



The Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 22, 2024 **8:00 a.m.**



Welcome to Church of the Ascension

Church of the Ascension provides opportunities to
Connect with God and one another,
Grow in faith and understanding, and
Serve the Lord, one another, and the world around us.

We are an active community of faith committed to welcoming all
and sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Christ-centered + Spirit-filled + Mission-minded

The Liturgy of the Word of God

✠ *Please stand as you are able.*

✠ Opening Acclamation

Bless the Lord who forgiveth all our sins. **His mercy endureth for ever.**

Collect for Purity

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Lighting of Advent Wreath Candle

The candles of hope, peace and joy are already shining. Today we light the candle of love. Jesus said to them, "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another." *John 13:34*

Let us pray.

Loving God, your mercy and compassion endure forever. Open our hearts, that we may receive your love; and following the example of your Son, spread that love to a love-starved world. Through Jesus Christ, who loved us to the end. Amen.

Kyrie

Lord, have mercy. **Christ, have mercy.** Lord, have mercy.

The Collect

The Lord be with you. **And with thy spirit.** Let us pray.

We beseech thee, Almighty God, to purify our consciences by thy daily visitation, that when thy Son our Lord cometh he may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The First Lesson: Micah 5:2-5a

A Reading from the Book of Micah

You, O Bethlehem of Ephrathah, who are one of the little clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to rule in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has brought forth; then the rest of his kindred shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall live secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth; and he shall be the one of peace.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 80:1-7

- 1 Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock; *
shine forth, you that are enthroned upon the cherubim.
- 2 In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, *
stir up your strength and come to help us.
- 3 Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.
- 4 O LORD God of hosts, *
how long will you be angered
despite the prayers of your people?
- 5 You have fed them with the bread of tears; *
you have given them bowls of tears to drink.
- 6 You have made us the derision of our neighbors, *
and our enemies laugh us to scorn.
- 7 Restore us, O God of hosts; *
show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

The Second Lesson: Hebrews 10:5-10

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews

When Christ came into the world, he said, "Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired, but a body you have prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings you have taken no pleasure. Then I said, 'See, God, I have come to do your will, O God' (in the scroll of the book it is written of me)."

When he said above, "You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings" (these are offered according to the law), then he added, "See, I have come to do your will." He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. And it is by God's will that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

✠The Gospel: Luke 1:39-55

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke. **Glory be to thee, O Lord.** In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth.

When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord."

And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. Surely, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name. His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise be to thee, O Christ.**

The Sermon: Rev. Pierre-Henry Buisson

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified.

He has spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of the People

As we prepare ourselves to joyfully celebrate the mystery of the Incarnation at Christmas, let us present our prayers to God.

Reader: O Lord our God, we pray you to heal all that is broken in the world because of human actions. As we prepare ourselves to joyfully celebrate the mystery of the Incarnation, **hear our prayers.**

O Lord our God, we pray for all our brothers and sisters in humanity; and for all the leaders of the world that they may work for the common good of all your children. As we prepare ourselves to joyfully celebrate the mystery of the Incarnation, **hear our prayers.**

O Lord our God, we pray for your Holy Church scattered around the world; guide, inspire, and strengthen all your children, Sean, our presiding bishop, Carrie, our bishop and all ministers, that together, we may bring hope, peace, joy, and love to the world. As

we prepare ourselves to joyfully celebrate the mystery of the Incarnation, **hear our prayers.**

O Lord our God, look with compassion on all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit, especially Sherry, Jenny, Molly, Bill, Bob, Ernest, Rich, Kadaj, Mary, Rick, Kathy, Kevin and those we name now silently and aloud, that they may feel your loving and healing presence. (*silence*) As we prepare ourselves to joyfully celebrate the mystery of the Incarnation, **hear our prayers.**

O Lord our God, bless those having birthdays and anniversaries this week, especially Beatrice, Mary Lou, Travis, Ellaria, Cheryl, Donald and Janice, Allan+ and Anne+, Henry and Pat. As we prepare ourselves to joyfully celebrate the mystery of the Incarnation, **hear our prayers.**

O Lord our God, we pray for those who rest in your eternal light and peace, and those we name now silently or aloud, (*silence*). As we prepare ourselves to joyfully celebrate the mystery of the Incarnation, **hear our prayers.**

Celebrant: O Lord our God, prepare in us a mansion for your Son, that at Christmas we may be ready to joyfully welcome Emmanuel, God with us, and be equipped to share the angels' good tidings, for unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord, in whose name we pray. **Amen.**

The Confession of Sin

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor.

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against thee in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved thee with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of thy Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in thy will, and walk in thy ways, to the glory of thy Name. Amen.

Celebrant: Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him, have mercy upon you, pardon and deliver you from all your sins, confirm and strengthen you in all goodness, and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Peace: The Peace of the Lord be always with you. **And with thy spirit.**

Birthday and Anniversary Prayer

O God, our times are in thy hands: look with favor, we pray, on thy servants as they begin another year. Grant that they may grow in wisdom and grace. Send thy blessings upon them, that their homes may be a haven of peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Announcements

Ascribe to the Lord the honor due his Name; bring offerings and come into his courts

Psalms 50:14

The Celebration of the Holy Communion

Thank you for your financial support! To make an online offering, please scan the QR code:

✠ **At the Presentation**

All things come of thee, O Lord, **and of thine own have we given thee.**



The Great Thanksgiving: Eucharistic Prayer II

The Lord be with you. **And with thy spirit.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them up unto the Lord.**

Let us give thanks unto our Lord God. **It is meet and right so to do.**

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God; because thou didst send thy beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing. Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and saying,

Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Hosts: Heaven and earth are full of thy Glory.

Glory be to thee, O Lord Most High. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

All glory be to thee, O Lord our God, for that thou didst create heaven and earth, and didst make us in thine own image; and, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to take our nature upon him, and to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption. He made there a full and perfect sacrifice for the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks to thee, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink this, all of you; for this is my Blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me."

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, we thy people do celebrate and make, with these thy holy gifts which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; and looking for his coming again with power and great glory.

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us, and, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, to bless and sanctify these gifts of bread and wine, that they may be unto us the Body and Blood of thy dearly-beloved Son Jesus Christ.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, whereby we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies. Grant, we beseech thee, that all who partake of this Holy Communion may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, and be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction; and also that we and all thy whole Church may be made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord;

By whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. **AMEN.**

The Lord's Prayer

And now, as our Savior Christ hath taught us, we are bold to say:

Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Breaking of the Bread

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, **Have mercy upon us.**

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, **Have mercy upon us.**

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, **Grant us thy peace.**

We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in thy manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the crumbs under thy Table. But thou art the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that we may evermore dwell in him, and he in us. Amen.

The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving. **Amen.**

Communion: *All baptized persons are welcome to receive Holy Communion. When directed by an Usher, please come forward to receive Holy Communion kneeling or standing at the Communion Rail.*

Post Communion Prayer

Let us pray. **Almighty and everliving God, we most heartily thank thee for that thou dost feed us, in these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of thine everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in;**

through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

The Blessing

May the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. Amen.

✠ **The Dismissal:** Let us bless the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Worship Assistants	December 22	December 24	December 29
Usher	David Kreider	Beverly Baker	Mary Lou Berg
Lector	Angela Chmar	Carrie Goff	David Kreider
Acolyte	Bill Sears	Jennie Grabill	Beverly Baker

December Altar Guild: Team 4

Kim Tompkins Charlie Aler Beverly Baker Jenny Beeker Helen Lang

The Altar Flowers are given to the glory of God by Mark and Emelia Howe, in celebration of daughter, Beatrice’s 14th birthday on Christmas Day.

The Bread and Wine

The Bread and Wine are given to the glory of God by Frank and Cheryl Vecera, in celebration of son, Robert’s birthday on December 20, and Cheryl’s birthday on December 28.

The Bread and Wine are given to the glory of God by Tom and Deborah Rio, in thanksgiving for their children and grandchildren.

Attendance – December 15:

8:00 am – 28 10:15 am In-person – 84 YouTube – 7 Facebook – 4 **Total: 123**

Readings for Next Sunday: The First Sunday after Christmas - C

Isaiah 61:10-62:3 Psalm 147 Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7 John 1:1-18

CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICES

We welcome you, your family and friends to celebrate Christmas at one of our Christmas worship services:
DECEMBER 24 AT 4:00 PM (HOLY CROSS HALL) - DECEMBER 24 AT 8:00 PM (STONE CHURCH)
DECEMBER 25 AT 10:15 AM (STONE CHURCH)

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The Reverend Pierre-Henry Buisson, Rector

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