

EPISCOPAL Church of the Ascension



This Week at Ascension

[Link to the Bulletins for Holy Week](#)

[Link to Randy's Sermon "Neither a Stone, Nor a Doormat Be" from March 29.](#)

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

Calendar Highlights

Good Friday, April 3

12noon Outdoor Stations of the Cross, Main Church
6pm Couples in Recovery, Ascension House
7:30pm Prayer Book Liturgy, Main Church

Saturday, April 4

9am Overeaters Anonymous, Undercroft Commons
11am AI-Anon, Undercroft Commons
11am Overeaters Anonymous, Ascension House
3pm Lord's Table Soup Kitchen, St. Martin's
7:30pm Easter Vigil, Main Church

Easter Day, Sunday, April 5

No Christian Formation for Children, Youth, or Adults
7:45am Holy Eucharist, Main Church
9am Festival Eucharist, Main Church
11am Festival Eucharist, Main Church

What is the Bible: Our Dude is Alive! - by Rob Bell

Let's talk about resurrection. There are four accounts of Jesus's life: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. They each tell about Jesus being betrayed by one of his friends, having a final meal with his friends, being crucified by the Romans, and then rising from the dead. If you read the gospel accounts of Jesus's resurrection, things get very interesting very fast. Mark reports that on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene, Mary the Mother of James, and Salome went to Jesus's tomb while Matthew says it was Mary Magdalene and the other Mary who went to the tomb.

According to John's gospel it was just Mary Mags, but when she gets to the tomb some dude asks her why she's crying and who she's looking for and she thinks it's the gardener so she wants to know if he's the one who took the body where did he put it- *Because I will get him* (She says with force of a woman is who is not mucking about). Then the possible-gardener dude says her name and she realizes that it's Jesus. Luke tells us that this same dude walked with two of the disciples from Jerusalem to Emmaus (which is 12km), talking the whole way, and they don't recognize him until they sit down for a meal and he breaks the bread and then they realize it's Jesus.

Interesting that the people who were closest to Jesus and spent years with him DON'T RECOGNIZE HIM post-resurrection. Hmm. The next time you hear someone insisting that it was an actual, literal resurrection-which is awesome if you ask me-make sure you add that bodily must mean that he didn't look like he looked before. One gospel mentions there was an earthquake-which the others leave out-John tells of two angels in white sitting where Jesus's body had been, Luke says it was two men in gleaming white, Mark says it was a young man dressed in a white robe *sitting on the right side* of the tomb, and Matthew says it was an angel of the Lord that rolled back the stone *and then sat on it*. Like you do. When you roll back a

11am Holy Eucharist in Spanish, Chapel
12:30pm Holy Eucharist for Families with Young Children
1:30pm Easter Egg Hunt, Undercroft Commons
5pm No Service

Monday, April 6

11:30am Cancer Support Group, Room 3
6:30pm Overeaters Anonymous, Undercroft Commons
7pm Listening Hearts Community, Library

Tuesday, April 7

9:30am Staff Meeting, Library
11am No Yoga
6pm Spanish Bible Study, Room 3
7pm Education for Ministry, Library
7pm Still Water Mindfulness Practice, Chapel
8:30pm AI-Anon, Ascension House

Wednesday, April 8

10am No *Speaking Christian* Book Group
7pm Codependents Anonymous, Ascension House
8pm Gamblers Anonymous, Ascension House

[Link to our Online Calendar](#)

Worship Leaders

Sunday, April 5

Preacher: (The Rev.) Randy Lord-Wilkinson

Flower Delivery: Musu Rogers, Eliane Dunn-Johnson

7:45 AM *Reader/Prayers:* Enid Cole, *Chalicians:* Edna Leake, Leslie Sanya, *Healing Prayer:* Janet King, *Acolytes:* Ron Hayden, Jackson Douglas, Aidan Douglas, *Welcome Team:* Enid Cole, Meredith Horan, *Altar Guild:* Georgette Dennis,

stone. And open up a tomb. If you read the accounts back to back, there's a lot of running and excitement and general mayhem. Setting aside the issue of whether a man actually rose from the dead (For the record, I'm a believer-the sheer poetry alone is so crazy good...), the four accounts of Jesus rising from the dead contain a number of jumbled details that render that narrative fairly jumbled, to say the least. There are several responses to these differences: Some ignore them. They simply repeat again and again that this God's word and so we take it in faith, we shouldn't question its truth, etc. Others take these differences as clear and tangible proof of its susceptibility. See? It's all myth, fable, miracle, fantasy, etc, borrowed from the tales of the day. I find both perspectives boring.

Before I explain, though, a few thoughts about propaganda.

To summarize, this is the worst propaganda. Ever. If you're trying to start a religion, this is a crap way to do it. How are you going to inspire confidence if you can't even report the details accurately with one voice? Not to mention the women, which we will mention because the gospel writers all mention the women. In these accounts, the writers all affirm that it's the women who first realized (say it with me now). Women didn't have much in the way of respect as we think of it in the first century, so much so that their word meant next to nothing in court. Why, in a culture that had such little regard for the witness of women, would you tell a story that hinges to a large degree on the witness of women? Second, Matthew writes that Jesus met up with his crew (posse?) on a mountain in Galilee and *when they saw him some worshipped him; but some doubted. Wha...? They doubted? Why would Matthew include this? If the point of your book is that Jesus is the Messiah, the King, the long awaited Savior of the World, the one everybody has been waiting for, why would you reach the crescendo of the story and then include a line about some of his followers doubting? Doesn't that ruin the moment? Doesn't this undermine everything you've been saying in your story?*

That said, a question for you: If something extraordinary did happen, how would it be remembered? Which leads to another question: If someone did rise from the dead, how would that story be told? In a calm and collected and polished manner or in a slightly haphazard way that buzzed and hummed and rattled with the electricity that comes from experiencing something unexpected and extraordinary that you don't really have categories for? Which leads to another: Is the haphazard humanity of it all reason to dismiss it or signs that it's an authentic record of what happened? Which leads to another question: When Matthew tells us that some his followers doubted, does this undermine the story or is the exact kind of honesty that reflects how people actually are? When each of

Yarvo Jones

9:00 AM *Readers:* Suzyn Gonzalez, Carleton MacDonald, *Prayers:* Stephanie Mitchell, *Chalicians:* Esther Tellu, Margaret Tellu, *Healing Prayer:* Major Clemens, *Acolytes:* Stacy Taylor, Kofi Kwamena-Poh, Kayleigh Yankie, *Welcome Team:* Margaret Joseph, Dorett Sutherland, James Black, Jonathan Black, *Altar Guild:* Margaret Joseph, Dorett Sutherland, Sarah Gallagher

11:00 AM *Reader:* Kate Siberine, *Chalicians:* Anika Lalmansingh, Avin Lalmansingh, *Healing Prayer:* Sarah Rubin, *Welcome Team:* Alex Langley, Alice Padmore, *Altar Guild:* Georgana Maines, Alice Padmore

5:00 PM *Reader / Usher:* No Service

the gospel writers include the part about the women being witnesses, why risk it? What a strange thing to include knowing it would discredit their story, *unless women actually were the first witnesses*. How open minded are you? What's possible? Is there a new creation bursting within this one? Did something happen that changes everything? Is the tomb empty? What happens if you actually live like it's true? What does this story do to your heart? Is the dude alive?

Announcements

(click for more info)

HEADLINERS

[Holy Week and Easter at Ascension](#)

[Parking on Easter](#)

[Annual Easter Egg Hunt, Sunday](#)

[This Year's Rice Bowl Offering](#)

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

[Godly Play, April 5](#)

[A Joyful Path, April 5](#)

[Rite-13 and Confirm, not Conform](#)

[Wednesday Evening Spiritual Practice Opportunities](#)

[Still Water Mindfulness Practice Group](#)

[Listening Heart Community at Ascension](#)

[Speaking Christian Morning Book Study](#)

[*The Portable Jung*](#)

[Women's Mini Retreat](#)

[Men's Retreat - Save the Date!](#)

WORSHIP

[Calling all Altar Guild Members](#)

[Youth Sunday, New Date](#)

[Acolyte Training and Review](#)

[Worship Rosters, April - June](#)

[Bulletins for Tablets Link](#)

SERVICE

Lord's Table Soup Kitchen

Gaithersburg HELP

Ascension's Cancer Support Group

LIFE AT ASCENSION

Ascension's Adventure Group to Tour Congressional Cemetery,
April 11

ESOL Class

Family Movie Night, April 17

Fall Event

New FACTs on Episcopal Church Growth and Decline

Annual Report

Prayer Request Updates

THE ASCENDANT

April

Prayers

FOR THOSE WHOSE LIVES ARE CLOSELY LINKED WITH OURS:

All of the Parishes in the Diocese of Washington
The Diocesan Altar Guild and all the Parish Altar Guilds of the
Diocese

PRAY FOR COMFORT, HEALING, COURAGE, AND HOPE:

Debar, Carol, Sue, Lee, Gordon, Joseph, Roderick, Ann, Susan,
Ellen, Joan, Nancy, Sarah, Onepe, Nancy, Janet, Lou, Fran,
Robert, and all those who, in this transitory life, are in
trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity.

We pray for peace in the world and all who are serving our
country here and abroad, especially those in harm's way, and
their families. For all people affected by natural disasters,
violence, and war.

We pray for all special intentions, and those on our extended
Healing Prayer List.

Thanksgiving:

We give thanks for the birth on March 26 of Leonidas Gabriel
Papas, grandson of Connie Finch and Roy Bevington.

We give thanks for the birth on March 30 of Chelsea Osorio,
niece of Javier García Ocampo.

We give thanks for the life of John K. Leake Jr. who died on
March 28.

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