

WELCOME TO CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

The Last Sunday after the Epiphany: 26 February A.D. 2017

Looking Ahead to Lent

Ash Wednesday is just hours away! Lent, for all its apparent somberness, comes from the Middle English word *lente*, meaning springtime. It is about preparing for Resurrection, especially through experiences of self-discipline. And, guess what? It lasts six weeks. Contemporary psychology suggests that the brain can be rewired in six weeks. So Lent is an opportunity to change your life by practicing something for the duration of the season that you'd like to make a part of your life permanently.

This is why, long ago, I abandoned "giving up" things for Lent, because even though I could relax my discipline on the Sundays in Lent, which are after all still feasts of the Resurrection (many Episcopal parishes even continue to adorn their altars with flowers to emphasize this), I was usually more preoccupied mentally with the thing I'd "sacrificed" than before! That just didn't seem "edifying" to me in any way, shape or form.

So I add something to my life in Lent, and that's what I recommend to you. You will more likely find that it will stay a part of your life afterward, and inviting something life giving and spiritually nourishing into your life leaves a little less room for the baggage that we wish we didn't have.

At Church of the Ascension you are blessed with many opportunities for a six week period of "Lenten enrichment:"

- Do some service: we send delegations to St. Martin's soup kitchen twice a month, or you can help make lunches for the men's homeless shelter once a month (service is a great gift to oneself). Or join in with Ministerio Felicidad.
- Help out with your child's Sunday School class (or have Sunday School at home for a change), or make dinner for the Youth Group or be a chaperone for one of their activities.
- Become a Pastoral Partner.
- Join the 9:00 a.m. Choir or be an 11:15 ensemble musician.
- Attend an adult formation class on a Wednesday evening or Sunday morning.
- Make a donation to the church or a charity. A long standing tradition at Ascension for Lent is the Rice Bowl: when you go up for Communion drop any spare change or currency into the bowl that'll be on a stand in the chancel. (Originally this was money you saved from not buying chocolate or whatever it was you'd given up for six weeks minus Sundays.) This year the money will probably go to our Cuban refugee family.
- Add something to your life that'll improve your physical, mental and spiritual health, as all aspects of ourselves are interconnected.

Contact information for ministry opportunities sponsored by Ascension are in the blue (sometimes green) bulletin every Sunday, or are to be found in the context of an announcement here in the Ascendant.

May this Lent indeed bring springtime to your path.

Randy

Annual Meeting

Our annual parish meeting will take place at 12:30 p.m. on Sunday, March 12 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. Vestry and delegate candidates will be available for dialog on the preceding next Sunday after the 9:00 a.m. and 11:00/11:15 a.m. services in the Undercroft Commons.

Candidates Forum on Sunday, March 5

The Vestry candidates will be available for dialog on Sunday, March 5 after the 9:00 a.m. and 11:00/11:15 a.m. services in the Undercroft Commons.

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: Joey Rick, Canon for Congregational Vitality

Refreshments and conversation follow every service in the Narthex.

The Nursery is open today from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 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

Godly Play: Mystery of Easter

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.

A Joyful Path

The Members of a Joyful Path will be studying how we are a part of the community of life that includes all people. Lesson topics will be: What is family?; People in the Neighborhood; The New Tribe and No Boundaries. Please come and join us downstairs in Room 11 during the 9:00 a.m. and 11:15 a.m. services

Yoga Classes

New Yoga Time: Randy is part of an interfaith team teaching comparative religion at Osher for Lifelong Learning at Johns Hopkins University on Thursday mornings, so yoga moved to Tuesday mornings at 10:00 a.m. in the 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.

Tai Chi Class

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 at sunset. Please come and join us.

Contact Claire Rosser at 301.275.0617 or Cjrosser@aol.com if you have any questions.

Wednesday Morning Book Group

Starting at the usual time (10:00 a.m.) on **February 1** (in the Library), the Wednesday morning book discussion group will begin to talk about Krista Tippett's *Becoming Wise: An Inquiry into the Mystery and Art of Living*. From the author: "The discourse of our common life inclines towards despair. In my field of journalism, where we presume to write the first draft of history, we summon our deepest critical capacities for investigating what is inadequate, corrupt, catastrophic, and failing. The 'news' is defined as the extraordinary events of the day, but it is most often translated as the extraordinarily terrible events of the day. And in an immersive 24/7 news cycle, we internalize the deluge of bad news as the norm—the real truth of who we are and what we're up against as a species. But my work has shown me that spiritual geniuses of the everyday are everywhere. They are in the margins and do not have publicists. They are below the radar, which is broken." Finish reading chapter 3 for March 1.

LIFE LONG LEARNING

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. We meet the first and third Monday of each month. Contact Lori Perine at lperine@gmail.com if you would like to join us.

Youth Group Schedule Spring 2017

- February 26 - Regular Meeting in Undercroft Commons
- March 12 - Regular Meeting in Undercroft Commons
- NEW - March 19: Northern Montgomery County Regional Youth Consortium at Ascension-making blessing baggies
- March 26 - Regular Meeting in Undercroft Commons
- April 9 - No Youth Group due to Spring Break
- April 23 - Regular Meeting in Undercroft Commons
- April 30 - Youth Sunday: NO YOUTH GROUP BUT LOTS OF CHURCH TIME
- May 21 - Picnic at Hight Walkers'

Sunday Morning Cell Group for Cell Group Leaders

If you are interested in growing your faith and connecting with other Ascensitonites, then join me for a cell groups leader training. Cell groups are a great way to develop your faith in the context of relationship. We will talk about how to form, participate and facilitate a small group. We will address best practices and a structure to start your group off with. Join me Sunday after the 9:00 or 11:15 services in Library, starting Sunday, March 5. Blessings, Jason Cutshall, jascut@me.com

Wednesday Nights in Lent

Wednesday evening yoga is back. Meet Randy in the Chapel at 6:00 p.m. for half an hour of gentle yoga. There are plenty of extra mats and blocks for those who need them.

Then there will be 20 minutes of Centering Prayer (instruction provided for those new to the practice).

Then at 7:00 p.m. follow Randy to the Library for a 5 session class on how to read the Bible called *Who Says So?*

From the Introduction: This adult education curriculum is designed to lead participants into an encounter with scripture as a source of authority for the Church and in their own lives. Its purpose is:

- To overcome common fears of discussing scriptural authority shared by many Episcopalians
- To give participants an awareness of the existence, strengths and limitations of a diversity of positions in relation to the authority of scripture, together with tools to understand the ways in which scriptural authority can be invoked by different groups
- To give participants an understanding of changing views of scriptural authority throughout history, including the uniquely Anglican perspective
- To enable participants to experience a diversity of methods of exploring and interpreting the scriptures
- To encourage participants to reflect upon the authoritative claims that they allow scripture to make on their own lives

Lenten formation starts on March 8.

LIFE LONG LEARNING

Call for Confirmation

If you are in the 9th grade or older (including adults up to 99 years old) and want to confirm your baptismal vows at the Cathedral in May, drop Randy a line. You should have been an active participant in the life of Ascension for at least the last couple of years, and be willing to participate in a group made up of people who are deciding if this the right time to do this.

LIFE AT ASCENSION

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

This fun annual event will be held on Tuesday, February 28, 2016 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 and sugar-free syrup -even a gluten free option are included on the traditional menu...there will be something for everyone. Also, if you plan to submit a recipe to the Ascension cookbook feel free to bring a sample of your dish to share.

Cost (s); \$5.00 per adult; \$3.00 per children 4 to 10 years; and children under 4 are free. We DO take debit and credit cards. If you have an instrument you would like to play, contact Randy at ral@ascensionmd.org. This fun event needs lots of helpers AND lots of attendees, 'the more, the merrier!' Sign up here: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0A4CABA82DA75-shrove1>

Ascension 2017 Cookbook



We are very excited to be in the creative process of producing the church of the Ascension Community Cookbook! We know Our members (and their family and friends) are blazing good cooks! This is the time to share some delicious recipes, and give credit to those Mothers and Fathers, and Aunties who gave us the recipe in the first place. We are gathering the recipes right now, and would love to have you take a moment to give us those wonderful directions on paper (forms in the Narthex) or electronically from the website: <http://ascensionmd.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Recipe-Card-English.pdf> Please complete your submission by March 5. And, in case you have not heard, the Ladies Cookbook Committee will pump up your enthusiasm for our cookbook endeavor in a unique way! They will be making some of their own yummy appetizers for us all to try at the Pancake Supper, February 28. Definitely put THAT on the Calendar.

If you have any question about the content or process, please contact Zadinga @Z_Zulu@msn.com

Attention, Worship Leaders and would-be Worship Leaders!

I'm just starting the worship rosters for April, May and June 2017. We would love to have you join the roster as a worship leader (chalcist, reader, acolyte, healing prayer minister), if so, please email or phone me. You'll get training. Current worship leaders - please let me know if you have any black-out dates for the above months. If so, I'll need them by March 17 or I won't be able to schedule around you. Thanks to all of you who give your time as a worship leader - we are blessed to have you.

Sari Stoddard, sari.stoddard@verizon.net, 301-972-0914.

LIFE AT ASCENSION

Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday is March 1. 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 from 7:00-9:00 p.m.

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 Commons once a month. Supplies are donated by Ascension members. Depending on the season, we provide forty to eighty lunches a month.

Sign-up for contributions are through an online system and assembly occurs by those present after the 9:00 am service on the third Sunday of the month. We will put lunches together on March 26th at 10:15 am. Contact Edith at esekasi@gmail.com if you would like to help, or sign up at <http://bit.ly/1VAKEz8>.

Mobile Med

The MobileMed clinic will move to the Rockville site during the months of January and February due to the van being too cold and uncomfortable for patients, providers, volunteers and staff. The Rockville site address:
981 Rollins Ave, Rockville, MD 20852

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. For more information, contact Melanie Mitchell at 301.519.1074 or melanie.mitchell@verizon.net

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Annual Giving Campaign Extension

The Annual Giving Campaign has been extended to help us reach our 2017 funding goal of \$500,000. Please help us send a clear message that we are a community that lives generously and supports Ascension's mission and outreach. Many of you have already pledged, and we thank you for your generosity. In the coming weeks, the Vestry will be calling members who have not yet turned in a pledge form to ask that they do so as soon as possible. Thank you in advance for your support. **Envelopes for annual giving pledges and the Facilities Reserve Fund are now available on the table outside the Church Office.**

Pledge Update as of 2-21-17:

- 160 Pledges for the Annual Giving Campaign, for a total of \$359,033
- 65 Pledges for Facilities Reserve Fund, for a total of \$87,512

Below are the names of those who pledged to the annual giving campaign this past week:

- Nora Campos,
- Gretchen Horlacher,
- Victoria Nwankwo

And the name of those who pledged to the Facilities Reserve Fund:

- Florence Sasu

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 García Ocampo
ocampo@ascensionmd.org, voice mailbox 16

Seminarian—Jason Cutshall
jascut@mac.com

Minister of Music—Jerrold Tidwell,
tidwellj@ascensionmd.org, voice mailbox 11

Parish Administrator - Kathy Van Arnum
office@ascensionmd.org, voice mailbox 10

Media Specialist—Eleni Hailu
comm@ascensionmd.org, voice mailbox 14

Interim Altar Guild Directors, Mardia Dennis, 301.540.4499
mard908@gmail.com, Doty Pfadenhauer, dottypfa@aol.com
and Georgana Maines, mainesgnh@verizon.net

Children's Music Leader - Howard Hanson,
howarddhanson@gmail.com

Chapel Musicians - Eric O'Loughlin, ericsmelody@gmail.com,
Samuel Munguia, pianoconclave@verizon.net

Nursery Attendant—Brenda Alvarez,
brendaalvarezduque@hotmail.com

LEADERSHIP AT ASCENSION

Senior Warden: Betsy Hasegawa
Junior Warden: Janet King

Vestry:

2017: Denise Lionetti, Najma Stubblefield, Paul Whitmore
2018: Berenice Rodriguez, Avin Lalmansingh,
Gary McLaughlin
2019: Rose Buck, Zadinga Ogada, John Pruessner
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
St. David's Church
World Mission Sunday
Companions in World Mission
Ash Wednesday (March 1)

THIS WEEK AT ASCENSION

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 27

1:00 p.m. Al-Anon—Library
6:30 p.m. Overeaters Anonymous—Room 4
6:30 p.m. Spanish Class—Ascension House
7:00 p.m. Jr. Girl Scout Meeting—Room 6

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28

10:00 a.m. Yoga—Chapel
11:00 a.m. Staff Meeting
6:00 p.m. Bible Study—Ascension House
6:00 p.m. Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper— UC
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, MARCH 1

10:00 a.m. Wednesday Morning Book Group—Library
12:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday Holy Eucharist—Main Church
1:00 p.m. Al-Anon—Library
7:00 p.m. Overeaters Anonymous—Room 1
7:30 p.m. Ash Wednesday Holy Eucharist—Main Church
8:00 p.m. Gamblers' Anonymous—Chapel

THURSDAY, MARCH 2

4:00 p.m. Tai Chi—Chapel

FRIDAY, MARCH 3

1:00 p.m. Al-Anon—Library
6:00 p.m. Couples 12-Step Program—Room 1
6:30 p.m. Movie Night—Undercroft Commons

SATURDAY, MARCH 4

9:00 a.m. Overeaters Anonymous—Chapel
11:00 a.m. Al-Anon—Undercroft Commons
11:00 a.m. Funeral - James Perine —Main Church
11:00 a.m. Overeaters Anonymous—Room 1
6:00 p.m. Pre-Planning Meeting— Undercroft Commons

SUNDAY, MARCH 5

Preacher: Jason Cutshall
7:45 a.m. Holy Eucharist—Main Church
8:15 a.m. Choir Rehearsal—Choir Room
9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist—Main Church
9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Godly Play—Room 6
9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. Joyful Path—Room 11
10:15 a.m. Service for Young Children— Chapel
11:00 a.m. Misa en Espanol—Chapel
11:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist—Main Church
11:15 a.m. FWYC Cell Group --- Library
1:30 p.m. Vestry Meeting—Room 1
5:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist—Chapel

Church Attendance	Feb. 5	Feb. 12	Feb. 19
7:45 a.m.	25	23	25
9:00 a.m.	123	87	70
10:15 a.m.	12	10	15
11:00 a.m. Spanish Service	50	38	41
11:15 am	50	45	36
11:30 a.m. At Sunrise	—	9	10
5:00 p.m.	14	21	14
Total:	274	233	211