

Summer Letter from the Rector

Welcome to our new Children's Ministry Director, Catherine Slocum

As announced in June, Catherine Slocum accepted the call to be our next Director of Children's Ministry. In addition to spending the last fifteen years serving as a Children's Ministry Director in three different churches, Catherine has also worked in communications and many other areas of church life in congregations ranging in size from less than 100 to more than 1,500 over the course of the past thirty years.

Though a life-long Anglican, (her Dad is a retired Anglican bishop!) most recently, Catherine comes to us from a 600 member Presbyterian Church in Murrysville, PA where she was serving as Director of Children and Family Ministries.

Catherine is already known to some in our congregation and is no stranger to our buildings. Catherine's husband, Jay, used to be on staff with us before planting Jonah's Call church that meets at Ascension and where Jay served as rector until early last year. Catherine and Jay have two children, Emma (21) and Lydia (17).

Please keep Catherine and her family in your prayers as she prepares to take up her new role with us and for all those who are so faithfully leading and volunteering in our Children's Ministry Program in this time of transition. Pray too for all our children and their families.



Catherine Slocum

Rector's Summer Reading



One of the things I am so looking forward to doing over our upcoming vacation is reading! On my personal list is the latest historical novel in the Shardlake series by C.J. Sansom. I also plan to finish reading the biography of Steve Jobs. Two other books I'm eager to pick up are: "The Good and Beautiful God: Falling in Love with the God Jesus Knows," and "The Magnificent Story: Uncovering a Gospel of Beauty, Goodness and Truth," both by James B. Smith, whom I heard speak at the recent ACNA Assembly in Texas last month. These books look like great resources for our Community Groups or for anyone who wants to grow in their Christian life.

My one big recommendation to *everyone*, however, is "Surprise the World" by Michael Frost. Chris Massa has written a helpful review of this book (page 5). This is a short, reasonably priced (\$8.00), easy to read book. I confess it's not a great literary work, and you might not find anything particularly new in its pages, but I believe if you and I were to take up the habits outlined in this book it could transform the way we live and our church family. If you read nothing else this summer, read this book!

More Than Stones: Welcoming our Neighbors, Reaching the Nations

It gives me great joy to write about our *More Than Stones* capital stewardship campaign. As recently as 18 months ago, I'm not sure I could have imagined writing the words *great joy* and *capital campaign* in the same sentence! But last year something profound changed in me. During my time away on Sabbatical three things became crystal clear:

First, the time to address the major maintenance issues that have beset our buildings, but which until last year we were unable comprehensively to address, is **Now**.

Second, the lens through which I believe God would have us approach this endeavor is: **Mission**.

Third, I have increasingly come to realize that this effort will take **Sacrificial Giving**.

How do these three things come together? The theme of the Global Anglican Future Conference, which I attended in Jerusalem last year was: "Proclaiming Christ Faithfully to the Nations." The reality for us at Ascension is that: **The nations have come to Pittsburgh, and the nations are our neighbors.**

We are uniquely situated here in Oakland. We are surrounded by 50,000 college students and thousands of young professionals who work in the areas of law, finance, robotics, computer science, medicine and education. Our neighbors come from all over the world and many will go out to the ends of the earth after their time in Pittsburgh.

Our Mission

Over the past few years we have seen remarkable growth in our midst. This year alone Sunday attendance has increased by 10%. We have never seen so many children, youth, young adults and families. We are starting new Community Groups as fast as we can train leaders, and every Sunday we are privileged to have visitors among us.

Given this season of life and health and growth coupled with the mandate to proclaim Christ faithfully to the nations, how might Ascension through our physical stones and through we who are the *living* stones, radiate the *light*, the *love* and the *life* of Christ? Surely this is our mission!

Ministry Opportunities

What if, over the next few years:

- Sunday Morning attendance increases to over 700?
- Youth Group doubles from 80 to 160?
- Children's Ministry doubles from 100 to 200?
- Community Groups explode from 28 to 58?
- We add a new Sunday Morning service within 3 years?
- International Ministry triples from 100 to 300 students?
- 10 new families join our Special Needs Ministry?
- We welcome 50 new people into our Seniors Ministry?
- We bring on staff several CCO Fellows?
- We bring on staff an Asian missionary?
- We send teams to Southeast Asia each year?
- We plant a church off-site within 5 to 7 years?



The many ministry opportunities are clearly about something *more* than stones. At the same time, this campaign is not about something *less* than stones. I believe we are now being called to repair and improve our facilities to maximize the opportunities for ministry and mission on our doorstep. I am excited to see what the Holy Spirit will do in and through us as we proclaim Christ faithfully in Pittsburgh, through our vocations, to our neighbors, and to the ends of the earth.

Process Update

May was quite a month with 12 listening sessions that generated 1,430 responses! Thank you to the more than 320 people who attended one of those sessions and to the 200 people who attended one of the two Town Hall Meetings in June.

In response to the congregational feedback the vestry agreed, at its meeting on June 25, to adjust the statement of our needs in our Capital Stewardship Campaign to include a specific component directed to funding Ministry and Mission.

There are now three clear goals before us:

1. Ministry and Mission
2. Refurbishment and Renewal
3. Essential Repairs

The current estimated costs of doing all this work is as follows.

Ministry & Mission:	\$650,000
<i>Provide a reserve fund to meet necessary staffing levels to facilitate current and projected growth (transitional arrangement until operating income grows to meet these needs)</i>	
Refurbishment & Renewal:	\$3,750,000
<i>Improvements to existing facilities to maximize ministry and mission opportunities including expansion of the Parish Hall</i>	
Essential Repairs:	\$3,600,000
<i>Stonework, windows, roofs, internal work in the nave</i>	
Other Project Costs & Expenses:	<u>\$200,000</u>
Total:	\$8,200,000

Home Visitations

The goal of our Financial Stewardship Campaign is to visit every home and invite people to participate. Some will be able to give much, others a little. But all can give something. In Luke 2 we read: “[Jesus] looked up and saw rich people putting their gifts into the treasury; he also saw a poor widow put in two small copper coins. He said, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all of them; for all of them have contributed out of their abundance, but she out of her poverty has put in all she had to live on.”

Equal Sacrifice

Our *More Than Stones* initiative calls for equal sacrifice not equal gifts, with *everyone* doing their part. Our giving needs to be over and above regular annual giving and can be made over three years. As I have begun to visit people I have been very moved to hear the stories of those who are truly giving sacrificially. Some are postponing retirement, others are accessing savings and IRA accounts, bonuses and pay raises. One couple decided to put off changing their cars. There are many ways that people are rising to the invitation to give sacrificially.



Yours in Christ,

Jonathan +

Jonathan N. Millard
(Rector)

A Call to Prayer

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation,
by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving,
present your requests to God. And the peace of God,
which transcends all understanding, will guard
your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

Philippians 4:6-7

This scripture provides a wonderful assurance - when we present our requests and thanksgivings to the Lord, we are gifted with peace in Christ Jesus! It is in peace and joyful anticipation that we are inviting the church to a season of continued prayer for the *More Than Stones* capital stewardship campaign. Prayer is the spiritual foundation of this initiative, so please join us as we pray...

For the many people who are not yet part of our church family;
For one another - we who are the living stones of our church family;
For Ascension's buildings and the ongoing discernment surrounding
the work that needs to be done; and
For our individual part in this adventure - what is God calling *me* to do?

Each person has a prayer stone to help remind us of our call to prayer. (If for some reason you don't have one or you want another, please feel free to take one from the basket in the Education Wing hallway.)

You might also pray the *More Than Stones Prayer* (below) as part of your daily prayers or pray it weekly with your community group. Perhaps the Lord will show you creative ways for incorporating prayers for the campaign into your regular pattern of prayer.

More Than Stones Prayer

Almighty and eternal God, in your goodness you set for your people the chief cornerstone, Jesus Christ, to be the foundation of our faith and the strength of our life together: Grant us grace so to build our lives upon the Living Stone that, faithfully and fervently we would declare the light and life of your truth and love to the nations, both here in Pittsburgh and to the ends of the earth, to the glory of your Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and forever. Amen.

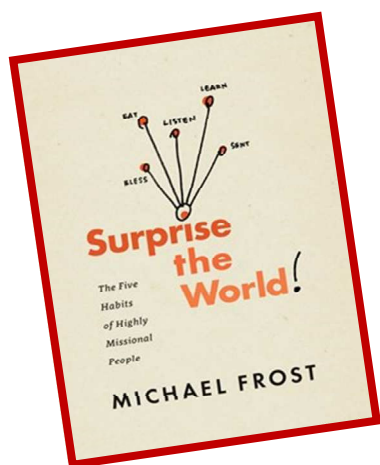
We'd love to know how you are praying and what you might be sensing in prayer. Feel free to send an email to let us know.



The Rev. Dr. Andrea Millard
Director of Prayer Ministry

andrea.millard@ascensionpittsburgh.org

Book Review



Surprise The World

by Michael Frost

A book review by
Chris Massa, Director of
Music and Worship Arts
[chris.massa](mailto:chris.massa@ascensionpittsburgh.org)
[@ascensionpittsburgh.org](mailto:chris.massa@ascensionpittsburgh.org)



The theme of our fall Parish Retreat at Laurelville (Oct 4 – 6) is “Surprise the World”. We will have a great variety of speakers including Jonathan & Andrea Millard, Tish & Jonathan Warren, Mark Stevenson, the Dean of Thailand (Ching Wah Ye) as well the head of the school located in Chiang Mai (Jeanne Yee-Gan). The core of the retreat will be based on the principles expressed in this small book. It is easy summer reading if you want to order a copy (they sell for around \$8.00).

First, a confession: I don’t know how to do evangelism. Yes, of course, I know how I’m *supposed* to do evangelism — at least, how I’ve been *told* I’m supposed to do evangelism — but I’ve never been able to internalize and translate it into something that I actually *do*. I’ve learned countless gimmicks and acronyms, each one supposed to make sharing my faith easier and more successful, and I’ve read a handful of books on the subject as well. But the more I do, and the more I read, the more I end up feeling guilty rather than motivated, and the more I recognize that evangelism is something that I simply don’t know how to do. I’m ashamed to admit that, more often than not, evangelism is something that I’ve left up to other people. To borrow from the late Dallas Willard, the Great Commission has been my great omission.

Which brings me to Michael Frost’s *Surprise the World*. Of all the books I’ve read on evangelism, *Surprise the World* is unique. I’m not saying it’s a great book — more on that in a moment — but it does something so rare that it feels kind of revolutionary: It demystifies the Great Commission. Rather than teaching a technique for evangelism, it reframes mission as something virtually anyone can do, and that all followers of Christ should do. It even goes so far as to draw a distinction between evangelism — something that some are uniquely called, equipped, and gifted to do — and living missionally — something that we are all called to do, whether we’re gifted evangelists or not. In this way, it feels like a helpful tonic to all of the books, acronyms, and flannelgraph presentations. It feels like a game-changer, and maybe it is.

Yes, Frost introduces an acronym in *Surprise the World*, but rather than being a tool for evangelism — that is, something for us to “use” on nonbelievers — this acronym functions as more of a mnemonic device, a memory aid for the reader. Frost’s model for mission is deceptively simple: If we cultivate a habit of *blessing* others, *eating* with others, *listening* to the Holy Spirit, *learning* Christ, and seeing ourselves as being *sent*, we are mirroring the

actions of Christ, and we are laying the groundwork for the kingdom of God. That’s it, although I would draw your attention to the word *habit*. This is not a program or a campaign, but a way of life. It is a biblical, practical way of living missionally.

I will happily admit that, from a literary standpoint, *Surprise the World* has very little to distinguish it, and I suspect that the author would agree with me. I’ve read enough of his work to know that Michael Frost is capable of writing something that makes for intellectually stimulating reading, but this isn’t that kind of book. The modesty of *Surprise the World* goes back to its roots: It started out as a slender e-book entitled *The Five Habits of Highly Missional People*, and while *Surprise the World* represents a fleshing-out of the original material, it still reads like a slightly expanded pamphlet. I would argue that *Surprise the World* is hardly a book at all, but a tool. A pair of pliers doesn’t need to be particularly elegant to get the job done, but they do have to work. Simply stated, I think the lack of flourishes is an asset in the case of *Surprise the World*. You will not be dazzled by Frost’s witty writing and clever turns-of-phrase, and you’re not supposed to be. His goal is to point the way to a missional lifestyle, and do so clearly, in a way that can’t be easily ignored or forgotten. As such, he succeeds brilliantly.

There’s another way that *Surprise the World* is not like most books. It is not a book that should be read and pondered, or that is designed to give you interesting ideas and a fresh perspective. Rather, it is a manual for action. If we are willing to read *Surprise the World* as the writer intended, it will result in change, both in the way we live and the world around us. It may even result in us living out our calling: that we would be sent out to do the work the Lord has given us to do, to love and serve him as faithful witnesses of Christ our Lord. Thanks be to God.

What is the vision for **COMMUNITY GROUPS** [life together] BIBLE STUDY | PRAYER | SERVING at Ascension?

The vision for Community Groups at Ascension comes from the description of the early church's practice in Acts 2:42-7.

The church devoted itself to four core practices:

devotion to the apostle's teaching, fellowship, sharing meals, and prayer.

As we know from the rest of Acts, these core practices formed the community for the sake of bearing witness to Christ in word and deed to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and 'the ends of the earth'.

The New Testament is clear that this commission is not issued to solitary disciples, but to the body of Christ, the people that God is forming for himself. The Bible affirms the dignity, the worth, and the freedom of the individual, but it repudiates individualism. Individualism, which can be summarized as a belief in personal autonomy and self-creation, is at odds with the biblical conviction that "we are individually members of one another" (Rom. 12:5). As the biblical scholar Craig Bartholomew argues, "we need a spirituality that will undermine western individualism." In addition to corporate worship every Sunday, our Community Groups are the chief way that we express our conviction that we are a body and not isolated individuals with private relationships to Christ.

Our Community Groups bear these commitments and practices out in different ways. Some groups meet every week, others meet every other week. Some share a meal at every meeting, others elect to do so on special occasions. All of our groups are open to participation by anyone, but they differ in the degree of commitment that they require. Some groups are open and flexible in terms of participation. Some groups, which we call Rule of Life Community Groups, require a greater degree of commitment. At the heart of all of our groups, however, is the commitment to form disciples into the body of Christ through the core practices of the faith for the sake of the mission of the gospel.

A Preference for Geographical Proximity

The long history of the church demonstrates that the practices of the church are most formative when the members of the church live close to one another and can DO life together. Another way to say this is that the more disparate and diffuse we become geographically, the less we resemble a body and the more we resemble a group of isolated individuals who happen to show up at the same place once a week.

Among secular intellectuals, there is a vast literature documenting and lamenting the 'crisis of place' that has been introduced as a result of car culture. This literature highlights the lack of flourishing that results from being constantly on the go in our cars and not deeply rooted in particular places, but also the way in which our ability to travel anywhere at any time generates an unrelenting sameness on all places. One observer calls this mono-chromatic pattern of building the 'geography of nowhere'.

As the church, we are not immune to this feature of American life, and we will not overcome it by challenging our members all to move within a mile of the church so as to artificially recreate the parish. At the same time, we recognize the way in which our lack of geographical proximity to each other dilutes not only the quality of our relationships but also the power of the fellowship to form us deeply into the body of Christ.

We are committed, therefore, to promoting geographic proximity in our Community Groups. If possible, we would like to encourage you to attend a group near where you live. We have groups that meet all over the city, and we are always adding more groups so that we can extend the fellowship of the body of Christ to more and more people in the city of Pittsburgh. You can view our **Community Group map** by visiting Ascension's website <http://www.ascensionpittsburgh.org/connect/community-groups>.



Contact me,
Jonathan Warren
(co-Associate Rector),
to discuss community
group options
[jonathan.warren@](mailto:jonathan.warren@ascensionpittsburgh.org)
ascensionpittsburgh.org.

Want to join a team?

Service is a great way to get plugged into the life of our church! To follow are ministries at Ascension in need of a few more recruits. See a ministry that matches your interests and giftings? To sign up, email Director of Ministry, Marilyn Chislaghi at marilyn.chislaghi@ascensionpittsburgh.org



MINISTRY	DESCRIPTION	TIME
Acolytes	Participate in the liturgical procession and altar party; 11am service; kids/adults	Sundays; 3 – 5 times/ quarter
Altar Guild Ministry (Communion team)	Join a fun ministry team to set up for Sunday worship; training provided	One month per quarter on a team
Archives	Archive resources to preserve Ascension history	As needed; training provided
Building and Property Task Group	Assist with building projects big and small; need people handy with tools; engineers, managers	Project based
Campus Ministry	Be a home for students; host gatherings; pray; mentor a student	Academic year Sept. - April
Chalice Bearers/ Lay Readers	Read during worship services and serve at communion	Sundays; 3 – 5 times per quarter
Children's Sunday School	Teach ages pre-K to 5th grade; assist in other administrative ways	Sundays; on a rotation w/other teachers
Community Groups	Lead or host a group that meets weekly or biweekly	Weekly or biweekly
Young Adults	Mentor a young adult; help organize events	Casual; as agreed
Greeters	Stand at entrances to greet those coming to church on Sunday	Sundays; 1 month/ quarterly
Hospitality Hour Hosts	Converse with newcomers in the Parish Hall	Sundays; 1 week/ monthly
International Ministry	ESL teachers/assistants; conversation partners; discipleship classes	Ongoing weekly
Meal Ministry: New mom	Prepare a meal for a family with a new baby (we have many babies on the way!)	As needed
Meal Ministry: Soul Food	Cook for the sick, bereaved or homebound (many more cooks needed)	As needed

MINISTRY	DESCRIPTION	TIME
Music: Contemporary Music Team	Vocalists & instrumentalists for our contemporary music ministry	Practices as needed
Music: Adult Choir	Sing at the 11am service (September – May)	Thursday practice
Music: Children's Choir	Sing once a month on the last Sunday at the 9 or 11am service	Practice Sundays 10:15 - 10:50am; sing monthly
Music: Sound Techs	Operate the sound board at 9 or 11am service	4 times per quarter
Prayer: Altar Prayer	Pray for those requesting prayer during communion at 9 & 11am services	3 – 5 times per quarter; monthly practicum on Saturdays
Prayer: Pray for our leaders	Pray one hour for the church, diocese, leaders and staff	9am Sunday mornings with a group
Security	Walk the facility between services	Sundays; 3 times per quarter
Special Needs Ministry	Teach/assist Sundays at 9am; be a buddy to a special needs friend	Sunday mornings or Saturday club
Ushers	Welcome, hand out bulletins, assist with offering & communion	Sundays; 1 month/ quarter
Welcome Table	Greet newcomers after worship services	Sundays; 1 month/ quarter
Youth Ministry	Be a friend and mentor to a teenager! Help with Middle School on Fridays/ or High School on Sundays	Friday or Sunday evenings

Want to get connected?
Contact Marilyn Chislaghi
Director of Ministry
412-621-4361 ext. 219 or
marilyn.chislaghi@ascensionpittsburgh.org



Music and Worship Arts Ministry

“Bringing artists together for the glory of God, the healing of His Church and the empowerment of local congregations to sing their song, tell their story and move forward in their mission”

- Are you a Pittsburgh artist involved in theater, visual arts, poetry or songwriting?
- Have you longed to carve out a sacred space to engage in your craft while praying for the Creator to do a new work in you?
- Does the opportunity to collaborate across artistic disciplines excite you?

Come join us at Church of the Ascension for a two-day Worship Arts Retreat hosted by United Adoration, a global non-profit organization dedicated to empowering artists in the local church.



Date:

Friday, August 2 (6 to 9pm) and

Saturday, August 3 (8:30am to 5:30pm)

asking the Holy Spirit to release new works within us!

Registration Cost

\$49 and includes three meals (dinner, breakfast, and lunch).

This retreat is open to all churches in the Pittsburgh area, so register today before all slots are filled!

Register online

<https://www.unitedadoration.com/retreats/>



For more information

contact Elise Massa,
Assistant Director of Music and Worship Arts,
at elise.massa@ascensionpittsburgh.org

Children's Ministry

You are Invited on a Journey with Paul

Who: Children in Pre-K through 5th grade

What: Paul-themed summer Sunday School

When: Sundays, June 16-August 18

Where: Education Wing

This summer, Children's Ministry will present a combined ages Sunday School class about the life of Paul. Using a specially developed curriculum based on Godly Play's "Paul's Travels and His Letters" lesson, students will learn about living in the power of the Holy Spirit while they study Paul's life, writings and missionary journeys. In addition to exploring Paul's life through themed activity centers that engage the whole child, students will have the opportunity to memorize Bible verses from Paul's letters. Summer lessons will include, but are not limited to, his birth in Tarsus, Paul studying at the Temple, his experience on the road to Damascus, Paul's escape from Damascus and time in the desert, his letters to new churches, Paul's final journey to Jerusalem, and his death.

Starting on Sunday, June 16, "Journey with Paul" resource booklets will be available in the education wing for families and parishioners who wish to support the children on their Journey with Paul.

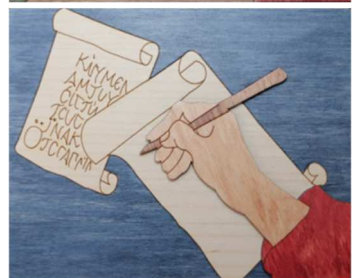
Assistant teachers and activity center facilitators are needed at both the 9am and 11am services this summer. Anyone interested in assisting with summer Sunday School should contact Jill Amber Graham at missjill326@me.com.

Children's Ministry Summer Needs

Assistant teachers and activity center facilitators are needed at both the 9am and 11am services in July and August. Additionally, Children's Ministry is seeking anyone with the following skills or interests who might be willing to share their experiences with the children this summer:

- those with missionary experience (short term or long term)
- someone who knows some Hebrew and/or Greek
- those who have traveled to the Mediterranean areas where Paul evangelized
- someone who would be willing to share information about early church history (general or related to Paul)

Those interested in sharing their experiences or assisting with summer Sunday School should contact Jill Amber Graham at missjill326@me.com for more information.



Youth Ministry

CAYG Summer Program Directors

I am very happy to announce that Kelsey Regan and Wes Williams are our Summer Program Directors for Church of the Ascension's Youth Group this year. With a combined age that makes them eligible for OWLS (Ascension's 55+ ministry), a couple of seminary degrees, musical talent, and great relationships with our youth, I am confident that this summer our program will be stronger than ever! In June and July Kelsey will be overseeing the middle school events on a Friday night while Wes supervises Sunday nights with our high schoolers. Kelsey will be organizing day trips out while Wes leads the music teams. I will be a happy volunteer at their CAYG events, enjoying their leadership while present and feeling reassured when absent in the UK. Do be praying for them, say hi when you see them around, and let's play a quick 'Guess Who' quiz. **Is it Wes or Kelsey who:**

Kelsey Regan



Wes Williams



Did a Master of Divinity at Trinity School for ministry between 2011 and 2015?

Is a professional American Sign Language Interpreter?

Is a hip-hop producer and rapper?

Has created and decorated some phenomenal birthday cakes?

Has been at Ascension for 26 years?

Worked in youth ministry with Jack Gabig?

Has previously served as a youth minister in Pennsylvania?

Designed and led a youth arts program?

Is at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary researching self-harm?



For more information on youth ministry contact

Alex Banfield Hicks

Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries

alex.banfieldhicks@ascensionpittsburgh.org

youth alpha summer 2019

Friday 6:30-9pm
Middle School

Sunday 6:30-9pm
High School

June 7/9 **Life: Is This It?**

June 14/16 **Jesus: Who Is He?**

June 21/23 **Cross: Why did Jesus Die?**

June 28/30 **Faith: How Can We Have Faith?**

July 5/7 **4th July Weekend Break**

July 12/14 **Prayer: Why and How Do I Pray?**

July 19/21 **Bible: Why and How Do I Read the Bible?**

July 26/28 **Telling Others: How and Why Do I Tell Others?**



2019-2020 Calendar



SUMMER

(SUMMER TEAM)

Saturday June 8th
Alpha Team Training

CHARLESTON

July 28-Aug 2
Hope Mission w/ Bellefield

YOUTH ALPHA (7)*

June 7 & 9 - July 26 & 28
Plus trips to Razzzy Fresh

HAITI

July 30-Aug 7
Haiti H2O

RIISING 9TH NIGHTS

Bonus evenings: eat n chat.
Dates TBD w/ Kelsey & Natalie

CAFE HOURS

Like office hours w/ Alex & Leah
Mon Wed Fri afternoons.



FALL

SEP-DEC

FALL SERIES (9)

Sep 6+8 - Nov 22+24
What do we believe?

LET'S TALK ABOUT:

Nov 1+3
Sex & Relationships

ADVENT

Dec 1 (HS), Dec 6+8
Service + Movie Making

(FALL TEAM)

Saturday Sep 14th
Laurelville Training

DYG

Saturday November 2
Diocesan Youth Gathering

OVRNT B4 XMAS

Friday December 13
Dinner, Movies, Christmas Fun

PARISH RETREAT

October 4-6
No Youth Group Oct 11 / 13.

WREATH \$\$\$

Collect Sun Dec 1
Let's Fundraise \$3k+!

CHRISTMAS EVE

Tuesday Dec 24
6:30 & 10pm Services



SPRING

JAN-MAY

(SPRING TEAM)

Saturday Jan 11th
Spring Team Training

SPRING SERIES (10)

Jan 24+26 - Apr 3+5
How do we live?

MRTN OVRNT

Saturday May 2
+ CAYG Apr 17+19, 24+26

SKI TRIP (MIDDLE)

Jan 17-18
Hidden Valley

LET'S TALK ABOUT:

Feb 13+15
Sex & Relationships

CHURCH TOURS

Once a month (Jan - May)
For seniors, + Nostalgia Nights

SKI TRIP (HIGH)

Jan 19-20 (MLK Monday)
Hidden Valley

DYG @ PP

Saturday April 4
Diocesan Day of Service

FOOD & FUN

May 15+17
Cook out & Hang out



MIDDLE SCHOOL FRIDAYS 6:30-8:30PM *-9PM DURING
HIGH SCHOOL SUNDAYS 6:30-8:30PM THE SUMMER
TRIPS & OVERNIGHT EVENTS VOLUNTEER TEAM TRAINING
SERVICE PROJECTS & SPECIAL EVENTS

Weekly news and event updates can be found in
the 'News!' section of caygonline.com

Venite: Ascension Campus Ministry

The school year may be over, but campus ministry at Ascension is still in full swing! With many students taking summer classes and students who are returning to Ascension for the summer, the harvest is plentiful. The summer is also a great season to build up and prepare for the upcoming school year. With this in mind, Venite will be holding a variety of events for college students this summer.

A VENITE SUMMER

GOSPEL OF JOHN STUDY (TUESDAYS, 7-8:30 PM)

June 4th	How to Lead a Bible Study Workshop
June 11th	Jesus Teaches Nicodemus
June 18th	The Woman Caught in Adultery
June 25th	The Death of Lazarus
July 2nd	Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet
July 9th	The Vine and the Branches
July 16th	Jesus and Peter
July 23rd	Summer Wrap Up

WEEKEND FUN (DATES TBD)

City Scavenger Hunt
Axe Throwing
Pirate's Game
Cooking & Baking Lessons
Lake House Retreat



Some will simply be for students to have fun together and enjoy this slower season.

Others will be more constructive and intentional, such as our summer Bible study.

At the beginning of the summer, students will be trained and equipped to lead small group Bible studies. Then, throughout the summer they will have the opportunity to practice this by leading Bible studies for and with their peers.

This will both help students dive more deeply into the Word as they grow in their faith and make them more effective leaders and ambassadors for Christ when they return to campus in the Fall.

If you are interested in joining us for “A Venite Summer” or have questions about our campus ministry, email Leah Hornfeck.

Leah Hornfeck
Associate Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry
leah.hornfeck@ascensionpittsburgh.org



Agape Year

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**"I realize that at the beginning of the year
I didn't actually **TRUST** God."**

Trust is really hard. Trust is often harder than belief.

As we said goodbye to Tessa and Kieran at the completion of their time with Agape Year, we spent a good amount of time and energy debriefing the year. Our friend Austin Gohn, author of *A Restless Age: How Saint Augustine Helps You Make Sense of Your Twenties* shared with our Fellows that **we don't learn from experiences, we learn from reflection.**

So, we reflected on our year. We asked a lot of questions about what was hard, what was formative, how they had grown and been challenged, and asked them about the things that they learned about themselves.

And one of our Fellows shared the above quote, that they realize now that they didn't actually trust God. Early in the fall we spent a lot of time studying the Nicene Creed. One of the exercises that Erika ran the Fellows through was replacing the words "I Believe" in the Creed, to "I Trust", and "I Love". They commented that saying, "I Believe in One God, the Father, the Almighty" came a lot easier than saying "I trust." They found that belief in and trust in are not the same. And so, through a challenging year and the grace of God, their belief was transformed into trust.

Trust is really hard. Trust is often harder than belief. In May, the Rev. Frank Bernardi invited the children to jump off of a piano stool and into his arms. Now, the kids could have stayed safe on the bench and said that they believed Frank would catch them. But trusting Frank required actually jumping off the bench.

Tessa and Kieran jumped into a life of trust in God this year. They trusted Him as they walked into new and uncomfortable places and ministries. They trusted Him as they ventured far from home in Thailand. And they are trusting Him as they venture forth into college and young adulthood.

Frank reminded us that following Christ is an invitation to a risky life. What a joy to see Tessa and Kieran accept that invitation. Can you pray with us that more young people would join us in accepting that invitation to live a risky life? Applications are still open for our 2019/2020 cohort. More info can be found at www.agapeyear.org/apply.

Want to take some risks? Join us this summer as we extend Christ's love in the City of Pittsburgh. Check out www.agapeyear.org/comeandsee for opportunities to join Agape Year in service to the city's least and lost.



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.



Tessa



Kieran

BEFORE YOU GO FAR,

AGAPE
YEAR

GO DEEP.

The gap year to anchor you
in God's story to change the world

MISSIONS:

Renée and Ardath Smith



Renée and Ardath Smith are sisters who have supported cross-cultural workers in their spiritual lives since the 1990s. In 2010 they began joining with others to form a Christian community devoted to worship and prayer, serving those serving God: *Hineni House*.

הִנֵּנִי

Hineni

is a Hebrew word translated “Here I am” or “Here am I”
It's about being here,
close by, present,
but also about readiness,
awareness, awakens.

Worship in Beauty

Hineni House worship is drawn from the treasure of the historic Christian faith and shaped by the beauty of Anglican and contemplative traditions. It is also impacted by dynamic worship characteristics of prayer movements around the world.

Prayer in Action

Called to prayer and engagement in a variety of prayer-related ministries, Hineni members provide spiritual direction, healing prayer, deeper discipleship through prayer workshop and training venues, and one-on-one prayer mentoring.

Serving Those Serving God

Difficult life dynamics take on greater intensity in a foreign context. Cross-cultural workers require in-depth support in order to survive and thrive in their callings – both on the field and when they return to their home countries. With over 65 years of combined ministry working in a variety of agencies, Hineni community members have seen time and again the core need of those who minister is an ever-deepening communion with Jesus.

Ardath and Renée have moved into a former B&B located in McDonald, PA – a lovely place for ministry to cross-cultural workers and others in local leadership and congregations. Your prayers are appreciated as they settle in to new life and ministry opportunities, and for finances related to establishing *Hineni House* in McDonald, PA

Ann Paton's sermon on February 25, 2018 (available on Ascension's website) explained the biblical word *Hineni* within the context of Abraham's story. This Hebrew word translated 'HERE AM I', is richly layered in meaning. It expresses attentiveness, responsiveness, listening and waiting, imploring and agreeing, acting on God's directives, moving forward in God's authority. This radical availability is what Hineni community members call the “Hineni Posture”. It has become their core commitment as a community and a transformative spiritual practice.

Thank you from Jeanne Kohn

Dear Ascension family,

I want to express my great thanks to you all for your loving celebration of my ministry on June 9. Your presence in worship and your very kind words, both in person and through the cards and notes which deeply moved me have filled me with thanksgiving and joy in our Lord Jesus. Words are insufficient to tell you how much you mean to me and how grateful I am for your loving care. May you all be richly blessed.



Jeanne Kohn
Organist and Choir Director
jeanne.kohn@ascensionpittsburgh.org

For Your Calendar



BBQ ON THE LAWN

End of Summer BBQ
Sunday, August 25th

Mark your calendars!

We'll have another combined 10am service followed by a BBQ on the lawn.

It's a superb opportunity to bring a friend or meet new ones.

Annual Parish Retreat

**Friday through Sunday,
 October 4 – 6**

Theme: Surprise the World
Registration opens in August

Our Annual Parish Retreat will be held at the Laurelville Mennonite Church Center from Friday, October 4 – Sunday, October 6. The weekend offers great teaching, an opportunity to enjoy beautiful natural surroundings and the chance to get to know others who regularly attend Ascension. The retreat has something for everyone – married or unmarried, from kids to college-aged to empty-nesters. Children and youth enjoy concurrent programming with their peers. Saturday afternoon there are several optional activities to enjoy the outdoors. Campfires and hot chocolate will also be part of the mix. Corporate worship, small group discussion and prayer ministry are highlights for many. The weekend concludes with Sunday morning worship followed by lunch.

All of the logistical details for registering for the retreat including meals, accommodation and scholarship will be available on our website in early August. Please mark your calendars now and plan to attend. For a sneak peak at the retreat theme, see Chris Massa's book review on 'Surprise the World'!

**Our Annual Fall Retreat takes place at the
 Laurelville Mennonite Church Center
 in Mount Pleasant, PA.**

This 250-acre camp, conference and retreat center is located at the foot of the beautiful Laurel Mountains of Southwestern PA.
 Website: <http://www.laurelville.org>



TFW LTE

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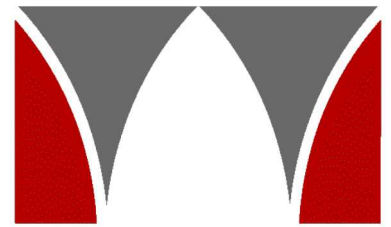
CONNECT NOW

Text 412-953-7050
or email

marilyn.chislaghi@ascensionpittsburgh.org

and list the connections
you want to make

- ☐ Newcomer/
Explore Ascension
- ☐ Community Groups
- ☐ Children
- ☐ Youth
- ☐ College
- ☐ Young Adult
- ☐ Seniors
- ☐ Special Needs
- ☐ Internationals
- ☐ Music / Arts
- ☐ Volunteer



**CHURCH OF THE
ASCENSION**

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

Worship Services

Sunday

9:00 a.m.
Holy Eucharist

11:00 a.m.
Holy Eucharist

Wednesday

Noon
Holy Eucharist
in the Gordon Chapel

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The Ascent

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Ascent Deadline

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The publication will be
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