

Together We Shine



The Mission and Ministries of The Episcopal Church of the Ascension

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www.ascensionmd.org

2021-2022

Welcome to the Episcopal Church of the Ascension

" Therefore go and make disciples of all nations " - St. Matthew 28:19a

Mission Statement

We represent Jesus Christ wherever we may be.

Vision Statement

The Church of the Ascension will become a community of faith where each one of us lives out our Baptismal Covenant at home, at work, and in the community. Together we will shine as if we were God's only light in the world. Our children, and their children after them, will yearn to carry forth Christ's work.

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Christian Formation

Christian Formation for Children

Children are welcome here!

Ascension believes in its children-their innocence, energy, joy, spirit of wonder and the honesty of their questions. We believe that children have a place at God's table that is equal to that of the youth and adults of this parish.

As of September 26, 2021, we offer two Sunday school classes, via Zoom, each week. The class for 2nd - 5th graders is held at 2:00 p.m. and uses the Joyful Path curriculum. We have a class for preschool-2nd graders at 3:00 p.m., which uses the Godly Play curriculum. Our Sunday afternoons together give us time to grow in our love for one another and in the knowledge that God is with us in all times and in all places. All are welcome to join us on Sundays for a most joy-filled time. In January of 2022 we will reevaluate whether it is safe to meet in person, but even when it is safe to hold classes in person, we plan to continue offering a zoom option for attendance.

- **A Joyful Path (2nd-5th grade)**

This curriculum is developed jointly by ProgressiveChristianity.org and the Center for Progressive Christianity. A spiritual curriculum for young hearts and minds, it is inclusive, compassionate, and "intra-spiritual" in the sense that it exposes children to the concept that many of the values taught by Jesus are found in other faith traditions. It teaches children how to access the wisdom already implanted by God in their hearts, about the sacred character and unity of the cosmos, and how to expand their awareness of our Creator.

After we greet each other and catch up on what is happening in our lives, the Joyful Path class starts with a prayer. Next we read a story which could be from a sacred text, a folktale or a short biography of an inspirational figure. We use questions to stimulate conversation about the lesson and then each child responds with a project such as designing a sacred space, writing down and decorating a bible verse or making a map of where Jesus traveled. Children receive packets of items to use at home for their projects, such as feathers, printouts, scissors and markers. We close the class with a prayer of thanksgiving and petition which the children have opportunities to lead.

- **Godly Play (preschool-2nd grade)**

This Montessori-based curriculum engages what is most exciting about religious education: God inviting us into scripture and spiritual experience. We explore sacred stories, parables and liturgy using figures and objects. We provide each family a kit of craft supplies including modeling clay, clothes pins, fabric scraps, markers, stickers, pipe cleaners, popsicle sticks and various printouts so the children can work on craft projects in response to the story. For example, during Advent the children made shepherd's crooks, a donkey, and a picture of the road to Bethlehem.

We begin each class with the song "This is the Day the Lord Has Made", and follow that with some simple yoga to help us prepare for the lesson. The storyteller then tells a story using the Godly Play materials. Afterward, we discuss the wondering questions, such as "I wonder what part of the story you liked best?" "I wonder what part of the story you think is the most important." "I wonder what part of the story you think we could leave out and still have all that we need?" and perhaps most importantly, "I wonder what part of the story is about you?" Wondering questions are the heart of the Godly Play approach. Each child hears the stories of the people of God and reflects on how the stories are manifest in their own lives.

After the wondering questions we work together on craft projects using the supplies in each child's kit. We finish our class with prayers of thanksgiving and petitions. Each of us is invited to share something we are

thankful for and then we pray together.

Although we miss meeting in person, virtual Sunday school has revealed some rich and unexpected blessings for which we are deeply grateful. One of the most wonderful results is that we are joined each week by children near us in Gaithersburg and Germantown, as well as Virginia, and even as far as Chicago, Illinois. In addition to the classes on Sunday, we also send a monthly note to each family. The note contains a story and ideas for family discussion and activities. We understand that some children may prefer not to attend classes on zoom, so we send these notes to all families whether or not their child attends the zoom classes. We welcome input; if you have ideas, suggestions, or are just interested, please contact the church or Michelle Wood at mdidavi@gmail.com.

Christian Formation for Youth

Youth Group (YG) Formation—middle and high school students meet on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month in the evening from 6:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m. in the Undercroft Commons area. Ascension’s YG is open to all youth in 6th grade and beyond, and they need not attend Ascension to participate in YG. Typical YG evenings include dinner, a spiritual lesson, and fun games—“Food, Fellowship & Fun”. YG kicks off the program year with a cook-out on September 19th, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at the Hight-Walker’s home.

- **Summer Work Camp** - Each summer, middle school and high school students travel to various areas of the country to help improve the local communities while building a lifetime of spiritual experiences through hard work and fellowship. Most recent work camps have focused in Philadelphia, PA and particularly St. James School which serves middle schoolers from severely under resourced communities. There will be another Work Camp in the summer of 2022.
- **Service Projects** - Along with the summer work camp, students participate in service projects throughout the year. They select causes that mean the most to them early in the program year, but most recently projects included Comfort Cases and curbing gun violence in schools.

The YG program at Ascension is a collaborative effort of lay leaders, staff, parents and clergy. Please support Ascension’s youths’ continued formation, and participate in this community by offering your time and talent. In particular, we need dinners supplied for the YG meetings held at Ascension. Below is the list of fall dates. Contact Angie or Trevor Hight Walker at angela.hightwalker@gmail.com or walkertj@yahoo.com if you could help supply funds for a meal or the meal itself.

Ascension Youth Group Schedule, Fall 2021

- Sunday, September 19th —Cook-out @ Hight Walkers
- Sunday, October 10th
- Sunday, October 24th
- Sunday, November 7th
- Sunday, November 21st
- Sunday, December 12th —Holiday party; no dinner needed.

Christian Formation for Adults

Adult education programs are offered throughout the church year. Keep an eye on the newsletter, bulletin, and social media accounts for multiple opportunities. Ascension also has two established programs for adult learning:

- **Wednesday Morning Group:**

Every Wednesday at 10:00, a group of thoughtful, committed members meet to discuss a book chosen for its spiritual themes. Contact the Rector for more information.

- **Education for Ministry (EFM):**

This is a four-year education program from the School of Theology at the University of the South. The program covers the Hebrew Bible and New Testament, the history of Christianity after the first Christians, and the development of the church in the modern world. Extra readings address the life of faith, the role of the church in environmental issues, and the issues of justice and equity. Contact Peggy Ruppel, the EFM mentor, at plr301@gmail.com for more information.

Health and Wellness Ministry

The Health and Wellness Ministry at Ascension is an intentional ministry focusing on both healing and health, combining the ancient traditions of the Christian community and the knowledge and tools of modern health care. We endeavor to provide information to help parishioners on their journey to live a healthy lifestyle. We focus on exercises and stretches that can be modified for a variety of experience levels and time availability as well as nutrition, and mental health support resources.

Mission Support Committees

Facilities

The Facilities Committee oversees the physical well-being of the Church including the main Sanctuary, Educational Wing, the Chapel, Ascension House and the grounds. The committee performs maintenance and repairs that are within their level of expertise and availability. The Facilities Committee coordinates with the church administrator to procure and review all maintenance and repair contracts, including but not limited to, grounds, plumbing, HVAC, electrical and periodic safety inspections, i.e., fire alarm and elevator. The Facilities Committee is also responsible for and in consultation with the administrator to develop and maintain a spreadsheet of necessary long-term maintenance and capital projects complete with estimated costs and life expectancy. Contact Randall Adams at randall.adams53@gmail.com or Ted Bedell at tedbedell@comcast.net

Stewardship Committee

This committee is responsible for the best use and growth of all of Episcopal Church of the Ascension resources. Stewardship acknowledges profound interest and ownership of all that we manage; God is the head of our enterprise.

The Stewardship Committee applies its talents and initiative to the financial and operational well-being of the church. Typically this will include annual budget formulation, tracking income and expense. The Committee responds to financial queries from the vestry, and is happy to work with, and advise, members of other committees who are involved with tending other resources.

Each fall, our efforts are directed toward the Annual Giving Campaign. We are the connector between the programs and the funding parishioners. There are many ways and opportunities to support Ascension with your donations and contributions, and the Stewardship Committee can facilitate those transfers.

Personnel

This committee serves some of the role of a Human Resources department, e.g., job descriptions, organizational structure, staffing levels, benefits, etc. Volunteers with interest or expertise in these areas are welcome.

Outreach Committee

Our calendar and Zoom information can be found on Realm in the Ascension Church calendar.

The Outreach Committee serves as a bridge between the Church of the Ascension and its surrounding geographical and spiritual communities. As representatives of Christ, we seek to understand the needs of our neighbors and to coordinate outreach activities of the parish.

We actively seek out and create opportunities for our church members to interact with the greater community, sharing what our church has to offer.

This year, Mobile Med restarted, the Men's Shelter Lunches have continued, and our youth group gathered donations for Gaithersburg HELP. In addition, there was a successful Yard Sale and Car Wash in August. To support our friends at nearby Summit Hall Elementary School, we held a school supply drive through Linkages to Learning, "a community school partnership with an integrated focus on health, social services, community engagement and leadership to support student learning, strong families, and healthy communities."

Ascension's Race, Equity and Social Justice Committee (RESJC)

Welcome to the Race, Equity and Social Justice Committee (RESJC) at the Episcopal Church of the Ascension, Gaithersburg. The RESJC is a parish-based group formed in June 2020 in response to the social unrest and ongoing, systemic inequities that exist in our country. We are dedicated to promoting social justice and dismantling inequity and injustice in our church, our community, and our country. Our committee is open to anyone feeling a call to action around issues of race, equity, and social justice. Whether you are an Ascension congregant or a member of the wider community, you are cordially invited to join.

The RESJC celebrates the diversity of our parish and our community by:

- Acknowledging and respecting the inherent dignity of every human being and celebrating our differences.
- Bonding with one another in prayer and fellowship.
- Listening to each other's deeply thoughtful presentations about our experience with race, equity, and social justice.
- Examining current and past inequalities and considering how we can live into our interconnectedness using our God-given talents to lift up every member of our human family.
- Educating ourselves by reflecting on scripture, keeping abreast of current events, reading books and articles, watching films and programs, attending presentations, participating in training sessions, discussing issues of equity and justice with one another, and interacting with religious and community leaders.
- Conducting advocacy for causes that promote racial equity and social justice.
- Partnering with like-minded organizations in the area such as Identity, Inc., Gaithersburg.
- Offering a variety of programs that explore topics relating to societal and religious diversity as well as equity and justice. Some recent activities include: (1) introducing congregants to the "From Many, One" exercise developed by the national Episcopal Church involving one-on-one listening/sharing sessions to bridge the differences that divide us; (2) sponsoring "A Conversation on Equity and Justice," an event for the congregation featuring as keynote speakers Ascension's rector Father Javier Garcia Ocampo and Hazel Monae, Missioner for Equity & Justice for the Episcopal Diocese of Washington; (3) engaging in social justice efforts with Maryland State legislators and City of Gaithersburg officials; (4) partnering with Sixth & I and 3GDC on a Holocaust Remembrance Day event followed by a discussion with our congregants; (5) viewing and discussing the films Finding Fellowship and Coded Bias with congregants; (6) holding a Voting Vigil of Prayer during the presidential election; (7) issuing a Statement on Ascension Support for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders; (8) creating and maintaining relevant content on Ascension's social media platforms; and (9) researching and documenting Ascension's history with regard to race and other aspects of its diverse background in coordination with the diocese.

We meet nearly every other Thursday at 7:00 pm, currently via Zoom. For further information and the Zoom link to our meetings, contact our chairperson, Laurie Yelle, at AscensionRESJ@gmail.com.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

My commandment is this: Love each other as I have loved you.
John 15:12

Mission: As our Lord commands and to which we commit in our Baptismal covenant, our mission is to take active and deliberate measures to assure that the inherent dignity of all peoples is acknowledged, respected, and protected. By all peoples, we mean every adult and child of every race, ethnicity, nationality, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, religious background, and socioeconomic status under God's creation. We do not overlook but rather respect and celebrate our differences as God intended. We remember and live into our interconnectedness, knowing that we are only as strong, healthy, happy, and satisfied as the least of our human family. We use our God-given talents to lift up every member of our human family.

We will achieve this through active and deliberate measures such as:

- Creating a safe space to discuss inequities within our church and in our community
- Becoming a Beloved Community by moving from an inclusive congregation to a connected congregation where all feel they belong
- Encouraging members to work toward actively eliminating injustice
- Participating with activities/organizations that are already working to bring equity (e.g., Habitat for Humanity; Identity, Inc., Gaithersburg; and 3GDC).
- Providing educational opportunities for the congregation and community on issues of social justice, race, and inequity that empower them to speak up and speak out against instances of injustice

How:

- Celebrate culturally important days/activities that are present in our community.
- Make use of national and diocesan programs such as the Episcopal Diocese of Washington's Sacred Ground dialogue series and the national Episcopal Church's initiative "Becoming a Beloved Community," which includes the "From Many, One" project.
- Host seminars, town hall-style meetings, vigils, film viewings, lectures, discussions, and service projects for our congregation and the community, including other faith groups.
- Encourage the sharing of stories and experiences.
- Recommend media (films, books, articles, lectures, workshops, seminars) that provide diverse perspectives.
- Conduct a racial audit: research and write up Ascension's history with regard to race and other aspects of its diverse history.

Gaithersburg HELP - ongoing

This organization provides emergency food and other support to needy families in Gaithersburg. HELP is 100% volunteer run, and volunteers are always needed, especially volunteers who speak Spanish.

How you can participate: Bring non-perishable food to Ascension and place items in the baskets in the narthex at any time. Collections are brought up during the offertory at the 10:00 a.m. service.

For more information, contact Melanie Mitchell at 301.519.1074 or melanie.mitchell@verizon.net.

Linkages to Learning Backpack Drive - annually, in the summer

This program at Summit Hall Elementary School helps remove barriers to learning. Ascension participates by collecting school supplies, then assembling backpacks containing those supplies each August. Contact Kristen Keating at 301.330.1208, or kristenkeating@westat.com for more information.

Lord's Table Soup Kitchen - on hiatus during the pandemic

This community soup kitchen provides a hot meal Monday through Saturday at a nearby church kitchen. Community teams prepare the food, welcome guests, serve the meal, and clean up afterwards. Since meals are served indoors, this program has been on hiatus during the pandemic. Contact Michelle Wood at heinigwood@verizon.net

Mobile Med - weekly; restarted in July 2021

A medical van staffed with doctors and nurses stops at Ascension House every Tuesday providing low-cost/free medical care to uninsured patients residing in Montgomery County. Volunteers are needed to serve as hosts in the Chapel for a few hours on Tuesdays. Volunteers welcome patients, assist with forms, and provide a friendly, quiet atmosphere while patients wait for providers. Volunteers are expected to be fully vaccinated and masked. For more information contact Michelle Wood at heinigwood@verizon.net.

Men's Shelter Lunches - third Sunday every month

Volunteers donate supplies and then meet on the third Sunday of each month in the Undercroft at 9:00 a.m. to assemble 40-80 bagged lunches. These are then delivered to the county men's shelter for distribution. Contact Edith Sekasi-Wasikye at esekasi@gmail.com or look for announcements for Sign-up Genius links in our weekly Bulletin or Headliners.

Grey Harman Froelich Memorial Columbarium

The Church of the Ascension offers a final resting place for you and your loved ones. The ashes can be placed into a niche or in the ground. The Grey Harman Froelich Memorial Columbarium is located on the North side of the main Church building. Rights to interment shall be made available to all members of the Church of the Ascension and by members of their immediate families. "Immediate family" shall include spouses, parents, parents-in-law, children and their spouses, and others for whom the subscriber is responsible. At the discretion of the Rector, ashes of persons who are not canonical members of the parish may be accepted for interment. All services at which ashes are interred in the Columbarium shall be conducted by the Rector of the Church of the Ascension, or by clergy acting with the Rector's permission and direction. For more information, please contact our Rector or Parish Administrator. 301-948-0122 , office@ascensionmd.org

Other programs...

...such as *Becoming Good Soil* and *Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake*, are looking to form a group at Ascension, too.

The Outreach Committee uses Ascension's Realm service for our email and calendar, and Zoom for our meeting space. If you would like to join the outreach committee or have suggestions for projects you would like to see taken on, or just would like a link to our zoom meetings, please contact any of:

Anne Brink (orangefishnet@gmail.com),
Kristen Keating (kristenkeating@westat.com)
Ascension Office (office@ascensionmd.org)

Parish Life

One-way God joins us together is through the fun and friendship that arise when we gather for fellowship. In this hectic society, we need occasions to relax, be real, and have fun together.

- **One Ascension Sunday**

On August 29th, 2021 there was a celebration after the 10:00 o'clock One Ascension (1A) service. Our 1A Sundays combine all our services for the day, when we all join in a single service. The dates for 1A luncheons

in the coming year are October 31, 2021, January 30, 2022, May 29, 2022, July 31, 2022 and October 30, 2022.

- **Shrove Tuesday Mardi Gras Pancake Supper**

In 2022 the Shrove Tuesday Pancake dinner will be March 1. As a committee we look forward to once again sharing a meal and get together for an enjoyable time with all Ascension parishioners, families and friends.

Pastoral Care

Caring for the people of God is part of the Church’s mission, and that care extends to the whole person: body, mind and spirit. As Christians, we are all called to be ministers, not only to spread the word of the Gospel, but to care for each other. Ascension offers the following opportunities:

- **Altar Flower Delivery (suspended during the pandemic)**

After the Sunday services, volunteers take the flowers from the altar to homes of members who need some extra brightness in their week.

- **Healing Prayer Ministers (suspended during the pandemic)**

Specially trained lay people share the ministry of healing prayer during the Eucharist at all Sunday services. They join or lead those needing prayers for themselves or on behalf of others prayers in a private annex.

- **Eucharistic Visitors**

One-on-one partnership for seniors and home-based church members provided by specially trained parishioners who extend a helping hand, pray together, and keep connections intact. Contact the Rev. Javier Ocampo at ocampo@ascensionmd.org or (301)948-0122 Ext. 12.

Baptism

Holy Baptism is the sacrament – the outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace - by which we become full members of the church. Any baptized person, from the tiniest baby to the oldest adult, is a full member of the church and is welcome to receive communion and to participate in the life of the church. You do not have to be rebaptized to join the Episcopal Church.

At Ascension, we have several Sundays each year when Baptism is offered. We baptize children through their parents and sponsors (Godparents), and also adults who are ready to commit to the promises of the Baptismal Covenant (see Prayer Book pages 304 and 305) and who want to participate regularly in the life of this parish. Prior to the baptism, parents or candidates must attend an orientation. The best preparation for Baptism is participation in parish life.

Baptismal Festivals

November 1, 2021..... All Saints’ Sunday
January 10, 2022..... Baptism of Our Lord
April 3, 2022 Easter Eve
April 4, 2022 Easter Day
May 23, 2022 Day of Pentecost
Summer TBA

Confirmation

Preparation for Confirmation begins at Baptism and embraces the whole of one’s life and journey in and outside the Church. Special preparation for adults and for youth is offered. Confirmation is open to all high school students, although the Rector may make exceptions should someone younger display a serious commitment to preparing for Confirmation.

Marriage

One of the greatest and most joyous decisions in life is the decision to marry. The clergy and staff at Ascension are delighted to help couples unite in marriage. Our policies and premarital preparation process are designed to help that union be a lifelong and loving one.

- All persons considering marriage at Ascension must contact the clergy and staff at **least four to six months prior to the wedding date.**
- The Episcopal Church requires that at least one of the persons being married be a baptized Christian. **At Ascension, we also require that the couple regularly attend services here, and if they are not already members, to explore the possibility of becoming members of Ascension.**
- The couple must attend an Imago workshop to help start the marriage off on the best possible foundation. Go to www.imagocenterdc.com for a more detailed description of the workshop.

Marriage for same-sex couples is legal in Maryland, and was formally approved by the General Convention of The Episcopal Church in 2015. The same guidelines for preparation apply.

Funerals

For Christians, at death, “life is changed not ended,” and the people of the Church stand together to support one another at a time of loss. The burial liturgy hallows our grief and proclaims the hope of a life that is sustained eternally by God’s indestructible love. The clergy of Ascension are on call around the clock to offer solace and support at the time of death.

Worship

Worship is the heart of our life at Ascension. Through the Holy Eucharist liturgy (a word that means “work of the people”) found in the Book of Common Prayer, the foundation of Anglican worship since 1549, we carry out the work God has given us to do. We sing, we pray, we hear the Word of God proclaimed in Scripture and sermon, and we lift up our concerns and joys and thanksgivings to God. We gather at God’s table as the living Body of Christ. We feed on the holy bread and wine of the Eucharist. And then we are sent forth to serve our community as apostles of Christ in our lives.

At Ascension, we welcome children, youth and adults to participate as leaders of worship. There is a place for you as an acolyte, altar guild member, chalice, choir member, healing prayer minister, reader, hospitality angel, or welcome team member.

Sunday Services

8:00 a.m.—Quiet, classic Episcopal Prayer Book liturgy. No music.

10:00 a.m.—A blend of a classic Episcopal service and a modern Eucharist. Music is provided by the Ascension Choir using our unique organ and our grand piano. Hymns are taken from the Hymnal 1982; Wonder, Love, and Praise, and Lift Every Voice and Sing. This service is usually Rite II, but changes to Rite I during Lent.

12:00 p.m.—Eucharist in Spanish with hymns mostly from Flor y Canto accompanied by music ensemble.

All three services are held in the main church. The 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. services are also streamed online and can be reached via the following links:

Zoom: Meeting ID 941 3360 0093; Passcode 1234

Facebook: Episcopal Church of the Ascension (<https://www.facebook.com/ecotamd/>)

YouTube: Episcopal Church of the Ascension
(https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCv4FzQS2Bg8_x63nitGk-zg)
Twitter: @ascensionmd (<https://twitter.com/ascensionmd>)
Twitch: ecotamd (<https://www.twitch.tv/ecotamd?sr=a>)
Instagram: ecotamd (<https://www.instagram.com/ecotamd/>)

Music

The Ascension Choir—Ascension is blessed with the Ascension Choir, an all-volunteer group led by the Minister of Music. The Choir practices each Thursday evening (beginning on the Thursday after Labor Day) during the program year (September through early June) from 7:45 pm to 9:15 pm, and sings at the 10:00 am service (beginning the Sunday after Labor Day), reporting for warm-up at 9:15 am. Occasionally there are extra rehearsals for major services, such as Christmas and Easter. The choir also sings for Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday and other services as needed. Rehearsals and warm-ups are in the choir room (Room 3) on the upper level of the office/education wing.

New or seasoned members of Ascension who are considering joining or returning to the choir are welcome at any time. No auditions are required, just the love of singing. The ability to sight-read music is helpful but not essential. Contact Minister of Music Andrew Kullberg at music@ascensionmd.org, or any choir member.

Hispanic Service Combo—Music at the Eucharistia en Espanol is offered by an all-volunteer team that employs several voices/instruments. The combo is open to volunteers who find joy in the Latino versions of Gospel music. Jesse Velasquez, Spanish Service Musical Director, leads the group and uses Flor y Canto as the principal hymnal.

The Organ—Ascension's music is greatly enhanced by our fine pipe organ, built by Casavant Frères of St-Hyacinthe, Québec (Opus 3801), and installed in 2001. It was the very generous donation of a long-time parishioner. The organ is primarily used at the 10:00 a.m. service in the main church.

Worship Leaders

Acolytes—lead the processions at the beginning and end of the service and assist the clergy at the altar during the service. Children (fourth grade and up) and adults are welcome to serve as acolytes.

Altar Guild—Teams of two to three members take turns preparing the church for worship on a rotating basis. Contact Sari Stoddard at sari.stoddard@verizon.net or 301-325-8791.

Chalicians—help administer Communion by serving the cup of wine to worshipers.

Lectors—read the Lessons, and lead the congregation in the Prayers of the People. Readers should be comfortable speaking publicly at a microphone.

Healing Prayer Ministers—these specially trained lay people share the ministry of healing prayer during Communion at all Sunday services.

Hospitality Angels—provide refreshment for church members and guests after each service. They prepare hot beverages after each service, and facilitate the serving of refreshments

Welcome Teams—comprising ushers and greeters, are ministers of hospitality who greet people, provide information to visitors, distribute bulletins, pass collection plates, and assist people at Communion.

Qualifications for all Worship Leader positions are membership in the Church of the Ascension and willingness to serve as you are scheduled, on a periodic basis. Training for all Worship Leaders is provided annually and at special times as need arises. Contact Curt Lindsay (lindsay_curt@yahoo.com) or the church office if you are interested in becoming a Worship Leader.

Ascension Expo

Ascension Expo is a ministries fair that is held early every fall between services in the undercroft. For 2021, the Expo date is September 19 and will consist of a PowerPoint presentation during worship services. Worship Leader groups are all represented, and will describe the duties and benefits of being a member of the various teams. Contact Curt Lindsay (lindsay_curt@yahoo.com), chair of the Worship Committee, or one of the clergy.

For additional information, please speak to one of the clergy, or to Curt Lindsay (lindsay_curt@yahoo.com), The Church Office is always willing to provide additional information, or to assist in making contact with the appropriate Worship Leader.

Leadership at Ascension

Altar Guild	Sari Stoddard Mardia Dennis Dotty Pfoadenhauer Georgana Maines	sari.stoddard@verizon.net mard908@gmail.com dotypf@aol.com mainesgnh@verizon.net
Christian Formation for Adults	TBD	
Christian Formation for Children	Megan Didavi	mdidavi@gmail.com
Christian Formation for Youth	Angie and Trevor Hight Walker	angela.hightwalker@gmail.com
Columbarium	John Pruessner Gordon Donnelly	prubu2@aol.com vagordon1@yahoo.com
Facilities	Randall Adams Ted Bedell	adams.randall53@gmail.com tedbedell@comcast.net
Health and Wellness	TBD	
Operations and Finance	Gary McLaughlin	garymclaughlin100@gmail.com
Pastoral Care	Javier Ocampo	ocampo@ascensionmd.org
Personnel	Kristen Keating	
Worship	Curt Lindsay	lindsay_curt@yahoo.com

Parish Life

Janet King
Megan Didavi
Anika Lalmansingh
Dorett Sutherland
Lovetta Willie

bkmechanical@aol.com
mdidavi@gmail.com
anika.lalmansingh@gmail.com
dmps2450@aol.com
wlovet71@aol.com

Vestry

Senior Warden
Junior Warden
Vestry Clerk
Parish Treasurer

Zadinga Ogada
Kristen Keating
Ophelia Yalley-Ogunro
Gary McLaughlin

Class of 2022

Wadai Dennis
Adoma Baffoe
Arturo Rodriguez

Class of 2023

Wendy Quijada
Danielle Allen
Monty Peterson

Class of 2024

Ed Armstrong
Lauren Kingsland
Ruth Anna Skowronski

Parish Staff

Rector

The Rev. Javier García Ocampo
ocampo@ascensionmd.org

Seminarian

Tracey Forfa
tforfa@gmail.com

Parish Administrator

Lin Keene
office@ascensionmd.org

Minister of Music

Andrew Kullberg
music@ascensionmd.org

Communication/IT/Sexton

Jesse Velazquez
comm@ascensionmd.org


Dates to Remember

2021

Sunday, September 19	Ascension Expo
Sunday, September 19	Program Year Begins
Saturday, September 25	Fiesta de las Américas
Sunday, October 03	Blessing of the Animals
Sunday, October 10	Youth Group Begins, Potluck Cook-Out 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Sunday, October 31	One Ascension Sunday, 10:00 a.m. Halloween party
Sunday, November 31	Día de los Muertos Celebration
Sunday, November 07	Daylight Saving Time ends (set clocks back one hour- "Fall back")
Thursday, November 25	Thanksgiving service, 10:00 a.m.
Friday, December 24	Christmas Eve Services: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5:00 p.m. For Families with Young Children• 7:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist Bilingual• 9:00 p.m. Festival Eucharist with Ascension Choir
Saturday, December 25	Christmas Day service, 10:00 a.m.

2022

Sunday, January 02	New Year's Celebration
Sunday, January 09	Día de Reyes (Rosca de Reyes) Celebration after 12:00 p.m. Service
Sunday, January 23	Annual Meeting, 10:00 a.m.
Saturday, January 29	Diocesan Convention
Sunday, January 30	One Ascension Sunday, 10:00 a.m.
Wednesday, February 02	Candlemas Day/Día de la Candelaria Celebration
Tuesday, March 01	Shrove Tuesday/Mardi Gras, 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday, March 02	Ash Wednesday Service, Noon and 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, March 13	Daylight Saving Time begins (set clocks forward one hour-" Spring ahead")
Sunday, April 10	Palm Sunday
Wednesday, April 13	Tenebrae, 7:30 p.m.
Thursday, April 14	Maundy Thursday: Holy Eucharist/Foot washing and Stripping of the Altar, 7:30 p.m.
Friday, April 15	Good Friday: "Ashes to Go", 12:00 p.m., Prayer Book liturgy, 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, April 17	Easter Vigil and First Eucharist of Easter, 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, April 18	Easter Services, 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m.
Sunday, May 26	Ascension Day Celebration
Sunday, May 29	One Ascension Sunday, 10:00 a.m. Spring Celebration
Sunday, July 31	One Ascension Sunday 10:00 a.m. Parish Picnic

ASCENSION EXPO 2021-22		The Rev. Javier Garcia Ocampo Rector	
Ms. Tracey Forfa Seminararian		The Rev. Eugene Wright Deacon	
Admin: Lin Keene, Jesse Velázquez			
Pastoral Care Chairperson: The Rev. Javier	Parish Life Chairperson: Janet King	Music Ministry Andrew Kullberg, Minister of Music	Worship Chairperson: Curt Lindsay
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baptisms, Confirmations, Marriages, Funerals • Hospice • Pastoral Partners • Healing Prayer Ministries • Flower Delivery • Eucharistic Visitors • Seabury Resources for Aging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One Ascension Sunday • Hospitality Angels • Shrove Tuesday • Parish Picnic • Ascension Adventurers (Open) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choir • Ensemble • Concerts • Evensong • Latino music (Director, Jesse Velázquez) • Organ marathon 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readers/Lectors • Chaliceists • Acolytes • Altar Guild • Welcome Team • Live-stream/Zoom
Christian Formation for Children Chairperson: Megan Didavi		Christian Formation for Youth Chairpersons: Angie Hight-Walker and Trevor Walker Helper: D-win Coleman	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Godly Play • Joyful Path • Artwork • Easter Egg Hunt 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Group • Summer Work • Service Projects 	
Christian Formation for Adults Chairperson: TBD		Christian Formation for Youth Chairpersons: Angie Hight-Walker and Trevor Walker Helper: D-win Coleman	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retreats • Listening Heart • Labyrinth • Education for Ministry • English/Spanish Bible Studies • Diocesan delegates • Diocesan Leaders – Líderes Latinos 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youth Group • Summer Work • Service Projects 	
Outreach Committee Chairperson: Anne Brink		Mission Support Personnel Chairperson: Kristen Keating	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linkages to Learning Backpack Drive • Gaithersburg Help • Lord's Table Soup Kitchen • Mobile Med • Outreach Projects-Yard Sale, etc. • Becoming Good Soil • Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake • Men's Shelter Sandwiches • Immigration Legal Services 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nomination Committee 	
Mission Support Race, Equity and Social Justice Committee Chairperson: Laurie Yelle		Mission Support Facilities Chairperson: Randall Adams	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reparation research • Prayer vigils • Film discussion • Workshops & Education • LGBTQ Pride 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inventory • Ascension House • Columbarium • Sexton 	
Mission Support Communications Chairperson: James Black		Mission Support Operations and Finance/Stewardship Chairperson: Gary McLaughlin	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media • Newsletters • Website design 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pledge Campaign • Registrar • Audit 	
 <p>The Episcopal Church of the Ascension</p> <p>"We Represent Christ Wherever We May Be Representamos a Cristo Dondequiera Que Vayamos"</p>			

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. 1 Co. 12:4-6

This section of Paul's letter to the Corinthian church is about unity in diversity, serving the common good together, and being instruments of God's grace by His Spirit at work to heal, to teach and to build up.

What gifts has the Lord given to us? I believe He has given us all of the gifts! Are we using His gifts for the common good? Or are we burying the gifts and not putting them to use?

We are at the beginning of a new year of activities at Ascension and in the middle of a pandemic that has taught us many things, especially to appreciate what we have and the people around us. I would like to see all of us working together to reach out to the community and people in need around Ascension.

I pray every day for Ascension and its mission. I pray to God to open our hearts so we can bring our gifts to the community around us. I pray to God every day for us to become a One Ascension for our community. I pray to God that Ascension would become a bridge between God and His people.

Join us every Sunday at any of our services 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m. to celebrate the Holy Eucharist. It does not matter where you are on the path of faith. Everyone is welcome to share this process together.

Blessings,
Padre Javier