

Profiles for Warden and Vestry Candidates

Candidate For Warden: Class of 2018

Maurice J. Seaton

Candidates for Vestry One for Class of 2018 Four for Class 2019

Carolyn "Susie" Braden
Stacey M. Carpenter
Joan Castagnone
Chrysanthi Fairchild
Janet Fisher
Elizabeth Garvin
Winnie Lok



For Warden



Maurice J. Seaton

Member of Ascension since 2008

Occupation:

Certified Fundraiser (CFRE) and Senior Consultant for the Episcopal Church Foundation

Activities at Ascension:

- Current member of Vestry (2015 to present), former Vestry member (2010-12)
- Chair of Ascension Planned Giving Committee
- Member of parish three Committees: Stewardship, Welcome, Capital Campaign
- Lector and Prayer Leader
- Liaison for the marketing/sale of Columbarium niches at Ascension

Activities in the Episcopal Church and Community:

- Current member of the Education for Ministry (EfM) Group meeting at Ascension
- Former Head of the Capital Campaign Fundraising Division at the Episcopal Church Foundation, where I worked with a broad spectrum of congregations throughout the country on fundraising, leadership and congregational issues
- Member of the Diocese of New York's Congregational Support Plan Committee (2005-2012), where I learned about the issues facing churches in the Diocese
- Previously served on the Vestry of an upstate church, and on the vestry of a church and a cathedral in South Africa, and am familiar with the role and responsibilities of vestries

What drew me to Ascension?

The dedication and warmth of the people was immediately evident. I found friendship, spiritual sustenance and opportunities to grow. At Ascension there is supportive clergy and a nurturing congregation I am proud to call my parish family.

What are Ascension's greatest strengths?

Beautiful and grounding worship and liturgy.
Magnificent music, inspiring preaching and faithful pastoral care.
Kind, open minded, and talented parishioners.

What is my vision for Ascension?

- Together with the vestry and clergy create, and live into, a new and bold vision for the future of Ascension now that our new rector is in place
- Develop and expand the ministries and programs to our neighborhood and those we serve, including to the new residents of the former St. Vincent's
- Eliminate the budget deficit by (a) increasing rental income (b) increasing the number of persons pledging (c) increasing the average pledge amount
- Establish a Legacy Society and increasing Planned Giving

Skills, experiences and talents I bring with me:

- Fundraising skills and experience
- Leadership experience in episcopal organizations
- High energy to translate vision and ideas into results
- The ability to listen and prayerfully consider all points of view, in confidence
- The willingness to admit when I am wrong and to navigate difficult issues with sensitivity, even in the midst of profound differences
- Significant experience working with the Diocese, the national church, and the Anglican Communion

For Vestry



Carolyn "Susie" Braden

Member of Ascension since 1983

Occupation:

Executive Secretary, Department of Neurology, Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center (MSKCC)

Activities at Ascension:

Lay Reader - I have been an active lay reader for many years in the parish, and in the past I've been an evening prayer leader. I have assisted and participated in many parish events including Lenten and Advent Quiet days. I have a good deal of church choir involvement both as a singer and parish choir coordinator. I was a member of the volunteer parish choir this past summer. This past year I was privileged to be on the canvassing committee for the 2016 pledge drive.

Activities in the Episcopal Church and Community:

I have had two spiritual retreats this past year to Holy Cross Monastery which were extremely beneficial. I have been active in several MSKCC volunteer fundraising events and also do coordination of numerous celebratory events within that community. In the past I was on the board of directors of my Hudson Heights Co-op and served as an officer for several years. I was a board member and officer with Voices of Ascension for many years.

What drew me to Ascension?

Music, liturgy and community.

What are Ascension's greatest strengths?

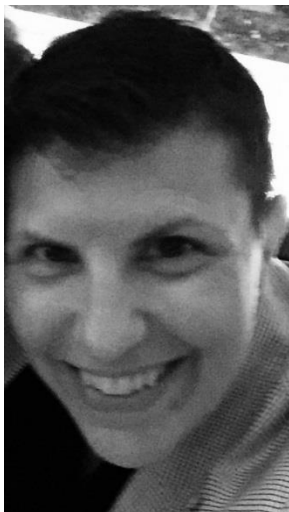
Music & liturgy, a stunningly beautiful space within which to worship, a diverse membership, a stimulating and supportive community and strong desire to strengthen the mission of Ascension.

What is my vision for Ascension?

I believe Ascension is at an exciting and pivotal time in its life as a parish. I hope to see further growth in our membership as well as greater fiscal support with increased pledging and other supportive measures. I believe the guidance of our new Rector and our incredibly strong and loyal parish community working together will enable us to embrace new ideas, increase and renew our spiritual strength and energy.

Skills, experiences and talents I bring with me:

Discernment; worship leader; evangelism; the ability to balance ideas and opinions via confidential communication within the vestry body. The two retreats over this past year have aided my spiritual growth and commitment to service in our church. I love this parish and would consider it a great honor and privilege to serve as a vestry member.



Stacey M. Carpenter

Member of Ascension since 2012

Occupation:

Client Director, Optum Relationship Office

Activities at Ascension:

- Serving as an acolyte
- Serving on the Altar Guild
- Teaching Sunday School
- Healing Prayer ministry
- Spiritual Development committee chair

Activities in the Episcopal Church and Community:

- Hold the service position of Group representative in a 12 step recovery based community
- Am a culture ambassador as part of my leadership role at Optum
- Participant in EfM program
- Coordinate social responsibility events at work

What drew me to Ascension?

I was looking for an Episcopal church and knew of Ascension through its community efforts.

What are Ascension's greatest strengths?

The people – parishioners and clergy, music program, historical importance in NYC, location.

What is my vision for Ascension?

That the Holy Spirit continues to guide Ascension to look for new and innovative ways to be God's hands; that Ascension is known as a place for its outreach and service in the Village, greater NYC, and globally.

That Ascension becomes as close to 100% self-supporting as possible and does not need to draw on its endowment.

Skills, experiences and talents I bring with me:

I have a 20+ year career in corporate America. I have leadership, project management, training/education and process expertise. Additionally, over the past 10 years, I have spent time in other church homes and will be able to bring learnings/fresh ideas to Ascension as we look for ways to form a deeper connection with the people of NYC.



Joan Castagnone

Member of Ascension since 2013

Occupation:

Writer/Editor. Retired from Church Pension Group (Communications) /Church Publishing (Acquisitions editor)

Activities at Ascension:

Registrar

Usher/Participation in Open Doors

Volunteer at Voices of Ascension Concerts

Occasional office back-up

Activities in the Episcopal Church and Community:

I worked with the Church Pension Group for seven years as Vice President/Management Services, a small department responsible for communications, event planning, and trustee coordination. For four years, I worked as an acquiring editor for Church Publishing.

I attended and helped to coordinate the Church Pension Group presence at three General Conventions.

Planned regional meetings on the implementation of the lay pension program and programs to address and prevent sexual abuse.

I served on the vestry of St. Clements's Church in Hell's Kitchen for about five years.

What drew me to Ascension?

On my first visit to the church, I was greatly moved by the La Farge mural of the Ascension, a powerful symbol of joy and hope. I found the liturgy to be thoughtful, authentic, and powerful. But, as importantly, I sensed that Ascension is a welcoming community, with a small parish feeling even in a landmark building filled with soaring music. Mother Shelly preached a wonderful sermon that day and warmly welcomed me. I was beyond sad to hear that the search for a new rector was just beginning and felt some reluctance to join a parish in transition, but her graceful leadership and an impressive Search Committee revealed a confident and healthy congregation where I would find a spiritual home.

What are Ascension's greatest strengths?

I think our greatest strengths lie in the people and the worship.

Our clergy and parish leaders are faithful, smart, and open-minded, a combination that makes old-timers and newcomers feel welcome and valued. Our parishioners are an awesome bunch of people with an astonishing array of gifts and interests.

I find the worship is a genuine celebration of the Spirit and I almost always leave a service with a feeling of peace and optimism.

What is my vision for Ascension?

I envision an "Easter Church" that lives out its name and continues a tradition of beautiful liturgy and music as an expression of a community that continues to thoughtfully serve its members and welcomes newcomers.

We are, on paper, committed to growth and diversity. I can see us really digging in to what we mean by those goals and finding creative, even radical, ways to achieve them. I would have a particular interest in developing programs that explore the nexus of the creative arts and Christian community.

Skills, experiences and talents I bring with me:

I would describe myself as a generalist. I have worked as a writer, editor, meeting planner, and project manager. Specifically, I think my editorial skill, particularly on print publications, would be useful. In addition, my background in meeting-organization could be helpful in developing speaker and/or education programs or seminars.

I also have strong administrative skills and am good at doing day-to-day not-very-glamorous office stuff.



Chrysanthi Fairchild

Member of Ascension since 2010

Occupation:

Fifth grade Math and Science teacher, United Nations International School

Activities at Ascension:

Stewardship Committee member
Usher at Voices of Ascension concerts
Tutor at Ascension Tutoring Program
Thursday night Bible Study

Activities in the Episcopal Church and Community:

Trained as a Stephen Minister at St. James Church

What drew me to Ascension?

I was initially drawn to Ascension because I appreciate traditional church services, having been born and raised as a Greek Orthodox. I have stayed, mainly because of the intelligent people who befriended me and the caring community I have found here.

What are Ascension's greatest strengths?

I think Ascension's greatest strengths are the beauty of the environment and the spectacular musical offerings. The combo could make a milk carton religious!

What is my vision for Ascension?

I think the challenge for Ascension is to maintain the delicate balance between the traditional and comfortable (and comforting) ritual so beloved by many older parishioners and the need to be relevant, adapting to the taste of younger people, who may have shorter attention spans, without diluting the essential qualities that make a service meaningful.

Skills, experiences and talents I bring with me:

I am a trained architect as well as a Math teacher, skills that could prove useful in maintaining an elderly building and balancing a budget.



Janet Fisher

Member of Ascension since 1982

Occupation:

Retired academic administrator – During the course of my career in both public and private institutions, my areas of responsibility included communications and broad community outreach.

Activities at Ascension:

- Book Club – Interaction with congregants engaged in peripheral activities at Ascension;
- Lector – Participate in Side Altar weekday services, which draw in people who may not be regular Sunday morning worshippers;
- Acolyte – Serve at the altar in various capacities, which include server, torch bearer and chalice bearer;
- Bible Study -- Interaction with congregants engaged in other facets of Ascension's common life;
- Healing Prayer – A new and much needed addition to the life of the parish and provides a confidential window into pastoral care issues arising within our parish common life.

Activities in the Episcopal Church and Community:

- Voices of Ascension – Work with the executive director and her staff on box office functions, operational issues and consult on a variety of marketing issues.
- Church Club – I am a life member of this organization, which attracts people from other congregations around New York City and other extended communities. It also provides some insight into individual parishes and diocesan challenges and thinking.

What drew me to Ascension?

A compilation of entities drew me into Ascension – a cohesive liturgical format, the music, an extensive rotation through the Book of Common Prayer and a former high school classmate.

What are Ascension's greatest strengths?

As a faith community we are poised to make major strides into the Church of the future. Since joining this parish family I have experienced at least three generational rotations in the congregation. Each of these have embraced liturgical shifts (Morning Prayer and Eucharist once a month to Eucharistic centered services) and exhibited new expressions of faith (Lenten Devotional Book, Halloween Open House to the Community, Pride March Water Table and the Living Nativity) all of which embraced a spiritual openness and flexibility.

What is my vision for Ascension?

Entering church can and may be challenging for new comers and lapsed churchgoers. Going forward we might wish to explore expanding our portals of entry while continuing to embrace our cultural heritage of glorious music within the liturgical setting and intelligent explorations and expressions of our individual and collective faith journeys. As the US Episcopal Church begins to explore Prayer Book updates, my vision is that we will be able to have a smooth transition into the area of new and auxiliary liturgical settings. We might also wish to expand our online and social media presence thereby extending our reach into communities that reach beyond our immediate geographical area and dioceses.

Skills, experiences and talents I bring with me:

On occasion I have been able to capture our lively community life through the use of photographs, which appear from time to time on the parish Facebook page. My previous experiences in working with community entities beyond the institution might be central to our ability to expand and grow our congregation for future generations. Perhaps lend some insights into upgrading and or streamlining our existing social media communications.

**Elizabeth Garvin****Member of Ascension since 1994****Occupation:**

Lighting designer/production manager for special events ERG
Intentio LLC

Activities at Ascension:

Head usher
Designer of Halloween Haunted Church
Past member of buildings and grounds

What drew me to Ascension?

My friend brought me to Ascension.

What are Ascension's greatest strengths?

Music, community, congregants.

What is my vision for Ascension?

More community outreach.

Skills, experiences and talents I bring with me:

As a designer and production manager, I can, as schedule permits, help in events such as Halloween.



Winnie Lok

Member of Ascension since 2005

Occupation:

Manager, Event and Entertainment Production for New York Road Runners

Activities at Ascension:

Sunday School Teacher
Altar Guild (9AM services)
Usher
Food Pantry Volunteer
Former tutor at afterschool tutoring on Mondays

Activities in the Episcopal Church and Community:

Member of CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) NYC
Volunteer for Habitat for Humanity

What drew me to Ascension?

Having been a lifelong Episcopalian, when I moved to NYC in 2005, I was looking for a spiritual home. I was walking in the neighborhood and came across the church and the beautiful building drew me in.

What are Ascension's greatest strengths?

The community of people from all walks of life.

What is my vision for Ascension?

Growth. Continual growth in the community within the Church as well as in outreach. Also, continual education and the desire to learn.

The Church of the Ascension
in the City of New York
Fifth Avenue at Tenth Street

Parish House (offices and mailing address):
12 West 11th Street, New York, New York 10011

Telephone: (212) 254-8620, Facsimile: (212) 254-6520
Internet Address: www.ascensionnyc.org

Office Hours:

Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Regular Weekly Worship Schedule

Sundays:

The Holy Eucharist (Side altar) 9 a.m.
Holy Eucharist with Music (Church) 11 a.m.
Service of Meditations and Sacrament (Church) 7 p.m.

Weekdays:

Monday through Thursday - Holy Eucharist - Side Altar, 6 p.m.
Fridays - Holy Eucharist with Healing - Side Altar, 6 p.m.

Clergy & Staff

The Rev. Elizabeth G. Maxwell, *Rector*
The Rev. Edwin Chinery, *Assisting Priest*
Shana Kaplanov, *Seminarian*
Dennis Keene, D.M.A., *Organist &*
Choirmaster
Andrew P. Jones, *Parish Administrator*
Vince Amodei, *Parish Bookkeeper*
Lenford Bowman, *Sexton*
Ravi Gayadin, *Assistant Sexton*
Dawa Sherpa, *Assistant Sexton*
Jennifer Passard, *Nursery Care*

Vestry

David Cholcher, *Warden*
Steven Hubbard, *Warden*
Mary Gaillard, *Treasurer*
Candace Lombardi, *Clerk*
Derek Baker
Peter Clark
Dorothy Dinsmoor
Lisa Dunn
Sirkka Kyle
Tom Rice
Charles Schmidt
Maurice Seaton
Isabel Spencer
Stacy Spikes
Meredith Ward