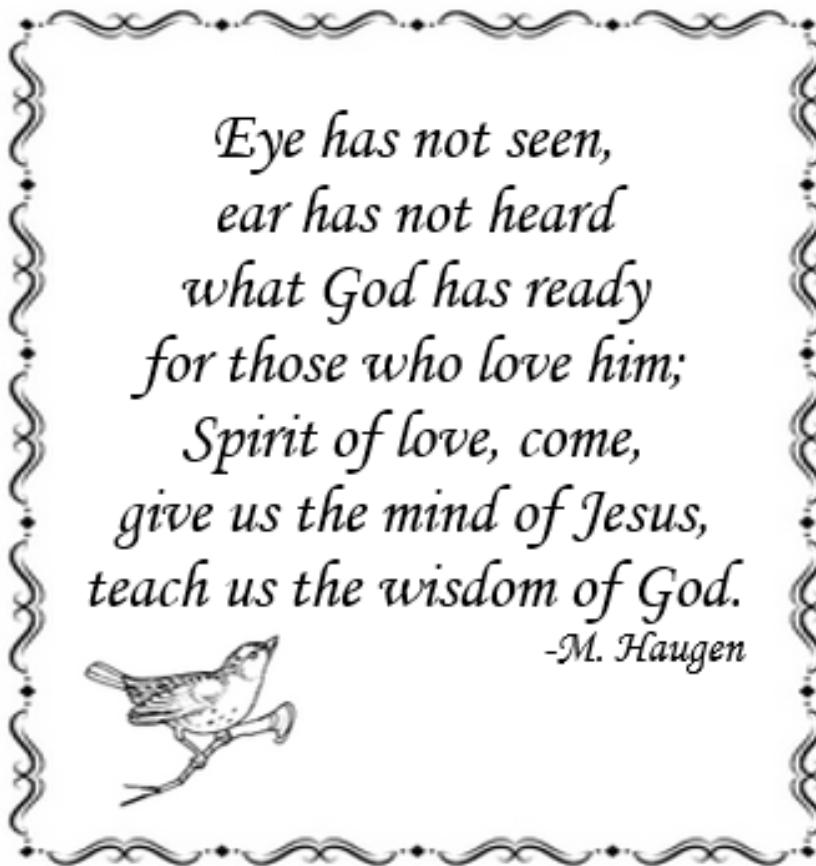


## Fifth Sunday after Epiphany February 8, 2026                    8:00 a.m.



### 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.

### Welcome

#### ♦Opening Acclamation

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**And blessed be his kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

#### 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.**

#### Hymn of Praise

**Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will towards men.**

**We praise thee, we bless thee, we worship thee, we glorify thee,**

**we give thanks to thee for thy great glory,**

**O Lord God, heavenly King, God the Father Almighty.**

**O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, that takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.**

**Thou that takest away the sins of the world, receive our prayer.**

**Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us.**

**For thou only art holy; thou only art the Lord; thou only, O Christ,**

**with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

#### Collect of the Day

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

Set us free, O God, from the bondage of our sins and give us, we beseech thee, the liberty of that abundant life which thou hast manifested to us in thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ; who liveth and reigneth with thee, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

#### **The First Lesson: Isaiah 58:1-10**

A Reading from the Book of Isaiah

Shout out, do not hold back! Lift up your voice like a trumpet! Announce to my people their rebellion, to the house of Jacob their sins. Yet day after day they seek me and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that practiced righteousness and did not forsake the ordinance of their God; they ask of me righteous judgments, they delight to draw near to God.

“Why do we fast, but you do not see? Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?”

Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day, and oppress all your workers.

Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight and to strike with a wicked fist. Such fasting as you do today will not make your voice heard on high. Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself? Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush, and to lie in sackcloth and ashes? Will you call this a fast, a day acceptable to the LORD?

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin? Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am.

If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday.

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

### **Psalm 112:1-9**

1 Hallelujah!

Happy are they who fear the Lord \*  
and have great delight in his commandments!

2 Their descendants will be mighty in the land; \*  
the generation of the upright will be blessed.

3 Wealth and riches will be in their house, \*  
and their righteousness will last for ever.

4 Light shines in the darkness for the upright; \*  
the righteous are merciful and full of compassion.

5 It is good for them to be generous in lending \*  
and to manage their affairs with justice.

6 For they will never be shaken; \*  
the righteous will be kept in everlasting remembrance.

7 They will not be afraid of any evil rumors; \*  
their heart is right;  
they put their trust in the Lord.

8 Their heart is established and will not shrink, \*  
until they see their desire upon their enemies.

9 They have given freely to the poor, \*  
and their righteousness stands fast for ever;  
they will hold up their head with honor.

### **The Second Lesson: 1 Corinthians 2:1-12**

A Reading from the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians

When I came to you, brothers and sisters, I did not come proclaiming the mystery of God to you in lofty words or wisdom. For I decided to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I came to you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling. My speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom,

but with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

Yet among the mature we do speak wisdom, though it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to perish. But we speak God's wisdom, secret and hidden, which God decreed before the ages for our glory. None of the rulers of this age understood this; for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But, as it is written, "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him" — these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. For what human being knows what is truly human except the human spirit that is within? So also no one comprehends what is truly God's except the Spirit of God. Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

#### ⊕**The Gospel: Matthew 5:13-20**

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

**Glory be to thee, O Lord.**

Jesus said, "You are the salt of the earth; but if salt has lost its taste, how can its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything, but is thrown out and trampled under foot. "You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets; I have come not to abolish but to fulfill. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth pass away, not one letter, not one stroke of a letter, will pass from the law until all is accomplished. Therefore, whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments, and teaches others to do the same, will be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." 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

*Celebrant:* Let us pray to God, whose light has dawned in Jesus Christ, and whose kingdom has come near.

*Intercessor:* God of light, who called thy Son to dwell among the people of Galilee: Shine upon thy Church, that we may walk in thy truth, proclaim the good news with courage, and follow Christ with joyful obedience. Lord, in thy mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of unity, whose cross is the power of salvation: Heal the divisions among thy people. Where we are tempted by rivalry, pride, or fear, draw us into one mind and one purpose in Christ. Lord, in thy mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of justice and peace: Guide the leaders of the nations, especially Donald, our President, and the Congress, that they may govern with wisdom, seek peace over conflict, and defend the dignity of every human life. Lord, in thy mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God who calls ordinary people to holy purpose: Bless this parish of Ascension, our families, and our community. Help us to leave behind whatever keeps us from following thee fully, and to serve with generosity, faith, and hope.

Lord, in thy mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of joy and thanksgiving: We give thee thanks for the gift of life, especially for those celebrating birthdays and anniversaries this week – Brenna, Maddox, Dave, Lynn K., Nancy, Jeff, James, Jenny L., Gary and Helen. Grant them growth in wisdom, grace, and love all the days of their lives. Lord, in thy mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God our healer and refuge: Be near to all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit, especially Eddie+, Don, Lianne, Lisa, Jack, Jackie, Dewey, Noah, Karen, Drew, Mary, Warren, Rick, Danny, Darrell, Cathy, Reed, Cheryl, and those we name before thee now. *[pause]*

Lord, in thy mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of eternal life: Receive into thy mercy all who have died. Comfort those who mourn, and grant that all thy saints may rest in the light of thy eternal kingdom.

Lord, in thy mercy, **hear our prayer.**

*Celebrant:* Gracious God, receive these our prayers, spoken and unspoken, and by the light of thy Son lead us in the way of repentance, unity, and faithful service; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

**Confession of Sin** Let us humbly confess our sins unto Almighty God. **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 your 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  
*Psalm 96:8*

**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 in the mystery of the Word made flesh, thou hast caused a new light to shine in our hearts, to give the knowledge of thy glory in the face of thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord. 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 Sending of Lay Eucharistic Visitors**

*Celebrant:* With whom will you share this communion? *Lay Eucharistic Visitor answers.*

In the name of this congregation, I send you forth bearing these holy gifts, that those to whom you go may share with us in the communion of Christ's Body and Blood.

**We who are many are one body, because we all share one bread, one cup. Amen.**

### **The Blessing**

May Christ, the Son of God, be manifest in you, that your lives may be a light for the world; 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:**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God, Alleluia, alleluia!**

Worship Assistants	February 8	February 15
Usher	Don and Janice Hobart	Bill Sears
Lector	Roberta Wilhelm	Barbara Sears
Acolyte	Beverly Baker	Beverly Baker

### **February Altar Guild:**

Ellen Anderson, Dorothy Carpenter, Jennie Grabill, Lisa Jamison, Melissa Leahy

**The Altar Flowers** are given to the glory of God by David and Jill Horn with thanksgiving for blessings received from the love of our Ascension family, our friends and families.

### **Attendance – February 1**

8:00 am – 27    10:15 am In-person – 52    YouTube – 10    Facebook – 9    **Total: 98**

### **Readings for Next Sunday: Last Sunday after Epiphany - A**

Exodus 24:12-18    Psalm 99    2 Peter 1:16-21    Matthew 17:1-9

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Church of the Ascension | 23 North Court Street | Westminster, Maryland 21157

The Reverend Pierre-Henry Buisson, Rector

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