

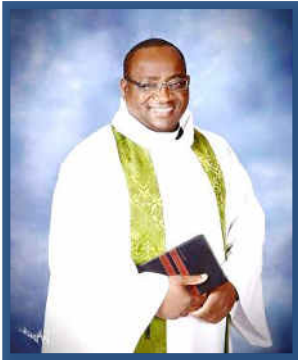
# ASCENSION EXTENSION

A monthly newsletter of Church of the Ascension • Westminster, MD

*Ascension is a family of faith so reflecting the life of Christ  
that we draw all people to Him.*

23 North Court Street • Westminster, MD • 21157

email: [churchoftheascension@gmail.com](mailto:churchoftheascension@gmail.com) • website: [ascension-westminster.com](http://ascension-westminster.com) • office phone: 410-848-3251/ 410-876-0736



## Remembering our Past, Rejoicing in our Present, Reclaiming our Future

by Fr. Samuel Nsengiyumva

As we approach next year's 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the official founding of our church, I have found myself thinking a lot about the meaning of this moment and the kind of response it evokes. For me, a simple reflection on this moment in our history

leads me to remember our past, rejoice in our present, and reclaim our future.

### Remembering our Past

Ever since I came to Ascension, I felt that worship in our historic Stone Church has always felt full even when there a handful of people. This was most noticeable during the singing when a handful of people sounded like a full cathedral. I always attributed it to good acoustics, until recently when I realized that there is more than good acoustics. It occurred to me that when we enter our historic Stone Church to worship, our voices are not the only ones present. We in fact are joining our voices to those of the thousands of faithful men, women, and children who have gathered in that space over the last 175 years, and whose voices still echo in prayer and praise to the God who is the same yesterday, today, and forever. This is true with every other aspect of our parish life. Whether it is with our buildings and grounds, our ministries, or anything else we do, we are walking in the footsteps of faithful men, women, and children who came before us. What a joy it is to remember that we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses (Hebrews 12:1); urging us to remain faithful in our time.

### Rejoicing in our Present

In spite of the inevitable challenges of ministry in a post-Christendom era, I find numerous reasons to rejoice in what God is doing in us and through us at this point in the history of our church. Whether it is witnessing the smiles in the faces of children and volunteers during our summer children's activities, the singing or the Prayers of the People on a Sunday morning, baptizing five children in one weekend, the different meetings discussing the present and the future of our shared life and mission, etc., I find reason to rejoice. Additionally, the more I rejoice in

## August 2018

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### The Ascension Extension

is published to exchange information between the parishioners and friends of the church. Please send all contributions for the newsletter to:  
[ascensioncommunication@gmail.com](mailto:ascensioncommunication@gmail.com).

Please submit articles for the September 2018 issue by:  
Monday, August 20, 2018.

what God is doing in our midst, the more I realize that the joy of the Lord is my strength (Nehemiah 8:10).

### Reclaiming our Future

The more I remember our past and rejoice in our present, the more I am reassured of our future. That sense of assurance, however, does not mean that we can simply sit and expect things to simply happen. It means recognizing that you and I have a role to play and stepping forward in faith to be used by God to unfold that future. That is what I mean by reclaiming our future. It means recognizing and playing our individual parts in preserving, enhancing or rebuilding the solid foundation laid by those who came before us; so that those who come after us will have a foundation on which to build the future that God intends for this place we call Ascension. Furthermore, it means a renewed commitment to ensure that Ascension remains an important outpost for God's mission - a place where God's love is proclaimed, in word and deed, for the benefit of those who live in this city, this county, and beyond.

My prayer is that as we begin to think about the upcoming 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we will all be led to remember our past, rejoice in our present, and reclaim our future; being confident that He who has begun a good work in this place will surely carry it on to completion on the day of Christ Jesus (Philippians 1:6). To Him who is able to do infinitely more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (Ephesians 3:20-21).

### CLERGY & STAFF

The Rev. Samuel Nsengiyumva, Rector  
Cheryl Vecera, Parish Administrator  
Stephanie Schaffer, Community Engagement Coordinator  
Mary Butler, Director of Music Ministry  
Abigail Wright, Interim Children and Youth Minister  
Lynn Lyon-Vaiden, Handbell Choir Director  
Allison Boggs, Nursery Attendant  
Donald Chepko, Night Sexton

Parish Administrator's Office Hours:

8:30-2:30 Monday, Tuesday, & Thursday

Community Engagement Coordinator's Office Hours:

9:30-3:30 Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday

Friday. - By Appointment, please call

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE



### SUNDAY

8:00 am - Holy Eucharist, Rite I (SC)  
9:15 am - Holy Eucharist, Rite II (HCH)  
10:30 am - Lemonade Fellowship  
11:15 am - Holy Eucharist, Rite II (SC)

### MONDAY

8:30 am - Church Office Open  
12:00 pm - AA, Room 210

### TUESDAY

8:30 am - Church Office Open  
10:00 am - Bible Study, Guild Room  
*Will resume on August 21.*

### WEDNESDAY

9:30 am - Church Office Open  
10:00 am - Pins and Needles, Room 202  
12:00 pm - Soup Kitchen (FH)  
12:00 pm - AA, Room 210  
7:00 pm - AA, Room 210  
*Summer Praise Band rehearsals will be announced. Choir and Handbell Choir rehearsals will resume on September 5.*

### THURSDAY

8:30 am - Church Office Open  
7:00 pm - Bible Study (see p. 8)  
8:00 pm - AA (FH)

### FRIDAY

12:00 pm - AA, Room 210  
7:00 pm - NA, Room 210

### SATURDAY

9:30 am - AA, Room 210  
10:00 am - 1844 Shoppe Open  
*Opens at 8:30 am on the 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month*  
8:00 pm - AA (FH)



SC: Stone Church    HCH: Holy Cross Hall  
FH: Fellowship Hall

# WORSHIP SCHEDULE



## August 2 at 11:00 am Memorial Service for Alice Immler Stone Church

The St. James Guild will host a luncheon at 12:00 pm. The following items are still needed, please email, call or text Sandy White.

Email: Sandysdreams@comcast.net

Cell Phone: 443-536-5306

FOOD	DESSERTS
Fruit platter	1 pan of brownies
1 spinach salad	1 bar cookie

Clean Up: 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm  
Blessings and thanks for your support for this ministry.

### August 5, 12, 19

- 8:00 am - Stone Church
- 9:15 am - Holy Cross Hall
- 10:30 am- Lemonade Fellowship
- 11:15 am - Stone Church

### August 26 - Blessing of the Animals

8:00 am - Stone Church  
*Please bring a photo of your pet.*  
 10:00 am - Front Lawn (weather permitting)  
*Please bring your pets and lawn chairs.*  
 If it rains, the service will be held in the Holy Cross Hall. *Please leave your pet at home but do bring a photo of your pet.*

Please bring any of these items to donate to the Humane Society of Carroll County:



Purina Dog/Puppy Chow	Baby Wipes
Purina Cat/Kitten Chow	Paper Towels
SOFT dog treats	Toilet Paper
Dog Toys	Multi-Purpose Cleaner
Cat Toys	



Lemonade Fellowship will follow the 10:00 am service.

## Prayers for College Students

On August 12 and 19, prayers for students who will soon return to college will be offered. If you are a student who is not able to attend church on August 12 or 19, Fr. Samuel will be happy to pray for you on August 5 or August 26. On August 5 or 26, please let Fr. Samuel know that you are there!



## Worship Committee Meeting

The Worship Committee will meet on Tuesday, August 21 at 7:00 pm in the Guild Room.



## Looking Ahead...

Choir and Handbell Choir rehearsals will resume on **Wednesday, September 5**. New members are needed and welcome in both choirs.

**Handbell Choir:** 6:30 pm in the Holy Cross Hall  
*Contact: Lynn Lyon-Vaiden (llyonvaiden@yahoo.com)*  
**Choir:** 7:30 pm in the Choir Room  
*Contact: Mary Butler (mbutler500@aol.com)*



<b>Back to School</b> <b>Sunday:</b> <b>September 16</b>	<b>Sunday School classes</b> <b>will resume</b> <b>after the 9:15 am service.</b>
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**Students** will receive a Back to School blessing during the 9:15 am service. Students may bring backpacks, athletic equipment, musical instruments, etc. to be blessed.

**Sunday School teachers** will be commissioned during the 9:15 am service.

## Vestry Meeting Highlights June 12, 2018



The Vestry is in the process of evaluating the church's safety and security policies and guidelines.

The Vestry discussed how to help Fr. Samuel handle Pastoral Care now that Deacon Barbara Sears has retired.

An Open Forum will be scheduled to discuss the Visioning, Discernment, Strategic Planning Team Update process with the congregation.

Plans have begun for celebrating the church's 175<sup>th</sup> anniversary during 2019.

The Diocese of Maryland provided a \$5,000 grant to help pay for summer programs.

A meeting will soon be scheduled to discuss a new Church Photo Directory.

OUR VESTRY		
Officers/Vestry Member	Term Ends	Ministry Liaison
Fr. Samuel Nsengiyumva		Rector
Roger Bair III Senior Warden	January 2020	Finance Discipleship Ministries
Buck Lyon-Vaiden Junior Warden	January 2019	Buildings & Grounds Stewardship Ministries
Connie Muscato		Treasurer
Brenda Bornt	January 2019	Memorials
Mary Beth Francis	January 2019	Worship Ministries
Melissa Leahy	January 2019	Discipleship Ministries Affiliated Groups
Jenny Beeker	January 2020	Outreach Ministries
Mary Lou Berg	January 2020	Membership Ministries
Judith Stainbrook	January 2020	Membership Ministries
Anne Arena	January 2021	Discipleship Ministries
Donna Fine	January 2021	Worship Ministries
Greg Forster	January 2021	Membership Ministries
Pam White	January 2021	Outreach Ministries

Treasurer's Report	
Year-to-Date Income and Expenses Through June 30, 2018	
<b>Income:</b>	
General Giving	\$ 147,703.73
Fundraisers	\$ 9,206.41
Rental	\$ 8,400.00
Miscellaneous	\$ 10,360.78
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 175,670.92</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>	
Staff and Staff Support	\$ 76,033.03
Buildings and Grounds	\$ 51,477.46
Diocese	\$ 21,052.86
Office/Business Expenses	\$ 5,231.52
Ministries/Worship	\$ 4,643.43
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 158,438.30</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$ 17,232.62</b>

# UPDATE ON THE DISCERNMENT & STRATEGIC VISIONING PROCESS

by Fr. Samuel Nsengiyumva

As many of you are aware, we recently embarked on a process that we hope will help us reaffirm our identity and our mission by re-discovering God's vision for us as a church. As you would expect in any serious discernment process, ours has been a deliberate, prayerful, and seemingly slow process, but one we hope will lead us to the place God wants us to be.

The process which brought together Vestry members and Ministry Team leaders began with a series of meetings in which we sought to articulate what we believe is God's purpose, vision, mission, and core values for us as a church. This first phase led to the development of a draft statement for each of the topics. We intend to continue reflecting and tweaking the draft statements as the process continues.

## INFORMATION GATHERING

The second and perhaps most engaging phase is the gathering of information. Before we can determine where we are going, we need to understand where we are now. That is why our large group has been divided into 4 teams to gather information that will create a profile of our parish. The four teams are:

### I. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT)

This group includes Greg Forster, Pam White, Melissa Leahy, Milt Beebe, Mary Beth Francis, and Roger Bair, III, will explore the possibility of administering the Church Assessment Tool (CAT) by "Holy Cow Consultants" to determine the overall health of our congregation. We hope that every member of our church will participate in this important process so we can adequately assess the health and vitality of our congregation.

### II. Current Ministry Assessment

This group includes George Sterling, Jenny Beeker, Jill Horn, Donna Fine, Wendy Messersmith, and Barry Messersmith Jr., will meet with ministry heads, and/or teams to personally discuss the current state of the ministries in which they are involved and come up with a report that will help us have a realistic picture of our ministries at this point.

### III. History

This group includes Ron Cox, Jeanne Cox, Brenda Bornt, Mary Lou Berg, Cheryl Vecera, and Lynn Lyon-Vaiden, will review and highlight some of the major developments of our church's history that have led to where we are today. While the first 150 years of our history has been recorded, there is no organized record of the most recent 25 years. We hope to get a clearer picture of what the last 25 years of our life and mission have been like.

### IV. Demographics

This group includes Kim Tompkins, Judith Stainbrook, Anne Arena, Mary Butler, Buck Lyon-Vaiden, and Fr. Samuel, will conduct a study of our parish's demographics and that of the surrounding community to have a better understanding of who we are as a parish and the kind of community in which we are called to proclaim the Good News of God in Christ.

Once these teams have gathered their information, they will each produce a report which will be part of the larger report on who and where we are in our life and mission as a church. It is our hope that every one of our members will participate fully in this process; most importantly pray that God will indeed use this process to show us the way forward with a common vision and mission.



## CHILDREN'S SUMMER PROGRAM NEWS

Our summer program will conclude with a **Drama Camp, August 13-August 17, from 8:30 am-3:00 pm.** We are busy making plans for an awesome experience, creating theme-related crafts, games and activities for the children to do when they're not rehearsing for the play, "The Princess Who Had No Name." I can't wait to see how Roberta Gore and her team make miracles happen again!

Do we need help? YES! Thank you for those who have already signed up to volunteer. Because of the popularity of this camp, we still need a number of helpers. Come join the fun! Please respond quickly as to how and when you can help during the Drama Camp week. Contact Betsy Reinders or Abigail Wright at [ascensionsummerprogram@gmail.com](mailto:ascensionsummerprogram@gmail.com) or sign up on the Drama Camp poster in the hallway.

### Important Dates:

**Saturday, August 11, 9:00am-2:00pm**

Set Up for Drama Camp

**Sunday, August 12, 12:00 pm-1:00 pm**

Meeting for all drama camp volunteers to give out schedules and responsibilities

**Sunday, August 12, 11:00 am-3:00 pm**

Set Up for Drama Camp

**Monday, August 13, 8:00 am**

Volunteers arrive and prepare for children's arrivals

**Monday, August 13, 8:30 am**

THE MAGIC BEGINS!!

### Volunteers Needed

**Group Leaders: 5 more volunteers needed**  
(16 and older, all day commitment)

Guide a small group of children to activities/assist them with crafts and games

**Games Team: 1-2 more volunteers needed**  
Help set up and lead games

**Storytelling: 1-2 more volunteers needed**  
Assist the storyteller

**Painting Backdrop: 1-2 more volunteers needed**

**Kitchen Team: 2 more volunteers needed**  
(especially August 15 and August 16)

Help prepare, prep, and serve lunches/clean up

**Hair and Make-Up: (August 17 only)**  
1-2 volunteers needed

Keep an eye on the

### DONATIONS BULLETIN BOARD.

We will be asking for supplies for games and crafts and food donations for Drama Camp week.



**Closing Ceremony and Ice Cream Social  
for the Summer Programs, Bible Camp  
and Drama Camp  
August 17 at 7:00 pm  
Everyone is welcome!**



### Our New Nursery Attendant

Allison Boggs is our new Nursery Attendant. She will care for children (ages 0-4) on Sunday mornings from 9:00am-11:00am and other times as needed. Allison is a junior at Westminster High School and hopes to pursue a degree in teaching. Her favorite subjects are English, History, and Religious Studies. She loves working with children. **A nursery assistant is needed each week** during the 9:15 am worship service. Please contact Abigail Wright at [ascensionchildrenandyouth@gmail.com](mailto:ascensionchildrenandyouth@gmail.com) if you would like to help. Hopefully, enough volunteers will respond so that each person will only need to assist on one Sunday each month.



### Summer Bible Study

The **Thursday Night Bible Study** will meet on two more Thursday nights at 7:00 pm in the Holy Cross Hall for this study:

**Anxious for Nothing: Finding Calm in a Chaotic World**  
a Small Group DVD Bible Study by Max Lucado

Please join us on **August 23 and August 30.**

*Tuesday morning Bible Study will resume at the end of the summer.*

Our Outreach Ministry will host a **Red Cross Blood Drive on August 25** from 9:00 am – 2:30 pm. Pre-schedule your appointment at [rcblood.org/together](http://rcblood.org/together) or speak to Sidney White.

## Thank You For Supporting Our Fundraisers

### Country Breakfast Buffet

August 4, 2018 7:00 - 11:00 am

COME HUNGRY LEAVE FULL

Adults \$8.00 • Ages 4-8 \$4.00

Delight in the decadent, delicious, and delectable foods served by our dedicated, determined and devoted crew that prepare and serve our country breakfast buffet each month. For additional information or to volunteer, please contact Milt Beebe.

The **Outreach Committee** will host a **bake table** during the August 4 Community Breakfast Buffet. They would greatly appreciate donations of cookies, brownies, cakes – just about anything tasty that doesn't need refrigeration. Drop off donations in the church office, or bring it in early on the morning of August 4. Thank you!

You will also have the opportunity to schedule a date and time to have your photo taken for our new **Church Picture Directory**. (See p. 16 for more information.)

**Gift Card** order forms are due on the second Sunday of each month.

### 1844 SHOPPE

#### Clearance Sale

**Friday, August 31 10:00am - 3:00 pm**  
**Saturday, September 1 8:30 am - 3:00 pm**  
**We are accepting donations.**

We would like to thank EVERYONE who participated in making our July Accessory and Yard Sale such a tremendous success. From those who donated lots of things for the sale, to those who helped organize and set it up to those who helped sell it and pack up what was left: THANK YOU. Over \$2,200 was raised for the church! What a blessing!

The 1844 Shoppe would not exist without the contributions of you and your friends. Please ask your friends to think of us when downsizing or just cleaning out stuff. (Just ask Donna Bair how it's done! Most of her friends have no furniture or pictures left in their houses.)

## Mistletoe Mart – 45 Years Strong

Thursday, November 8 – Saturday, November 10

The 45th annual Mistletoe Mart is coming soon! Shortly after Labor Day, Jenny Beeker will post the volunteer sign-up boards. We will again ask for your time and talent to make the 2018 Mistletoe Mart another success. This year, the Mart will close at 7:30 pm on Thursday and Friday. Our delicious dinners will still be served starting at 5:00 pm. Saturday hours will remain 10:00 am - 4:30 pm. We will welcome 52 artisans and expect over 2,700 guests to enjoy Ascension hospitality. To be successful, we need your help!

### Here's how you can help:

**Ask a few friends to help us.** The Mart is a big undertaking and many hands make light work. If your friends volunteer, we will offer 2 free tickets. Please ask – We need them. And perhaps you can spare a vacation day to help during The Mart.

**Sunday, November 4 Take-Down team:** Kevin and Jackie Weschler coordinate emptying rooms and preparing furniture to be loaded on the moving van. Men and strong teenagers are needed to help. Help from friends is always appreciated.

**Decorations:** Betsy Reinders is our chief decorator. She adds the beautiful Christmas touches that give The Mart its special holiday ambiance. Decorating will begin on Sunday, November 4 when greens will be put up in the hallways and bulletin boards will be decorated.

**Kitchen Prep Helpers - Sunday, November 4 - Wednesday, November 7:** Under Helen Lang's leadership, our kitchen team will prepare food for The Mart.

**Kitchen Mart Helpers - Thursday, November 8 - Saturday November 10:**

Our day begins early as we finish daily food preparations and begin serving when The Mart opens at 10:00 am. Your help is needed to plate sandwiches and desserts, to take orders at the window and to plate food from the hot table. Shifts are 2 to 4 hours. The kitchen crew becomes a close knit group that has a lot of fun.

**Café Hostesses:** We need volunteers in 2-4 hour shifts to clear and wipe the café tables after our guests finish their meals. This is also a wonderful opportunity to welcome and greet our visitors.

**Admission Table:** You will sell admission tickets and provide a warm welcome to our guests. Shifts are 2 to 4 hours. We need 2 to 3 people at the Ralph Street parking lot entrance and 2 at the Court Street entrance. (This is primarily a seated job.)

**Shop Runners:** You become our ambassador to the artisans by bringing them meals and providing a break for them. Shifts are ideally 2 to 4 hours. This is a great job for our middle and high school students and their friends as well as anyone who wants to increase his/her daily number of steps!

**Country Store:** We need volunteers in 2 to 4 hour shifts to sell our delicious baked goods. And we need all Ascension bakers to provide fresh baked goods throughout The Mart!

**Golden Bough Tea Room:** We need volunteers in 2 to 4 hour shifts to pour tea and serve cookies. The tea room is a calm, pleasant setting where our guests are able to sit, visit and relax. (This is primarily a seated job.)

**Saturday November 10-After Mart Help:** When The Mart ends at 4:30 pm on November 10, volunteers are needed to remove decorations, take down the tables and chairs in the café area, sweep floors, and assist artisans, if needed, with their takedown.

**Monday, November 12 (evening) – Moving Van Returns:** After the floors are stripped and waxed following The Mart, the moving company returns our furniture. We will again need men and strong teenagers and friends to help reset the Fellowship Hall, Holy Cross Hall, Sunday School rooms, meeting rooms and offices.

**If you have any questions,** please contact Marcie Forster at [Marcie.Forster@gmail.com](mailto:Marcie.Forster@gmail.com) or anyone who is on the Mistletoe Mart Committee:

Anne Arena, Donna Bair, Jenny Beeker, Susan Bingham, Joyce Chomko, Katie Corbin, Elizabeth Heagy, Grace Huber, Helen Lang, Betsy Reinders, Sondra Sarles, Kathy Sullivan, Kim Tompkins, Jackie Weschler, Kevin Weschler, Sandy White



## Good News!



### Carillon Concert – August 4

Buck Lyon-Vaiden will play a carillon concert at The Netherlands Carillon in Arlington, VA on Saturday, August 4 from 6:00 pm-8:00 pm. Please contact Buck or Lynn for additional information.

### Young Adult Fellowship

#### August 9

**Ages 16-22** are some of the most exciting and challenging years of your life. Join us at Church of the Ascension in Westminister, MD on August 9, 6:00 pm to 9:00 pm for some fellowship (and pizza) and to reconnect with your peers. Register at [bit.ly/2NKFOdm](http://bit.ly/2NKFOdm) and contact Abigail Wright at [ascensionchildrenandyouth@gmail.com](mailto:ascensionchildrenandyouth@gmail.com) for more information.



### Museum of the Bible Bus Trip

**Date:** Thursday, September 20, 2018

**Time:** 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

(Leaving from the Ralph Street parking lot)

**Price:** \$39.00 each (includes bus, driver's tip and admission to the museum). You can pay by check or credit card. **Deadline for purchasing tickets is August 26.**



Church of the Ascension is sponsoring a Bus Trip to the Museum of the Bible in Washington D.C. Tickets can be purchased in the church office.

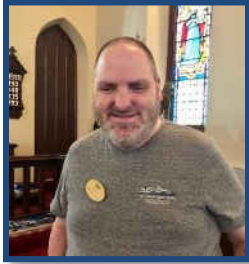
Please call 410-848-3251 to reserve the number of tickets you need.

Did you know that this special exhibit will be open on September 20?

Pilgrim Preacher: Billy Graham, the Bible, and the Challenges of the Modern World

## Meet some of our New Members

Among the many blessings we have experienced as a church in the past year, is the welcoming of a number of new people who are enriching our lives in tremendous ways. They've been kind enough to share a little more about their life's journeys and how the Lord led them to us.



### Ron Welds

Ron Welds started attending Ascension early this year after moving to Westminister from Washington State. He was officially welcomed as member of Ascension on Sunday, June 17. Asked why he decided to join Ascension, he had this to say: "I knew I wanted to join Church of the Ascension even before I moved to Westminister because it was the only Episcopal church and my sister Donna looked it up on-line and told me all about it."

Born in Palo Alto, California, Ron was raised in Washington State after moving to Tacoma at age 3. Ron has always had a keen interest in music, both secular and sacred, and he was baptized into the Episcopal Church at the age of 21. He is a real "Seattleite" at heart having spent his young adult years living in the city and absorbing the religious, musical, and artistic culture. His special love for the Episcopal Church's Compline service broadcast on Sunday evenings at 9:30 p.m. (PST) on King Radio persists even today as he will stay up to 12:30 EST to listen to the service.

Ron has sung with many church choirs, ranging from choral to gospel over the years and has appreciated music from many denominations. He moved to Anne Arundel County, Maryland in 1998 and has lived with his family ever since and enjoys being present as his great nieces and nephews are growing up. The entire family moved back to the Pacific Northwest and lived in Issaquah and North Bend Washington for 5 years.

Finally, as anyone knows who has talked with Ron, he has a very special place in his heart for dogs and loves to keep updated on how everyone's dog is doing. His hope for Ascension is "that the church will grow, families will come, and maybe we will have a choir for kids"

### Joe and Donna Parker



Joe and Donna began their journey by following Donna's brother, Ron Welds, as he became integrated into his chosen community of Ascension. The more they attended, the fonder they became of the people who make up the church. That, combined with a pastoral and music leadership team who were both welcoming and encouraging, helped them to integrate in meaningful ways. When asked how they decided to join Ascension, they said: "Joining Church of the Ascension was a gradual, spirit-led transition, and we couldn't be happier and feel more at home!" They were officially welcomed as members of Ascension on Sunday, June 17.

Joe, a Nebraska native, met Donna, who was raised in Tacoma Washington, while they were both serving in the Army at Ft. Lewis, Washington. In 1986, they married and had two daughters, Rachel and Stephanie. Joe continued to serve a full 20-year career as a Counterintelligence Special Agent. He completed degrees culminating in an Executive Masters of Information Technology, and continued working as a Department of Defense Contractor. He is now happily retired and busy playing music and helping with 6 grandchildren.

Donna completed her enlistment and served as a music and liturgy director at parishes both in the U.S. and in Germany as the family moved with Joe's military assignments. She completed a Ph.D. in Pastoral Counseling from Loyola University and went on to work with transitional homeless shelters, Hospice of the Chesapeake and finally as a counselor in private practice specializing in the treatment of anxiety disorders. She is now on an extended leave of absence while caring for her mother, her brother Ron, and helping with the 6 grandchildren. When asked what their hopes for Ascension are, this is what they said:

"There is a lot of life happening at this church, and we are honored to be amongst a group of dynamic people who care so deeply for each other and for the larger community around them! Our hope for the future is that we can participate in meaningful ways to further a mission that resonates so deeply for us as a couple. It is a great honor to be a part of this church."

<b>Transferred In:</b> Jeanne Morrill - from All Saints' Episcopal Church, Reisterstown, MD	<b>Baptized:</b> Christiannah was baptized on July 14. Emma, Hayleigh, Logan, Wyatt, and Jackson were baptized on July 15.	<b>New Address:</b> Ted & Joanne Neil 3392 Avrill Road Caledonia, NY 14423
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**Rector's Cross Recipients** by Fr. Samuel Nsengiyumva

It has been said that Christians do not give of their time, talent, or treasure in order to be praised by people but for the honor and glory of God and the benefit of others. While this is true and admirable, many Christians also agree that some form of appreciation is helpful in inspiring and encouraging one another as we strive to be faithful to God's call upon us. We at Ascension try to do this in a variety of ways, by word and action. The awarding of what has come to be known as the Rector's Cross is one such way the Rector has expressed appreciation to those among us who demonstrate exceptional dedication to the life and mission of Ascension.

**Why a Cross?**

The choice of a cross as a symbol of appreciation may not make sense but it has significant theological significance. For Christians, the cross is the greatest symbol of self-sacrifice. Jesus demonstrated his full dedication to his Father's will by offering himself to be crucified on the cross. He invites us to carry our cross (God's call to us) and follow him (Matthew 16:24). St. Paul urges us to have the same attitude that was in Christ Jesus who humbled himself in obedience to God even unto death on the cross (Philippians 2:5-8). Beyond that, the only reason the award is called the Rector's Cross is because it is the Rector who determines who gets the award and when.

While a large number of our members have demonstrated the level of dedication that qualifies them for the Rector's Cross, only a few are given the award each year. In other words, the Rector's Cross could be seen as Ascension's ministry honor society or hall of fame into which only a few people are inducted each year while many others who are qualified wait for their turn. Similarly, while the qualifications for receiving the award are standard, many other factors go into determining who receives the award in a particular year. They include, but are not limited to, the number of years one has been actively involved in the life and mission of Ascension, the level of involvement, the status of a potential recipient, etc.

2018 is the fourth year that the Rector's Cross has been awarded to those who demonstrate exceptional dedication to the life and mission of Ascension. This year's recipients included Peter Whitford, Lynn Kirby, Betsy Reinders, Donna Fine, and Milt Beebe.

1. Peter Whitford and his wife Dorris started attending Ascension in 1999. They both became active members of the Choir and several other ministries. Peter was awarded the Rector's Cross because of his exceptional dedication and service to Ascension as a member of the Choir, a cantor, a lector, buildings and grounds, Vestry member, etc. In April, Peter and Dorris started their journey back to Australia, his native country, to be close to their children.
2. Lynn Kirby and her husband Bud started attending Ascension in 1994. She immediately became active as a member of the Choir. Since then, she has been involved in many aspects of our life and ministry including serving as chair of the Worship Committee (1996), chair of the Fellowship committee for many years, Vestry member (3 terms), Registrar, Discipleship Committee, Women's Retreat Committee, etc. For the past three years she was a full-time volunteer serving as our ministry support associate. During that period, she spearheaded and coordinated several key projects including the beautification of our campus, the 1844 Shoppe, upgrading our website, and many others. She was awarded the Rector's Cross in recognition and

appreciation for her exceptional dedication to the life and ministry of Ascension. In May, she and her husband Bud moved to Florida.

3. Betsy Reinders started attending Ascension in the mid-80s. She and her husband Rick were married at Ascension in 2000. They both have been very active members of Ascension for those many years. Betsy is best known for her leadership in coordinating and decorating the church for special events such as the Women's Tea, Ministry Fair, Christmas, Receptions, Mistletoe Mart, etc. She has been an active member of St. Martha's Guild including serving as its president. She also serves as a lector, chaliceist, etc. Most recently, she has devoted most of her time to the children's ministry. She is the primary facilitator for the Children's Chapel time; and for the last two years, she has served as our Children's Summer Program coordinator. Under her leadership, the program has expanded to include a Bible Camp/VBS, and many other new activities. In June, Betsy was awarded the Rector's Cross in recognition and appreciation for her exceptional dedication to the life and mission of Ascension over these many years.

4. Donna Fine started attending Ascension around 1996. Since then she has been involved in many ministries. She serves as a member of the Ascension Choir, the Handbell Choir, a chaliceist, a Lay Eucharistic Visitor, Acolyte, Fellowship Committee (chair), Vestry, Healing Ministry Team, the 1844 Shoppe, and many other ways. It is difficult to find anything at Ascension in which Donna is not involved. In June, Donna was awarded the Rector's Cross in recognition and appreciation for her exceptional dedication to the life and mission of Ascension over these many years.

5. Milt Beebe started attending Ascension in 1987 but did not become active until 1996. Since then, he has served in numerous ways including but not limited to the Choir, the Handbell Choir, the Praise Band, back-up organist, chaliceist, etc. He has also served on the Vestry, the Outreach Committee, and several other ministry teams. Milt is well known as coordinator of the Country Breakfast Buffet ministry which feeds a delicious warm breakfast to around 200 clients every first Saturday of the month. In June, Milt was awarded the Rector's Cross in recognition and appreciation for his exceptional dedication to the life and mission of Ascension.

As indicated above, 2018 is the fourth year since we started awarding the Rector's Cross as a symbol of appreciation for those who have demonstrated exceptional dedication the life and mission of Ascension.

Previous recipients include:

- 2015 - Bill Sears, Nancy Griesmyer, Joyce Brown
- 2016 - Ron Cox, Joanne Neil, Ann Cox, Charlie White
- 2017 - Donna Bair, Pat Shirley, Sandy White

As you can see, these are exceptional people who have contributed so much to our shared life and mission. We thank God that there are many others like them who continue to give of themselves to God's work in this place in exceptional ways. Some of them have been doing it for a long time while others are just beginning. All of them are gifts to us and deserve our recognition and appreciation in as many ways as we can find. The Rector's Cross will continue to be awarded as one way of expressing our gratitude and appreciation for those who, following the example of our Lord, give of themselves for the glory of God and benefit of his people. Thanks be to God!



## DreamBuilders June Mission Trip *by Joyce Chomko*

From June 17-23, Church of the Ascension sent 15 people, in a team of 55, to Baton Rouge, LA. On Sunday after arriving, we visited the job sites and ended the day with a Christian worship service. Devotions were said daily. On Monday through Friday, with a half day of work on Wednesday, we worked on 3 houses. Two of the home sites were a blitz build and the other was partially framed. The partially framed house was mostly completed during our week.

By the time the team left, one blitz build house was under roof and the interior and exterior were framed; the other blitz build house was framed and trusses were installed. At the third house, the team installed a floating floor, doors and hardware, caulking and ceramic tile on the kitchen floor, and both bathrooms (gluing, cutting and grouting). The team worked side-by-side with the families.

On Wednesday afternoon, we all headed to New Orleans and DreamBuilders treated everyone to dinner. On Saturday before returning home, we went on a Bayou boat trip and spotted many alligators and raccoons. Several team members even held a 1 year old alligator with his mouth bound.

The Ascension DreamBuilders team thanks church members for their prayers, support and monetary donations. Without such a giving church family, some would not be able to go on this trip. Because of your generosity, costs were defrayed for 8 Ascension team members.

## Birthdays

8/4 • Steve	8/19 • Kathy
8/5 • Hope	8/20 • Nick
8/7 • Caitlin	8/20 • Ben
8/9 • Bobbie	8/21 • Carrie
8/10 • Donna	8/22 • Sean
8/10 • Merle	8/23 • Hayleigh
8/12 • Dottie	8/24 • Sue
8/12 • Cody	8/26 • Dorris
8/13 • Ray	8/27 • Donna
8/13 • Hailey	8/27 • Chris
8/15 • Debbie	8/28 • Chloe
8/15 • Pat	8/28 • Zoe
8/16 • Don	8/30 • Jennie
8/16 • Barry	8/30 • Sean
8/16 • Stephanie	

## Anniversaries

8/5 • Joe & Lisa: **40 years!**  
8/10 • Greg & Marcie: **40 years!**  
8/10 • Jim & Terri: **50 years!**  
8/12 • Steve & Carol  
8/15 • David & JoAnne  
8/16 • Tristan & Rachel: **10 years!**  
8/17 • Ron & Nancy  
8/20 • Kevin & Diane  
8/22 • Ted & Joanne  
*Ted and Joanne's new address is on p. 11*  
8/25 • Donna  
8/30 • Dale & Debbie

## Prayer List – for Various Needs and Conditions

Joe	Lynn	Ron	Lisa
Joy	Mandy	Ben	Joyce
Milt	LeAnne	Bill	J. Michael
Bill	Jan	Dee	Anne
Mary Lou	Andrew	Jason	Mary Lee
Clare	Noelle	Cassie	Barbara
Emily	Frank	Lynn	Pat
Rick	Debi	Barbara	Nicole
Sally	Marti	Howard	Margaret
Brenda	Angel	Barbara	Peggy
Steve	Nancy	David	Kim
Judy	Bob	Catherine	Irene
Mary Jo	Paul	Barbara	Bailey
Trey	Jack	Kevin	Claire
The Drobneks	Eila Mae	Russell	John

## Our College Students and Young Adults (Age 18-24)

Ryan	Hannah	Rachel
Avery	Luke	Ben
Jeb	Robbie	Nick
Angela	William	Kyle
CJ	Emily	Leah
Austin	Max	Tyrus
Amanda	Kyle	Christopher
Jason	Ruth	Cody
Jordan	Leah	Veronica
Ana	Andrew	Hope
Samuel	Emily	Emma
Nathan	Adelaide	Trevor
Conner	Sarah	Abigail

### For the Homebound and Those in Convalescence Centers

Betty  
Caroline  
Dolores

### For the Safety of all Military Personnel Currently Serving

Pvt. Jacob  
Fort Wainwright • Fairbanks, AL  
2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. James • Fort Lee, VA

*If you have a relative in the military, please provide the church office with rank, name, and where he/she is currently serving.*





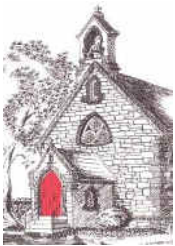
## Coming Soon! New Parish Picture Directory

It has been almost three years since our current Parish Picture Directory was published. So much has changed since then. Among the changes are the significant number of members who have joined us in those three years. For this reason, the Vestry has approved the publishing of a new picture directory to be available sometime around the end of the year.

As a result, the Membership Team met with a representative of Universal Church Directories on Tuesday, July 31, to discuss the next steps. As is always the case, the main part of the project is the taking of the family pictures. This will include making appointments for the pictures and the actual picture taking. **The pictures will be taken by photographers from Universal Church Directories on September 20, 21, and 22.** You may sign-up, in person, starting at the Country Breakfast Buffet on Saturday, August 4, 2018 and every Sunday through September 16. Online sign-up will become available on Monday, August 6, 2018. As always, this will be absolutely free to you and to the church.

Unlike similar projects in the past, which only involved our members, this is open to anyone in the community who may be interested in having a free family portrait. Please encourage your relatives and friends to participate in this free opportunity. Only members of Ascension will be included in the Picture Directory. Ascension members will receive a copy of the directory in addition to the free family portrait.

As you can imagine, this is a big project that will require a lot of time and coordination. If you like working on projects like this one, please contact Deb Vana ([gardengirlone@comcast.net](mailto:gardengirlone@comcast.net)).



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### Church of the Ascension

23 North Court Street  
Westminster, MD 21157