

WELCOME TO CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

The First Sunday after the Epiphany: The Baptism of Our Lord – 8 January A.D. 2017

The Art of Longing

Longing is a way we humans connect and commune with a reality that doesn't yet exist. It is a species of hope. And hope is a kind of faith, as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews wrote: "faith is the assurance of things hoped for, of things not seen."

Longing engages the soul, the heart, the center, of a person. It's more than a fantasy of what is to come. It is rather a profound desire that connects us with the one who is to come and in fact makes that one present to us in some mysterious way. We often say that absence makes the heart grow fonder, when we talk about being separated from someone we love. Our hope that we will see them again soon is enflamed by the experience of separation and the anticipation that we will once again be together.

In that experience of absence and separation we commune with the object of our longing. Some say that the presence of God is felt most authentically in the experience of God's absence. In a time of perceived separation the longing for reunion keeps the relationship alive, until a new epiphany of the long expected one fills us with joy and gratitude.

May God surprise you by meeting you in your deepest longing.

Peace,

Randy

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.

Children Formation News



Today, in place of the 5:00 service, the children of Ascension (and the young at heart) will present an Epiphany pageant in the Nave. Participants should arrive at 4:00 to get ready. For more information, please contact Gordon Donnelly at vagordon1@yahoo.com. We will also have regular Sunday school today.

The following week, we will be baking communion bread. The children enjoy measuring and mixing the ingredients as well as the good feeling of contributing to the church community.

On January 29, we will be meeting with Howard Hanson for Music Sunday.

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.

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.

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.

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 12 and 13.

Cell Group Meeting for Families with Small Children



We will have our second cell group meeting this morning after the 10:15 service (so around 11:15 a.m.) in the church Library. We'll be looking at the next chapter of *We Make the Road by Walking* and the accompanying Bible passage (Genesis 2)."

LIFE LONG LEARNING

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 tina@lightbalncecounseling.org

New Book for Wednesday Morning



Starting at the usual time (10:00 a.m.) on January 25 (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."

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 (rsshay@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

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.

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.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Pledge Update as of 1-4-17:

- 121 Pledges for the Annual Giving Campaign, for a total of \$267,667.
- 59 Pledges for Facilities Reserve Fund, for a total of \$76,732

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

Ruby King,
Abraham & Christine Kroma

And those who pledged to the Facility Reserve Fund:

Abraham & Christine Kroma

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

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
Christ Church, Washington Parish
Christ Church Parish, Kensington
Christ Church Accokeek (St. John's Parish) and
St. John's Chapel
Christ Church, Georgetown
Anglican Communion Sunday

THIS WEEK AT ASCENSION

MONDAY, JANUARY 9

- 11:30 a.m. Living with a Chronic Illness—Room 1
- 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
- 7:30 p.m. Renewal Works Meeting—Library

TUESDAY, JANUARY 10

- 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 11

- 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 12

- 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 13

- 1:00 p.m. Al-Anon—Library

SATURDAY, JANUARY 14

- 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 15

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
- 10:15 a.m. Men's Shelter Lunches
- 11:00 a.m. Misa en Espanol—Chapel
- 11:15 a.m. Holy Eucharist—Main Church
- 12:30 p.m. Teacher's Meeting—Library
- 5:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist—Chapel

Church Attendance	Dec. 11	Dec. 18	Jan. 1
7:45 a.m.	27	25	20
9:00 a.m.	89	95	59
10:15 a.m.	10	17	9
11:00 a.m. Spanish Service	35	84	29
11:15 am	49	59	56
11:30 a.m. At Sunrise	6	12	—
5:00 p.m.	15	14	10
Total:	231	306	183