

Ascension Dimension

January 2015



Church of the Ascension
Claymont, DE

January Events

January 4th

Feast of the Epiphany

January 19th

Martin Luther King Jr.
Day

January 21st

Ascension Guild Meeting

January 25th

Annual Meeting
Potluck Brunch



A New Year Full of Promise

Advent and Christmas have come and gone, and now the New Year is upon us. It has been such a blessing for me to be with you these past few weeks and I look forward to our first year of ministry together. I am enjoying meeting everyone, and am thankful that you are game to help me learn your names by reintroducing yourselves to me at least seven times over the course of our first few months together.

Our first few weeks together have been full of activities and many joys. One of the greatest joys for me in December was to be part of the Birthday Party for Jesus with the children. The youth ministry at Ascension is surely vibrant and growing! I was also delighted to experience your annual display of crèches for the first time. I was amazed by the great number of beautifully-crafted crèches that come from so many different parts of the world. What a lovely and special event that is unique in this community and beyond. Best of all we had the opportunity to worship together and with the Rev. Lael Sorensen on Christmas Eve. The pageant, the beautiful flowers and music all greatly enhanced this special season of worship and celebration.

I am thankful for Lael's ministry at Ascension during these past many weeks. I realize and understand that the congregation is saddened by her departure. We will all miss her, and we offer our best wishes to her and our prayers as she begins her ministry at St. Peter's.

The New Year is here and is full of promise! I am encouraged to know that the months ahead are pregnant with possibility. I am holding on to these words spoken by the Angel Gabriel to Mary: "Nothing will be impossible with God." As we continue to be faithful to God's call to us I can confidently say that God is and will be there to guide us and to do more for us and with us—God will do more than we can know or imagine.

Faithfully,
Ketlen+

The legend of the sand dollar

There's a pretty little legend that I would like to tell
Of the birth and death of Jesus found in this lowly shell.
If you examine closely, you'll see that you find here
Four nail holes and a fifth hole, made by a Roman's spear.
On one side the Easter lily, its center is the star
That appeared unto the shepherds and led them from afar.
The Christmas poinsettia etched on the other side
Reminds us of his birthday, our happy Christmastide.
Now break the center open, and here you will release
The five white doves awaiting to spread good will and peace.
This simple little symbol, Christ left for you and me
To help us spread his Gospel, through all eternity.
—Author unknown



January Birthdays



- 3rd Debbie Frantz
Helen Gwynn
- 4th Philip Carew
- 9th Paul McFarland
Carol Middleton
- 10th Martha Fisher
- 12th Margie McKinley
- 14th Anna Lockwood
- 15th Meara Catts
- 17th Wendy Maxwell
Charles Morgan Sr.
- 19th Luke Mozzoni
- 20th Leigh Hamilton
David Moore
- 27th Lisa McFarland
- 28th Emily Collins
Nancy Freebery
Doris Pearson

Please let us know if we missed your birthday or anniversary. YOU are an important part of our parish family.

Happy Birthday!!



Our deepest Sympathy to the family and friends of Walter Fox, Sr. who passed away on November 27, 2014. His life was celebrated with a memorial service at Ascension on December 5th.



Thank you for the 46 Campbell's points and 10 Box Tops for Education collected this month. Colder weather may mean soup is on the menu in your home; please save the labels and place them in the boxing the narthex.

Your clipping helps the Claymont Elementary School.

ECW Annual Meeting

The Diocesan ECW met on November 22 as part of Parish Life Day. Beth FitzPatrick was elected Chairperson for the Triennium (Nov. 2014 – Nov. 2017). Chrissie Lockwood was appointed to fill the last year of the Financial Coordinator (treasurer) term. She takes office on January 1, 2015.

January Anniversaries

We have no anniversaries in January.

SPECIAL PROGRAM AT THE CLAYMONT LIBRARY



The Art, History and Etiquette of the Afternoon Tea: Thursday, January 22nd at 2PM.

The lecture covers from facets of the ancient Zen Tea Ceremony, to the dos and don'ts of Victorian Tea Etiquette.

The program concludes with suggestions for creating your own "Silver Tea," including how to brew a proper cup of tea and scone recipes. Tea and refreshments served. Presented by the Delaware Humanities Forum. **Registration required.** (Adults) Please call (302)798-4164.

Altar Guild

Our newest member, Heidi Palalay, is paired with Chrissie Lockwood and her training period is complete. Thank you Heidi for joining in this ministry! With three baptisms in November and the busy Advent and Christmas seasons, the Altar Guild has been working overtime! In early December, Ann Archer and Beth FitzPatrick met and polished all of the silver used for the Eucharist. December 21st several members assisted with the greening of the church...wreaths and red bows were hung, the pew torches installed and the parish Nativity Set was placed in front of the altar. We are actively recruiting new members, so if this ministry interests you, let Beth FitzPatrick or one of the Altar Guild members know, and we will start your training. The time commitment to set up for Sunday services is usually only a half hour or so, and the rotation is once every 3 or 4 weeks.

Stockley Center Collection

The Diocesan ECW is most appreciative of the wonderful collection for the Stockley Center donated by the members of Ascension. The amazing number of items was taken to Parish Life Day where it was given to a representative of the Stockley Center. There was so much that the priest from Georgetown offered to transport most of it. The clients will had a much nicer holiday because of our generosity. Thank you, thank you, thank you! ECW Board.

ANNUAL MEETING AND POTLUCK BRUNCH JANUARY 25, 2015 FOLLOWING THE 10AM SERVICE

Please plan to attend the Annual Meeting of The Church of the Ascension on January 25th. As was approved last year the current vestry will continue in place to provide a smooth transition as we enter life in the Brandywine Collaborative Ministries under new leadership. The Rev. Ketlen Solak will be our celebrant at both services that day and will attend our annual meeting. Continuing leadership will enable us to better support The Rev. Solak and the clergy who will be coming to support her.



While we are not having normal elections this year, our by-laws call for a vestry of 7-12 members. As we are currently at 8 members, we invite any eligible parishioners who are interested in serving on vestry to speak to the wardens (Janet Middleton or Steve Stephenson) about serving. New members would be very welcome. To be eligible to serve on vestry, one must be: *18 years of age; Every member of the Vestry is required to be an active registered member of The Church of the Ascension, a confirmed member of the Episcopal Church and a contributor of both time and finances, to regularly attend the worship services of this parish, to participate in the life of the church as a year round member of the parish, to attend Vestry retreats, and to be an active participant or leader in one or more committees.*

Serving on vestry is a great way to help the parish while becoming more familiar with the workings of the church. Each vestry member is also a member of at least one vestry committee.

The Rev. Ketlen Solak will be celebrant at both services and will be at our annual meeting. Plan to attend and see how we have grown in spirituality and mission and more about our future direction.

As is our custom, we will have an annual report of all of our committees telling what we have accomplished this year. **All Ministry heads are requested to have their reports turned in by January 15th.** A copy of your last year's report can be sent you if that would help.



As has been our custom in recent years, we will begin our annual meeting with a potluck brunch. So, pull out your favorite recipe and bring food to share. Watch for sign-up sheets so that we don't all bring the same thing. We have some great cooks and the meal is always delicious. If you don't cook or don't have time to prepare something, come and join us anyway - there is always enough food for everyone.



Pledge envelopes for 2015 were made available in the narthex on December 21st. If you have not done so, please pick yours up to save us the expense of mailing them.

If you have not yet pledged, pledge cards are available in the back of the church or by calling the office. ***It is not too late to pledge to support the worship and ministry of The Church of the Ascension.*** Pledge cards are available in the Narthex or by calling the office. If you feel you cannot pledge at this time but would like pledge envelopes to help track your giving, notify the office or Genia Thomas in church or email: newsletter@ascensionde.org.

Giving Statements for 2014 will be available January 11th in the Narthex. Once again, if you can pick up your statement and save us the postage, it would be appreciated. Any statements not picked up will be mailed by January 30, 2015 so that you will have yours for tax purposes.



A DECEMBER TO REMEMBER

December was a busy month of fellowship, spirituality and mission at Ascension. On December 6th, we opened our doors to the community with our annual reception following the Claymont Christmas Parade. The parade ended at Ascension with the blessing and decoration of the Claymont Weed. The Rev. Ketlen Solak joined us and blessed the Weed. We then served hot chocolate and cookies to those who attended.

Saturday, December 13th was Launch Pad's (our youth group) **Birthday Party for Jesus**.



The parish was invited to share in the festivities. Heidi Palalay led the singing of Christmas songs and accompanied us on guitar. The youth then made a birthday tree for Jesus. On paper leaves they printed the gifts they would give Jesus (e.g. be kind, clean my room, be respectful, etc.). They presented the leaves to The Rev. Ketlen Solak who blessed them and then Betty and Carol Middleton pasted them on the tree. Hot dogs and birthday cake were shared. A beautiful Christmas party!

On December 21st, we once again hosted our **"Keeping Christ in Christmas" nativities display**.



Sharman Stephenson is the force behind our nativity display. She brings her extensive collection and adds them to those donated by other members of the parish arranging them so that each is shown off at its best. It is indeed inspiring to see how "Some children see him..." Nativities are from many countries around the world. The one on the left is a new one that Fr. Ruben and Mary Anne brought back from Puerto Rico when they visited there this summer. The display never gets old - it is well worth seeing every year. It is a chance to escape the commercialism of the holiday season while focusing on the true meaning of Christmas. Nativities are from many countries and in many different media. The display is then open to the public from 9AM (after the first Sunday service) to 4 pm. Tea and cookies are available so that you can truly relax. With 125 - 150 nativities it is the largest display in the area and so artistically arranged as to show each one to its best advantage. Be sure to plan on seeing it next year.



Christmas Eve 2014 On Christmas Eve we were blessed to have two wonderfully inspiring services. At 5 PM our children serenaded us with an anthem "The Friendly Beast". They processed with the choir and servers and were a wonderful addition to our worship. Fr. Ruben Rodriguez-Yejo and The Rev. Lael Sorensen created a wonderful telling of the Christmas story with the children present fulfilling the roles of Mary, Joseph, angel, shepherd and the 3 Kings.

At 7:30 PM our choir treated us with a wonderful choral prelude of Christmas anthems. Under the direction of our musical director Sandy Pierce, the selection was inspiring and well performed.

The Rev. Ketlen Solak was our celebrant and preacher at the 8 PM service. Once again the service was inspiring. In addition to the extra food collected during the Advent season for the Claymont Community Center, it is our custom to collect infant clothing and supplies on Christmas Eve. As you can see from the photo above, our worshippers were very generous again this year. The items collected will be given to Friendship House Homeless Shelter.

December 28th was a bittersweet day for us. We had to say goodbye to The Rev. Lael Sorensen who has been our supply clergy this fall. Her guidance and sense of humor found a place in all of our hearts. We will miss her, but wish her happiness and success as she goes to her new position as rector of St. Peter's Church in Rockland, Maine.

On December 21st our senior warden Janet Middleton presented her with a small token of our appreciation. On the 28th Lael treated us to a delicious coffee hour.

Some of her recent sermons can be found in her online blog at laelsorensen.org.



We appreciate all of the effort that has gone into making our December so memorable: The Launch Pad and its leaders; Sandy Pierce and the choir; the altar guild; those who decorated and greened the church; our lectors, communion assistants, ushers, greeters, secretarial staff and sexton and of course all of our clergy plus all who participated in making our Christmas season so spectacular.



Stewardship Report



Stewardship Report

STEWARDSHIP 2014. Unfortunately we have lost pledging members this year through death and relocation. Last year 55 pledges totaled \$122,000. This year we have received 50 Pledges which total \$99,242. If you have not pledged, please do so today. If you did not receive a pledge card or have misplaced yours, pick one up in the back of the church or the Parish Hall or call the office and one will be sent to you. Prayerfully consider if you can increase the amount you have pledged. We fully realize that "life happens" and some cannot increase or may need to decrease due to family situations. Pledges can be adjusted upwards or downwards during the year as situations arise.

Launch Pad Happenings

By Jodie Lockwood

Starting this month we will introduce our COTA kids in the newsletter. Each month there will be information about the child's interests and a challenge for you to talk to them and answer a question. We start with the newest member of our Launch Pad Group Mekhi Waxman.

COTA Kids Spotlight "Mehki"

Mehki is an energetic 10 year-old who attends Mt. Pleasant Elementary. Mehki is always smiling; in fact I refer to him as my ray of sunshine!!!

Mehki is a generous soul; just ask him about the super gift he gave me that is now in the Sunday school room...feel free to check it out!!! I will give you a hint...Mehki is a huge WWE fan and that is something we have in common! Mehki attends church with his grandmother Katie and as you may know he has an interesting tie to Ascension! Take a moment this month and get to know Mehki a little better. Then maybe you can answer my *COTA Kids Question of the Month Challenge*...

Who is Mehki's favorite wrestler?



Upcoming Launch Pad events

All events are open to all members of the parish.

JANUARY 17TH - FAMILY GAME NIGHT 4-6 PM

Pizza Dinner @ 4PM followed by fun and games (i.e. Twister, Connect)

FEBRUARY 14TH - PARENT'S NIGHT OUT 5-8 PM ♥♥

Take your spouse out for a Valentine's Day Dinner - knowing your children are safe and having dinner & FUN!

MARCH 14TH - A TALE OF THREE TREES 11AM-1PM

A Lenten Reading of *A Tale of Three Trees* with milk and cookies. Let us prepare for the great journey GOD has for us all!!!

APRIL 19TH, A DAY OUT AT THE PARK 1:35PM

Join us at Frawley Stadium as we root the **BLUE ROCKS** to victory! Watch for information on getting group tickets closer to the date.



Jodie has presented a proposal for a BCM Youth Ministry which was enthusiastically endorsed. Each church would maintain its own youth group and Sunday School but meet quarterly for joint events. Each church would have an adult member on the planning committee, Suggestions for this ministry include a March Dinner at Friendly's (Breaking of Bread as a Family); June Summerfest @ Killen's Pond - Taking time for Fellowship and renewing your Spirit; September - Back to School Bas @ AMF Lanes - Returning to the Fold; December - Karaoke Christmas Party - Celebrating the Birth of Christ by Raising Our Voices.



As of November 30th Year-to-date income is under budget by \$12,146.42 with pledges \$5,521.52 under budget. Fortunately expenses are under budget by \$9747.28. Hopefully some of the pledges will be caught up. Grocery Card sales through October were \$11,250.00 of which we received approx. \$560. Thanks to those who support this ministry and Carol and Babak Golgolab for administering it for us.



SUNDAY BREAKFAST MISSION

ON SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29TH, Pat and Gail Mummert, Mike and Judy DuRoss volunteered their time to serve dinner at the Mission. The menu included meatballs with gravy, broccoli, rice, collard greens, rolls, and cookies. Our Ascension volunteers estimated that approximately 200 people in need were served that evening. Pat Mummert gave a heart-felt account of her experience serving the meal on Sunday, November 30th during the 8:00 service.

Those who have experienced this ministry say that they feel truly humbled and grateful to be able to give back to those less fortunate than ourselves. Won't you think about it? The next opportunity to serve will be on **Saturday, January 31.** Look for the signup sheet on the table in the parish hall early in January.

GIFTS FOR THE CHRIST CHILD

Thank you so much for your contributions to this program that Ascension supports each year. The items received were given to Friendship House Clothing Bank of Delaware. This is a very special and meaningful way to help new mothers in need.

FOOD DELIVERED TO CLAYMONT COMMUNITY CENTER BY COSTCO ON OUR BEHALF

During the month of December there were 8 deliveries on our behalf -- 4 on Thursdays and 4 on Saturdays. The total estimated retail value of the food delivered was \$1,592.00. We thank Costco for their generous support of the Community Center!

FOOD DELIVERED TO CLAYMONT COMMUNITY CENTER BY THE ASCENSION CONGREGATION

Food delivered to the Community Center during November for the Thanksgiving Food Basket collection was valued at \$985.00. Thank you very much for generous support of the Community Center!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We received a note of thanks from William Perkins, Executive Director of Friendship House. He states, "Thank you for your ongoing support and generous donation of \$100.00." We also received a note from World Vision for our contribution of \$100.00. The note states, "Medicines and medical supplies will be distributed in your honor."

The Outreach Committee extends its appreciation and heartfelt thanks for your generosity and support of our ministries. Without your help we could not succeed in our mission to help those who are in need.



Women's Fellowship

ASCENSION GUILD

All women are invited to come to attend the meeting of Ascension Guild on January 21st at 7PM in the conference room.

Join us for fellowship and planning.

*From the
Senior Warden*



Greetings All,

What a wonderful Christmas holiday we had, thanks to Lael, Ruben and Ketlen, who inspired us all to keep the birth of the Christ child the center of our worship. And thanks to all the children who reminded us all how much fun Christmas is for the young at heart.

And thank you to everyone who planned, participated and attended our Christmas Eve services. It was truly an uplifting evening.

As most of you have seen, the work on the roof is in full steam, but not without a few snags. Some areas of the roof were more extensively damaged than first thought but it looks like the repairs will still be within budget. With God's help and good weather, repairs should be completed before the annual meeting the last Sunday in January.

I do hope you all will attend the annual meeting. We have lots to discuss! Many exciting things are happening here at Ascension and you are a big part of it. So please plan on participating. A signup sheet will be in the parish hall for brunch items. As usual we will feast before we conduct business.

On Saturday January 3rd, the BCM council will meet for the first time this year. This will also be our first meeting with Ketlen. We have set aside 2 1/2 hours so I will have much to share with you in the next Newsletter about what we accomplished.

Happy New Year!

Yours in Christ,
Janet Middleton

*For I know the plans I have for you, declares the lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and hope. -
Jeremiah 29:11*

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The Church of the Ascension

3717 Philadelphia Pike
Claymont, DE 19703

Member: Brandywine
Collaborative Ministries

Phone: (302) 798-6683

Fax: (302) 798-7870

E-Mail:
office@ascensionde.org

Newsletter Submissions:
newsletter@ascensionde.org

Sunday Worship
8:00 AM & 10 AM



Mission Statement

*The Episcopal Church
of the Ascension
seeks to be the body of Christ
in our community through
worship, teaching, service
and celebrating life.*

Website

www.ascensionde.org



Launch Pad
Family Game Night

**Family Game Night - January 17th
4-6PM**

&



**Annual
Meeting**

&



**Potluck
Brunch**

January 25th following the 10 AM Service