



Office for  
Transition  
Ministry

# Ministry Portfolio

*Full Portfolio (last updated May 12, 2025)*

## Church of the Ascension, Central Florida

4950 South Apopka-Vineland Road, Orlando, FL 32819, United States

Contact:

Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge | Receiving Names until 06/30/25.

[dsmith@cfdiocese.org](mailto:dsmith@cfdiocese.org)

Weekly Average Sunday  
Attendance (ASA)

**180**

Number of Weekend  
Worship Services

**2**

Number of Weekday  
Worship Services

Number of Other per Month  
Worship Services

**1**

Current Annual  
Compensation

Cash Stipend

Housing / Rectory Detail

Utilities

SECA reimbursement

Compensation Available for  
New Position

Housing Available for

Pension Plan

**We're in compliance with  
CPF requirements.**

Healthcare Options

**Full family**

Dental

**Yes**

Housing Equity Allowance in  
budget

**No**

Annual Equity Amount

Vacation Weeks

**Other**

Vacation Weeks Details

**2**

Continuing Education Weeks

**Other**

Continuing Education Weeks  
Details

Continuing Education  
Funding in budget

Sabbatical Provision

Travel/Auto Account

**Yes**

Other Professional Account

**Yes**

*No incumbent. Compensation per 2025 Diocesan guidelines and is negotiable.*

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Describe a moment in your worshipping community's recent ministry which you recognize as one of success and fulfillment.

A moment of success and fulfillment in our worshipping community has been the intentional rebuilding and strengthening of our church leadership following the pandemic and a year-long rector search. After welcoming our new rector, we worked together to create a mission statement that reflects our shared purpose and values. From there, we established a Rector's Council, inviting lay members to serve as part of a leadership team. This structure, along with our vestry, has empowered members of our congregation to take an active role in guiding the life and mission of the church, which has not only supported our strong ministries but also deepened our sense of community. Through this time of transition and growth, we have come together in worship, leadership, and fellowship, and we are proud of the collaborative spirit that has emerged and the foundation it provides for our future.

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How are you preparing yourselves for the Church of the future?

Our mission is to build and steward a vibrant and loving church community of all ages that: nurtures believers through biblical teaching, worships God with reverence and joy through historic liturgy, provides ample opportunities for spiritual growth and leadership development, impacts the world beyond our walls through compassionate service, and eagerly shares the good news of Jesus. We have established a Rector's Council comprised of church members who lead our parishioners in each aspect of our vision. The Council oversees and encourages reflection on the effectiveness of ministries and the goals of growth, service, and stewardship. Ongoing reflection and work have allowed the church to develop in all areas, including our online presence by making our services accessible through digital platforms and enhancing our website to be more user-friendly and engaging for newcomers. In the last five years, we have grown our children and youth programs, which we aim to continue along with multiple outreach and evangelism opportunities. Our future is continuing to develop as a Christ-centered, authentic environment that engages its parishioners in spiritual growth, service, and compassion.

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Please provide words describing the gifts and skills essential to the future leaders of your worshipping community.

Visionary leadership, inspirational preacher, bridge builder, Compassionate shepherd

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Describe your liturgical style and practice for all types of worship services provided by your community.

Our worship is grounded in the historic liturgy of the Church as found in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer, Rite II Holy Eucharist, which is used for both Sunday services. God's story is told as we praise, hear God's word, and gather at his table. Music plays a vital role in our worship. Sunday services are nearly identical with the balance of musical styles being the primary difference. The 8:15 service leans heavily on The Hymnal 1982 while 10:45 is a blend of hymns and praise music. In addition to our Sunday worship, special services guide us through the Church year. These include Advent Lessons and Carols, Christmas Eve, Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, and Good Friday. We also offer a monthly healing service sponsored by The Order of St. Luke (OSL), which features healing prayer for one another, teaching, and time of praise and worship. Our worship is supported by over 70 members of the congregation who serve in the altar guild, acolytes, lay readers, lay Eucharistic ministers, prayer ministry, music ministry, ushers and greeters. As we participate in worship, we hear God's story and are invited to become part of his mission to serve one another, our community, and the world.

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How do you practice incorporating others in ministry?

While respecting our clergy and sacramental ministry, we are not a clergy-dependent church. We have strong lay involvement in all services. Lectors, Lay Eucharistic Ministers, acolytes, music ministry members, ushers, greeters, Altar Guild members, and audio/visual operators assist during our services. Our children's ministry members provide spiritual education to our children and youth. Lay Eucharistic Visitors assist the clergy by taking sacraments to the homebound. Our Greeter Ministry, begun over 30 years ago, was reorganized and revitalized in 2008 and gave birth to our successful Newcomers Ministry. The Newcomers Ministry includes a program entitled Ascension 101, which leads to membership and participation in church ministries. Ministry vacancies are announced in church, in the online newsletter, and through word-of-mouth recruitment, and they are typically filled in a timely manner by volunteers. We have held successful ministry fairs, a spiritual gifts retreat, and have distributed individual spiritual gifts inventory booklets to increase church ministry interest and participation.

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As a worshipping community, how do you care for your spiritual, emotional and physical well-being?

Small home groups are a very successful ministry, achieving significant annual growth. This form of personal interaction has helped our congregation grow spiritually through studying Scripture and also emotionally and physically as we care for those experiencing hardships through prayer and fellowship. With typically a dozen or less participants, small groups create a space where people feel secure enough to be open and allow others into their personal lives. Many small home groups have been meeting for years, with members becoming more like family than just fellow congregants. Retreats, potluck dinners, newcomer dinners, annual picnics, and golf outings are some of the larger community events that help us meet the spiritual, emotional, and physical needs of our entire congregation. Additional ministries provide meaningful opportunities for connection and support. Our annual Advent Lessons and Carols service prepares us both spiritually and emotionally for the Christmas season. Meanwhile, our Memorial Garden offers a serene setting where parishioners can personally experience God's presence through prayer and meditation.

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How do you engage in pastoral care for those beyond your worshipping community?

Our mission is rooted in providing abundant opportunities for spiritual growth and leadership. We are proud of our “deep bench” — a dedicated clergy and pastoral care team who play a vital role in our worshipping community. Our Rector’s Council, composed of both lay members and clergy, supports the Rector in living out our mission and is instrumental in reaching out to the broader community as well as offering a range of services to meet the spiritual and practical needs of our congregation. These include weekly hospital and nursing home visits, directing individuals to counseling referrals, and providing pastoral care in times of need. In addition to their spiritual duties, our Deacons are attuned to the needs of our community, offering financial assistance through the discretionary fund and ensuring the safety and well-being of our community by providing Praesidium training for Safe Church-Safe Community, and reinforcing our commitment to protect the vulnerable among us. Looking ahead, the team is planning to offer monthly worship services at Brookdale Assisted Living Facility, ministering to those unable to attend our regular Sunday services.

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Describe your worshipping community’s involvement in either the wider Church or geographical region.

We are a church dedicated to serving our congregation and the community through outreach and compassionate ministry. Our campus is a welcoming space for several community groups. OSL has become a key part of our worship life with participants from multiple denominations across the United States. We support Harbor House, an organization committed to preventing and eliminating domestic abuse in Central Florida. Our chapter of The Order of the Daughters of the King collects food, baby items, and cleaning supplies to assist the food pantries of other local churches. We support I-Dignity, an organization that helps individuals obtain legal identification documents essential for accessing employment, housing, and healthcare. Our inaugural Timeless Treasures Rummage Sale was a fundraising success, providing financial support to individuals within our parish. Following the 2023 earthquake in southeastern Turkey, our church responded by supporting relief efforts. We contributed over \$4,500 to provide urgently needed essentials to approximately 100 families in Nurdağ. We also regularly organize clothing and donation drives to support underserved communities in Central America and Orlando.

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Tell about a ministry that your worshipping community has initiated in the past five years. Who can be contacted about this?

The OSL Healing Ministry was established and sponsored by our church five years ago. In the Lord’s perfect timing, this ministry has continued to grow by raising new leadership, expanding its membership, and extending healing opportunities beyond our church walls. An anointed worship team has provided a strong foundation, helping the ministry gain national and international recognition. We have received numerous testimonies of healing since the ministry’s inception, and for that, we give all praise to God. A retired clergy member currently serves as Chaplain for our OSL chapter.

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What is your practice of stewardship and how does it shape the life of your worshipping community?

This past year, our stewardship efforts focused intentionally on treasure—teaching that financial giving is an act of worship and obedience to God. We encouraged our congregation to see their gifts as a faithful response to God's provision, emphasizing that stewardship is not about meeting a budget but about returning a portion of what God has generously given to us. Our stewardship message was shared clearly and consistently through parish announcements, letters, and personal testimonials during worship services in the weeks leading up to Consecration Sunday. Families were invited to prayerfully consider their financial pledges as an expression of gratitude, and we provided opportunities for online giving and planned gifts as part of that commitment. We were grateful to experience a very positive response, which affirmed that when we focus stewardship on the spiritual practice of giving—rooted in thanksgiving and trust in God—our community responds with generosity and joy.

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What is your worshipping community's experience of conflict? And how have you addressed it?

Our worshipping community has experienced challenges in recent years, including the departure of a rector and the separation of a plant mission church amidst the disruptions of COVID-19. The combination of these events tested our resilience, yet Church of the Ascension remained steadfast in our commitment to maintaining our core community. Throughout this period, we focused on nurturing relationships, supporting one another, and ensuring that our parish remained a place of faith and belonging. Rather than allowing these challenges to weaken our congregation, they ultimately strengthened our foundation in advance of the arrival of our most recent rector. With his leadership and the strengthened foundation of our congregation, our community ultimately grew stronger together in faith and numbers, of which we are very proud.

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What is your experience leading/addressing change in the church? When has it gone well? When has it gone poorly? And what did you learn?

The pandemic forced Ascension to evaluate how our community comes together. From the start, clergy and staff began creating contingencies, establishing and maintaining constant communication with the parishioners. Worship was moved to a virtual platform, evolving from a single camera to multiple angles. Additional offerings were created such as virtual dinners and prayer groups. Focus groups of vestry and ministry heads were brought together to strategically implement in-person worship in a safe and socially distanced manner. Clergy created videos to share how the reopening would take place, personally walking the parishioners through what to expect. Task teams were formed to maintain new policies and provide assistance each Sunday. Through much thought and grace, the church was reopened in May of 2020 while continuing to incorporate and improve the virtual aspect. As our in-person attendance increases, additional plans are in place to engage our congregation. Though God's Word is never changing, the way in which the message is delivered is infinite. We will be here to help our new rector take Ascension to the next level, regardless of barriers, real or perceived.



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### Prior Incumbents

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
The Rev. Ryan Cook	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	2022-08	2025-01

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
The Rev. James Sorvillo	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge	2003-08	2021-01

Name	Position Title	Date Begun	Date Ended
The Rev. Ronald Hooks	Rector / Vicar / Priest-in-Charge (Part-time)	1985-01	2002-07

Church School	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Children School	Number of Students for Children School
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Number of Teachers/Leaders for Teen/Young Adults School	Number of Students for Teen/Young Adults School	Number of Teachers/Leaders for Adults School	Number of Students for Adults School
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Day School	Number of Students for Day School	Number of Teachers for Day School	Number of Total Staff for Day School
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Worshipping Community Web site: <https://ascension-orlando.org/>

Media Links:

Online References:

> <https://www.youtube.com/@ascensionorlando>  
> <https://www.facebook.com/ascensionorlando>

Languages Significantly Represented:

Provide Worship or Classes in:

### References

Bishop:

**The Rt. Rev. Dr. Justin S.  
Holcomb**

Diocesan Transition Minister  
**Canon Dan Smith**

Phone: 407-206-4426 Email: dsmith@cfdiocese.org

Current Warden/Board Chair

**Mrs. Rebecca Bass**

Phone: 407-797-9829 Email: beckie1762@gmail.com

Previous Warden/Board Chair

Search Chair

**Mr. Clayton Williams**

Phone: 850-324-3396 Email: clayton.m.williams@gmail.com

Parish/Institution

Local Community Leader