



# This Week at Ascension

[Link to the Bulletins for  
January 3](#)

[Link to Randy's Christmas  
Eve Sermon "365."](#)

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

## Calendar Highlights

**Friday, January 1**

*New Years Day - Office  
Closed*

**Saturday, January 2**

9am Overeaters Anonymous,  
Undercroft Commons  
10am Epiphany Pageant  
Meeting, Main Church  
11am Al-Anon, Undercroft  
Commons  
11am Overeaters  
Anonymous, Chapel

**Sunday, January 3**

*There will be no Christian  
Formation for Children,  
Youth, or Adults*  
7:45am Holy Eucharist, Main  
Church  
8:15am Choir Rehearsal,  
Choir Room  
9am Holy Eucharist, Main  
Church  
10:15am Holy Eucharist for  
Families with Young  
Children, Chapel  
11am Holy Eucharist in  
Spanish, Chapel

## Journey to the Center

Both God's truest identity and our own True Self are Love. So why isn't it obvious? How do we find what is supposedly already there? Why should we need to awaken our deepest and most profound selves? And how do we do it? By praying and meditating? By more silence, solitude, and sacraments? Yes to all of the above, but the most important way is to live and fully accept our present reality. This solution sounds so simple and innocuous that most of us fabricate all kinds of religious trappings to avoid taking up our own inglorious, mundane, and ever-present cross of the present moment.

As James Finley says, "The greatest teacher of God's presence in our life is our life." For some reason, it is easier to attend church services than quite simply to reverence the real --the "practice of the presence of God," as some of our saints have called it. Making this commitment doesn't demand a lot of dogmatic wrangling or managerial support, just vigilance, desire, and willingness to begin again and again. Living and accepting our reality will not feel very spiritual. It will feel like we are on the edges rather than dealing with the essence. Thus most run toward more esoteric and dramatic postures instead of bearing the mystery of God's suffering and God's joy inside themselves. But the edges of our lives--fully experienced suffered, and enjoyed--lead us back to the center and the essence, which is Love.

We do not find our own center; it finds us. Our own mind will not be able to figure it out. We collapse back into the Truth only when we are spiritually naked and free--which is probably not very often. We do not think ourselves into new ways of living. We live ourselves into new ways of thinking. In other words, our journeys around and through our realities, or "circumferences," lead us to the core reality, where we meet both our truest self and our truest God. We do not really know what it means to be human unless we know God. And, in turn, we do not really know God except through our own broken and rejoicing humanity.

In Jesus, God tells us that God is not different from humanity. Thus Jesus' most common and almost exclusive self-name is

11:15am Holy Eucharist, Main Church  
5pm Holy Eucharist, Chapel

#### Monday, January 4

6:30pm Overeaters Anonymous, Undercroft Commons  
7pm Listening Heart Community, Library

#### Tuesday, January 5

6:30pm Spanish Class, Ascension House  
7pm Codependents Anonymous, Room 1  
8:30pm AI-Anon, Room 1

#### Wednesday, January 6

10am *Falling Upward* Book Group, Library  
6pm Yoga, Chapel  
7pm Spanish Bible Study, Ascension House  
8pm Gamblers Anonymous, Chapel

#### Thursday, January 7

10am Yoga, Chapel  
7:45pm Choir Rehearsal, Choir Room

[Link to our Online Calendar](#)

## Worship Leaders

#### Sunday, January 3

Preacher: The Rev. Javier Ocampo, The Rev. Cindy Baskin at 11:15 am

*Flower Delivery:* Adoma Baffoe, Hawa Clemens

7:45 AM *Reader/Prayers:* Jean Cohn, *Chalicians:* Enid Cole, Wadai Dennis, *Healing Prayer:* Meredith Horan, *Acolytes:* Raymond Chin, Jackson Douglas, Aidan Douglas, *Welcome Team:* Jean Cohn, Don Cohn, *Altar Guild:* Georgette Dennis

9:00 AM, *Readers:* Barbara Mansfield, Gary McLaughlin *Prayers:* Susan Ahalt, *Chalicians:* Sari Stoddard, Dotty Pfadenhauer, *Healing Prayer:* Paul Whitmore, *Acolytes:* Manny Johnson, Kofi Kwamena-Poh, Sam Mendimasa ,

"The Human One" or "A Son of Humanity." He uses the term seventy-nine times in the four Gospels. Jesus' reality, his cross, is to say a free "yes" to what his humanity daily asks of him. It seems that we Christians have been worshiping Jesus' journey instead of doing his journey. The worshiping feels very religious; the latter just feels human and ordinary. We are not human beings on a journey toward Spirit, we are already spiritual beings on a journey toward becoming fully human, which for some reason seems harder precisely because it is so ordinary.

- Richard Rohr

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### Announcements

(click for more info)

### HEADLINERS

[Christian Formation Christmas Break](#)

[Epiphany Pageant News](#)

[Family Movie Night, January 8](#)

### CHRISTIAN FORMATION

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

[Yoga at Ascension](#)

[Listening Heart Community at Ascension](#)

[Still Water Mindfulness Practice Group](#)

[Baptisms](#)

### WORSHIP

[Bulletins for Tablets Link](#)

[Worship Rosters, Jan-Mar 2016](#)

### SERVICE

[Gaithersburg HELP](#)

[Ascension's Cancer Support Group](#)

[Lord's Table Soup Kitchen](#)

[Men's Shelter Lunch Preparation](#)

### LIFE AT ASCENSION

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

*Welcome Team:* Swithin Kwamena-Poh, Kevin Blanc, Algernon Thomas, *Altar Guild:* Caryl Thomas, Dotty Pfadenhauer

11:15 AM *Reader:* Peg Ruppel, *Chalicians:* Kirk Fitch, Avin Lalmansingh, *Healing Prayer:* Alex Langley, *Welcome Team:* Pete Minderman, Kendall Anderson, *Altar Guild:* Laura Shay, Lynne Shaer

5:00 PM *Reader / Usher:* Hollis King

Eucharistic Visitors: Barb Mansfield

[Ascension's Adventure Group to Carlyle House](#)

[Our Winter Weather Policy](#)

[Nursery Volunteers Needed](#)

[Keeping the Feast](#)

[Spanish Classes](#)

[ESOL Classes](#)

[Prayer Request Updates](#)

## PUBLICATIONS

[January Ascendant](#)

[Together We Shine](#)

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## Prayers

### FOR THOSE WHOSE LIVES ARE CLOSELY LINKED WITH OURS:

In the Diocesan cycle of prayer, we pray for The Church of the Epiphany, Washington, Epiphany Church, Forestville, The Welcome Table and Street Church, The Church of the Epiphany, Washington, Pray for those who are being ordained.

### PRAY FOR COMFORT, HEALING, COURAGE, AND HOPE:

Barbara, Harry, Carol, Mary, The FitzPatrick Family, Edward, Sally, Jean, The Johnson Family, Susan, Johnetta, Julia, Alice, 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 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.

**ALTAR FLOWERS:**

Given by Tom and Denise Lionetti in celebration of their 35th wedding anniversary.

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