



# The Ascendant

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

February 2019

## Winter Weather Policy

At Ascension, we always TRY to have church even when the weather is bad. We realize that travelling may be very difficult for some, so please make the best decision for you and your family about Sunday church attendance. Even if we have Sunday services during inclement weather, we may cancel all other activities, such as Christian Formation for Children, Youth and Adults. Volunteer leaders, likewise, should use personal judgment about the safety of their travel that day. Cancellations will be announced by way of e-mail and social media.

As a rule, we will follow Montgomery County Public Schools for closing and cancellation decisions. If there is a delayed opening our morning activities are cancelled. If schools are closed, morning and afternoon activities are cancelled. In this event, evening activities still may be scheduled, so check in with the committee chair or call the outgoing message line at the church to check the status of your meeting or activity.

## Ash Wednesday is March 06

We will celebrate the Holy Eucharist and offer the Imposition of Ashes at 12:00 noon and 7:30 p.m. in the Main Church. The evening service will be bilingual. The Labyrinth will be available for meditation in the Chapel from 10:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m. "Ashes to Go" will be offered again this year for morning commuters at the Shady Grove Metro Station between 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. We need volunteers to come and help with prayers and administering the Ashes.

## Midweek Eucharistic Service

During Lent, we will have a Holy Eucharist in the Chapel every Wednesday at 7:00 PM. It would be a Contemplative Eucharist featuring alternative Eucharistic prayers, Taizé music and from a variety of sources. During these services we will have conversations about some of the important and famous women in the Bible. If you have questions feel free to contact Padre Javier at [frjavier@ascensionmd.org](mailto:frjavier@ascensionmd.org)

## It's almost KonMarie Time in the Church

It's time to get out your calendars. Lent is only six weeks away. Our pancake supper is on Shrove Tuesday, March 5th. Ash Wednesday is the following day, March 6th. 7am on Ash Wednesday, we will be offering ashes at the Shady Grove Metro. Following will be a noon service and a 7pm service. The date for the Lenten Retreat will be announced shortly. The title is: Prophets, Martyrs and Saints. Our Lenten sermon series is soon to be named. We will also be hosting a Wednesday evening service that will have an informal vibe with a group reflection homily and Eucharist. Participating in community disciplines partner well with other private disciplines to make your Lenten experience more complete.

Now, you might ask why I called Lent, Kondo Marie time in the title of this article. Really, I'm not mocking sacred time. I am just incorporating an example of a new secular passion that has become popular because of its implied sacramentality about living simply. Its themes are living with less anxiety about getting and having stuff and about how to appreciate what you have. The Zen contemplative spirit is very similar to our own contemplative traditions. KonMarie might serve as our Lenten allegory, remembering that allegories are not meant to fit everything very neatly but to serve as a representative and helpful idea. If KonMarie's discipline is imparting about how to live in an uncluttered life with more joy, we can certainly apply that to Lent. Lent is a time when we give prayerful attention to what is in our lives that might be messing with our relationships with each other and, most notably, separating us from the joy of God.

Lent is about finding that our true compass in life is Christ. It is about embracing the compass of Christ, so that we find and embrace a true Christian decluttering discipline. Decluttering can bring material clarity through spiritual clarity. What brings us true joy? We remember that Christ exhorted his disciples to take only what they wore, a tunic and their sandals, but to take no bread, no money, no extra tunic and no staff. He also gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases and he sent them out to preach the kingdom of God. We will ponder that one Gospel event for our lifetimes, but it might be a fresh way to consider a Lenten discipline in this specific moment of our lives. How do we shed ourselves of encumbrances that turn us away from God, so that we will know and be vested with God's power to be his instruments of good in the world?

Now, for some suggestions for your personal Lenten practice. There are the traditional fasts. You can get creative emotionally and engage in a process of discerning what is getting you stuck in life. You might try ridding yourself of these things. Or, you might decide that you will attend Wednesday services all through lent. Or, you might decide to settle on a specific discipline of study. Anyone for reading the New Testament all the way through in Lent? This could become an habit which fits the character of Lenten disciplines. They are gifts which keep on giving. In this time of preparation for Lent, make a list of things you've always said you should do. Are they things that will bring you closer to God and to each other? Pray on these lists and then be ready to begin a great season of prayer and action in Lent, 2019.

May God Bless you and Keep you,

The Rev. Nan Hildebrand

## A Joyful Path—10:00 a.m.

The 10:00 Joyful path will learn about Mildred Norman Ryder who answered Jesus's call to leave family and friends and follow him by becoming a "peace Pilgrim". She walked across the United States several times in the 1950's, 60's and 70's teaching people about peace. For this service, all children will meet in the place of peace located in room 4 each week, and then separate by age groups.

## A Joyful Path—12:00 p.m.

Escuela Dominical Para Nin@s. The members of A Joyful Path will be learning how to concentrate our energy. We will use memory games and our story of the week "Sam digs a well." Come join us in Room 2 during the 12noon service.

## Wednesday Morning Book Group

Ascension's book group is discussing the book, "Sapiens: A Brief History of Humanity", by Yuval Noah Harari. This book explores the ways in which biology and history have defined us and enhanced our understanding of what it means to be "human". We meet weekly at 10:00 a.m. in Ascension's library on Wednesdays. All people are invited to participate.

## Yoga Class

Yoga classes are offered on Thursdays at 10:00 AM in Room 6, taught by Lucia Pires. The class is multilevel, with an emphasis on gentle yoga, and is appropriate for beginners. Props are offered, but the students are encouraged to bring their own yoga mats.

## Tai Chi Class

Tai Chi class is at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday afternoons in the Chapel; a good time of peace and balance in a lovely place. Please come and join us. Tai Chi will be cancelled any Thursday that schools are closed for bad weather this winter. Contact Claire Rosser at 301.275.0617 or Cjrosser@aol.com if you have any questions

## Spanish Class

Come and take part in Ascension's Spanish Class on Mondays from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 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 Fr. Javier at [ocampo@ascensionmd.org](mailto:ocampo@ascensionmd.org).

## Godly Play

This is a Montessori-based method, presenting the stories of the Bible within a sacred space. Children experience these stories, wonder about them and then are allowed open-ended opportunities, usually with art supplies, to explore the stories. For the 10:00 service, all children will meet in the place of peace located in room 4 each week, and then separate by age groups.

## Servant Keeper—We see the Change

Thank you for updating your information and becoming familiar with Ascension's database, Servant Keeper. We can see the changes you've made to your addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses; we can also see that some of you have uploaded pictures of yourselves. This is amazing. Let me encourage you to continue to spread the word to others on how easy it is to get into the database and navigate it. I'm sure you've discovered how to see your contributions and print statements as needed. I hope you have found this to be a valuable tool and continue finding yourself entering the portal. If you have not had the opportunity to log into Servant Keeper or are having difficulties logging in, please let me know. Here is the link again:

<https://servantkeeper.com/member-portal/ECOTA/registration/email>

If I can be of any assistance, please feel free to contact me at [office@ascensionmd.org](mailto:office@ascensionmd.org) or stop by the office. Lin Keene

## Continuing the Collection of Items for ComfortCases

The inspiring sermon in September by Robert Scheer, founder of ComfortCases, has prompted many congregants to ask what more we can do to help this local non-profit organization bring dignity and hope to youth entering foster care. We will continue to have a bin in the narthex for collecting additional travel-sized toiletry items. Further information on ways to help the organization—from donating pajamas to helping pack comfort cases—can be found at [www.comfortcases.org](http://www.comfortcases.org). The organization is housed at 15825 Shady Grove Road, Suite 60, Rockville, MD 20850; phone: 202-253-0402.

## Our Choir is Recruiting New Members!

A new and exciting musical opportunity awaits you! The Ascension Choir is currently recruiting new members. Singers of all ages, abilities, and voice parts are welcome to participate. If you're interested, come visit our weekly choir rehearsals on Thursday evenings at 7:30 pm in the Choir Room- no audition required and no strings attached.

We'd love to see you there!

Questions? Contact Andrew Kullberg, [music@ascensionmd.org](mailto:music@ascensionmd.org)

## Parish Life Committee.

After a very fun and successful 1A to celebrate the new year; the Parish Life Committee is looking forward to 2019. March will be a very busy month. Starting with Tuesday night March 5th we will be having an annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake dinner. We will be asking for volunteers so help as we approach the March date. Also there will be Annual Meeting on March 10th. The committee will coordinate the hospitality function so that there will be plenty of good things to eat before and during the meeting. And finally March 31st will be the next 1A; and this year it will also be Youth Sunday. So we will work with the Youth group to have yet another great 1A. Thank you to all who have supported us by bringing great things to eat and a joyful heart to all the occasions where we meet as One Ascension.

## Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper



## Shrove Tuesday

This fun annual event will be held on Tuesday, March 05, 2019 from 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. in the Undercroft Commons. Come join us to celebrate Mardi Gras, Carnival, Fat Tuesday or Martes Gordo...or a good excuse to have pancakes and sausage! This fun event needs lots of helpers AND lots of attendees, 'the more, the merrier!' If you have an instrument you would like to play or if you have a fun activity or games, contact Padre Javier at [frjavier@ascensionmd.org](mailto:frjavier@ascensionmd.org) or Andrew at [music@ascensionmd.org](mailto:music@ascensionmd.org).

## Coffee Supplies



During one of my Colleague Group meetings, I shared with the others the success of our coffee hour at Ascension. We have had an average of 50 to 60 people per Sunday. In light of the popularity of the coffee hour, I am asking people to volunteer to bring coffee cups, dessert plates, and cream for coffee. Please bring your donation on Sunday or during the week during office hours.

Thank you! Padre Javier

## Annual Meeting

Our annual parish meeting will take place at 11:30 p.m. on Sunday, March 10 in the Parish Hall. We'll begin with a potluck lunch. Our primary business will be to elect new Vestry members and to have a time for shared reflection on the ministry and mission of Ascension. The Vestry candidates will be available for dialog on the preceding Sunday after the each service in the Parish Hall.

## Vestry Candidates Forum

We have a complete slate of three excellent candidates for next year's Vestry class. Please join us Sunday, March 3rd for a Vestry Candidate Forum after each service.

## 2019 Lenten Rice Bowl Recipient

A Lenten tradition since the tenure of Rector Harry Dalzell (1970-1980), your offering, placed in the wooden bowl in the font as you come forward for Communion, goes toward an outreach ministry. Typically, we alternate between local and domestic or international causes.

## Kitchen is Now Open

Some rules to follow:

- Keep all surfaces clean and clear after use.
- Do not leave any dirty dishes in the sink.
- Any food left in the fridge must have a date on in and will be thrown away after three (3) days of date.
  - If it isn't dated it will be thrown away immediately.
- Someone with a Food Handler's certificate must be present when food is being prepared and/or served.
- Please use gloves when serving.

If you have taken the Food Handler's course, would you please give a copy of your certificate to the office to be filed, thank you

## Immigration Consultations

Lucelia R. Justiniano worked at several immigration law firms as a law clerk assisting clients in removal defense cases and family-based applications before the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. Lucelia interned at the Executive Office of Immigration Review in Baltimore, Maryland drafting decisions for three of the immigration judges. She also interned at the Board of Immigration Appeals in Falls Church, Virginia where she worked alongside Board Attorney Advisors in drafting Board decisions. She has been part of Ascension for a long time. She is exceptionally dedicated to giving back to the community. Now, she is offering immigration consultations every first Sunday of the month. If you have question or know anybody who would need some legal advice she will be at the Library on February 03, from 10:30 to 11:45 AM Contact Lucelia Justiniano at [lucelia@jezicfirm.com](mailto:lucelia@jezicfirm.com) or Cell phone (240)565-5590



## Classical Violin Concert at Ascension

Come enjoy a free classical violin concert in the main church on Sunday, March 10, at 2:00 p.m. The musician is Vijeta Sathyaraj, a violinist in the National Symphony Orchestra. Ms. Sathyaraj is a highly accomplished performer who has given solo recitals in Denmark, India, Hong Kong, and the United States. A reception will follow the concert.

Born in Macau, China, Vijeta Sathyaraj began violin studies in the Philippines at the age of 3. By age 6, she was featured on the Philippine National Broadcast. She studied at the Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts and completed high school at Idyllwild Arts Academy in California. After receiving her Bachelor of Music and Bachelor of Arts degrees from Oberlin Conservatory and College in Ohio, she earned her Professional Performance Certificate at Lynn University in Florida. She recently completed a fellowship with the Cincinnati Symphony.



## CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITIES

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### Men's Shelter Lunch Program



The Men's Shelter lunch program provides bagged lunches for homeless men. Lunches are assembled in the Undercroft once a month. Generous Ascension members donate the supplies. Depending on the season, we provide 40 to 80 lunches each month. The next program is February 17th at 9:30 a.m. Contact Edith at [esekasi@gmail.com](mailto:esekasi@gmail.com) if you would like to help.

### 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, February 23rd in the church kitchen. If you have any questions, Contact him at [ocampo@ascensionmd.org](mailto:ocampo@ascensionmd.org)

## Montgomery HOSPICE

Montgomery Hospice is a nonprofit that has been serving the residents of Montgomery County for 36 years. They provide professional end-of-life care in homes, extended care facilities, and at Casey House, their acute care facility. They are looking for new volunteers. The greatest need is for volunteers to visit patients. These volunteers provide companionship for patients, respite for family members, lavender oil hand massages, music by the bedside or help with practical matters. Many provide the gift of "presence" by simply being with a patient. All volunteers go through an application process and a three-day training. For more information, call 301-921-4400 or visit [www.montgomeryhospice.org/volunteer](http://www.montgomeryhospice.org/volunteer)

### WE THANK THE PEOPLE OF ASCENSION

Thank you for your tremendous outpouring of support for the Giving Tree this holiday season. Because of your generosity, Comfort Cases will be able to provide the following items to children in foster care:

- 26 pairs of infant pajamas
- 48 pairs of children's pajamas
- 42+ blankets
- 41 bibs
- 56 baby wash cloths, and
- 42 stuffed toys

Thank you for making a wonderful difference in the lives of foster children.

# ASCENSION ADVENTURERS



## Ascension Adventurers to tour the African American Museum

All Ascension parishioners and friends are invited to join us on a tour the Smithsonian Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C. on Friday, February 22nd .

Participants in our visit may explore this museum’s exhibits individually at their own pace, or they may explore together in small, self-organized groups.

Many of us will be travelling to the museum via Metro Rail. If you wish to travel with us, then please meet us at 9:00 a.m. near the information kiosk located in the Shady Grove Metro Station. Otherwise, you may travel to the museum however and whenever you wish.

If you would like to join us for lunch, we will be eating at noon at the “Sweet Home Café” which is located inside the museum. All parishioners and friends are welcome.

Weather permitting, the museum will be open from 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on February 22nd. Entrance to the museum is free on a first-come-first-serve basis and, during the month of February, you will not need an entrance pass on a weekday. However, you may need to wait in line if the museum is filled to capacity. This is why we are visiting the museum on a Friday and why we are intending to arrive early.

For additional information about the museum, please see [HTTPS://nmaahc.si.edu/](https://nmaahc.si.edu/) . Also, feel free to contact Richard Snay via email ([rssnay@aol.com](mailto:rssnay@aol.com)) or phone (301-977-5259). Please let Richard know by Wednesday, February 20th, if you plan to meet with us at the Shady Grove Metro Station to travel to the museum together or to go on your own. It would also be helpful for him to know if you plan to eat lunch with us at the museum.

### Directions to the African American Museum via Metro Rail

#### Address of the museum:

1400 Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, D.C.

Take a Red line Metro train from the Shady Grove Station to the Metro Center Station

Take either a Blue, Orange or Silver line Metro train from the Metro Center Station to the Federal Triangle Station

Walk southward one-half block along 12th Street toward the National Mall to Constitution Avenue. Walk westward one block along Constitution Avenue, and the museum will be on your left after you cross 14th Street.

# PLEDGE UPDATE



150 Pledges for the total of \$352,380.00 ; 11 Facilities Reserve Fund donations for \$7,648.00, and 1 Music Ministry for \$500.00 have been received.

Thanks to those below who have pledged to the annual giving campaign:

- Adeline Hedd-Williams
- Anne Brink
- Pamela Novel
- Abraham & Christine Kroma
- Adoma Baffoe
- Alexander & Letina Langley
- Algernon Thomas
- Alice Padmore
- Aloysius & Frances Farrah
- Amy Van Dalinda
- Andrew & Venice Greene
- Andrew Kullberg
- Anthony & Florence Chukwurah
- Arturo & Maria Rodriguez
- Avin & Anika Lalmansingh
- Barbara Mansfield
- Berenice Rodriguez
- Betsy & Guy Hasegawa
- Betty Knight
- Beverly Stennett
- Bob & Linda Waters
- Bob Wilkinson
- Brad Clark
- Brenda Gumula
- Carolyn Dowling & John Bjerke
- Ceda & Zadinga Ogada
- Charles & Rimie Sicard
- Charles Dickson
- Christoper & Rachel Ruggeri
- Christopher & Susan Ahalt
- Christopher & Vivian Rennie
- Claire Morin
- Claire Rosser
- Clay & Kay Kolle
- Curt Lindsay
- Cynthia Perley
- David & Laurie Yelle
- David & Stephanie Mitchell
- Debbie Garcia
- Don & Jean Cohn
- Don & Marty Marks
- Dorett Sutherland
- Dorothy Thiele
- Edna Leake
- Emmanuel & Gloria Nwankwo
- Emmanuel Johnson & Eliane Dunn-Johnson
- Enid Cole
- Esther Tellu
- Fayemi & Christina Johnson
- Fe Wlotzko
- Florence Sasu
- Frances Spina
- Francisco & Betsy Balicao
- Frank & Leslie Sanya
- Gail Unterberger & Randall Adams
- Gary S & Susan T McLaughlin
- Gayah & Semera Fahnbulleh
- Georgana & Henry Maines
- George Eng
- Georgette Dennis & Duglas Lozano
- Gerald & Kristin FitzPatrick
- Gerlinda Somerville
- Gerry Gil
- Gina Fera & Olive Rivera
- Gordon Donnelly
- Gregory & Peg Donnellon
- Howard & Margaret Holland
- Isaac & Josephine Clarke
- Ivan Flores
- Jacob & Sciou Broderick
- Jake & Ophelia Yalley-Ogunro
- James Black
- Janet King
- Javier Garcia Ocampo
- Jeff & Rose Buck
- Jemima Carr
- Jennie Cargill
- Jerry & Dotty Pfadenhauer
- Jesse Velasquez
- Jim & Toni Babcock
- John & Kelly Ten Hagen
- John Pruessner
- Joyce Thompson
- Julio Flores & Flor Ortiz
- Karen Olsen
- Kathleen Bainbridge
- Kathy Froelich
- Kevin & Lisa Blanc
- Kevin Conway
- Kirk Davies
- Kirk Fitch & Alice Benson
- Kristen Keating
- Lauren Kingsland
- Leonard & Erin Martinko
- Liz Lennon
- Lovetta Willie
- Lucia Pires
- Major & Hawa Clemens
- Mardia Dennis
- Margaret Mirin
- Margaret Tellu
- Marion Dossen-Rice
- Martha Lubet
- Mary Waldron
- Maura Ryan
- Maura Ryan
- Megan & Coiffi Didavi
- Melanie Mitchell
- Melody Bell
- Meredith Horan
- Monica Koenig Caphart
- Monty Petersen
- Mr. Jonathan Black
- Muyangwa & Matilda Muyangwa
- Nancy Carman
- Natalie Wilson
- Neil & Nathalie Scott
- Pamela Irons-Forth
- Paul Whitmore & Sari Stoddard
- Paul Whitmore & Sari Stoddard
- Peg Ruppel
- Pete & Ellen Minderman
- Peter & Kathy Wendolkowski
- Peter & Nan Hildebrand
- Peter Maroulis
- Pflantzbaum, Bubba
- Phyllis Eddy & Joe Deffenbaugh
- Raymond & Doris Chin
- Richard & Sue Snay
- Robert & Cindi Bonsib
- Robert & Esther Taylor
- Ron & Jan Hauber
- Ron & Sharon Hayden
- Ruby King
- Russell Weber
- Ruth Anna Skowronski & Luis Pedron
- Sarah & Daniel Gallagher
- Shirley Allen
- Steve Heinig/Michelle Wood
- Stewart & Lavina Williams
- Swithin & Ama Kwamena-Poh
- Ted & Kelly Bedell
- Terry & Kristin Johnsen
- Thomas & Lucille Roberson
- Tom & Denise Lionetti
- Tom Hall
- Trevor Walker & Angie Hight Walker
- Vergel Escobar
- Wadai Dennis
- Winsome Palmer

# VESTRY MINUTES

## January 2019

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**PRESENT:** Rev. Javier Garcia Ocampo, Senior Warden Betsy Hasegawa, Junior Warden Zadinga Ogada, Rose Buck, Gordon Donnelly, Meredith Horan, Janet King, Luis Pedron, John Pruessner, Berenice Rodriguez and Bob Waters. Absent: Susan McLaughlin. Others in attendance: Ascension Treasurer Avin Lalmansingh; Matthew Watson. The meeting opened at 7:10 p.m., with a short prayer and check in around the table.

**CONSENT AGENDA:** Janet moved that the consent agenda be adopted, Bob seconded the motion, and it passed.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

**Facility Repairs.** John reported that the repairs to the roof have been completed. Hopefully, the repairs will address the problems with leaking in several of the hallways. Funds from Facilities Reserve will be used to cover the costs.

**Office Computers.** Avin Lalmansingh summarized the assessment of the office computer equipment and recommendations on next steps. Ascension needs to update the equipment we currently have to allow staff to operate as efficiently as possible and permit use of the latest software for business applications. After consultations with EDOW IT specialist Peter Turner, Avin recommends that Ascension purchase two all-in-one stand-alone computers that have both processor and monitor in one configuration. The computers cost \$1,250 each. In addition, as previously reported, Peter suggests that we use a cloud-hosting service instead of purchasing a new server. The annual cost for the cloud-hosting service including firewall and maintenance is \$809. Thus, the total cost for the computers and cloud hosting is \$3,369. Janet moved that the Vestry approve the expenditure and designate it as part of the General Office portion of the budget. Meredith second the motion, and the Vestry unanimously approved.

**Matthew Watson's Eagle Scout Project.** Matthew Watson presented an overview of his Eagle Scout project, which is to renovate, refurbish, and paint Classroom 2 on the main level. As part of the project, he will update the cabinetry, install movable cubbies, and prepare and paint all of the walls in the room. Vestry members asked questions about the type of cabinetry and cubbies to be installed; sanding and finish work required, and the time frame for completing the work. The Vestry also discussed the project budget, which is approximately \$400. Janet made a motion to allow Matthew to make an appeal to Ascension's parishioners for financial support. Bob seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

**Overview of Ascension's 2019 Budget.** Avin Lalmansingh presented a comprehensive overview of Ascension's preliminary 2019 budget, including income and expenses together with a review of 2018. This past year was a very good one for Ascension financially. Ascension had fewer expenses as a result of changes in personnel, greater building use income, support from a Diocesan grant, and solid plate and pledge income. As a result, Ascension will have positive net income of the year, although the exact amount is not yet known. For 2019, Ascension's income will likely be much the same, minus the Diocesan grant. There are still a number of questions about 2019 expenses that will require additional deliberation. Javier suggested that the Vestry hold a special meeting just on the 2019 budget to provide time to discuss in detail. Vestry members agreed.



# VESTRY MINUTES

## January 2019

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**New Vestry Member Discernment.** Bob reported to the Vestry about ongoing efforts to discern and call a new slate of candidates to run for open positions on the Vestry. Those efforts are going well and a slate of candidates will be announced soon. Relatedly, the Vestry discussed the date of the parish annual meeting and decided that the meeting will be held on Sunday, March 10. The candidate forum with the Vestry candidates will be held the previous week, on Sunday, March 3. Reports for the annual meeting will be due on February 15.

**Parish Life.** The Vestry discussed a number of items related to parish life, including whether to hold the Shrove Tuesday pancake supper. It was decided to hold the event. The Vestry also discussed refreshments for the annual meeting. The next Ascension 1A Sunday service will be on Sunday, March 31.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

**Diocesan Convention.** Javier gave an overview of this year's Diocesan Convention, which begins with pre-convention activities on Friday, January 25, and formally convenes on Saturday, January 26. Javier emphasized that even if one is not a delegate, one can attend and it's a chance to see the Diocese in action, which Bob also emphasized.

**Vestry Retreat.** Vestry members discussed plans for this year's Vestry retreat, following the annual meeting and election of new members. The retreat will be held on March 15-16. Options for where to hold the retreat were discussed, as well as the role of this year's facilitator and topics to be discussed. The Vestry will finalize plans at its next meeting.

**WSSC Work Activities.** Zadinga briefed Vestry members on the WSSC activities scheduled to begin in April, which will last for approximately one year. WSSC will be replacing a sewer line that's adjacent to Ascension House, resulting in repair work that will take in the Ascension House parking lot. Zadinga will share further details as they become available, including how to mitigate any disruptions to weekday activities, including Mobile Med, and whether weekend activities may be impacted.

**Building Use.** Berenice led a discussion with the Vestry about Ascension's building use agreements with St. Barnabas and Sandy Ridge Academy. She reported that St. Barnabas is very happy to use the chapel space, albeit needing office and storage space, as well. In addition, their use of the chapel space has been a reminder of the poor condition of the chairs in the chapel. Vestry members discussed steps to address, including the chairs that are being stored in the chapel choir area. Gordon suggested a subcommittee of the Vestry meet to identify a solution. John and Luis agreed to be part of the subcommittee.

Berenice also led a discussion about Ascension's contract with Sandy Ridge. Ascension presented Sandy Ridge with a new contract on November 15, 2018, and met to discuss with them on December 6, 2018. At the meeting on December 6, there was a review of concerns that Sandy Ridge raised, as well as concerns Ascension expressed. Those concerns included areas related to our physical plant, use of the facility, itself, and the price and length of the contract. Berenice summarized the negotiations thus far on the contract, and what will should be the effective date for the new contract. She will continue to serve as point person in completing those negotiations and together with Javier, will meet with them as needed to finalize the contract based on input from the Vestry on the annual cost and length of the contract.

# VESTRY MINUTES

## January 2019

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**Personnel Update.** Javier reported on changes in the office staff. Eleni Hailu is no longer with Ascension and Jesse Velasquez has stepped in to handle many of the communications activities that had been performed by Eleni. The Vestry recommended that Javier explore options for a more permanent arrangement with Jesse, who is by all accounts has been doing a superb job in helping out.

**Worship Schedule.** The Vestry discussed the current worship schedule and feedback that Vestry members have heard on the timing of the services, music and other related issued. The Vestry agreed to continue monitoring feedback, with the possibility of conducting a more formal review or survey at the one-year mark of Javier serving as Priest in Charge.

### OPEN MIC

**Gordon** reported on the Epiphany Pageant, which was attended by over 20 people, and there was a brief discussion of ideas for next year. All agreed that Gordon had done an outstanding job in directing the pageant and there were thanks all around for his efforts.

**John** noted that he will be in touch with an electrician to investigate some of the dead outlets and other electrical needs we still have.

### ADJOURNMENT

At 9:55 p.m., Luis moved that the meeting be adjourned. Rose and Berenice seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Howard Holland on behalf of Danielle Allen  
Clerk of the Vestry

# CURRENT FINANCIAL STATUS

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## Parish Finances

### Budget Development and Implementation

We have closed out the 2018 finances. We are in the process of working on various budget scenarios for 2019 based on discussions with the Executive Committee and Vestry. We are also preparing financial reports for the upcoming 2019 Annual Meeting.

### December Financials

Total income for December was \$62,455. Ascension received \$5,826 in Plate receipts, \$42,224 in Pledge income, \$4,110 in Building Use Donations, and \$10,295 in Miscellaneous Unrestricted Income. Income categories were significantly higher than budgeted due to the Christmas season and the higher level of giving (i.e. plate and pledge) generally observed during the holidays. Also received were extra Trust Income totaling \$7,987 reported under Misc. Unrestricted Income.

Total expenses for December were \$31,474. Most expense categories were below the budgeted amounts. However, General Office Expenses and Utilities were higher than expected. Our monthly projected Diocesan Pledge of \$2,214 was issued to fulfill the 2018 Annual Diocesan Pledge of \$26, 572.

Taken together, we had net positive income of \$27,051 based on income and expense figures described above, and taking into account our Church's December mortgage payment of \$3,931. Lastly, the Treasurer's Report shows that our Unrestricted Cash Reserves is currently at \$172, 815. Restricted accounts such as the Endowment Fund increased to \$308, 663 but the Facilities Reserve Fund decreased to \$20, 700 due to HomeFix roof replacement expenses totaling \$21, 010 in December 2018.

Please refer to the Restricted Special Offering Balance for all restricted account categories and respective balances at of the end of December 2018.



## *The Ascendant*

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

February 2019

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

*Address Service Requested*

*"We Represent Christ Wherever We May Be."  
"Representamos a Cristo Donde Quiera Que Vayamos."*

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### Contact Us

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

### Parish Staff

Priest in Charge  
Pastoral Associate  
Deacon  
Minister of Music  
Parish Administrator  
Communications

Javier Garcia Ocampo  
Nan Hildebrand  
Eugene Wright  
Andrew Kullberg  
Lin Keene  
Jesse Velazquez

### Wednesday

7:00 p.m.—Holy Eucharist

### Sunday Services

8:00 a.m.— Holy Eucharist  
10:00 a.m. — Holy Eucharist  
12:00 p.m.— Eucaristia en Espanol

### Office Hours

Monday—Thursday : 9:30 A.M. — 3:30 P.M.  
Friday : 10:00 A.M. — 2:00 P.M.