



The Church of the Ascension Parish Profile

The Church of the Ascension is a diverse and welcoming Episcopal Church located in Chicago's vibrant Gold Coast neighborhood. Part of the worldwide Anglican Communion, we have been grounded since the 1880s in a rich Anglo-Catholic tradition in which we encounter God's abundant grace and love for us and for the world. Our worship is graced by a nationally known music program, excellent and probing preaching, and what many describe as transcendent liturgy. We also continue the widespread catholic practice of devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, both in feast-day observances and monthly recitation of the Holy Rosary in community.



Our principal Sunday liturgy is the 11 a.m. solemn high mass celebrated at our east-facing high altar. Three sacred ministers (celebrant, deacon, and sub-deacon), master of ceremonies, crucifer, thurifer, and torchbearers create the ethos that some have described as “timeless.” The minor propers are sung in Latin from the *Graduale Romanum* and a unique setting of the ordinary is sung by the choir each Sunday. God's presence is truly felt. It gives us the strength and courage to go out into the world to do the work we have been given to do.

A sung mass with sermon is offered Sundays at 9 a.m. with hymns and a congregational mass setting, with the organist/cantor



chanting the minor propers from *The English Gradual*. Low masses are celebrated each Wednesday evening, as well as on prayer book holy days. Solemn choral evensong and benediction preceded by a 30-minute organ recital is offered on the first Sunday of the month from Michaelmas to Corpus Christi. Stations of the Cross with music is offered every Friday during Lent. We pray the daily office through Zoom.



Our parish is both a destination and a neighborhood parish. It includes life-long Episcopalians as well as many young adults who are new to our worship. We are especially welcoming to the LGBTQIA+ community. We are a well-educated parish. We want a rector who will expand our Christian knowledge and experience.

As part of a commitment to our Anglo-Catholic heritage and the Oxford Movement, we reach out to our neighborhood. Our food pantry distributes food and personal items once a month to neighbors in need. We host 12-Step program meetings and an annual Thanksgiving dinner. We stream our masses for the benefit of those who cannot attend in person.



Our current staffing includes a full-time interim rector, a full-time curate and part-time sexton, parish administrator, organist, choirmaster, verger, bookkeeper, lay minister of communications and technology, and vestry-appointed treasurer. The choir, choirmaster, and the

organist are professional musicians of the highest caliber. Several retired clergy are part of our parish family and participate actively in liturgy and parish programs.



Ascension is located about a mile north of Chicago's Loop. The property includes the church building, parish hall (attached to the church), stand-alone rectory, coach house, a former convent, a parking lot, and Our Lady of Victory Garden, which is open to the public. Our next rector will be involved in determining the future of the former convent, now vacant. Developing a plan for its transformation looms large.



The Church of the Ascension enjoys the benefits of endowments graciously provided by our forebears. The endowments are professionally managed and significantly support the operating budget. We have no debt. Our 55 pledges and open offering is projected to be \$125,482 in 2022 which would contribute 10.4% to our projected operating income. The ongoing reliance on our financial endowments has tended to discourage pledging. We are looking for a rector who will help us work on improving stewardship. We will provide additional financial information to finalists.



The Church of the Ascension has a long history. It was founded in 1857 as a mission of St James Church (now the cathedral). Since 1869 the parish has been in the forefront of the Anglo-Catholic tradition in the Episcopal church. It is widely known for its excellent liturgies and its outstanding music. A written history of the parish can be found in the book entitled *History of the Church of the Ascension, Chicago, Illinois (1857-1982)*, by George C Giles, Jr.



We seek in our eighteenth rector a priest who is deeply spiritual; an engaging and thought-provoking homilist whose first priority is to serve God in a viable, well-established Anglo-Catholic parish and someone who will love the Church of the Ascension as we do.

More information about the Church of the Ascension can be found on our website at: <https://www.AscensionChicago.org>



CHURCH
OF THE
ASCENSION



The Episcopal Diocese of Chicago is geographically and culturally expansive. The diocese spans about half the area of Illinois, stretching from Lake Michigan to the Mississippi River, from the Wisconsin border nearly to St. Louis. Our 122 congregations are found in the city of Chicago, in the suburbs of Chicagoland, other Illinois cities like Peoria, Aurora, and Rockford, and many rural settings across the state.

The Episcopal Diocese of Chicago encompasses congregational vitality initiatives such as The College for Congregational Development, established Episcopal college ministries throughout the state, and a strong commitment to social witness, as expressed through the work of Episcopal Charities and Community Services, the social outreach arm of the diocese.

The Right Reverend Paula E. Clark became the thirteenth Bishop of Chicago in September 2022.

Interested candidates are asked to complete the diocese's Clergy Information Form for Transitions. Questions about the application process should be directed to The Reverend J. Sierra Reyes, Associate for Ministries. Sierra can be reached at jsreyes@episcopalchicago.org.