



ANGLICAN  
CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

1476 SPARKS STREET  
SUDBURY, ONTARIO  
P3A 2E1  
CANADA



The Church of the Ascension sits just at the edge of the bustling heart of New Sudbury, literally around the corner from the city's largest shopping mall, and across the street from the back entrance of a Tim Horton's coffee shop. It is not too much of a stretch to conceive that the Ascension's physical location is a metaphor for the way by which Christ waits for each of us—so often consumed and distracted by the pressures and distractions of daily life—to suddenly come upon Him already in our midst, to discover what has always been there, to open our hearts to His constant presence, and through that discovery begin to explore His love and purpose for us as individuals and as a community.

Founded in 1954 as the "New Sudbury Mission", the Ascension's present physical location was established in 1958 and dedicated in 1959. The Year of Our Lord 2024 shall mark, by God's grace, the parish's 70th anniversary. In addition to a multi-purpose Sanctuary, the Church building has a fellowship hall, kitchen, Vestry Office, separate board room, Chapel, and nursery. The Church building meets physical accessibility standards and is up-to-date in terms of renovations and repairs.

Our missional objectives, taken from the Diocese of Algoma, are to share in the gathering work of Christ so that His newness of life overflows into our hearts, homes, churches, and community. Sunday mornings are observed with two services of Holy Eucharist, the second service with a choir, children's ministry, and nursery, typically using the liturgical forms provided by the *Book of Alternative Services* and with the last Sunday of the month using the *Book of Common Prayer* instead. A mid-week Eucharist is usually offered on Wednesday mornings, and more recently services of Morning and Evening Prayer from the *BCP* have been offered by the lay readers on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sunday evenings. A bible study (with coffee and treats) typically follows the Wednesday morning Eucharist, and in the Fall and Spring the Ascension has sought to provide additional faith-based community learning opportunities such as Alpha, Lenten studies, or other topical seminars. The Ascension has enjoyed close relations with Thorneloe University, and past presidents of Thorneloe have served as honorary clergy and as interim incumbents of the parish.

Presently, 350 individuals are on our parish roll, representing a body of people from all walks of life, social and cultural backgrounds, and faith traditions and experiences. We are blessed to be a multigenerational community, with grandparents and grandchildren attending services together, and with several large young families that have grown and are growing still in the faith community that surrounds them. We are one of the few parishes in Sudbury still seeing a strong demand and high participation in regular children's ministry, and biannually have been able to offer Catechism and Confirmation to both youth and adults seeking to grow in their Anglican faith. The Godly Play programme forms the bedrock of our Sunday morning children's ministry from Fall through Spring, supplemented with broader community outreach through monthly Messy Church services. In the summer, Ascension is one of two key Deanery loci for Vacation Bible School.

Outreach at the Ascension includes programmes aimed at feeding the homeless or those in need through the city-wide, multi-denominational "Out of the Cold" initiative, whose modified mandate during the recent pandemic saw members of the Ascension prepare and deliver 1000 meals during the Winter and Spring of 2021. Our Indigenous Relations committee has worked with local elders, speakers, and writers to facilitate seminars, workshops, and blanket exercises, aiming to answer the TRC's "calls to action" and to examine ways of repairing and restoring damaged relationships. Pastoral visiting is a significant component of outreach at the Ascension, with the incumbent assisted by a dedicated committee that helps bring Home Communion, visits those in retirement homes or nursing facilities, prepares meals and helps with cleaning for those who are ill or in need, and maintains a parish prayer chain.

The ACW has a strong presence in the parish, hosting two fundraising teas annually, and is a key component in co-ordinating support services for funerals; a large and knowledgeable Altar Guild provides additional support and preparatory assistance to the incumbent for all services. We have a dedicated music director, who plays at one service on Sunday mornings and at all other key festivals and occasions, and who arranges practices with the choir and cantors. A dedicated Property committee is overseen by the Wardens. The Parish Life committee schedules luncheons and suppers (including Shrove Tuesday), fundraisers, dances, games- and fellowship- nights, clothing swaps, Christmas outreach baskets for seniors, shut-ins, and those in need, and two large yard sale fundraisers in the Spring and Fall. Recently, one of the lay readers has begun a Youth Ministry initiative, aimed at keeping teenagers and young adults engaged in their faith journey through the Church.

Financially, the Ascension is a stable and solvent parish, with a targeted average annual budget over the last three years of \$160,000.00. Revenues in 2018 and 2020 did not wholly meet this budget, while it was exceeded in 2019, resulting in an average shortfall of 2% over the three year period. Envelope offerings

represent the most significant single source of revenue, and we have noticed a downward trend over the last five years in the amounts collected. Over the last three years, envelope returns have been 7% short of budget targets. Other streams of revenue have off-set and compensated for this shortfall, with fundraisers/targeted appeals, and building space rentals averaging 108% and 139% above budget expectations, respectively. Consistently, expenses have come in under budget during this period, 1.3% on average, allowing the parish to maintain a modest surplus from year to year as contingency against emergencies. (During the COVID-19 pandemic period, the Canada Emergency Response Benefit has greatly helped to offset deficits imposed by restrictions on gatherings that underpin both fundraising activities and building rentals). Nevertheless, diminishing offerings represent a serious stewardship challenge to the parish; Board and Vestry appeals and presentations, sermons focussing on financial stewardship, and innovative fundraisers have had some short-term success in moving the revenue trend in a positive direction, but the social and financial instabilities apparent in the upheaval of the COVID-19 pandemic have proved disruptive to determining whether any long-term change has yet been effected.

The Ascension owns a house and property which have served as rectory to several incumbents; where incumbents have preferred or been able to maintain their own place of residence, the rectory has been leased to tenants and rental revenues translated to a living allowance for the incumbent.

Spiritually, the Church of the Ascension stands poised to move forward from the periphery of its physical location fully into the heart of the city, the nation, and the world that surrounds it—ready to become what Christ needs it to be: a faithful minister and supporter of His flock, a witness to His presence and love, a servant to those in need, and a reflection of His light amongst a people desperately waiting to see it.

Church of the Ascension website:

[| Diocese of Algoma, Anglican Church of Canada \(churchoftheascensionsudbury.com\)](http://Diocese of Algoma, Anglican Church of Canada (churchoftheascensionsudbury.com))

Publically-posted Annual Vestry Report, 2020

[Annual Vestry Report | \(churchoftheascensionsudbury.com\)](http://Annual Vestry Report | (churchoftheascensionsudbury.com))

Publically-posted Annual Vestry Report, 2019

[2019 Vestry Report | \(churchoftheascensionsudbury.com\)](http://2019 Vestry Report | (churchoftheascensionsudbury.com))

Church of the Ascension on Facebook:

[The Church of the Ascension - Anglican | Facebook](http://The Church of the Ascension - Anglican | Facebook)

Church of the Ascension on Instagram:

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