

WELCOME TO CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

The Epiphany of our Lord: January 6, A.D. 2019

The Power of Hope

For most of us, the closing of 2018 is a welcome end to a year of dispiriting news, discomfiting weather, worry about the safety and health of family and friends, and our own personal challenges. We may comment to our friends in a breezy fashion, "I hope 2019 will be better!" The word hope in this context is gauzy and insubstantial; it is a wish, a conversational gambit, not belief.

Hope used in a Biblical sense is powerful and motivating. You may remember that the early Christians depicted hope as an anchor fixed on the shore of the afterlife. We tend today to place our anchor of hope in a man-made lagoon of stocks, real estate and trappings of comfort. This is only as reliable as the stock market and fashion trends themselves. By contrast, the prophet Isaiah outlines what man can expect of a life infused with a more substantial Hope: "But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint" (Isaiah 40:31)

Hope, as opposed to wishes, trusts in the future. Hope supplies the motivation to revise or explore options for action. Hope is active, not passive emotion; it increases knowledge and creativity when we put it to use. "Therefore, gird your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, and fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 1:13) Sometimes, though, hope eludes us when fear, bad news and pain abound. This makes for very dark times. "The spirit of man can endure his sickness, but a broken spirit, who can bear?" Proverbs 18:14

Hope doesn't sit around brooding about all that is wrong. Hope is active, determined to defeat anger, unfairness, depression and apathy. Perhaps Barack Obama has a 21st century prescription for the restoration and nourishment of hope: "The best way to not feel hopeless is to get up and do something. Don't wait for good things to happen to you. If you go out and make some good things happen, you will fill the world with hope; you will fill yourself with hope."

As members of a church with unshakable belief in the living God, let us cling also to the Christian notion of hope as the expectation of what God has promised us, and its strength is in His faithfulness. It is our job to make 2019 much better than 2018. In this way we really will make it better for others, and finally, for ourselves.

Many Blessings,

Javier

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 "Represent Jesus Christ wherever we may be." We welcome you to our church family and invite you to fill out a welcome card (located in the rack at the ends of each pew).

TODAY AT ASCENSION

Preacher: The Rev. Javier García

Refreshments and conversation follow every service in the lower atrium.

A place of peace for parents and a beginners Sunday School is available in Room 4.
Please feel free to bring your child.

Three Kings Day (Día de Reyes)



Everyone is invited for this special gathering after the 12 o'clock service. Traditional treats will be served including the King's cake which contains tiny figures of the baby Jesus.

The Epiphany Pageant will be presented at 1:30 p.m. in the Main Church. The pageant this year is titled : "What? No Angels?".

LIFE LONG LEARNING

A Joyful Path—10:00 a.m.

The class of Joyful Path at 10:00 will be studying about the Epiphany, the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles as represented by the Magi. Come and join us!

For this service, all children will meet in the place of peace located in room 4 each week, and then separate by age groups.

A Joyful Path—12:00 p.m.— (this class will resume next week)

Escuela Dominical Para Nin@s. The members of A Joyful Path at 12:00 are learning how to concentrate energy. We use memory games and the story of the week. Come join us in Room 2 during the noon service.

Godly Play

The class of Godly Play will be studying about the Epiphany, the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles as represented by the Magi . Come and join us!

For the 10:00 service, all children will meet in the place of peace located in room 4 each week, and then separate by age groups.

Wednesday Morning Book Group

Ascension's book group is discussing the book, "Sapiens: A Brief History of Humanity", by Yuval Noah Harari. This book explores the ways in which biology and history have defined us and enhanced our understanding of what it means to be human. Our next meeting will be in Ascension's library at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, January 9th. All are welcome to participate. Please read Chapters 13 and 14 for this meeting.

Spanish Class

Spanish Classes will restart after January 21st. Come and take part in Ascension's Spanish Class on Mondays from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 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 Fr. Javier at ocampo@ascensionmd.org.

LIFE AT ASCENSION

Thursday Morning Yoga

Yoga classes are offered on Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. in Room 6, taught by Lucia Pires. The class is multilevel, with an emphasis on gentle yoga, and is appropriate for beginners. Props are offered, but the students are encouraged to bring their own yoga mats.

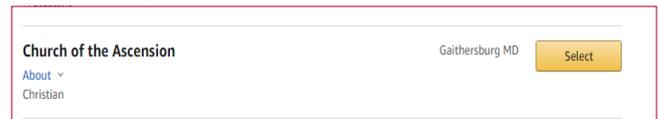
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AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to our church.

On your first visit to AmazonSmile (smile.amazon.com), you are prompted -

- ◆ To login with your Amazon Account.
- ◆ Then search for "Church of the Ascension" and select Church of the Ascension from the list with location "Gaithersburg MD"
- ◆ That is all. It will be connected to your account; every time you shop, and when you go to smile.amazon.com, your selection will be there and will track your purchases.

Just make sure you select the right "Church of the Ascension" at Gaithersburg MD as this:



Send Your Photos!

Have you taken pictures of any events held here at Ascension? Please share them with us! We are compiling a collection of photos taken throughout 2018 for a digital album. We will continue collecting photos throughout the coming years. Email your photos to office@ascensionmd.org.

Ascension's Giving Tree

Today will be the last day that the Giving Tree will be in the Narthex, in support of the work done by Comfort Cases, Inc. This organization provides support and dignity to all children entering a foster home.

Remember that this will be the last day the Giving Tree will be up, so don't miss your last chance. The ornaments on the tree consist of two cards, color-coded for each age group and item. Separate the cards, hang one on the tree, take the other card with you for reference, purchase an item listed on the card, and place the unwrapped item in the collection box located in the Narthex. If you have any questions, contact fellow parishioners Sue and/or Richard Snay at 301.977.5259 or email to subarsy@aol.com.

Coffee Supplies

During one of my Colleague Group meetings, I shared with the others the success of our coffee hour at Ascension. We have had an average of 50 to 60 people per Sunday. In light of the popularity of the coffee hour, I am asking people to volunteer to bring coffee cups, dessert plates, and cream for coffee. Please bring your donation on Sunday or during the week during office hours. Money contributions are also welcome. Thank you! Padre Javier

Baptism Day is January 13th

Are you interested in receiving the Sacrament of Baptism for yourself, your baby or other family members young or old? Speak with Fr. Javier during coffee hour, or contact him at the office at 301.948.0122.

Diocesan Convention

Diocesan Convention is the yearly legislative meeting presided over by the bishop and consisting of the clergy and elected representatives of its congregations. It considers the diocesan budget and other matters regarding the mission and ministry of the diocese. The 124th Convention will be held on January 26, 2019 at Washington National Cathedral, located at 3101 Wisconsin Ave NW, Washington, DC 20016. Information on registration and attending Convention will be available on the Diocese's website.

Día de la Candelaria

February 2nd may be Groundhog Day in the United States, but in Mexico, there is a completely different celebration on this date. This is the religious holiday known as Día de la Candelaria (or Candlemas in English). Throughout Mexico on this date, people dress up figures of the Christ Child in special outfits and take them to the church to be blessed, and they also get together with family and friends to eat tamales, as a continuation of the festivities of Three Kings' Day on January 6. Come and join us to celebrate Dia de la Candelaria after the 12:00 p.m. services.

PLEDGE UPDATE AS OF JANUARY 01, 2019

- ◆ Francisco & Betsy Balicao
- ◆ Melody Bell
- ◆ Jonathan A. Black
- ◆ Eliane Dunn-Johnson
- ◆ Matilda Chimbely Muyangwa
- ◆ Gerlinda Somerville

125 pledges for a total of \$289,120.00, as well as 10 Facilities Reserve Fund donations of \$6,448.00, and one Music Ministry donation of \$500.00 have been received to date.

Men's Shelter Lunch Program



The Men's Shelter lunch program provides bagged lunches for homeless men. Lunches are assembled in the Undercroft once a month. Generous Ascension members donate the supplies. Depending on the season, we provide 40 to 80 lunches each month. The next program is January 20th at 9:30 a.m. Contact Edith at esekasi@gmail.com if you would like to help, or sign up at <http://bit.ly/>

Ministerio Felicidad



Once a month, Ascension members prepare lunches and send love and prayers to day laborers in the neighborhood of the church. Join Fr. Javier at 6:00 a.m. on Saturday, January 26 in the church kitchen. For more information, contact Fr. Javier at ocampo@ascensionmd.org.

Montgomery Hospice

Montgomery Hospice is a nonprofit that has been serving the residents of Montgomery County for 36 years. They provide professional end-of-life care in homes, extended care facilities, and at Casey House, their acute care facility. They are looking for new volunteers. The greatest need is for volunteers to visit patients. These volunteers provide companionship for patients, respite for family members, lavender oil hand massages, music by the bedside or help with practical matters. Many provide the gift of "presence" by simply being with a patient. All volunteers go through an application process.

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



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



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

CONTACT US

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www.ascensionmd.org

- ◆ Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 9:30 a.m. 3:30 p.m.
Friday 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.
- ◆ Phone: 301.948.0122 ◆ Fax: 301.926.9012
- ◆ Fr. Javier's cell: 202.903.6426
- ◆ Prayer requests: Fill out a prayer request card (pink or yellow, on the table in the narthex) or e-mail the office at office@ascensionmd.org.

Bishop of Washington - The Rt. Rev. Mariann Edgar Budde
mebudde@edow.org, 202.537.6550
Priest in Charge –The Rev. Javier García Ocampo
ocampo@ascensionmd.org, voice mailbox 12
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Mardia Dennis, mard908@gmail.com, Dotty Pfadenhauer,
dottypfa@aol.com and Georgana Maines,
mainesgnh@verizon.net

LEADERSHIP AT ASCENSION

Senior Warden: Betsy Hasegawa
Junior Warden: Zadinga Ogada

Vestry:

2019: Rose Buck, Janet King, John Pruessner
2020: Gordon Donnelly, Meredith Horan, Luis Pedron
2021: Berenice Rodriguez, Robert Waters,
Susan McLaughlin
Danielle Allen, *Clerk of the Vestry*
Avin Lalmansingh, *Treasurer*

Christian Formation for Children: Megan Didavi
Christian Formation for Youth: Angie Hight-Walker
Facilities: Ted Bedell & John Pruessner
Finance: Avin Lalmansingh
Mission: Paul Boynton
Pastoral Care: Nan Hildebrand
Personnel: Jean Cohn
Worship: Gary McLaughlin & Curt Lindsay

Delegates to Diocesan Convention:

Mardia Dennis, Gary McLaughlin, Sue Snay
Alternate: Fredy Diaz

Cycles of Prayer

Prayers for those whose lives are closely linked with ours:
The Epiphany
Church of the Epiphany, DC
Welcome Table and Street Church,
Church of the Epiphany, DC
Epiphany Church, Forestville

THIS WEEK AT ASCENSION

Monday, January 7, 2019

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

Tuesday, January 8, 2019

7:00 a.m. Mobile Med–Canceled
11:00 a.m. Staff Meeting–Library
7:00 p.m. Stillwater Mindfulness Group–Chapel
7:30 p.m. Spanish Bible Study–Library
8:30 p.m. Al-Anon–Room 1

Wednesday, January 9, 2019

10:00 a.m. Book Club- Library
1:00 p.m. Al-Anon–Room 1
7:00 p.m. Overeaters Anonymous–Parish Hall
7:00 p.m. Vestry Meeting–Room 1
7:30 p.m. Worship Committee–Library
8:00 p.m. Gamblers' Anonymous–Room 2

Thursday, January 10, 2019

10:00 a.m. Yoga–Room 6
4:00 p.m. Tai Chi–Chapel
6:30 p.m. Ensemble–Main Church
7:00 p.m. Al-Anon–Room 1
7:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

Friday, January 11, 2019

1:00 p.m. Al-Anon–Room 1

Saturday, January 12, 2019

9:00 a.m. Overeaters Anonymous–Room 2
11:00 a.m. Al-Anon–Undercroft
11:00 a.m. Overeaters Anonymous–Room 1
7:00 p.m. Al-Anon/Spanish- Room 1

Sunday, January 13, 2019

Preacher: The Rev. Nan Hildebrand

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist –Main Church
10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist –Main Church
10:00 a.m. St. Barnabas –Chapel
10:00 a.m. Bible School for 3 year olds & under – Room 4
10:00 a.m. Godly Play–Room 6
10:00 a.m. Joyful Path–Room 2
12:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist Spanish–Main Church
12:00 p.m. Escuela Dominical para Niñ@s- Room 2
2:00 p.m. Christian Counseling Network–Room 2
6:00 p.m. Youth Group–Parish Hall

Attendance	Dec. 16	Dec. 23	Dec. 24	Dec. 25	Dec. 30
8:00 am	30	37	5:00 p.m. 70		
10:00 am	113	137	9:00 p.m. 135	41	192
12:00 pm	65	39			
Total:	208	213	205	41	192