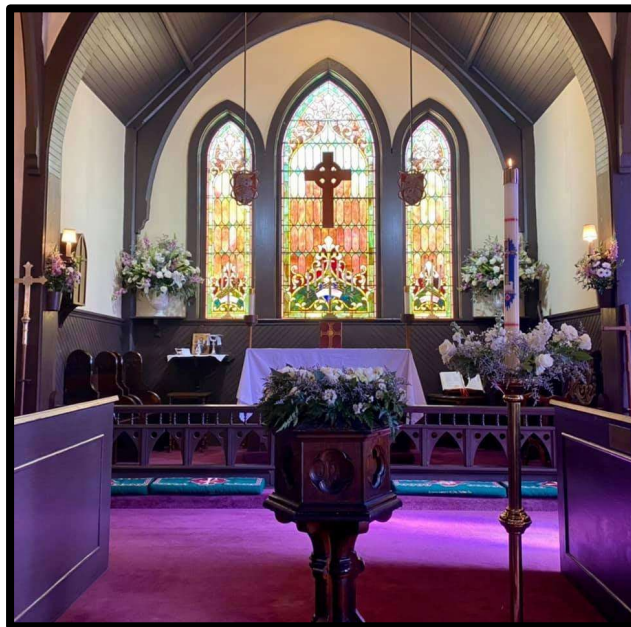


# Episcopal Church of the Ascension

## Cartersville, Georgia

Loving Like Jesus since 1844





# RECTOR SEARCH

## The Episcopal Church of the Ascension Cartersville, GA

This close knit, service oriented, engaged congregation seeks an energetic, community minded, collaborative priest to partner with them as their next Rector. Located approximately 45 minutes northwest of Atlanta in historic downtown Cartersville, Georgia, the Church of the Ascension is uniquely positioned to enjoy a small town community feel within close proximity to all that the major metropolitan city of Atlanta has to offer. Ascension's 176 year old parish has deep roots in the Cartersville community. The congregation is community minded and focused on a mission of service, especially through the thriving Red Door Food Pantry ministry, which has distributed over 400,000 pounds of food to the community so far in 2021. Ascension's church culture is ecumenical in nature and collaboration with other churches and community organizations is strong with regards to outreach and care for the community. The church also has a strong pastoral care ministry to serve those in the parish who are in need. Following a generous bequest, the church recently established a quasi-endowment fund and expects the return on that fund combined with annual pledges to provide continued financial stability and opportunities for new ministries and projects.



### TO APPLY:

Qualified applicants will be a priest in good standing with experience in the Episcopal Church having an enthusiastic desire to lead and manage a small, well resourced, growth minded church with extensive community relationships.

Apply here: [tinyurl.com/AscensionRectorSearch](https://tinyurl.com/AscensionRectorSearch)



EPISCOPAL DIOCESE  
OF ATLANTA

# OUR PURPOSE

*We challenge ourselves and the world to love like Jesus as we worship joyfully, serve compassionately, and grow spiritually.*

The Episcopal Church of the Ascension exists as a witness to God's grace. We offer a welcoming environment that serves our congregants and our wider community with gratitude and generosity, recognizing the gifts of those present among us as we continue to grow in our faith and commitment to Jesus Christ.

WE BELIEVE, walking in the path of Jesus, that we are called to respect and welcome the diversity of both our congregation and our local community. We are called to be attentive to the needs and strengths of all, affirming that each person brings beauty and unique gifts that reveal God's goodness.

WE WORSHIP in an orderly, participatory manner in common with Episcopal/Anglican churches everywhere. We are a congregation, not an audience. Our worship calls and directs us to service, to go in peace to love and serve the world and each other.

WE SERVE and support each other and the wider community with prayers, love, and action.

The real treasure of the church is the people we serve!  
Our congregation and the larger church are in God's hands. It is God's Church, and God can take care of it.  
Our call is to know where our treasure is so that our heart is there also! (Paraphrase of St. Laurence of Rome 256 AD)



# We are a proud part of the Diocese of Atlanta



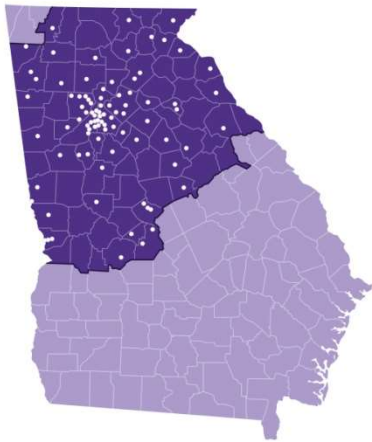
# The Diocese of Atlanta

The Diocese of Atlanta is a diverse and expansive faith community, with 117 communities focused on worshipping a living and loving God and working for a better world in the name of Jesus Christ. More than 50,000 members in 11 convocations spread across 75 1/2 counties in north and central Georgia make up the Diocese.

Our Diocesan Purpose Statement, adopted at Annual Council 2015, informs all aspects of our common life: “We challenge ourselves and the world to love like Jesus as we worship joyfully, serve compassionately, and grow spiritually.”

We are a Christian community blessed with vibrance, variety and vitality. Our diocesan bishop, [The Right Rev. Robert C. Wright](#), was elected in June 2012 and ordained and consecrated on Oct. 13, 2012.

The Offices of the Bishop are at the Cathedral of St. Philip in Atlanta. The Diocese has more than 200 clergy under Bishop Wright's oversight, plus an abundant supply of lay leaders and ministers.



The Diocese of Atlanta was carved from the Diocese of Georgia in 1907. As part of The Episcopal Church, the Diocese is connected to the worldwide Anglican Communion of 70 million people in 38 provinces. The Diocese is also engaged in a special companion relationship with the Diocese of Cape Coast in West Africa.

The Diocese of Atlanta actively supports the ministry of The Episcopal Church and its presiding bishop, The Most Reverend Michael Curry.

## ***Stay Connected***

Our website is [www.episcopalatlanta.org](http://www.episcopalatlanta.org)

Follow us: [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [YouTube](#)

[Sign up to our email list](#) to receive emails featuring diocesan-wide news, events, announcements, and inspiration.

Follow Bishop Wright: [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#)

# Welcome to the Church of the Ascension

Welcome. We appreciate your interest in our small but mighty parish and your willingness to read and learn about our faith journey.

## Vestry

Erle Newton, Sr. Warden  
Linda Hamilton, Jr. Warden  
John Adams  
Sandi Behrens  
Linda Brunt  
Jimmy Hyde  
Keith Limardo  
Jeff Tindall  
Brenda Worley

## Nominating Committee

Kelley Dial, Chair  
Linda Hamilton  
Lindy Agan  
Dan Bennett  
Leigh Easterwood  
Meghann Humphreys  
Marty Knight  
Drew Tonsmeire  
Susan Wade  
Seth Wilhoite

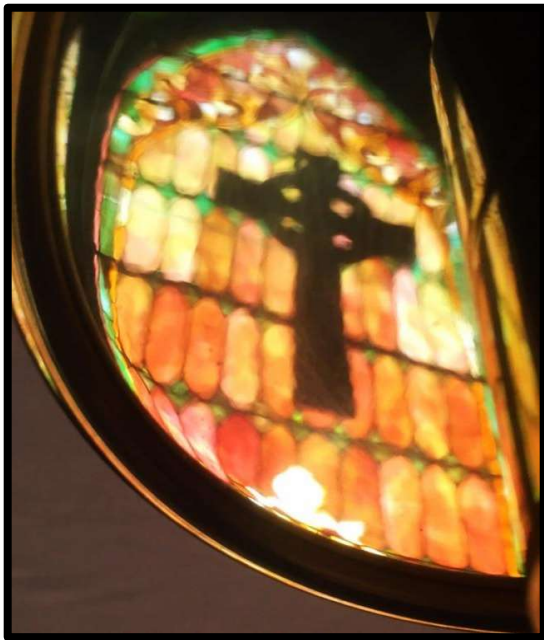
# Who Are We?

## Self-Study

In June of 2019 we conducted a Congregational Assessment through Holy Cow Consulting. Sixty-five percent of the congregants participated.

Overall, approximately 75% of our members were clearly satisfied with things in the church. This, along with other information, indicates that the church has options which include growth, expansion, replication, and external impact. How and whether these are realized depends on the choices made moving forward.

Not every question was of equal importance to members. When asked how satisfied they are, members tended to focus on the issues expressed in the questions below. When they felt more positive in these areas, they tended to feel more positively overall.



- The worship services at our church are exceptional in both quality and spiritual content.
- Our Rector helps us accomplish our mission by bringing out the best in everyone.
- In important decisions in our church, adequate opportunity for consideration of different approaches is usually provided.
- Persons who serve as leaders in our church are representative of the membership.
- Being part of this church community has given new meaning to my life.

Conversely, when members felt less positive about the areas above, they tended to feel less satisfied with their experience in the church overall.

Every church exhibits patterns in its life that contain strengths and potential weaknesses. Ascension showed strengths related to inclusiveness and advocacy. Potential weaknesses were identified as a tendency to intellectualize issues and occasional difficulties establishing identity and vision.







As members look to the future, their top four goals are:

- Make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth to the church.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive strategy to reach new people and incorporate them into the life of the church.
- Develop ministries that work toward healing those broken by life circumstances.
- Provide more opportunities for Christian education and spiritual formation at every age and state of life.

In comparison to other churches, three goals that are unusually strong for our church are:

- Strengthen the management and support of persons in various ministries so that they are able to do what they do best in work that is meaningful and celebrated.
- Enlarge or improve the physical facilities of the church to expand or enhance our ministries.
- Create more opportunities for people to form meaningful relationships (for example, small groups, nurtured friendships, shared meals, etc).

These may warrant attention from the leadership even if they are mid-level priorities.

All the information should be explored and validated in further conversation. Survey data is not the end of a conversation but the beginning.

**\*These are pre-COVID responses**





# Our Community - Overview



Cartersville, Georgia is rooted in history from the pre-historic Leake Mounds and Etowah Indian Mounds, to numerous Civil War era sites. Following the dissemination of the Mississippian Mound Builders' culture, Creek Indians inhabited the region until driven south by the Cherokees in the late 18th Century. Despite adopting a civilized lifestyle, the discovery of gold in north Georgia in 1828 numbered the Cherokees' days here in their "Enchanted Land."

The State of Georgia created 10 counties from Cherokee territory, one of which was Cass County. Cassville became the county seat and Cartersville sprang up just to the south along newly created rail lines and former stagecoach routes. Originally called Birmingham, the community was frequently visited by a prominent north Georgia planter and entrepreneur Col. Farrish Carter, who jokingly suggested that due to his many visits, the town should change its name to Cartersville; and the town residents did just that.

The county seat was burned in November 1864, and reconstruction was greatly impaired because Cassville's citizens had kept the railroad from entering their pristine community. As a result Cartersville was reincorporated as the new county seat in 1872.

Historically Cartersville's economy has been derived from the mining industry, and the community reflects this today in the red clay and iron pours at Red Top Mountain State Park, the Antebellum iron works at Cooper's Furnace Day Use Area, and in the Weinman Mineral Gallery at Tellus Science Museum. Even the local high school's "mascot," the Cartersville Hurricanes, gets its name from nearby Hurricane Hollow, an ore deposit located in Cartersville's popular Pine Mountain Recreation Area.

Today major manufacturers such as Toyo Tire North America, Anheuser-Busch Brewery, Shaw Industries, Komatsu, and Vostelpine employ thousands throughout north Georgia. Residents and visitors alike enjoy the four seasons of the north Georgia mountains, plentiful recreation areas in and around Allatoona Lake, and unique museums such as the Booth Western Art Museum, the Tellus Science Museum and the Savoy Automobile Museum. The Booth and Tellus are Smithsonian Affiliate Museums.

Downtown Cartersville is a great destination for the town's best restaurants, and a variety of eclectic places to shop. Two performing arts theaters anchor the historic square where the city's 20,000+ residents gather throughout the year for festivals, farmer's markets, and more.

## Our Community – Schools



Ascension is located within the city limits of Cartersville, Georgia. The city is home of the Cartersville City School System, a charter system consisting of a preschool, primary, elementary, middle, and high school. The school system was founded in 1888 and is proud of its legacy of excellence in academics, athletics, and the arts. Students are “Purple Hurricanes” from the day they begin preschool until the day they graduate, and beyond. Most of the children in the parish are students in the Cartersville City Schools. More information about the system can be found at: <https://www.cartersvilleschools.org/>



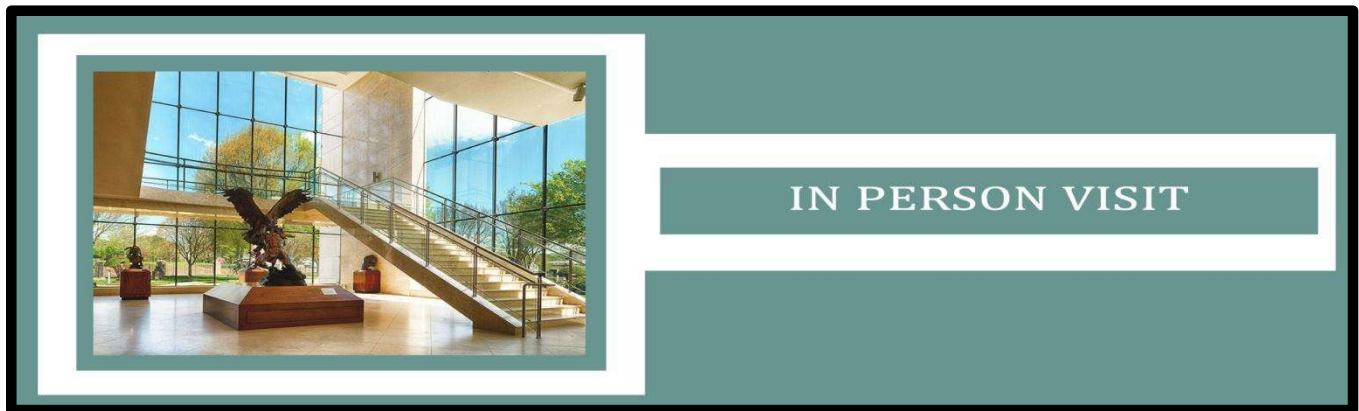
The portions of Bartow County outside the City of Cartersville are served by the Bartow County School System. That system consists of three high schools, four middle schools, 12 elementary schools and a college and career academy. The system believes in empowering children to succeed and provides excellent education opportunities. More information about the system can be found at: <https://www.bartow.k12.ga.us/>

## Our Community – More Information

Tellus Science Museum: <https://tellusmuseum.org>



Booth Western Art Museum: <https://boothmuseum.org/>



Savoy Automobile Museum: <https://savoymuseum.org/>





The Grand Theatre: <https://thegrandtheatre.org/>



The Pumphouse Players/Legion Theatre:

<https://pumphouseplayers.com/>



Etowah Indian Mounds:

<https://gastateparks.org/EtowahIndianMounds>





## Lake Point Sports and Lake Point Station

<https://lakepointsports.com/>

<https://lakepointstation.com/>



City of Cartersville: <https://www.cityofcartersville.org/>



Cartersville-Bartow County Convention and Visitors Bureau

<https://visitcartersvillega.org/>



Cartersville Downtown Development Authority

<https://downtowncartersville.org/>





# A History of the Church of The Ascension



An Article by parishioner Peggy Brown Shinall that appeared in the Daily Tribune News in 2019

On May 30, 2019, Ascension Day on the church calendar, dozens of supporters and community leaders gathered at the home of Marty Knight, great-great-great granddaughter of William Henry Stiles, a founder of the Episcopal Church of the Ascension, to kick off a year-long celebration of the congregation's 175 years together.

It was a breezy Thursday evening with excitement bubbling through the crowd, waiting for "Mother Mary," the Very Rev. Mary K. Erickson, to introduce Cartersville's mayor. Erickson and I stood with Mayor Matt Santini, as he read the 175-Year Proclamation. Suddenly he stopped, looked at our rector, and said he would also add, "Ascension is a crown jewel in the community." Now, I wonder, how could this tiny gray church which has regularly struggled to exist be a "crown jewel"?

Today the church is located on West Cherokee Avenue in Cartersville, but it began on the Etowah River. On November 6, 1844, Bishop Stephen Elliott, first bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Georgia, visited his friend William Henry Stiles, Savannah native, Congressman, and Ambassador to Austria. Stiles and other friends of the church encouraged Elliott to form a parish "in this most interesting country." By June 22, 1845, the bishop consecrated a church on ten acres adjoining Valley View plantation and a parsonage and school on forty acres across Euharlee Road.

Businessman and third-generation Ascensionite Guy Parmenter explains, "The 1844 church was serviced by a circuit rider ministry and subject to conditions of the time, weather and transportation as examples." Ascension's rector—when one was available--often divided his duties among up to four mission churches. Stiles descendant and brother to Marty, Frederick Knight said, "The Stiles family were very devout Episcopalians and led Morning Prayer and perhaps Evening Prayer every day in their households. But they didn't go into town often like we do." Travel was difficult even for short distances, so everyone's attendance in church would have been affected.

Ascension, however, has survived into the twenty-first century. What helped the small church endure? Partly it was the support of community leaders migrating from Savannah and elsewhere. William Henry Stiles, Jr., his son W.H. Stiles, III, as well as his son Robert Mackay Stiles were church leaders throughout the late 1800's and 1900's. Parmenter said that his parents and grandparents, who came in 1929, "contributed heavily both in time and money to the betterment of Ascension."

Another reason the church survived struggles such as lack of clergy leadership was partly due to the liturgy. Referred to by some as ritual, liturgy is the group response to and participation in the sacred, from Greek word *liturgia* meaning the people's work for the common good. According to Erickson, rector since

2010, liturgy is key to emphasizing “the role of the people over and above the role of the clergy. It is important to have an ordained person, but regardless . . . it is the community that gathers that really matters.”

Another factor that helped the church survive is the ability to change. In the early 1870’s, the congregation relocated into the growing town of Cartersville. The church chose a Carpenter “Country” Gothic design for the building, but finances plagued the building project, halting construction during 1873 for lack of funds. Nevertheless, the community supported Ascension with a December 1873 fundraiser, advertised in the newspaper: “The Episcopal church ought to be finished. It will be an ornament to the city.” Finally completed and consecrated in 1874, the historic sanctuary still stands today. According to Knight, “I don’t know anybody who doesn’t love that church.”

Though the church struggled, it often prospered with changes and growth intermittently throughout its 175 years. Notable changes include adding gas lights and carpet in 1892, a parsonage behind the church in 1900 (the current parking lot), stained-glass windows in 1938 secured from the closed church at Cave Springs, and the Sunday School wing and parish hall during the 1950’s. From 1955 to 1960, while the population of Cartersville increased by twenty-five percent, membership at Ascension more than doubled. Also during this time the church advanced to full parish status in the Diocese of Atlanta. From the diocesan council records: “Parishioners seemed convinced that the most expansive part of their history lay ahead. So too must have felt Episcopalians in Cartersville.”

With growth and a succession of resident ministers Rev. William D. Winn and Rev. Louis Tonsmeire, Sr., Ascension’s identity formed as a church that helps people. Tonsmeire came to Ascension in 1965 with helping people in mind, it seemed, fostering bi-racial discussions, the Retired Men’s Group, and compassion among people. Parmenter remembers his youth group in the late 1960’s: “one weekend where [Tonsmeire] took us on an eye-opening tour of blighted areas of Atlanta and [we] learned of the Episcopal Church’s community assistance” and to “NAACP headquarters in order that we could learn about their mission.” During the 1980’s Rev. Michael (Corky) Carlisle welcomed to Ascension the nation-wide Episcopal renewal along with tremendous growth, and he invited the late founder of Habitat for Humanity, Millard Fuller, which led to a Cartersville branch of Habitat—still active today.

Perhaps the reason for the mayor’s statement that Ascension is a “crown jewel in the community” is the Red Door Food Pantry (RDFP). Begun as a few shelves of canned food, it has grown over the last decade. With Erickson as rector, gleaming facilities supplanted the crumbling parish hall and Sunday School wing, and the second largest room added was space for RDFP. Director Karen Tindall said, “The Red Door Food Pantry served over ninety-six thousand pounds of food to 4,135 families in Bartow County in 2018.” RDFP is a hands-on ministry, which appeals to the community, with over sixty volunteers who actively serve.

The motto of the year-long celebration of 175 years is “Honor the past, celebrate now, forge our future in Christ.” The church clearly honors the past and plans numerous celebrations during this year, but how do we forge our future in Christ? Who is Church of the Ascension after 175 years and where is it going? To discover these answers, the church conducted a self-survey recently, and consultant Rev. Frank Baltz led church leaders through the survey results on Saturday, June 15. The group was thrilled with his news! Of course, struggle and challenge remain, such as attracting millennials and remaining open to change. But Baltz said, “You are very strong as a church. I’ve only seen one in the same ballpark. There is real vitality [here].”

A “crown jewel”? Maybe, but we’re not resting on our laurels. There is work to be done.



# A Snapshot of our Ministries

## Building and Grounds

For two years, during the pandemic, the Building and Grounds Committee successfully maintained the church properties. Thanks to both the 'Holy Mowers' who dutifully cared for the lawn and the many faithful parishioners who turned out in force for our parish workdays. In addition, the Rector's office located in Ascension House was refreshed with new furnishings as the search for a new rector began.

Our campus consists of the historic nave, a new parish hall/education wing, and Ascension House, a historic former residence that currently houses the church offices, the choir room, and the church library. Ascension House has served us well for many years but is in need of major renovations. In addition to the structures, we have a lawn large enough for outside services and social gathering. It contains a labyrinth, installed shortly before the COVID shutdown. We are located in historic downtown Cartersville. Our campus is a beloved part of the area, known to all as the "church with the red doors".

Having successfully undertaken the construction of a new parish hall in 2014, it is only natural that Ascension House now merits the congregation's attention. Conversations have begun as to the merits of renovating historic Ascension House versus razing all or part of the current structure to construct a new facility. Our new rector will join these discussions and will have the opportunity to participate in the planning and execution of this exciting project.

As is true with all congregations, our parish has been through spirited debate in the past regarding the construction and renovation of facilities. Our history of resolving such issues has always been dictated by faith, prayer, and respect for one another. We look forward to reaching consensus and moving forward.



# Christian Formation

The Christian Formation Ministry adapted during the pandemic. When parishioners were able to gather again, a new sense of normal emerged.

Our Truth Seekers Class (adults) began the year on Zoom and has since transitioned to in person classes. They typically either work their way through a relevant book or discuss the weekly readings along with their meaning, and how to apply them. The Inquirer's class (for those new to our faith or liturgy) also started the year on Zoom with "Welcome to the Book of Common Prayer," as the study. They then conducted a slow read of the Book of Common Prayer followed by a study of the 1982 Hymnal. Some began attending the class virtually before ever setting foot in the church. At the end of September, five people from the class were Received or Confirmed by Bishop Wright. The history of the church and an advent study followed.



In July, we hosted Vacation Bible School with participants ranging from 2 to 10 years old. Several teenagers volunteered their time. The theme of the week was "Transformed! Jesus Changes Everything! The kids made crafts, learned new songs, played games, and even got to make a new friend: Christy, the Chrysalis (a puppet who became a butterfly by the week's end).

In September, we launched a revamped, in person Family Service. The redesigned order of service presents sacred elements of worship in a way that captures the attention of young children. The Family Service has been an evolving experiment, and will continue to evolve.

The Children's Sunday School teachers typically lead discussions about the Sunday readings. We want this time to be a chance for children to think more deeply about the message of the Scripture and also give them space to think critically and ask questions. Our new youth coordinator has been in charge of the EYC Sunday School hour. The EYC class begins with refreshments, a trivia game, and then moves on to discussion of the Scripture with questions encouraged. This is a safe place, where students will be accepted as they are.



# Evangelism/Communications

We are a welcoming parish. The path leading us here began well over a decade ago when we implemented a variation of a process shared with us by St. David's in Roswell for welcoming and integrating newcomers. We added our own touches to this method and made progress in intentionally welcoming those who were unfamiliar with the liturgical nature of our worship and anxious about the book balancing and pew aerobics.

As we continued moving down the path, we often referred to evangelism as a spiritual version of show and tell and branded all parishioners as unofficial members of the Evangelism Committee. The committee, the Vestry, and the parish as a whole developed a relationship with Father Frank Baltz. During that time he led a parish-wide training in welcoming newcomers and helped with the follow up from that event.

As we became increasingly more comfortable welcoming new people and shepherding them toward the resources that would help them find their niche, we explored the Invite, Welcome, Connect ministry. A number of specific plans for intentionally welcoming and integrating newcomers were made and then.....COVID!



Our Evangelism Committee was well versed in using electronic media as a tool to reach out prior to the pandemic. Before the shut down our communications director began training all ministries on the use of various social media. However, no one was prepared to use electronic media almost exclusively. With the help of talented parishioners and our communications director, we became rather adroit at engaging a virtual congregation and now have the opportunity to use those skills to enhance our in person worship and pull in those who may not be able to attend in person.

We are currently working on resuming the Invite, Welcome, Connect ministry and scheduling an organized newcomers event as well as overseeing the redesign of our church website and are daily expanding our social media presence. We have all the tools necessary to remain intentionally and extravagantly welcoming to all.





# Fellowship

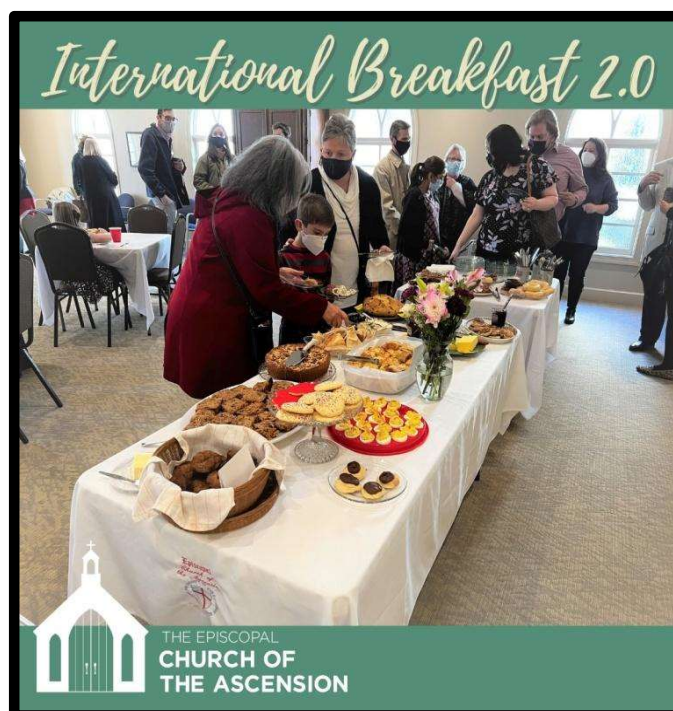
Ascension's Fellowship Ministry organizes events to bring us together as a parish family and provides opportunities for us to get to know and enjoy one another. We believe our events are creative and fun; the parishioners agree. In addition to the festive receptions after services on Easter and Christmas Eve, we organize "Food & Fellowship" after Sunday services.



Historically other events include a Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper complete with a competition in which any burned pancakes are launched over the roof of the parish hall. Also, Lenten Luncheons with other community churches are extremely popular. Other Fellowship get-togethers include: old fashioned picnics; multi-generational events; holiday events such as the July 4th cookout, the Christmas family craft night during Advent, and more! We also provide support for youth events and special functions at the Church such as Diocesan training days and Ascension Coffee House. In its 15<sup>th</sup> season, Coffee House provides a listening room environment for original music.

An example of a super creative recent event is the International Breakfast. We brought covered dish breakfast items which represented our families' countries of origin. The International Breakfast got us talking to each other about our families and learning about each other in a new way.

Fellowship ministry goals for the immediate future include: collaboration with other ministries; support for youth centered events; streamlining processes; recruiting volunteers; generating more participation in events not directly related to church services; strengthening our messaging. Also, since "if it ain't broke . . . don't fix it" . . . we will certainly continue tried and true activities. Ascension's Fellowship Ministry is an integral part of our church life and experience. The Fellowship Ministry will continue to seek exciting and engaging ways to promote connection and community among our Parish family members, newcomers, and the Cartersville/Bartow County community.





# Worship/Music



This has been a year of re-gathering, rebuilding, and rebirth. We began 2021 without a rector and with a new organist/choirmaster, as we continued to worship online with pre-recorded services that included music and weekly floral arrangements. Facebook Live/YouTube services were led by supply priests. Evening and Noonday Prayer continued to be led online each evening by parishioners. These prerecorded services continued through Holy Week. Although not an ideal situation, new members were drawn to Ascension through our online presence as we shined God's light virtually in the midst of dark times.

We returned to in-person, indoor worship on Easter Sunday, with all the precautions required by the Diocese. Pre-recorded services ended at that time as we transitioned to in person/live-streamed services. Our organist left for a "dream job" shortly thereafter and a short term interim was hired. On May 9th, the Canterbury Choir (adult) resumed rehearsals. The choir began to lead worship again in June. At the beginning of August, we hired a Youth and Communications Coordinator. The Wednesday 12:15 PM service returned on June 9<sup>th</sup>. The 9:00 AM service resumed on September 26<sup>th</sup> including a child-centered liturgy.



The St. Cecilia Choir (children's) resumed in-person rehearsals in August after more than a year of meeting on Zoom. The Reverend Terri Brice began serving as Ascension's Interim Rector on November 7th. We now have a "long term" interim organist/choirmaster. From April 4, 2021 until the present, elements of worship have been gradually added to the services: moving from spiritual communion only, to single element communion, to communion of both kinds by intinction; single lectors to multiple lectors; no singing to singing; and no choir to choir. Offertory and oblation bearers were added. It is a testament to God at work in our parish that we have remained a healthy congregation during these uncertain times.

# Outreach

The primary focus of the Outreach Committee for many years has been the Red Door Food Pantry. Beginning in 2020 and continuing into 2021, members of the Outreach Committee and church leadership began the process of securing 501(c)(3) charitable exemption status from the IRS to advance the food pantry's ability to raise funds to further the mission of feeding hungry people in our community. The food pantry has a board of directors selected from church leadership, lay church members, and interested members from our greater community who have shown a dedicated commitment to our ministry and fidelity to our Christian faith. Any significant changes to the leadership, structure, or mission of the food pantry must be approved by the Vestry prior to any such action or change being made.



Along with the regular Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning distributions, the RDFP also participates in Hope for Christmas, Farmers to Families, and the Mobile Food Pantry. Hope for Christmas in December 2021 provided food for 881 families with a total of 2,422 children. Farmers to Families distributed boxes of fresh produce, milk, eggs, and meat to families from January 30th to May 27th in 2021. Mobile Food Pantry occurs year-round at the Allatoona Resource Center in Acworth and takes place every third Saturday of the month as part of ServSaturday to distribute food to families unable to make the trek to Cartersville.

This year we used BLESS Coalition as a resource for organizational help. The director coordinates and solicits volunteers for Hope for Christmas packing, RDFP truck unloading (once a month), truck drivers, ServSaturday at Allatoona Resource Center, and Farm to Families as well as managing our Facebook pages and helping with Mardi Gras. For more information about BLESS Coalition, please visit [blesscoalition.org](https://blesscoalition.org).

The Mardi Gras fundraiser is the largest annual fundraiser for the RDFP. We are fortunate to have many willing hands and hearts – both from within the church and the greater community – who work hard to ensure this event's success. For more information about sponsorships, tickets, and event details, please visit [www.cartersvillemardigras.com](https://www.cartersvillemardigras.com).





# Pastoral Care

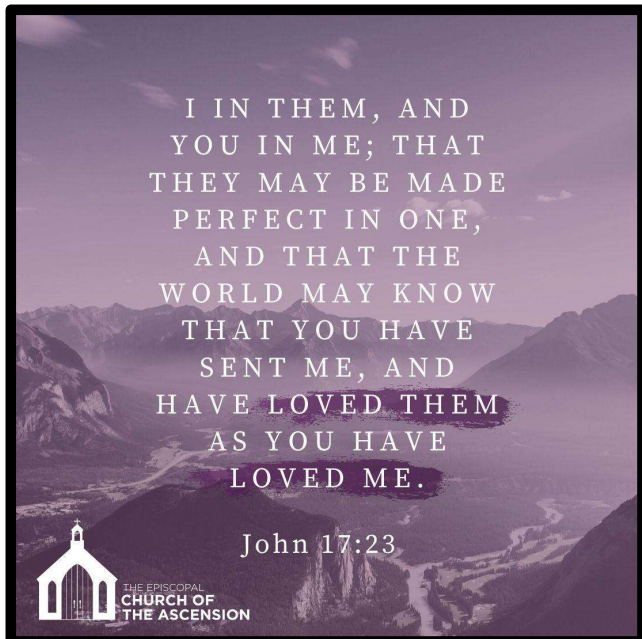
The primary focus of the Pastoral Care ministry is our Ascension church family. We seek to serve and support our congregation whether someone is ill, gives birth, or loses a loved one. These dedicated ministry members are unseen heroes living out what Christ has asked us to do by loving one another without expectation of anything in return. Since we are a smaller church family, we typically become aware of specific needs through a variety of channels. Once the need is identified a plan comes together for what might best benefit our church family member. It might be prayer, a phone call, a note of encouragement, a dinner provided by one of our five meal teams, or a bouquet of fresh flowers delivered to the home.



Lifting the spirits of a church member is the goal. We have several “doorknob delivery” programs and gift baskets delivered throughout the year. At Easter and Christmas the elderly, homebound, and frail members of our congregation receive baskets including a variety of homemade items assembled, wrapped, and delivered by members of this ministry.

We are currently exploring new ways to meet the needs of our congregation. In 2022, we are launching a new service offering transportation to those unable to drive to personal appointments or errands. We have also noted many people in our congregation have suffered devastating losses. We are currently working to form a grief support group led by a licensed counselor.

Our goal is to give support where it is most needed.



# Stewardship

While the Covid pandemic raged on in 2021, The Stewardship ministry carried on, with an ultimate mission of creating a sustainable, missional ministry at Church of the Ascension. Having introduced the Holy Currencies to our parish in 2020, Stewardship continued to build on the program's concept of circulating a cycle of blessings through its six "currencies." In 2021 Stewardship focused on the currencies of Wellness and Truth, while reinforcing the currencies of Relationships and Time and Place.

With the return of indoor services Stewardship found a new way to get its message out. On the back page of each bulletin was an explanation of how Holy Currencies can be used to bring a cycle of blessings to our church. As the currencies flow, their values increase. The exchange of these currencies regenerates resources.

When Covid numbers went down, Stewardship and Fellowship worked together to sponsor the first social event since the beginning of the pandemic, a July 4<sup>th</sup> picnic. In August Stewardship participated in the parish Ministry fair. In the fall Stewardship opened our doors so visitors could tour our Church and pick up a bottle of water on the way to a local festival.

Leading up to Pledge Sunday three members gave testimonials about what Ascension means to them. As of late December, 63 people have pledged, including 10 new pledges and 16 increased pledges. The total amount for 2022 is \$256,000.





# Finances

## Church of the Ascension

### Financial Report

#### Annual Meeting 2022

	For the Year 2021			For the Year 2022		
	Actual 2021	Budget 2021	Difference Fav (Unfav)	Actual 2021	Budget 2022	Difference Fav (Unfav)
Pledge	268,593	251,500	17,093	268,593	253,700	(14,893)
Non-pledge	10,535	10,000	535	10,535	25,000	14,465
Plate offering	3,603	0	3,603	3,603	5,000	1,397
Subtotal - Contributions Income	282,731	261,500	21,231	282,731	283,700	969
Other income	807	0	807	807	1,200	393
<b>Total Operating Income</b>	<b>283,538</b>	<b>261,500</b>	<b>22,038</b>	<b>283,538</b>	<b>284,900</b>	<b>1,362</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>						
<b>Servant Ministries:</b>						
Diocesan Commitment	34,144	35,100	956	34,144	34,000	144
Christian Education	2,000	2,000	0	2,000	9,000	(7,000)
Communications	1,360	800	(560)	1,360	1,400	(40)
Evangelism	284	500	216	284	500	(216)
Fellowship	500	500	0	500	3,000	(2,500)
Music ministry	2,500	2,500	0	2,500	2,500	0
Outreach	13,240	13,100	(140)	13,240	14,200	(960)
Pastoral Care	528	1,000	472	528	1,000	(472)
Stewardship	776	2,000	1,224	776	2,000	(1,224)
Worship	3,000	3,000	0	3,000	3,000	0
Subtotal - Servant Ministry Expenses	58,332	60,500	2,168	58,332	70,600	(12,268)
<b>Administrative:</b>						
Utilities	17,739	17,000	(739)	17,739	17,000	739
Insurance	6,570	5,000	(1,570)	6,570	6,600	(30)
Buildings & Grounds	19,214	12,000	(7,214)	19,214	12,000	7,214
Other Administrative Expenses	19,487	23,400	3,913	19,487	19,700	(213)
Subtotal - Administrative Expenses	63,010	57,400	(5,610)	63,010	55,300	7,710
<b>Personnel</b>	<b>100,440</b>	<b>141,800</b>	<b>41,360</b>	<b>100,440</b>	<b>180,000</b>	<b>(79,560)</b>
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>221,782</b>	<b>259,700</b>	<b>37,918</b>	<b>221,782</b>	<b>305,900</b>	<b>(84,118)</b>
<b>Excess Revenue over Expenses</b>	<b>61,756</b>	<b>1,800</b>	<b>59,956</b>	<b>61,756</b>	<b>(21,000)</b>	<b>(82,756)</b>

## Finances Continued– Quasi Endowment

In July, 2019 we lost a beloved parishioner. Larry Pritchard was a vital part of our church for many years. His generosity knew no bounds. He preferred his acts of kindness to be anonymous; many of his selfless acts of kindness became known only after his death. In a final act of love and faithfulness, he bequeathed more than half his estate to Ascension.

Because of Larry's love for us, we were able to pay off the majority of the debt on our 2014 addition. Most of the remaining money has been placed in a quasi endowment fund overseen by a church committee and the Vestry. The funds themselves are being managed by the Episcopal Church Foundation.

The general intent of the quasi endowment fund is to leave the principal essentially untouched and use the earnings to fund special projects in accordance with the purposes set forth in the bylaws of the fund.



# So, Who Is Called To Walk With Us?

You might be the right priest for us if.....

- You have a sense of humor and can laugh at yourself. The Ascension family is a lively, fun loving, witty bunch. Laughter is frequently the background music when we gather.
- You are comfortable ministering to young children, young families, and young adults. As with most churches, we continue to work toward attracting these groups to our midst and want someone who is passionate and creative about that ministry.
- You appreciate history and want to celebrate it. Our people have worshipped and served for over 175 years. Soon we will be celebrating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our historic nave. We intend to celebrate as only Episcopalians can.
- You are engaged in current issues and today's human condition. Ascension is passionate regarding serving those less fortunate and those who are suffering. We strive to be God's hands and feet in our community.
- You like to eat. We are in favor of food in general and shared meals in particular.
- You embrace diversity and change. We tend to be quite flexible, open minded, and accepting of others. We hear and respect different points of view regarding politics, social justice, worship, and liturgy. We believe what we say.....all are welcome. We have found that working consistently toward consensus brings us to answers that are most often in the middle.
- You can preach up a storm! We appreciate someone who will give us something to think about and incorporate in our lives but do not wish to have politics force fed to us.
- You bring creative ideas but also want to empower others in ministry rather than getting too deep into the weeds.
- You would enjoy a church building project. We are intent on caring for our beautiful, historic campus. While we are thrilled with our latest addition, we are also excited to begin a new project to meet the needs of our church staff and congregation.
- You want to be a part of a vibrant, forward thinking community that is just outside the metro Atlanta area.
- You take one look at our vibrant church family and realize that this is your dream job! Seriously, what's not to love?

