



Spires March 2026

Church of the Ascension

13216 Detroit Avenue • Lakewood, OH 44107 • www.ascension-lakewood.org

GREGORY SENT, SENIOR WARDEN



Dear fellow Ascensionites,

I had the unique pleasure of having my second baptism at Church of the Ascension. My first was at the baptismal font in 1975. My second was a baptism by fire my first few weeks as Senior Warden. We had horrible, record-breaking winter storms, which caused us to follow the example of Trinity Cathedral and close for one Sunday Service. Vestry and I all agreed that to be cautious and close that Sunday, putting the safety of our parishioners first, was most judicious.



Our church is marching forward with the elevator project. The construction team has completed removing the old elevator and cleaned out the shaft of all previous structures. The next step will be the actual installation of the new elevator by the company. At this time, we are unsure of the date of completion but our Ascension family will be able to use the chairlift at the east door near our sacristy. If ever a parishioner needs assistance, I urge them to reach out before coming to church and letting us know their concerns using the chairlift.

In February, we lost two women who had long ties to Ascension with family members who were or are still active. In the same month we welcomed the birth of new members of our community, who hopefully will soon be part of our weekly services. With several new little ones arriving at Church of the Ascension, a group of parishioners will be bringing the old nursery in the undercroft back to its former glory.

Supply priests have been set up for all of March, and up to and including Easter. Father Peter (Peter Faass) will be with us during that time. We also will have Stations of the Cross, lead by Alex DeJesus.

During the first week of February, I was asked to represent the Archives of the Ohio Diocese at the closing of Church of Our Savior, an Episcopal Church in Salem, Ohio. It was a very solemn event, which was the closing of their parish, a parish that was started in the 1850s. Sitting in the pews and looking at the beautiful architecture and then talking to the members of the closing church, a wave of sadness hit me. I realized how close years ago our church had been to such a fate.

We have come a long way from that! We are a vibrant and growing church (even without a rector!) We have had new visitors to Ascension, who love the friendliness and loving community we have. It is because of each of us in this parish that we will continue to grow and help each other develop into an even better version of our past. The Ohio Diocese has approximately 102 churches and when looking over our numbers from 2025, which the diocese published, we rank as number 13 out of 102 (as an average number of parishioners weekly at our church!) That is something for which to be proud and excited.

During this year, I would like to thank you all for your support and help. Many parishioners have reached out to me with invaluable advice and offerings of help. There are many things happening now at Ascension and I look forward to serving this year.

Fr. Peter Faass will be our Supply Priest thru March

God loves you. No exceptions.®

THE REV. PETER FAASS & ANTHONY F. KASTELIC

Fr. Peter was born in the Netherlands and immigrated with his parents to the United States when was two and a half years old, in 1957. His family was sponsored by a Methodist Church in Miami, Florida. He grew up as a Methodist in Danbury, Connecticut and was active in choir and youth group. After high school he left that church because he felt the Methodists were not responsive to the social issues impacting the country in the 60's and 70's. After a wilderness period of about ten years, he found a new church home at St. James in Danbury which had just called the first husband and wife rector team in the Episcopal Church.

Peter graduated from Western Connecticut State university in 1977 with a major in history and a minor in speech communications. He worked for many years in hospitality in the private country club sector, where he eventually earned his CCM (Certified Club Manager certificate) through Georgia State University in Atlanta. This provided him with management skills in personnel, finance, budgeting, and building and grounds; something that has proved invaluable to his time in the ministry. In 1996, after five years of discernment, he entered the General Theological Seminary in Manhattan. He graduated in 1999 and was ordained to the diaconate in June, and to the priesthood in December of that same year.

Peter served as a curate at Trinity Church in Torrington, Connecticut (1999-2001) then at St. John the Baptist Church in Sanbornville, New Hampshire. (2001-2006) While in New Hampshire he was the co-liturgist and co-master of ceremonies for the consecration of Gene Robinson as Bishop. He stated, "that event remains one of the high lights of my life!"

Peter came to Ohio in 2006 as priest-in-charge of Christ Church in Shaker Heights. He was made rector there three years later. He retired in November of 2022. He says he quickly discovered that the term "retired priest" is an oxymoron! He has been busy ever since serving as a supply clergy person for various parishes in the Diocese.

Peter met Anthony F. Kastelic in 2009 at an event at Trinity Cathedral in Cleveland. Anthony, born in Maple Heights, is of Slovenian heritage. He was raised Roman Catholic. After graduating from Kent State University with a degree in dance, he became a professional dancer in New York City for eighteen years. He was received into the Episcopal Church at St. Thomas Fifth Avenue in Manhattan.

The southern coast of Maine has been a special place for Peter most of his life. It has become so for Anthony, as well. He and Anthony were married there at Trinity Church in York Harbor by Bishop Mark Hollingsworth in 2013.

Anthony is currently the pastor's assistant at Old Stone Presbyterian Church on Public Square in Cleveland. He is also a tailor of church vestments, altar hangings and women's clothing, and is a skilled floral designer. He and Peter live in Shaker Heights with their cat, Naomi.

Anthony and Peter enjoy cooking, traveling, gardening and reading. They took their first Holland-America Line cruise in the western Mediterranean last year and loved it so much, they are booked on a trans-Atlantic HAL cruise this coming October. Peter is currently writing a memoir about his family's immigration experience and has a book outline for a novel revolving around Queen Maxima of the Netherlands.



Peter and Anthony taken at the Keukenhof gardens in the Netherlands

KEIRA DODD, VESTRY MEMBER AND DISCERNMENT COMMITTEE COMMUNICATOR

Discernment Committee Update

As you can see from the title, the first important bit of news is that the diocese would like us to use the word discernment instead of search to describe the process we are undertaking. Discernment implies prayerful consideration and trust in the Holy Spirit's wisdom and guidance as we make decisions that will affect the direction of Ascension for the foreseeable future. So far, the discernment committee has met one time alone to discuss the process and appoint leadership: the Chair, Jenny Mapes-Christ, who is responsible for convening meetings; the Chaplain, John Carlson, who makes sure that prayer is centered in the committee and the congregation; and the Communicator, Keira Dodd, who is in charge of communicating information to the parish and the diocese. We've also had two all-parish meetings, the first to discuss the life-cycle of our parish and the second to explore who we are as a congregation and what we are looking for in a priest.

As a result of the meetings thus far, the discernment committee made a recommendation to the vestry that we attempt to obtain a Priest-in-Charge, a priest recommended by the bishop who will sign a three-year contract and then possibly be called to be our rector if they are a good fit. The vestry accepted our recommendation at the last vestry meeting. While the Priest-in-Charge route only allows us to interview one person at a time, that path has the potential to move much more quickly and at much less expense to the parish. Usually, a rector search takes 18 months on average, and as part of the search, we would need to hire consultants and have an Interim Rector appointed by the bishop and our Senior Warden. The discernment committee felt that it was worth trying the Priest-in-Charge route since our parish has a very positive reputation in our diocese, so it is highly likely that we already have multiple priests interested in our open position. Plus, we can always switch to search for a rector at a later date if necessary.

Looking ahead, the next step in the process is for the discernment committee to write the one-page profile that the bishop will share with interested candidates and post on the diocesan website. The profile will be based on the discussion at the second all-parish meeting, during which we identified the most important qualities that we are looking for in a priest, as well as the defining characteristics of our parish and our neighborhood. After that, the discernment committee will be trained on how to interview potential candidates, and then we'll interview the first person recommended to us by the bishop, hopefully, by the end of April. Keep in mind that the discernment committee is not allowed to share the names of anyone we interview. Not even the vestry will know unless the person passes the interview stage, and we recommend that the vestry call the person as our Priest-in-Charge. Keeping the names confidential protects the person's privacy, so gossip doesn't spread about the priest's desire to move to a new parish. While we need to be secretive about whom we are interviewing, we on the discernment committee would be happy to answer any other questions you may have about the process.

DISCERNMENT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Aaron Beatty
Becca Bretz
John Carlson
Jenny Christ

Cara Clemens
Keira Dodd
Derek Lewallan
John O'Donnell

Domenico Sgambellone
Corky Thacker

EUCCHARISTIC VISIT

If you are unable to attend church and would like to request Holy Communion to be brought to you please contact the Parish Administrator 216-521-8727 Jim.Weiss@Ascension-Lakewood.org

SUSAN HANKEY, VESTRY MEMBER



I was born in Wilkes-Barre, a city in north-eastern Pennsylvania. My parents were William J. and Hannah Llyod Davis. They met at St. Stephen's Episcopal Church. They had 3 children, myself, and my brothers W. J. Davis Jr., now deceased, and Reverend Dr. James Lloyd Davis, retired, Downingtown, Pennsylvania. I am a cradle Episcopalian, baptized, confirmed and married in the Episcopal Church. My husband, Robert, and I will be married 50 years in October 2026. We have 4 children, Dr. Thomas Gildea, Mr. Michael Gildea, Mrs. Jennifer Houser, and Mrs. Sarah Ciarniello. All were baptized, confirmed, and married in the Episcopal Church. We have 6 grandchildren. I was a nurse at Wilkes-Barre General Hospital for 36 years and retired in December of 2019. We moved to Cleveland in 2022 to be closer to our family. We now live in Lyndhurst.

As a child, I attended Sunday School, Church camp, and Youth Group, and was a member of the Girls Choir. As an adult, I taught Sunday School, co-chaired Christophany, was an active member of Cursio, a Eucharistic minister, chalice bearer, Head of the Worship Committee, member of the Couples Club, served as a nurse for the Royal School of Church Music Camp, was a member of the Vestry, as well as both the Junior and Senior Warden of St. Stephen's Episcopal Pro Cathedral. I am looking forward to serving on the Vestry at Church of the Ascension.

Your Sister In Christ,
Susan Hankey

VESTRY MEMBERS

Senior Warden, Gregory Sent
Junior Warden, Rob Theibert

Adam Clemens
Alex DeJesus
Kiera Dodd

Susan Hankey
Joe Sgambellone

WEEKLY COMPLINE

The Diocese of Ohio will be hosting Compline on

Sunday evenings at 7:30 pm from now through March 29th.

All are welcome to this quiet, contemplative service of prayer and scripture, offering a peaceful close to the day. We hope you will join us. When we pray together, our hearts and souls are more centered, and we draw closer to God; when life feels like too much, praying together is a balm. We hope you will come and rest in God's presence as we pray for the world. If you are interested in officiating.

Please contact the [Rev. Canon Jessie Gutzsell Dodson](#).

THE GREAT VIGIL OF EASTER

Saturday, April 4th at 8 pm

All are invited to join our bishop for the Easter Vigil
at Trinity Cathedral, 2230 Euclid Ave, Cleveland,

INVITATION TO A HOLY LENT

Dear People of God:

The Holy Scriptures tell us of God's loving purpose in creation: to raise up a holy people worthy of eternal life. Because we have fallen far away from that purpose, God has worked patiently to draw us back sending prophets and teachers to warn and to guide us and coming at last into this world in Jesus and sharing our human life and death so that we might know the full extent and power of God's love and forgiveness. In the waters of Baptism and by the power of the Holy Spirit, God has called men and women of every time and place into the Church, the Body of Christ, to offer worship and praise, to bear witness to God's love, and to work with God for the healing of the nations.

Yet, we continue to fall short of the holiness for which we were made and to turn aside to our own purposes, weakening our witness and failing to fulfill the ministries to which we are called. We stand in constant need of the forgiveness that Jesus proclaimed and which he commissioned the disciples to offer.

Therefore from very early times, the Church has set aside the season of Lent as a time when God's people are called to repent their sins and to renew the promises made at their baptism. It is a time when we were called to examine our way of life, to put aside all luxuries and self-indulgence, and to live a life of greater discipline, centered again on our Baptismal covenant of faith and witness and our commitment to seek justice and peace for all people.

I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word.

LENTEN CALENDAR

Wednesdays, February 25th - March 25th

6:30pm Stations of the Cross

7:00pm Evening prayer (ongoing)

Palm Sunday, March 29th

No 8:00am service

10:30am Holy Eucharist

Maundy Thursday, April 2nd

7:30pm Holy Eucharist and Stripping of the Altar

9pm to midnight, night watch (Please sign up in the office to indicate which time slot you will take)

Good Friday, April 3rd

7:30pm Solemn Liturgy with Holy Communion

The Great Vigil of Easter, April 4th

8:00pm Great Vigil of Easter at Trinity Cathedral

Easter Sunday, April 5th

No 8:00am service

10:30am Holy Eucharist (Easter egg hunt following the service)



PALM CROSSES

Saturday, March 28th, at 9am

Join us in making palm crosses in Strom Hall.
This is an intergenerational event. Bring the family!

STATIONS OF THE CROSS

We will have Stations of the Cross in the church on the
Wednesdays of Lent at 6:30pm. Followed by evening prayer at 7pm



EASTER EGG HUNT



On Easter Sunday we will have the children's **Easter egg hunt following the service**.

We are asking for people to donate their loose change and small wrapped candy in order to fill the eggs (silver coins only please).

A collection box can be found at hospitality after the 10:30am service.

KEEP WATCH AND PRAY

Thursday, April 2nd, from 9pm until midnight

We will have a prayer vigil in the Chapel at the Altar of Repose,
after the Maundy Thursday service. If you are able to take part.



ALTAR FLOWERS FOR EASTER

We create a temporary pool of funds from which to buy the plants which adorn the altars and the chancel for Easter Day in memory or in honor of loved ones. Place your contributions in the envelopes provided (checks made out to the church, with "Easter flowers" in the memo line or cash) and list those you want to remember on the form provided next to the box for the contributions. Or send your donation [online](#) and an email to Jim.Weiss@Ascension-Lakewood.org. The amount of each gift is determined by the donor.

The deadline for making gifts to the fund and placing names on the remembrance list is March 29th (Palm Sunday), which allows sufficient time for that list to be compiled for publication with the Easter service bulletins.

Following the 10:30am service on Easter Day the plants are distributed to parishioners who due to ill health or disability are unable to attend worship.



Something Olde



~Treasurer~

Something New



SHAWL MINISTRY

**Do to the elevator being under construction.
The Shawl Ministry will not meet in March**

THE AFTERNOON GUILD

Wednesday, March 11th at 12pm (NOON) Notice the time change.

We will be going to enjoy lunch at THE RANGER CAFE at Lakewood High School.
The well trained students will prepare and serve us our lunch in the student run Cafe.

A RESERVATION IS NECESSARY

RSVP by Monday, March 9th by contacting me at bach2schol@hotmail.com. Looking forward,
April's meeting will be Tom Strong with a presentation on strategies to stave off Alzheimers!

AN INVITATION

**The Plant-Based Supper Club will meet on
Thursday, March 5th from 6:30 to 8:30 in Ascension Hall.**

Sponsored by the Esselstyn Family Foundation, the Supper Club is part of a grassroots effort to inform the public about the health benefits of a plant-based diet. A highly respected surgeon at the Cleveland Clinic, Dr. Caldwell Esselstyn has conducted research showing that a plant-based diet can halt and even reverse heart disease, even in patients with the severest disease. This is the research cited by Bill Clinton as a major factor in his personal dietary changes.

To learn more, come to the dinner and enjoy the food. You'll be glad you did.

If interested, please contact Rob Stuart at (216)513-5078. All are welcome.

PLEASE HELP CLEAN THE CHURCH

Saturday, March 28, 9am-Noon

Please join us as we roll up our sleeves and prepare our church for Holy Week and Easter Sunday. We will be cleaning the Sanctuary, and the more hands we have, the more quickly the work will be completed. If you are able, please feel free to bring Murphy Oil Soap, cleaning rags and a bucket.

The recent elevator reconstruction has created quite a bit of dust, and we would like to give the church a thorough cleaning — from the Narthex to the Chancel, as well as the Chapel.

Sign-up sheets will be available in the church office during the week, in the Sanctuary on Sunday mornings, and in Ascension Hall during Hospitality. You may also sign up by calling the church office at 216-521-8727 or by emailing Jim.Weiss@Ascension-Lakewood.org.

Thank you in advance for your help and for taking part in caring for our church as we prepare for this holy season.

ALTAR GUILD

Have you ever wondered about the beautiful arrangements and preparations that make our services so special? Our Altar Guild plays a vital role in creating a sacred space. We're looking for new members! If you'd like to learn more about what we do and how you can join this ministry, please contact Derek Lewallen at 440-821-6266. We need members to help with both 8 am and 10:30 am services.

EVENING PRAYER IN CHURCH

Wednesdays, 7-7:30pm, in the nave.

ASCENSION NIGHT OUT

As you know, our monthly Ascension Night Out is usually a time for good food and fellowship; however, in keeping with the spirit of the Lenten season, we will not be holding our dinner outing in March.

Lent is a time of reflection and simplicity, and I felt it was appropriate to take a brief pause from our regular gathering this month. We will plan to resume Ascension Night Out in April and I look forward to being together again then.

Thank you for your understanding, and I wish you all a meaningful and blessed Lenten season.

Peace,
Jim

Introducing a new way to get your Contribution Statement and view the Church Directory via the IconCMO Member Portal

What is IconCMO and How Does It Help Our Church?

IconCMO is a database that keeps financial records and member information for our Church. It facilitates the use of this database by Ascension's administrative staff to communicate with parishioners and maintain its financial records using a fund accounting methodology.

As a Church member, you can:

- review and edit your own information in the database,
- view and communicate with other church members — an online church directory,
- view or print out your donation statement at any time,
- and see what groups you are in.

Our church staff can:

- edit or view any record based on their security level,
- add donations, pledges, members, groups, and attendance,
- review church accounting books or payroll,
- communicate via mass email or text messaging to the entire church or certain groups,
- and more...

What Do I Need To Get Started?

Please request 'Member Access Credentials' (MAC) from the Church Administrator Jim Weiss Jim.Weiss@ascension-lakewood.org, the Treasurer Rincy Isaacs risaacs@ascension-lakewood.net, or Aaron Beatty aaron@ascension-lakewood.net. This is a required first step.

You will receive an email from the Church Administrator with a [clickable link](#), and your username and temporary password. Please click on the link to login and change your password. You may be required to enter the Church's phone number; if so, type 216-521-8727. You may also change your username to one that you prefer instead of the assigned random number. Save these credentials for future use.

How Do I Access Icon With A Web Browser?

Go to [Icon CMO](#) on your browser. You will need to enter the Church's phone number (216-521-8727) and your saved credentials.

Can I Use My Mobile Device?

Yes! Our church members can have access to the church directory at their fingertips. Check out the church software app in the iOS App Store or Google's Play Store below or look up 'iconcmo' in the app store for your device.



Please download the app to your device

After you have received the MAC, open the IconCMO app and log in through the church software app using your credentials

Can I See My Own Donations or Print Them?

Yes! No more waiting for donation statements to arrive via pony express mail for tax time. Our church members can print their statements right from the member portal. Our church members can verify that all their donations are recorded by the church instead of waiting until the end of the year. *Please note that the donations via Vanco (Credit Card or Debit Card) are updated usually by the 7th of every month for the previous month.*

What Else Can I Do?

The Member Portal helps church members in many ways to connect to the church and its members. Members are also able to update their own information (except for their picture). This leads to greater reliability of information as congregational members monitor their own profiles. Check out what is available below!

Key church member features

- See and edit/update your personal information.
- Review what groups each individual belongs to.
- Review your contributions history and print a statement.
- Save the church time and money from mailing statements.
- Browse the online church directory.



Sample Screen

INFORMATION FOR LIVE STREAMED WORSHIP

The service is streamed live each Sunday at 10:30am on The Church of the Ascension website:

<https://ascension-lakewood.org/> and on YouTube: <https://tinyurl.com/4rs872e2>.

Previous services and featured choir videos on YouTube at: <https://tinyurl.com/3c336j6n>.

MONTHLY PICK-UP YOUTH CHOIR

On the second Sunday of each month, from September through May, all children are welcome to join our monthly pick-up Youth Choir and sing a song for the 10:30 am service offertory.

Margie will prepare the kids during the first part of the service and they will then offer that song as an Offertory Anthem the same day. Please send me a note

bach2schol@hotmail.com if your child is interested in joining our group! All are welcome!

BELLWETHER FARM SUMMER CAMP REGISTRATION OPEN

Can you believe our first summer camp session is only 130 days away?

We truly hope you can join us for fantastic summer at [Bellwether Farm](#).

Here you will find more [information](#), as well as links to help guide you.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to [contact us](#).

CCD REGISTRATION IS OPEN

Click here to register for the College for Congregational Development at Bellwether Farm, August 2-7. Prepare to be immersed in a collaborative learning environment where we strategize how to grow into the faith communities God has gathered to love the world together.

Price is \$850/person for a single room at Bellwether.

Please reach out to the Rev. Leah Romanelli DeJesus if you anticipate needing a scholarship.

March 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8 am- Service 10:30 am- Service 5-7pm - Youngish Adult Fellowship	2	3 12:12 pm - Noon day prayer via conference call	4 6:30 pm - Stations of the Cross in the church 7 pm - Evening prayer in the nave	5 6:30-8:30pm - The Plant-Based Supper Club 7-8:30 pm - Choir Rehearsal	6	7
8 8 am- Service 10:30 am- Service <i>Daylight Savings</i>	9	10 12:12 pm - Noon day prayer via conference call	11 12 pm - Afternoon Guild at The Ranger Cafe 6:30 pm - Stations of the Cross in the church 7 pm - Evening prayer in the nave	12 7-8:30 pm - Choir Rehearsal	13	14
15 8 am- Service 10:30 am- Service 5-7pm - Youngish Adult Fellowship	16	17 12:12 pm - Noon day prayer via conference call <i>St. Patrick's Day</i>	18 6:30 pm - Stations of the Cross in the church 7 pm - Evening prayer in the nave	19 5 pm - Finance Committee Meeting 7 pm - Vestry Meeting 7-8:30 pm - Choir Rehearsal	20	21
22 8 am- Service 10:30 am- Service	23	24 12:12 pm - Noon day prayer via conference call	25 6:30 pm - Stations of the Cross in the church 7 pm - Evening prayer in the nave	26 7-8:30 pm - Choir Rehearsal	27	28 9am - Help make palm crosses 9am -Noon- Help Clean Church for Easter
29 10:30 am- Service <i>Palm Sunday</i>	30	31 12:12 pm - Noon day prayer via conference call				

FINANCIAL OFFERINGS TO THE CHURCH

Please mail in your pledges/financial offerings so we can continue with the ministries of the church as well as meet our financial obligations.

SCAN THE CODE BELOW



Or visit: ascension-lakewood.org

Where you can make a one time donation or set up continuing donations. Please join us in helping to keep The Church of the Ascension strong and able to meet the needs of an ever-changing world.

ASCENSION YOUNGISH ADULT FELLOWSHIP

Meets in Ascension Hall Every First and Third Sunday 5pm-7pm.

Just like the group name says, this is all about fellowship. Come get together to spend time in community with your fellow parishioners aged 18+. We will play board games, watch movies, engage in conversation, and more as we grow closer together and strengthen our bonds as friends and siblings in Christ.

DANIEL VANAH, EDITOR

Do you have something you would like in an upcoming issue of the Spires?
Please submit your items by the 22nd of the month to danielvanah16@gmail.com

COLLECTING CLOTHES

Collecting Clothes for St. Luke's Episcopal Church. Box is outside the office. Please only clean and lightly worn clothing. Highly needed are seasonal men's and children's items.

MARCH CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS



March 01:	Stephanie Gillies	March 18:	Adeline Gertsma
March 04:	Jeff Sommer	March 22:	Ann Pesta
March 07:	David Sent	March 25:	Susan Hankey
March 07:	Charlotte Sent	March 28:	Grace Hildebrand
March 08:	Sarah Ciarniello	March 28:	Carol Roser
March 08:	Cherie Paisley	March 31:	Christopher Deibel
March 15:	Harper Semproch	March 31:	Rosalie Ferline