



The Ascendant

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

August 2017

Yard Sale & Car Wash - August 26

There will be a Yard Sale and Car Wash on Saturday, August 26, from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. If you have clothes that you want to donate, bring them to the office. Heavy items and furniture should be brought to the Ascension House Porch. Remember that you can bring your car to be washed. We also need help. If you are available, you are welcome to join us! For more information, please contact Javier at ocampo@ascensionmd.org or 202-903-6426

Help Provide School Supplies and Backpacks for Children in Need

It is that time of year! Ascension is collecting school supplies to provide backpacks for students (kindergarten through 5th grade) at Summit Hall Elementary School, Gaithersburg as part of the Linkages to Learning Program. The purpose of this program is to improve the well-being of children and their families through collaborative delivery of school services that address social, economic, health, and emotional issues that interfere with the academic success of a child. Lists of supplies for each grade level are available in the narthex and on the website. Please take a list or share a list with a friend. A monetary donation of \$14 is welcome to help cover the cost of the backpacks. Please place monetary donations in the collection plate. Please include "for backpacks" on the memo line of the check. Please leave the supplies you are bringing in Room 1. On Sunday August 20, we will gather in Room 1 after the 9 am service to stuff the backpacks. All help will be appreciated. We can work together while we visit and get to know each other. Thank you for your support. For any question, contact Kristen Keating at KristenKeating@westat.com

Yoga and Christianity

Everybody reading this knows that I teach one or two yoga classes a week in our wonderful Chapel (the original Ascension) in any given month. I have practiced yoga (with "varying degrees of dedication") since the year I was ordained a priest (1984). That was also the year I started to meditate. Before that I had no spiritual practice to speak of apart from going to church and reading the Daily Office once in a blue moon. I told myself that since I was now a priest I ought to do something spiritual. My bishop at that time John Coburn of Massachusetts, did yoga (he died a few years ago at age 99), and I was drawn to it, so I read a book by a French Benedictine monk entitled Christian Yoga that got me started.

Many Christians are afraid of yoga and even contemplative prayer! A (distant) member of my extended family thinks I am a Hindu missionary. He prays for my deliverance from demonic influences and the salvation of my eternal soul. OK. I'll take that. But yoga is a form of Christian stewardship for me, and a way of reverencing my body and all creation. When I conclude a class with the greeting 'namasté', that means I acknowledge and reverence the divine spark within my companions. This is not radical, progressive flapdoodle. Christians speak of the Christ within all of us. and Jews speak of the divine spark found in the depth of every human being.

At the moment offer a free class - entry level - every Thursday at 10:00 a.m. in the Chapel. I'll be away the week of August 14 so there will be no class on the 17th.

In September or October (I need to follow up on some other activities in order to nail this down) I'll do a reprise of the Lenten series where we will do both yoga and centering prayer, starting at 6:00 p.m. in the Chapel. I have some extra mats.

Wear loose, comfortable clothing and be prepared for a surprisingly refreshing and renewing experience.

Namasté,
Randy

CONNECT WITH US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



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



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



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



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

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.

Education for Ministry (EFM) 2017-2018

In order for Ascension's Education for Ministry class to begin on or about September 12th, we need six people to have their registrations completed by August 25th. Peg Ruppel and David Mitchell renewed their mentor training in May, and now it's time to get the class registered. The \$375 tuition covers all books and materials.

If you want to explore your faith, the Bible, and the church more deeply, this is your chance. EFM is a distance learning program from the School of Theology at the University of the South (Sewanee, visit <http://efm.sewanee.edu>).

Questions? Concerns? Please contact Peggy Ruppel (ph.301.377.0728; email plr301@gmail.com) or David Mitchell (ph.240.454.1904; email newlywed98@comcast.net) for more information.

Thanks, everyone! Peg

Wednesday Morning Book Group

Wednesday Book Group: Christ Actually: The Son of God for the Secular Age On Wednesday, September 13, the book group will begin to read and discuss James Carroll's learned, extended, and beautifully written Christ Actually: The Son of God for the Secular Age. This is actually [sic] cheapest in hard cover from Amazon at \$6.98.

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?

"What Carroll has discovered through decades of writing and lecturing is that he is far from alone in clinging to a received memory of Jesus that separates him from his crucial identity as a Jew, and therefore as a human. Yet if Jesus was not taken as divine, he would be of no interest to us. What can that mean now? Paradoxically, the key is his permanent Jewishness. No Christian himself, Jesus actually transcends Christianity.

"Drawing on both a wide range of scholarship as well as his own acute searching as a believer, Carroll takes a fresh look at the most familiar narratives of all—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Far from another book about the "historical Jesus," he takes the challenges of science and contemporary philosophy seriously. He

retrieves the power of Jesus' profound ordinariness, as an answer to his own last question—what is the future of Jesus Christ?—as the key to a renewal of faith."

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

There is no Spanish Class on August 7, 14 and 21. We will resume the class on August 28. For more information contact Javier at ocampo@ascensionmd.org

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

Children's Formation

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 altar 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.

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.

LIFE AT ASCENSION

Ascension's Adventurers to Tour Cryptologic Museum



All parishioners and friends are invited to join us for a docent-led tour of the National Cryptologic Museum located near Laurel, MD on Saturday, August 5th.

This 1.5 hour tour is free and covers cryptologic history and the role that making and breaking codes has played in American and world history. You'll hear how messages were sent during the Civil War, how the U.S. entered WWI as a result of a decrypted German message, touch a real working German Enigma machine from WWII, see the machine that decrypted the Japanese "Dec. 7, 1941" message, learn about the Native American Code Talkers, see some of the earliest supercomputers and secure telephones, and much more.

Participants can meet us at 9:00 a.m. in Ascension House's parking lot to carpool. Alternatively, participants can meet us at 9:55 a.m. at the museum.

People are also invited to join us for lunch at the Olive Garden restaurant located in Laurel after the tour. This restaurant features Italian cuisine. The carpools will be organized to allow people to return directly to Ascension if they are unable to join us for lunch.

For more information about the museum, see: <https://www.nsa.gov/about/cryptologic-heritage/museum/>

For more information about Olive Garden, see: <http://www.olivegarden.com/> .

If you are planning to join us, please let Richard Snay (email: rssnay@aol.com; tel: 301-977-5259) know by noon on Friday, August 4th, so that he may make appropriate reservations.

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. Nonmembers 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.

The Lunch Bunch at St. Nick's

We meet on the third Tuesday of every month 11:30 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. at St. Nick's. Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, August 15, 2017. After a delicious potluck luncheon together, we will play Bingo with winners choosing from many interesting prizes on our prize table! Newcomers and guests do not have to bring food for the first time.

We are also encouraging everyone to bring at least one non-perishable, kid-friendly food item to add to St. Nick's Summer Food Drive. Many children are hungry this summer as school is out and there are no free breakfast and lunch programs. Let's help the Germantown HELP Food Pantry meet the higher demand for food!

Come prepared to shop at the St. Nick's Crafters' Table, too! We are featuring many handmade works of art and other interesting items. As was done last year, you may make a donation in any amount for any of the items and all proceeds will be donated to the Deibel-Mahan Fund at St. Nick's. You may make your donation in cash or, for tax purposes, by check with Deibel-Mahan Fund in the memo.

One Ascension Sunday

The feast was great! 120 of the faithful attended, they brought so much (very tasty) food that there was lots left over! We had done many things right, and a few things were still a little wobbly. Aaron Lalmansingh (age 10) was a big help; his parents' Trinidadian Black Cake was stunning! Berenice became a general in the kitchen, and the

chaos that greeted her receded. Gordon , who had initially thought that no grilling could occur because of the state of the Church's grills, managed perfectly on the donated grills of Ivan Flores. Gary brought a tent-like structure under which extra tables were installed; it was perfect for all the teens and preteens, who appeared to be sharing some hilarious stories.

Having the sound system (thanks to Fredy) was a great help in communicating, and even better at bringing a festive musical atmosphere to the event.

Here are some of the delicious main dishes, side dishes, salads and desserts that we received:

- Hamburgers and hot dogs (Vegetarian and not) from Church of the Ascension
- Pulled Pork; Pulled Chicken from Luis Pedron
- Coconut curry Chicken from Chris Ruggeri
- Tinga de Pollo from Ivan Flores
- Chili from Lauren Kingsland
- Grilled Mashed potatoes from David Mitchell
- Jallof Rice from Gloria Nwankwo
- Tabouli from both Barb Mansfield and Susan McLaughlin
- A Giant green salad from the Ventura family
- Cole slaw from both Phyllis Eddy and Cheryl (?)
- Savory muffins from Peg Ruppel
- Orzo Pasta from Kathy Froelich
- Colorful Pasta salad from Jan Hauber
- Tomato Salad and Tangy Macaroni salad from Sari Stoddard
- Potato Salad and raw vegetables from Loveta Willi
- Tomato and Basil from Karen (?)
- Fruit and limes from the Ventura Family
- Watermelon from Margaret Tellu
- Brownies from Megan Didavi and Marsha Sutherland
- Banana Nut Bread from Christine Kroma
- Chocolate Zucchini Bread from Susan McLaughlin
- Blueberry Peach Pie from Rachel Ruggeri

We are still learning how to collect information as well as we bring in the yummy food, so we confess that several delicious dishes were served (and completely consumed!) without our getting the name of the donor. They included a Coconut cake with chocolate, chocolate chip cookies, more fresh fruit, more potato salad, a bumper crop of cucumbers, bags of potato chips (was this you, Arturo Rodriguez?), a stunning Salat Tangiers, a cucumber and black olives salad. Almost by magic, the dessert table filled with a giant decorated sheet cake, cupcakes, cookies and whipped cream. The drinks table sprouted sodas, fancy water, and a flavorful punch.

Attendees seemed to have a very good time. There was lots of laughter and many offers of help at the clean up stage. A special thank you out to Megan Didavi, Berenice Rodriguez, Ruth Anna Skowronski, and Lovetta Willie for being the last ones out! We are all hoping the the Oct.29session will be just as much fun, generating gustatory contentment and possibly brisk cookbook sales!

A special shout out to Ivan Flores for his willingness to help in set up and take down of tables. We watched in awe as two mature

**August Recital at Ascension Sunday,
August 20 at 7:30 p.m.**



Come and enjoy an evening of German, French and American classics, including works by J.S. Bach, Griffes, Burton, Varese, CPE Bach, and Hue performed by Cristian Dohler Rodas, on the flute; joined by Jerrold Tidwell and Janghyo Yoo on piano in the Main Church. This recital is free and open to the public, and there will be a reception afterwards in the lower atrium.

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 August 20 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, August 26 in the church kitchen. If you have any questions, Contact Javier at ocampoj@ascensionmd.org



Financial Update August 2, 2017
Budget Development and Implementation

We continue to work with the Vestry's Budget Tiger Team to implement changes to 2017 budget to reduce operating expenses and bring our income and expenses more closely into alignment. As we've reported previously, our goal remains to narrow the gap between income and expenses during 2017 and achieve a balanced budget by mid-2018, if not sooner.

May Financials

Total income for June was \$32,654. Ascension received \$2,272 in plate receipts and \$26,688 in pledge income. Both are somewhat lower than levels we usually see in June. Our Miscellaneous Unrestricted Income was \$3,044. Our rental income was lower for the month due to pre-payments made earlier by Sandy Ridge Academy, who operate the preschool in Ascension's lower level.

For June, our total expenses were \$45,814. Most expense categories were at or below expected levels for the month. Our Salary & Benefits costs continue to reflect the added expenses associated with Father Javier's compensation, but Ascension's expenses in this category have started to change as a result of no longer employing musicians for several of our services. Our Facilities expenses were higher for the month, after being lower than expected in April and May.

We had negative net income for June of \$13,160 based on the income and expenses figures just described. Year to date, we have income of \$255,777, against total expenses of \$297,478, creating a deficit of \$41,710 thus far for the year.

Finally, the balance in the Endowment Fund stands at \$286,717 as of June 30. Our Unrestricted Cash Reserves were at \$69,900 as of month's end. In addition, with the continued donations that we have received, we now have \$34,478 in the new Facilities Reserve Fund.

September Ascendant

Please email Eleni Hailu by Wednesday, August 23, if you have anything for the September Ascendant at comm@ascensionmd.org. Thank you!



The Ascendant

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August 2017

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Gaithersburg, MD 20877-2315

Address Service Requested

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

Contact Us

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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