

This Week at Ascension

Mr. Christ, the Unexpected One

For many more years than I care to admit, I thought 'Christ' was Jesus's last name. When I was fortunate enough to study under some world class, Harvard educated religious studies profs at *West Virginia University* (italics mine!), I put it all together in a new way. Or, more accurately, it was explained to me that 'Christ' was his title. It meant "anointed one" in Greek. In Hebrew, the term is 'Messiah'. So we can call him Jesus Messiah, too. Anointed ones in ancient Israel were kings. They were anointed with God's Spirit, and acted as God's representatives in the governing and leading of the people.

In general, many Jews in that period of the history of Israel expected the Messiah, the Christ, to be another king, like David. He would liberate them from Roman occupation and lead God's Chosen to a new and glorious chapter of their history.

But, of course, we know how the story goes. Jesus was not that kind of Christ.

I had a bishop in Washington State who always said "Jesus the Christ" when he prayed aloud and when he celebrated the Eucharist, even when the 'the' wasn't there. He wanted us to know who Jesus was and is, and to remind us that this human being was as anointed as anyone could possibly be: positively brimming over with Spirit.

Don't be too surprised if I start calling him 'the' Christ, because that is who he is for us. I pray, however, that Jesus the Christ will accompany you on your journey always, and never cease to be a surprise to you.

Namasté,

Randy

HEADLINERS

Palm Sunday is a 1A Sunday!

There will be one service at 10:00 a.m. Afterward will be Randy's farewell celebration. Save the date: March 25.

Lenten Bible Study: Contemplating Colossians

Contemplation is entering into the realm of spiritual mystery. In the New Testament, the mysterious letter to the Colossians takes up that theme with its claim that we have the mystery of Christ. Over the first five Sundays in Lent, Sister Elena will lead an encounter with this mysterious short text and its theologies of the pre-existence of Christ, invisibility (Harry Potter's not the only one with a cloak!), spiritual power and resurrection. We'll also engage the apparent contradiction with these theologies and their manifestation within an unjust social order. Meets from 10:15 to 10:45 am on five Sundays, February 18 through March 18, in the Undercroft.

LIFE LONG LEARNING

New Book for Wednesday Morning Book Group

Beginning Wednesday, March 7, the Wednesday morning group will begin to discuss Brian McLaren's latest book entitled *The Great Spiritual Migration: How the World's Largest Religion Is Seeking a Better Way to Be Christian*. Watch the Sunday announcements and weekly e-mails for reading assignments. Here's a description from Amazon.com (<http://amzn.to/2nGabwg>): "Brian McLaren, a leading voice in contemporary religion, argues that— notwithstanding the dire headlines about the demise of faith and drop in church attendance—Christian faith is not dying. Rather, it is embarking on a once-in-an-era spiritual shift. For millions, the journey has already begun."

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 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 Crosser@aol.com if you have any questions.

Thursday Morning Yoga

Randy's yoga class is every Thursday at 10:00 a.m. in 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.

Godly Play

This week's Godly Play lessons, the Faces of Easter I and II, help children prepare for the Mystery of Easter. We move toward the Mystery by hearing the stories of Christ's journey toward the cross and resurrection. This week we focus on the face of Christ as a newborn child and the face of Christ as the One who was lost and found

A Joyful Path

The members of A Joyful Path will explore the meaning of being of service to others. I John 3:18 "Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and action. Also the meaning of this Mexican proverb: "A good deed is the best prayer." Come and join us in Room 2 after the 9:00 a.m. service (10:15).

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

2018 Lenten Rice Bowl Recipient

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. This year the Rice Bowl offering goes to Gaithersburg HELP, an agency that provides material support to struggling residents of all kinds. Ascension's food offering goes to the HELP food pantry on Muddy Branch Rd. Parish member Melanie Mitchell has been heavily involved with HELP board for many years. Former Rector Joe Clark served two terms as president of the HELP board.

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, February 24 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 February 18 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

Mobile Med will not be at Ascension House starting tomorrow January 2nd (until the beginning of March). I have posted signs on the Ascension House bulletin board and on the door to the chapel. Signs list the alternate location as well as a number to contact for more information.

Jean Cohn
spangle1@comcast.net
[240.372.3652](tel:240.372.3652)

LIFE AT ASCENSION

Pledge Envelopes

Please don't forget to pickup your pledge envelopes located on the table outside the Parish Office if you haven't done so. If your pledge envelope is not there and you did not pick it up please contact Lin by e-mail at office@ascensionmd.org.

Zumba at Ascension

We will have Zumba classes at Ascension every Thursday at 7:30 p.m. in Undercroft Commons. Zumba is a dance fitness program created by Colombian dancer and choreographer Alberto "Beto" Perez during the 1990s. Zumba involves dance and aerobic movements performed to energetic music. The choreography incorporates hip -hop, soca, samba, salsa, merengue and mambo.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Prayers For Those Whose Lives are Closely Linked With Ours:Diocesan Retreat Committee, Pray for all the Presidents of the United States (Presidents' Day, February 20)

We pray for comfort, healing, courage and hope for Harriette Eleanor Cooper, Mike Darracott, Sally and William Glick, Sue Jenkins, Margaret Joseph, Melanie Mitchell, Sarah Olsen, Easton Pool, Fran Spina, Ruthie Swain, Kim Weaver, Suzanne Winterhalter, Sharon Wood, and all those who, in this transitory life, are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity.

QUICK LINKS

[Link to Service Leaflets for February 18](#)

[Link to Podcast of Katie's Sermon on Sunday, February 11: "A Religious Dialogue on the Meaning of the Transfiguration"](#)

[Link to Sermon and Other Videos page](#)

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



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