

The Annual Parish Meeting  
of the Church of the Ascension,  
Cartersville, Georgia  
November 20, 2011



The 2011 Annual Parish Report

**CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION**  
**Annual Parish Meeting**  
**November 20, 2011**

Agenda

- I. Prayer
- II. Election of Secretary for the Meeting
- III. The Appointment of Three Tellers
- IV. Election of Vestry
- V. Rector's Report
- VI. Report of the Vestry
- VII. Other Reports of the Parish
- VIII. Memoria
- IX. Miscellaneous Business
- X. Prayer
- XI. Adjournment



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## THE MINUTES OF THE 2010 ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

The Annual Parish Meeting of the Church of the Ascension was held on Sunday, December 12, 2010. The meeting began at 10:00 a.m.; The Rev. Mary K. Erickson opened with prayer.

Victor Riggs nominated Nancy Haight as Secretary of the Annual Meeting. Susan McLeod seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Kathi White, Jamie Hamilton, and Neal Brunt were appointed as Tellers for the meeting.

The Rev. Mary K. Erickson gave everyone a few minutes to read the 2009 minutes. Susan McLeod moved that the minutes be approved; Victor Riggs seconded. The motion passed and the minutes were approved.

Joe White moved that the vestry reports be approved; Kelly Dial seconded. The motion passed and the vestry reports were approved.

Nancy Miller spoke in some detail about the finance report which is YTD October 31, 2010 in the 2010 Annual Parish Report.

TYD total revenue shows a deficit of \$9,953 (10/31/10)

Pledges are up to date

Ascension operates under a bare bones budget – no budget for Servant Ministries with the exception of Buildings and Grounds and Outreach

There is no budget for aging buildings

Finance meetings are held the 3rd Thursday of every month

2010 statements will be available mid-January

Neal Brunt added that the budget is a crisis situation but that the crisis is being managed. Ascension's annual budget for the last few years has hovered around \$220,000 and needs to be at \$250,000.

John Youd added that last year at the annual meeting 71 pledges were turned in for an amount of \$214,114. This year there are 71 pledges, 14-15 being new pledges turned in for an amount of \$216,611.

There was then a discussion of Ascension's diocesan commitment. In 2009 Ascension had to forfeit voice and vote at Diocesan Council because of not meeting the 2008 financial commitment but voice and vote were restored in 2010 as obligations were met in 2009 and 2010.

Election of the Vestry was introduced by the Rev. Mary K. Erickson speaking for the Vestry Nominating Committee. Members of the Committee are Susan McLeod, Neal Brunt, Kathi White and Jamie Hamilton.

Nominations for vestry include Angee McKee, Keith Martin, and David Horah. No other nominations were received from the floor. Victor Riggs made a motion to close the nominations, seconded by Carol Robson and passed. The three candidates for Vestry were elected by acclamation.

The retiring vestry members Susan McLeod, Neal Brunt, Kathi White, Jamie Hamilton and Dan Baker were presented with an icon of the Ascension by the Rev. Mary K. Erckson. Dan Baker has kindly agreed to stay on as Senior Warden for a couple of months as the Rev. Erickson continues settling in and appoints a new senior warden.

Those who died in 2010 were remembered: Josh Covington, Jane Muller, and Mary Ann Franklin

Connie Evans addressed the meeting on the need to purchase the Ford property and that is has always been assumed that when the property became available Ascension would acquire it. Although Ascension does not currently have the funds she strongly encouraged those at the annual meeting to recognize the importance of that property to Ascension's long term plan.

Victor Riggs addressed the meeting with a heartfelt thank you to Dan Baker for his long term service as Senior Warden which resulted in a standing ovation from all in attendance at the meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with a prayer at 10:36 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Nancy H. Haight, Secretary of the 2010 Annual Meeting

## REPORT OF THE RECTOR

It was a great year for your new rector at Church of the Ascension! Thanks again for your warm welcome and hospitality. Last year when I wrote this annual report I had only been with you for two weeks. And now it is hard to believe my first year is nearly complete. It has truly been an honor and privilege to be your rector and to serve others with you.

Let me begin by giving thanks to the Vestry: Dan Baker, Sr. Warden through May, John Youd, Sr. Warden beginning in June, Carol Robson, Jr. Warden, Marcia Humphreys, Earline Walpole, Mason Rountree, Nancy Miller, Angee McKee, Keith Martin and Chris McAbee. Thanks also to our Vestry Clerk, Nancy Haight and Treasurer, Joe White. It has been my delight and pleasure to get to know you and work beside you. You have worked hard, you have done good work, and we are fortunate for your commitment to this parish. Of course none of us, especially me, could have accomplished all that we did without the support of our Parish Administrator. Thank you, Helen Lesser, for your patience and energetic response to the many demands that are placed on you each day.

The Vestry jumped right into the challenge of leadership after the beautiful seasons of Advent and Christmas. We began the year in retreat with The Rev. Frank Baltz. He taught us about Mutual Ministry Review. This is a model for parish leadership that maximizes decisions based upon objective criteria. We think it is a helpful church leadership model and will strive to incorporate it into all we plan and do. The congregation's feedback is an important part of the process as well so please help us out with surveys and feedback forms when the opportunity arises.

As many of you may remember we needed to address the adjacent property that had come available at the end of last year. The Vestry appointed a steering committee to evaluate the opportunity. While another buyer made a first offer that was accepted, the committee did not lose a second to shift its focus towards our own buildings and grounds with existing architectural plans. These are exciting times for our little historic church with the red doors.

In addition to learning about Mutual Ministry Review and the appointment of a Buildings and Grounds Steering Committee your Vestry set goals to increase the visibility of the 9:15 Holy Eucharist and to increase our commitment to Christian Formation. Special planning meetings within the appropriate committees took place to plan strategies for both. We hope you have noticed some changes. I invite you to attend a 9:15 service and participate in one of our Christian Formation offerings. Please give us your feedback.

Among the many items that came to the vestry's attention this year was the resignation of our beloved organist and choirmaster, George Chesnut. With the help of Fellowship Committee, we sent George off to his new position in Carrollton with appreciation for his years of ministry among us. A search committee was also appointed and we are in an active phase of interviews and auditions. It is unlikely the position will be filled before the Christmas holidays, but I thank our other church musicians for their willingness to cover. See Worship and Liturgy Report for more information.

An area of ministry that is at the core of my calling is that of healing and pastoral care. Corporately, the parish has continued to heal as the spirit of forgiveness and mercy has

grown. I am aware that there remain some members of our community for me to meet, get to know, and to bring to them the Holy Eucharist. God calls each of us and all us of together into ministries of wholeness: A healing of body, mind, and spirit into the unity of Jesus Christ. In addition to hospital and home visits, healing has a prominent presence in our weekly worship. Healing Ministers pray, anoint, and lay on of hands during the Sunday Eucharist. The Wednesday evening service has become A Public Service of Healing with Holy Eucharist. Broken spirits, illness, injury, and aging bring about need for physical and spiritual healing for people of all generations. A reminder to all to call the church when you or a loved one are sick, in need of prayers, and when you go to the hospital. Hospitals no longer inform the priests and pastors of hospitalizations of members because of confidentiality laws, so we rely on you or family to let us know. As we know the need for healing is not limited to the physical life. In these hard times layoffs, disappointments, and other kinds of losses also call for healing before we can move on. Please don't hesitate to contact me and consider the Service of Healing on Wednesdays at 6:30 PM.

It has been an exciting year all around and more to come! Nothing, however, is more engaging and inspiring than our worship on Sunday mornings. It is your active participation in the liturgy that reveals the spirit of God's love to one another and all who join us...and we have been joined by a number of visitors and newcomers! Last spring we confirmed and received seven new members into the Episcopal Church. We will have 8 more adults and one youth to be confirmed/received/reaffirmed when Bishop Whitmore visits this month. We have also grown by a number of transfers that are complete and pending. A grand welcome of all newcomers is planned for November 19. I hope you too sense the power of the Holy Spirit working among us.

The Body of Christ, the Church, is not a club of like-minded members. Our unity is found in our committed love and worship of Jesus Christ, not in what we think. It is clear to me that there is hunger and thirst for this very love and mercy found at the heart of our Lord and Savior. Let us continue to grow together in that very spirit of love and mercy that we may be a light for our community. "Sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things."

Thank you for a great first year!

God's blessings,

Mother Mary

**Membership, Attendance and Services of the Reporting Congregation**

<b>Using Last Year's Report:</b>	
<b>Active Baptized Members of the Reporting Congregation Reported Last Year</b>	Using the 2009 Parochial Report, record the Number of Baptized Members Reported as of <b>December 31, 2009</b> . (See your 2009 Parochial Report, Box M09)
	<b>Members Reported Last Year = M09.</b> <input style="width: 100px; text-align: center;" type="text" value="272"/>

**Using the Register of Church Membership and Rites:**

**During the Report Year** 1. **Increases during year:** All members added to the baptized members section of your congregation's Membership Register during 2010 by: baptism, confirmation/reception, or transfer; and those persons restored from inactive status, or not counted in last year's membership count.

**Increases in Membership** Total Increases = 1.

**Decreases in Membership** 2. **Decreases during year:** All baptized members lost by death, transferred to another congregation, removed to inactive status in the Register of Church Membership and Rites, removed for other reasons, or not removed from last year's membership count.

Total Decreases = 2.

**Active Baptized Members of the Reporting Congregation At Year-End** M10: Add the increases entered in Box 1 to Box M09. Then subtract the decreases entered in Box 2 for the total active membership as of December 31, 2010

**Total Active Baptized Members (end of report year) = M10.**

**Communicants in Good Standing of the Reporting Congregation** 3. **All communicants in good standing:** All baptized members of the reporting congregation, who "have received Holy Communion at least three times during the preceding year" and are faithful "in corporate worship, unless for good cause prevented," and "in working, praying, and giving for the spread of the Kingdom of God."

**All communicants (adults and youth) in good standing = 3.**

**Youth in Good Standing** 4. Those communicants in good standing (counted on line 3) who are under age 16.

**Communicants in good standing who are under age 16 = 4.**

**Others Active** 5. **Others who are active** whose baptisms are not recorded in the Parish Register, or in another Episcopal congregation.

**Others = 5.**

**Using the Service Register:**

**Average Sunday Attendance for 2010** 6. **Sunday (& Saturday Evening) Attendance:** Divide total Sunday attendance by number of Sundays.

**Average Sunday Attendance = 6.**

**Easter Attendance in 2010** 7. **Easter Sunday Attendance** (7)

**Sacraments & Services:**

<b>Number of Holy Eucharists Celebrated During 2010</b>	8. Total Sunday & Saturday Evening Eucharists	(8)	<u>152</u>
	9. Total Weekday Eucharists	(9)	<u>51</u>
<b>Daily Offices and Other Services Held During 2010</b>	10. Total Private Eucharists	(10)	<u>41</u>
	11. Daily Offices Held on Sunday	(11)	<u>2</u>
	12. Daily Offices Held on Weekdays	(12)	<u>2</u>
	13. Marriages conducted in 2010	(13)	<u>2</u>
	14. Burials conducted in 2010	(14)	<u>3</u>

**Using the Register of Church Membership and Rites:**

<b>Baptisms in 2010</b>	15. Baptisms 16 years and older	(15)	<u>0</u>
	16. Baptisms under 16 years of age	(16)	<u>1</u>
<b>Confirmations in 2010</b>	17. Confirmations 16 years and older	(17)	<u>1</u>
	18. Confirmations under 16 years of age	(18)	<u>0</u>
<b>Received in 2010</b>	19. Received by a bishop	(19)	<u>1</u>

**Education:**

<b>Children and Youth</b>	20. Total Church School Students Enrolled	(20)	<u>18</u>
<b>Adult Education</b>	21. Do you have any regular Sunday or weekday adult education program(s)?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	

**Stewardship and Financial Information of the Reporting Congregation****Giving Information for 2010 :**

<b>Number of Pledges</b>	1.	Number of signed pledge cards for 2010 -report year	(1)	<u>73</u>
<b>Total \$ Pledged</b>	2.	Total dollar amount pledges for 2010-report year	(2)	<u>\$214,117</u>

**Report of Revenues and Expenses for 2010 :**

<b>Operating Revenues</b>	3.	Plate offerings, pledge payments & regular support	(3)	<u>\$253,837</u>
	4.	Money from investments used for operations in 2010	(4)	<u>\$0</u>
	5.	Other operating income, including unrestricted gifts & restricted gifts used for operations, & contributions from congregation's organizations	(5)	<u>\$1,013</u>
	6.	Unrestricted bequests used for operations	(6)	<u>\$0</u>

**Subtotal Normal Operating Income (3 + 4 + 5 + 6) = A** \$254,850

7.	Assistance from diocese for operating budget	(7)	<u>\$0</u>
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**Total Operating Revenues (A + 7) = B** \$254,850

<b>Non-Operating Revenues</b>	8.	Funds received for capital projects	(8)	<u>\$14,012</u>
	9.	Additions to endowment, & other investment funds	(9)	<u>\$3,604</u>
	10.	Contributions & grants for congregation based outreach & mission programs	(10)	<u>\$15,180</u>
	11.	Funds for transmittal to other organizations	(11)	<u>\$1,186</u>

**Subtotal Non-Operating Revenues (8 + 9 + 10 + 11) = C** \$33,982

**Total All Revenues (B + C) = D** \$288,832

<b>Operating Expenses</b>	12.	To diocese for assessment, apportionment, or fair share	(12)	<u>\$18,120</u>
	13.	Outreach from operating budget	(13)	<u>\$5,500</u>
	14.	All other operating expenses	(14)	<u>\$230,056</u>

**Subtotal Operating Expenses (12 + 13 + 14) = E** \$253,676

<b>Non-Operating Expenses</b>	15.	Major improvements & capital expenditures	(15)	<u>\$0</u>
	16.	Expense for congregation's outreach & mission	(16)	<u>\$16,583</u>
	17.	Funds contributed to Episcopal seminaries	(17)	<u>\$0</u>
	18.	Funds transmitted to other organizations	(18)	<u>\$2,051</u>

**Subtotal Non-Operating Expenses (15 + 16 + 17 + 18) = F** \$18,634

**Total All Expenses (E + F) = G** \$272,310

**At Year-End:**

<b>As of December 31, 2010</b>	19.	Total cash in all checking & passbook savings accounts	(19)	<u>\$48,397</u>
	20.	Total investment at market value (not including cash reported in line 19)	(20)	<u>\$213,746</u>

## REPORT OF THE SENIOR WARDEN

First and foremost I would like to thank God for all His blessing He has bestowed on our church this past year. I am sure everyone will agree that it has been an exciting twelve months here at Church of the Ascension.

To my good friend Dan Baker, thank you so much for serving for over four years as Senior Warden. I can't imagine what these past years would have been like without you. Your knowledge and wisdom have helped our church to become a place that we all love.

To the two members of the Vestry that are leaving at the end of this year along with me, Marcia Humphreys and Earline Walpole, it has been a real pleasure serving with both of you. I thank you for all you have done these past three years. To the other vestry members, I will truly miss our meetings but leave with the knowledge that the Vestry is in excellent hands.

With the addition of the audio/visual equipment in the church and parish hall, we have expanded our ability to serve our church in many ways. Not only do we now have a P/A system in the church but a video of the service in the parish hall. The system can also be used for educational presentations in the hall. In all, it has really expanded our ability to serve our congregation.

We learned this year what a blessing the Good Lord has bestowed on our church with the arrival of Mother Mary. She has fueled the flames of our ministries and has brought a level of energy that has added so much to our beloved church. I am positive that the upcoming year will be even more exciting than this past one.

On a personal note, I would like to thank everyone for allowing me to serve on the vestry for the past three years. To Mother Mary, I thank you for the chance to serve as Senior Warden. These experiences have been very rewarding. Most important, I thank God for bringing Carol and me to the Church of the Ascension.

*May God be merciful to us and bless us, show us the light of his countenance and come to us*

*Psalm 67.1:*

God Bless You All,

John Youd



## VESTRY REPORTS

### BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS

Another year has passed by and again many projects have taken place at Church of Ascension. With all the help of volunteers, especially Allen McDaniel, I believe we were able to keep expenses way down.

Some of the projects included the bathrooms, which were carried over from last year and with some final touches it brought that project to a close.

Also the first part of the year we completed our Clean Signs campaign and we now have the best looking signs in the county.

The food pantry roof leak went all year with no drips therefore the sheetrock was replaced. A major roof repair was completed to the Parish Hall and with a little help from some new faces to the B&G team, Jim Harrelson and Chris McAbee, that was done with minor expense. Great job!

John Youd went on a mission to simplify our massive bundle of keys and after many hours turned it into a very useable, light-weight key chain.

With concerns of safety with the dead tree in the parking lot the tree was removed making our parking lot a safe place again.

The Holy Mowers were used again this year. Every Sunday people are complimenting on how great our grounds look. I give a special thanks to all the teams and also Dennis Popham for again organizing the teams and schedules. Thank you to all who contributed to acquiring a riding mower for this ministry.

Sandy Cunningham had the idea of the Adopt a Plot Program and a few areas have been adopted. We will continue to look for people willing to take on an area to plant or just keep the weeds under control. Also in the memorial garden, John Youd headed up reconditioning and upgrading the memorial box.

We've had continued problems with rodents and thanks to Dan Baker for his persistent quest of keeping them at bay.

Over in the Ascension House, the heat/air unit, plumbing, and kitchen floor needed work and all was repaired, safety lights installed on two of the porches, and the last of the big projects was the painting of the worst areas. Thanks to a great group of volunteers for the paint project, we kept a big expense to a minimum which saved \$1,600.00 worth of funds!

Coming to the vestry as the Buildings and Grounds Representative made me very uncomfortable at first. But after completing a year with the people of this church, I'm proud and honored to have taken this role. You are all a great group of people, and without you, this mission would not be possible. Thank you for your continued support and I'm looking forward to another year.

Respectfully Submitted,

Keith Martin  
Buildings and Grounds Vestry Representative

## CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Once again Christian Formation tried to ensure that there was something for everyone to enjoy!

This summer we held our first annual Christian Formation Retreat. Parishioners were invited to attend and offer their ideas for growing and participating in this important ministry. As a result of the retreat, the Christian Formation committee gained three new teachers: Matthew Thomas, Earline Walpole, and Stephanie Horah. All three are very welcomed additions to our wonderful and dedicated group of teachers.

For Adult Formation, Mother Mary led classes using the “Welcome Series” of books and Kathi White led discussions on Christian Parenting in today’s world.

Also, as well as our regular children’s classes, a teen confirmation class was offered. This ongoing class is guided by Dan Baker, Tiana Brachel, and Matthew Thomas.

This year’s VBS was entitled “Come & See” and the spotlight was on the Episcopal Church. The theme included a ‘History’ lesson, provided by Meghann Humphreys’ improve troop, presentations by Mother Mary on Liturgical Seasons, the Book of Common Prayer, and the Sacraments, and Dan Baker offering the attendees information on Episcopal Relief & Development, as just one example of what we do as Episcopalians. Activities and classes were offered for all age groups: Elementary, Middle School, High School, and Adults.

While attendance was good in most cases and it was a great year, our classes still have a lot of empty seats and there is a need for more volunteers. We are always looking for new ideas and invite you to join us in our mission to grow a strong Christian Formation ministry.

Respectfully Submitted,

Carol Robson  
Vestry Liaison for Christian Formation

## COMMUNICATIONS MINISTRY

With the vestry approval to initiate a new ministry, a group of interested people came together including Brenda Worley, Susan McLeod, Claudia McCormick, Leata Thomas, and Helen Lesser. We met in early summer to organize ourselves, to put some goals in place, and to commit to ‘excellence in communication.’

Much of our time together was focused around coordinating efforts and the importance of meeting deadlines in order to keep our parish family well informed. We addressed the need for transparency and the critical need for good communication throughout the parish to meet that goal. Updated computer hardware and software for Helen Lesser, we learned, was key to improving communication in almost all areas. That was accomplished in mid-summer (with help of anonymous donor) and you probably noticed some changes about that time in our electronic communication formatting. Of course, significant efficiency was gained in other areas for the Parish Administrator as well.

This is not a committee that meets often because we are working closely with many committees and people to get the word out to you and to our wider community. Our communication areas include: Church of the Ascension Website, The Trumpet, This Week at Ascension (weekly email), bulletins, email, Face book, phones, local newspaper, bulletin boards, and signage.

With all this electronic communication we also strive to maintain a personal and human touch in our communications. In many churches you will find that for the sake of keeping personnel costs to a minimum they have gone to phone answering systems. Of all places for a real person to answer the phone the church is at the head of that list. Consequently, as we have grown in numbers and tasks at the office we find we need more help. So, like many wise churches, we are adding parish volunteer receptionists to the Communications Ministry. We have several who have already signed up and we are seeking more. When you call the church, please give a word of thanksgiving for their volunteer efforts and for keeping that personal touch even as we grow.

As I write this, we are planning to meet on November 12 to evaluate our efforts and set a new goal or two for 2012. Jeff Tindall, Angee Mckee, and Kelley Dial have recently joined our efforts. We hope you have found the improvements to our communications helpful. Please let us know what you like and where we can improve.

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. Mary K. Erickson, Chairperson

## EVANGELISM

Report not available at print time

## FELLOWSHIP

Since becoming a vestry member in September, I have witnessed a great interest in Fellowship at the Episcopal Church of the Ascension. I believe most people are willing to participate and be active in our Fellowship Ministry. Furthermore, I am thankful for such interest.

Gail Underwood, chairperson, has been by my side continually and offers her support at every turn. Gail has taken on the task of organizing coffee hour teams and planning festivities for the parish. In addition to organizing coffee hour teams, Gail is inviting new parishioners to join Fellowship. Gail and I share in the goal of growing this ministry to better suit the needs of the church and to glorify God.

For the meantime we have decided not to focus on 1st Sunday Lunch. The reason behind that is, we want to prop up Coffee Hour as much as possible. Although we have coffee hour after the eleven o'clock service we still have two more services to go. We believe Coffee Hour is extraordinarily important to the life of our parish as it provides an opportunity to welcome new-comers and to fellowship with one another. 1st Sunday Lunch will be up for discussion once Coffee Hour is well established.

A new facet of Fellowship is utilizing social media, The Daily Tribune News, [www.ascensioncartersville.org](http://www.ascensioncartersville.org) and “The Trumpet” to accomplish our goal of spreading the message : Church of the Ascension is Spirit-filled... come and see! Church of the Ascension has a facebook page! There you will find announcements, upcoming events and parish photographs. Be sure to “like” us! Claudia White has been a wonderful asset to Fellowship. Because of her good work with The Daily Tribune News Fellowship at Church of the Ascension has gotten more exposure than ever. “The Trumpet” has also been very helpful in spreading our message. This month our article offered thanks for a successful Malbone and requests for kitchen supplies (be sure to check it out at [www.ascensioncartersville.org](http://www.ascensioncartersville.org)).

Lastly, I want to thank everyone who has helped out with Fellowship. Nothing would be possible without you all so freely giving of your time and talent. I share in your determination to make Fellowship the best that it can be... always with God’s help. Please, always feel free to contact me with concerns or questions.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Christopher P. McAbee

#### ASCENSION COFFEE HOUSE

Ascension Coffee House takes place on the second Friday of each month. Rick McKee serves as host and sound technician. Angee McKee coordinates set up, ministry workers, snack and drink donations, and clean up.

Ascension Coffee House is celebrating four years of evangelism, fellowship, and outreach to our community. This event continues to draw new people to Ascension, as well as loyal fans. This year, we opened our beautiful nave during the event and welcomed visitors to enjoy the beauty of our lovely little church during the intermission. Many people from the community have commented on how they had wished to see the building, but have never attended a service.

Attendance at coffee house has increased again this year. The response from the community has been positive. Coffee house attendees contribute non-perishable food items and dry pet food to the Ascension Food Pantry. All cash donations are deposited into the rector's discretionary account.

This ministry has welcomed many new workers this year. We are grateful for the service of so many who have contributed snacks and drinks, set up tables, moved equipment, cleaned up, shared their music, and listened enthusiastically over the last five years.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Angee McKee  
Ascension Coffee House Coordinator

## FINANCE

In years past, the budget has presented challenges, but with this current budget year, we are meeting our financial obligations, have started a small emergency saving account, and have been able to fund all servant ministries. Most churches budget 92% on their pledges, but the Church of the Ascension is able to budget 97% of the expected pledged amount because our parishioners have been so faithful in keeping their pledges current. This balancing act is most ably handled by the Finance committee chair, Mal Underwood and Joe White, Treasurer who watch the day to day financial picture of the church. A special thanks to Helen Lesser who works very closely with Joe and Mal.

The total operating budget for the church year is \$243,600 with personnel costs being the largest cost. At the current report, we have two full time positions (rector and parish administrator). We have two part time positions (sexton and nursery attendant) – George Chesnut left in October 2011 and we are looking for his replacement. The outreach and building and grounds ministries are the most well funded of the ministries.

The I AM FUND stands at \$203,606 and is currently in a money market account. The Finance Committee recently made the decision to move the money into ING DIRECT for a higher rate of return until the funds are needed.

Brenda Worley, Carol Robson, Nancy Miller, and Arleigh Daniel conducted an internal audit of the 2010 calendar year of the church finances. Minor changes have been made in the handling of the finances, but no significant findings were found. Of note, a safe has now been installed in the sacristy for the offerings to be placed between services for better safekeeping of the funds.

With the ministry fair, four new tellers are now in training and will soon be added to the rotation. The new members are: Marla Rozier, Maggie Martin, Robert White, and Bobby Womack.

Thanks to the congregation as a whole for keeping pledges current.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy E. Miller, Vestry Member

**Church of the Ascension  
Financial Statement Status & Projections  
As of September 30, 2011**

	<b>09/30/11 YTD Actual</b>	<b>09/30/11 YTD Budget</b>	<b>Variance Fav (Unfav)</b>	<b>2011 Projected Annual Results</b>	<b>Variance Fav (Unfav)</b>
<b>REVENUE</b>					
Pledge	156,884.00	163,200.00	(6,316.00)	217,600.00	0.00
All other	16,315.43	19,500.00	(3,184.57)	24,000.00	(2,000.00)
<b>Total revenue</b>	<b>173,199.43</b>	<b>182,700.00</b>	<b>(9,500.57)</b>	<b>241,600.00</b>	<b>(2,000.00)</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>					
Servant ministries	25,651.26	26,016.75	365.49	34,289.00	400.00
Administrative	27,314.53	28,162.50	847.97	38,370.00	(820.00)
Personnel	125,454.88	127,611.00	2,156.12	168,948.00	1,200.00
All other	0.00	900.00	900.00	0.00	1,200.00
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>178,420.67</b>	<b>182,690.25</b>	<b>4,269.58</b>	<b>241,607.00</b>	<b>1,980.00</b>
<b>Excess (deficit) revenue over expenses</b>	<b>(5,221.24)</b>	<b>9.75</b>	<b>(5,230.99)</b>	<b>(7.00)</b>	<b>(20.00)</b>

**RESTRICTED FUND BALANCES @ 09/30/11:**

I AM Fund	203,606.67
Outreach	14,398.75
Memorial Fund	6,212.83
Ascension Fund	28,061.89
All other	5,210.43
<b>Total restricted fund balances</b>	<b>257,490.57</b>

## OUTREACH

The last three years have been a wonderful experience for me due to all the hard working people who take on all the many different tasks required to keep the Outreach ministry running. A special thanks to John and Terry Bangert for chairing our Food Pantry. Each Sunday a group of dedicated parishioners meet after the 8:00AM Service to prepare the bags of food for the Food Pantry. They prepare 144 bags that are distributed on Tuesday and Thursday mornings to the needy. Brenda Worley and Bill Dial rotate driving to ALDI in Marietta to purchase the food from the cheapest retailer in the area. Marilyn Greer and Sam and Beth Hood, Maggie Martin, Maxine Richards, and Chris McAbee for distributing the food each week at our Food Pantry. Sandy Rutters and John and Terry Bangert deliver food to our Senior Shut in Patrons.

In September, the Bane and Blessing was held to raise money for our Food Pantry. Thanks to Chris McAbee chairing the Bane and Blessing this year. Due to the congregation's generosity, we raised \$3,700. Many parishioners donated items, their time and money to help make this sale a success.

Thanks to Nancy Zerbe for being our grant writer. She once again secured a generous grant from The Episcopal Church for us.

The Red Door Fund is an important part of the Outreach Ministry. The Red Door Fund is funded primarily by donations. One purpose of the money is to help the needy with their utility bills, gas money, doctor bills, etc. The fourth Sunday of every month is "Spare Change Sunday". As the congregation goes up for Communion they drop their change in the Red Door Fund Jar. Due to a shortage of funds this year we have added a bake sell on the day of our Annual Meeting.

This November we have distributed bags with a list of items needed to provide Thanksgiving dinner for our Food Pantry clients. Parishioners were asked to fill a bag. Donations were taken up for to purchase gift cards for turkeys. We hope to have at least 80 bags to hand out this year.

December we will have at least 20 children Outreach sponsored for the Christmas Angel Tree. Each child has a wish list of four (3) items, so we will have sixty (60) angels on the tree. We received the family names from Cartersville Middle and South Central Middle Schools. This has been very rewarding and successful in years past.

We have received tremendous support of the Food Pantry from the businesses of Cartersville. Publix donates bags for the groceries. Bartow Diner has a collection jar at their cash register, which they donate to our Food Pantry. Sam Jones United Methodist for sharing food collected from its food drives.

We want to thank all of you for your support of Outreach. Special thanks go to Marilyn Greer, Beth and Sam Hood, Sandy Rutters, Bill Dial, Brenda Worley, Claudia McCormick, Maxine Richards, Chris McGee and many more. And we thank all of you for donating so much of your time to the Food Pantry each Sunday.

We encourage each of you to become involved in Outreach, so we can better serve the needs of our community.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcia Humphreys, Vestry Liaison for Outreach

John and Terry Bangert – Chairpersons

Nancy Zerbe – Chairperson

Chris McAbee - Chairperson

## PASTORAL CARE

The Pastoral Care committee has served members of the parish through the following ministries:

The **Card Ministry** sends cards to those who are ill and/or for condolence to parish members when we are notified by the family.

**Hospital visits** are usually made by Mother Mary. Please contact the church office when you or a member of your family is in the hospital. Due to HIPAA (health information privacy guidelines and policies) doctors and hospitals do not contact the church on your behalf.

The **Flower Ministry** makes smaller arrangements of the altar flowers following the services. These are available to Mother Mary and Eucharistic Visitors when making hospital and home visits.

The **Meal Ministry** provides a meal for household members who have experienced a recent hospital stay. The online Care Calendar ( [www.carecalendar.org](http://www.carecalendar.org) ), came to our attention this past year as a tool to be used by families to coordinate care needs. The Pastoral Care Committee recommends that a technological savvy family member or friend initiate the Care Calendar. The committee can then assist with communication of these needs to our faith community. Parish members will be encouraged to access the care calendar and sign up as needed.

The Church of the Ascension is fortunate to have **Daughters of the King** and the **Pastoral Care Prayer Ministries** who seek to pray every day for those in need. Please contact the pastoral care vestry person if you wish to have your name or that of a loved one placed on these private prayer lists. On Sunday mornings we pray corporately for people whose names are placed on the church prayer lists. Please contact Helen Lesser if you wish to place your name or that of a loved one in the bulletin for inclusion in our Sunday morning worship. All persons and prayer ministries are encouraged to take the ‘prayers of the people’ lists home for inclusion in private prayers.

**Helping Hands** began as a small gesture to help with little tasks around the house and in lieu of a chair person for this position; we are currently unable to provide this kind of assistance. We are looking for volunteers to make Home Bound Visits to our members who are homebound. A prerequisite before making the visits will be to attend the workshop [Safeguarding God’s People](#). If this is an area you feel called to serve, please contact Mother Mary. Pastoral Care Committee meets every second Tuesday of the month at 5:30pm.

**Pastoral Care Committee** organized two Women's Retreats this year: April 9th, Connie Evans and Mother Mary led us in our journey on the five points of discernment; 1. *Longing (Blessed be the longing for without it nothing changes)* 2. *Silence (hard but absolutely necessary)* 3. *Waiting (Takes patience and discipline)* 4. *Imagining (That dream, or bible verse or comment from a friend just might be God speaking)* and finally 5. *Listening-how to listen for the voice of God.* Our morning was spent listening to scripture reading, learning some new songs, and sharing ways we have felt God's discernment in our lives. October 22nd Connie Evans and Mother Mary continued our pilgrimage as we studied a key element of daily pilgrimage and renewal in the call to forgiveness. We explored some of the implications of forgiveness as it relates to our ability to live a rich full life....A life filled with meaning and new life. The way to inner peace and freedom comes with the decision to commit daily to the healing process of forgiveness. Each time we forgive, there is the potential to be "born again" into the greater life God has created for us. At the end of our day, we came together to celebrate the Holy Eucharist. *God has spoken once, twice have I heard it...* (Psalm 62).

*Jesus said, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while."* (Mark 6:31)

#### STEERING COMMITTEE

Report not available at print time

#### STEWARDSHIP EDUCATION

This year's Stewardship Committee for the first time in a long time decided to take a new approach to Stewardship. The committee studied a book about this new approach and began the planning many months ago.

The title for this approach is "New Consecration Sunday". It is a more personal approach to stewardship than the ones used in past programs. The culmination of this program occurred on October 23, 2011 with a combined worship service at 10:00 A.M. and a catered luncheon under tents beside the parish hall.

The results of our new approach are, as of Nov 4, 2011, 71 household have responded with a total commitment of \$231,307.76. Of these, 52 have increased their commitment over last year. There are still a number of households who pledged last year that have not made their commitment yet. In all, I am very pleased with these results and the commitment our members are making to our church.

Respectfully submitted,

John Youd, Vestry Liaison for Stewardship

#### WORSHIP AND LITURGY COMMITTEE

Thank you Jamie Baker for your leadership of the committee until I was ready. Thank you for continuing to be our chaplain, opening and closing our meetings with prayer and devotion.

As a way to discussing worship and liturgy the committee has undertaken a book study. We are reading *Celebrating the Eucharist: A Practical Ceremonial Guide for Clergy and Other Liturgical Ministers*. It is written by Patrick Malloy who is Professor of Liturgy at the Episcopal General Seminary in New York. I believe we would all say it has been a helpful review as we learned to ask a question that is different from the usual focus: “What does the liturgy mean?” This is not a bad question as we all appreciate a better understanding of the liturgy. Malloy, however, reminds us of a different question. He wants us to consider: What is the liturgy doing?

As a way of explaining his shift to this question, he likens liturgy to art in a foreign museum. He reminds us that if you go to such a museum and look at a work of art, it does something to you. It draws you in and does something to you. And as you grow and change and return to the piece of art, it does different things to you. Now consider what happens if the museum places a placard next to the work of art and it tells you what it means in the country’s native language. What does it mean? You might study the words, but if you are not familiar with the language at all, e.g., Japanese or Chinese, you will find that no matter how long you stare at the placard, it will not reveal the meaning. Now consider that a docent wanders by and interprets the placard in your native language. Now you know what it means, right? Is that the end of the story?

Malloy’s point is that liturgy is much more like art than the placard. It’s about impact! What is the liturgy doing? What might the liturgy do? What can it do? What has it done? Depending upon our own life experience and spiritual growth, what it can do changes over time. The meaning of a particular gesture, object, or even an explanation of the whole rite is not nearly as important as asking ‘What is the liturgy doing.’ As Episcopalians we recall “that a sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace.” And so we too can conclude with Malloy that God is doing something in and through the liturgy for you, me, and us.

As our study has progressed (it is a big book), we found that we wanted to make some minor changes to our services: Offertory is slightly changed as oblations and alms are placed directly on the altar, we invited the congregation to join the clergy in bowing at the Sanctus (Holy Holy Holy), and we have attempted some changes with communion hymns at 11:00 AM Service. The addition of the audio visual projection into the Parish Hall will necessitate a couple of other small changes at the 11:00 service (we will have someone from the congregation read the prayers of the people at the lectern, rather than a Eucharistic Minister read from the center, in order to access the microphone.) We have made a couple of changes to the 9:15 Service which we hope attracts not only young families but people who are busy on Sunday mornings and seek first to center their busy lives in worship. Finally I am seeking to start a ministry of vergers because I need help on Sunday mornings. It is very difficult to preach/celebrate at three services, teach class, and coordinate the liturgy. We will explore this further and provide you with more information in the near future. Remember to ask questions if you are unfamiliar with worship/liturgical changes and give us feedback as well.

My thanks to all those on the committee: Dan and Jamie Baker, Connie Evans, Angee McKee, Susan McLeod, Carol Robson, Dick and Nancy Zerbe. It has been a good year of study and reflection. We have missed Dick and Nancy and are committed to their return and leadership of ushers and altar guild respectively. George Chesnut also served on this

committee as staff organist and choirmaster, but as most of you know he left to take a position in Carrollton, GA at St. Margaret's. Our own parish musicians and choir members are helping us to make music and lead worship during the interim. They include John Blankenship, Kelley Dial, Angee and Rick McKee, Barry and Susan McLeod.

Update: Organist and Choirmaster Search Process

The Organist and Choirmaster Search Committee including John Blankenship, Beth Hall, Natalie Horah, Angee McKee, Susan McLeod, and Carol Robson and I are in the process of interviews/auditions with candidates. It is unlikely that we will have a new organist before the holidays, but we are hopeful. We are grateful for the talented people who have come forward for consideration.

Most important of all to our corporate worship is you, the congregation. Your participation in the "liturgy" is key to our way of worship and Episcopal life. "Liturgy" literally means the work of the people (intended for the common good). Together we "Celebrate the Eucharist" and my role is to preside and preach. Understanding the importance of liturgical participation and the knowledge that God is indeed present and 'doing' something is a profoundly powerful combination. No telling where the Holy Spirit will take us on our journey together.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mother Mary Erickson



## THE I AM COMMITTEE

The I AM Fund was started in 2004 as a vision to upgrade, expand, and renovate our aging Church building. The vision includes a larger Parish Hall and kitchen, new offices for the Rector and Parish Administrator, new choir room, classrooms, and space for the Outreach ministry. In previous years, funds were used to pay-off an existing mortgage and acquire an architectural rendering of the proposed construction.

The fund has continued to grow over the past 3 years despite the operating challenges of transitioning between Rectors, and the current economic recession. The continued growth of the I AM Fund throughout these challenges reflects that our vision is alive and well.

	2008	2009	2010	Sept. 2011
Fund Balance	\$137,174	\$168,422	\$186,893	\$203,607

As reflected in the above fund balances, we started 2011 with a balance of \$186,893 and added \$16,714 thru September 2011, for a total of \$203,607.

We must first strengthen our day to day operating budget before any major building project can become a reality. For this reason, gifts to the I AM Fund should be over and above your normal giving to the operations of Ascension.

The I AM Fund is restricted for the purpose of constructing a new building to house a Parish Hall, kitchen, offices, and classrooms. There continues to be no doubt that as our structures continue to age, the need for construction will increase. Church of the Ascension has given much to our community for many years. The enhancement of our facility will insure that we will be here for the community and the Parish for years to come. Thank you for your continued support.

Joe White

Interim Chairman



*In Memoria*

*Annie Bird Strickland*

*Shirley Frick*

*Michael Moran*

*Brad Paulk*