the recommended donation is \$10 to cover the cost of course materials.

Due to the nature of the material, this course will be **limited to 20 couples**, on a first-come, first-serve basis.



Jim and Mari Stout

Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University



Ascension will offer Financial Peace University (FPU) beginning this April. FPU is a course that provides tremendous help and guidance with household finances. Those who have taken the course have come to understand budgeting, saving, insurance, mortgages, retirement, college planning, investing, giving and other practical financial matters with excellent results. Some members of our own congregation have dug out of significant and debilitating debt by practicing the principles taught in the course.

Do you have any of these concerns about your finances?

- The balances on the credit cards are growing
- Student loan debt feels crippling
- Every time you start to get some traction with the finances, an emergency comes along and knocks you down again
- You know you should be saving for your kids' education, but you don't know how to get started
- You want to plan for the future, but you never seem to have any money left when all the bills are paid
- You feel that you aren't free to do the things that God has planned for you because you are weighed down by money problems

Course facilitators:

Kelsey and Aaron Sams

Course dates:

Eight sessions

Friday evenings

April 6 through May 25

Time: 6:30 to 9pm

Childcare:

Childcare will be provided for infants through 5th grade

Questions?

Feel free to contact Aaron at chemicalsams@gmail.com or Kelsey at kelseysams@gmail.com.

Registration:

Please sign up by March 25th at www.ascensionpittsburgh.org.

Course Fee:

No payment is required, however the recommended donation is \$100 to cover the cost of the course kit (one kit needed per household).



Aaron and Kelsey Sams

For Your Calendar



Shepherd's Heart Sunday

Sunday, March 4

Members of Ascension are asked to help prepare and serve dinner at Shepherd's Heart, an Anglican parish near Mercy Hospital that has welcomed and served Pittsburgh's homeless and poor for many years. Each Sunday, following their 5:15pm Eucharist, they offer a full dinner free of charge to all present. For more details on the Sundays when this meal is provided by Ascension or to sign up, please contact Jonathan Sewall at 412-452-1935 or jonathan.sewall@gmail.com. To sign up, you can also add your name to the list on the door of the church kitchen.

This ministry is good for families and individuals who can't volunteer during the work week. You can help cook, serve or both. Cooks can expect to spend about two hours preparing the meal after our Sunday services: we can start cooking after the 9am or the 11am service, depending on which one you attend. Servers can attend Eucharist at Shepherd's Heart (5:15pm at 13 Pride St. in Uptown, 15213) or come near the end of the worship service (about 6:20pm) and then serve; we're usually done by 8pm.

Owl's Senior Luncheon Series

Thursday, March 8 from 12:30 – 2:30pm

The OWLS (Older, Wiser, and Lively Still!) Fellowship continues its 2018 Luncheon Series on Thursday, March 8th with a talk and concert by Catherine Crotty. Catherine will share with us her story of being sought by the Father and how her intimacy with Him has increased through her life at the piano. At the end of her talk, she will play two pieces by Debussy. Catherine holds degrees in piano performance from West Virginia University and The University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. For twenty years she was principal keyboardist with The West Virginia Symphony Orchestra. Don't miss this special treat!



Ann Tefft

Join us from 12:30 -2:30 pm for a delicious lunch. OWLS meetings take place on the second Thursday of each month in the Hunt Room. (Parking restrictions will be lifted for people to park on the streets and the Neville Street lot will be reserved for OWLS only.) There is a \$10 charge for lunch, but first-time friends are free! Please RSVP to Ann Tefft at 412-526-1107 or tefft.ann@gmail.com.

Lay Eucharistic Minister Training and Refresher

Sunday, March 11 after the 11am service in the Gordon Chapel

Join Canon Jonathan Millard for a training on how to become a Lay Eucharistic Minister (LEM). LEMs take communion to those who are in the hospital, in nursing homes or perhaps at home for extended times. We would love to have more folks on this team. If you are already a LEM and want a refresher, you are welcome as well. For more information, please email marilyn.chislaghi@ascensionpittsburgh.org.



Special Needs Ministry

Capernaum Friends Club meets Saturday, March 10 from 2 – 4pm



Ascension's Capernaum Friends Club had a Valentine Day Dance on February 18 for our friends with special needs. We hosted over 50 people including friends, family and volunteers from both Ascension and the South Hills Capernaum Club. Everyone had so much fun playing games, making Valentines, eating pizza and, above all, DANCING!! We are extremely grateful for our DJ, Ascension's own Tyler Marwood! We had to put on our dancing shoes to keep up with Tyler! We are also grateful for the many volunteers who share the love of Jesus with our special needs friends.

The next Capernaum Friends Club meets **Saturday, March 10th from 2 – 4pm.** Anyone is welcome to join us, even if you are just curious about what we do. If you know a family with a special needs child or young adult, please let them know about us! Our doors are open wide! For more information, please reach

out to Christina at carlucci.christina@gmail.com.

Sacramental Confession By appointment

Monday, March 26 - Wednesday, March 28

In the Anglican tradition, there is no requirement for private confession. However, James 5:16 reads, "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for one other so that you may be healed." If you desire to have your conscience unburdened and to receive spiritual consolation and ease of mind, you are invited to receive reconciliation with God through the aid of a priest. Jonathan Millard, Jonathan Warren and Tish Warren will be available by appointment these three days during Holy Week to hear your private confession. Please call or email one of the priests or call the church office in confidence (ext. 219).

Lunch with Jonathan and Andrea

Sunday, April 8 after the 11am service

This will be Canon Jonathan Millard's last Sunday with us until he returns from his sabbatical leave in mid-August. Please join Jonathan and Andrea Millard for lunch in the New Catacombs following the 11am service. They will speak for about 30 minutes on their plans and hopes for this sabbatical leave. All are welcome. Lunch is by donation. Childcare provided.



Local Missions

Here are snapshots of several missions our church has supported for many years through our mission budget. Our congregational prayers this month will focus on Seeds of Hope, East Liberty Family Health Care Center (ELFHCC) and the Kairos Prison Ministry.

Seeds of Hope

Seeds of Hope is an Anglican parish in the Bloomfield-Garfield neighborhood. The Rev. Dr. John Paul Chaney and his wife Marilyn lead a congregation that serves the poor and needy in many ways. In the summer, the church hosts the **6-week Earthen Vessels Outreach day camp** staffed by college students and high school seniors that cares for 80-90 kids from disadvantaged families in the neighborhood. Earthen Vessels Outreach serves the community with food and educational help during the school year, too. If you're a student interested in serving as a summer camp counselor, or you'd like to know more about Earthen Vessels, please visit the website www.evo-pgh.org for contact info.



In addition to services at the main sanctuary located at 257 S. Evaline Street, the parish offers a service called Word of Life at 11am Sundays at Lighthouse Pointe Village senior living center in O'Hara Township. On the third Saturday of every month, Seeds of Hope Deacon Byron Johnson also has a service for the residents of the Ladies of the Grand Army of the Republic Health and Rehab Center in Turtle Creek.

East Liberty Family Health Care Center

The Center was founded by Ascension's Dr. David Hall 36 years ago to offer first-quality medical care to East End families regardless of their ability to pay. From the start, it has been a Christian clinic: prayer is available with every visit but is never required - all receive the same care and attention. David has said, *"One of my great privileges is the chance to pray with my patients."*

In addition to David, several Ascensionites have found their callings at ELFHCC as full-time nurses and physicians; others in our congregation are regular patients at the clinic or serve on its board. From 3 rooms in a church basement, the clinic has expanded to 75 people in 3 locations serving about 9000 patients a year, with roughly 40% of the care uncompensated. Almost 3/4 of the patients have incomes at less than 200% of the poverty line.



Dr. David Hall

Make your flu shot appointment now!

412.661.2802

Available at East Liberty, Hill District, and Lincoln-Lemington locations.

There are chances to volunteer with patients at ELFHCC and to work on the final stages of upcoming construction projects that will take shape as they renovate parts of their space in East Liberty this spring. They are seeking to build a separate pediatric waiting room and suite allowing kids and parents to feel welcome and safe. The center has added a chaplain on staff, Mary Lovett. The staff and volunteers at the center hope to extend blessings more deeply into the three neighborhoods where their clinics are located, the East End, Lincoln-Lemington and Hill District neighborhoods regardless of ability to pay.

Kairos Prison Ministry International

by Ron and Judy Yadrick

Fulfilling Christ's call in Matthew 25: 36

"... I was in prison and you visited me ..."



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What is Kairos? It is an inter-denominational Christian ministry whose mission is to take the face and heart of Jesus inside State and Federal prisons to share His love and forgiveness and impact the hearts and lives of incarcerated men, women and youth, as well as their families, to become loving and productive citizens of their communities. Its motto is *"Listen, Listen, Love, Love."* Kairos, translated from the Greek, is *"God's Special Time,"* where God transforms the lives of individuals.

Kairos "Inside" brings a trained team of lay-volunteers and clergy inside the prison setting for a 3-1/2 day weekend led by same gender Kairos volunteers. The team works with a group of chosen residents and the weekend will include talks, meditations, discussions, group and individual activities, and music. God works through the servant hearts of the team as the Holy Spirit brings down the inevitable walls of anger, fear, resentment, and hate. Hearts open up to the "Amazing" grace, forgiveness and unconditional love that God offers. Christians are born or re-born! We often see a new creation in Christ!

The long-range view distinguishes Kairos from other prison ministries. The volunteers and residents (inmates), among other things, discuss basics like "listening skills," an essential for participating in weekly "Prayer and Share" gatherings. Volunteers return to the prison for this weekly follow-up support. Without it, what may have been a mountain-top experience on retreat, would quickly be lost to the prison environment.

Kairos "Outside" ministers to female loved ones of men and women who are, or have been, incarcerated. Women affected by incarceration "do time" right along with their loved ones. This weekend retreat is free to female guests. The ladies soon realize that those around them share the same chains. The weekend is designed to help break the chains of isolation and the societal stigma and replace them with inner healing, friendships and support. The ministry continues with reunions and SWAP (Share, Witness, Action, Prayer) groups to help grow their faith and allow them to become active members of the Kairos Outside community. Often a transforming experience, often women who participate as guests return to serve as team members in future Kairos Outside weekends.

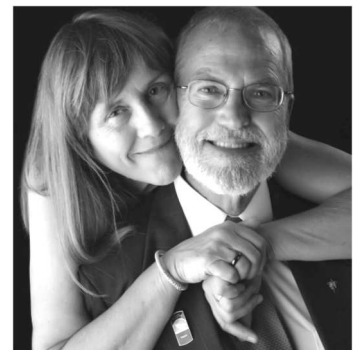
Kairos Outside weekend retreats are held the last weekend in October at *St. Paul of the Cross Retreat Center* located on the South Side Slopes in Pittsburgh. We extend an invitation to come and hear the women share their Weekend experience at the closing ceremony Sunday afternoon. Their witness is heart-warming and overwhelming! Let Jackie McKee know if you are interested in attending.

Interested in joining a Kairos Team? As a member, you attend mandatory team formation meetings for each Weekend. The training program is approximately 40 hours (4 all-day Saturdays and an overnight session) prior to the Weekend. You learn about the prison environment and the rules and regulations that need to be followed. Specific tasks are defined, explained, and assigned. Serving includes participating in the continuing ministry of reunions and "Prayer and Share." On the Weekend, you enter the prison daily to meet with the residents, then return to home base in the evening, usually at a local church, where the "Prayer and Sacrifice" support team sets up camp and offers valuable logistical support.

Those interested can contact Jackie McKee (mckeejk@gmail.com) or Judy and Ron Yadrick (ronyadrick@gmail.com). The international website is www.kpmi.org and the PA website is www.kairospa.org. Financial contributions can be made payable to KPMI, with KOWPA or SCI-Greene on the memo line and sent to PO Box 224, Meadville, PA 16335.



Jackie McKee



Judy and Ron Yadrick

The Yadricks are serving on team March 15-18.

A Kairos Inside team is entering SCI Greene in Waynesburg, PA.

Please pray for the work of building HIS Church inside those prison walls.

Congregational Care

We are continuing our look at the Congregational Care Team with this interview of Mari Stout about *The Workshop*, Ascension's Counseling Ministry.



By Tish Warren



Mari Stout

How long have you been at Ascension and how did you find out about Ascension?

Mari: Jim was a member at Ascension when we got married, so I began attending here as well. This was back in 2000. We moved to Philly in 2002 for me to attend seminary and were there until 2009. When we moved back to Pittsburgh in 2009, we returned to Ascension.

What is your favorite kind of ice cream?

Mari: I know this makes me weird, but I'm not a big fan of ice cream.

If you had a completely free afternoon and could spend it anyway you'd like, what would you do?

Mari: Read . . . or go to a thrift store.

If you could have one super power, what would it be? And why?

Mari: I would love to fly—and not be afraid of heights while doing it. I imagine it to feel beautiful and free.

How did you come to The Workshop?

Mari: After graduate school I worked for the Christian Counseling and Educational Foundation (CCEF) near Philadelphia. A core tenet of their counseling is to work closely with churches. I grew to appreciate this holistic approach to counseling, and when we moved to Pittsburgh wanted to be a part of a counseling ministry that was explicitly connected to a parish.

What does this ministry look like or do?

Mari: The counseling ministry of The Workshop is really an arm of pastoral care. There can be seasons in our lives where we are stuck or hurting—individually and/or relationally. It can be a gift to have someone intentionally process, guide and walk with us in these seasons of struggle. I have seen how Jesus meets us in this journey, and that it is often in the very face of suffering that we get to know him as “the God of all comfort” (II Cor. 1:3).

What is your favorite part of leading or being on this ministry team?

Mari: I am, by nature, a cynic. My work as a counselor has changed that. Every week I get to witness just how good God is, how well he knows and loves my clients, and how he makes us whole. It is a humbling privilege to get to have a front row seat, where I witness profound redemption. I hate suffering. I hate that the world is not the way it's supposed to be. At times, my reflex is still to shake my fist and scream at God, “You better be seeing this! This better matter to you!” He has been so kind to me. He's shown me over and again that it does matter to him. In fact, I've come to see that he hates suffering even more than I do.

Could you share about the new therapists who recently joined The Workshop team?

Mari: In January, The Workshop welcomed two new therapists: Priscilla Ortlip and Camden Bianco.

Priscilla Ortlip



Priscilla comes to us with over 3 decades of experience as a therapist. She has joined our counseling team through a partnership with the Christian Counselors Collaborative, of which she is the founder. Her areas of specialty include: trauma and abuse, family and relationship issues, and anxiety and depression. Priscilla worships at Allegheny Alliance Church on the north side. She is a wealth wisdom and experience.

Those interested in counseling with Priscilla can contact her via the Christian Counselors Collaborative at www.cccpgh.org or 1-855-222-2575. Priscilla works at Ascension on Thursdays.

Camden Bianco



is a graduate of Covenant Seminary. She loves working with children, teens and young adults. She is very insightful and connects quickly and deeply with her clients. She comes to us with an art therapy background. Camden worships at City Reformed Church in Oakland, where her husband is the Assistant Pastor.



Those interested in contacting Camden can email her at camdenbianco@gmail.com. She primarily works at Ascension on Fridays.

How can our church support this ministry and

how can we be in prayer for your team?

Mari: Thank you for this question. For the Workshop counselors: would you pray that we would be listening for where God is working in our clients? And that we would be humble, wise, loving and bold as we respond to what we see. For the Workshop clients: would you pray for courage for them to do hard (and often painful) work? And that each one, even in the face of suffering and stuck-ness, would encounter both God and themselves more fully?

How does this ministry help Ascensionites to “do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith” (Galatians 6:10)?

Mari: It strikes me that many of us limp around, dragging or attempting to conceal the parts of ourselves that don't work very well. I believe that it really is “for freedom that Christ has set us free.” The ministry of The Workshop hopes to play a role in helping people discover this freedom and live into it more fully.

How can folks contact you and when do you counsel?

I counsel out of Ascension several days a week. If I can't fit clients into my schedule, I'm happy to refer to other counselors who might be suitable. Folks can reach out to me at macstout@gmail.com. Thanks!

Music Ministry

By Chris Massa and Jeanne Kohn

*Oh, how good and pleasant it is, when brethren live together in unity!
It is like fine oil upon the head that runs down upon the beard,
Upon the beard of Aaron and runs down upon the collar of his robe.
It is like the dew of Hermon that falls upon the hills of Zion.
For there the LORD has ordained the blessing: life for evermore.
— Psalm 133, The Book of Common Prayer*



Chris Massa

A little over a year ago, two dear friends of mine (this is Chris speaking) were blessed with twins. While they were obviously overjoyed at the new additions to their family, their enthusiasm was mixed with more than a little fear and trembling. You see, these twins were not their first children; in fact, they weren't their first *twins*. Less than two years earlier, they had welcomed their first set of twins, and they had a five-year-old as well. Yes, they were excited, and they knew that they were blessed, but they also recognized that with these blessings came the need for change.

We at Church of the Ascension have been richly blessed, and not just by the presence of children. Our worshipping community has grown and changed over the past several years, and these changes have brought both opportunities and challenges. As music ministers, we recognize the need to adjust with the changes while also prayerfully seeking how we can address the challenges. Simply stated, there will be some changes taking place in the music ministry of Ascension, but we believe that they are changes worth making.



Jeanne Kohn

Let's start by saying what will *not* be happening. The choir will not be going away, and neither will the organ, and the 9am and 11am services will maintain their unique musical identities. There will also not be a change in leadership or personnel, although hours may be shuffled around slightly.

What *will* be changing is that the 9am and 11am contemporary music teams will combine to form a single ministry. This means that, during the music at the 9am service and during the contemporary music at 11am (the music that has been led by Resounding Grace), the music will be led by a "combined" team made up of both 9am and 11am musicians. In many ways, this is not a new concept: At combined services throughout the year — whether it's the Saturday before the marathon or services followed by a cookout — as well as at the Laurelville parish retreat, we have frequently formed teams made up of musicians from both services. What is new is that, rather than doing this on special occasions, it will be every week.

Why is this happening? In one sense, we believe that this will strengthen the music ministry while also addressing certain challenges that the ministry is facing, and frankly, if we didn't believe that this would ultimately improve the quality of the music at both services, we wouldn't be doing it. In another sense, it is in response to the overwhelmingly positive feedback we have received after combined services, particularly (but not limited to) this past Laurelville retreat. But honestly, those are secondary considerations. The fact is that we believe that it is a "good, right, and joyful thing" when we worship together, that God takes great joy in us being united. Yes, there will be some adjustments and growing pains, and we covet your prayers as we, and the music ministry volunteers, navigate them, but we ultimately believe that this is the right next step for both the music ministry and Ascension as a whole.

Young Adult Ministry

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner and Compline!



Thanks so much to all who were able to attend our February Dinner and Compline! Everyone left with stomachs full of pancakes and hearts prepared to start Lent the next day.



Danyel Johnson

As I stood in the kitchen 20 minutes before our dinner started, I didn't have a single pancake made, yet thanks to our amazing pancake team everyone was still able to eat on time! A huge thanks to Kelsey and Jack who took over the pancake making. I've never seen so many pancakes being cooked at once! Also, thanks to Wesley who saved our bacon from burning and to Elizabeth who was ready to take on any job needed in order to ensure the food be ready.

While enjoying our pancakes we listened to Jonathan Warren talk about the reasoning behind Lent, how it changes and shapes us and ways that we can do Lent together as a community. We also heard some fun facts about Shrove Tuesday and its origin!

Sarah from **Earthen Vessels Outreach** came to talk to us about her summer internship, a 7-week long summer opportunity to minister to inner city kids in Pittsburgh!

We closed the evening with compline, led by Jonathan Warren and our worship team, Kelsey and Wesley. And, a final big thanks to Daniel and Lorna for helping to clean up the 'Pancake Factory'!



**OPEN
HAND**
ministries

What's coming up? **Service Day Saturday, March 3rd**

Young adults are invited to a service day with Open Hand Ministry on Saturday, March 3rd. Contact me (Danyel) for more info at danyelj10@gmail.com.

Dinner and Compline

Our next Dinner and Compline will be March 13th from 6:30-8:30pm. In February we had 10 new people come! This is a fantastic way to get to know others in our Young Adult community! We look forward to seeing you in March!

By the way, what's Compline? Compline is one of the Daily Offices found in the Book of Common Prayer. Most often, the word "office" means the place where we work, or a political position. But there's also a "church" meaning. From an ancient Latin root, it means to make a ceremony or service, so we refer to our through-the-day prayers as "offices." An "office" consists of prayer, scripture and psalms, and saying the offices is a way of living in constant touch with God. Jesus did it! Traditionally there are seven offices (see Psalm 119:164), but most who observe the offices don't do all seven. The principle is to have regular, fixed-time appointments with God - morning, noon and evening.



Youth Ministry

Hot Sauce!

My very gifted predecessor, Sarah Laribee, had a great tradition of taking a shot of hot sauce to welcome new friends to youth group. As much as the English love curries, I tend to choose the mild kind, and so I was a 'late adopter' of this hot sauce celebration. I put it off for nearly three years, but finally submitted to her superior wisdom and bit the bullet (or bought the bottle). The hot sauce welcome was introduced to the Middle School Youth Group on Friday, and there happened to be two new people. "Welcome Sophia!" I said, and glugged the fiery soup. Her mother later messaged me on Facebook..."Sophia keeps talking about your 'hot shot' in her honor and who she could invite!" Such a response also brightens the face on these cold grey days!

More Bibles! More Art!

The youth space I inherited included a collection of NIVs, ESVs and older Bibles that look much loved, like the Velveteen Rabbit. The growth of the middle school youth group on a Friday night also means we now need more Bibles! I would like to raise money to buy a new set of 50 NRSVs, (our pew Bible) and we will do so at a Lasagna Dinner on Saturday May 5th, after the 5pm Saturday Service (Marathon Weekend so worship will be on Saturday). The cost will probably be over \$500. While our Youth space is a friendly expression of the current community, with middle and high school faces grinning from framed photos on the wall, I am also convinced we need to communicate the importance of the passing of time. So I am commissioning an artist to produce a new large piece for our space that explores the connection between the liturgical calendar, growing up and church history. I'm thankful that our tradition helps us place our daily dramas in the context of the Big Story.

- Fundraiser -
Lasagna Dinner
SATURDAY, May 5th
Marathon Weekend
After the
Saturday Evening Service



Alex Banfield Hicks

Meet a member of the team!

Each Ascent will now profile a member of my team. Before Christmas I was praying that a young married couple would join the Middle School Ministry team, and my prayer was answered! Caelan and Natalie, newly-weds and Grove City grads, have brought much warmth, insight and servant-heartedness to our Friday nights, and this month I am presenting Natalie. She acknowledges that: "I got involved with Middle School youth here because I was hoping to reach out and help the church in some way, and I really appreciate the middle school age group; they are goofy and inquisitive but also tend to struggle with a lot of insecurities and awkwardness (something we have in common)."

As for what she intends to bring to their community, she added: "I hope to help them overcome the same fears and such that I faced at their age. I love trying to find ways to draw them out and be a friend." Illustrating this last point, she shared how on her first night she..."sat next to a couple of younger fellows during our large group time. Though initially, they seemed quite skeptical of a woman sitting next to them, they warmed up considerably upon the discovery that I shared a similar love for nerdy and excellent fantasy literature!"

Do pray for Natalie, in her marriage to Caelan, her contributions to their Community Group, and being mentor to middle school girls on Friday nights!

Natalie



Communion Class(es)

On Sunday, March 18 we will use our Sunday School time to teach on the sacrament of Communion/Eucharist. The aim is to teach the kids about why we do what we do, so that they can have a deeper reverence for Christ in worship. We also desire to equip parents with tools to talk to their kids about what they see and experience in worship. Matt Ulrich & Jonathan Warren will co-lead this time, and parents are encouraged to attend with their child.



Matt Ulrich

Sunday School Help Needed

Do you have a love for kids and a desire to see them grow up in the knowledge and love of Jesus? Children's Ministry needs your help! We are currently looking for teachers and assistants to lead elementary age classes and toddlers, especially during the 11am service. Matt would love to talk to you about how you could use your gifts in ministry to our kids!

Holy Week and Easter for Kids

Palm Sunday at 9am or 11am

This year all of the kids are invited and encouraged to join in leading the singing for the processional on Palm Sunday! All kids in grades K-5th will practice the song briefly at the end of the Sunday School hour on Lent 3, 4 & 5.

On Palm Sunday childcare is available for those 4 and under in rooms 101 and 102. If you would like your younger children to join with you in the palm processional around the church, please take them to childcare after the processional is complete. Children 5 and older are with their parents for the service. There are coloring sheets specifically for Palm Sunday located at the back of the church.

Maundy Thursday at 7pm

Childcare for those 4 and under in rooms 101 and 102. K – 5th grade will have a lesson together in the Hunt Rooms.

Good Friday from Noon – 3pm

Childcare for those 4 and under in rooms 101 and 102. Children's program for those K – 5th grade in the Hunt Rooms. Children can stay for all three hours, or for any one or two of the three hours. Children will engage in all kinds of activities that are themed to Holy Week and Easter.

Easter Sunday

6am Easter Vigil - No childcare

9am and 11am service – Childcare for those 4 and under in rooms 101 and 102; children 5 and older are with their parents for the service. There are coloring sheets for Easter Sunday located at the back of the church.

Easter Egg Hunt



We will have an Easter Egg Hunt in the Hunt Rooms/Courtyard (weather permitting) following both services on Easter Sunday. Please join us and bring baskets!

EASTER SUNDAY!

ascensionpittsburgh.org

JOIN US 

6 AM

Easter Vigil

8 AM

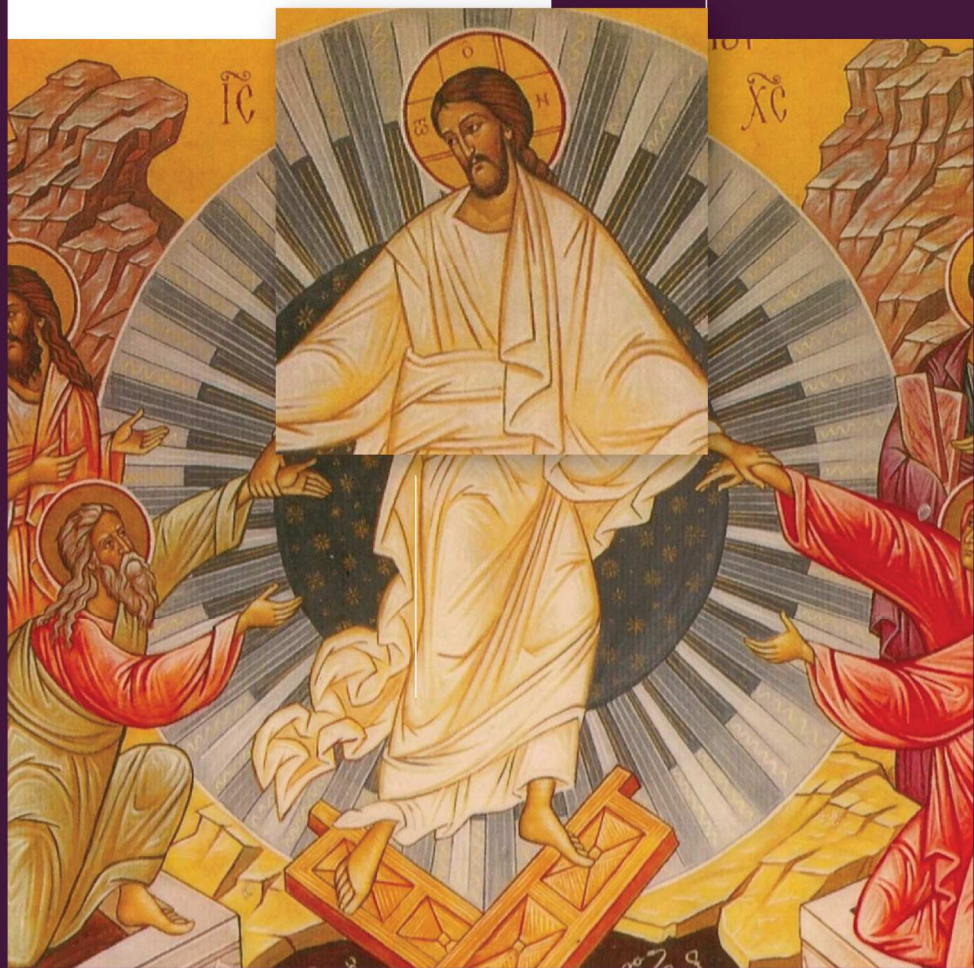
Sunrise Breakfast

9 AM

Holy Communion

11 AM

Holy Communion

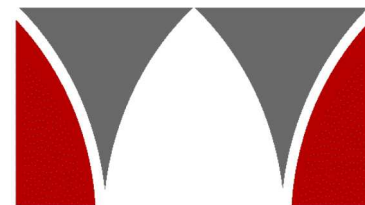


Great Vigil of Easter at 6am

The first service of Easter Day begins with darkness and includes the singing of the *Exsultet*, or Song of Praise, over the year's Easter Candle, the passing of the Light of Easter, scripture, silence and Holy Baptism. Please remember to bring your bells to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord! Childcare is not provided at the vigil.

9am and 11am Services

Our 9am and 11am worship will be much the same, but with songs, hymns and anthems to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord on Easter Day! Please remember to bring your bells!



CHURCH OF THE
ASCENSION

A Worshipping Community;
Equipping God's People;
Sharing Christ's Healing With a Broken World

Worship Services Sunday

9:00 a.m.

Holy Eucharist

11:00 a.m.

Holy Eucharist

Wednesday

Noon

Holy Eucharist

in the Gordon Chapel

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Ascent Deadline

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