



Welcome to Church of the Ascension

The Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany: February 9 A.D. 2020

As many of you know, this past weekend we held our 2020 Vestry Retreat, facilitated by Rev. Ken Howard, former Assistant Rector of Ascension, retired Rector of St. Nicholas, Darnestown and founder of FaithX Strategic Missional Consulting.

We kicked off the retreat with a dinner on Friday evening where the treasurer and our outgoing members joined the current vestry to share our faith stories—how we came to Ascension, why we stay and why we feel called to serve. We discussed the best practices of a well-functioning vestry, after which our outgoing members offered words of wisdom, and we ended the night with a Compline service.

We jumped right into work when we met early Saturday morning, starting with a discussion on Ascension's Vision Statement and its Mission Statement. Anyone who has engaged in strategic planning likely knows that a vision statement looks to the future and, in the case of a church, answers the question, "What is God calling us to be?" In contrast, a mission statement reflects the present and answers the question, "What is God calling us to do?" A strong vision statement leads to a strong mission statement which, in turn, leads to focused and realistic goals and objectives.

So we spent time unpacking the phrase "We represent Christ wherever we may be," which we're sure you've heard around Ascension and seen on our website. We asked ourselves what it really means to be an ambassador for Christ, why we want to be ambassadors for Christ and what we are doing about it.

At last month's "More Jesus, More Love" revival, Presiding Bishop Curry told us that we need more love in our lives. He said that love is more than a feeling. Love is a commitment and an action. One of the best ways we can prove the reality of God's love is by welcoming strangers and caring for the needy and forgotten. So, we concluded that representing Christ means loving everyone, but especially those in the margins, and looking for ways to meet their needs.

We ended the retreat with the beginnings of a plan on how to move forward along with a number of strategies, of which we will share two. The first issue we want to address, of course, is growing our congregation. We want it to reflect our surroundings, so we have a robust community that values people of all ages, ethnicities and backgrounds. We discussed ways to attract and integrate new members into the Ascension family with the support of our newly-formed Communications Committee. Another priority is to address local unemployment. Public data about the neighborhoods surrounding Ascension shows a need for support in the area of employment stability. Many types of literacy--including language, financial, and health--have a great impact on economic stability, and we are looking at ways to help our neighbors in these areas.

We are very excited to have begun this process and look forward to continuing to develop Ascension's strategic plan. Bishop Curry has invited all of us to practice the Way of Love, and we are ready to take up the challenge.

God's Peace,
Zadinga Ogada
Senior Warden

Kristen Keating
Junior Warden

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. Deacon Eugene Wright

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!

Salt and Light in the World of Work

If you are a follower of Jesus living the beatitudes, you matter. You have an important role to play because you are the salt of the earth. Salt preserves and Christians help preserve what is good in the culture. In the ancient world, salt was very valuable: the Greeks thought it contained something almost divine, and the Romans sometimes paid their soldiers with salt. A soldier who didn't carry out his duties "was not worth his salt." You are a seasoning agent. In a sense, you can bring the distinctive flavor of God's values to all of life. You can make life palatable.

LIFE LONG LEARNING

Sunday School

The Parable of the Sower and the Parable of the Leaven. The Parable of the Sower, which is found in all three synoptic gospels, describes Jesus' promise of abundant harvest.

Wednesday Morning Book Group

During our next meeting, we will view the movie, "The Theory of Everything", which is based on the life of the famous physicist, Stephen Hawking. We meet at 10 AM on Wednesdays in Ascension's library. All people are welcome to participate. The movie runs for approximately two hours. Bring a sandwich for yourself and/or something edible to share with the group.

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

"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

Seamstresses 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.

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.

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 or Music Minister Andrew at music@ascensionmd.org.

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 1st**. This is truly a life changing experience. Please encourage any 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

Youth Group This Sunday February 9th at 6 pm

Youth group is back in session and will meet this Sunday from 6 pm to 8 pm for food, fellowship and fun! All in 6th grade and above are welcome! There will be prizes for some games!

Youth Sunday will be March 29, 2020

Youth Sunday-which is also a Once Ascension Sunday will take place on March 29th at 10 am. There will be a luncheon to follow in the undercroft. Please mark your calendars so you are certain to attend!

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.

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

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. The organization is housed at 15825 Shady Grove Road, Suite 60, Rockville, MD 20850; phone: 202-253-0402.

Men's Shelter Lunches

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 on February 16 at 9:00 a.m. Contact Edith esekasi@gmail.com

Dear Lunch Bunchers; Happy February!

This is your first reminder for our Lunch Bunch gathering on February 18, 2020, 11:30am to 2:00pm. Our feature presentation for February will be in observance of Black History Month. After lunch we will watch a short documentary film entitled Harriet Tubman: They Called Her Moses. Harriet Tubman is a revered name in American history. She was born in Maryland in the 1820s. Through her selfless efforts, hundreds of African American slaves escaped to freedom. Tubman's tenacious trust in God and love for others earned her the title The Moses of her People. Come and join us at St. Nicholas Episcopal Church, 155575 Germantown Road, Germantown, Maryland 20874. Contact Audrey at audreyt58@gmail.com

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.

Bishop of Washington - The Rt. Rev. Mariann Edgar Budde mebudde@edow.org, 202-537-6550
Rector –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 - TBA
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:

Diocesan Commission on Ministry

All Seminaries, Seminarians, and Seminary Professors;
Postulants and Candidates

Pray in thanksgiving for the life and witness of Absalom Jones (February 13)

THIS WEEK AT ASCENSION

Monday, February 10, 2020				
11:30 AM		Living with a Chronic Illness - RM 1		
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, February 11, 2020				
3:30 PM		Staff Meeting-Library		
6:30 PM		English Bible Study - RM 2		
6:30 PM		Ensemble - Main Church		
7:00 PM		Stillwater Mindfulness Practice Group - Chapel		
7:30 PM		Choir Rehearsal		
8:30 PM		Al-Anon—RM 1		
Wednesday, February 12, 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, February 13, 2020				
10:00 AM		Yoga- RM 2		
4:00 PM		Tai Chi - Chapel		
7:00 PM		Al Anon/Spanish - RM 1		
Friday, February 14, 2020				
1:00 PM		Al-Anon—RM 1		
Saturday, February 15, 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, February 16, 2020				
Preacher: The Rev. Javier G. Ocampo				
8:00 AM		Holy Eucharist - Main Church		
9:00 AM		Men’s Shelter Lunches		
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		
11:30 AM		"How the Loss of Biodiversity Threatens All Life on Earth" by Charlie Shore -Parish Hall		
12:00 PM		Eucaristía en Español - Main Church		
1:30 PM		Maryland Uke Jam - Chapel		
Attendance	January 12	January 19	January 26	February 2
8:00 AM	26		28	29
10:00 AM	116	198	114	147
12:00 PM	30		40	52
Total	172	198	182	228