



# CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

Dear Parish,

The Rector, Wardens & Vestries of Ascension and St. George's would like to thank all who attended the June 9<sup>th</sup> vestry meeting, and all who shared their ideas regarding Sunday morning worship times. There was a good cross-section in attendance - people from both congregations, people who frequent all of the various worship services.

Much of the discussion revolved around 7:30am Sunday worship. We wanted to focus not only on the best way to respond to the absence of Fathers Ball and Beall in our service rotation but also provide a firm foundation, moving forward, for Ascension and St. George's - our communities, now, and those we hope to draw closer to Christ through worship and our common lives.

For starters, the departure of Fathers Ball and Beall makes it difficult to maintain two simultaneous 7:30am services at both churches. One of the most significant factors we considered was the attendance at the two early services: at Ascension, average attendance is approximately seven; while St. George's regularly has between 20 and 25 at that service. These numbers led us to the conclusion that, yes, it is vitally important to continue to offer an early morning Sunday service, and that early morning service will be in Valley Lee.

When the vestries met after the open meeting, they continued the discussion and made the following recommendation to the rector:

- Offer the 7:30am service at St. George's only.
- Move St. George's 9:15am service to 9am
- Move Ascension's 11am service to 10:30am

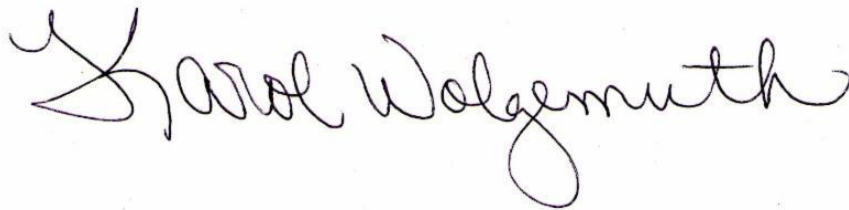
Father Greg accepted the vestries' recommendations and this new schedule will go into effect on Sunday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>. 7:30am & 9am at St. George's, Valley Lee. 10:30am at Ascension, Lexington Park. We will continue to monitor attendance and listen to members' concerns and make modifications if

necessary.

There was also a consensus around two primary goals. First, we are committed to providing excellent worship experiences for those in our communities, and those yet to come into deeper relationship with Christ through worship at Ascension and/or St. George's. Second, this new, simpler Sunday worship schedule is a firm foundation upon which we will create more and more opportunities to grow our churches - both Ascension and St. George's. We believe there is great, untapped potential for significant numerical and spiritual growth at both places - St. George's and the wider 'Herring Creek' community, and Ascension and the wider Lexington Park community. Both vestries are committed to developing and offering worship that is rooted in our Anglican tradition and, at the same time, open and welcoming to our neighborhood families.

During these past 15 months of working and meeting together, we have developed a sense of shared ministry. It is our hope that this new schedule will meet the needs of both parishes while providing opportunities for increased participation and church growth. If you would like to talk further, feel free to reach out directly to Father Greg at [greg@churchoftheascension-patuxent.org](mailto:greg@churchoftheascension-patuxent.org), or (301) 481-5737. I also invite your response by contacting the Parish office at 301-863-8551.

Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karol Wolgemuth". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'K' and a long, sweeping tail on the 'h'.

Karol Wolgemuth  
*Senior Warden*