



The Ascendant

A Newsletter by and for Members and Friends of Church of the Ascension

September 2017

Ministry Fair

Leaders and participants of parish ministry teams will be available to chat Sunday, September 10 at 10:15 in the Undercroft. The program year begins on Sunday, September 17. All formation classes will meet between the 9:00 and 11:00/11:15 services.

Christian's Formation Starts on September 17

Starting Sunday, September 17, all Sunday school classes will be held between the 9:00 and 11:00 Services. Adult Christian Formation will also be offered at this time. We are excited about consolidating the two groups into one larger group. We hope children will become more involved in the church service by doing welcome team, helping with alter guild, reading, or whatever their talents and interests bring them to do. Adult Formation choices will include the opportunity to learn what their children are learning and how to help them see God in everyday life.

Fiesta de las Americas, September 17

In some Latin American countries, in September we celebrate our Independence. For this reason, the Spanish Congregation is organizing a party in the Undercroft Commons on Sunday, September 17, after the 11:00 a.m. service. We invite everyone to attend!

Town Hall Meeting

There will be a Town Hall Meeting about Ascension's finances as a follow up to the discussion at the Annual Meeting, at 10:15 a.m. September 24, in the main church.

Who's a Christian?

For surely you know that when we were baptized into union with Christ Jesus, we were baptized into union with his death. By our baptism, then, we were buried with him and shared his death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from death by the glorious power of the Father, so also we might live a new life.

- Romans 6:3-4

The atheist philosopher Nietzsche observed, correctly, that without Paul, Christianity would not have become a world religion. It would have remained a sect within Judaism. Jesus was clear that his mission was to the "lost sheep of Israel." He would commission Paul to be "apostle to the Gentiles" when they would meet on the road to Damascus.

Paul's writings are sometimes hard to follow. But what I like about him is that he is really one of us. He became a follower of Jesus without having met the man, except in a vision, and in prayer. The same way Christians who've lived ever since have had to become disciples.

Who's a Christian? How do I become one? What does it mean to have a "relationship" with Jesus?

People who call themselves Christians disagree on the answers to these questions, and have done so from the beginning of the "movement." Paul and Peter had to reach an accord after spirited disagreement on the subject. Peter and the apostles wanted people to be Jews first, as they had been. Thanks be to Paul that this idea didn't survive the first generation of Christianity!

I think a lot of you will agree with me that many humans who've called themselves Christians over the centuries exhibited behaviors that were most un-Christlike. And there are many who did not belong to a church or thought of themselves as Christians who admired Jesus and tried to live as he did, such as Mohandas Gandhi, to pick an easy example.

As much as we Episcopalians exalt the sacrament of baptism, that doesn't guarantee a thing. Hitler was baptized.

Bottom line: a Christian is someone who tries to live as Jesus lived. A person who is motivated by compassion, possibly tempered with some healthy self-interest ("please put on your oxygen mask first before assisting others...") and who sees God in all things and in many people as well! Someone who allows herself to be found by God.

Someone who spends time with Jesus, who engages the mind and heart with him, in story (which includes scripture and liturgy), fantasy, and relationships with real people who want to know him and be as much like him as you and I do.

Namasté, Randy

LIFE LONG LEARNING

Tai Chi Class

Tai Chi classes are offered at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday afternoons in the Chapel; a good time of peace and balance in a lovely place at sunset. Please come and join us.

Contact Claire Rosser at 301.275.0617 or Cjrosser@aol.com if you have any questions.

Wednesday Book Group: *Christ Actually: the Son of God for The Secular Age*

The Wednesday morning book group will resume on Sept. 13th (10:00-11:30, as usual, in the Library) to start discussing *Christ, Actually*. Read the Introduction.

The Amazon synopsis: "A New York Times bestselling and widely admired Catholic writer explores how we can retrieve transcendent faith in modern times. Critically acclaimed and bestselling author James Carroll has explored every aspect of Christianity, faith, and Jesus Christ except this central one: What can we believe about—and how can we believe in—Jesus in the twenty-first century in light of the Holocaust and other atrocities of the twentieth century and the drift from religion that followed?"

The Listening Heart Community

The Listening Heart Community is Ascension's "monastery of the heart", an intentional group for seekers in all stages of their spiritual journey to explore Benedictine and other contemplative spirituality in community. We meet the first and third Monday of each month in Library. Contact Lori Perine at lperine@gmail.com if you would like to join us.

Spanish Class

Come and take part in Ascension's Spanish Class on Mondays from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Ascension House. You don't need to know Spanish to come, because we get together to learn and/or practice. For more information contact Javier at ocampo@ascensionmd.org

Yoga



Randy's teaches a yoga class every Thursday at 10:00 a.m. in the Chapel. These are gentle, entry level classes anyone may enjoy. No props are needed. There are some mats, blocks and blankets for those who want them. If you have your own mat, bring it. Wear loose fitting, comfortable clothing.

Calm Mind and Joyful Heart: Still Water Mindfulness Practice Group

Mindfulness is our capacity to be fully present in our own lives, to be aware of what we are doing as we are doing it. As we develop our awareness, an inner stillness naturally grows. We are better able to embrace the world, better able to experience the Kingdom of God in the present moment. Our weekly program of meditation and mindfulness practices in the tradition of zen monk and peace activist Thich Nhat Hahn will continue on Tuesdays from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. in the chapel.

Invitation to View "Walk with Me" Film



The Stillwater Mindfulness Practice Group invites you to view – "Walk with Me: A Journey into Mindfulness Featuring THICH NHAT HANH" on September 26 at 7:30 p.m. at Germantown Stadium 14, 2000 Century Blvd. Germantown, MD.

For more information, visit <http://walkwithmefilm.com/> or to reserve your tickets gather.us/s/20587

Coping and Resiliency Workshop for Teens

In response to an increase in incidents of violence, discrimination and bias, the International Cultural Center, in partnership with Kehilat Shalom and Church of the Ascension, hosting an interactive workshop for teens. Participants are welcome to share their reactions to recent events and discuss various ways to support themselves, their peers and the wider community. The event will include group discussion, practicing coping skills and a creative writing activity to raise awareness of violence, discrimination and bias. After completing the workshop, participants will be able to:

- ◆ Apply coping skills to overcome adversity,
- ◆ Increase communication skills & better express themselves,
- ◆ Learn how to help others who may be struggling,
- ◆ Access resources and communities of support,
- ◆ Develop advocacy skills,
- ◆ EARN SSL HOURS

The workshop will be facilitated by Licensed Clinical Social Worker, Atefeh Fathnezhad, LCSW-C and held on Sunday, October 1, 2017 from 2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. in Undercroft Commons.

LIFE LONG LEARNING

Ascension Youth Group Fall 2017

The Ascension Youth Group typically meets on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of the month from 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m in the undercroft of the church, unless noted.

We will not meet on Nov 26th due to Thanksgiving.

Ascension YG is open to all Youth in 6th grade and beyond. They need not attend Ascension.

Typical YG includes dinner, provided by two families, a spiritual lesson and fun games. "Feed, Fellowship & Fun"
A new group formed with all northern Montgomery county (NoMoCo) Episcopal churches that plan to have Youth Gathering Opportunities monthly with the host rotating from church to church. Ascension, as the largest YG, will host the first one on Oct 1st.

Date	Details	Food	Sign up for Dinner
September 24 th	Ascension YG Kick off Cook Out @ Hight Walkers	Please bring a side dish or dessert to share	X
October 1 st	NoMoCo Youth Gathering at Ascension	Seeking volunteer families. This will be a larger group so maybe three families	1. 2. 3.
October 8 th	Ascension YG in Undercroft	Two Families Needed*	1. 2.
October 22 nd	Ascension YG in Undercroft	Two Families Needed*	1. 2.
November 5 th	NoMoCo Youth Gathering Location TBD		X
November 12 th	Ascension YG in Undercroft	Two Families Needed*	1. 2.
December 3 rd	NoMoCo Youth Gathering at St. Anne's	Advent Wreath Making, \$15 per wreath	X
December 10 th	Ascension YG Christmas Party	Location to be determined	X

*Two families is typically split: 1. Brings meal and 2. Brings beverages and dessert; although the two families can divide as they wish. We have plates, napkins, silverware and cups. Plan for 20 Youth for dinner.

Angela Walker
angela.hightwalker@gmail.com

LIFE AT ASCENSION

Planning Ahead

Planning for our passing is often not done and put off to another day. Our death is inevitable. Thought of what our personal wishes are at the time of our passing (funeral and final resting place) are something to think about now. If cremation is an option for you; we at Church of the Ascension have a place to be considered. The structure to the left of the main church building is the Grey Harman Froehlich Memorial Columbarium. Church of the Ascension members and/or their immediate families may subscribe and be interred there. Non-members may subscribe and be interred at the discretion of the Rector.

For more information please feel free to contact Randy, or Gordon Donnelly ,571-275-6637, vagordon1@yahoo.com .

Gordon Donnelly, Columbarium Steward

Zumba Classes at Ascension!

Summer is here and is always a good opportunity to get in shape. For that reason, we will have Zumba classes at Ascension every Thursday at 7:30 p.m. in Undercroft Commons. Zumba is a dance fitness program created by Colombian dancer and choreographer Alberto "Beto" Perez during the 1990s. Zumba involves dance and aerobic movements performed to energetic music. The choreography incorporates hip-hop, soca, samba, salsa, merengue and mambo.

Introducing Our New Parish Administrator



Lin joined the Church of the Ascension staff as the Parish Administrator in August 2017. Lin brings a background of experience in accounting and office management to the parish. Originally from New York City, she is a Navy veteran, and earned her degree in Accounting while the family lived in the Hampton Roads region in Virginia.

In addition to supporting the day-to-day operations at Church of the Ascension, she enjoys spending time with friends and family, and riding her motorcycle as much as the weather allows.

Lin and her husband relocated to Maryland after they retired from the Navy in 2013. She is a proud mother of two children, Paul, who resides in Boston, MA, David, who resides in Richmond, VA, and two fur babies (dogs), Chaucer and Miss, that reside in Clarksburg.

Adopt-a-Space at Ascension

Our worship and common spaces are sacramental in the sense that we rendezvous with God and one another in them. It is therefore meet and right that we tend them as the gift that they are. This sign-up lists most of the spaces we inhabit from week to week. They do get cleaned, but there's a lot of traffic in and out of our building and there are plenty of unclaimed artifacts to prove it!

This is an invitation for groups or individuals to "adopt-a-space" to declutter and re-order (where there is furniture).

I have assigned some groups to care for spaces with which they have a special relationship, such as the main church's sacristy, where the Altar Guild lives out its mission to prepare the holy of holies for each of to encounter at every service. Some spaces got claimed immediately, such as the Chapel nave and sacristy, by "regulars" at the 11:00o'clock service.

There are a few left! Won't you join in?

Sign up by clicking this link: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0a4caba82da75-adoptaspace>

Randy

Attention all Worship Leaders (and those interested in becoming a worship leader)

I will be preparing the new worship roster for the months of October, November and December shortly; if you have any blackout dates for that period, or any changes specific to those months, please let me know as soon as possible.

Thanks, Sari Stoddard
sari.stoddard@verizon.net

Contact info update

The Clipboard is being circulated at all services for a few Sundays to give you a chance to inform the Church Office of any changes in your information.

Save the Date

On October 7 we will held a party in the Undercroft as a fundraiser for Ascension. Tickets are on sale. If you need more information ask members of the Vestry, Bernice @ Berenice.rodriguez.84@gmail.com or Luis @ lrpedron@gmail.com or Javier @ ocampo@ascensionmd.org

LIFE AT ASCENSION

Ascension's Adventurers to Visit C&O Canal National Park



All parishioners and friends are invited to join us for a morning walk in the C&O Canal National Historical Park on Saturday, September 16th (rain date - September 23rd).

Starting at the Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center, we will divide ourselves into two groups. One group will take a leisurely stroll along the C&O Canal towpath to the Great Falls Overlook and back (total walking distance = ~ 2.0 miles). The second group will walk along a more rugged trail to the former Maryland Gold Mine and back (total walking distance = ~3.0 miles). While Great Falls Overlook provides a spectacular view of the Potomac River cascading through a rocky gorge, the Maryland Gold Mine provides a nostalgic view of an unsuccessful enterprise.

Participants can meet us at 9:15 a.m. in Ascension House's parking lot to car-pool. Alternatively, participants can meet us at 10:00 a.m. at the Great Falls Tavern Visitor Center.

Entrance to this National Park is \$10 per car. However, several Ascension people have National Park passes which will allow free entry for the cars in which they are riding.

People are also invited to join us for lunch at Normandie Farm Restaurant which features French country cuisine (and delicious popovers). The carpools will be organized to allow people to return directly to Ascension if they are unable to join us for lunch.



If walking is not your thing, then you may forego the trip to the National Park and simply join us for lunch at the restaurant around 12:30 p.m.

For additional information about the C&O Canal National Historical Park, see: <https://www.nps.gov/choh> .

For additional information, about Normandie Farm Restaurant, see: <http://popovers.com/> .

Also, feel free to contact Richard Snay (tel: [301-977-5259](tel:301-977-5259); email: rssnay@aol.com) for additional information.

If you are planning to join us, please let Richard know by noon on Friday, September 8th, so that he may make appropriate arrangements.

Fun fact: Tom Hall, a fellow Ascension Adventurer, volunteers as a guide at the C&O Canal National Historical Park!

Driving directions from Ascension to the C&O Canal Tavern Visitor Center

Address: 11710 MacArthur Blvd, Potomac, MD

- Drive south on I-270
- Take Exit 5 (Falls Road) eastward toward Potomac
- Follow Falls Road for 6 miles until it terminates at its intersection with MacArthur Blvd.
- Turn right onto MacArthur Blvd. and proceed less than 1 mile to the first stop sign
- Just past the stop sign, turn right and park in the Park's parking lot.

Driving direction from the Park's Visitor Center to Normandie Farm Restaurant

Address: 10710 Falls Road, Potomac, MD

- Follow MacArthur Blvd back to Falls Road and then turn left onto Falls Road
- The restaurant will be on the left side of Falls Road approximately 0.3 miles after this road intersects Democracy Blvd.

CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITIES

Hurricane Harvey: What Can I Do?

Episcopal Relief & Development urges prayers for communities along the US Gulf Coast dealing with the impact of Hurricane Harvey. Please donate to the Hurricane Harvey Response Fund and visit the organization's website for more information about relief and recovery efforts. <http://www.episcopalrelief.org/hurricane-harvey-response>.

October Ascendant

Please email Eleni Hailu by Wednesday, September 25, if you have anything for the October Ascendant at comm@ascensionmd.org. Thank you!

CONNECT WITH FUS ON SOCIAL MEDIA



<http://bit.ly/2tHzJuT>



<http://bit.ly/2tC0Ysa>



<http://bit.ly/2sYC8UV>



<http://bit.ly/2paseJO>

Montgomery County Friendship Picnic

5th Annual! Join Us for a FREE, Fun-Filled Afternoon!

ALL FREE!

Food and Drink
Lunch of Your Choice
Traditional / Kosher*
Halal / Vegetarian
Ice Cream
Music & Dancing
DJ
Performances
Children's Activities
Train Rides
Carousel
Zumba
Large Playground
and More!

Join us for the
2nd Annual
Friendship Walk

FREE Satellite Parking
and Shuttle Service from
WHEATON ICE RINK /
ATHLETIC FIELDS
11717 Orebaugh Avenue
Wheaton, MD 20902



MONTGOMERY COUNTY
FRIENDSHIP
Picnic

*Bringing Together Communities
With Diverse Cultures and Faiths*

SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 17, 2017

1 - 5 pm

Wheaton Regional Park
2000 Shorefield Road
Wheaton, Maryland 20902

Kindly bring one non-perishable food item for donation to the Manna Food Center.

RSVPS are encouraged! For more information and to RSVP, visit:
www.montgomerycountymd.gov/humanrights

*Restaurant under Rabbinical Council of Greater Washington

Sign language interpreters and other auxiliary aids or services upon request – with as much advance notice as possible, preferably at least three (3) business days before the event. Contact Beverly Marshall at 240-777-8479; TTY users use Maryland Relay 711; or send a request to beverly.marshall@montgomerycountymd.gov

Sponsored by Montgomery County's Committee on Hate/Violence (COHV), Office of Human Rights, Human Rights Commission, Office of Community Partnerships, Department of Police, Fire and Rescue Service, The County Executive's Faith Community Working Group and Montgomery County Parks.

Bringing Together Communities with Diverse Cultures and Faiths

WHEN : Sunday, September 17, 2017, 1 pm to 5 pm

WHERE : Wheaton Regional Park
2000 Shorefeild Road
Wheaton, MD 20902

For more information, see here: <http://files.constantcontact.com/b35ee73b601/cf6b7d86-a511-4035-9472-e279d47e8374.pdf>

Men's Shelter Lunch Program

The Men's Shelter Lunch program provides bagged lunches for homeless men, assembled in the Undercroft Commons once a month. Supplies are donated by Ascension members. Depending on the season, we provide forty to eighty lunches a month. The next program is on September 17 at 10:15 a.m. Contact Edith at esekasi@gmail.com if you would like to help, or sign up at <http://bit.ly/1VAKEz8>.

Mobile Med

Every Tuesday, for (at least) the summer months, Mobile Med has agreed that we can close the waiting room at 1:00 p.m. We will still list a person for the 1p shift in case the day is particularly hot or rainy and we need to keep the waiting room open until 3:00 p.m. I will notify the "on call" 1p person that morning if they need to be there.

The 11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. person will now close the Chapel at 1:00 p.m. I have put instructions for closing in the volunteer folder; you can also contact Jean Cohn if there are questions at spangle1@comcast.net or 240.372.3652.

Gaithersburg HELP

This organization provides emergency food and other support to needy families in Gaithersburg. Non-perishable food collected at Ascension every week, and during specific holiday in-gatherings, helps to stock the pantry. Donations may be brought to church at any time and left in the narthex. For more information, contact Melanie Mitchell at 301.519.1074 or melanie.mitchell@verizon.net.

Ministerio Felicidad

Ascension members prepare lunches and send love and prayers to day laborers in the neighborhood of the church. Join Javier at 6:00 a.m. on Saturday, September 23 in the church kitchen. If you have any questions, Contact Javier at ocampo@ascensionmd.org

Connecting College Students to Our EDOW Campus Ministers

EDOW requests for names of college students in our parishes who will attend our local schools this fall. Whether entering freshmen or rising upperclassmen, they would love to know and support them. So, if you have students at any of the following, could you drop a note to Joey at jrick@edow.org or to their respective campus ministers (listed below)? They would love to keep them connected to the our Episcopal chaplaincy and also to whatever parish is closest to them.

- American University, Carolyn Seton, cseaton14@gmail.com
- George Washington University, Shawn Strout, strout@stpauls-kst.com
- Georgetown University, Becky Zartman, rebecca.zartman@gmail.com—Howard University, Yolanda Rolle, yolanda.rolle@howard.edu
- St Mary's College, nathanbeall1@gmail.com or
- The University of Maryland, Kriste Pitts, rev.kpitts@gmail.com



Financial Update August 2, 2017
Budget Development and Implementation

We continue to implement changes to 2017 budget to reduce operating expenses and bring our income and expenses more closely into alignment. Our goal remains to narrow the gap between income and expenses during 2017 and achieve a balanced budget by mid-2018, if not sooner.

As part of accounting for the gift we received earlier this year from the Brooke Trust, those monies have now been credited as Miscellaneous Unrestricted Income. If one looks on the Executive Summary Report, which is page 4 in the accompanying financials, the year to date figure of \$89,789 includes the \$50,000 gift from the Trust. Our Total Income for the year of \$343,635 reflects that \$50,000, as well.

As a result, we show a more positive overall position year to date than when we look strictly at our usual sources of income and our month-to-month expenses. We continue to have negative net operating cash flow, which is important to consider as we plan for the rest of the year.

July Financials

Total income for July was \$37,859. Ascension received \$2,333 in plate receipts, and \$27,294 in pledge income for the month. Both are consistent with levels we usually see in the summer. Our Miscellaneous Unrestricted Income was \$3,211, and we had rental income of \$5,020.

For July, our total expenses were \$45,754. Most expense categories were at or below expected levels for the month. Our Salary & Benefits costs now reflect the changes we made in June with our musicians and will soon reflect changes in the composition of our office staff. There is a typo in the July variance for General Office Expenses on the Executive Summary Report; that figure should read \$953, not the year-to-date figure shown.

We had negative net income for July of \$7,895 based on the income and expenses figures just described. Year to date, not considering the gift from the Brooke Trust, we have income of \$293,635, against total expenses of \$343,232, creating a deficit of \$49,597 so far for the year. However, as noted above, when adding in the \$50,000 gift to Miscellaneous Unrestricted Income as the financial documents reflect, we show positive net operating income of \$403.



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September 2017

The Episcopal Church of the Ascension
205 South Summit Ave.
Gaithersburg, MD 20877-2315

Address Service Requested

"We are ambassadors who represent Christ." - 2 Corinthians 5:20

Contact Us

Phone: 301.948.0122 Fax: 301.926.9012
eca@ascensionmd.org www.ascensionmd.org

Parish Staff

Rector	Randy Lord-Wilkinson
Assistant to the Rector	Javier García Ocampo
Minister of Music	Jerrold Tidwell
Parish Administrator	Lin Keene
Media Specialist	Eleni Hailu

Sunday Services

7:45 a.m.—Holy Eucharist
"Meditative" service, no music - Main Church
9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist
Classic sacred music of the Church accompanied by Choir and Organ—Main Church
10:15 a.m.—Eucharist for Young Children and Families
Storytelling of the Gospel with children's songs—Chapel
11:00 a.m.—Eucharist in Spanish
Songs and prayers in Spanish—Chapel
11:15 a.m.—Holy Eucharist
Modern Music and liturgy accompanied by instrumental ensemble—Main Church
5:00 p.m.—"Last Chance Church"—Chapel