

WELCOME TO CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

The First Sunday in Lent : 18 February A.D. 2018

Mr. Christ, the Unexpected One

For many more years than I care to admit, I thought ‘Christ’ was Jesus’s last name. When I was fortunate enough to study under some world class, Harvard educated religious studies profs at *West Virginia University (italics mine!)*, I put it all together in a new way. Or, more accurately, it was explained to me that ‘Christ’ was his title. It meant “anointed one” in Greek. In Hebrew, the term is ‘Messiah’. So we can call him Jesus Messiah, too. Anointed ones in ancient Israel were kings. They were anointed with God’s Spirit, and acted as God’s representatives in the governing and leading of the people.

In general, many Jews in that period of the history of Israel expected the Messiah, the Christ, to be another king, like David. He would liberate them from Roman occupation and lead God’s Chosen to a new and glorious chapter of their history.

But, of course, we know how the story goes. Jesus was not that kind of Christ.

I had a bishop in Washington State who always said “Jesus the Christ” when he prayed aloud and when he celebrated the Eucharist, even when the ‘the’ wasn’t there. He wanted us to know who Jesus was and is, and to remind us that this human being was as anointed as anyone could possibly be: positively brimming over with Spirit.

Don’t be too surprised if I start calling him ‘the’ Christ, because that is who he is for us. I pray, however, that Jesus the Christ will accompany you on your journey always, and never cease to be a surprise to you.

Namasté,

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: Javier Ocampo

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 ocampoj@ascensionmd.org

There is no class on Monday February 19.

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

This week's Godly Play lessons, the Faces of Easter I and II, help children prepare for the Mystery of Easter. We move toward the Mystery by hearing the stories of Christ's journey toward the cross and resurrection. This week we focus on the face of Christ as a newborn child and the face of Christ as the One who was lost and found.

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. This fall and winter, we will be praying with the writings and teachings of Thomas Merton, the American mystic and Trappist monk, in observance of the centennial of his birth.

We meet again on Monday December 4. Contact Lori Perine at lperine@gmail.com if you would like to join us.

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

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.

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 .

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 the Undercroft .

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.

Office Closure

Monday February 19 is Presidents' day and the office of Church of the Ascension will be closed. All church and community activities in church buildings are canceled.

CONNECT WITH US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



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



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



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



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

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-Wasiky

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 program is today 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 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. 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
Diocesan Retreat Committee
Pray for all the Presidents of the United States (Presidents'
Day, February 20)

THIS WEEK AT ASCENSION

Monday, February 19

OFFICE CLOSED

- 1:00 p.m. Al-Anon—Room 1
- 7:00 p.m. Listening Hearts Community-Library
- 7:00 p.m. Overeaters Anonymous—Room 1

Tuesday, February 20

- 10:30 a.m. Staff Meeting—Library
- 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 21

- 10:00 a.m. Wednesday Morning Book Group—Library
- 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 22

- 10:00 a.m. Yoga—Chapel
- 11:30 a.m. Episcopal Seeking Seniors—Asbury
- 4:00 p.m. Tai Chi—Chapel
- 7:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal—Choir Room
- 7:30 p.m. Zumba—Undercroft

Friday, February 23

- 1:00 p.m. Al Anon—Room 1

Saturday, February 24

- 5:00 a.m. Ministerio Felicidad
- 9:00 a.m. Overeaters Anonymous—Chapel
- 11:00 a.m. Al-Anon—Undercroft
- 11:00 a.m. Overeaters Anonymous—Room 1

Sunday, February 25

Preacher: Randy Lord-Wilkinson

- 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. Vestry Meeting—Room 1
- 5:00 p.m. Contemplative Eucharist—Chapel
- 6:00 p.m. Youth Group—Undercroft

Attendance	January 28	February 4	February 11
7:45 a.m.	22	25	27
9:00 a.m.	60	84	79
10:15 a.m.	7	7	17
11:00 a.m. Spanish Service	45	30	49
11:15 am	62	27	52
5:00 p.m.	6	6	9
Total:	202	179	233