

Ascent

October
2018

Abundance

“Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;
his love endures forever.”
(I Chronicles 16:34)



In our lives, and in the church, we may experience seasons that are dry and empty, when we feel that we don't have enough -- friends, money, work, or time. At other times we may experience seasons of an abundance of opportunities, blessings, resources, or joy.

In the biblical narrative we see this play out. You may remember Joseph's dream in which he saw seven fat cows and seven skinny cows. The fat cows represented years of plenty and the skinny cows, years of famine. In history, God's people experienced times of slavery, of wandering in the wilderness, of defeat and exile. They also experienced times of rescue, of living in the promised land with peace and prosperity. "Yet, in all seasons of life, it is good and right to give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever." (Psalm 136)

I think it is fair to say that we, at Ascension, are in a season of abundance.

A visit to the Parish Hall between services is evidence of the abundance of people on Sunday mornings. Sometimes it feels like you're taking your life in your hands to get to the refreshments without being run over by hordes of children! What a wonderful "problem." What an extraordinary answer to the prayers of parishioners decades ago -- at a time when there were very few children at Ascension!

We have seen record attendance over the summer and so many aspects of our church life are thriving. We have upwards of 70 youth in regular attendance at middle and high school youth groups. Most weeks we have more than 70 children under 11 in attendance on Sundays. Our Young Adult community groups are bursting at the seams. Our Wings (Special Needs ministry), English as a Second Language ministry (ESL), Seniors Ministry, and prayer ministries are all thriving. We continue to be blessed with an abundance of extraordinarily talented and dedicated musicians in our Music Ministries. Ascension as we know it could not function without the huge numbers of faithful volunteers who give of their time week by week in so many areas of ministry.

We also heard this month that the Pennsylvania Attorney General has 'signed off' on our Settlement agreement with the Episcopal Church and we are hoping and expecting that the local court will ratify the agreement within a few weeks. It seems our season of uncertainty regarding our buildings is nearing its end.

Most exciting of all are the people who are coming to Christian faith for the very first time in our midst, including those from other religious backgrounds and faiths.

With all these signs of abundance in our midst, how might God be calling us to respond?

Continued

I can think of at least three ways:

➡ **With thanksgiving and generosity.**

In the words of the 19th century hymn, *“To God be the Glory, great things he has done!”*

I’m mindful also of Jesus’ words: *“to whom much has been given, much will be required.”* (Luke 12:48)

➡ **With humility and attentiveness.**

In the Old Testament God warns his people, *“Take care that you do not forget the Lord your God, by failing to keep his commandments, his ordinances, and his statutes... ‘Do not say to yourself, My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth.’ But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth.”* (Deuteronomy 8:11, 17,18)

In the New Testament, St. Paul warns: *“if you think you are standing, watch out that you do not fall.”* (1 Cor. 10:12)

➡ **With renewed commitment to God and his church.**

Increased attendance, life, and growth brings with it renewed calls on our resources of people, buildings, time, and money. Over the coming months I will be working with the vestry to discern how God may be calling us to respond in the months and years ahead. In the meantime, I wonder, ***how might God be calling you to respond*** with your gifts, your time, and your money?

*“Now to him who by the power at work within us
is able to accomplish abundantly
far more than all we can ask or imagine,
to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus
to all generations, forever and ever.
Amen.”*

Ephesians 3:20

Yours in Christ,

Jonathan +

Jonathan N. Millard
(Rector)



EXPLORE ASCENSION

New Member Class



Saturday, October 13

9am – lunch

Ascension Hunt Rooms

Our next Explore Ascension class will be Saturday, October 13. This class is for all those who are new to Ascension, who wish to find out more about Anglicanism in general or Ascension in particular. It is also part of the pathway to membership. So, mark your calendars!

The class is co-taught by all Ascension clergy Jonathan Millard, Jonathan Warren, and Tish Warren. We begin with breakfast and conclude with lunch. Childcare is provided.

If you would like to register there are a couple of options:

1. Visit www.ascensionpittsburgh.org and sign up there;
2. Email Marilyn that you plan to come at marilyn.chislaghi@ascensionpittsburgh.org.

The Rev. Tish Warren named Writer-in-Residence

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Dear Ascension family,

I'm writing to let you know of a change that took place on September 1. Mother Tish took on a new and different role as Writer-in-Residence and Fr. Jonathan Warren became full-time Associate Rector. I'm eager to share this change with you which comes about at the request of the Warrens and with the enthusiastic support of the vestry, myself and the bishop.

Why this change?

In Mother Tish's own words:

"I love working at Church of the Ascension. I truly love being a priest. I love [hearing] confessions and meeting with parishioners. I love being part of this staff team, participating in staff meetings, and strategizing about Ascension's mission and future. However, as my work and profile as a writer has grown, I can't figure out how to be a writer and a priest together in this season of life. My mental and emotional energy is divided between my book projects and my work at the church. Because of all this it can feel like: motherhood, writing, parish ministry. Pick two of three... However, I have no desire whatsoever to be a public priest and writer who is disconnected from the church. I still very much desire to be institutionally imbedded. I want to serve the church as a priest and in my work as a writer, and I want to stay grounded in the actual work of a pastor."



How she will minister?

Tish's primary contribution to Ascension will be her vocation as a priest-writer. As many of you will know Tish was the recipient of Christianity Today's 2018 Book of the Year award for her book *Liturgy of the Ordinary* (IVP 2016). If you have not yet read this, I highly commend it to you.

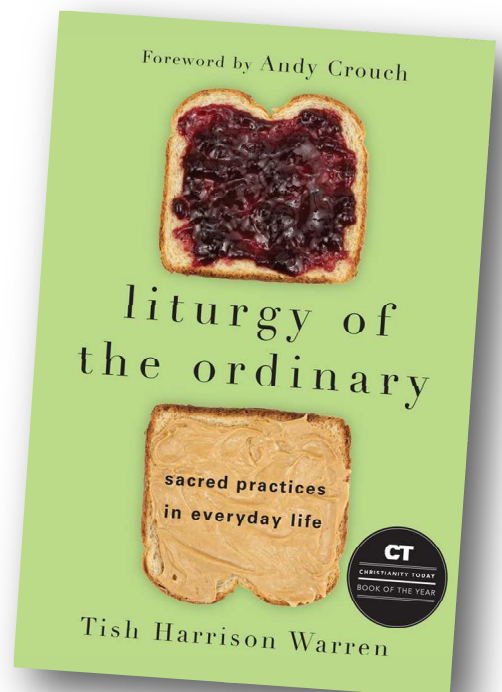
Additionally, Tish will:

1. Preach and celebrate at Ascension approximately every four to six weeks.
2. Provide pastoral presence: serving liturgically, hearing confessions, and undertaking other occasional priestly duties.
3. Engage with young adults through regular events such as Dinner and Compline.
4. Write monthly articles for our newsletter, *The Ascent*.

Yours in Christ,

Jonathan +

Jonathan N. Millard
(Rector)





Baptism in the New Testament

Baptism is a ritual with immense significance in the New Testament. St. Paul says that when we are plunged under the waters of baptism, we die together with Christ, and when we rise from the water we are raised to new life together with him (Romans 6:3-4).

St. Peter gives us another image: through the waters of baptism we pass through the death of God's judgment of sin and are placed into the safety of the ark, just as Noah and his family were (1 Peter 3:20-1). And that ark is the church.

St Paul also tells us in Titus 3:5 that in baptism we are washed with the water of regeneration. Here he draws on Temple imagery to liken baptism to the bath that priests must take in the bronze basin in the inner court of the Temple in order to approach the high altar and the Holy of Holies. In baptism we are given the great dignity and honor of being incorporated into the kingdom of priests. In keeping with this, at baptism we are given the vocation 'never to be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and 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' (Collect after Baptism).

Fundamental Changing of Loyalties

To be baptized is thus not simply a rite of passage or a symbolic act of belonging to the church. It involves a fundamental change in our loyalties. It is a fundamental surrender of ourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is slavery to Christ rather than slavery to sin. It is a submission to and an invocation of his Lordship in every area of our lives. It is a refusal to hold any part of ourselves back from him. It is the concession that he is the rightful ruler and owner of all things, and that he is worthy of this love and submission because he 'loved me and gave himself for me' (Galatians 2:20).

Preparation: Counting the Cost

This change of loyalties is symbolized and really given in baptism, and historically the process of changing one's allegiance from sin to Christ involved lengthy preparation, as candidates for baptism counted the cost of following Christ (Luke 14:28).

At Ascension, the process of preparation for adult baptism involves learning basic Christian teaching summarized in the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, and the Ten Commandments. It also involves a process of relinquishing our lives to him by learning to pray, and to follow him as his disciples in the realms of sex, money, and power, three areas that are consistently highlighted throughout Scripture as presenting painful obstacles to our allegiance to Christ.

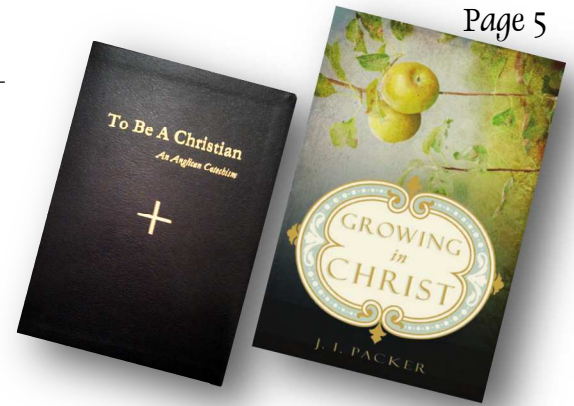
Nuts and Bolts of Baptismal Preparation

There will be a total of 12 classes, all held on Sunday mornings from 9:30 – 10:30am. They will be taught by Robin Capcara, an experienced Christian teacher in our congregation, in three 4-week modules. We will be using J.I. Packer's *Growing in Christ*, as well as the Anglican Catechism, *To Be a Christian*. The modules will be held at the following times:

Module 1: November 4, 11, 18; December 2

Module 2: January 13, 20, 27; February 3

Module 3: March 3, 10, 17, 24



Each candidate will be paired with a baptismal sponsor as well. Candidates will meet with their sponsors at least 4 times between November and April to talk and pray together. Candidates who decide through this process that they want to dedicate themselves to Christ will meet with one of Ascension's priests in April and then will be baptized at the 6am Easter Vigil on Sunday, April 21, 2019.

Are you already baptized but are now finding your way back to Christ?

Although this process is primarily oriented toward those pursuing adult baptism, it is also open to those who were baptized in the past but who have only recently rekindled their relationship with Christ and are seeking to reaffirm their baptismal vows. Please contact Fr. Jonathan Warren at jonathan.warren@ascensionpittsburgh.org if you are interested in getting more information or signing up.

Ascension International Ministry



New Discipleship 101 Class started

The centerpiece of our international ministry is our English as a Second Language program. Classes are held Monday mornings and Wednesday evenings. Along with the classes, we host Bible studies that participants are welcome to attend as well. On Sunday, September 23rd we began to host a Sunday morning Discipleship 101 class for internationals who are new to the Christian faith. The class is called 'Growing in Faith' and runs concurrent with the 11am service in the conference room.

Ascension International Ministry Food Festival

Along with a few field trips this fall, notably to a pumpkin patch(!), we will also host an International Ministry Food Festival on Friday, November 2. This will be a fun evening with great food as our international friends bring in dishes from their own countries. Members and friends of Ascension are welcome to join the fun, bring along some food, and get to know internationals who LOVE speaking with Americans.

Conversation Partners or Field Trip Drivers

If you would like to be paired with an international to speak English, or if you would enjoy driving on one of our field trips, contact LuAnn (info below).

Thanksgiving Hosts

Internationals love being invited into American homes for Thanksgiving. This is something we've coordinated the past several years, and it has resulted in deep and lasting relationships. If you would like to host one or more internationals this year, please contact LuAnn.

Want more information?

If you would like to volunteer in the International Ministry, contact LuAnn at PittsburghEnglish4U@gmail.com.

Hard Conversations in a Cultural Minefield

teaching and discussion about human sexuality

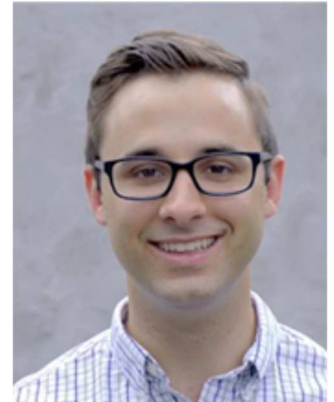
All Members of the parish are invited to an evening discussion, hosted by Jonathan Warren with speaker Pieter Valk. Details are to follow. RSVPs are not necessary. For more information, please email jonathan.warren@ascensionpittsburgh.org.

Date: Saturday, October 20

Time: 7pm – 8:30 pm

Location: Parish Hall, Church of the Ascension

Coffee, tea, and childcare provided



Pieter Valk,
Executive Director of



We are a church that believes, teaches, and confesses that marriage is a total, comprehensive union between one man and one woman that is open to children (if God wills), and which displays the mystery of Christ and the church, and that sex is to be expressed only in marriage. We are a church that believes, teaches, and confesses that the difference between male and female, which is not *only* anatomical but finds chromosomal expression at the cellular level, is a structure of God's good creation and is not dependent upon the subjective sense of oneself as male or female. These are not optional add-ons to the story of Scripture, but rather they are commitments which, if removed, distort the integrity of the story.

We are also a church that proclaims Christ's redeeming and transforming love for all people, including our LGBTQ+ neighbors, friends, and those inside and outside the Church family. We are a church in which some are gay and lesbian and some experience gender dysphoria, and we believe that Christ is "bringing many of these sons and daughters to glory" (Hebrews 2:10).


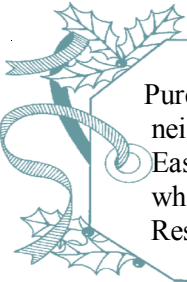



We believe that the gospel is good news for *everyone*, including those who identify as LGBTQ+ persons, and we are committed as a church not only to saying that it is, but to imagining and working to demonstrate how it can be. We believe that it is possible both to hold the Church's traditional sexual ethic unequivocally *and* be committed to the flourishing of gay and lesbian and gender dysphoric persons in the Church. We believe that God can use the efforts of LGBTQ+ persons in our church not only to lead holy, chaste, and sanctified lives themselves, but also to bless this community and to call us to holiness and conformity to Christlikeness.

Because we hold these convictions, Ascension will be hosting an evening discussion with Pieter Valk, a gay, celibate Anglican Christian, who is the founder of the ministry EQUIP. The mission of EQUIP is to help the Church better love those who experience same-sex attraction. EQUIP yearns 'for the Church to become a place where children hear their parents and pastors talk about same-sex attraction in theologically accurate and compassionate ways. So that when, in late elementary school or early middle school, some children [experience feelings of same sex attraction] , they no longer respond with shame, fear, or hiding. Instead, we desire for them to share with their parents and pastors because they have heard that God still loves them and has good things for them'. That is our desire at Ascension as well, and we hope that this conversation will generate a deeper trust and confidence in the power of the gospel, and a deeper sense of love among us as a body and for our neighbors. Please join us for this important discussion.

Local Mission Opportunities

Here are some local ministries through which Ascension's members extend Christ's love outside our walls. Newcomers are always welcome! For more information on any of the ministries, please contact Jonathan Sewall, 412-452-1935 or jonathan.sewall@gmail.com. Thanks!

Great activities to do involving community groups, families or individuals!

Ministry name	How you can help	Info & Contact
Giving Tree www.eecm.org 	 <p>Purchase gifts for our neighbors in the East End of Pittsburgh who lack financial Resources.</p>	<p>November – December; Email or text Jonathan Sewall (see above) or see him during hospitality hour between services.</p>
Circles www.circlespgh.org 	<p>Engage with neighbors in the East End through the Circles program to help move individuals and families out of poverty.</p>	<p>Every Tuesday from 6 – 8pm; Contact Ted Melnyk at tedmelnyk@hotmail.com or see him during hospitality hour between services.</p>
Open Hand Ministries www.openhandpgh.org 	<p>Help renovate housing in the East End for those who lack financial resources.</p>	<p>First Saturdays; Contact Tim Raufer traufer@openhandpittsburgh.org or see him during hospitality hour between services.</p>
Shelter Meals www.eecm.org 	<p>Cook or serve meals for guests at East End Cooperative Ministry</p>	<p>Serve the last Tuesday of the month and cook the Sunday prior; Email or text Jonathan Sewall (see above) or see him during hospitality hour between services.</p>
Shepherd's Heart Meals www.shepheart.org 	<p>Cook or serve meals for the poor or homeless at Shepherd's Heart Anglican Fellowship in Pittsburgh's uptown neighborhood (by Mercy Hospital)</p>	<p>Six Sundays per year as announced. The final dates for 2018 are October 28 and December 2. Email or text Jonathan Sewall (see above) or see him during hospitality hour between services.</p>



Agape Year

Agape Year is a partnership between the Anglican Global Mission Partners and Young Anglicans Project. The Directors of Agape Year, Nate and Erika Twichell, attend Ascension and all Agape Year Fellows participate in the life and worship of our church.

Agape year is a 9-month program for recent high school graduates. They are encouraged to 'go deep', living in community while receiving intense discipleship instruction; to 'go far', living and ministering overseas for 4 – 6 weeks; and to 'go tell', concluding the program with a tour of U.S. churches to witness to what God did during their time as fellows.

Ascension's recent sermon series on the Epistle of James calls us to a life of faith and action. Since we have the Spirit of the Living God dwelling within us, our lives reflect our transformed nature. And our works show our faith in action. We call this 'lived theology'.

In *Agape Year* we say **Go Deep, Go Far, Go Tell**. The first four months of our time together (September through December) is when we **Go Deep**. So what does Going Deep look like?

First Go Deep in God's word. We start our days with Morning Prayer. Three times a week we gather to study the Nicene Creed; we've confessed our faith through the Creed hundreds or thousands of times, but what are the implications of what we are saying? We use Lectio Divina to pray through the scriptural backbone of our confession: if we confess that God is maker of heaven and earth, what does it say about God that he says His creation is good?

Then we **Go Deep in service.** On any given day this fall Tessa and Kieran (our fellows for the year) can be found teaching ESL to our new neighbors at Ascension, leading a Bible study for the "houseless" with Living Ministries, helping vulnerable children learn how to read with Urban Impact, tending a community garden on an abandoned baseball field, or joining in breaking the cycles of generational poverty through home ownership with Open Hand Ministries.



All of this is done in the context of our church family. And we need your participation. Next time you see Tessa or Kieran can you ask them what it's like to eat with the houseless? Can you ask them what it is like to tutor in an under-performing public elementary school? Can you pray for them? We want you to join us! Come and see what your brothers and sisters are doing! Please contact Nate or Erika at natetwichell@sams-usa.org if you'd like to join us for a meal or in service.

Building a Culture of INVITATION

As Ascension, we desire for every member and attender to be seen and heard and to experience the love of Christ, and to be immersed in deep and transformative relationships. At a church of our size, we believe that these connections can be best facilitated through participation in smaller segments of the congregation. Seeing each other in Sunday worship and having casual conversations in the Parish Hall are not sufficient points of contact with the body, which is why along with organic connections between parishioners, we emphasize our Community Groups as the front line of our congregational care and the principal structure that drives relational connections between participants in the body of Christ at Ascension.

Because of the vital role Community Groups play in our congregation, we have striven to cast vision for and to inculcate a *culture of invitation* in our Community Groups. But this culture of invitation in Community Groups is merely an extension and intensification of a culture we hope to see firmly implanted in organic ways at Ascension. When members of Ascension meet new people, whether they are brand new or have been coming for some time, we hope that one of the first things that will happen is an invitation of some sort – an invitation to lunch, or to coffee, or to a gathering event (Seniors Luncheon, Dinner and Compline, etc.). Among the easiest and most non-threatening thing to invite a newcomer to, however, is a Community Group, and we have asked both members and leaders of groups to be active in inviting others to their groups.

My favorite story that I have recently heard about this culture of invitation taking deep root in a Community Group involves a newly formed Young Adult Group, led by Elizabeth Ruscitti and Alex Kabusk and hosted by Clare Clifton at her apartment in Squirrel Hill. Just before the group was poised to meet for the first time, Clare sent out an email inviting all of her friends from church and among her recently graduated Grove City friends inviting them to come to the group. She wrote to say that ‘I already have about 40 people on my list....so I hope I’m not going overboard’! Nearly 20 showed up for their first gathering together, many of whom also came to the Dinner & Compline gathering event for Young Adults later in the week, again as a result of personal invitations sent.

We don’t all need to be inviting forty people to our Community Groups, but we can let the vitality and enthusiasm of this group become infectious to us. We can develop a passion to see more people connected to the body through the life of our Community Groups. We can pray concertedly that God would raise up more leadership and more Community Groups, with greater geographic

concentration, so that more people may be seen and heard, and brought into the fellowship of Ascension. Whoever we are, we can become people who invite people to know the goodness of God, who with

St. Andrew say,

"Come and See"



"Come and See"



By Jonathan Warren,
Associate Rector

Youth Ministry

Fall Launch Overnight

Although I planned a badly-timed event (a camping overnight just before school started!), it went surprisingly well! We had fifty youth delegates, a good team of leaders and a band of ‘camping chiefs’ (dads) who arrived in the evening and set up all our tents while we were in chapel. We emerged at dusk to see a festival of canvas awaiting us! I’m thankful for the personal retreats, small group prayer times and the chance to teach on Romans 12. Pray that all the resolutions made to follow God’s calling into the new academic year will bear fruit!



Middle School Youth Group

It became increasingly important to me over the summer to aim to recruit two leaders for each small group, ideally a 20-something teamed with a college student. This encourages friendships amongst leaders, informal mentoring, and a stronger leadership dynamic. I am incredibly thankful that Bellefield church, under the direction of Tanya Carter, has been bringing not just middle and high schoolers to Ascension, but also sends college students to help with CAYG. Thus, Friday night saw me gather with a top-quality team of 12 volunteers, eating dinner together with that night’s chefs, Kathy Hartle and Sally James, before welcoming a vibrant gathering of Middle Schoolers at 6:30pm. The leaders also let me take their photo by the pool table afterwards. Do pray for these ministry friendships to grow and for this team to go from strength to strength (pictured below).

High School Youth Group

In my first year at Ascension, Jane would welcome me home after leading the high school youth group and I would occasionally come bounding in enthusiastically, exclaiming “nine turned up!” Things plateaued in my second year, doubled in my third year, but now have doubled again! No one was expecting the forty who arrived on Sunday night, not least Leah and our two Pitt students, who walked in the door with ‘too many’ boxes of pizzas. It’s exciting! But do pray for wisdom for me and the CAYG leadership team (volunteers and high schoolers) to know how best to respond to the challenges and opportunities that this presents. Thanks for praying!

For more information

Email or text Alex (alex.banfieldhicks@ascensionpittsburgh.org; 412-652-3137)

Visit www.caygonline.org for breaking news about CAYG (Church of the Ascension Youth Group).





2018-2019 Calendar

FALL

FLO @ ST JO'S

10am Sat Aug 25 - 26th
Fall Launch Overnight

FALL SERIES (9)

Sep 7+9 - Nov 16+18
Doubting our Doubts

PARISH RETREAT

October 5+7
No Youth Group Oct 12 / 14.

DYG

Saturday November 3
Diocesan Youth Gathering

WREATH \$\$\$

Collect Sun Dec 2
Let's Fundraise \$3k+!

ADVENT (2)

Two weekends
Service + Movie Making

OVRNT B4 XMAS

Friday December 14th
Dinner, Movies, Christmas Fun

REST

Christmas and NYE
Take a holiday break!

(CAYG TEAM)

Saturday Jan 5th
Fox Chapel + Guest

SPRING

SKI TRIP

Jan 13-14
Hidden Valley

SPRING SERIES (10)

Jan 18+20 - Mar 29+31
Praying for Change

SENIOR TOURS

Various weekends
College-prep Church visits

GIRLS / GUYS

Feb 15+17
Valentines Discussions

DYG @ PP

Saturday April 13
Diocesan Youth Gathering

EASTER WEEKEND

Thursday April 18 - Sun 21
With whole church family

MRTN OVRNT

Saturday May 5
+Going The Distance

REST

Rest of May
Take a warm break!

(CAYG TEAM)

Saturday June 1st
Fox Chapel + Guest

SUMMER

TRANSITIONS

2nd Sunday in June
Hi 6th! Bye Seniors!

YOUTH ALPHA (7)

From 2nd w/e in June & July
Plus trips to Razzzy Fresh

PLANO, TEXAS

June 17-24
ACNA + Mission Trip

DAY TRIPS

2 July Wednesdays
CAYG Adventures

(CAYG TEAM)

Saturday August 3rd
Fox Chapel + Guest Speaker

REST

August
And breathe...

MIDDLE SCHOOL

FRIDAYS 6:30-8:30PM

HIGH SCHOOL

SUNDAYS 6:30-8:30PM

Thanks for praying for this program with us as we
foster faithful disciples of Jesus Christ!
(caygonline.com)



Year 1 7 Monthly Sunday Lunches

9/23/18	Introduction
[10/7/18]	[Parish Retreat = No Meeting]
11/4/18	The Gospel
12/9/18	Bible Overview
1/6/19	Creeds
2/3/19	Sacraments
3/3/19	The Lord's Prayer
4/7/19	Ten Commandments

Year 2 8 Monthly Sunday Lunches

9/8/19	The Anglican Church
[10/7/19]	[Parish Retreat = No Meeting]
11/3/19	Book of Common Prayer
12/8/19	God the Holy Spirit
1/5/20	God the Father
2/2/20	God the Son
3/1/20	Capstone Presentations
4/5/20	End of Confirmation Assessment
5/10/20	Confirmation Service + Lunch with the Bishop!

Youth Confirmation

By Alex Banfield Hicks

Anglicanism requires a public and personal profession of the faith from every adult believer in Jesus Christ. Confirmation by a bishop is its liturgical expression. In Confirmation, God, through the bishop's prayer for daily increase in the Holy Spirit and the laying on of hands, strengthens the believer for Christian life in the service of Christ and his kingdom. Grace is God's gift, and we pray that he will pour out his Holy Spirit on those who have already been made his children by adoption and grace in Baptism.

During the Confirmation service, the bishop will say: "Dearly beloved, it is essential that those who wish to be Confirmed in this Church must publicly confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior; become his disciple; know and affirm the Nicene Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Commandments; and have received instruction in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments and the Catechism of the Church." But how do young confirmands learn the Nicene Creed? How can we at Ascension best help them understand the Old and New Testaments and the Catechism of the Church? How can we do this together?

The nine confirmands pictured here completed the first iteration of a two-year youth confirmation process. They met together for lunch on the first Sunday of each month, enjoyed the presentation of a guest speaker, discussed it together, and went home with an assignment to undertake with their confirmation mentor, the results of which they would present to the group the following month.

The 2018-2020 youth confirmation process follows a similar pattern of monthly lunches, mentors and homework assignments but has been streamlined from 16 to 12 main sessions, plus an introduction, end of course assessment and Confirmation Sunday itself. See opposite for an outline of the dates and the theme of each session. If you're interested in joining our team of confirmation mentors, or would like your child to be considered for the youth confirmation process, then please do contact me. I am very thankful that Tom Hillman and Zack Wilson have joined the team to run our monthly sessions, but am looking for a volunteer to coordinate the catering. I hope to hear from you!



Teach me your ways, O LORD, that I may live according to your truth! Grant me purity of heart, so that I may honor you. Psalm 86:11

Young Adults

Ascension Campus Fellowship Weekly Bible Study



As seasons change in nature and in our own lives, it is easy to get caught up in all the business. This is especially true for college students. Syllabus week has passed, the novelty of the semester has worn off, and—believe it or not—midterms are right around the corner. However, it is in these busy and stressful times when we most need to rely on God and His strength and goodness.

If you are a college student, and you find yourself in this situation, we'd like to invite you to join us for the Ascension Campus Fellowship Weekly Bible Study! This school year we will be going through the book of Romans learning about the gospel, specifically the ways in which the gospel affects what we believe and how we behave.

We meet at Church of the Ascension in room 105 on Tuesdays at 6:30pm, and we hope to see you there! For more information, email or text our Associate Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry, Leah Hornfeck (leah.hornfeck@ascensionpittsburgh.org; 724-630-0167).

Young Adult Dinner and Compline

Our monthly Dinner and Compline series invites young adults to come into community in order to wrestle through the challenges and celebrate the joys that this time of life brings. Recently, we held our September Dinner and Compline, and it was hands down the best one thus far with over 30 young adults gathering together to share a meal and receive some life advice from our rector, Jonathan Millard, and his wife, Andrea.

Though the summer weather had continued into this September evening, the orange tablecloths and leafy designed plates gave the sense of excitement and warmth that comes with the autumn season. The room was not the only thing that reflected the changing seasons though. The message from Jonathan and Andrea about calling was quite reminiscent of the ways in which the seasons of our lives change as God calls us to new jobs, places, relationships, etc. Everything about this evening was well-timed considering change and transition are things that most young adults are deeply acquainted with.

These types of topics will be ones that we will continue to discuss and work through in upcoming Dinner and Compline Evenings.

Our October Dinner and Compline speaker will be former Ascension Youth Director, Sarah Laribee, recently returned from several years teaching in a school in Iraq. It will take place on Thursday, October 4th from 6:30 – 8:30pm in Church of Ascension Hunt Rooms. We hope to see you there!

For more information, email or text our Associate Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry, Leah Hornfeck (leah.hornfeck@ascensionpittsburgh.org; 724-630-0167).

A promotional graphic for a 'Dinner and Compline' event. On the right is a photograph of Sarah Laribee, a woman with short brown hair, sitting at a table with a cup of coffee and a dessert. On the left is a graphic with a thought bubble containing a bowl of soup. Below the thought bubble, the text reads: 'DINNER AND COMPLINE', 'Thursday October 4th', '6:30-8:30', and 'CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION' with a logo. At the bottom right, the text reads 'SOUP WITH SARAH LARIBEE'.

Music Ministry

Along with our Rector, Jonathan Millard, I give thanks for Mel Tickner's vision, passion and enthusiasm as she passes along the leadership baton of our Children's Choir which she has directed these last eight years. It has been a particular delight for me to have watched her grow from a little 7-year old girl with eyes that shone as she sang in our children's choir, to see her develop as a singer in middle school and a worship leader with Resounding Grace, to being the director of a new generation of children's choir



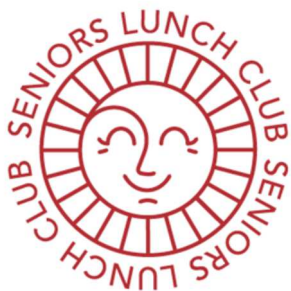
members. Through her tenure as Children's Choir Director she has honed her leadership and musical skills beautifully while caring for our children's spiritual development through the discussion of the texts they sang as well as pouring out love upon each one of them. I think those qualities of her leadership are well expressed in her own words which she shared with the parents:

"It is with a heavy heart that I share with you that, after much thought, prayer, and discussion with Jeanne Kohn and Father Jonathan, I have decided to step down from my position as Children's Choir Director. I could never adequately express how much being a part of this ministry has meant to me over the past 8 years. It has given me so much joy and blessed my life more than I could ever have believed. The experience has been absolutely priceless and I could never thank you enough for the support you have given as a congregation. It has truly meant the world to me and to the wonderful children I had the privilege of teaching. I will continue to attend services at Ascension and I can't wait to see the Children's Choir continue to grow and blossom with its new director! "

We wish Mel every blessing and happily we are not saying 'goodbye' as she continues to be a part of our church family.

-Jeanne Kohn, Director of Music Ministries

Seniors Ministry



Our OWLS (Older, Wiser, and Lively Still!) Fellowship got off to a great start in September and continues into October.

On **Thursday, October 11**, the Luncheon Series will feature Dr. Wendy LeMarquand on "Prayer." Last year Dr. Wendy returned from Ethiopia where she lived and ministered as a doctor, alongside her husband, Bishop Grant LeMarquand.

Join us from 12:30 to 2:30pm for a delicious lunch catered in the Hunt Rooms. 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.



Dr. Wendy LeMarquand

Bits and Pieces

Women Alive in Christ Diocesan Women's One-Day Retreat

Saturday, October 13 from 9:30am to 4:30pm

Guest Speaker will be

the Rev. Canon Dr. Andrea Millard

at St Thomas Anglican Church

4106 St. Thomas Drive in Gibsonia, PA 15044

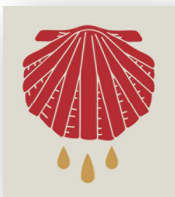
Cost: \$35 which includes a continental breakfast, lunch and spiritual refreshment.

Reservations can be made through the following website: womenaliveinchrist.org or by calling Diane at 724-825-5632 or Bonnie at 724-939-7163.



Parish Workday Saturday, November 3

8:30am – Lunch (Pizza provided). **Skills at ALL levels are welcome!**



All Saints Sunday - Baptisms

Sunday, November 4

We will have baptisms at the 9am and 11am service. Contact Jonathan Millard or Jonathan Warren if you wish to be baptized.

Altar Flowers

Would you like to remember a loved one with a Sunday flower memorial? Email Melita at cartermpp@gmail.com for details of available dates and cost. Going forward all memorials will be for the high altar.



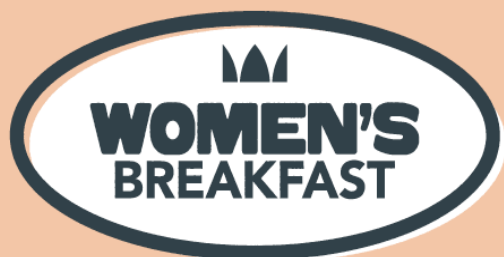
Want to give the

Altar Guild Ministry a try?

Saturday, October 28 at 9:30am

Show up in the sacristy (the back room near the piano) for a quick dive into the world of the Altar Guild. Try it out for a morning and see if it is a fit for you!

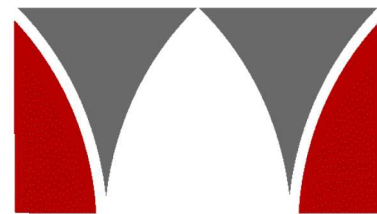
Advent Women's Breakfast



Mark your calendars!

Saturday, December 1

Featuring **Sarah Laribee**, former Ascension Youth Pastor who is home from 4 years of teaching in Iraq. More info coming in November.



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

Address

4729 Ellsworth Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15213
Phone: 412-621-4361
Fax: 412-621-5746

Website

www.ascensionpittsburgh.org

The Ascent

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Ascent Deadline

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Ascent are due October 12.