

## E-News for the Week of Sunday, February 7

### Transfiguration of Our Lord

#### Readings

Exodus 34:29-35

Psalms 99

2 Corinthians 3:12-4:2

Luke 9:28-36 [37-43a]

#### Participants

**Celebrant:** Rev. Nancy Wright

**Altar Guild:** Julie Valliere

**Communion Assistant:** Bob Furst

**Lector:** Jim Wilhite

**Liturgical Assistant:** Kathe Bruno

**Organist:** Ann Gnagey

**Greeters:** Marilyn Johnson and Suzanne Furst

**Ushers:** Bonnie & Paul Lombardi and Jim Wilhite.

#### Upcoming Week

##### Wednesday, 2/3

4:30-5:30 p.m. Tai Chi (rental)

6:15 p.m. Contemporary

7:15 p.m. Bell Choir

##### Thursday, 2/4

10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Quilter's Group

##### Friday, 2/5

Meals on Wheels

##### Sunday, 2/7

9:00 a.m. Sunday School

10:00 a.m. Worship Service

11:30 a.m. Worship Team

##### Monday, 2/8

2:00 p.m. Mutual Ministry

##### Tuesday, 2/9

6:00 p.m. Property

##### Wednesday, 2/10

Ash Wednesday

7:00 p.m. Worship Service

Click [HERE](#) for a long-range calendar.

#### Upcoming Birthdays

2/3 Jane A'Lee Heyerdahl

2/3 Robert Hondal

2/5 Kate Peake

2/6 Kim Fry

2/9 Bob Hanson  
2/9 Valerie Rittershausen

### Pastor's Message

Dear Ascension friends,

On a rainy day in Vermont in February, it is well to remember that we are in the week of celebration for light! First, this coming Sunday is Transfiguration Sunday, a church feast day. In a stupendous moment (Luke 9:28-36), Jesus and three disciples are on a mountain, with Moses and Elijah (symbolizing the law and the prophets). Jesus, while praying, is transfigured in light. And then a cloud overshadows them, and the disciples hear the voice of God: "This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!"

Thus, whenever we pray, we enter into the light of Christ. I trust that each of you has dedicated times of prayer during the week, to receive the light of Christ. Or, you may find yourself praying spontaneously during the week, which also brings Christ's light near.

Third, February 1 is the feast day for St. Brigid. In ancient Europe, a Celtic festival, Imbolc, which honored the beginning of the sun's return, was associated with the goddess Brigit, who in Christian times became St. Brigit. I love St. Brigit, as she was associated with sacred flames, as well the hearth and home, and spring's beginning. As healing, creativity, poetry, high intelligence, excellence, and perfection were attributes of the goddess Brigid, these also seem to have been transferred to the celebration since the fourth century of the presentation of Jesus in the temple (Luke 2:21-40), February 2, an ancient Christian holy day called Candlemas.

In working with isolated older people in Manhattan in my first years of ministry, I couldn't wait until Candlemas. Tired of walking the streets in the cold in my daily rounds, on February 2 I would go into any Catholic church (they were all open during the day) and see many white candles burning in honor of Candlemas. Surely, the beginning of warmth and spring!

All these historic associations are worthy of our prayer and attention. They have power to take us into places of light and comfort, even in days that may seem dreary.

Blessings, Pr. Nancy

### Sunday School News

#### Children

-The Children of Sunday School learned about Jesus Baptism, and about His first miracle at the Wedding at Cana, and about the beginning of His teachings that God Loves Everyone.

-**Sunday, February 14** is a Family Breakfast and Valentine Craft at **9:00 a.m.** Please plan to attend with your child. Details at Sunday School.

-**NO Sunday School on Sunday, February 21.**

#### Adults

The class is reading Pope Francis I *Encyclical Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home* as the Bishop has suggested. Anyone can join at any time; you can purchase a book from Pr. Nancy or read the Encyclical on line for free. No class preparation is needed, as we read aloud and discuss each paragraph.

### From the Office

**Attention All!** We're gathering submissions for the next issue of the *Church Mouse* now. Please send in submissions to [church.office@alcvt.org](mailto:church.office@alcvt.org) no later than **3:00 PM, Wednesday, February 10.**

## HARK! IMPORTANT UPCOMING NEWS AND EVENTS

### **BIG Thank You!!!**

Dear Ascension family members,

France and I want to thank all of the people that made the Scandinavian Dinner such a big success. We couldn't have done it without the help and support of so many of you. The food was incredible and it was so nice to hear the laughter and excitement. I want you let you know that I witnessed Pr. Nancy eat a large helping of lutefisk and I understand that there were a couple of new converts to this delightful food. Won't it be a great day when Cheryl Couillard gives it a try and Claire Anderson says "it's not too bad"? The video of our "sing along" is great and I can't wait for you to see it for yourselves. Could this be YouTube material?

Did you take photos or videos of the dinner? If so, would you please send copies to the church office? I would be very grateful if some of the photos we e-mailed to me as well. We're hoping that we'll be about to put some photos in the next issue of the Church Mouse.

At last count we collected more than \$2,400.00 for Lutheran World Relief. That figure is extremely humbling for me and points out why Ascension Lutheran Church is such a wonderful place to worship God, enjoy life and be a blessing to many other people.

Sincerely,

Jake Hansen

### **Save the Date - Care for Creation movie - Merchants of Doubt**

**7 PM - Thursday Feb 18, 2016**

This 90-minute documentary delves into the well-funded campaign to spread doubt about climate change and other important issues. This event is co-sponsored by the Care for Creation Committee, VT Interfaith Power and Light, and the South Burlington Energy Committee.

Watch the trailer and find out more: <http://sonyclassics.com/merchantsofdoubt/>

### **Quilter's Group**

All are welcome to join with the quilters at Ascension in the assembling of mission quilts for Lutheran World Relief. The quilts are tied rather than quilted hence no sewing skills are required. The process is simple and moves along quickly when many hands are involved. The group meets the first and third Thursday of the month 10 a.m. to 12 noon. Next meeting is **Thursday, February 18!**

### **Praise-A-Palooza**

**Saturday, February 6th**

At First Congregational Church of Essex Junction

**5 pm Soup Supper followed by 6 pm Praise-A-Palooza**

Come get your praise on with bands from:

First Congregational Church of Essex Junction, Grace United Methodist Church of Essex, Ascension Lutheran Church of South Burlington, and The Smokey Newfield Project

There will be a free will offering. Hope to see you there!

### **Men's Breakfast**

Calling all Men of Ascension! The next Men's Breakfast is **Saturday, February 20 at 8:30 a.m.** Join us for good food and great conversation!

### **Congregational Meeting**

**Sunday, February 21, 2016, 11:30 a.m. (immediately following service)**

Meeting agenda will consist of voting for new council members, approving the minutes from the December Congregational Meeting, and approving the 2016 budget.

### **Coffee Hour**

The 2016 coffee hour list has been posted. Please sign up!

### **Additional News and Opportunities**

#### **Blanket Drive**

The International Club at Burlington High School is participating in a blanket drive for the Syrian refugees and First Baptist church of Burlington is also participating through the work of our young people!

The official drive will take place from February 4-8 at BHS so we will have a donation bin available here at the church office and on Sunday at service. Anyone in the community can donate new or used fleece blankets! These blankets will be sent to Northern Syria through a New Hampshire based non-profit organization called NuDay Syria.

#### **GREAT NEWS from the ONE Campaign!!**

The House of Representatives passed the bipartisan Electrify Africa Act!

This bill will help sub-Saharan African countries modernize their power infrastructure and increase their access to electricity—saving lives, strengthening education, alleviating extreme poverty, and accelerating growth and development.

The legislation passed the Senate in November and heads now to the White House for President Obama's signature.

We couldn't have done it without you. For the past four years, ONE members have signed petitions, written letters, sent tweets, and made calls in an effort to ask Congress to pass this bill. It wasn't easy. At the end of the last Congress, we had to start all over again after falling just short to pass the bill in the Senate at the end of 2014. But ONE members kept using their voices and this year, we finally got the job done. Hundreds of thousands of our members took an action in the last four years and to all of them we say THANK YOU for using your voice and making a difference.

#### **Snow Sculpture**

Brooke Monte, the son-in-law of Lois and Mark Helland, and father of Ascension's Sunday School student Leanna Monte, was one of four Burlington-based sculptors who won the top prize in the 26<sup>th</sup>-annual International Sculpture Championships in Breckenridge, Colorado. They won for their piece "Rhonda and Her Recycling Robo-Octopus." Print article is on the ALC bulletin board, but follow the link here to view online:

<http://www.sevendaysvt.com/LiveCulture/archives/2016/02/01/team-vermont-wins-international-snow-sculpture-comp>

#### **Film Festival**

On **February 11-13, 2016**, the Vermont International Film Foundation (VTIFF) is presenting a three-day festival of cinema from the Middle East in Contois Auditorium, Burlington City Hall. This specially

curated program brings to Vermont eight films from Israel, Palestine, Jordan, and Saudi Arabia, including the Academy Award-nominated Palestinian film Omar. N.B.: 50% of the films were directed by women. Global Roots was launched by VTIFF four years ago to offer our community opportunities to learn about other cultures that relate to Americans living in Vermont, without the clichés of sensational and superficial media representations.

Two of the filmmakers will be attending the screenings – Leila Sansour for Open Bethlehem and Roger Sherman for In Search of Israeli Cuisine. Every evening around 5:30 or 6pm VTIFF will offer tastings of food from the Middle East with cash bar.

The Festival was made possible with a grant from the Sisters of Mercy Peace Initiative and co-sponsored by the Burlington-Bethlehem-Arad Sister City Program, which is celebrating its 25th anniversary. Mousa Ishaq, long-time member of Ascension, is the chair of the Sister City Program and extends a special invitation to Ascension members and friends to attend. The film Open Bethlehem, to be screened on Thursday, February 11, at 7 P.M., may be of special interest, given our sister congregation relationship with the Christmas Lutheran Church in Bethlehem. The film's director, Leila Sansour, will be at the screening for a follow-up Q and A session. A reception to which all are cordially invited starts at 6 P.M.

Passes for the three-day festival of eight films are available now for \$30 (general), \$20 (VTIFF members), and \$15 (students). Tickets to individual films are also available now and at the door. For more information, visit [www.vtiff.org](http://www.vtiff.org).

### **Tai Chi at Ascension!**

Tai Chi for All Generations, **Wednesdays, 4:30-5:30 p.m.** with Elizabeth Wirls

It's a new year, time to get into a new groove! Please join us!

Classes are ongoing and everyone is welcome to come as you are, whenever you wish. All generations are welcome! Please note that we have decided to offer these classes on a "pay as you can" basis. That way everyone who is interested will be able to join us! For more information, see the attached brochure and feel free to contact Elizabeth in the church office, 862-8866

[CLICK HERE](#) for full brochure.