

Ascension Alliance

COMMUNITY OF ASCENSIONISTS

AN ECUMENICAL PART OF THE MYSTICAL BODY OF CHRIST
ONE, HOLY, CATHOLIC, AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH

Information Packet

Spirituality is a renewable Resource

**PRESIDING BISHOP
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**MAILING ADDRESS: PO Box 167
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**ASCENSIONALLIANCE.ORG
(253) 961-9775**

INTRODUCTION

The Ascension Alliance is both a mystical movement and “free” Catholic Church – without ceiling, walls, or affiliation with any other ecclesiastical body. Emerging from a small mission community it strives to be a spiritual “stagecoach stop” for pilgrims and small faith communities called and gathered for the opportunity to experience spiritual renewal, maximum self-determination, and fellowship with like-minded sojourners. The Community of Ascensionists is a religious congregation of the Ascension Alliance—part of the one Mystical Body of Christ, a Church, umbrella organization, and expression of God’s mystical movement of Spirit.

We are born of a free Catholic vision, in the tradition of a fledgling Independent Catholic movement, inspired by the intuitions of the Emerging Church, and following the example of the Jewish Renewal movement. However, we are really part of a much larger stirring of Spirit that beckons us to transcend old ways that no longer work and ascend to higher levels of consciousness and spiritual living. To use a metaphor from New Testament scripture: Don’t put new wine into old wineskins.

In keeping with the wisdom of spiritual reflection, we can say we are open to exploring new insights in conversation with and respect for ancient traditions.

If your own Spirit resonates with what you’re reading, perhaps you’re already part of the ASCENSION vision and didn’t realize it.

We call our movement “Free” Catholic to emphasize our aspiration to seek truth and gain spiritual knowledge, free from the encumbrances of dogma, while honoring and rooting ourselves in the apostolic tradition.

We say we are a Church in the tradition of a fledgling Independent Catholic movement because we emerged from it and trace our apostolic succession through it. Apostolic succession is the tradition through which bishops trace their sacerdotal authority from their consecration by bishops who were themselves consecrated by bishops, going back in succession to the apostles, who were themselves called by Jesus Christ. See complete table at end.

Independent Catholic churches are Catholic congregations that are not in communion with the Roman Catholic Church, but which claim valid apostolic succession for their bishops. Bishops in Independent Catholic Churches are sometimes referred to as “episcopi vagantes” (wandering bishops) because of their lack of affiliation with a larger communion of churches.

The Emerging Church is a Christian movement of the late 20th and early 21st century that crosses a number of theological boundaries: participants can be described as evangelical, post-evangelical, liberal, post-liberal, charismatic, neo-charismatic and post-charismatic. Participants seek to live their faith in what they believe to be a "postmodern" society.

Proponents of the Emerging Church movement call it a "conversation" to emphasize its developing and decentralized nature, its vast range of standpoints and its commitment to dialogue. What those involved in the conversation mostly agree on is their disillusionment with the organized and institutional church and their support for the deconstruction of modern Christian worship, modern evangelism, and the nature of modern Christian community.

When we were forming our new organization we went looking for examples of how we could honor our tradition but respond creatively to the needs of today's world. We found it in Jewish Renewal.

The term Jewish Renewal describes a set of practices within Judaism that attempt to reinvigorate Judaism with mystical, Hasidic, musical and meditative practices drawn from a variety of traditional and untraditional sources. The inspiration of Jewish Renewal is credited to Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, a Hasidic-trained rabbi ordained in the Lubavitch movement, who broke with Orthodox Judaism beginning in the 1960s.

Jewish Renewal brings kabbalistic and Hasidic theory and practice into a non-Orthodox, egalitarian framework. Renewal Jews often add ecstatic practices such as meditation, chant, and dance to traditional forms of worship. They borrow freely and openly from other traditions, such as Buddhism and Sufism.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Ascension Alliance is incorporated in the State of Washington as a Church. We are recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a tax-exempt Church under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. We have also been granted a group exemption letter from the IRS so that affiliated ministries can take advantage of the tax-exempt status of our central organization.

We are episcopal, in that the Church is headed by a Presiding Bishop, our spiritual leader, and a CEO, who handles administrative affairs. Together they lead the Church in consultation with a Board of Governors and a Council of Bishops. Membership in the Board is open to both clergy members and lay persons. All validly consecrated bishops who have been duly incarnated into or

approved for consecration within our organization are members of the Council of Bishops. We have adopted a set of by-laws, as well as an ethics policy, which all affiliated ministries are bound by. Copies are available on request.

LITERATURE

We accept sacred scripture and Church tradition in conversation with lived experience as a guide to living. In addition to the books of the canonical bible and the deuterocanonical literature, our Church is building its foundation on two unique texts: *A Free Catholicism for the Third Millennium: An Introduction to The Ascension Alliance* and *A Free Catholic Concise Liturgy and Other Useful Writings*.

We have been granted the author's permission to make use of an edited version of *A Free Catholicism for the Third Millennium: An Introduction to The Ascension Alliance*. Authored by Rev. Thomas J. Hickey, Ph.D. and edited by Most Rev. Alan R. Kemp, D.Min, it serves as a summary of our charism, philosophy, and beliefs. .

We are also committed to both personal praxis and community celebration. We want our clergy to have a firm grounding in traditional liturgy but also be able to creatively respond to the needs of today's world. The text, *A Free Catholic Concise Liturgy and Other Useful Writings*, is based on the Liturgy of the Liberal Catholic Church and other sources and was edited by Most Rev. Alan R. Kemp, D.Min. It serves as a guide, not requirement, for liturgical practice.

ASCENSION THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

Ascension Theological College, our seminary, provides training and education to persons who feel called to ordained or non-ordained ministry. The college confers lawful degrees through the religious-exempt status granted by the Washington Student Achievement Council for its Bachelor of Divinity, Master of Divinity, Master of Pastoral Counseling, Master of Spirituality, Master of Theological Studies, and Doctor of Ministry degree programs. For more detailed information, please see the college's catalog, which is available in pdf format from our website or on request by snail mail.

CURRENT LEADERSHIP

**REV. MSGR. CAROL CALVERT, ARCHPRIEST, GENERAL ASSEMBLY
REPRESENTATIVE TO THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

**MOST REV. HOWARD DUGAN, D.D., BISHOP; PERMANENT MEMBER, BOARD OF
GOVERNORS**

**MOST REV. BERNIE FINCH, D.C., BISHOP; PERMANENT MEMBER, BOARD OF
GOVERNORS**

**MOST REV. ROBERTO FOSS, D.D., J.D., PRESIDING BISHOP; MEMBER, BOARD
OF GOVERNORS**

MOST REV. PATSY GRUBBS, D.D., PRESIDING BISHOP EMERITA; PERMANENT MEMBER, BOARD OF GOVERNORS
MOST REV. ALAN R. KEMP, D.MIN, FOUNDER AND FIRST PRESIDING BISHOP; ARCHBISHOP; CEO; PERMANENT MEMBER, BOARD OF GOVERNORS

MEMBERSHIP

We do not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, sex, or sexual orientation. We require rigorous preparation for ordained ministry but encourage maximum self-determination and a creative response to the needs of today's world.

CLERGY MEMBERS. Anyone already ordained or consecrated in apostolic succession can apply for "incardination" into our organization. Discernment about the appropriateness of fit is a matter for both the applicant and Ascension. We require proof of prior ordination and valid apostolic succession.

We ask recognized clergy in our organization for a modest annual clergy tithe.

Clergy persons ordained without apostolic succession may apply for admission to our non-residential ordination program, a highly decentralized program of study that prepares persons for ordained and non-ordained ministry. For persons ordained in other traditions, we look at prior learning as well as the knowledge, values, and skills we believe are necessary for the practice of a creative ministry. A separate information packet is available from Ascension Theological College.

LAY MEMBERS. Any lay person associated with an incardinated clergy person or participating in an affiliated ministry is considered a member of the Ascension movement. In addition, anyone interested in becoming an individual member of the Ascension organization may do so for a modest annual tithe.

MINISTRIES. Any ordained or non-ordained person in our organization may apply for a charter for their ministry. Affiliated ministries become eligible to participate in the tax-exempt status of the parent organization. All are bound by our ethics policy. Chartered affiliated ministries must adopt their own by-laws and have at least three officers. We ask them to make a nominal contribution to the Ascension organization.

BACKGROUND CHECKS

Applicants for incardination and ordination may be asked to undergo a criminal and child protective background check to determine their suitability for ministry. On a case-by-case basis, they may be asked to undergo a psychological evaluation. Expenses for background checks and/or psychological evaluation shall be the responsibility of the applicant.

SPIRITUAL DIRECTION

We encourage our clergy to have an ongoing formal relationship with a spiritual director to offer fellowship, spiritual direction, guidance, and consultation.

TITHES & FEES

The following are the annual tithes and fees for those wishing a formal affiliation with Ascension–Alliance for Spiritual Renewal.

INDIVIDUAL MEMBER – ANNUAL TITHE: \$25

CLERGY INCARDINATION – APPLICATION FEE: \$25 (WILL BE APPLIED TO SUGGESTED ANNUAL TITHE)

CLERGY MEMBER – ANNUAL TITHE: \$50

CHARTERED MINISTRY

The Ascension Alliance is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt Church and has been granted a group exemption letter from the IRS. The group exemption letter provides a way for Chartered Ministries to participate in the tax-exempt status of the central organization.

“PLANK HOLDER” OR “LIFETIME” CHARTER: The first ten ministries to apply were granted a “plank holder” or “lifetime” Charter.

REGULAR CHARTER: New charter applicants are assessed \$153 annual tithe. Payment of the first year must accompany the Charter Agreement.

*Note: All charter holders are exempt from annual clergy tithes.

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MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. Box 167, VAUGHN, WA 98394
E-MAIL: COSMAS@CONCENTRIC.NET + PHONE: (253) 961-9775

Application: Individual Membership

NAME: _____ SSN: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____ D.O.B. _____

HOME PHONE: _____ CELL PHONE: _____

OTHER PHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____

AFFINITY. Briefly describe your interest in our movement (not required).

PARTICIPATION IN AFFILIATED MINISTRIES. Briefly summarize your associations with any affiliated ministries.

INTERESTS. Do you have any special projects or ministries you'd like to work on? If so, please briefly describe.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Please provide any additional relevant information you'd like to share on separate attached sheets.

ANNUAL TITHE: \$25

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Clergy Incardination Application

NAME: _____ SSN: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____ D.O.B. _____

HOME PHONE: _____ CELL PHONE: _____

OTHER PHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____

PREVIOUS CHURCH AFFILIATIONS. Briefly describe your previous church affiliations.

ORDINATION INFORMATION. Briefly summarize your previous ordination information, including ordaining/consecrating bishop and the apostolic succession of the group.

GRADUATE EDUCATION: Briefly describe your graduate education and include unofficial transcripts)

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION: Briefly describe your theological education and include unofficial transcripts)

SPIRITUAL JOURNEY: Please provide a brief description of your spiritual journey (approximately 5 pages). Be sure to tell us how your journey has led you to our door.)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Please provide any additional relevant information on separate attached sheets.

APPLICATION FEE: \$25 (Will be applied to Suggested Annual Tithe upon Incardination)

SUGGESTED ANNUAL TITHE: \$50

BACKGROUND CHECK FEE: TBA

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Chartered Ministry (Separate Charter Agreement Required)

NAME OF MINISTRY: _____

NAME OF CLERGY LEADER: _____

OFFICER #2: _____

OFFICER #3: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

HOME PHONE: _____ CELL PHONE: _____

OTHER PHONE: _____ E-MAIL: _____

MINISTRY DESCRIPTION. Briefly describe your ministry in terms of services, activities, and interests.

BY-LAWS. Please provide a copy of your by-laws.

ETHICS POLICIES: By applying for a charter as an affiliated ministry you and your ministry agree to abide by our Ethics and Conflict-of-Interest policies.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Please provide any additional relevant information on separate attached sheets.

[] ANNUAL CHARTER: \$153 annual tithe

APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION

Apostolic succession is the term used to describe the transmission of sacerdotal authority from Jesus Christ to the apostles and from them to the bishops of the Church. Successive generations of bishops pass on apostolic succession, from bishop to bishop, in an unbroken line of consecrations (special ordinations) down to the present time.

The Ascension Alliance derives its apostolic succession through several lineages, including from the Roman Catholic, Old Catholic, and Syrian Orthodox churches. While there has been a strong oral tradition from the very beginnings of the Christian Church, it was not until the sixteenth century when the Roman Catholic Church began to keep written records of these consecrations. We trace our principal western, Roman Catholic, line of succession from this source. See below.

ROMAN CATHOLIC LINE

The first recorded Roman Catholic lineage begins on 12 March 1566 with Cardinal Scipione Rebiba.

CARDINAL SCIPIONE REBIBA, Roman Catholic Bishop of Troia, consecrated

GIULIO ANTONIO SANTORIO, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Santa Severina, who on 7 September 1586 consecrated

GIROLAMO BERNERIO, O.P., Roman Catholic Bishop of Ascoli Piceno who on 4 April 1604 consecrated

GALEAZZO SANVITALE, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Bari, who on 2 May 1621 consecrated

LUDOVICO LUDOVISI, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Bologna who on 12 June 1622 consecrated

LUIGI CAETANI, Roman Catholic Titular Patriarch of Antioch who on 7 October 1630 consecrated Giovanni Battista Scannaroli, Roman Catholic Titular Bishop of Sidon who on 24 October 1655 consecrated

ANTONIO BARBERINI (the younger), Roman Catholic Bishop of Frascati who on 11 November 1668 consecrated

CHARLES MAURICE LE TELLIER, Roman Catholic Bishop of Mieux, who on 21 September 1670 consecrated

JAQUES BENIGNE BOUSSUET, who on 24 October 1693 consecrated Jaques Goyon De Matigon, who on 18 February 1719 consecrated

DOMINICUS MARIE VARLET, Roman Catholic Bishop of Babylon.

OLD CATHOLIC LINE

The Old Catholic lineage begins on 17 October 1739, when Dominicus Marie Varlet consecrated

PETRUS MEINDAERTS, Old Catholic Archbishop of Utrecht, who on 11 July 1745 consecrated

JOHANNES VAN STIPHOUT, Old Catholic Bishop of Harrlem, who on 7 February 1768 consecrated

GUALTERUS MICHAEL VAN NIEUWENHUIZEN, Old Catholic Archbishop of Utrecht, who on 21 June 1778 consecrated

ADRIANUS JOHANNES BROEKMAN, Old Catholic Bishop of Harrlem, who on 5 July 1797 consecrated

JOHANNES JACOBUS VAN RHIJN, Old Catholic Archbishop of Utrecht, who on 7 November 1805 consecrated

GILBERT CORNELIUS DE JONG, Old Catholic Bishop of Deventer, who on 24 April 1814 consecrated

WILLIBORD VAN OS, Old Catholic Archbishop of Utrecht, who on 25 April 1819 consecrated

JOHANNES BON, Old Catholic Bishop of Haarlem, who on 13 November 1824 consecrated

JOHANNES VAN SANTEN, Old Catholic Archbishop of Utrecht, who on 17 July 1854 consecrated

HERMANUS HEIJKAMP, Old Catholic Bishop of Deventer, who on 11 August 1873 consecrated

CASPARUS JOHANNES RINKEL, Old Catholic Bishop of Haarlem, who on 11 May 1892 consecrated

GERARD GUL, Old Catholic Archbishop of Utrecht, who on 28 April 1908 consecrated

ARNOLD HARRIS MATHEW, Old Catholic Bishop for Great Britain.

INDEPENDENT CATHOLIC LINE

The Independent Catholic lineage begins on 28 October 1914 when Arnold Harris Mathew consecrated

FREDERICK SAMUEL WILLOUGHBY, who on 13 February 1916 consecrated

JAMES INGALL WEDGWOOD, Presiding Bishop of the Liberal Catholic Church, who on 13 July 1919 consecrated

IRVING STEIGER COOPER, Liberal Catholic Regional Bishop for the United States, who on 13 September 1931 consecrated

CHARLES H. HAMPTON, Liberal Catholic Regional Bishop for the United States, who on 22 June 1957 consecrated

HERMAN ADRIAN SPRUIT, who became Archbishop-Patriarch of the Church of Antioch (Catholic Apostolic Church of Antioch, Malabar Rite), who on 7 October 1980 consecrated

MERI LOUISE SPRUIT, Bishop of the Church of Antioch (Catholic Apostolic Church of Antioch, Malabar Rite) who was enthroned as Archbishop-Matriarch on 26 January 1986, who on 27 October 1990 consecrated

RICHARD ALSTON GUNDREY, Bishop of the Church of Antioch (Catholic Apostolic Church of Antioch), who was elevated to Patriarch-Presiding Archbishop on February 19, 2005.

ASCENSION LINE

The Ascension lineage begins on 21 October 2006 when Richard Alston Gundrey consecrated

ALAN RICHARD KEMP, Bishop for the Diocese of the Northwest (Catholic Apostolic Church of Antioch), who became the Interim Presiding Bishop of the Church of Antioch on 26 January 2009, who founded the Ascension Alliance on November 5, 2009, and who became its first Presiding Bishop.

[Archbishop Kemp's co-consecrators were Bishop Paul Clemens and Bishop Kera Hamilton.

Bishop Paul Clemens was consecrated in 1988 by Archbishop Herman Adrian Spruit.

Bishop Kera Hamilton was consecrated in 2005 by Archbishop Richard Alston Gundrey.]

Archbishop **ALAN RICHARD KEMP** consecrated the following individuals:

BERNIE ORDERS FINCH on 29 August 2010 at the Little Chapel of St. Thomas, the Doubter, at the Hermitage on Key Peninsula, Gig Harbor, WA 98329.

[Bishop Finch's coconsecrators were Most Rev. Howard Dugan, Most Rev. Patsy Grubbs, and Most Rev. Dale Caldwell.]

RANDAL DAVID GILLEN on 18 November 2010 at the Little Chapel of St. Thomas, the Doubter, at the Hermitage on Key Peninsula, Gig Harbor, WA 98329.

[Bishop Gillen's coconsecrators were Most Rev. Patsy Grubbs, Most Rev. Daniel Dangan, Most Rev. Jorge Eagar, and Most Rev. Roberto Foss]

Archbishop **PATSY GRUBBS** was elected Presiding Bishop on 25 August 2012 and was installed in this office during a pontifical celebration of the Holy Eucharist on 26 August 2012 by Most Rev. Alan Richard Kemp.

Archbishop **PATSY GRUBBS** consecrated the following individuals:

DOUGLAS L. WALKER on 22 March 2015 during the pontifical celebration of the Holy Eucharist at the Loretto Chapel, Santa Fe, NM.

[Bishop Walker's co-consecrators were Most Rev. Alan R. Kemp, Most Rev. Richard Gundrey, and Most Rev. Daniel Dangan.]

DEIRDRE BROUSSEAU and **SANDRA OLSON** on 12 September 2015 during the pontifical celebration of the Holy Eucharist at Convocation 2015, Seabeck Conference Center, Seabeck, WA.

[Bishop Brousseau and Bishop Olson's co-consecrators were Most Rev. Alan R. Kemp and Most Rev. Anastasia Voyatidjes.]

Archbishop **ROBERTO FOSS** was elected Presiding Bishop on 12 September 2015 and was installed in this office during a pontifical celebration of the Holy Eucharist on 13 September 2015 by Most Rev. Patsy Grubbs and Most Rev. Alan Richard Kemp.