



WELCOME TO CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

Second Sunday after Christmas : January 5 A.D. 2020

I SAW THREE SHIPS COME SAILING IN ON CHRISTMAS DAY

I love Epiphany and I guess you do, too. I have so many memories of this day from my childhood, when I was expecting my presents from the Three Kings. In Mexico, Día de Los Reyes is celebrated to honor them. This holiday represents the day the Three Wise Men gave gifts to Jesus Christ, and the day closes the Christmas festivities.

It is the last day of Christmas but it doesn't mean the gift giving (and receiving) is over. In the majority of the Latino/Hispanic countries, kids receive gifts from the Three Kings, rather than from Santa Claus at Christmas. I remember that I used to place my shoe with a wish list on top for the Three Kings before I went to bed. In the morning, my shoe had some of the gifts I had asked the Three Kings for.

During Día de Los Reyes, we serve Rosca de Reyes, or King's Cake. "Rosca" means wreath and "reyes" means kings. The Rosca de Reyes has an oval shape to symbolize a crown and has a small doll inside, which represents baby Jesus. The doll figure symbolizes the hiding of the infant Jesus from King Herod's troops. Traditionally, roscas are adorned with dried and candied fruits to symbolize the many jewels that a crown would have. The person who gets the slice with the doll must host a party on Día de la Candelaria in February.

The Magi only journeyed from the East once, but many of us probably feel like this is a well-worn path that the church travels every Christmas. We have been here before. We have looked under every rock, peered around every corner, and explored the nuances of this story so many times that perhaps we are tempted to put our worship, our Bible readings, our carols, and our Epiphany celebrations on auto-pilot and casually allow ourselves to bask in the familiar light of the star of Bethlehem and the visitors it draws from afar.

Yes, it is too true - the story of the Magi's journey is well known. The Jesus we discover in Matthew's gospel - *the Jesus of God; the Light that came to vanquish darkness; the One who was fully God and fully Man at once; the One who came to change the world and who desires to start by changing you and me; the One who, when received and welcomed in faith leaves the seeker "overwhelmed with joy"; the One in whom the "hopes and fears of all the years are met; and where meek souls will receive him still"* - this dear Christ will enter in.

This year we may not get presents from the Three Kings, but we can share the gift that is the light of God with our neighbors, family and friends. You and I could be the new Wise Women and Men from this world.

May this Epiphany be filled with 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 Garcia Ocampo

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!



The magi from the east followed the star until it stopped still over the house. They entered, found the child with Mary, prostrated themselves, and did him homage.

LIFE LONG LEARNING

Wednesday Morning Book Group

During our next meeting, we will be discussing Chapter 6 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 or 301-275-0617 for more information.

LIFE AT ASCENSION

REALM has Arrived

Our new database program is up and running. REALM allows us to sort and network lots of information and allows you, the parishioner, to contribute your pledge, enter your data, put your picture in it, keep it up to date, and check your tax information. You'll be able to join a committee, sign up to be a Worship Leader, see who's on the vestry or who is running for the vestry. Try it out at <http://ascensionmd.org/realm-sign-up/>

Next Baptism

The next baptism date, after the upcoming baptisms on January 19, will be **April 11, 2020**. If you want to be baptized or know someone who would like to be, please contact Javier at ocampo@ascensionmd.org

Vestry/Convention Delegate Candidates Named

Many, many thanks to everyone who took part in this year's nomination process. The process was made even better by everyone who took the time to think about their vision for Ascension and how they or someone they knew could serve our community. By the end of the nominating period, ten names had been put forward and each potential candidate was asked to consider standing for election.

Today, we are very pleased to announce the following slate for the vestry:

Danielle Allen

Adoma Baffoe

David Mitchell

Wendy Quijada

In addition, Ruth Anna Skowronski has agreed to become Ascension's Alternate Delegate to the Episcopal Diocese of Washington's annual convention.

You can learn more about the candidates on January 12th when they will be available after each service at the Candidate's Forum.

Annual Meeting

Our annual parish meeting will take place at 11:30 a.m. on Sunday, January 19th in the Undercroft. We'll begin with a potluck lunch. Our primary business will be to elect new Vestry members and to have a time for shared reflection on the ministry and mission of Ascension. The Vestry candidates will be available for dialogue on the preceding Sunday, January 12th, after each service in the Undercroft (see article above).

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.

Coffee Supplies

I was so happy that several generous donors had brought in coffee supplies! With an average of 50 to 60 people per Sunday, we always need things. With the popularity of our coffee hour, please continue your generous gifts. In particular, right now we need *coffee, dinner plates and paper tablecloths*. Please bring your donation on Sunday or during the week during office hours.

Thank you! Padre Javier

MLK Choral Evensong on January 19, 2020 at 5:00 p.m.

The Ascension Music Ministry is presenting an evening prayer service in honor of the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in the main church. This service will be led by the Ascension Choir and will feature new service music composed by our former Minister of Music, Paul Kelley. If you are interested in taking part in the service by singing with our choir or reading scripture, please contact Andrew Kullberg at music@ascensionmd.org.

Ascension's Giving Tree

This Advent season, a "Giving Tree" will adorn Ascension's Narthex, whereby we will have the opportunity to support the wonderful work being performed by Comfort Cases, Inc. in bringing dignity and necessities to foster children. Detailed instructions may be found in the Narthex.

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.

Youth Group Work Camp Dates Selected 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 1st**. This is truly a life changing experience. Please encourage youth-who will have finished 6th grade by the end of this school year and older-to contact us with any questions! -Angie and Trevor



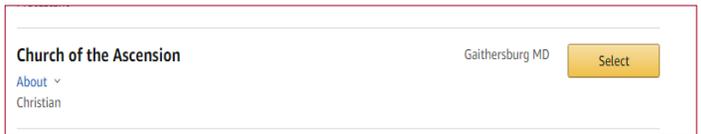
Amazon Smile

AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon. 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's 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:



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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 yellow prayer request card (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

Pastoral Associate—The Rev. Nan Hildebrand
hildebrandnan@gmail.com

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: Betsy Hasegawa

Junior Warden: Zadinga Ogada

Vestry:

2020: Gordon Donnelly, Meredith Horan, Luis Pedrón

2021: Berenice Rodriguez, Bob Waters, Susan McLaughlin

2022: James Black, Kristen Keating, Wadai Dennis

Danielle Allen, *Clerk of the Vestry*

Avin Lalmansingh, *Treasurer*

Delegates to Diocesan Convention:

Mardia Dennis, Gary McLaughlin, Sue Snay

Alternate: Fredis Diaz

Cycles of Prayer

Prayers for those whose lives are closely linked with ours:

Church of the Epiphany, DC
Welcome Table and Street Church, Church of the Epiphany,
DC
Epiphany Church, Forestville

THIS WEEK AT ASCENSION

Monday, January 6, 2019

- 1:00 PM Al-Anon—RM 1
- 2:00 PM English Tutoring- RM 2
- 6:00 PM Spanish Class - RM 2
- 7:00 PM Listening Hearts Community - Library
- 7:00 PM Overeaters Anonymous—RM 1

Tuesday, January 7, 2019

- 3:30 PM Staff Meeting-Library
- 6:30 PM English Bible Study - RM 2
- 7: PM Stillwater Mindfulness Practice Group - Chapel
- 8:30 PM Al-Anon—RM 1

Wednesday, January 8, 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
- 7:30 PM Worship Committee-Library
- 8:00 PM Gamblers Anonymous—RM 2

Thursday, January 9, 2020

- 10:00 AM Yoga- RM 2
- 4:00 PM Tai Chi- Chapel
- 6:30 PM Ensemble - Main Church
- 7:00 PM Al Anon/Spanish - RM 1
- 7:00 PM Stillwater Mindfulness Practice Group - Chapel
- 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal

Friday, January 10, 2020
Javier’s Day Off

- 1:00 PM Al-Anon—RM 1

Saturday, January 11, 2020

- 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, January 12, 2019

Preacher: The Rev. Javier G. Ocampo
Candidate Forum

- 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
- 12:00 PM Eucaristia en Espanol - Main Church

Attendance	December 22	December 24	December 25	December 29
8:00 am	38	5:00 PM 62		
10:00 am	125	9:00 PM 159	35	175
12:00 pm				
Total:	163	221	35	175