



# This Week at Ascension

[Link to the Bulletins for  
December 13](#)

[Link to Randy's Sermon "The  
God in the Garbage" from  
December 6.](#)

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

## Calendar Highlights

### Saturday, December 12

9am Advent Day of  
Meditation, Chapel  
9am Overeaters Anonymous,  
Undercroft Commons  
11am AI-Anon, Undercroft  
Commons  
11am Overeaters  
Anonymous, Chapel  
7pm Our Lady of Guadalupe  
Celebration, Main Church

### Sunday, December 13

7:45am Holy Eucharist, Main  
Church  
8:15am Choir Rehearsal,  
Choir Room  
9am Holy Eucharist, Main  
Church  
9am ESOL Classes, Room 1  
9am *Godly Play*, Room 6  
9am *A Joyful Path*, Room 11  
10:15am Holy Eucharist for  
Families with Young  
Children, Chapel  
11am Holy Eucharist in  
Spanish, Chapel  
11am *Godly Play*, Room 6  
11am *A Joyful Path*, Room

### Blessed to Be a Blessing *Stewardship Reflection Series*

*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with  
all your soul,  
and with all your mind and with all your strength.*

My kids make fun of me for taking so long to get into a swimming pool. When I was their age, I too used to race toward the water with t-shirt, flip flops, and towel flying as I launched myself into the deep end. Let's just say I've gotten less exuberant in my old(er) age. Similarly, when it comes to stewardship, we sometimes dip a toe into the water rather than taking the plunge. It's safer that way, we tell ourselves, yet God wants all of us, not a portion or a percentage or a piece. That's the essence of the Shema, the Hebrew prayer that forms the basis of Jesus' Greatest Commandment: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind and with all your strength."

The word "all" binds together this ancient prayer. Jesus bids us to love God with all our heart and all our mind and all our soul and all our strength. This isn't easy, of course, as there are lots of distractions: kids get sick, things get crazy at work, we have needy friends, it's time to get to the grocery store, American Idol is on. Loving God with all your heart and mind and soul doesn't mean ignoring the practical realities of life. It means taking the time to be aware of God's presence not just on Sunday morning, not just when it's convenient, but in the very midst of life.

In the context of faithful stewardship, this doesn't mean God wants all our money. The annual stewardship campaign isn't a glorified back alley stick-up. Rather God wants all of us - heart, mind, and soul - and when we give our all to God, our financial resources naturally return to the God from whom all blessings flow.

Returning a portion of what we have is a recognition that we are merely temporary stewards of our resources. They were in the world long before we arrived and will be there long after we're gone. You may already be fully immersed in this concept

11

**11:15am** Holy Eucharist,  
Main Church

**5pm** Holy Eucharist, Chapel

**6pm** Youth Group Christmas  
Party, Rockin' Jump

**Monday, December 14**

6:30pm Overeaters

Anonymous, Undercroft  
Commons

7pm Girl Scouts, Room 6

**Tuesday, December 15**

6:30pm Spanish Class,  
Ascension House

7pm Codependents

Anonymous, Room 1

8:30pm AI-Anon, Room 1

**Wednesday, December 16**

10am *Falling Upward* Book  
Group, Library

7pm Spanish Bible Study,  
Ascension House

8pm Gamblers Anonymous,  
Chapel

**Thursday, December 17**

10am Yoga, Chapel

6pm Bariatric Support Group,  
Chapel

7:45am Choir Rehearsal,  
Choir Room

[Link to our Online Calendar](#)

## Worship Leaders

Sunday, December 13

Preacher: Ms. Barb Mansfield

*Flower Delivery:* Esther Sawyer,  
Adoma Baffoe

7:45 AM *Reader/Prayers:* Jackson  
Douglas, *Chalicians:* Leslie Sanya,  
Enid Cole, *Healing Prayer:* Jean  
Cohn, *Acolytes:* Ron Hayden,  
Jackson Douglas, Aidan Douglas,  
*Welcome Team:* Herald Douglas,  
Lisa Murdock, *Altar Guild:*  
Georgette Dennis

9:00 AM *Readers:* Betsy Hasegawa,  
Carleton MacDonald, *Prayers:* Diana  
Gustafson, *Chalicians:* Nancy

or perhaps you've merely stuck a toe into the waters of stewardship or maybe you're up to your waist and contemplating whether to dive in. Most of us are somewhere in the middle as God beckons us into ever-deepening relationship.

I do eventually get into the pool. When the boys complain I'm taking "forever" I remind them I have a lot more surface area than they do. Taking the slow route can be painful, but in time I find myself just as fully immersed as those who took the initial plunge. However we arrive at being fully immersed in stewardship, God rejoices.

The Rev. Tim Schenck Rector, The Episcopal Parish of St. John the Evangelist The Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts

### *Reflection Questions:*

- How is giving a natural expression of loving God ?
- Is your giving an act of worship that takes you beyond duty to delight?
- How is proportional giving a means of immersing yourself in your baptism?

---

### Announcements

(click for more info)

### HEADLINERS

[Advent Morning of Meditation, December 12](#)

[Youth Group Christmas Party, December 13](#)

[Ascension's Giving Tree, 2015](#)

[Christmastide Services, 2015](#)

### CHRISTIAN FORMATION

[Godly Play, December 13](#)

[A Joyful Path, December 13](#)

[Falling Upward, Wednesday Morning Book Group](#)

[Yoga at Ascension](#)

[Listening Heart Community at Ascension](#)

[Still Water Mindfulness Practice Group](#)

[Baptisms](#)

### WORSHIP

Carman, Cynthia Perley, *Healing Prayer*: Paul Whitmore, *Acolytes*: Manny Johnson, Msangwa Ogada, Nuelle Johnson, *Welcome Team*: Esther Allotey-Taylor, Bev Stennett, Christine Kroma, *Altar Guild*: Nancy Carman, Cynthia Perley, Liz Lennon

11:15 AM *Reader*: Laura Shay, *Chalicians*: Christian Nwankwo, Rimie Sicard, *Healing Prayer*: Alex Langley, *Welcome Team*: Penelope Cudjoe, Karl Didavi, *Altar Guild*: Georgana Maines

5:00 PM *Reader/Usher*: Diana Gustafson

Eucharistic Visitors: Jean Cohn

[Bulletins for Tablets Link](#)

[Celebration of the Virgin of Guadalupe's Day, December 12](#)

[Navidad Latina, December 20](#)

[Epiphany Pageant](#)

## SERVICE

[Men's Shelter Lunch Preparation, December 20](#)

[Child First Montgomery](#)

[Gaithersburg HELP](#)

[Ascension's Cancer Support Group](#)

[Lord's Table Soup Kitchen](#)

## LIFE AT ASCENSION

[Annual Giving Campaign Update with Annual Giving Form](#)

[Christmas Flowers](#)

[Christmas Caroling at Asbury](#)

[Our Winter Weather Policy](#)

[Nursery Volunteers Needed](#)

[Keeping the Feast](#)

[Spanish Classes](#)

[ESOL Classes](#)

[Prayer Request Updates](#)

## PUBLICATIONS

[December Ascendant](#)

[Together We Shine](#)

---

## Prayers

FOR THOSE WHOSE LIVES ARE CLOSELY LINKED WITH OURS:

In the Diocesan cycle of prayer, we pray for Episcopal Church Women, The Memorial Scholarship of the Episcopal Church Women, United Thank Offering

In the Anglican cycle of prayer, we pray for Windward Islands, West Indies.

PRAY FOR COMFORT, HEALING, COURAGE, AND HOPE:

Barbara, Harry, Peg, Mary, The FitzPatrick Family, Edward, Sally, Jean, The Johnson Family, Tracy, Susan, Johnetta, Julia, Norma, Julia, Clarence, 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 Ascension's Minister of Music Discernment Team.

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.

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

Compassionate God and Father of all, we are horrified at violence in so many parts of the world. It seems that none are safe, and some are terrified. Hold back the hands that kill and maim; turn around the hearts that hate. Grant instead your strong Spirit of Peace- peace that passes our understanding but changes lives.

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

**THANKSGIVING:**

For the life of Catherine Spangler, who died on November 26.

For the life of Jean Thompson, who died on December 6.

**ALTAR FLOWERS:**

We give thanks for the life of Clara A. Thomas, in whose loving memory her daughter Enid Cole, grandchildren and great-grand children have given the altar flowers today.

Episcopal Church of the Ascension  
205 South Summit Avenue  
Gaithersburg, MD 20877-2315  
301-948-0122  
[ascensionmd.org](http://ascensionmd.org)