



The Ascendant

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

June 2019

June 9 is Pentecost Sunday



The Christian holiday of Pentecost commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles and other followers of Jesus while they were in Jerusalem celebrating the Feast of Weeks. As described in the Acts of the Apostles, tongues of fire appeared over the apostles and they spoke in many languages. This is the celebration of the birthday of the Church.

Summer Bible Study: Parables

Some of Jesus's most picturesque but curious teachings are found in the Parables. Please join us in June and July for a friendly discussion and reflection upon some of Jesus's most valuable lessons. We will be meeting in room 2 at 6:30 on June 11, 18, 25, and July 2, 9, 16. Come join us for some or all of the meetings! Contact Fr. Javier at ocampo@ascensionmd.org to obtain a discussion guide or further questions.

Father's Day Food Drive

Honor your dads, living and departed, while helping others. Bring a bag of groceries to church before or on Father's Day, Sunday, June 16, for the food pantry at Gaithersburg HELP. Forms for dedication information are found at the Narthex. As always, we will give thanks for the ministry of fatherhood in the Prayers of the People at all services on the 16th.

Pentecost Sunday and the Season of Pentecost

This coming Sunday is not only the Seventh Sunday of Easter, but it is the celebration of the Pentecost. The Christian reason for celebrating is because it is the day that the Holy Spirit descended on the Apostles and the assembled one hundred or so gathered as followers of Jesus. The Day of Pentecost is considered the birthday of the church. Until that day, the gathering of the disciples and crowds around Jesus would not have been called a church or a Temple or a synagogue.

Jesus' post resurrection appearances were Jesus' way of completing the unfinished business he had with them. There was the need to heal Peter from his denial of Jesus after his arrest; there was the need gathering the frightened disciples together and forming them for their mission ahead as Apostles and, most importantly, for them to comprehend the enormity of what God had done for them and the world in sending Jesus to reveal God's grace, mercy and love.

For Jesus' last mission before the Ascension would be reminder of the fulfillment of his promise to send the Holy Spirit for their empowerment to carry out their mission to spread the good news of God to the world. Jesus did not hesitate to say this in Acts. "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth. The first step the Apostles took was to heal the polity of the disciples by replacing Judas with Matthias in prayer and in the casting of lots. The Twelve were restored.

When the day came for the Spirit, the disciples were all gathered in one place...it came with a violent wind from heaven, which filled the whole house where they were sitting...then tongues of fire separated them and came to rest on each of them. Then all were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. The Jews from all over the world then heard their languages being said by the disciples and they were amazed. Many said the apostles were drunk.

They were anything but drunk. They were free of their fears. They were free of their misconceptions about whom Jesus was and for what Jesus came to them. They knew that Jesus came not for the return of earthly kingdom of Israel, but for the Kingdom of God's reign on earth. They knew through the Holy Spirit that God was for all people in all places. They were given through the Spirit the gift of speech that allowed them to align themselves with, to identify with and to speak with all who heard the call of God. They were touched by fire and wind and knew, finally, why God had called to them through Jesus and they knew that through God and Jesus that they would be forever in their presence the Holy Spirit. God with us; God in us; and God for us and for all. The people of God were all the people of the earth and the world was filled with divine light, divine love and the possibility of the mercy of human love. What they knew would power them through all adversity, would power them to drink from the cup from which Jesus drank and power them to be the bearers of his word throughout the world. Let it be so for us. What was given to the apostles and to all the thousands of witnesses in Jerusalem today has passed down through the generations to us today and will pass through us to the generations to come until "thy kingdom come, they will be done on earth as it is in heaven".

Amen.

Rev. Nan+

A Joyful Path—10:00 a.m.

Since we have had such a small group of children attending Sunday School at 10:00 this year, we have been keeping everyone (preschool-5th grade) together in the Godly Play class, rather than offering Joyful Path and Godly Play separately. We meet in Room 4, the Place of Peace, which is also our infant/toddler class. Our last day of 10:00 Sunday school is June 9th. Hoping all the kids can join us as we celebrate our year of learning together.

A Joyful Path—12:00 p.m.

Escuela Dominical Para Nin@s. The members of the Joyful Path class learn how to concentrate our energy, using memory games and our stories of the week. Come join us in Room 2 during the 12:00 noon service.

Wednesday Morning Book Group

Ascension's book group is discussing the book, "Enlightenment Now" by Steven Pinker. This book claims that reason, science, and humanism have brought progress in the sense that health, prosperity, safety, peace, and happiness have tended to rise worldwide. We invite you to participate in our discussions. We meet on Wednesdays at 10:00 a.m. in Ascension's library.

Thursday Morning Yoga Class

Yoga classes are offered on Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. in room 2, 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.

Thursday Afternoon 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 during the school year. Contact Claire Rosser at 301-275-0617 or cjrosser@aol.com if you have any questions or for more information.

Spanish Class

Come and take part in Ascension's Spanish Class on Mondays from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Room 2. You don't need to know Spanish to come, we get together to learn and/or practice. For more information, contact Fr. Javier at ocampo@ascensionmd.org.

ComfortCases

There is a bin in the narthex for collecting additional travel-sized toiletry items for ComfortCases. Further information on ways to help the organization, from donating pajamas to helping pack comfort cases, can be found at www.comfortcases.org. The organization is housed at 15825 Shady Grove Road, Suite 60, Rockville, MD 20850; phone: 202-253-0402.

Coffee Supplies

Our coffee-and-fellowship hours after each service at Ascension have been full of good food, good drinks and good conversation, with an average of 50 to 60 people per Sunday. But with success comes need. Could you help by donating coffee cups, dessert plates, or cream for coffee? Please bring your donation on Sunday or during the week during office hours. Thank you! Padre Javier

One Ascension Sunday/Picnic— June 30

The time is near when we will again celebrate as one Ascension, at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, June 30. There will be no other services that day. We will have the picnic as well. Come one, come all, to join the fun!

We need to Update your Information

2019 Church Directories are available on the table in the narthex. Have you moved? Had an addition to your family? Please check your information and if there is any change let the church office know so our records can be updated.

Amazon Smile

AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to our church.

On your first visit to AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com), you are prompted

- ◆ to login with your Amazon Account
- ◆ Then Search for "Church of Ascension" and select Church of Ascension from the list with Location "Gaithersburg, MD".
- ◆ That is all. It will be connected to your account and every time you want to shop and when you go to smile.amazon.com, your selection will be there and will track your purchases.

Just make sure you select the right "Church of Ascension" at Gaithersburg MD :

The screenshot shows a search result for "Church of Ascension" in Gaithersburg MD. The search bar contains "Church of Ascension" and "Gaithersburg MD". Below the search bar, there are three dropdown menus: "Church of the Ascension", "About -", and "Christian". A yellow "Select" button is visible to the right of the search bar.

Help Wanted! Lots of Opportunities!

Can you read aloud? Do you feel a call to serve the chalice at the Eucharist? Would you like to greet people as they arrive? We are looking for new Worship Leaders at 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. Not sure what the Worship Leaders are? Take a look at the back of the Sunday service bulletin. You will be trained and will work with experienced parishioners. Most positions serve 2-5 times in each 13-week quarter. Speak to a Welcome Team or Worship Committee member or contact Sari Stoddard - and join in!

Creation Care in the Episcopal Church

The online address for Presiding Bishop Curry's Creation Care project is <https://www.episcopalchurch.org/creation-care> There is a brief video by Bishop Curry about his vision for this project. It includes resources for expanding our awareness of and engagement with environmental issues. There is also an opportunity to pledge to greater service in environmental stewardship. There are several questions associated with the pledge. Please consider taking the pledge. If the suggested responses don't seem to fit your vision, consider using local projects as a starting point.

How do you like our current services?

The survey is ending! If you haven't filled it out, this is your last chance. The Worship committee has started analyzing input. What's the survey about? This past year has seen significant changes to the Sunday services of Ascension. We need input on our members' likes and dislikes of the service changes. Please complete a survey form being as frank as you can. The survey is totally anonymous. If you would like to speak personally with Father Javier, another clergy member, or any member of the vestry or the Worship Committee, say so, and we will get in touch with you. <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/6MKNHRW>

Could You Tutor Someone in English?

The Literacy Council of Montgomery County is in need of English tutors to help adult learners gain a better understanding of the English language and improve their skills in reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Volunteers are asked to commit to two hours of tutoring each week and should plan on two hours of preparation each week as well. No experience is necessary. For more information, visit <http://www.literacycouncilmcmd.org/>

Volunteer at Montgomery Hospice

Montgomery Hospice is a nonprofit that has been serving the residents of Montgomery County for 36 years. It provides professional end-of-life care in homes, extended care facilities, and at Casey House, its 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

Immigration Consultations

Parishioner Lucelia R. Justiniano has 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 the first Sunday of every month. If you have questions or know anybody who needs legal advice she will be at the church library on Sunday, July 7, from 10:30 to 11:45 a.m. Contact Lucelia Justiniano at lucelia@jezicfirm.com or cell phone 240-565-5590.

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 June 16 at 9:30 a.m. Contact Edith at esekasi@gmail.com if you would like to help.

Ascension T-shirts

If you are interested in getting an Ascension T-shirt, please call or email Berenice at 249-281-3736 or berenice.rodriquez.84@gmail.com T-shirts are \$10.

ASCENSION ADVENTURERS

Ascension Adventurers to Attend “Oldies” Concert



All Ascension parishioners and friends are invited to enjoy a free concert by The Fabulous Hubcaps at the Gordon Bowie Music Pavilion in Montgomery Village on Saturday, June 8th, from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. One of the most sought out “Oldies” groups in the United States, The Fabulous Hubcaps will play all of the best oldies classics while dressing as your favorite artists. Come out and hear Elton John, Elvis, The Temptations, Willie Nelson and more, all for your enjoyment! Families are welcome to relax with a picnic and blankets or lawn chairs to enjoy the evening’s entertainment!

Beer and wine sales by Mullys Brewery and Elk Run Winery will be available to those 21 and older.

Parking is available behind Watkins Mill Elementary School (19003 Watkins Mill Road). Handicap accessible parking is available by calling 301-948-0110.

Guests are invited to bring lawn chairs, blankets, picnics/food and beverages for an evening out at the outdoor amphitheater.

For weather cancellation information, call 301-948-0110 (option 6) in advance of the performance.

For more information about The Fabulous Hubcaps, see <https://www.thehubcaps.com> .

Also, feel free to contact Richard Snay (tel: 301-977-5259; email: rsshay@aol.com), who recommends that you arrive early because this performance should be extremely popular.

Richard and Sue Snay plan to arrive in the viewing area around 6:45 p.m. All parishioners and friends are welcome to join them, but lawn space in the viewing area will be on a first come first serve basis.

P.S.: Poodle skirts are optional for gals, and greasing your hair is optional for guys.

VESTRY MINUTES

May 2019

PRESENT: The Rev. Javier Garcia Ocampo, Senior Warden Betsy Hasegawa, Junior Warden Zadinga Ogada, Gordon Donnelly, Meredith Horan, Susan McLaughlin, Berenice Rodriguez, Luis Pedron, James Black, Kristen Keating, Wadai Dennis, and Bob Waters. Others in attendance: The Rev. Nancy Hildebrand. The meeting opened at 2:02 p.m., with a prayer and check in around the table.

CONSENT AGENDA: Gordon moved that the consent agenda be adopted; Berenice seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Facility Committee. Received the costs for contracts submitted for the purchase of two A/C units in the Chapel. The options were narrowed to two companies, Precision HVAC (Precision) and TriState, with Precision including a 10 year warranty. Decided to use Precision based on our past experience and because we have an existing service contract with them. Motion was made and seconded to select Precision to complete the HVAC replacement in the Chapel at a total cost not to exceed \$16,000. The motion passed unanimously.

ARK proposals for fire safety maintenance, including the elevator shaft, were discussed next. A motion was made to approve the proposals for ARK to do the battery testing and the fire sprinkler system safety inspection at a total cost not to exceed \$3,000. The motion was seconded and it passed unanimously.

Formation of Elections Working Group. Ascension's bylaws need to be updated. Berenice, Gordon, Susan and Zadinga will form a vestry subcommittee to begin the process. The goals of the update include 1) making the document more plain language for clarity and understanding, and 2) moving the date of the Annual Meeting to no later than January.

EDOW Strategic Planning April 25 Meeting Recap. The intent of the meeting was to identify strategies to accomplish diocesan objectives, as suggested by the parishes, over a number of years. There will be a follow-up retreat in June.

Contracts Update. St. Barnabas signed a contract with Ascension. Berenice and Zadinga will meet with St. Barnabas once again to finalize the agreement. There is a plan to meet with Dr. Tina to confirm what space is available. The first regular meeting with Sandy Ridge went well. They did a walk through to discuss their needs including regular maintenance needs, mulch, etc.

Rice Bowl/Meal Packing Event. The Lenten Rice Bowl raised \$1600. Another \$1700-\$1800 is needed to meet the minimum required for the event with Rise Against Hunger. June 9th is the scheduled packing date. We have a contract. The event will be announced to the church.

NEW BUSINESS

Health and Wellness Committee. Questions arose recently about when and how often the defibrillators and first aid kits are checked. An assessment of the church's needs is necessary.

VESTRY MINUTES

May 2019

At present, most emergency assistance plans during service hours are under the purview of the Welcome Team. Also, should we consider emergency messaging by text?

Security Concerns. A discussion regarding the security of the Church took place. A decision to install cameras to the main building was made. In an attempt to refresh security practices, the door code has been changed to ensure that only those who should have it will know it.

OPEN MIC

Meredith shared that a music session with Ana Hernandez is planned for Saturday, October 26th from 10:00am - 2:00pm. We are partnering with Lutherans to bring her workshop to the community. 40 people minimum to cover costs but more can participate. Registration is required.

Gordon shared that Children's Formation wants to hand out a postcard during the Yard Sale with information about the Church and its Youth Offerings. They would also like to hold a children's activity during the sale.

The Parish Picnic is scheduled for 30 June following the One Ascension 10:00am service.

Wadai raised concerns about the safety and soundness of Ascension House. Berenice suggested the Vestry look into the insurance policy for certain endorsements and to plan an assessment of the property for common hazards of older structures such as it is. Berenice will contact some companies for quotes on an inspection.

Berenice has been in contact with a company that repurposes old lockers, from schools, to create storage solutions. That company has agreed to provide some to Ascension at no cost. They will meet with us in the weeks following the May Vestry meeting.

Javier shared that Katie Beth will be ordained and needs a letter from the Vestry.

Wadai brought up the need for greater organizational leadership for volunteer activities. We should consider designating someone to coordinate a volunteer team.

ADJOURNMENT: At 5:07 p.m., the meeting ended with a closing prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Danielle Allen
Clerk of the Vestry

Current Financial Status



Parish Finances

Budget Development and Implementation

The Stewardship committee met on May 22nd, 2019 to review the church financials. A summary of Income and Expense figures for April 2019 is provided below.

April Financials

Total revenue for April was \$44,799. The Monthly Profit & Loss statement shows that Ascension received \$4,890 in Plate receipts, \$31,107 in Pledge income, \$4,854 in Building Use Donations, and \$3948 in Miscellaneous Unrestricted Income. Total revenue was higher than budgeted for the month.

Total expenses for April were \$45,952. The Monthly Profit & Loss statement shows that expense categories Salary & Benefits and Facilities were noticeably over budget. The monthly projected Diocesan Pledge was expectedly higher due to payment of three months' worth of pledges for February through April 2019.

Taken together, we had net negative revenue for April of \$1,153 based on the revenue and expense figures just described. The Balance Sheet shows that the Checking account balance is \$137, 108. The Savings account balance is \$52, 516.

The Restricted Special Offering Balance sheet lists all restricted accounts, including the Endowment Fund that has increased to \$320,602 and the Facilities Reserve Fund that has increased to \$7,777.



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June 2019

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.*

Contact Us

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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

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.