

WELCOME TO CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

The Third Sunday after the Epiphany: 22 January A.D. 2017

Until We Meet Again

One of the fun things you can do on the Internet these days is look up people you haven't seen in a long time. I've lost track of most everybody I knew in high school and even college, as I've moved from coast to coast and been such a gypsy. I'm one of those people who's really focused on the people who are in my life from day to day and do a very poor job of keeping in touch with people from my past. While idly playing around with Facebook and Google last week, however, I discovered that one of my closest friends in high school died in April. A little more sleuthing revealed that her parents' church had her on their prayer list over a year ago. But that's all I could learn about the circumstances of her death. Living and working in churches all of my adult life brings me into close proximity with death on a regular basis. I still feel that something isn't quite right when someone dies before experiencing the "autumn" and "winter" of life. It makes me sad that she won't live to be a very old woman, or that we won't get a chance to reconnect and share stories of the past and the present.

Jesus was a young man when he died. Even though we talk comfortably about his ongoing life in and among us, he did know mortality and grief (upon the death of Lazarus, his friend). While we are consoled by the Christian hope of eternal life, his tears of grief and personal experience of mortality hallow our own. The idea of life being "changed, not ended" through death doesn't seem to mean that we won't know grief and loss, but rather - paradoxically - feel them more deeply. And also, make us more aware that this earthly pilgrimage is a precious gift.

Some of you have no doubt recently overheard me saying that for most of my adult life I was quite comfortable thinking about the afterlife as returning to God whether my "self" was preserved or not. Love changes everything, however, and is stronger than death. As I have accrued tenure on my life journey my defenses have softened and I am more able to "let people in" more than I used to. Not only am I closer to people I know, but, through them, I have in many cases a sense of connection to people they love deeply who have died.

So I am having to revise my thinking on this and many other things!

So may I say to my departed classmate: See you later, old friend.

Randy

Pledge Envelope boxes for those who made commitments to both the Annual Giving Campaign and Facilities Reserve Fund are now available on the table outside the Church Office.

Pictorial Directories are here! They are in a box on the table outside the Church Office. Priority is given to those who had portraits taken

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 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.

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 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. 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>. Read Chapters 14 and 15.



LIFE LONG LEARNING

Cell Group for Families with Young Children

The cell group for families with young children meets the first Sunday of every month at 11:15 am in the church library. We are currently discussing Brian McLaren's *We Make the Road by Walking*. If you have any questions, feel free to contact sarahanear@gmail.com

New Cell Group Formation

How's your family tree? For some, we have been slaving to manually accumulate the data and documents that show your lineage. For others, the new technology is hard to avoid. If you, like me, got an Ancestry.com membership for Christmas, or you're an early adopter, or just curious, let's get together to explore the technology, help one another navigate the rapids of technology, or just cheer one another onward. I would like to gather together folks that can do all that and more. If you are interested, let's meet at the Church on this coming Wednesday evening at 7:00 p.m. in the Church Office. I will be there every other Wednesday for at least the next month to give you a chance to drop in and make your interest known. Feel free to contact me at garymclaughlin100@gmail.com, or give me a call at home 301.340.7139

New Book for Wednesday Morning

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."

Spanish Classes

Come and join us to Ascension Spanish Classes on Thursdays from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. You don't need to speak Spanish to come, because we get together to learn and/or practice. For more information contact Javier ocampoj@ascensionmd.org

Still Water Mindfulness Practice Group

Mindfulness is our capacity to be fully present in our own lives, to be aware of what we are doing as we are doing it. As we develop our awareness, an inner stillness naturally grows. We are better able to embrace the world, better able to experience the Kingdom of God in the present moment. Our weekly program of meditation and mindfulness practices in the tradition of zen monk and peace activist Thich Nhat Hahn will continue on Tuesdays from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. in the chapel.

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.

LIFE AT ASCENSION

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).

Ascension's Adventurers to tour the National Archives

All parishioners and friends are invited to join us for a docent-led tour of the National Archives Building in Washington, DC on Thursday, January 26th. [Note: such tours are available only on weekdays.]

Our group will meet at 8:15 a.m. at the kiosk located inside of the Shady Grove Metro Station and then travel to the Archives via Metro Rail.

Alternatively, people can meet us at 9:35 a.m. at the Archives' "Special Event entrance" located near the corner of 7th St. and Constitution Ave., NW. [Warning: do not go to the Archives main entrance.]

The guided tour is free and it will last approximately 60 minutes. Afterwards, we will allow an extra 30 to 60 minutes for participants to visit exhibits in greater detail and at their own pace.

The Rotunda inside the National Archives Building displays the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and the Declaration of Independence. Several other exhibits are on display within three other galleries within this building.

For more information, visit: <https://www.archives.gov/dc-metro/washington> or <https://www.archives.gov/museum/visit/> or contact me either via email (rsssnay@aol.com) or phone (301-977-5259).

Participants are also invited to join us for lunch at a yet-to-be-selected restaurant located within a few miles of the Shady Grove Metro Station. Some possibilities include:

Hershey's
Red, Hot, and Blue
Thai Farm

Other suggestions are welcomed. Please provide me with your preference by Sunday, January 15th, and we'll choose the restaurant democratically. Shortly after January 15th, I'll send an invitation to all parishioners via an email that specifies the selected restaurant.

Best regards,
Richard Snay

CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Giving Tree News

Heartfelt thanks to all who contributed to this year's Giving Tree. Your donations amounted \$890.00 in gift cards, \$342.70 in Metro cards, and \$660.00 in cash and checks, for a grand total of \$1892.70. This year's total topped last year's by \$168.70. It exceeded all of our expectations and we have been overwhelmed by your generosity.

Thank you again.
- Richard and Sue Snay

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

Ministerio Felicidad

We are going to give sandwiches to the homeless on Saturday 28th. If you want to be part of this ministry, contact Javier at ocampo@ascensionmd.org

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Annual Giving Campaign Extension

The Annual Giving Campaign has been extended through January 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 1-17-17:

- 144 Pledges for the Annual Giving Campaign, for a total of \$335,675
- 61 Pledges for Facilities Reserve Fund, for a total of \$78,032

Those who pledged to the annual giving campaign this past week: :

Naomi Senkeeto

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

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Minister of Music—Jerrold Tidwell,
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Media Specialist—Eleni Hailu
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Interim Altar Guild Directors, Mardia Dennis, 301.540.4499
mard908@gmail.com, Dotty Pfadenhauer, dottypfa@aol.com
and Georgana Maines, *mainesgnh@verizon.net*

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

Chapel Musicians - Eric O'Loughlin, *ericmelody@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
St. Paul's Church, Baden and St. Mary's Chapel, Aquasco
St. Paul's Church, Rock Creek Parish
St. Paul's Church, K Street
St. Paul's Church, Piney Parish
St. Timothy's Parish, Washington
St. Timothy's Child Development Center
Diocesan Convention: The Bishop of Washington, Diocesan
Convention Officers, Clerical and Lay Delegates, Conven-
tion Task Force and Committee Chairs

THIS WEEK AT ASCENSION

MONDAY, JANUARY 23

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

TUESDAY, JANUARY 24

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 25

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 26

10:00 a.m. Yoga—Chapel
11:00 a.m. Episcopal Seeking Seniors Asbury
4:00 p.m. Tai Chi—Chapel
6:00 p.m. Bariatric Support Group—Chapel
6:30 p.m. Spanish Class —Ascension House
7:45 p.m. Choir Rehearsal—Choir Room

FRIDAY, JANUARY 27

1:00 p.m. Al-Anon—Library

SATURDAY, JANUARY 28

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 29

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. Holy Eucharist—Main Church
2:00 p.m. Christian Counselors Network Meeting—
Library
5:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist—Chapel

Church Attendance	Jan. 1	Jan. 8	Jan. 15
7:45 a.m.	20	25	30
9:00 a.m.	59	76	82
10:15 a.m.	9	8	33
11:00 a.m. Spanish Service	29	48	44
11:15 am	56	68	36
11:30 a.m. At Sunrise	—	3	9
5:00 p.m.	10	18	12
Total:	183	246	246