



This Week at Ascension

[Link to the Bulletins for May 8](#)

[Link to Randy's Sermon "See Me, Feel Me" from May 1.](#)

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

Calendar Highlights

Friday, May 6

6:00 pm Movie Night,
Undercroft Commons
6:00 pm Couples in
Recovery, Chapel

Saturday, May 7

9am Overeaters Anonymous,
Undercroft Commons
9:30 am Safeguarding God's
Children, Undercroft
Commons
11am AI-Anon, Undercroft
Commons
11am Overeaters
Anonymous, Room 1
3pm Confirmation Retreat,
Undercroft Commons

Sunday, May 8

7:45am Holy Eucharist, Main
Church
8:15am Choir Rehearsal,
Choir Room
8:30am Budget Discussion
Group, Library
9am Holy Eucharist, Main
Church
9am Godly Play, Room 6
9am A Joyful Path, Room 11

Ambushed by Love

I wonder if the only way that conversion, enlightenment, and transformation ever happen is by a kind of divine ambush. We have to be caught off guard. As long as you are in control, you are going to keep trying to steer the ship by your previous experience of being in charge. The only way you will let yourself be ambushed is by trusting the "Ambusher," and learning to trust that the darkness of intimacy will lead to depth, safety, freedom, and love.

Any use of fear techniques or trying to shame people into the spiritual journey is inherently counter-productive. It simply makes you more defensive and protective of your boundaries, but now at an unconscious level (I am afraid this is true of a high percentage of Christians, who were largely raised on fear of "hell" and social pressure). We need spiritual teachers like John of the Cross to help us see the patterns of the spiritual journey that actually work, so we can be a bit less defended, a bit less boundaried, with ourselves and with God. Only then can God do the soul forming work of seduction and union.

God needs to catch us by surprise because our very limited preexisting notions keep us and our understanding of God small. We are still trying to remain in control and we still want to "look good"! God tries to bring us into a bigger world where by definition we are not in control and no longer need to look good. A terrible lust for certitude and social order has characterized the last 500 years of Western Christianity, and it has simply not served the soul well at all. Once we lost a spirituality of darkness as its own kind of light, there just wasn't much room for growth in faith, hope, and love.

So God has to come indirectly, catching us off guard and out of control, when we are empty instead of full of ourselves. That is why the saints talk about suffering so much. They are not masochistic, sadistic, negative, morbid, or oppositional. The mystics have seen the pattern and, as Teresa of Ávila says in one place, it is not that you are happy for the suffering—who would be, who could be?—you are happy for the new level of intimacy that the suffering brought you to. You only know this after the fact, perhaps days or weeks or even years later. One

10:15am Holy Eucharist for Families with Young Children, Chapel

10:15am Budget Discussion Group, Library

11am Holy Eucharist in Spanish, Chapel

11am Godly Play, Room 6

11am A Joyful Path, Room 11

11:15am Holy Eucharist, Main Church

12:15pm Budget Discussion Group, Library

12:30pm Pastoral Care Team Meeting, Library

5pm Holy Eucharist, Chapel

6pm Youth Group/Work Camp Meeting, Undercroft Commons

Monday, May 9

11:30am Living with Serious Illness Group, Room 1

6:30pm Overeaters

Anonymous, Undercroft Commons

7pm Outreach Committee, Library

7pm Girl Scouts, Room 6

Tuesday, May 10

6:30pm Spanish Class, Ascension House

7pm Education for Ministry, Library

7pm Codependents

Anonymous, Room 1

7pm Stillwater Mindfulness Group, Chapel

8:30pm AI-Anon, Room 1

Wednesday, May 11

10am *Grounded* Book Group, Library

7pm Ensemble Rehearsal, Main Church

8pm Gamblers Anonymous, Chapel

Thursday, May 12

10am Yoga, Chapel

7:45pm Choir Rehearsal, Choir Room

day you realize, "God is so real to me now. How did I get here?" All you know is that you did not engineer or even imagine this. You were taken there when you were off guard. John's word for that is darkness.

Adapted from Intimacy: The Divine Ambush

Announcements

(click for more info)

HEADLINERS

[Youth Work Camp Meeting, May 8](#)

[Budget Discussion Groups](#)

[Mother's Day Food Drive](#)

[Ascension Celebration: May 15, The Day of Pentecost](#)

[Last Call for Pentecost Readers](#)

[Men's Shelter Lunch Preparation, May 15](#)

[Pictorial Directory](#)

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

[Godly Play, May 8](#)

[Survey About Sunday School](#)

[A Joyful Path, May 8](#)

[Youth Group, May 8](#)

[Work Camp, 2016](#)

[Yoga at Ascension](#)

[Education for Ministry](#)

[New Book for Wednesday Morning Book Group: *Gilead*](#)

[Women's Retreat](#)

[Listening Heart Community at Ascension](#)

[Still Water Mindfulness Practice Group](#)

WORSHIP

[Worship Rosters, April-June, 2016](#)

[Bulletins for Tablets Link](#)

SERVICE

[Link to our Online Calendar](#)

Worship Leaders

Sunday, May 8

Preacher: Ms. Enid Cole

Flower Delivery: Hawa Clemens,
Eliane Dunn-Johnson

7:45 AM Reader/Prayers: Leslie Sanya, *Chalicians:* Edna Leake, Wadai Dennis, *Healing Prayer:* Jean Cohn, *Acolytes:* Raymond Chin, Jackson Douglas, Aidan Douglas, *Welcome Team:* Florence Sirleaf, Meredith Horan, *Altar Guild:* Georgette Dennis

9:00 AM, Readers: Gordon Donnelly, Barb Mansfield, *Prayers:* Susan Ahalt, *Chalicians:* Dotty Pfadenhauer, Esther Tellu, *Healing Prayer:* Kate Siberine, *Acolytes:* Manny Johnson, Msangwa Ogada, Nuelle Johnson, *Welcome Team:* Dorett Sutherland, James Black, Jonathan Black, *Altar Guild:* Nancy Carman, Cynthia Perley, Liz Lennon

11:15 AM Reader: Tunde Ayinde, *Chalicians:* Alice Padmore, Peg Ruppel, *Healing Prayer:* Laura Shay, *Welcome Team:* Alex Langley, Alice Padmore, *Altar Guild:* Laura Shay

5:00 PM Reader/Chalician: Rebecca Smith-Kevern

Eucharistic Visitors: Meredith Horan

[Outreach Retreat](#)

[Gaithersburg HELP](#)

[Lord's Table Soup Kitchen](#)

LIFE AT ASCENSION

[Movie Night, May 6](#)

[Ascension Adventurers to Brookside Gardens, May 14](#)

[Ascension Softball](#)

[Annual Picnic; Save the Date](#)

[Church Yard Sale and Car Wash](#)

[Living with Serious Illness Group](#)

[Keeping the Feast](#)

[Spanish Classes](#)

[Prayer Request Updates](#)

PUBLICATIONS

[Link to the Annual Report and the Vestry Candidate Questionnaire](#)

[May Ascendant](#)

[Together We Shine](#)

Prayers

FOR THOSE WHOSE LIVES ARE CLOSELY LINKED WITH OURS:

In the Diocesan cycle of prayer, we pray for Collington Episcopal Life Care Community, Friendship Terrace, Seabury Christian Communities Group Homes, Seabury Resources for Aging, Pray for all Seniors and their Ministries in the Church, Pray for all Mothers and those who have been as Mothers to Us

PRAY FOR COMFORT, HEALING, COURAGE, AND HOPE:

Rose, Carol, Alvaro, Marguerite, Sarah, Nancy, Janet, Lou, Fran, 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.

Equip us and empower us to be witnesses to your love - as advocates and as servants, as ministers of welcome and of hope for all affected by natural disasters, violence, and war.

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

We pray for those who are in discernment around confirmation, Alice Bennett, Grace Bennett, Jerry Fitzpatrick Fayemi Johnson, Wendy Quijada, and Alfred Wasikye.

ALTAR FLOWERS:

Given by Nancy Carman, in loving memory of her mother Shirley Thomas.

Given by Betsy Hasegawa, in loving memory of her father Jerry Jenkins who died on April 30.

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