



Ascension Extension

MAY 2026

www.ascension-westminster.com

410-848-3251
office@ascension-westminster.com

Church of the Ascension
23 N. Court St.
Westminster, MD

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Rector's Message

May: Seeing Clearly, Living Faithfully

Dear Friends in Christ:

As we enter the month of May, I find myself returning to a simple image that has helped me many times when life feels complicated: a glass of water, half empty or half full?



It is the same reality—yet two very different ways of seeing. The half-empty glass focuses on what is missing. It can lead us toward discouragement, even paralysis, as everything appears marked by scarcity.

The half-full glass focuses on what is present. It invites gratitude, hope, and the courage to keep going. Both images are true. But one is more helpful than the other. That image came to mind as I reflected on our life together at Ascension—our attendance, our ministries, and our finances.

I am deeply grateful for all who gather Sunday after Sunday, in person and online. And yet my priestly heart longs to see more people drawn into the life of Christ in this place.

I am deeply grateful for all who give—through pledges, offerings, time, and talent. And yet I remain aware that our financial situation is still fragile. We are waiting to hear whether we will receive the \$50,000 assistance requested
(Continued on p. 2)

Rev. Pierre-Henry Buisson

Day Off: Monday
rector@ascension-westminster.com

Church Office Hours

Monday, Wednesday, Friday
9:00 am -3:00 pm
office@ascension-westminster.com

**The Church Office will be closed on
Monday, May 25.**

*Ascension is called to be a family of faith so reflecting the life of Christ,
that we draw all people to him.*

May Worship

May 3

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Youth Sunday

8:00 am H.E. Rite I, Stone Church

9:00 am Sunday School (Gr. 6-12),

Adult Bible Study

10:15 am H.E. Rite II, Holy Cross Hall

11:30 am Fellowship Hour

May 10

Sixth Sunday of Easter

Mother's Day

8:00 am H.E. Rite I, Stone Church

9:00 am Sunday School (Gr. 6-12),

Adult Bible Study

10:15 am H.E. Rite II, Holy Cross Hall

Sunday School(Gr. K-5)

11:30 am Fellowship Hour

May 17

Ascension Sunday

8:00 am H.E. Rite I, Stone Church

9:00 am Sunday School (Gr. 6-12)

Adult Bible Study

10:15 am H.E. Rite II, Holy Cross Hall

11:30 am Fellowship Hour

May 24

Day of Pentecost

WEAR RED

8:00 am H.E. Rite I, Stone Church

9:00 am Adult Bible Study

10:15 am H.E. Rite II, Holy Cross Hall

Sunday School(Gr. K-5)

11:30 am Fellowship Hour

May 31

First Sunday after Pentecost

Trinity Sunday

Graduate Recognition

8:00 am H.E. Rite I, Stone Church

9:00 am Adult Bible Study

10:15 am H.E. Rite II, Holy Cross Hall

11:30 am Fellowship Hour

Rector's Message continued...

from the diocese. If granted, it would help reduce our deficit, but it would be a one-time gift. It will not resolve the deeper question of how we sustain and grow the mission God has entrusted to us.

So we stand together with a glass that is both half full and half empty.

And perhaps that is exactly where faith begins: not in denying reality, and not in seeing it through fear or through wishful thinking, but in learning to see clearly—and to respond faithfully.

This month of May invites us into that deeper vision—not only through reflection, but through the great feasts we are about to celebrate together.

At the heart of our life as a parish stands the Ascension of our Lord, our patronal feast. While the Ascension falls **on May 14** this year, we will celebrate it together on Sunday, May 17. In the Ascension, Christ does not withdraw from the world—he draws our humanity into the very life of God. And at the same time, he entrusts his mission to us. The disciples are not told to stand looking up into heaven, but to go, to witness, to live as his Body in the world. The Ascension is not an ending—it is a sending.

On May 24, we will celebrate Pentecost—falling this year on Memorial Day weekend—the great feast that brings the Easter season to its fulfillment. The Holy Spirit is given—not to a select few, but to the whole community. Fear is transformed into courage. Silence becomes proclamation. The Church is born as a people sent outward in love. **I invite you to wear red as a sign of the fire of the Spirit we are called to share in the world.**

And on May 31, Trinity Sunday, we are invited to contemplate the deepest truth of our faith: God is not solitude, but communion—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And we are drawn into that communion, called to reflect it in our common life and our shared responsibility.

These are not abstract doctrines. They shape how we live. They teach us to see with the eyes of faith—neither denying what is missing, nor forgetting what God has already placed in our hands. Because Christ is ascended, the mission is now ours to carry. Because the Spirit is given, we are not without resources. Because God is communion, we are not meant to face this moment alone.

(Continued on p. 3)

I rejoice and give thanks for all that we are and have—for your faith, your generosity, your presence, and your love for this church. And at the same time, I want to speak plainly: the months ahead will require all of us. Not out of fear, but out of faith. Not as an obligation, but as a shared calling.

In August, as we begin preparing our 2027 budget; we will need that shared commitment even more clearly.

I invite you to pray about your part in this—through your presence, your generosity, your invitation to others, and the gifts you bring to this community. This is how the Body of Christ lives and grows.

May this month of May help us to see clearly, to trust more deeply, and to respond more faithfully—to the God who continues to call us forward.

With gratitude and hope
Pierre-Henry+

Fundraisers

On behalf of the Fundraising Committee, I would like to thank everyone who supported our April 27 fundraiser at Texas Road House. It was wonderful seeing the support from both services. Although we don't yet know the amount that was raised, I can share that the bake table made \$439 - a HUGE success. A BIG THANK YOU to all of our BAKERS!!!! When we know the total amount raised, it will be shared.

Again, thank you!!!

Our next Texas Road House fundraiser will be on Monday, July 6, 3:00pm - 10:00pm. Mark your calendar!

Beverly Baker



Join us for a

Thom Roland
DANCE BAND

Hawaiian Paradise
DINNER-DANCE

Saturday, June 13, 2026
Church of the Ascension
Fellowship Hall
23 North Court Street, Westminster, Maryland 21157

Island-Inspired Dinner, 4-5:30 pm • Dancing to Live Music, 6-9 pm

Silent Auction Featuring Exciting Items

Put on your tropical attire and join us for an evening of great food, music, dancing and fellowship!

\$35.00 per person

To purchase tickets and for more information, contact Beverly Baker at blbaker08@comcast.net
ascension-westminster.com/events

Event Sponsor
MYERS-DURBORAW
Funeral Homes

Worship Assistants: May 2026					
May Altar					
Guild: Team 1 Karen Lance, Jenny Lui, Raymond Lui, Sandy White					
	Usher(s)	Lector	Acolyte	Chalicians	Worship Slides
May 3 8:00 am	Cheryl Vecera	Mary Lou Berg	Jennie Grabill		
May 3 10:15 am	1. David Anderson 2. Ellen Anderson	John Holbert	Beatrice Howe	1. Sandy White 2. John Holbert 3. Helen Lang 4. Kim Tompkins	Karen Lance
May 10 8:00 am		Roberta Wilhelm			
May 10 10:15 am	1. David Horn 2.	Barbara Sears		1. Sandy White 2. Jill Horn 3. 4.	John Holbert
May 17 8:00 am		Mary Lou Berg	Beverly Baker		
May 17 10:15 am	1. 2.	Buck Lyon-Vaiden		1. Sandy White 2. John Holbert 3. 4.	Jeanne Cox
May 24 8:00 am			Beverly Baker		
May 24 10:15 am	1. 2.	John Holbert		1. Sandy White 2. John Holbert 3. 4.	Lynn Lyon-Vaiden
May 31 8:00 am					
May 31 10:15 am	1. 2.	John Holbert		1. John Holbert 2. Helen Lang 3. 4.	Jeanne Cox

May 31: Graduate Recognition

St. Martha's Guild will host a special Fellowship Hour following the 10:15 a.m. service on May 31. On this date, we will recognize our graduates.

If someone in your family will graduate this spring or already graduated in December 2025, please contact the church office so they can be included in the celebration.



Worship Assistants

We are looking for people to serve as **Ushers** at both services and as **Worship Slide assistants** for the 10:15 service. No experience needed — if you can click a mouse, you can run the slides! As an Usher, you will welcome and serve our congregation on Sunday morning.

If you feel called to serve in either of these ways, please contact the Church Office; training will then be promptly scheduled!



Sunday, May 3 will be Youth Sunday during the 10:15 am service!

DATE	Sunday School (Gr. 6-12)	Sunday School (Gr. K-5)	Children's Chapel (all ages)
May 3 Youth Sunday	9:00 am		10:15 am
May 10	9:00 am	10:15 am	
May 17	9:00 am	9:45 am: Children's Garden	10:15 am
May 24		10:15 am	

SUMMER 2026
TERRIFIC TUESDAYS
SUMMER PROGRAMS
IN JUNE & JULY
Bingo for Books, Friendship Tea,
Playdough Fun,
Creatures Great and Small,
Birthday Party Games,
and more!

REGISTRATION IS OPEN!
Register by **May 31.**
DRAMA CAMP (2-WEEK PROGRAM)
AUGUST 10-14 & AUGUST 17-21
Church of the Ascension
23 N. Court St.
Westminster, MD

The K-5 Sunday School Class is invited to plant flowers in the Children's Garden on Sunday, May 17th, (Rain date: May 24th) at 9:45 am.

Flowers, tools, and gloves will be provided. Parents may join in to help our volunteer team or may use this time to have fellowship with other parents.

Questions? Contact Deb Vana



Summer Program Information and Registration:

www.ascension-westminster.com/summer

WE NEED YOUR HELP

Summer Program Volunteers Needed

For more information, please contact:
Betsy Reinders



Summer Sundays



BIBLE BASICS
with *Carrie Goff*
9:30 - 10:15 am
June 14
July 12
August 9

Summer

CHILDREN'S SERMON
at 10:15 am
June 7
July 12
August 2




Celebrate
AMERICA'S 250TH



Church of the Ascension
23 N. Court Street
Westminster, MD 21157



SUNDAY, JULY 5
EUCHARIST OF THANKSGIVING FOR THE NATION
ONE WORSHIP SERVICE AT 9:00 AM

CHURCH COURTYARD
Weather Permitting

BRING LAWN CHAIRS!

ascension-westminster.com/events

Church Office Notes



The Church Office
will be
CLOSED
5/25/2026



MEMORIAL DAY



June Newsletter:
Articles Due

Monday, May 18
communication@ascension-westminster.com

The Vestry

Vestry/Officers	Term Ends	Ministry Liaison
Rev. Pierre-Henry Buisson		Rector
Kim Tompkins, Sr. Warden	2027	
Bryan Lance, Jr. Warden	2029	Buildings and Grounds
Susan Considine, Treasurer	2029	
Nancy Starner, Assistant Treasurer		
Lorraine Fulton, Registrar	2027	Christian Education (Adults)
David Anderson	2027	Worship Assistants
Deborah Rio	2028	Fellowship
Mark Howe	2028	Stewardship
Melissa Leahy	2028	Outreach, Pastoral Care
Dave Gosnell	2029	Christian Education (Children & Youth)

Vestry Meeting Highlights – April 28

Present: The Rev. Pierre-Henry Buisson, David Anderson, Lorraine Fulton, Kim Tompkins, Mark Howe, Melissa Leahy, Deborah Rio, Susan Considine, Dave Gosnell, Bryan Lance.

Absent: none

The meeting began with a prayer and opening discussion shared by Fr. Pierre-Henry. The Vestry approved the Consent Agenda, including the Vestry Meeting Minutes from 3/24/2026, Vestry Resolutions 2026-YTD, 2026 Vestry Liaisons 3/25/2026, and Treasurer's Report.

The delegates were elected for the Diocesan Convention to be held 11/20-11/21: Deborah Rio delegate and Mark Howe alternate.

A Eucharist of Thanksgiving for the Nation, marking the 250th Anniversary of American independence, will be held on Sunday, July 5, with the participation of the Westminster Municipal Band. On that day, there will be one service at 9:00 a.m., held outdoors on our front lawn. This special occasion will also be shared with the wider community.

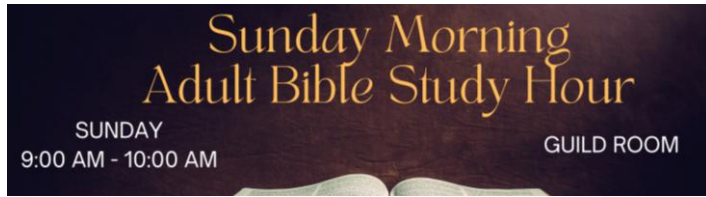
Bryan Lance shared that Buildings & Grounds replaced the Holy Cross Hall ceiling tiles during their cleanup day on Saturday, 4/25.

Susan Considine reviewed the Financial Reports for March, 2026. At the end of March, Operating Income was higher than budgeted (\$30,721 for March, \$135,107 YTD), and Operating Expenses were higher than budgeted for the month (\$37,385 for March, \$104,444 YTD). This resulted in a \$6,664 negative variance for the month of March, but still on track YTD. Buildings & Grounds is researching the utility bills across the campus to ensure recent billing is correct. As of 3/31, there was \$225,674 total available in our checking and money market accounts, but only \$51,045 was unrestricted and available to apply to our Operating Expenses.

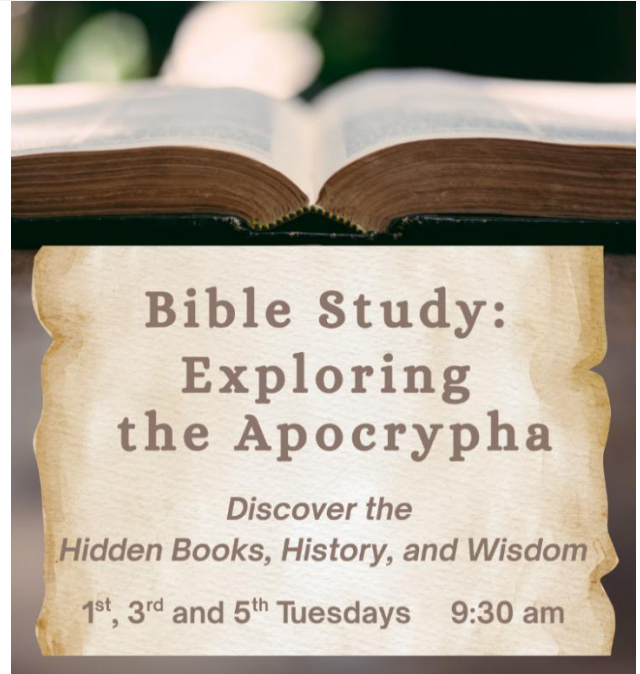
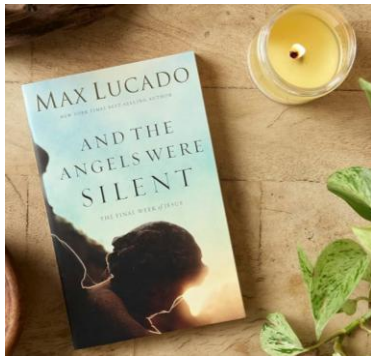
Church Staff

Rev. Pierre-Henry Buisson	Rector
Ann Fariss	Parish Administrator
Lynn Lyon-Vaiden	Communications Associate/Handbell Choir Director
Mary Butler	Organist/Choir Director
Travis Collins	Digital Ministry Associate
Suzanne Walter	Nursery Attendant

Bible Study



Thursday Night Bible Study will continue to meet at 6:30 pm through Thursday, June 11. Our study and discussion of *And the Angels Were Silent* will then resume in the fall. It is not too late to join this study. For information, please contact Lynn Lyon-Vaiden.



Tuesday Morning Bible Study
This study begins on
May 3 at 9:30 am in Room #202.
 For information, please contact Bill Sears.

Book Club

BOOK CLUB 2026
 Join us at 12:30 pm in the Guild Room.

May 27: *Theo of Golden: A Novel* by Allen Levi

June 24: *Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee: An Indian History of the American West* by Dee Brown

September 30: *Switchboard Soldiers: A Novel of the Heroic Women Who Served in the U.S. Army Signal Corps During World War I* by Jennifer Chiaverini

1844 Shoppe

May Days
at The 1844 Shoppe
 Friday & Saturday
 10am -1pm
 20% OFF
 scarves, handbags,
 jewelry, and accessories
 (all month)

Shop for Mother's Day: May 10
 find a gift for someone you love
 (or for you!)

Mistletoe Mart

Website: mistletoemart.com

Mistletoe Mart #52 will take place November 12-14, 2026! Please mark your calendars now!

We are currently on track to have **39 artisans** for Mistletoe Mart 2026. Vendor jurying will continue in May to fill 2 remaining spots.

After careful consideration, the decision was made to **increase the admission price from \$5.00 to \$7.00.** (Children 12 and under remain free.) This should result in an additional \$4,000 - \$4,500 admission income. As a reminder, the admission ticket is good for all three days of the Mart.

We have received our beautiful **postcards for 2026!** We will begin to share them at the upcoming Westminster Flower & Jazz festival.



The **Mistletoe Mart website will be updated** during May to begin to reflect the Mistletoe Mart 2026 dates, vendors for Mistletoe Mart 2026, updated picture gallery and the amount given to community outreach from the Mistletoe Mart 2025 proceeds.

Please note: This will be Melissa Leahy's last year serving as the lead of the Mistletoe Mart Kitchen. Therefore, we need someone to shadow and assist Melissa this year and assume the role by Mistletoe Mart 2027. Please contact Melissa to further discuss (melissazleahy@gmail.com).

Got Signs? Five yellow and two white Mistletoe Mart yard signs are missing. **Please return them to the Church Office soon!**

Thank you, again, for all of your ongoing support for the Mistletoe Mart! We are grateful!

Kim Tompkins
Mistletoe Mart Chair
www.mistletoemart.com

Fellowship



Volunteers are needed to host. We want to keep it VERY simple by providing coffee, and using snacks that are available in the church pantry. Coffee making instructions are provided. All you need to do is make coffee, set out a few platters or baskets of snacks, monitor the coffee and make more if necessary and clean up. There is a sign up sheet on the kitchen door. Training is available! Questions? Please contact Kat Dittrich.



DreamBuilders' MD

The March 14 DreamBuilders' Spaghetti Dinner, Silent Auction and iPhone Raffle was a big success!

Church of the Ascension contributed:

- 7 restaurant gift cards
- 18 bottles of wine
- \$725 from the sale of 39 of 40 raffle tickets!

Net Income = \$24,687.96!

This is almost enough (\$25K) to finance the construction of one new house in Kentucky!

Please consider joining one or both of these mission trips:

- June 21-27 Hazard, KY
- October 18-24 San Juan, Puerto Rico

Please contact Buck Lyon-Vaiden for more information.

Spring Fundraiser: May 13, 2026

JOIN US FOR DREAMBUILDERS' SPRING FUNDRAISER



What: Happy hour and/or dinner

Where: Bushel And A Peck
12250 Clarksville Pike Ste. H
Clarksville, MD 21029

When: Wednesday, May 13th
4:30 p. m. - 8:30 p. m.

A portion of the proceeds from your meals and drinks goes directly toward funding three homes in Hazard, Kentucky.

Due to limited capacity, if you are interested in dinner, please make a reservation on the Bushel and A Peck webpage: <https://www.bushelandapeck.com/reservations> or call Bushel and A Peck at 410.531.1809. Please put in the notes that you are with DreamBuilders.



If you are unable to attend you can still support Dreambuilders by purchasing 50/50 raffles tickets \$5 each or 5 for \$20. Or, use this QR code or go to www.DreamBuildersMD.org and click "donate".

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Giving Challenge



Ghanaian Mothers' Hope

sponsored by the Sarasota Community Foundation with matching funds provided by The Patterson Foundation. Thanks to a generous Ghanaian Mothers' Hope donor who matched donations as well, we raised \$19,950 in funding. This will allow us to fund our reading camps and create new programs.

Blessings,
Debi Frock, Founder



Long-time Parishioner Marion Britton will celebrate her 100th birthday on May 17! If you would like to mail her a card, she would appreciate it.



There is also a large card in the Church Office if you would like to sign it.

*During May Please Help Fill
The Blessings Closet*

May is a month when Ascension collects non-food items for Shepherd's Staff to assist individuals and families in Carroll County who cannot afford to purchase everyday necessities.

****Current High Need Items****

**Laundry Detergent Pods or Sheets
Tall Kitchen Trash Bags**



Other Items:

All Purpose Cleaner	Disinfecting Wipes/Spray	Paper Towels
Bar Soap	Disposable Gloves	Shampoo
Baby Diapers - all sizes	Feminine Hygiene	Toilet Tissue
Deodorant	Hand Sanitizer	Trash Bags
Dish Soap	Incontinence Briefs	Ziploc Bags - all sizes

Please place the items in the box at the entrance to Holy Cross Hall or the Stone Church.

Church of the Ascension

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