



"We are ambassadors who represent Christ." – 2 Corinthians 5:20

# THIS WEEK AT ASCENSION

## Dreams and Reality

When I was quite a young man I had big dreams about who I would be, and what I would accomplish. Like most young men, I wanted to make my mother proud, and avoid disgracing my father. The vision of myself as a member of a committee in a place far from home was certainly not part of my dreams! And yet, I must tell you that my recent experience with one of Ascension's most vital committees, the Worship Committee, as given me lots to think about.

Let me back up a little. Unlike many aspects of the Episcopal Church, the number and type of committees that a church may use to accomplish all that needs to be done is not regulated by the Canons or the local bishop. I know of churches with only two committees (typically Finance, and Buildings and Grounds), and others with 12-15 separate committees. Some churches revise their committees every 1-2 years; others have the same committees that served their grandparents fifty years ago. But in all cases, the committee structure exists to provide wide involvement and education of the congregation in matters that affect everyone. Of course, the end result of the group's deliberations should be a sharing of the workload of the pastor and his staff. This is good, from my point of view! Secondly, these bodies permit the exploration of multiple viewpoints about matters of concern to the community. Finally, productive church committees provide an avenue for members to gain a deeper, more trusting relationship with fellow members. Of course, the pastor COULD decide everything; it might be faster, but in my opinion, it wouldn't be better.

Let's take the example of the Worship Committee. When I came here, there was one person on the Worship Committee—Carleton MacDonald. When he left, we were faced with compressing six services into three, finding the right mix of style, liturgy, music, (and for want of a better word) atmosphere to fit each service. And the vast wealth of

knowledge and experience that Carleton had was out THERE—in California. Though no one person came close to knowing all that Carleton did, among the congregation there were people who felt deeply about their worship experience. They were called to serve on a newly formed Worship Committee. There were many meetings; there was open airing of contradictory positions; there was passion, doubt, and prayer. I truly believe that God was with us, for in this time of negativity and unwillingness to see any view but our own, everyone flexed just a little. And just a little was enough to give us all a beginning from which to launch a reexamination of all that we need to do and be to make our church strong and enduring.

Many of our current committees are looking at how they may accomplish the work that they are tasked to do. Each one has a Chairperson who calls the meeting and determines the work to be accomplished. If there are activities that require funding or consultation with the vestry, there is a Vestry Liaison assigned to the committee. But note that this is not a vestry-directed activity; it is a chance for the congregation to be actively involved. It is a way for you to bring your unique talents and interests to the work of the Church. Right now, we are starting to consider the training that needs to go along with service on a committee to enhance the satisfaction and utility of the experience. I hope that you will consider service on an Ascension Committee. Look on the back page of your service bulletin insert. 'Under Leadership at Ascension,' you will find a list of all the current committees and the person to contact.

My mother did not live to see me sitting on the Worship Committee, but I feel pretty sure that she would be proud! But you know Moms!

## HEADLINERS

### **Summer Sunday School**

We are offering Summer Sunday School during the 10:00 service which loosely follows the format of the Families with Young Children Service. The program is lead by Michelle Wood and Megan Didavi, but other Sunday school teachers, parents or other members of the congregation may also pitch in. We are required by Parents may come to Sunday School with their little ones or go to the church service. We will sing, have a simple lesson, pray and play. We will all go to church for communion. If you have any questions, call or text Megan Didavi 703-626-7199 or email at [mdidavi@gmail.com](mailto:mdidavi@gmail.com)

## **WE HAVE GONE DIGITAL**

In this day and age we must keep up with technology. We have update Servant Keeper (Ascension's database) to allow parishioners to update their own information on the church's database. The link below will allow you to access it by entering your email address and creating a password. You will be able to not only update your current information, but also view your contributions and print your own statements. Of course those whom wish us to provide them with their statements, we will be happy to do so. You will be able to share your interests in severing and tell us where you are serving now.

**<https://servantkeeper.com/member-portal/ECOTA/registration/email>**

## **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 time, 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 by going here: **<http://ascensionmd.org/know-about-fredy-and-his-family/>**.

May God's Blessings be upon you!

Javier and Nan

## **The University of Liberia Alumni Chorus**

The University of Liberia is located in Monrovia, Liberia on the West Coast of Africa and is the flagship center of higher learning in Liberia. The University Chorus is a nonprofit Organization in the United States consisting of alumni of The University of Liberia. The Choir has a concert once each year and all proceeds go towards a scholarship fund to continuously sponsor forty students enrolled in full-time studies at the University and the construction of a Fine Arts Center on the University's Fendell Campus in Liberia. The Choir has committed to singing two songs on Sunday, July 22nd at the 10:00 a.m. service as an offering of thanks and appreciation for your kindness.

1. The Lord bless you and keep you
2. A traditional Liberian tribal song

## **Overtone Singing at Ascension!**

On Friday, July 27th at 7:30pm, join Harmonic Introductions for a concert of overtone singing in the Chapel!

Harmonic Introductions is a small non profit, community vocal ensemble, dedicated to expanding the awareness, appreciation, and understanding of the art of overtone singing.

### **What is Overtone Singing?**

Overtone singing is a technique that enables 1 vocalist to produce and, with a bit of practice, control 2 or more notes simultaneously. When multiple voices come together to sound in this medium, a surreal soundscape and relaxing, glowing atmosphere settle and swirl throughout the space!

Link to Facebook event: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1570313249764904/?ti=icl>

## **Are you interested in helping someone in need of transportation get to church?**

We have members at Ascension that are looking for a ride to Sunday service. Are you available, are you interested in giving them a lift? If you live in Gaithersburg and would like to assist please contact the parish administrator Lin Keene at [office@ascensionmd.org](mailto:office@ascensionmd.org)

# LIFE LONG LEARNING

## Wednesday Morning Book Group

We will next meet in Ascension's library at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, July 11th , to discuss Chapter 8 of Derek Wilson's book entitled "A Magical World: Superstition and Science from the Renaissance to the Enlightenment."

## Tai Chi

Tai Chi on Thursdays in the Chapel will be cancelled for July and August, and resume in September.

During the summer, we will meet in Washington Grove on Saturday mornings at 9 am. Directions are Woodland Park, on Grove Road, near the tennis courts. Cancelled if rainy.

For information, contact Claire at [cjrosser@aol.com](mailto:cjrosser@aol.com) (301-275-0617).

## 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 lifeforce 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.

**There will be no yoga class on 7/26, 8/16 and 8/23.**

# LIFE AT ASCENSION

## **Thank You for Volunteers for Grounds Maintenance**

A simple thank you doesn't convey the gratitude we have to all who came out and served at this past Saturday's Garden Party. The grounds look amazing! Thank you for your hard work and dedication to this project. Thank you for supplying your labor, tools, supplies, food and drinks.

## **Personnel Committee Seeks Volunteers!**

Do you have Human Resource Management or Managerial experience? Do you have a keen eye for detail? Are you gifted at conflict resolution? Well if so, then the personnel Committee is looking for volunteers. We are looking for help with the following areas of personnel: reviewing the personnel policies and guidelines, establishing salary structures, creating and performing annual reviews, and reviewing benefits packages for the staff and clergy. If any of the above sounds interesting, Ascension could use your help. Please contact the Vestry Liaison, Rose Buck, at [rose.buck2@gmail.com](mailto:rose.buck2@gmail.com) or at 301.325.6291 or email Lin Keene at [office@ascensionmd.org](mailto:office@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](mailto: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, July 28 in the church kitchen. If you have any question, Contact Javier at [ocampo@ascensionmd.org](mailto: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 July 15 at 10:15 a.m. Contact Edith at [esekasi@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.montgomeryhospice.org/volunteer)

## PRAYER REQUESTS

Prayers For Those Whose Lives are Closely Linked With Ours: Diocesan Committee on Human Resources, Canons and Staff of the Diocese of Washington, All Vestries, Parish Leaders and Staff Members

We pray for comfort, healing, courage and hope for Jean Cohn, Harriette Eleanor Cooper, Fredy Diaz, Peggy Donnellon, Sally & William Glick, Rudi Miksa, Ann Mitchell, Leslie Pool, Leslie Sanya, Fran Spina, Dorett Sutherland, Samuel Tellu, Martha Tieran, , 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 podcast of Javier's Sunday, June 24 Sermon: "Keep Calm, Jesus is in the Boat"](#)

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

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

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