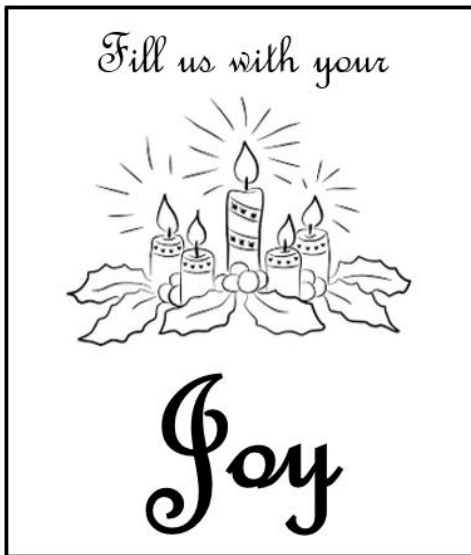


## The Third Sunday of Advent

December 14, 2025 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

Rev. Pierre-Henry Buisson

✠ Opening Acclamation

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

**And blessed be God's Kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**

### Confession of Sins

Hear what our Lord Jesus saith: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets. *Matthew 22:37-40*

Let us humbly confess our sins unto Almighty God.

*A time of silence is kept.*

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.**

The Almighty and merciful Lord grant you absolution and remission of all your sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of his Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

### **Kyrie**

Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy Immortal One, **Have mercy upon us.**

### **Collect of the Day**

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

Stir up thy power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let thy bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be honor and glory, world without end. **Amen.**

### **The Lessons**

#### **The First Lesson: Isaiah 35:1-10**

A Reading from the Book of Isaiah

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the LORD, the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. Say to those who are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God. He will come with vengeance, with terrible recompense. He will come and save you."

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy. For waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp, the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

A highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Holy Way; the unclean shall not travel on it, but it shall be for God's people; no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

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

#### **Psalm 146:4-9**

4 Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help! \*  
whose hope is in the LORD their God;

- 5 Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; \*  
who keeps his promise for ever;
- 6 Who gives justice to those who are oppressed, \*  
and food to those who hunger.
- 7 The LORD sets the prisoners free;  
the LORD opens the eyes of the blind; \*  
the LORD lifts up those who are bowed down;
- 8 The LORD loves the righteous;  
the LORD cares for the stranger; \*  
he sustains the orphan and widow,  
but frustrates the way of the wicked.
- 9 The LORD shall reign for ever, \*  
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations.  
Hallelujah!

### **The Second Lesson: James 5:7-10**

A Reading from the Letter of James

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth, being patient with it until it receives the early and the late rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

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

### **✠The Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11**

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

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

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me."

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.'

"Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

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

✠ 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.

The Prayers of the People

*Celebrant:* As we await the coming of our Lord in glory, let us with humble hearts make our prayers unto Almighty God.

*Intercessor:* We beseech thee for thy holy Catholic Church; for Sean, our Presiding Bishop; for Carrie, our Bishop; and for all bishops, priests, and deacons; that in this holy season they may be strengthened with the hope of thy coming again in glory. **Lord, have mercy.**

We pray thee for the nations of the earth, and for all who bear authority; especially for Donald, our President; Westley, our Governor; and Mona, our Mayor; that they may labor for justice and peace, and that all people may behold the dawning light of thy salvation. **Lord, have mercy.**

We pray thee for this community of Westminster, for our neighborhoods, families, and friends, that our life together may reflect the patience, hope, and expectation of this holy season. **Lord, have mercy.**

We pray thee for all who are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity; for the poor, the lonely, and the oppressed; and especially for those on our parish prayer list: Jenny, Peg, Lianne, Lisa, Jack, Jackie, Dewey, Noah, Eva, Gary, Karen, Drew, Richard, Mary, Christopher, Danny, Darrell, Joseph, Martha, and all others we name before thee silently or aloud [*pause*]. That they may find courage and healing in the promise of him who cometh to make all things new. **Lord, have mercy.**

We give thee thanks for the blessings of this life; for the goodness that surrounds us; and especially for those celebrating birthdays this week: Scott, Janice, Michael, and all whom we remember before thee silently or aloud [*pause*] That their joy may abound and their gratitude increase. **Lord, have mercy.**

We pray thee for those who have departed this life in the hope of the Resurrection, that they may be numbered with the saints in light and share in the glory of thy eternal kingdom. **Lord, have mercy.**

*Celebrant:* O Lord, who comest to open the eyes of the blind and to strengthen the weary: Receive the supplications of thy people; make our fearful hearts strong with joy, and prepare us for the coming of thy Son, 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 your hands: look with favor, we pray, on your servants as they begin another year. Grant that they may grow in wisdom and grace. Send your blessings upon them, that their homes may be a haven of peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### Announcements

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



### Offertory Sentence

As we rejoice in the signs of Christ's coming — the blind seeing, the lame walking, the desert blossoming — let us offer our gifts and our lives to the One who brings good news to the poor and joy to all creation.

## **The Celebration of the Holy Communion**

### ✠ 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, ourselves, 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.**

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.**

### **The 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.**

### **The Communion of the People**

*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, whose Advent gives us cause for rejoicing, grant you the gift of his Holy Joy, and reward you with the promise of unending life; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you and remain with you always.

**Amen.**

### **✠ The Dismissal**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

<b>Worship Assistants</b>	<b>December 14</b>	<b>December 21</b>
Usher	Cheryl Vecera	Don and Janice Hobart
Lector	Roberta Wilhelm	Angela Chmar
Acolyte	Beverly Baker	Beverly Baker

**December Altar Guild -Team 1:** Karen Lance, Jenny Lui, Raymond Lui, Sandy White

**Attendance: December 7**

**8:00 am** - 37    **10:15 am** In-person – 63    YouTube - 6    Facebook – 4    **Total: 110**

**Readings for Next Sunday: The Fourth Sunday of Advent - A**

Isaiah 7:10-16    Psalm 80    Romans 1:1-7    Matthew 1:18-25

**Advent and Christmas at Ascension**

Sat. December 20	10:00 am–12:00 pm	Cookie Walk: Fellowship Hall
Sun. December 21	4:00 pm	Longest Night Service ( <i>Blue Christmas</i> ) UM Church
Wed. December 24	4:00 pm	Christmas Eve Service: Holy Cross Hall
Wed. December 24	8:00 pm	Christmas Eve Service: Stone Church
Thurs. December 25	10:15 am	Holy Eucharist Rite II: Stone Church

