

WELCOME TO CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

The Holy Name of Our Lord : 1 January A.D. 2017

“Footsteps of Forgiveness”

Lloyd D. Newell

All of us are travelers through the experience of life. For some, the journey is short; for others, it requires special skills to navigate difficult passes. None of us knows when our journey will end and a new one begin. Most of us hope to learn as we go, to enjoy the trip, to be helpful to those around us.

Seasoned travelers advise others to “travel light.” Perhaps this counsel applies to more than just our physical baggage. It could apply also to the collection of grudges and resentments. Some of us have strapped bygone injustices to our backs as if they are precious jewels; then we struggle along like beasts of burden maneuvering a steep mountain trail. How much easier our travels would be if we would cast off this heavy load.

Forgiveness—the willingness to put aside someone else’s mistake—brings us a feeling of unrestrained goodwill. It can bring lightness of being and a delight in life that cannot be attained if we cling to old resentments.

It’s been said that holding a grudge is like taking poison and hoping the other person will die. Anger and self-pity make poor traveling companions and do the most harm to the one who carries them.

Too often we wait for an apology, an admission of guilt by the wrongdoer. Such waits can be long and cause us to miss the vista just around the corner. Forgiving others shouldn’t be contingent on their being sorry.

Forgiveness is for the forgiver. It cleanses us from the poison of hatred and releases a burden that hurts us far more than it hurts our offender. By letting go of past injuries, we release ourselves from bondage.

No matter how difficult our journey may be, our load will be lighter, and our destination joyful, if we will learn to forgive.

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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 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

This week in Godly Play, we will study The Exodus, when Moses led the People of God out of slavery in Egypt through a parting in the Red Sea. This story helps evoke the People's experience of God's elusive presence. Godly Play classes meet downstairs in Room 6 during the 9, 11 & 11:15 services.

A Joyful Path

The members of A Joyful Path will be spending the next several Sundays studying and learning about "the Many Ways." We will be exploring and discovering the beliefs and rituals of the five major world religions. We will continue our journey from Hinduism to Buddhism. Come and join us in Room 11 during the 9, 11 and 11:15 services.

Music Program for Sunday School

The last Sunday of each month is "Music Sunday" with Howard Hanson, Ascension's Children's Music Director. We spend approximately 15 minutes during the 9:00 and 11:15 Sunday School sessions to learn basic music theory, explore our favorite musical traditions and learn new Bible songs.

Yoga Classes

Randy's yoga class is every Thursday 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

We are starting Tai Chi classes in the new year, at 4p.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. Claire, cjrosser@aol.com

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

Finding God in the Waves Book Group

The Wednesday Morning Book Group continues exploration of *Finding God in the Waves: How I Lost My Faith and Found it Again Through Science*, by Mike McHargue. From Amazon.com: "From the host of the popular podcasts, The Liturgists Podcast and Ask Science Mike, a story of having faith, losing it, and finding it again through science—revealing how the latest in neuroscience, physics, and biology help us understand God, faith, and ourselves." For a fuller description and to purchase, go to <http://amzn.to/2ecQ9DC>

LIFE LONG LEARNING

The Listening Heart Community

We have been discussing possible times to try to get together outside of the regular Sunday service, in the format of an informal Bible study or book reading. Because we all have small children, we would also like to include snacks and a play space. Weeknights are difficult for most of us, so we are proposing the following times to get together, once a month:

Sundays, before or after the 10:15 service (something like 9:30 or 11:15 a.m.). Saturday or Sundays post-nap time (something like 4 or 5:00 p.m.). What would everyone prefer?

If we meet before or after the 10:15 Sunday service, we could find a space at the church. If we meet in the afternoon on Saturday or Sunday, we could meet at individual homes. We are happy to host the first meeting or two.

Yours,
Brian, Sarah, Leo, and Jane
sarahanear@gmail.com

Mind-Body Skills Workshop

Dr. Tina Lightner-Morris will offer workshops on holistic health using research based healing therapies for 8 Mondays from November 14, 2016 to January 9, 2017 between 7:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. to help you deal with life changes, stress and illness. Participants have experienced a decrease in depression and anxiety, renewed sense of wellbeing, better coping skills to manage pain, increased energy and stamina, enhanced immune system, greater self-awareness and more. The fee is \$65 per session, \$520 for the series or \$500 if paid in full by the first session.

For more information or if you have question, contact Dr. Lightner-Morris, at 301.524.0808 or

LIFE AT ASCENSION

tina@lightbalncecounseling.org

The King's Birthday

The King's Birthday still has many openings for speaking and non speaking parts for children young and old. If you are interested in participating please email me at vagordon1@yahoo.com. You are also invited to our first rehearsal. The second rehearsal will be Saturday , January 7th same time.

Look forward to your participation.
Gordon

Visitors' Welcome Kits Are Available

If you are visiting Ascension today, Welcome! To learn more about the community that is Church of the Ascension, please take home with you a welcome packet, located on the Chapel counter and on the table next to the Office. A Welcome Team member will be glad to assist you!

Vestry Nominations Welcome



It is that time of year when the Vestry is in discernment around who may be called to the ministry of leadership at Ascension. If you'd like to nominate someone simply approach any Vestry member, or e-mail one of the Wardens: Betsy Hasegawa (grhasegawa@verizon.net) or Janet King (bkmechanical@aol.com).

LIFE AT ASCENSION

Movie Night

Everyone is welcome to meet up in the Undercroft Commons on Friday, January 6 at 6:30 p.m. to watch Star Wars: The Force Awakens (rated PG-13).

From Amazon: "As a new threat to the galaxy rises, Rey, a desert scavenger, and Finn, an ex-stormtrooper, must join Han Solo and Chewbacca to search for the one hope of restoring peace."

We'll start off with pizza and whatever else people want to bring (for specific suggestions, follow this sign-up). We do ask for a donation of \$5 per person with a \$15 per family maximum toward the cost of the pizza. We'll start the movie at 6:45 and we'll most likely be out and off to bed by 8:30 p.m.

You need not be a child, or have one, to attend! Dolls, favorite toys, sleeping bags and pillows are also welcome!

Please RSVP by Midnight Thursday, January 5. We need 10 confirmations to make Movie Night happen...

To sign up, go here: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/70A0A4CABA82DA75-seestar>

Pledge Envelope Boxes

Pledge envelopes are available on the table outside the church office door.

CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Mobile Med

We host the MobileMed van every Tuesday from 7:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. Volunteers are assigned a 2 ½ hour shift each month. Duties include collecting basic patient information, answering questions and ensuring a safe, comfortable waiting area. Our contact for Mobile Med is Jean Cohn at spangle1@comcast.net or 240.372.3652.

CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Ascension's Giving Tree

This Christmas season through Sunday, January 8, you will find Ascension's "Giving Tree" adorning the Narthex. A sign near the tree will identify crucially needed items for refugees and recent immigrants from the Middle East or Latin America, who are now living in the D.C. area. In a box near the tree, you will find a collection of pairs of color-coded cards, each labeled with possible gift options (gift card, metro card, or check). One card in each pair will have an attached string, and the box will contain several pairs of cards for each gift option. Select a pair representing the gift of your choice. Put the card containing a string on the tree immediately, and take the other card with you. After you have obtained your gift, place it in the designated box located near the tree. Your gift may also be placed in the offering plate as long as it is clearly marked "Giving Tree". Eventually, we hope the tree will be covered with many brightly colored cards. Cards and money will be distributed between Crossroads and the MCIRRN (Montgomery County Interfaith Refugee Resettlement Neighbors).

If you have any questions, feel free to contact fellow parishioners Sue and/or Richard Snay at 301.977.5259 or subarsy@aol.com.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Pledge Update as of 12-27-16:

- 119 Pledges for the Annual Giving Campaign, for a total of \$266,867.
- 57 Pledges for Facilities Reserve Fund, for a total of \$76,222

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

Aloysius & Frances Farrah, Esther & Robert Taylor, Thomas Hall, Bendu Toee, Isaac & Josephine Clarke, Megan Didavi, Esther & Archie Sawyer

New Website Launched



We just new What is New: launched our website.

- A responsive design automatically adapts itself to a particular viewing environment such as desktop, tablet or mobile.
- Online electronic giving
- Signup to different subscription directly from our website
- Analytic tools to track the traffic to the website which helps to analyze the engagement of the site visitors.

Online Giving



Church of the Ascension is pleased to announce the introduction of an electronic option on our new website for making regular offerings. Contributions can now be debited automatically from your checking or saving account or processed using your credit or debit card. Our new electronic giving program offers convenience for you and much-needed donation consistency for the congregation. If you are currently giving on a weekly basis, you will no longer need to write out 52 checks a year or prepare 52 envelopes. And, when travel, illness or other circumstances prevent you from attending the services, this program will allow your weekly offerings to continue on an uninterrupted basis.

An Authorization form and a "Frequently Asked Questions" flyer are available from the church office.

You can also find the electronic Authorization form by clicking "Give to the Church of Ascension" button on the home page of our new website.

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
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Altar Guild Directors-Sari Stoddard, 301.972.0914,
Sari.stoddard@verizon.net, Mardia Dennis, 301.540.4499
mard908@gmail.com

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

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: Zadinga Ogada ~ 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 the Epiphany, Washington
Welcome Table and Street Church,
Church of the Epiphany, Washington
Epiphany Church, Forestville
The Feast of the Epiphany
Provincial Middle & High School Retreat

THIS WEEK AT ASCENSION

MONDAY, JANUARY 2

OFFICE CLOSED

- 1:00 p.m. Al-Anon—Library
- 6:30 p.m. Overeaters Anonymous—Room 4
- 7:00 p.m. Listening Hearts Community—Library

TUESDAY, JANUARY 3

- 11:00 a.m. Staff Meeting
- 6:00 p.m. **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, JANUARY 4

- 11:00 a.m. Wednesday Morning Book Group—Library
- 1:00 p.m. Al-Anon—Library
- 7:00 p.m. **Ensemble Rehearsal—Main Church**
- 7:00 p.m. Overeaters Anonymous—Room 1
- 8:00 p.m. Gamblers' Anonymous—Chapel

THURSDAY, JANUARY 5

- 10:00 a.m. Yoga—Chapel
- 4:00 p.m. Tai Chi—Chapel
- 6:30 p.m. Spanish Class —Ascension House
- 7:45 p.m. Choir Rehearsal—Choir Room

FRIDAY, JANUARY 6

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

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7

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

SUNDAY, JANUARY 8

Preacher: Randy Lord-Wilkinson

- 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 Families with Young Children—
Chapel
- 11:00 a.m. Misa en Espanol—Chapel
- 11:15 a.m. Baptism - Karvar
- 11:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist—Main Church
- 5:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist—Chapel
- 6:00 p.m. Youth Group Mtg. & Spiritual Formation —
Under Croft

Church Attendance	Dec. 4	Dec. 11	Dec. 18
7:45 a.m.	26	27	25
9:00 a.m.	84	89	95
10:15 a.m.	9	10	17
11:00 a.m. Spanish Service	52	35	84
11:15 am	46	49	59
11:30 a.m. At Sunrise		6	12
5:00 p.m.	14	15	14
Total:	231	231	306

December 24	5 p.m. - 43	7 p.m. - 137	9 p.m. - 100
December 25	10 a.m. - 83		