



# Welcome to Church of the Ascension

*The Third Sunday after the Epiphany: January 26 A.D. 2020*

## Belonging

My dear Ascension Family,

It was such a pleasure to see so many of you at the Annual Meeting last week in the undercroft. As I looked around the room, waiting for the meeting to begin, I was so happy to see aspects of my dream for this community right there before me. There was a pleasant buzz of friendly conversation, a bustle of parish life volunteers and their friends readying the refreshments for everyone, and parishioners of all ages, races and circumstances chatting amiably together. When the meeting began you were able to listen respectfully, ask questions without rancor, and accept decisions. From what I've heard from my circle of priest buddies, we have a most unusual congregation! Of course, we do!

Ascension is a caring community. I know that I can always ask you to respond to a particular need or suggest how something might be improved. Remember when I said that it is important to recognize the life and accomplishments of departed members? You promptly showed up thereafter for the bereaved families who took comfort from the care of the whole community. We all need to belong. It is a basic human need, without which we wither, fail to thrive. Belonging is very important in seeing value in ourselves and in life. To know that you belong to a particular community increases joy and decreases the stress of painful situations. I should know. When I first came to Ascension I knew almost no English, knew no one in the parish, and was culturally disconnected from my roots. It was a stressful time, and I did not belong. I was very lucky, though, to have fallen into a church community like Ascension. In a very short time, welcoming members of the church reached out in love and friendship to make me a part of the community. Having had this experience, I recognize the importance of belonging and urge all of you to strengthen the bonds of belonging among yourselves. If we are to be the body of Christ, we can leave nobody disconnected from the whole, and nobody disinterested in the strength of the community.

For this reason, I have a few practical suggestions to increase your own and others' sense of belonging at Ascension. First, make an effort to see the needs of the community, as well as its members. Volunteer for committees, reach out to new people, call members whom you haven't seen in a while. Tell me about issues that trouble you or that seem like opportunities. Secondly, keep (and teach) an open mind about ways of doing things. Flash decisions that something won't work can be right---or wrong. Give new or unfamiliar things a chance. And finally, practice an attitude of acceptance, especially of people. Think back to a time when you found acceptance in a new situation or crowd and try to make that feeling bloom for someone else.

The other day I ran across a passage about belonging that I think you might like:

“Community means strength that joins our strength to do the  
Work that needs to be done. Arms to hold us when we falter.  
A circle of healing. A circle of friends. Someplace where we  
can be free.”

Miriam Simos  
(aka Starhawk)

## *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: Peg Ruppel**

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. All children are welcome!

**Today's Gospel**

Jesus said to Simon Peter and Andrew, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men." Immediately they followed him. Jesus began to proclaim this: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." He cured many people.

**LIFE LONG LEARNING**

**Sunday School**

This week in Godly Play, we present the Parable of the Good Shepherd. In this story, we learn about the shepherd who knows each of his sheep by name and shows them the way to all good things. If one sheep goes missing, the good shepherd searches for it, even leaving the ninety-nine to do so. When he finds the missing sheep, he calls his friends to rejoice. This story underscores how well Christ knows each of us. It also reminds us that to stay on the true path, we must know Christ as well. We explore how our faith helps us through good times and bad times and take comfort that if we lose our way, Christ will come looking for us and welcome us back into the fold.

**Wednesday Morning Book Group**

During our next meeting, we will be discussing Chapters 9 and 10 of the book "Brief Answers to the Big Questions" by Stephen Hawking. We meet at 10 am on Wednesdays in Ascension's library. All people are welcome to participate.

**Thursday Morning Yoga**

Yoga classes are offered on Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. in room 2, 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.

**Tai Chi**

Tai Chi class is at 4:00 p.m. on Thursday afternoons in the chapel, a time of peace and balance in a lovely place. Please come and join us. Contact Claire Rosser at [cjrosser@aol.com](mailto:cjrosser@aol.com) or 301-275-0617 for more information.

**LIFE AT ASCENSION**

**"How the Loss of Biodiversity Threatens All Life on Earth" By Charlie Shore**

On Sunday, February 16, scientist Charlie Shore will give a presentation on biodiversity as part of a four-week series of discussions we will have on Sundays in February about our responsibility as Christians to care for the earth and address the climate crisis. He will begin with a brief overview of the carbon and nitrogen cycles and give an analysis of how soil micro- and macro-organisms are essential to good soil health, and our entire agricultural system. Charlie will discuss the importance of free-range grazing by large herds (cattle, elk, bison), and the necessity of restoring predation in grazed lands. Throughout his talk, he will present key information about how climate change and biodiversity loss are working synergistically to destroy our environment. He will conclude with a dialog of how each individual, no matter what station in life, can act to ameliorate these tragic and imminent threats. Q&A to follow. The presentation will be held in the Parish Hall after the 10:00 service, and everyone is encouraged to come.

**Next Baptism**

The next baptism date, will be on **April 11, 2020**. If you want to be baptized or know someone who would like to be, please contact Javier at [ocampo@ascensionmd.org](mailto:ocampo@ascensionmd.org)

**Stitchers Wanted!**

Ascension is blessed in having priestly garments and hangings in most liturgical colors—but we don't have a set of the dark red ones used in Holy Week. We are interested in seeing if we can make them ourselves, maybe in a weekly sewing circle. Please email Fr. Javier if you are interested in being part of this group effort. He will set up an informational meeting to kick the project off.

**"Inspire Your Heart with Art"**

"Inspire Your Heart with Art" will be held at National Lutheran's Village at Rockville (9701 Veirs Dr, Rockville, MD 20850). Everyone is invited to attend the Opening Reception Thursday January 30 from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. You can also submit your own art to be in this show by contacting Brittany McKee at [bmckee@thevillageatrockville.org](mailto:bmckee@thevillageatrockville.org) or call her at 301-354-8447. Photo submissions of art work need to be submitted by January 20.

**Ash Wednesday is February 26**

We will celebrate the Holy Eucharist and offer the Imposition of Ashes at 12:00 noon and 7:30 p.m. in the Main Church. The evening service will be bilingual. The Labyrinth will be available for meditation in the Chapel from 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. "Ashes to Go" will be offered again this year for morning commuters at the Shady Grove Metro Station between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. We need volunteers to come and help with prayers and administering the Ashes.

**Please help us with your pledge!**

Thank you all for your continued support of Ascension. We are having glitches with our new system while breaking it in. So we ask you to do a couple of extra things this year.

- If you have submitted your pledge online, please *fill out a pledge card* also.
- If you are an EFT donor, please *fill out a new EFT authorization form* and submit it to the office.

We apologize for the inconvenience. As we move forward with our new database we will need to resubmit your information.

**Lenten Devotional**

The first Sunday of Lent will include a gift of a small daily devotional pamphlet titled, "Living Well through Lent ". The booklet provides a foundation for seeking a deeper experience of Lent, an experience that will help prepare us for the true meaning of Easter. An English or Spanish version can be downloaded for free at <https://shop.livingcompass.org/collections/advent-and-lent-resources> in PDF format. We have ordered a number of paper copies, but they are not free - so we encourage you to get your copy at the above website.

**Youth Group Work Camp Dates for 2020**

Ascension Youth Group will once again go to Philadelphia to work with the St. James School. Please mark your calendars! **The dates are July 12-17, 2020.**

Our Virginia friends at St Ivy will also join us that week. We need approximate numbers of attendees by **March 1<sup>st</sup>**. This is truly a life changing experience. Please encourage any youth-who will have finished 6<sup>th</sup> grade by the end of this school year and older-to contact us with any questions! - Angie and Trevor

**Sorters and Plastic Bins Needed**

One of our members donated about 25 bags of clothing for our yard sale. We need to sort through the bags and we are asking you to please donate large plastic containers so that we can put the clothes in order. Also we will need help sorting the clothes when we have a good number of containers. Please contact the office if you are able to help and state what your available day(s) and time(s) are. Thank you for your usual kindness.

**Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper**

This fun annual event will be held on Tuesday, February 25, 2020 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the Undercroft. Come join us to celebrate Mardi Gras, Carnival, Fat Tuesday or Martes Gordo...or use this event as a good excuse to have pancakes and sausage! This fun event needs lots of helpers AND lots of attendees, 'the more, the merrier!' If you have an instrument you would like to play or if you have a fun activity or games to play, contact Padre Javier at [frjavier@ascensionmd.org](mailto:frjavier@ascensionmd.org) or Music Minister Andrew at [music@ascensionmd.org](mailto:music@ascensionmd.org).

**Midweek Eucharistic Service**

During Lent, we will have a Holy Eucharist in the Chapel every Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. It will be a Contemplative Eucharist featuring alternative Eucharistic prayers, Taizé music and will come from a variety of sources. If you have questions contact Padre Javier at [frjavier@ascensionmd.org](mailto:frjavier@ascensionmd.org)

**2020 Lenten Rice Bowl Recipient**

Continuing a Lenten tradition since the tenure of Rector Harry Dalzell (1970-1980), your offering, placed in the wooden bowl in the font as you come forward for Communion, goes toward an outreach ministry. Typically, we alternate between local and domestic or international causes. The recipient is selected anew each year by the Vestry.

**ComfortCases**

The inspiring sermon preached by Robert Scheer, founder of ComfortCases, has prompted many congregants to ask what more we can do to help this local non-profit organization bring dignity and hope to youth entering foster care. We will continue to have a bin in the narthex for collecting additional travel-sized toiletry items. Further information on ways to help the organization—from donating pajamas to helping pack comfort cases—can be found at [www.comfortcases.org](http://www.comfortcases.org). The organization is housed at 15825 Shady Grove Road, Suite 60, Rockville, MD 20850; phone: 202-253-0402.

Youth Group

THERE WILL NOT BE YOUTH GROUP THIS SUNDAY DUE TO THE MORE JESUS, MORE LOVE REVIVAL. THE NEXT YOUTH GROUP IS FEBRUARY 9TH AND WE ARE SEEKING FAMILIES TO SUPPLY DINNER THAT EVENING.

**CONTACT US**

205 S. Summit Ave., Gaithersburg, MD, 20877  
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 yellow prayer request card (on the table in the narthex) or e-mail the office at [office@ascensionmd.org](mailto: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  
**Deacon**–The Rev. Deacon Eugene Wright genenatwright@gmail.com  
**Minister of Music**–Andrew Kullberg music@ascensionmd.org, voice mailbox 11  
**Parish Administrator** - Lin Keene office@ascensionmd.org, voice mailbox 10  
**Communications** – Jesse Velazquez comm@ascensionmd.org, voice mailbox 14

**Altar Guild Directors**

Sari Stoddard, sari.stoddard@verizon.net; 8:00 a.m. director Mardia Dennis, mard908@gmail.com; 10:00 a.m. directors Dotty Pfadenhauer, dottypfa@aol.com and Georgana Maines, mainesgnh@verizon.net

**LEADERSHIP AT ASCENSION**

**Senior Warden:** Zadinga Ogada  
**Junior Warden:** Kristen Keating  
**Vestry:**

2021: Berenice Rodriguez, Bob Waters, Susan McLaughlin  
 2022: James Black, Adoma Baffoe, Wadai Dennis  
 2023: Wendy Quijada, David Mitchell, Danielle Allen  
*Clerk of the Vestry - open (if interested, please contact the office or one of the Wardens)*  
 Gary McLaughlin, *Treasurer*

**Delegates to Diocesan Convention:**

Mardia Dennis, Gary McLaughlin, Fredis Diaz  
 Alternate: Ruth Anna Skowronski

**Cycles of Prayer**

Prayers for those whose lives are closely linked with ours:  
 St. Paul’s Church, Baden and St. Mary’s Chapel, Aquasco  
 St. Paul’s Church, Rock Creek  
 St. Paul’s Church, K Street  
 St. Paul’s Church, Piney  
 Diocesan Convention: The Bishop, Diocesan Convention Officers, Clerical and Lay Delegates, (January 25)  
 Pray for the Diocesan Revival "More Jesus, More Love" with Presiding Bishop Michael Curry (January 26)

**THIS WEEK AT ASCENSION**

Monday, January 27, 2020				
1:00 PM		Al-Anon—RM 1		
2:00 PM		English Tutoring- RM 2		
6:00 PM		Spanish Class - Conference RM		
7:00 PM		Overeaters Anonymous—RM 1		
Tuesday, January 28, 2020				
3:30 PM		Staff Meeting-Library		
6:30 PM		English Bible Study - RM 2		
7:00 PM		Stillwater Mindfulness Practice Group - Chapel		
8:30 PM		Al-Anon—RM 1		
Wednesday, January 29, 2020				
10:00 AM		Wednesday Morning Book Group - Library		
1:00 PM		Al-Anon—RM 1		
6:00 PM		English tutoring-RM 2		
7:00 PM		Overeaters Anonymous—RM 1		
7:30 PM		Spanish Bible Study		
8:00 PM		Gamblers Anonymous—RM 2		
Thursday, January 30, 2020				
10:00 AM		Yoga- RM 2		
4:00 PM		Tai Chi- Chapel		
6:30 PM		Ensemble - MC		
7:00 PM		Al Anon/Spanish - RM 1		
7:30 PM		Choir Rehearsal		
Friday, January 31, 2020				
Javier’s Day Off				
Vestry Retreat				
1:00 PM		Al-Anon—RM 1		
Saturday, February 1, 2020				
Vestry Retreat				
9:00 AM		Overeaters Anonymous-RM 2		
11:00 AM		Overeaters Anonymous—RM1		
11:00 AM		Al Anon - Parish Hall		
7:00 PM		Al Anon/Spanish - RM 1		
Sunday, February 2, 2020				
Preacher: The Rev. Javier G. Ocampo				
8:00 AM		Holy Eucharist - Main Church		
10:00 AM		Bible School for 3-year olds and under -RM 4		
10:00 AM		Holy Eucharist - Main Church		
10:00 AM		St. Barnabas - Chapel		
10:30 AM		Immigration Consultations - Library		
12:00 PM		Eucaristía en Español - Main Church		
Attendance	Dec 29 1A	January 5	January 12	January 19
8:00 AM		26	26	
10:00 AM	175	156	116	198
12:00 PM		41	30	
Total	175	223	172	198