

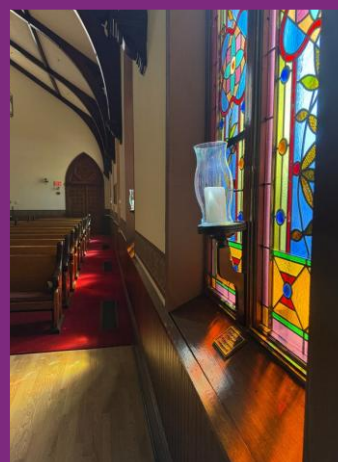


ASCENSION

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Minnesota's first Episcopal Church Founded in 1846

Experiencing God's love through communal worship, inspiring music, hospitality with one another, and spreading God's love into the surrounding community and through our shared mission work.



Church Address

214 3rd Street N.
Stillwater, MN

Manwaring Office

215 4th Street N
Stillwater, MN

aechurch.org





A People of God with a God Centered Vision & Mission

As a visible sign of God's presence in the world, we are an affirming community of welcoming, loving, and questioning people that actively proclaim and live the Gospel. Our warm, non-judgmental, and inclusive community supports people to be themselves and to feel Free to Question. We treasure hospitality, fellowship, and celebration together.

At the heart of Ascension is a strong commitment and outreach - to be the hands and feet of Christ for those in need.

We honor our rich history with joy. We embrace a traditional and yet varied liturgical experience and treasure the quality of our sermons and music including hymnal, choral and instrumental offerings.

Our children and youth are a priority. We like them with us, visible and involved in the upfront Playground during services. Their presence brings vitality to our worship and community.

"It's the Gospel—caring for the community, inside and outside the walls."

**You belong.
No exceptions.**



*"Ascension is like family to me."
"I like the Playground in front. The children are engaging in the liturgy; they need to be in church."*

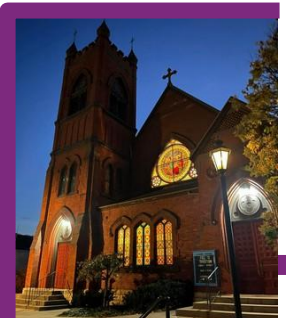
Where God has Placed Ascension

The Episcopal Church of the Ascension was established in 1846 and is the oldest worshipping Episcopal congregation in the Diocese of Minnesota. Our church is located in Stillwater, the birthplace of Minnesota, overlooking the St. Croix River. Our buildings are historic, beautiful and supported by our solid Building Reserve Fund to maintain them now and preserve them into the future.

Our church can seat up to 200 people in the Sanctuary. We have a large parish hall with modern kitchen facilities and an up-to-date library that also serves as a formation space. Our small chapel provides a quiet retreat space and is used for special services. The lower level has space for children's Christian formation and general meetings. Manwaring House, adjacent to the church, houses office and meeting spaces and has a dedicated youth group area.

We are part of the Episcopal Church in Minnesota, shepherded by Minnesota's 10th Bishop, the Rt. Rev. Craig W. Loya. The diocese has made four commitments to be a church that looks and acts like Jesus:

1. Discipleship: transformative encounters with Jesus
2. Justice: building community with the poor and marginalized
3. Faithful innovation: a culture of experimentation
4. Vital communities: sharing life together deeply



What Does God Hope for Ascension?



Like many churches, Ascension has experienced some significant and challenging situations in the past 5-8 years. This includes a turnover of all of the key ministry positions due to a retirement and needed changes in staffing. We've rebuilt our programmatic infrastructure in the following areas: Music, Christian Formation for children, youth and adults; pastoral care support, community involvement in mission and outreach; and growth-related activities and events. This restructuring has provided a new supported framework for our faith community and reflects a clear sign of the church's enduring vibrance as we move forward.



Our current staff has brought freshness and new skills to us. We have learned there is a deep passion and desire to remain in community, to heal and grow stronger. Our core membership of about 75 pledging families is strong and committed to stewardship.

We hunger for continued spiritual development to truly understand what discipleship means, and to prepare us to engage with our challenging world in doing God's work in the community.

"We want a rector with the ability to embrace who we are at Ascension and works to build relationships with us."

"We desire a leader who connects us to current issues in our daily life to the Gospel teachings and shows us how to live as Disciples of Christ."

Through our discernment process the parish is clear that we are looking for a rector who will positively challenge us and help us to understand and use our strengths, passions and energies. We are searching for a new Rector who by following the guiding influence of the Holy Spirit will:

- Provide relevant worship and spiritual growth opportunities.
- Be an empathic and personable force of stability and strong leadership.
- Develop relationships with parishioners to form "a connected community."
- Help us strengthen and grow our parish family and ministries by personally reaching out in a relatable manner to young families and older adults encouraging, involvement, retention and integration into parish life.
- Demonstrate acceptance of the diversity of beliefs and our Free to Question approach that is core to Ascension.
- Be a generous and faithful steward of our resources.
- Support the strong history of mission outreach at Ascension, especially in our local community, and inspire the congregation with trust and optimism for the future.

The Resources God has Given Us - Demographics, Financial Information and Stewardship

Our overall membership is approximately 200 people led by our Vestry of twelve including four officers. Average Sunday attendance between the two services averages 90 people during the program year. We have a solid financial base and a balanced budget. We are committed to a transparent approach to our finances. Our stewardship activities encourage an understanding that the giving of time and talents, as well as the giving of financial resources, supports our commitment to be the eyes, hands and feet of Christ.

Our talented staff of six is supported by lay leadership on over 20 standing and ministry committees. We have completed separate discernment processes for children/ youth formation, our music program and our new rector search within the past two years. These discernments have developed a strong picture of who we are and what we yearn for in our church.

- [Ascension Financial Summary August 2025 YTD](#)
- [2024 Annual Report and 2024 Parochial Report](#)
- [2024 MMR final](#)
- [Staff and Vestry organizational charts](#)

Our Programs

Worship and Liturgy Approach

Central to our shared life here at Ascension is our worship. We seek to balance traditional Rite Two Holy Eucharist with an informed focus on inclusion, occasionally incorporating other resources such as the New Zealand Prayer Book and Celtic worship for more encompassing language.

We offer two distinctly different services on Sunday mornings. Our 8:00 am service is smaller, more contemplative and spoken. Our 10:00 am service is larger and offers a full choral Eucharist, supplemented by instrumental music that augments our congregational singing. This is a family friendly service encourages our children to sit in the parent supervised Prayground at the front of the Nave.

Our Rector has a large support system here at Ascension:

- Our Worship Committee meets on a quarterly basis. This collaborative team assists the Rector in assessing past services and planning future services.
- Our Altar Guild serves our parish and God by caring for and preparing our sanctuary for all services including Sundays, weddings, funerals, baptisms and any special services. They maintain and care for our sacred vessels, altar linens, and vestments.
- Our Vergers assist the Rector in preparation for and during services.
- Other Sunday support includes Acolytes, Lay Readers, Lay Eucharistic Ministers, Newcomer Greeters and Ushers
- Our Director of Music works collaboratively with the Worship team to plan and support Liturgies.

Christian Formation

Formation at Ascension centers on discipleship, growing in love, wonder, and the call of Jesus Christ. Our children's formation centers on the image of Jesus as the Good Shepherd, affirming that they are known, loved, safe, and called by God. Our youth group shares a meal, plays, prays, and wonders together about the Good News of the Gospel through Scripture stories. Our adult formation offers a space to wonder, question, engage texts and one another as we grow as disciples of Jesus.

Music

Ascension has a long history of musical excellence that honors a traditional Anglican style of music, which embraces hymns and service music and promotes congregational participation. In addition, high quality choral anthems have long been the cornerstone of Ascension's liturgical music. Our community appreciates a broad variety of instrumental ensembles and musical styles and strongly supports the inclusion of modern hymn texts that reflect current theology. In addition to the Adult Choir, we welcome members to our Handbell Choir as well as other instrumental ensembles and soloists throughout the year. We recognize the importance and power of music in the worship experience as we seek to glorify God, enhance the beauty of our Liturgies, and inspire spiritual growth. Our Music Committee supports this key ministry.

Mission/Outreach

Ascension has a dedicated and historical commitment to mission/outreach. Through work with our Mission and Creation Care ministries, we support many initiatives through both financial and volunteer resources. Over the past few years we have made an effort to become more involved with community partnerships that focus on food programs, housing insecurity and the protection of God's creation. We feel called to focus primarily on our local community that clearly has an increasing need for help and support.

Mission/Outreach at Ascension



Our Programs - continued

Erickson Plaza

This exciting project is focused on creating a community hub for connection, care and celebration outside of the church walls and will be dedicated in the spring of 2026. The Plaza will allow Ascension to increase our community participation and deepen our understanding and investment in people, resources and inclusive programs that serve our local neighbors, Stillwater and St. Croix Valley communities.

[Erickson Plaza Brochure](#)

[Erickson Plaza Website](#)

Our Additional Ministries

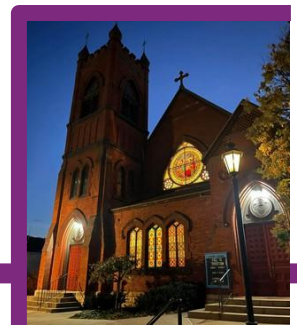
Ascension supports and offers stewardship to many other ministries that help to serve God and create our culture. Our welcoming nature puts fellowship and hospitality as a key activity not only to welcome visitors but provide the 'family' connection so many feel. We love to come together and share in our time and lives. Sunday Hospitality Teams hosting coffee hours, Shrove Tuesday Jazz night, feasting together, worship and fellowship events are a few of these ways.

We also focus on initiatives to help us GROW through welcoming visitors, building awareness through communications, keeping our beautiful facility utilized and in good condition, personal health and wellness with our Healing Touch ministry, or advocating for Social Justice in connection with ECMN initiatives and much more .

Click to Link to:

[2025 Ministries Opportunities booklet](#)

[Ascension GROW Initiative](#)



Leading Ascension is a fulfilling role full of joys, learnings and challenges while living and working in a vibrant community. We invite you to discern if this fits for you. If it does – we want to meet you!

To Apply:

www.aechurch.org/search

Link to OTM for Ascension

The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim the good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for prisoners and recovery of the sight of the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised.

Luke 4:18

QR codes for the links embedded in the Parish Profile

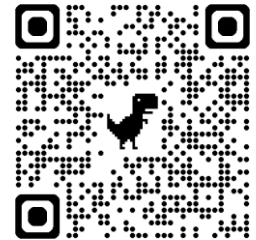
Ascension Financial Summary
August 2025 YTD



Staff and Vestry
organizational charts



2025 Ministry Opportunities
booklet



2024 Annual Report



Mission/Outreach at Ascension



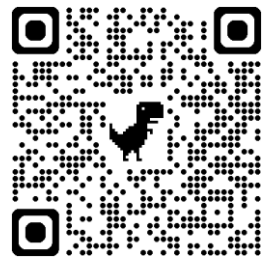
Ascension GROW Initiative



2024 Parochial Report



Erickson Plaza Brochure



2024 MMR final



Erickson Plaza Website



