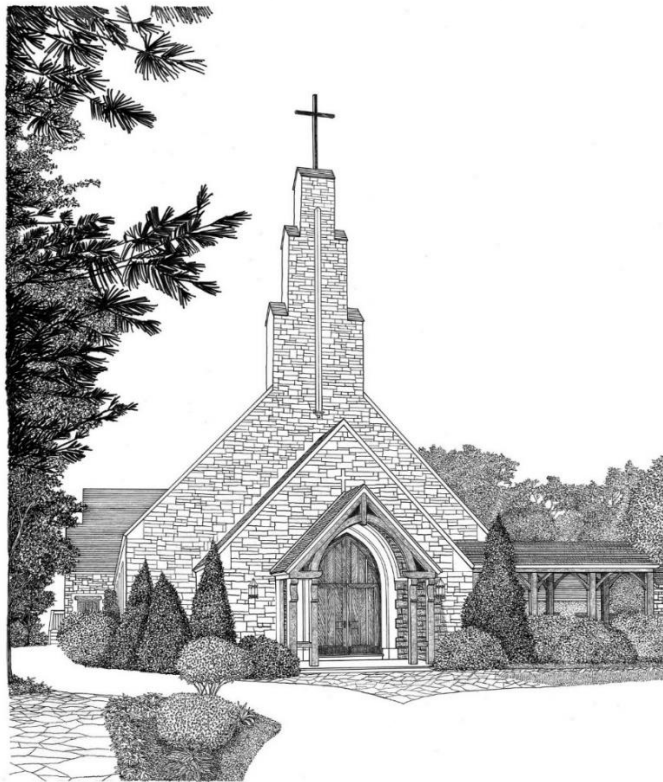


# 2019 ANNUAL REPORT

## Episcopal Church of the Ascension



**Presented at the  
December 8, 2019  
Annual Meeting**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Agenda .....	2
2019 Financial Report   2020 Proposed Budget .....	3
2020 Proposed Budget.....	6
Endowment Report .....	7
Ascension Fund.....	8
Rector's Discretionary Fund.....	9
Outreach Committee Fund.....	10
Rector's Report.....	11
Music at Ascension .....	13
Children, Youth, & Families at Ascension .....	14
Vestry Candidate Profiles .....	15



## Vestry Stewardship Covenant

- **We believe** that in spite of any barriers, God is a God of abundance. Provision for ministries to all people and the entirety of God's creation will occur when our focus and our trust remain with God.
- **We commit** to give as Jesus did and focus on need not want. We seek to pray more and think less and to live within our means so that we are able to give to others.
- **We invite** each of you to open your heart and mind to embrace giving as a response to a deeper connection with God, your neighbor, and the world.

# AGENDA

## Welcome

## Prayer

## Reading of Mission Statement:

The mission of the Episcopal Church of the Ascension is to love with the heart of Christ and act as the body of Christ in our church, community, and world.

~*Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths. Psalm 25:4*~

**2019 Financial Report | 2020 Proposed Budget** ..... Brad Lail & Tommy Shores

**2019 Endowment Report** ..... Tommy Shores

## Planned Giving

## Recognition of New Members through Transfer

Irene Carey

Joshua Herman

Betty Rosenbaum

**Rector's Report** ..... Karla Woggon

### Sharing stories

1. Turn to someone sitting near you. Take one minute each to share an experience when you knew you were loved.
2. Turn to a new person near you. Take one minute each to share when you felt God was really alive in our church within the last month or year.

**Recognition of 2019 Wardens** ..... Karla Woggon

Lisa Hart, *Senior Warden*

Mark Valcourt & Ken Wilkinson, *Junior Wardens*

Brad Lail, *Finance Warden*

**Recognition of Outgoing Vestry Members** ..... Karla Woggon

Ann Dobbins, Liz Goebelbecker, Terri Reed, and Mark Valcourt

**Recognition of Returning Vestry Members** ..... Karla Woggon

Term Ends 2020: Jean Bolton, Ruth Clontz, Lisa Hart, and Brad Lail

Term Ends 2021: Lynn Carlton, Bess Fuller, Molly Gross, and Ken Wilkinson

## Election of New Vestry Members for 2020-2022 Term

Nominees: James Carter, Joshua Herman, Nancy Linker, Marian Story

## Election of Ascension Fund Committee Members:

Current Members: Bob Meek, Gail Ramsdell, Bess Fuller, and Nancy Zagaroli

## Election of Diocesan Delegate

Nominees: Marlys Kiser and Kendra Williford (Alternate: Steve Walker)

# 2019 FINANCIAL REPORT | 2020 PROPOSED BUDGET

	2019 Budget	2019 Actual As of 10/31/19	2020 Draft Budget
<b>OPERATING INCOME</b>			
Pledge Payments (2020 pledge goal = \$366,463; 95% = \$348,140) (2019 commitments = \$343,810)	\$ 319,970	\$ 251,232	\$ 348,140
Non-Pledge Contributions	\$ 88,000	\$ 69,728	\$ 90,000
Youth	\$ 0	\$ 300	\$ 0
Flowers	\$ 4,400	\$ 2,673	\$ 3,500
Christian Ed Materials	\$ 0	\$ 1,229	\$ 0
Endowments ( <i>see page 7</i> ) (7% Building, 37% General Fund)	\$ 50,446	\$ 50,446	\$ 51,480
Vitality Grant	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000	\$ 8,000
Patton Trust Distributions (Assist w/ Children & Youth budget)	\$ 35,000	\$ 13,115	\$ 62,282
Prior Year Operational Fund Surplus	\$ 14,473	\$ 0	\$ 0
Allocation of Operational Fund Reserve	\$ 6,710	\$ 0	\$ 0
<b>Total Operating Income</b>	<b>\$ 526,999</b>	<b>\$ 396,723</b>	<b>\$ 563,402</b>

## OPERATING EXPENSES

### Personnel Expenses

Salary & Wages	\$ 264,040	\$ 209,689	\$ 287,986
Staff Social Security	\$ 10,480	\$ 8,266	\$ 12,116
Travel & Auto	\$ 5,250	\$ 1,805	\$ 5,627
Cell Phones	\$ 3,000	\$ 2,500	\$ 4,800
Sabbatical (non-cash item)	\$ 2,500	\$ 0	\$ 2,500
Continuing Education	\$ 5,000	\$ 3,846	\$ 5,357
Pension	\$ 31,400	\$ 22,661	\$ 33,306
Health Insurance	\$ 25,623	\$ 17,045	\$ 28,221
Personnel Search Expense	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 1,000
<b>Total Personnel Expense</b>	<b>\$ 347,293</b>	<b>\$ 265,812</b>	<b>\$ 380,913</b>

### Facilities Expenses

General Maintenance	\$ 9,500	\$ 9,856	\$ 15,000
Lawn & Garden	\$ 8,200	\$ 6,143	\$ 7,000
Utilities	\$ 21,000	\$ 18,310	\$ 23,000
Security	\$ 4,620	\$ 4,473	\$ 4,700
<b>Total Facilities Expense</b>	<b>\$ 43,320</b>	<b>\$ 38,782</b>	<b>\$ 49,700</b>

	<b>2019 Budget</b>	<b>2019 Actual</b> <i>As of 10/31/19</i>	<b>2020 Draft Budget</b>
<b>Outreach Expenses</b>			
Diocese of Western North Carolina	\$ 47,746	\$ 39,788	\$ 50,748
Outreach ( <i>see page 10</i> )	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Outreach ( <b>not funded by Endowment</b> )	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Ascension Fund ( <i>see page 8</i> )	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Rector's Discretionary ( <i>see page 9</i> )	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
<b>Total Outreach Expense</b>	<b>\$ 47,746</b>	<b>\$ 39,788</b>	<b>\$ 50,748</b>

### **Christian Formation Expenses**

Youth ( <i>see page 14</i> )	\$ 2,500	\$ 902	\$ 2,500
Nursery	\$ 2,650	\$ 2,066	\$ 2,650
Christian Education – Children	\$ 500	\$ 3,229	\$ 4,820
Christian Education – Adult	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,721	\$ 4,100
Vestry Retreat	\$ 3,000	\$ 0	\$ 300
WNC Diocesan Convention	\$ 1,000	\$ 200	\$ 1,000
<b>Total Christian Formation Expense</b>	<b>\$ 13,150</b>	<b>\$ 10,118</b>	<b>\$ 15,370</b>

### **Finance Expenses**

Insurance & Taxes	\$ 14,000	\$ 13,807	\$ 13,500
Diocesan Loan	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Line of Credit	\$ 250	\$ 82	\$ 0
Stewardship	\$ 0	\$ 272	\$ 300
Audit	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 0
Fees	\$ 100	\$ 914	\$ 1,200
<b>Total Finance Expense</b>	<b>\$ 14,350</b>	<b>\$ 15,075</b>	<b>\$ 15,000</b>

### **Office / Administration Expenses**

Computer & Copier exp.	\$ 7,500	\$ 7,835	\$ 8,367
Dues & Subscriptions	\$ 0	\$ 100	\$ 100
Postage	\$ 2,800	\$ 2,871	\$ 2,882
Office Supplies & Printing	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,045	\$ 1,800
Sales Tax ( <b>refunded semi-annually</b> )	\$ 0	\$ 2,031	\$ 0
Advertising	\$ 500	\$ 193	\$ 550
Web Services & Design	\$ 340	\$ 332	\$ 372
Misc.	\$ 100	\$ 2	\$ 0
<b>Total Office/Administration Expense</b>	<b>\$ 13,240</b>	<b>\$ 14,409</b>	<b>\$ 14,071</b>

<b>Parish Life Expenses</b>	<b>2019 Budget</b>	<b>2019 Actual</b> <i>As of 10/31/19</i>	<b>2020 Draft Budget</b>
Parish Life	\$ 8,500	\$ 7,164	\$ 9,000
Supplies & Food	\$ 2,500	\$ 1,551	\$ 2,700
Bereavement	\$ 2,000	\$ 1,565	\$ 2,000
Wedding Ministry	\$ 0	\$ 936	\$ 0
Meals & Entertainment	\$ 100	\$ 0	\$ 100
<b>Total Parish Life Expense</b>	<b>\$ 13,100</b>	<b>\$ 11,216</b>	<b>\$ 13,800</b>

<b>Worship Expense</b>			
Altar Guild and Worship Supplies	\$ 5,500	\$ 2,422	\$ 5,500
Altar Flowers	\$ 4,000	\$ 2,605	\$ 4,000
Music	\$ 12,000	\$ 4,993	\$ 11,000
Organ & Piano Maintenance	\$ 11,500	\$ 14,142	\$ 1,500
Supply Clergy	\$ 1,800	\$ 1,772	\$ 1,800
<b>Total Worship Expense</b>	<b>\$ 34,800</b>	<b>\$ 25,934</b>	<b>\$ 23,800</b>

**TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES**

**\$ 526,999    \$ 421,134    \$ 563,402**

**TOTAL OPERATING SURPLUS**  
(Shortfall)

**\$ 0    \$ (24,411)    \$ 0**

Non-Operating Income *(Non-budgeted items:  
Rector's discretionary; Outreach, Ascension fund, Men's  
Ministry; Circles; youth fundraisers, etc.)*

**\$ 0    \$ 72,596    \$ 64,778**

Non-Operating Expenses *(Non-budgeted items:  
Rector's discretionary; Outreach, Ascension fund, Men's  
Ministry; Circles; youth fundraisers, etc.)*

**\$ 0    \$ 49,728    \$ 64,778**

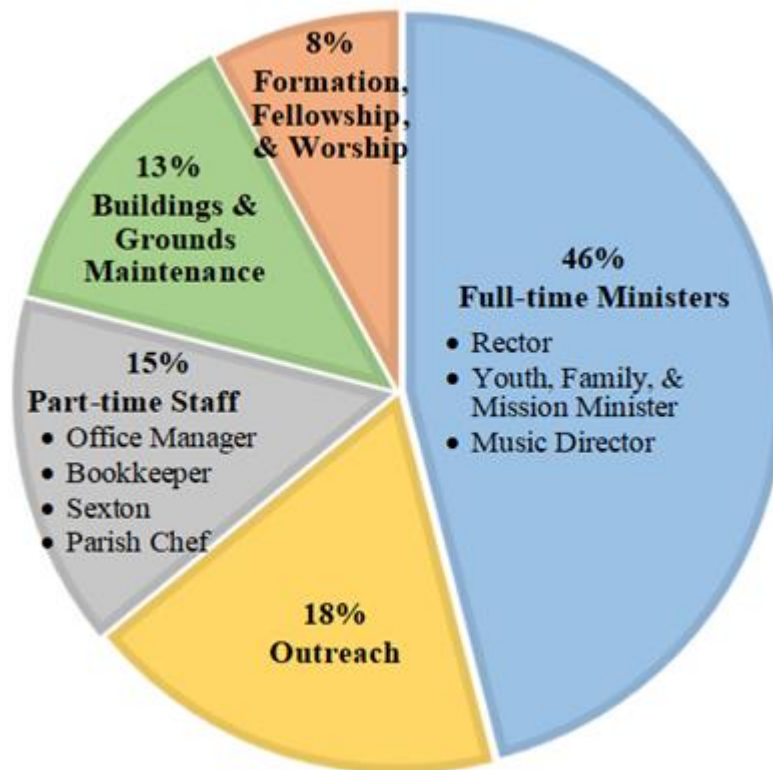
**Total Operating & Non-Operating  
Surplus/(Shortfall)**

**\$ 0    \$ (1,543)    \$ 0**

# 2020 PROPOSED BUDGET



**We believe** that God is a God of abundance.  
**We commit** to praying, trusting, & giving, like Jesus.  
**We invite** you to join us in sharing your gifts with the church and community.



*Our mission is to love with the heart of Christ, think with the mind of Christ,  
and act as the body of Christ in our church, community, and world.*

# ENDOWMENT REPORT

**Portfolio Value = \$3,191,295**

As of October 31, 2019

PORTFOLIO	% OF TOTAL	SHARE OF ENDOWMENT
Burns Endowment <i>(Rector's Discretionary 25%; Outreach 75%)</i>	46.203 %	\$ 1,380,687
Burns Special <i>(Building)</i>	7.107 %	\$ 212,379
Fennell Endowment <i>(Music)</i>	9.516 %	\$ 284,367
Nelle Burns <i>(General Fund)</i>	26.207 %	\$ 783,145
Ascension Fund	9.516 %	\$ 284,368
Burns Fund <i>(Altar Guild)</i>	1.451 %	\$ 43,360
<b>Total Endowment</b>	<b>100.000 %</b>	<b>\$ 2,988,306</b>
<b>Rogers' Outreach Bequest</b>		\$ 24,755
<b>Stock Gift Account</b>		\$ 17,423
<b>Patton Charitable Remainder Trust</b>		\$ 160,811
<b>Total Investments</b>		<b>\$ 3,191,295</b>

2019 INVESTMENT PERFORMANCE	TOTAL INVESTMENTS
Market Value at 12/31/2018	\$ 2,928,484
Dividend and Interest	\$ 77,646
Management Fees	\$ (34,888)
Change in Market Value	\$ 332,793
Annual Endowment Distribution	\$ (113,923)
Patton Charitable Remainder Trust Distribution	\$ (13,115)
2018 Stock Gift Proceeds transferred in January 2019	\$ (3,117)
2019 Stock Gift Proceeds held in Gift Act. (as of 10/31/19)	\$ 17,415
<b>Market Value at 10/31/2019</b>	<b>\$ 3,191,295</b>



# ASCENSION FUND

As of October 31, 2019

## 2019 Funds available to Ascension Fund

Balance carried over from 2018 \$ 14,153.32

Endowment Distribution \$ 10,840.85

***Total Funds Received*** \$ **24,994.17**

## 2018 Disbursements by Category

Rent/Mortgage Assistance \$ 2,554.00

Funeral Assistance \$ 400.00

Home Appliance Assistance \$ 350.00

Medical Appointment Assistance \$ 800.00

Medical Equipment Assistance \$ 295.85

Property Tax Assistance \$ 800.00

Utility Assistance \$ 2,213.49

***Total Disbursements*** \$ **7,413.34**

**Funds remaining as of 10/31/2019** \$ **17,580.83**

# RECTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

**2019 Analysis**  
(As of October 31, 2019)

<b>RECTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND INCOME</b>		
Prior Year Cash Balances	\$ 5,190	23.58 %
2019 Endowment Income	\$ 13,159	59.79 %
Donations to Rector's Fund	\$ 3,660	16.63 %
<b>Total Cash Sources</b>	<b>\$ 22,009</b>	<b>100.00 %</b>

<b>RECTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND EXPENSES</b>		
Camp Henry	\$ 628	4.14 %
Community Assistance -- Individuals	\$ 2,892	19.05 %
Community Organizations	\$ 2,261	14.89 %
Parish Life Activities	\$ 2,234	14.72 %
Parishioner Assistance	\$ 7,166	47.20 %
<b>Total Disbursements</b>	<b>\$ 15,181</b>	<b>100.00 %</b>
<b>Funds remaining as of 10/31/2019</b>	<b>\$ 6,828</b>	

# OUTREACH COMMITTEE FUND

<b>OUTREACH FUNDING</b>	<b>2019 Actual</b> As of 10/31/2019
Carryover Funds from Prior Year	\$ 1,898.15
Annual Endowment Fund Distributions	\$ 39,476.80
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>\$ 41,374.95</b>

## OUTREACH DISBURSEMENTS

### Global Disbursements

Episcopal Relief and Development.	\$ (594.60)
<b>Total Global Disbursements</b>	<b>\$ (594.60)</b>

### Regional Disbursements

Thompson's Children's Home	\$ (4,000.00)
<b>Total Regional Disbursements</b>	<b>\$ (4,000.00)</b>

### Local Disbursements

Backpack Program	\$ (4,000.00)
Camp Henry Scholarships	\$ (1,000.00)
Patrick Beaver Learning Resource Center	\$ (1,000.00)
Safe Harbor	\$ (5,000.00)
<b>Total Local Disbursements</b>	<b>\$ (11,000.00)</b>

<b>Grand Total Disbursements</b>	<b>\$ (15,594.60)</b>
<b>Funds remaining as of 10/31/2019</b>	<b>\$ 25,780.35</b>

# RECTOR'S REPORT



*By The Rev. Karla Woggon*

At the January 2019 vestry retreat, the vestry set the following 2019-2020 goals. I have indicated below the progress we have made thus far. At the 2020 vestry retreat, we will review these goals, discuss our progress, and decide what goals we will continue to work on.

## **Children, Youth & Families / Mission & Innovation**

- Call an Assistant Priest to focus on children, youth, families, and Mission & Innovation.
  - ✓ *Progress:* As we continue to refine the skills and gifts we are looking for in an assistant priest and gain a clearer focus on Mission & Innovation, we called Cole McGlynn, a Lutheran Seminarian, to serve as interim pastor for 30 hours per week through May 2020. He has oversight of our ministry to children and youth and also is in charge of our Mission & Innovation Task Force (*see page 14*).
- Form a strong committee.
- Define creative ways to invite families with young children into our space.
- Form a youth leadership team (*see page 14*).
- Conduct community educational events around parenting.
  - ✓ *Progress:* In April 2019 we held a community forum on nurturing the spiritual lives of children.

## **Stewardship of Our Lives & Spiritual Renewal:**

*For a full list of activities, see the Spiritual Renewal & The Stewardship of the Fullness of our Lives program catalog.*

- Conduct a year-long focus on topics related to aging.
  - ✓ *Progress:* In fall 2019 we held two community forums: The Five Legal Documents Everyone Needs & Why (on September 8) and Know Your Options for Long-term Care (on October 13).
- Offer programs that support the spiritual growth of our bodies, minds, and spirits.
  - ✓ *Progress:* This fall Jean Bolton led two Body, Mind, & Soul exercise classes. In February Lee Gibbs conducted a seminar on the importance of water. We sold water bottles with a “Come to the Water...The Episcopal Church of the Ascension” imprint. In January 2020 Gibbs will return to conduct four seminars on healthy eating.
- Offer programs to help bring financial stability into our lives.
  - ✓ *Progress:* Currently in the planning phases.

## **Spiritual Renewal**

*For a full list of activities, see the Spiritual Renewal & The Stewardship of the Fullness of our Lives program catalog.*

- Embed the Bible more fully in our lives.
  - ✓ *Progress:* We begin each Vestry meeting with bible study. We also implemented an all-parish book read of *Way of Love -- 50 Day Bible Challenge*.
- Strengthen our spiritual friendships & prayer partners.
  - ✓ *Progress:* Six faith-sharing dinner groups continue to meet to nurture our spiritual friendships.
- Embrace our core Episcopal beliefs & practices.

### Buildings & Grounds

- Form a strong committee
  - ✓ *Progress:* So the proper attention could be given to each area, two committees have been formed: a Building Committee (headed by Ken Wilkinson) and a Grounds Committee (headed by Mark Valcourt).
- Playground
- Back Yard
  - ✓ *Progress:* Trail to creek created, creek banks were secured, and the field improved.
- Labyrinth
  - ✓ *Progress:* William Goebelbecker, under the guidance of Mark Valcourt, is installing a labyrinth in the lower part of the field behind the church on Second Avenue.
- Develop a schedule for needed repairs and maintenance of the buildings.
  - ✓ *Progress:* The building committee is evaluating the current state of our buildings and will present their findings and recommendations at the 2020 Vestry Retreat.
- Ensure proper adherence to ADA compliance / Address security concerns
  - ✓ *Progress:* The building committee will report their findings related to ADA compliance at the 2020 Vestry Retreat. A Security Task Force was formed and has already made recommendations to the Vestry. Security cameras (with live feed and recording capabilities) have been installed in five locations throughout the building. In October 2019, the Security Task Force conducted “Prepared – Not Scared: Planning for Emergencies” as a community program; additional programs will be considered and planned.

<u>From the 2018 Parochial Report</u>		<u>December 2018 – December 2019</u>	
Average Sunday Attendance (ASA) .....	106	Weddings .....	3
Total Operating Income (NOI) .....	\$507,482	Funerals .....	6
Pledging Units .....	88	Baptisms .....	2
		Confirmations .....	0
		Transferred In .....	5
		Transferred Out .....	0

# MUSIC AT ASCENSION



*By Cory Westby, Director of Music*

***“Let all the earth around ring joyous with the sound: may Jesus Christ be praised!” – Hymn #427, “When Morning Gilds the Skies”***

Our current music ministries are moving right along heading into a very busy time! Our Parish Choir, though small, is so very talented and dedicated. I continue to be grateful to the members of the choir who give of their time to support the song of the people and enhance our worship. As capable and accomplished as our choir has remained, it is still small. I am actively seeking out new members to join the choir. If you’ve ever considered it, give us a try. If you can talk, you can sing! Summer Choir enjoyed continued success this year, with brave new singers joining us twice a month. We will look to continue this in 2020. Our staff singers continue to be a great asset to Ascension. This year we’ve had 2-4 staff singers at a time. As singers have needed to discontinue their participation or have graduated, I continue to engage with students at Lenoir-Rhyne and CVCC and let them know of this opportunity.

In my expanded musical role, I have enjoyed more opportunities to teach and engage with people. Often, I find myself learning more than I am teaching! I have begun writing a weekly column called “Singing on Sunday”, which seeks to bring attention to the significance of music chosen for worship that weekend. The Thursday Morning group spent some weeks studying the biblical support for the arts and the role they play in sharing the Gospel in Philip Ryken’s book “Art for God’s Sake.” I have also developed monthly Sunday morning sessions during the formation hour on various topics related to singing, music in worship, and hymnody. These sessions sometimes include tips and guidance for the act of singing itself, deeper looks at the music for a Sunday or season, and understanding how to fully utilize the resources found within our hymnal and Book of Common Prayer. Stronger attendance of these sessions is desired, and I am looking at ways to bring that about.

Our worship opportunities have also seen expansion this year. We have enjoyed two services of Evensong this fall, with two more planned for the February and May. We have also begun a monthly service of sung Compline, the service prayed at the close of the day. Each month those gathered for Wednesday programs, youth, and choir meet in the sanctuary around the light of a candle for a fifteen-minute worship service of prayer and praise, lead entirely by chant. It has proven a peaceful and fitting way to end a busy Wednesday at Ascension.

The Concert & Evensong series has been very successful, with good attendance and feedback. The thought behind their development was that people who enjoyed Evensong would be exposed to fine musicians and ensembles, and people who enjoyed musical performances would be exposed to the beautiful, rich liturgy of Evensong. We welcomed a professional harpist and cellist in September, and just recently enjoyed a program of bluegrass music. These evening concerts are followed by the service of Evensong (sung Evening Prayer), in which we sing hymns, chant the liturgy, and the choir sings uniquely composed settings of biblical canticles. We are developing strategies for more expanded marketing of future events.

Our instruments have continued to serve faithfully. The Campbell Harpsichord was on stage with the Western Piedmont Symphony this fall. In preparation for this, some minor repairs and maintenance were undertaken, and it is now in tip-top shape. The Flentrop pipe organ also saw significant work this year. The instrument was re-leathered (required every 25-30 years), and some structural issues were corrected to ensure it continues to provide support to our singing for decades to come.

I have known Ascension to be a congregation that places a high value on the arts, especially music. I remain so very grateful and humbled to be allowed to work among you all, as we utilize the gift of music and song to lift our prayers, our praises, and our thanks for all of God’s many blessings.

***“When mirth for music longs, this is my song of songs: may Jesus Christ be praised!  
God’s holy house of prayer hath none that can compare with: Jesus Christ be praised!”***

# CHILDREN, YOUTH, & FAMILIES AT ASCENSION

By Cole McGlynn, Assistant for Evangelism, Children, Youth, & Family Ministry



## Youth

Ascension youth offerings include Wednesday evening youth group, Sunday School, open office hours at Tasteful Beans on Monday evenings, and occasional youth lock-ins and trips. Youth group and lock-ins continue to be our best attended events and the cornerstones of youth ministry at Ascension.

- **Wednesday Youth Group** – Each week we check in with one another and share “blessings and bummers” of the week, spend time doing some sort of learning or activity to grow spiritually, and then reserve time to play games. Once a month we join the choir and other parishioners for compline. Throughout the year the youth group has enjoyed such special activities as baking and decorating cookies for Shop with a Purpose, hosting a guest speaker to learn about their experiences working abroad for one year with the ELCA’s Young Adults in Global Mission program, and examining our faith through a variety of different lessons.
- **Lock-ins** – Our lock-ins give youth an opportunity to gather, typically after an outing or activity, for a night of games and fellowship. Youth are invited to bring a friend, which offers opportunity for us to reach other youth in the community. Our two most recent lock-ins include:
  - Scarowinds – Eleven Ascension youth attended along with other youth from St. Albans. Afterward, most of the Ascension youth and their friends stayed overnight at the church to enjoy snacks and watch a movie.
  - Christmas Caroling -- After spreading joy to homebound parishioners and a few of the local nursing homes, several youth spent the night at Ascension to celebrate friendships and the holiday.

Moving forward we will continue with our regular offerings as well as partner with other local Episcopal churches for a confirmation retreat at Lake Logan. I feel confident in the direction we are moving for Ascension’s youth ministry and have enjoyed getting to know everyone. We will continue to define how to best tailor our youth offerings and adapt to the needs of those in the program.

## Mission

A ten-person Mission and Innovation Task Force was formed to address how Ascension will faithfully continue to follow God in our church and city as society and the community changes. The group’s focus has been on faithfulness and keeping God at the center of everything. As we embrace our belief that God is in control and already at work in the community, the group’s work will focus on defining ways Ascension can be more authentically present in our neighborhoods and practice abundant ways of life.

Utilizing Alan Roxburgh’s book, *Joining God, Remaking Church, Changing the World*, we have started to discern God’s presence in our church and in our community while also being more intentional about listening to one another and the areas where we live. Roxburgh lays out five practices: listening, discerning, testing and experimenting, reflecting, and deciding. The task force has spent time thus far working with and reflecting on the practice of listening.

The work this taskforce has been doing and will continue to do is important but we also recognize the importance of extending this work to the whole Ascension family, which will be done through intentional sermons, lessons, and progress updates.



# VESTRY CANDIDATE PROFILES

## JAMES CARTER

**Phone:** 828-228-7088

**E-mail:** rawson1539@hotmail.com



### **Tell us a little about yourself.**

I was raised in Statesville, North Carolina and then drafted into the U.S. Army where I served 32 years...22 years active duty plus four years with the National Guard. I then worked for the Department of Military Affairs for 28 years as a Building & Grounds Supervisor at Camp Blanding in Stark, Florida.

### **What about Ascension nurtures your spiritual life?**

Sunday worship at Ascension is very nurturing to my spiritual life because I enjoy the fellowship of the people in our congregation. I find most members to be open minded to the diversity of people represented in our congregation and also open to new ways to welcome the community into our fold. I've also been spiritually nurtured by friendships shared with the people in my faith-sharing group.

### **What gifts do you think Ascension might have to share with the world?**

Our exceptionally nurturing leaders, Rev. Karla Woggon and Deacon Anita Ware. Talented organist and musicians. Spirit-filled people. Faith, music, and brotherhood.

### **What gifts/skills do you have that bring you joy that you'd like to share?**

My carpentry and craftsmanship is what I am most gifted with and it does bring me joy to share this talent where it is most needed.



## VESTRY CANDIDATE PROFILES

### JOSHUA HERMAN

**Phone:** 828-291-0394

**E-mail:** joshuaherman116@gmail.com



**Tell us a little about yourself.**

I hold a Bachelor of Arts degree in Music concentrating in Sacred Music from Lenoir-Rhyne University. As an employee of Greater Hickory Cooperative Christian Ministries, I work in a ministerial capacity as a community advocate for the NETworX community.

**What about Ascension nurtures your spiritual life?**

At Ascension I am nourished by the Eucharist and the loving and welcoming parish community, particularly the Wednesday evening crowd. Ascension is truly a loving and supportive family.

**What gifts do you think Ascension might have to share with the world?**

Ascension has many members that represent the Church in the community by volunteering and sharing Christ's love with the greater community. This church also has one of the finest music programs in the greater Hickory area.

**What gifts/skills do you have that bring you joy that you'd like to share?**

I have served many churches as a professional church musician for the better part of 15 years. Additionally, I have a love of administration work. I do not believe in inaction; leadership should lead effectively.

## VESTRY CANDIDATE PROFILES

### NANCY LINKER

**Phone:** 828-302-4835

**E-mail:** nancydlinker@gmail.com

**Tell us a little about yourself.**

I like to think that those who know me would say I am fair, honest, compassionate, and objective. I love my God, my family, my friends, and my church. I love a walk in the woods, a good laugh, a good book, and a good meal. I struggle with organization and time management skills, and technology!



**What about Ascension nurtures your spiritual life?**

The strength of friendships, the opportunity to serve in unlimited ways, the countless possibilities, provided to increase knowledge and faith, the simple beauty of the worship space and of the liturgy, offer exhilaration in exciting times, contentment in ordinary times and comfort in challenging times.

**What gifts do you think Ascension might have to share with the world?**

The face of our church has changed since I was welcomed into the Ascension family when I moved to Hickory in 1984. It has been a privilege to be a part of a loving parish that seeks to include all who want to be a part of our family. Sharing God's love through outreach enriches each of us as well as those we hope to serve. The current initiative that seeks to find new ways to "do church" challenges us to be open to the call of the Holy Spirit; responding to the call can enrich us in ways yet to be discovered. The emphasis on finding new and creative ways to attract and meet the needs of children, youth and families should help us become a stronger more sustainable parish with greater ability to carry out the mission of the Church.

**What gifts/skills do you have that bring you joy that you'd like to share?**

Children and youth have been the focus of much of my involvement in our Church. I have taught Sunday School, lead the Youth Group, lead Children's Chapel, assisted with Confirmation Classes, shared leadership on two youth Mission Trips to the Lower Brule Lakota Indian Reservation and a Journey to Adulthood Pilgrimage to Great Britain as well as serve on numerous children and youth related committees. Currently, I teach Sunday School, serve on the Children, Youth and Family Ministries Committee and am an Assistant Leader for BSA Troop 726, sponsored by Ascension.

During my many years at Ascension I have served on the Vestry, been on a Rector Search Committee and a few Search Committees for Directors of Children and Youth. For many years I have enjoyed being a Lay Reader and serving on the Altar Guild.

As I continue to seek God's will in my life and in our church, I feel, due to my participation in varied Ascension activities during my thirty-five years of membership, I may have a unique perspective to offer which could be useful to the Vestry.

## VESTRY CANDIDATE PROFILES

### MARIAN STORY

**Phone:** 828-310-4735

**E-mail:** mbstory62@gmail.com



**Tell us a little about yourself.**

I am a mother of three, a grandmother of three, and the spouse of Chris Story. When I am not with family, I volunteer at CCM and am an active member of The Service League of Hickory.

**What about Ascension nurtures your spiritual life?**

Participating in the Thursday Discussion Group provides opportunity to explore various topics and learn from others. Receiving communion is also very important in my spiritual life.

**What gifts do you think Ascension might have to share with the world?**

I think Ascension should explore options of taking more mission trips to expand our reach into the world. These trips would also deepen the personal bonds within our church family.

**What gifts/skills do you have that bring you joy that you'd like to share?**

I have good organizational skills, enjoy cooking, and get great pleasure from helping others in need.

