

WELCOME TO CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

The Last Sunday after Epiphany : 11 February A.D. 2018

What's Up with Randy?

If you are connected to me on social media or attended last Sunday's town hall meeting, or have just engaged me in casual conversation, you will already know what I am writing about here. The big news is that I am in week three of working as a part time lecturer in the astronomy department at the University of Maryland, College Park. Specifically, my title is Program Associate in the College Park Scholars program "Science, Discovery, and the Universe." SDU is one of twelve interdisciplinary tracks in the Scholars program for gifted and highly motivated freshmen [sic] and sophomores. There are also programs oriented around life sciences and economics, for example.

This was one of the first jobs I applied for 11 months ago after I announced to you at our annual meeting, that I was going to try to go bi-vocational. I had a stellar interview with the program director. I was actually amazed that I even got to the interview stage, as other applicants had Ph.D.'s. And it was in the astronomy department! I'd be teaching a class on the history and culture of astronomy, my first love. Most of you will recall that this was my first ambition as a child and teen. And I'd be fostering community among young adults new to university culture. Perfect!

But I wasn't chosen. Someone who worked for the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum was. The program director did say that he might invite me to be a guest speaker, however.

I continued to look for part time teaching positions and even signed up to be an MCPS substitute teacher. I was invited to apply for a part time position funded by Montgomery County and Interfaith Works, working with a colleague in the community who I very much respected. There was no teaching involved (my true calling), but it would be an extension of work I had already been doing for years. But that was not to be, either. Someone who had worked for Interfaith Works for 20 years was chosen. That news came to me last October, and that's when I realized that the bi-vocational model wasn't going to work for me and you.

I applied to a Montgomery College program for people transitioning into teaching called Alternative Certification for Effective Teachers. If admitted, I could be a fully compensated teacher-intern come Fall of '18 and get my certification pretty quickly. The ACET program recruits prospective teachers in high demand areas such as high school physics, math, computer science, and middle school science. Social studies would've been an obvious fit for me, but the program wasn't looking for those. After talking to the program director, we concluded that middle school science (!) might be a good fit.

Science, again. A major piece of the application process was to pass a standardized test for middle school science teachers. I took that test a few weeks ago and actually passed. Handily. So I was on my way to being a science teacher (if I am admitted to the program)! What a journey!

I was at peace with this development, and excited even, when I got an e-mail a few weeks ago from the SDU program director entitled "Somewhat Urgent." The person chosen for the position at UMD had to resign and I was now the new Program Associate. I am still in state of shock and awe. The timing of this is actually better for me. I see now that I could not have done this and been even a part time rector of Ascension. Our parish is too big, and complex, and needs a full time priest.

A spiritual person might say that I am being led by the Spirit. It's what I would say to one of you if you told me this story. I mean, what are the odds? A 62 year old rector getting a teaching job at a university, or starting a new vocation as a science teacher? And yet I feel a sense of rightness about the whole thing, and joy, and peace, and a little intimidated. All of those subjective feelings go with a sense of "call." I do feel as though I am commencing a new mission.

A friend was quick to remind me that my spirituality as a child flowed out of my love and reverence for the cosmos. I was led to God by the stars, and now God was leading me back to them.

My new boss asked me if I were available for the Fall semester. I told him I was interested but that I was in discernment around being a middle school science teacher. God answers prayer through action. I need to keep moving and engaging to see where I am to go. It is good to have choices. Picasso said that "Inspiration exists, but it has to find you working."

I am as sure as I can be that Ascension is and will also be guided into the next chapter of its emerging mission. Your leaders are stellar (an astronomical term), and if you listen and watch with them, you will be part of the new thing that God wants to do with you.

Peace!

Randy

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: Katie Beth

Katie Beth is from the deep south, Louisiana, where people speak a little bit differently and Jesus, this time of year, generally comes in the form of a plastic baby inside a cake. You can ask her more about that later. Prior to moving to D.C. Katie Beth lived in Taiwan, the Republic of China, teaching and working with aboriginal families. In Taiwan, she saw the effects of colonialism and abusive evangelism, and this motivated her to study religion and conflict resolution. Katie Beth has spent the last three years living in D.C., studying these things at Wesley Theological Seminary and American University. Supported by Ascension* Katie Beth just recently completed an internship at the World Council of Churches in Geneva, Switzerland, which she will share more about in her sermon.

Refreshments and conversation follow every service in the lower atrium.

A place of refuge for parents with restless children is available all morning in the Main Building, in Room 4.

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. 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.

A Joyful Path

The members of A Joyful Path will explore the meaning of being of service to others. I John 3:18 "Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. Also the meaning of this Mexican proverb: "A good deed is the best prayer." Come and join us in Room 2 after the 9:00 a.m. service (10:15).

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

Thursday Morning Yoga

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

New Book for Wednesday Morning Book Group

Beginning Wednesday, March 7, the Wednesday morning group will begin to discuss Brian McLaren's latest book entitled *The Great Spiritual Migration: How the World's Largest Religion Is Seeking a Better Way to Be Christian*. Watch the Sunday announcements and weekly e-mails for reading assignments. Here's a description from Amazon.com (<http://amzn.to/2nGabwg>): "Brian McLaren, a leading voice in contemporary religion, argues that— notwithstanding the dire headlines about the demise of faith and drop in church attendance—Christian faith is not dying. Rather, it is embarking on a once-in-an-era spiritual shift. For millions, the journey has already begun."

Godly Play

Lent is the Season when we prepare for Easter. These six weeks are a solemn time, overflowing with meaning. This lesson gives an introduction to the relationship of Lent to the Mystery of Easter as well as how Easter overflows into the season of Easter. This lesson that introduces the Mystery of Easter will be followed by the lessons called the Faces of Easter during the weeks of Lent.

Spirituality and Dementia workshop: February 8

This workshop, led by Janice Hicks (candidate in the deacon formation process in the diocese), is designed to provide information to clergy and all who are interested about spirituality related to dementia along with resources for congregations and families dealing the effects of dementia. \$10 registration fee includes workshop, coffee, lunch and CEU certificate. Thursday, February 8 from 10:00 - 11:30, a.m. at The Village at Rockville (map). Please contact Alice Benson with any questions. To register: <http://bit.ly/2DC0sgx>

Lenten Bible Study: Contemplating Colossians

Contemplation is entering into the realm of spiritual mystery. In the New Testament, the mysterious letter to the Colossians takes up that theme with its claim that we have the mystery of Christ. Over the first five Sundays in Lent, Sister Elena will lead an encounter with this mysterious short text and its theologies of the pre-existence of Christ, invisibility (Harry Potter's not the only one with a cloak!), spiritual power and resurrection. We'll also engage the apparent contradiction with these theologies and their manifestation within an unjust social order. Meets from 10:15 to 10:45 a.m. on five Sundays, February 18 through March 18, in the Undercroft.

LIFE AT ASCENSION

Interfaith Class on "Abraham's Children"

This class, to have been offered in March as a Lenten study for local Jews, Christians, and Muslims, has been cancelled. For details, see Randy.

Lost and Found

If you are missing an item, take a look in the Lost and Found bin located by Work room 5. Lost items are due to be recycled on February 9th.

Pledge Envelopes

Please don't forget to pickup your pledge envelopes located on the table outside the Parish Office if you haven't done so. If your pledge envelope is not there and you did not pick it up please contact Lin by e-mail at office@ascensionmd.org.

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

This fun annual event will be held on Tuesday, February 13, 2018 from 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. in the Undercroft Commons. Come join us to celebrate Mardi Gras, Carnival, Fat Tuesday...or a good excuse to have pancakes and sausage! Vegetarian sausage, gluten free pancakes and sugar-free syrup are included on the traditional menu as well as a gluten free option...there will be something for everyone. This fun event needs lots of helpers AND lots of attendees, 'the more, the merrier!' Cost (s); \$5.00 per adult; \$3.00 per children 4 to 10 years; and children under 4 are free. N.B. We DO take debit and credit cards. If you have an instrument you would like to play, contact Randy at ral@ascensionmd.org. Sign up here: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0a4caba82da75-shrove1>

LIFE AT ASCENSION

Ash Wednesday is February 14



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. and 9:00 a.m.

Palm Sunday is a 1A Sunday!

There will be one service at 10:00 a.m. Afterward will be Randy's farewell celebration. Save the date: March 25.

Special Christmas Offering

Ascension members raised \$605.00 toward Latino youth Henry Sanchez's bond, as he has been detained by Immigration and Customs Enforcement. This will be forwarded to parish member Lucelia Justiniano, an attorney at the law firm representing his family.

Hand Sanitizer

Small bottles of Purell are in the pew racks for you to use if you intend to intinct. And if you forget, there's another bottle or two on the table in front of the font .

Shrove Tuesday Organizational Meeting

Join me and others to see if we can perform a pre-Lenten miracle once again, in the Undercroft at 10:15 (or right after the 9:00 a.m. service). - RALW

Annual Meeting

Our annual parish meeting will take place at 12:30 p.m. on Sunday, March 4 in the Undercroft Commons. 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 9:00 a.m. and 11:00/11:15 a.m. services in he Undercroft .

PLEDGE UPDATE AS OF FEBRUARY 7, 2018



167 Pledges for a total of \$371,708

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

- ◆ Adoma Baffoe
- ◆ Anthony & Florence Chukwurah
- ◆ Edna A Leake
- ◆ Edith Sekasi-Wasikye

CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

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 program operate on February 18 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

Mobile Med

Mobile Med will not be at Ascension House starting tomorrow January 2nd (until the beginning of March). I have posted signs on the Ascension House bulletin board and on the door to the chapel. Signs list the alternate location as well as a number to contact for more information.

Jean Cohn
spangle1@comcast.net
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, February 24 in the church kitchen. If you have any questions, Contact Javier at ocampo@ascensionmd.org

2018 Lenten Rice Bowl Recipient

A Lenten tradition since the tenure of Rector Bill Smalley (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. This year the Rice Bowl offering goes to Gaithersburg HELP, an agency that provides material support to struggling residents of all kinds. Ascension's food offering goes to the HELP food pantry on Muddy Branch Rd. Parish member Melanie Mitchell has been heavily involved with HELP board for many years. Former Rector Joe Clark served two terms as president of the HELP board.

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

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*
Avin Lalmansingh, *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
World Mission Sunday

Diocesan Commission on Ministry

All Seminaries, Seminarians, and Seminary Professors; Pos-
tulant and Candidates

Pray in thanksgiving for the life and witness of Absalom
Jones

Ash Wednesday (February 14)

THIS WEEK AT ASCENSION

Monday, February 12

- 11:30 a.m. Living with a Chronic Illness—Room 1
- 1:00 p.m. AL-Anon—Room 1
- 6:00 p.m. Spanish Class—Ascension House
- 7:00 p.m. Overeaters Anonymous—Room 1

Tuesday, February 13

- 10:30 a.m. Staff Meeting—Library
- 6:00 p.m. Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper—Undercroft
- 6:00 p.m. Spanish Bible Study—Ascension House
- 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, February 14

- 7:00 a.m. Ash Wednesday—Shady Grove Metro Station
- 10:00 a.m. Wednesday Morning Book Group—Library
- 12:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist- Main Church
- 1:00 p.m. AL-Anon—Room 1
- 6:00 p.m. Ensemble Rehearsal—Main Church
- 7:00 p.m. Overeaters Anonymous—Room 1
- 8:00 p.m. Gamblers' Anonymous—Chapel

Thursday, February 15

- 10:00 a.m. Yoga—Chapel
- 4:00 p.m. Tai Chi —Chapel
- 7:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal—Choir Room
- 7:30 p.m. Zumba-Undercroft

Friday, February 16

- 1:00 p.m. AL Anon—Room 1
- 6:00 p.m. Couples 12-Step Program—Room 1

Saturday, February 17

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

Sunday, February 18

Preacher: Javier Ocampo

- 7:45 a.m. Holy Eucharist—Main Church
- 9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist—Main Church
- 10:00 a.m. Latin Choir—Room 1
- 10:15 a.m. Adult Class —Library
- 10:15 a.m. Godly Play—Room 6
- 10:15 a.m. Joyful Path—Room 2
- 10:15 a.m. Service for Young Children— Chapel
- 10:15 a.m. Men's Shelter Lunches
- 10:15 a.m. Lenten Study—Undercroft
- 11:00 a.m. Eucaristia en Espanol—Chapel
- 11:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist—Main Church
- 1:30 p.m. Maryland Uke Jam—Undercroft
- 5:00 p.m. Contemplative Eucharist—Chapel

Attendance	January 21	January 28	February 4
7:45 a.m.	26	22	25
9:00 a.m.	81	60	84
10:15 a.m.	14	7	7
11:00 a.m. Spanish Service	45	45	30
11:15 am	50	62	27
5:00 p.m.	6	6	6
Total:	222	202	179