

This Week at Ascension

Frederick Buechner *Quote of the Day*



Coincidence

I THINK OF A PERSON I haven't seen or thought of for years, and ten minutes later I see her crossing the street. I turn on the radio to hear a voice reading the biblical story of Jael, which is the story that I have spent the morning writing about. A car passes me on the road, and its license plate consists of my wife's and my initials side by side. When you tell people stories like that, their usual reaction is to laugh. One wonders why.

I believe that people laugh at coincidence as a way of relegating it to the realm of the absurd and of therefore not having to take seriously the possibility that there is a lot more going on in our lives than we either know or care to know. Who can say what it is that's going on? But I suspect that part of it, anyway, is that every once and so often we hear a whisper from the wings that goes something like this: "You've turned up in the right place at the right time. You're doing fine. Don't ever think that you've been forgotten."

- Originally published in *Wishful Thinking* and later in *Beyond Words*

HEADLINERS

Annual Meeting

Our annual parish meeting will take place at 10:15 a.m. on Sunday, March 4 in the Main Church. 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.

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. The class meets from 10:15 to 10:45 am on five Sundays, February 18 through March 18, in the Undercroft with the Rev. Sr. Elena Thompson

#MarchForOurLives

To date, there are 63 marches organizing around the country for March 24th, with thousands planning to come Washington, D.C. The Diocese of Washington is preparing to join the marchers and welcome them with the best of our hospitality. We're looking for churches where marchers can sleep, find respite during the day and food for the journey. More than a dozen churches are leading the way. We're also organizing EDOW youth and all who wish to walk in solidarity with them to take part on this historic march. With our ecumenical and interfaith partners we are planning a pre-march vigil on Friday evening March 23. We'll have more information soon. We are not alone in this work. The country's conscience has been awakened and people from all sectors, many faiths, and every point on the political spectrum are responding. You can learn more about the Episcopal Church's national efforts on the Bishops United Against Gun Violence Facebook page. If you are interested in being part of EDOW's ministry of solidarity and hospitality, please let us know. Plans are still fluid, but we will keep you informed each step of the way. It's a privilege and great responsibility to be present and awake at pivotal moments like these. I give thanks for the young people who are leading the way. Learn more on opportunities and information related to March for Our Lives. Author: The Rt. Rev. Mariann Edgar Budde

Ascension Youth Group

OThis Sunday March 4th @ 4:00 p.m., we will do another service project with Comfort Cases. We will need an approximate head count by noon on March 2nd. <https://www.comfortcases.org/>

Our dioceses is planning to participate in the "March for Our Lives" on March 24th. More info here: <https://www.thecut.com/2018/02/march-for-our-lives-for-gun-control-will-be-on-march-24.html>

We plan to talk with the Youth about whether we want to participate as a group. Obviously based on their Memorial to the Lost project last year, there may be some interest.

Look forward to seeing you this Sunday evening!!!

Angie & Trevor

Christian Formation

Christian Formation teachers will meet with parents and grand parents on Sunday, March 18th at 10:15 a.m. in the Library for parents who would like to discuss the Sunday School situation (the best time to hold Sunday School classes).

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." Read through Chapter 1 for 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](tel:301.275.0617) or Cjrosser@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.

Starting April 12, 2018, Tina Lightner-Morris will be teaching Yoga at 10:00 a.m. at Chapel.

Godly Play

This week's Godly Play, we will study the Faces of Easter V. This lesson continues to help us prepare for the Mystery of Easter. We move toward the Mystery by hearing the stories 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 healer and peacemaker.

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

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

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, March 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 March 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

Worship Committee News

Our single-handed stellar Worship Committee Chair Carleton MacDonald is moving to Orangevale, California. His last Sunday at Ascension is April 8. If you would like to serve as chair or committee member, please let me know. Meredith Horan [301-926-1054](tel:301-926-1054) or horanm@hotmail.com

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: Non-parochial Clergy of the Diocese, Washington Episcopal Clergy Association (WECA), Network of National Episcopal Clergy Association (NNECA)

We pray for comfort, healing, courage and hope for Harriette Eleanor Cooper, Mike Darracott, Sally and William Glick, Margaret Joseph, Ophelia Yalley-Ogunru, 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 March 4](#)

[Link to Podcast of Randy's Sermon on Sunday, February 25: "Retarded and Risen"](#)

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

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



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