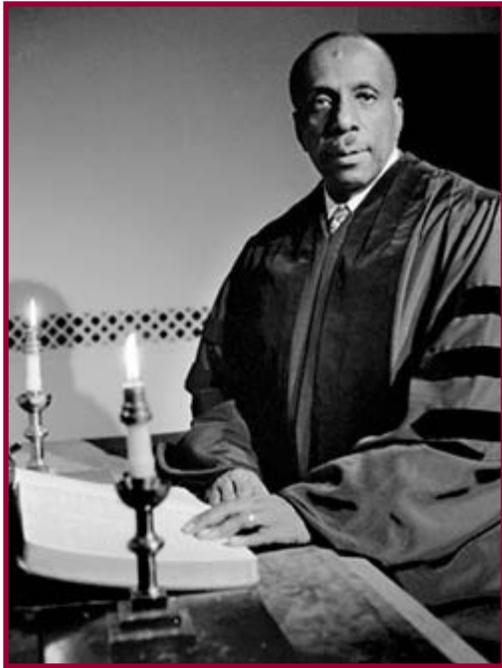


# WELCOME TO CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

*The Fourth Sunday of Advent: 24 December A.D. 2017*

## The Work of Christmas Begins



Howard Thurman (1899 - 1981) wrote:

When the song of the angels is stilled,  
When the star in the sky is gone,  
When the kings and princes are home,  
When the shepherds are back with their flock,

The work of Christmas begins:

To find the lost,  
To heal the broken,  
To feed the hungry,  
To release the prisoner,  
To rebuild the nations,  
To bring peace among people,  
To make music in the heart.

Howard Thurman was an influential American author, philosopher, theologian, educator and civil rights leader. He was Dean of Chapel at Howard University and Boston University for more than two decades, wrote 21 books, and in 1944 helped found a multicultural church. He was a mentor of Martin Luther King.

### Christmas Service Schedule

Christmas Day, Monday, December 25  
10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist with Carols and Organ: Main Church

The First Sunday After Christmas, Sunday, December 31—"One Ascension Sunday"  
10:00 a.m. Bilingual Lessons and Carols: Main Church

*There will be no Christian Formation on Sunday,  
December 24 or December 31.*

**TO OUR VISITORS, NEWCOMERS, AND SEEKERS**

*We thank you for joining us today and hope you will return often.*

At Ascension, our mission is to become "ambassadors of Christ," so we welcome you to this community of resident aliens. We invite you to fill out a welcome card (located in the rack at the ends of each pew).

## TODAY AT ASCENSION

**Preacher: Randy Lord-Wilkinson**

**Refreshments** and conversation follow every service in the lower atrium.

The **Nursery is open today** from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. It is in Room 2, in the rear hallway of the annex at the high school end of the building. Ask a welcome team member for directions.

### LIFE LONG LEARNING

#### Tai Chi

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. Please come and join us.

There will be no Tai Chi on December 28th. We will resume in January. 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.

#### Children's Formation

In observance of the Christmas holiday, Godly Play and Joyful Path will not meet this week.

The members of A Joyful Path are moving their classroom upstairs to room 2 (the old nursery). Come and join us in our new setting Sunday January 7th after the 9am service.

#### Spanish Class

Come and take part in Ascension's Spanish Class on Mondays from 6:00 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](mailto:ocampo@ascensionmd.org)

#### Thursday Morning Yoga

It will be on hiatus for the season and will resume at 10:00 a.m. on January 11, 2018.

#### Wednesday Morning Book Group

*Night*, by Elie Weisel, is the next selection. Read the first three chapters in preparation for the group's next meeting on January 3. The group meets weekly in the Library from 10:00-11:30 a.m.

### LIFE AT ASCENSION

#### One Ascension Sunday—December 31st

One Ascension Sunday is a week away! We are going to celebrate the end of one year and the start of another. Please join us after the service and bring a dish to share. The main course will be spiral cut ham. We need side dishes such as macaroni and cheese, potatoes, green beans, salads, desserts or your favorite dish. Please plan on joining in on the fun. A clipboard will again be passed around in the church so that we can have a rough idea of who is coming and what people are bringing.

Janet King, for the Parish Life Committee

### Special Christmastide Offering

Dear Friends and Members of Ascension:

At its most recent meeting on December 17th, the Vestry voted unanimously to take up a special Christmastide collection to support the cause of Henry Sanchez, whose story is related to us by parish member Lucelia Justiniano, an immigration lawyer.

"Henry Sanchez, whose case obtained national attention when he was falsely accused of raping a girl at Rockville High School, was for a time the "poster child", or scapegoat, for anti-immigrant sentiment around the country.

"All charges against Henry were dismissed. In the process, his father Adolfo was detained by immigration authorities, forcing his two other children (ages 21 and 14) out of their apartment. Adolfo was released from ICE (Immigration and Customs Enforcement) custody on a \$20,000 bond (which seems inordinately high since he has no criminal background at all) but the family was able to pull together enough money to pay it through loans from friends.

"After Henry's charges were dismissed, the state released him into ICE custody and now is holding him on a \$40,000 bond which the family is unable to pay. Adolfo's wife (Henry's stepmother) has also struggled greatly with caring for her 9 children since she depended on him to help provide for her children (the youngest 7 living with them are 2, 4, 9, 9, 13, 15, and 21 years old). Henry lived on his own from the age of 14 to 18 when he reunited with his father.

"He has never before been in any trouble with the police here or in his native Guatemala. He endured substantial physical abuse at the hands of his mother while he lived with her in Guatemala and fled Guatemala due to gang threats. There is no doubt that he needs guidance and therapy to overcome his past trauma. However, what he has received so far in this country is downright injustice. Adolfo, Henry, and his two brothers are all currently in deportation proceedings.

"I come across so many devastating stories but I feel like extending a hand to this family will renew their hopes in the U.S.

"Thank you.  
Lucelia R. Justiniano, Esq."

If you want to make a contribution to Henry's fund, you may write a check to 'Ascension' with 'Henry' in the memo line. We realize that this is a controversial project, and so all of us in the leadership circle want to be available to hear your concerns and questions, if you have any. Our pictures and names are in the narthex (and have been for years), so you know who we are!

We are also starting a bit late, but remember that Christmas lasts until January 6, the Feast of the Epiphany. So if we can have your offering in hand by Sunday, January 7 we would be most grateful!

Christmastide Blessings!  
The Clergy and Vestry of Ascension

## Annual Giving Pledge Campaign

The Annual Giving Pledge Campaign has been extended through the end of December in order to reach all congregation members who have not yet pledged for funding year 2018. For tax planning purposes, please be aware that the last day to fulfill a 2017 pledge commitment or to make a donation/gift for calendar year 2017 will be Tuesday, December 26h, 2017.

## Epiphany Pageant - The King's Birthday

Ascension's annual Epiphany Pageant goes up at 5:00 pm. on Sunday, January 7, 2018, in the context of the weekly Eucharist celebrated at this time. It will take place in the main church.

There are parts and support roles for people of all ages.

Here is the rehearsal schedule:

- ◆ Saturday, December 30th - 10:30-12:00 noon
- ◆ Saturday, January 6th - 10:30-12:00 noon

All rehearsals are in the main church.

See you there!

Thanks, Gordon  
vagordon1@yahoo.com

## Nursery Closing after Sunday, December 31

At the most recent meeting of Ascension's teachers with the Rector, it was clear that the "nursery" has not been utilized as originally intended for toddlers and infants up to age 3. This has been the case for some time. Parents with infants and toddlers attend the 10:15 service (often with a child on the way!) or one of our other services. Starting January 7, 2018, Room 2 will be the Joyful Path classroom (for kids in 3rd to 5th grade), and Room 4 will become a comfortable place for parents with children who need a "break" from sitting in church. There will be comfortable furniture, a bathroom, and in time a monitor so that the service can be seen and heard there.

## PLEDGE UPDATE AS OF DECEMBER 19, 2017

118 Pledges for a total of \$281,576

Thanks to those below who have pledged to the annual giving campaign these past couple of weeks:

- |                             |                                |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ◆ Isaac & Josephine Clarke  | ◆ Mabel Olivera                |
| ◆ Gina Fera                 | ◆ Ted & Kelly Bedell           |
| ◆ Tom & Denise Lionetti     | ◆ Carolyn Dowling/ John Bjerke |
| ◆ Winsome J Palmer          | ◆ Terry & Kristin Johnsen      |
| ◆ Algernon Thomas           | ◆ Ruby King                    |
| ◆ Bendu B Toee              | ◆ Chikezie Nwankwo             |
| ◆ Kathleen Bainbridge       | ◆ Alice E Padmore              |
| ◆ Aloysius & Frances Farrah | ◆ Marion Rice                  |
| ◆ Barbara Mansfield         | ◆ Neil & Nathalie Scott        |
| ◆ Peter Maroulis            | ◆ Linda G Sye                  |
|                             | ◆ Laura Ann Whirley            |
|                             | ◆ Robert A Wilkinson           |

## Men's Shelter Lunch Program

The Men's Shelter Lunch program provides bagged lunches for homeless men, assembled in the Undercroft once a month. Supplies are donated by Ascension members. Depending on the season, we provide forty to eighty lunches a month.

The next time the program operates is January 21 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>.

## 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. **Please: no perishables.** For more information, contact Melanie Mitchell at 301.519.1074 or [melanie.mitchell@verizon.net](mailto:melanie.mitchell@verizon.net)

## Mobile Med

Every Tuesday, Mobile Med will be open for the service until 3:00 p.m. Starting January 2nd, our Tuesday Mobile Med clinic at Ascension House will move to the fixed site at Rollins Avenue for the cold winter months. It is too cold in the van for the staff, patients and equipment. Around February 1st, I will request blackout dates for March and April. If there are questions, contact us at [spangle1@comcast.net](mailto:spangle1@comcast.net) or 240.372.3652.

## 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, January 27 in the church kitchen. If you have any questions, Contact Javier at [ocampo@ascensionmd.org](mailto:ocampo@ascensionmd.org)

## CONTACT US

205 S. Summit Ave., Gaithersburg, Maryland, 20877  
www.ascensionmd.org

- ◆ Office Hours: Monday-Friday 10:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m.
- ◆ Phone: 301.948.0122 ◆ Fax: 301.926.9012
- ◆ Randy's Cell: 301.801.4347
- ◆ Javier's Cell: 202.903.6426
- ◆ Prayer requests: Fill out a yellow prayer request card on the table outside the office, in the Chapel or e-mail the office at office@ascensionmd.org.

**Bishop of Washington** - The Rt. Rev. Mariann Edgar Budde  
mebudde@edow.org, 202.537.6550

**Rector** - (The Rev.) Randy Lord-Wilkinson  
ral@ascensionmd.org, voice mailbox 12

**Assistant to the Rector**—The Rev. Javier Garcia Ocampo  
ocampo@ascensionmd.org, voice mailbox 16

### Interim Ministers of Music

9:00 a.m. Clarice Snyder  
11:15 a.m. Karina Gomez McCarty

**Parish Administrator** - Lin Keene

office@ascensionmd.org, voice mailbox 10

**Media Specialist**—Eleni Hailu

comm@ascensionmd.org, voice mailbox 14

**Altar Guild Directors**, Mardia Dennis, 301.540.4499

mard908@gmail.com, Dotty Pfadenhauer, dottypfa@aol.com  
and Georgana Maines, mainesgnh@verizon.net

**Nursery Attendant**—Brenda Alvarez,

brendaalvarezduque@hotmail.com

## LEADERSHIP AT ASCENSION

**Senior Warden:** Betsy Hasegawa

**Junior Warden:** Janet King

### Vestry:

2018: Berenice Rodriguez, Avin Lalmansingh,  
Gary McLaughlin

2019: Rose Buck, Zadinga Ogada, John Pruessner

2020: Gordon Donnelly, Meredith Horan, Luis Pedron

Sari Stoddard, *Clerk of the Vestry*

Howard Holland, *Treasurer*

Christian Formation for Children: Megan Didavi ~ Christian  
Formation for Youth: Angie Hight-Walker ~ Facilities: Ted Be-  
dell Finance: Howard Holland ~ Mission: Paul Boynton ~ Pas-  
toral Care: Randy Lord-Wilkinson Personnel: Jean Cohn ~  
Worship: Carleton MacDonald

### Delegates to Diocesan Convention:

Kristen Keating, Carleton MacDonald, Sue Snay

Alternate: Mardia Dennis

## Cycles of Prayer

In the Diocesan cycle of prayer, we pray for  
Church of St. Stephen and the Incarnation and  
Misa Alegria, DC

St. John's Church, Zion Parish

St. John's Church, Broad Creek

St. John's Church, Mt. Rainier

St. John's Church, Georgetown

St. John's Church, Lafayette Square and Iglesia San Juan

St. John's Church, Norwood

St. John's Church, Olney

St. John's Episcopal School, Olney

St. John's Preschool, DC

## THIS WEEK AT ASCENSION

### Monday, December 25

OFFICE CLOSED

- 10:00 a.m. Christmas Service—Main Church
- 1:00 p.m. Al-Anon—Room 1
- 7:00 p.m. Overeaters Anonymous—Room 1

### Tuesday, December 26

OFFICE CLOSED

- 10:30 a.m. Epiphany Pageant Rehearsal—Main Church
- 7:00 p.m. Codependents Anonymous—Room 1
- 7:00 p.m. Stillwater Mindfulness Group—Chapel
- 8:30 p.m. Al-Anon—Room 1

### Wednesday, December 27

OFFICE CLOSED

- 1:00 p.m. Al-Anon—Room 1
- 7:00 p.m. Overeaters Anonymous—Room 1
- 8:00 p.m. Gamblers' Anonymous—Chapel

### Thursday, December 28

- 4:00 p.m. Tai Chi—Chapel
- 7:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal—Choir Room
- 7:30 p.m. Zumba—Undercroft

### Friday, December 29

- 1:00 p.m. Al Anon—Room 1

### Saturday, December 30

- 9:00 a.m. Overeaters Anonymous—Chapel
- 11:00 a.m. Al-Anon—Undercroft
- 11:00 a.m. Overeaters Anonymous—Room 1

### Sunday, December 31

- 10:00 a.m. Bilingual Lessons and Carols—Main Church

Attendance	December 3	December 10	December 17
7:45 a.m.	30	26	27
9:00 a.m.	87	62	74
10:15 a.m.	9	0	5
11:00 a.m. Spanish Service	43	31	42
11:15 am	42	44	32
5:00 p.m.	12	13	12
Total:	223	176	192