

This Week at Ascension

The Kingdom of God is like a Mustard Seed

Last week, Sister Elena's sermon provided us with an essential guide for our progress on the Christian path. She talked about the importance of each member being a pastoral caregiver just by gracious listening and active supportiveness. She told the story of a minister in another denomination who preached to his congregation that each person sitting in the pews that day was called by God and anointed by God to be a bearer of God's healing to our neighbor and to the world.

We might ask if we are qualified to provide pastoral care to another? My response is that we are trained as Christians in the knowledge and peace of God and we are instructed to love God with our whole heart and our neighbors as ourselves. We need to trust that by listening to what the Spirit is saying to God's People in Church, we can then listen with grace and love to the person sitting next to us in Church. This transformative listening flowing from the Spirit through us to others is the way we can live by Jesus' Great Commandment to love God with our whole heart and soul and to love our neighbors as ourselves. We are qualified by Christ to care for others in the trust that God truly hears us and empowers us as bearers of other's pain. Our congregation has two priests who are trained in pastoral care, but we need every single one of you to be our assistants in pastoral care. Because you are on the front lines with people in need, you are first responders, i.e. the first "hearers". You are very important.

Now, we might ask, how do we become good listeners and how do we know how else we might be helpful. Holy listening does not require the listener to solve the problem at hand. Only the person who is sharing can do that. Yet, as a listener, it may become clear how you might actively provide support. A person in need might just need a hug or know that they have a friend to call. Never underestimate how important being heard is or underestimate the strength of a person in trouble. Just that few minutes of loving attention may be exactly what the struggling person needs that day to keep going. By listening, we learn how else we might be of service. Fredy Diaz' detention has mobilized many of you to help and your listening has facilitated your active support for him.

Jesus's miracles were often delivered as a result of Jesus' full attention on the seeker. They experienced God's healing through his complete attention. He told stories which illuminated the way God cares for us and the way we can care for others. This Sunday, we will hear Jesus teaching that "The Kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how." We are that seed and we do not know how exactly God will work through us, but only

that God will do so and we will grow as pastoral caregivers. We are like the mustard seed, the smallest of all seeds, which when sown grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs. I will be away for vacation in California for the next three weeks and I will miss you.

Blessings, Nan+

HEADLINERS

The Fredy Diaz Martinez Fund

Friends, most of you know that our fellow parishioner and friend, Fredy, was arrested by ICE a little over a week ago. Fredy's wife and three children are also active and faithful members of Ascension. They primarily worship at the Noon service, but are always participants in the One Ascension services. Their daughter Jazmin is a reader of the Psalms at that service and reads beautifully from the lectern. Fredy and his family are always there for others in need. Present to serve when Ascension needs him. Our lawns and gardens testify to his care. In my support letter to the immigration judge, I described Fredy as a man of merit and spirit.

Well, now Fredy needs us. Because of his detention, he will have massive legal bills so that he can be reunited with his family, his church and his job. At this time, his family is deprived of the much needed second income provided by Fredy to his family. Last Sunday, we let you all know what had happened to Fredy and invited you to help Fredy and his family. We also asked you to write letters of support for Fredy to the immigration judge. Many of you have provided wonderful letters. Thank you. Many of you have already made financial donations as well. Thank you. To further support the Fredy and his family, we are formally setting up a Fredy Diaz fund. If you have not yet donated, we invite you to do so as you are able. If you wish to donate again, we support that too.

May God's Blessings be upon you!
Javier and Nan

First Responder Presentation

Would you know how to act quickly if a person in your pew suddenly had a heart attack? Do you know where our AED is located, how to use it, or even what it is? What would you do if a stranger entered the church carrying a weapon, or simply looked threatening? A presentation given by a member of the Gaithersburg Police Department will address all these issues, and more, on Sunday, June 24th following the 10:00 a.m. service in the undercroft. Please plan to attend this important meeting to learn more about these urgent issues.

Youth Group Seeks Donations for Raised Garden Beds

Next Sunday, June 24th at the 10 am service, we will send off our Ascension Youth to their annual Work Camp/Mission Trip to intercity Philadelphia. Fourteen Ascension Youth will be joined by four Youth from the diocese of Virginia, as has become a tradition over the past few years. Please attend the service to wish them well on their service week.

While the Youth are in Philly, they will construct 10 raised garden beds. The lumber cost is \$1000 and we are seeking donations to help fund the project. Please playfully consider a donation of even the smallest amount. Make checks payable to Ascension with subject line such as "work camp project" or "lumber". Cash can be put in an envelope and labeled accordingly.

Self-sustaining fresh fruits and vegetables are critical to improving children's lives in these unserved communities.

Volunteer for Grounds Maintenance

If you are free and would like to join us on July 7th from 8 AM - 12 PM, we are organizing volunteers to help prune trees, bushes, landscaping and the overall appearance of Ascension's grounds. If you have yard tool and equipment to help in this project, please let us know. There is a sign up sheet in the Narthex. If you are interested in leading this group, please make a note next to your name.

If you have any questions, please contact Lin at office@ascensionmd.org

Facilities Committee Seeks Volunteers!

Have you ever built a house all by yourself? Neither have we. But we have lived in houses and apartments where things break and need repairs. If you have experience calling plumbers, electricians, roofers, etc., and meeting them when they come for estimates, you are just the kind of person we need for the facilities committee. While we welcome handy people who can fix a lock, drive a screw or change a light bulb, most of our duties consist of identifying projects, arranging for estimates and meeting prospective contractors. Perfect for retirees! The more of us there are, the less anyone person has to do. If you are interested, contact one of the following: Ted Bedell, 301 -520-8449; Luis Pedron, 301-922-5610; John Pruessner, 240-271-4739, or email Lin Keene at: office@ascensionmd.org

LIFE LONG LEARNING

Wednesday Morning Book Group

We are reading Derek Wilson's book entitled *A Magical World: Superstition and Science from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment*. Our group meets on Wednesday mornings at 10:00 a.m. in Ascension's library. All are welcome to participate. Please read Chapter 6 for this coming Wednesday.

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 or Cjrosser@aol.com if you have any questions.

Thursday Morning Yoga

Yoga classes are offered on Thursdays at 10:00 AM, 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.

Lucia Pires is from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. She is a 500-hour Pranakriya Yoga School of Healing Arts certified yoga teacher. Her training focuses on cultivating and enhancing the relationship of the student with his or her life force through yoga postures, breath work and meditation, in order to create change in awareness and help the student move towards wholeness and greater aliveness. She completed her professional training in 2015.

Lucia is the mother of two boys, ages 14 and 10, and when they give her a little break she enjoys reading, writing, long walks in nature and dancing.

Summer Sunday School

This week (June 10) is the last week of the regular Sunday school year. Both Joyful Path and Godly Play will celebrate our time together in the godly play classroom.

There will be summer Sunday school in room 3 (the toddler room/room of refuge). It will be geared toward ages 5 and under, but older children are welcome to come help or just hang out.

If you have questions, contact Megan Didavi 703-636-7199 mdidavi@gmail.com.

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

Prison Ministry

Bubba Pflantzbaum has been writing to an inmate in Cumberland for about 10 years, providing friendship and access to information. His name is Jim, and he may be released in the next year or so. Jim is always looking for people to correspond with, so if you are interested in getting involved with this ministry, please email Bubba at bubbashalom@gmail.com

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, June 23 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 June 17 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 or melanie.mitchell@verizon.net

Mobile Med

Mobile Med: Ascension hosts the Mobile Med van on Tuesday at Ascension House (where the van parks) and the Chapel (where the patients wait). We have volunteers that man the waiting room from 7:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m. You do NOT need medical knowledge or training - we act as hosts to the patients as they wait. We welcome new volunteers!

Jean Cohn

spangle1@comcast.net

240.372.3652.

Montgomery Hospice

Montgomery Hospice is a nonprofit hospice that has been serving the residents of Montgomery County for 36 years. We provide professional end-of-life care in homes, extended care facilities and at Casey House, our acute care facility. We are looking for new volunteers. Our greatest need is for volunteers to visit patients. These volunteers provide companionship for patients, respite for family members, lavender oil hand massages, music by the bedside or help with practical matters. Many provide the gift of "presence" by simply being with a patient. All volunteers go through an application process and a three-day training. For more information, call 301-921-4400 or visit www.montgomeryhospice.org/volunteer

LIFE AT ASCENSION

Ascension Work Camp 2018

Where: Philadelphia, PA St. James School

Cost: \$350 however scholarships will be found for those in need. Please make check out to Ascension and put "work camp" in the memo. Also please do not hand it to me but rather give it to church office in person or mail.

This is always a very rewarding experience for our Ascension Youth. The church will send them off on June 24th at the 120 am service.

Please contact Angie to sign up or with any questions: angela.hightwalker@nist.gov.

Kitchen Closed

Until repairs are completed, the kitchen will be closed. We are sorry for the inconvenience and thank you for your support during this time

PRAYER REQUESTS

Prayers For Those Whose Lives are Closely Linked With Ours: St. Alban's Church, DC and Iglesia San Albano, Pray for all fathers and those who have been as fathers to us.

We pray for comfort, healing, courage and hope for Reba Brown, Jean Cohn, Fredy Diaz, Peggy Donnellon, Harriette Eleanor Cooper, Sally & William Glick, Rudi Miksa, Ophelia Yalley-Ogunro, Leslie Pool, Leslie Sanya, Fran Spina, Dorett Sutherland, Samuel Tellu, Martha Tieran, Elvia Valencia, and all those who, in this transitory life, are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity, as well as for all those on our extended healing prayer list.

QUICK LINKS

[Link to Leaflets for Services](#)

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

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