

This Week at Ascension

Incarnation

'THE WORD BECAME flesh,' wrote John, 'and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth' (John 1:14). That is what incarnation means. It is untheological. It is unsophisticated. It is undignified. But according to Christianity it is the way things are.

"All religions and philosophies which deny the reality or the significance of the material, the fleshly, the earth-bound, are themselves denied. Moses at the burning bush was told to take off his shoes because the ground on which he stood was holy ground (Exodus 3:5), and incarnation means that all ground is holy ground because God not only made it but walked on it, ate and slept and worked and died on it. If we are saved anywhere, we are saved here. And what is saved is not some diaphanous distillation of our bodies and our earth but our bodies and our earth themselves. Jerusalem becomes the New Jerusalem coming down out of Heaven like a bride adorned for her husband (Revelation 21:2). Our bodies are sown perishable and raised imperishable (1 Corinthians 15:42).

"One of the blunders religious people are particularly fond of making is the attempt to be more spiritual than God."

- Originally published in *Wishful Thinking*, by Frederick Buechner

HEADLINERS

One Ascension Sunday—December 31st

One Ascension Sunday is fast approaching. We are going to celebrate the end of one year and the start of another. Please join us after the service and bring a dish to share. The main course will be spiral cut ham. We need side dishes such as mac and cheese, potatoes, green beans, salads, desserts or your favorite dish. Please plan on joining in on the fun. A clipboard will again be passed around in the church so that we can have a rough idea of who is coming and what people are bringing.

Janet King, for the Parish Life Committee

Nursery Closing after Sunday, December 31

At the most recent meeting of Ascension's teachers with the Rector, it was clear that the "nursery" has not been utilized as originally intended for toddlers and infants up to age 3. This has been the case for some time. Parents with infants and toddlers attend the 10:15 service (often with a child on the way!) or one of our other services. Starting January 7, 2018, Room 2 will be the Joyful Path classroom (for kids in 3rd to 5th grade), and Room 4 will become a comfortable place for parents with children who need a "break" from sitting in church. There will be comfortable furniture, a bathroom, and in time a monitor so that the service can be seen and heard there.

Volunteers Needed

We are looking for volunteers for the church office from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Contact Lin at office@ascensionmd.org

LIFE LONG LEARNING

Wednesday Morning Book Group

Night, by Elie Weisel, is the next selection. Read the first three chapters in preparation for the group's next meeting on January 3. The group meets weekly in the Library from 10:00-11:30 a.m.

Tai Chi

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. Please come and join us.

Tai Chi will resume in January. Tai Chi will be cancelled any Thursday that schools are closed for bad weather this winter. Contact Claire Rosser at [301.275.0617](tel:301.275.0617) or Cjrosser@aol.com if you have any questions.

Thursday Morning Yoga

It will be on hiatus for the season and will resume at 10:00 a.m. on January 11, 2018.

Godly Play

In observance of the New Year holiday, Godly Play will not meet this week.

Joyful Path

In observance of the New Year holiday, Joyful Path will not meet this week.

The members of A Joyful Path are moving their classroom upstairs to room 2 (the old nursery). Come and join us in our new setting Sunday January 7th after the 9am service.

Spanish Class

Come and take part in Ascension's Spanish Class on Mondays from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 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 Javier at ocampo@ascensionmd.org

CARING FOR OUR COMMUNITY

Ministerio Felicidad

Ascension members prepare lunches and send love and prayers to day laborers in the neighborhood of the church. Join Javier at 6:00 a.m. on Saturday, January 27 in the church kitchen. If you have any question, Contact Javier at ocampo@ascensionmd.org

Men's Shelter Lunch Preparation

The Men's Shelter Lunch program provides bagged lunches for homeless men, assembled in the Undercroft once a month. Supplies are donated by Ascension members. Depending on the season, we provide forty to eighty lunches a month. The next program is January 21 at 10:15 a.m. Contact Edith at esekasi@gmail.com if you would like to help, or sign up at <http://bit.ly/1VAKEz8>.

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](tel:301.519.1074) or melanie.mitchell@verizon.net

Mobile Med

Every Tuesday, Mobile Med will be open for the service until 3:00 p.m. Starting January 2nd, our Tuesday Mobile Med clinic at Ascension House will move to the fixed site at Rollins Avenue for the cold winter months. It is too cold in the van for the staff, patients and equipment. Around February 1st, I will request blackout dates for March and April. If there are questions, contact us at spangle1@comcast.net or [240.372.3652](tel:240.372.3652).

LIFE AT ASCENSION

Epiphany Pageant - The King's Birthday

Ascension's annual Epiphany Pageant goes up at 5:00 pm. on Sunday, January 7, 2018, in the context of the weekly Eucharist celebrated at this time. It will take place in the main church.

There are parts and support roles for people of all ages.

Here is the rehearsal schedule:

- Saturday, December 30th - 10:30-12:00 noon
- Saturday, January 6th - 10:30-12:00 noon

All rehearsals are in the main church.

See you there!

Thanks, Gordon
vagordon1@yahoo.com

PRAYER REQUESTS

Prayers For Those Whose Lives are Closely Linked With Ours: Christmas Day (December 25), Church of St. Stephen and the Incarnation and Misa Alegria, DC, St. John's Church, Zion Parish, St. John's Church, Broad Creek, St. John's Church, Mt. Rainier, St. John's Church, Georgetown, St. John's Church, Lafayette Square and Iglesia San Juan, St. John's Church, Norwood, St. John's Church, Olney, St. John's Episcopal School, Olney, St. John's Preschool, DC

We pray for comfort, healing, courage and hope for Harriette Eleanor Cooper, Mike Darracott, Sally and William Glick, Sue Jenkins, Melanie Mitchell, Fran Spina, Ruthie Swain, Gale Unterberger, Suzanne Winterhalter, and all those who, in this transitory life, are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity.

We give thanks for the life of Tom Thiele, who died early Thursday morning. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

QUICK LINKS

[Link to Service Leaflets for December 31](#)

[Link to Podcast of Randy's Sermon on Sunday, December 24: "Greate Expectations"](#)

[Link to Podcast of Randy's Sermon on Sunday, December 24: "Another Brick in the Wall?"](#)

[Link to the Episcopal Diocese of Washington's Website](#)



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