

The Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 21, 2025 **10:15 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

Prelude

✠ Processional Hymn

“Advent Gathering Song”

ADVENT GATHERING SONG

Gently *mp* James J. Chepponis

Come, come Em - man - u - el.

Come, Em - man - u - el.

Copyright © 1995 by GIA Publications, Inc. All rights reserved.

Cantor verses:

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1. God will give us a sign, so come | 4. O the King of glory shall come |
| 2. For a child from the virgin will come | 5. He will save us from sin, so come |
| 3. And his name will be Jesus, so come | 6. For the Son of God will come |

The Opening Acclamation

Blessed are you, holy and living God.

You come to your people and set them free. Amen.

Confession of Sin:

Jesus said, "The first commandment is this: Hear, O Israel: The Lord your God is the only Lord. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these." *Mark 12:29-31*

Let us confess our sins against God and our neighbor. *A time of silence is kept.*

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you 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 your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

Kyrie Eleison

“Kyrie #10”

J. Berthier



Collect of the Day

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.** Let us pray.

Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

The Lessons

The First Lesson: Isaiah 7:10-16

A Reading from the Book of Isaiah

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the Lord your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the Lord to the test. Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."

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

Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18

- 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.

16 Let your hand be upon the man of your right hand, *

the son of man you have made so strong for yourself.

17 And so will we never turn away from you; *

give us life, that we may call upon your Name.

18 Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; *

show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

The Second Lesson: Romans 1:1-7

A Reading from the Letter of Paul to the Romans

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ, To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

✠ Sequence Hymn

“The Angel Gabriel From Heaven Came”

Hymnal #265



1 The an - gel Ga - bri - el from hea - ven came,
2 “For know a bless - ed Mo - ther thou shalt be,
3 Then gen - tle Ma - ry meek - ly bowed her head,
4 Of her, Em - man - u - el, the Christ, was born

his wings as drift - ed snow, his eyes as flame;
all gen - er - a - tions laud and hon - or thee,
“To me be as it pleas - eth God,” she said,
in Beth - le - hem, all on a Christ - mas morn,

“All hail,” said he, “thou low - ly maid - en Ma - ry,
thy Son shall be Em - man - u - el, by seers fore - told,
“my soul shall laud and mag - ni - fy his ho - ly Name.”
and Chris - tian folk through - out the world will ev - er say—



Words: Basque Carol; paraphrased by Sabine Baring-Gould Music: Gabriel's Message, Basque Carol; harm. Edgar Pettman

The Holy Gospel: Matthew 11:2-11

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

Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: “Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.” When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Children's Chapel: *Children of all ages are welcome!*

Sermon

The 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.

The Prayers of the People

Celebrant: As we draw near to the feast of the Nativity, let us offer our prayers to the One who comes to dwell among us in boundless love.

Intercessor: For your holy Catholic Church; for Sean, our Presiding Bishop; for Carrie, our Bishop; and for all who minister in your Name; that in this holy season they may be renewed by the hope of your coming again in glory; let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mercy.

For the nations of the world and for all who hold authority, especially for Donald, our President; Westley, our Governor; and Mona, our Mayor; that they may seek justice and peace, and that all people may recognize the dawning light of your salvation; let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For this community of Westminster, for our families and friends, and for all our neighbors, that our life together may reflect the patience, hope, and expectation of this season; let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For all who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; 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, Deb, Martha, and all whom we now name silently or aloud *[pause.]* That they may find strength and healing in the promise of Christ, who comes to make all things new; let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For the victims and survivors of the recent mass shootings in Australia and at Brown University, for all who suffer from violence throughout the world, and for families and communities overwhelmed by grief and fear; that the light of Christ may shine in the darkness, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For the blessings of this life, and especially for those celebrating birthdays and anniversaries this week: Greg, Nicholas, Beatrice, Don and Janice, and all whom we now remember silently or aloud *[pause.]* That gratitude and joy may abound in their lives; let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

For all who have died in the hope of the Resurrection, that they may share in the joy and glory of Christ's eternal kingdom; let us pray to the Lord. **Lord, have mercy.**

Celebrant: O Lord, who in the fullness of time sent your Son to be born of Mary: Receive the prayers of your people; grant us the peace that casts out all fear, and prepare us to trust in your love and in the promise of Immanuel, God with us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Peace: The Peace of the Lord be always with you. And also with you.

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

Offertory Sentence *To make an online offering, please scan the QR code.*



As we rejoice in the fulfillment of God's promise – the virgin conceiving and the birth of the Savior – let us offer our gifts and our lives to the One who saves his people from their sins and brings the light of love to all creation.

The Celebration of the Holy Communion

Offertory

"People Look East" verses 1, 2 & 4



1. Peo - ple, look east! The time is near of the crown - ing
2. Fur - rows be glad! Though earth is bare, one more seed is
3. Stars, keep your watch! When night is dim, one more light the
4. An - gels, an - nounce with shouts of mirth, Christ who brings new



of the year. Make your house fair as you are a - ble,
plan - ted there. Give up your strength the seed to nou - rish,
bowl to brim, shi - ning be - yond the fros - ty weath - er,
life to earth. Set ev - ery peak and val - ley hum - ming



trim the hearth and set the ta - ble. Peo - ple, look east and
that in course the flow'r may flou - rish. Peo - ple, look east and
bright as sun and moon to - ge - ther. Peo - ple, look east and
with the word the Lord is com - ing! Peo - ple, look east and



sing to - day; Love, the Guest is on the way.
sing to - day; Love, the Rose is on the way.
sing to - day; Love, the Star is on the way.
sing to - day; Love, the Lord is on the way.

Words: Eleanor Farjeon
Music: Traditional French Carol, arr. Eric Wyse, 2012.

✠ Presentation Hymn

"Doxology"

Praise God from whom all bless - ings flow. Praise God all crea - tures

Here - be - low Praise God a - bove ye heav - enly Host. Praise

Fa - ther, Son, and Ho - ly Ghost. Re - joice! Re - joice! Em -

ma - nu - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

The Great Thanksgiving: Eucharistic Prayer A

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

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

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth; because you sent your 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 we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Sanctus

"Holy, Holy, Holy Lord"

Hymnal #S130

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and might, Ho - ly,

ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of power and might. Hea - ven and Bless - ed is

earth are full, full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the

high - est, ho - san - na in the high - est

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in his sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts. Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him.

Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with Mary, Joseph and all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

The Lord's Prayer

And now as our Savior Christ has 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 Bread

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;

Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.

Je - sus, Lamb of God: have mer - cy on us. Je - sus, bear - er
of our sins: have mer - cy on us. Je - sus, Re - dee - mer, Re -
deem - er of the world: give us Your peace, give us Your peace.

Setting: F. Schubert

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 are welcome to receive Holy Communion. When directed by an usher, please come forward **in two lines**. The priest distributes the Bread at the center. If you prefer a blessing, please cross your arms over your chest. To receive the Wine, you may: Drink from the cup held by the chalice bearer standing next to the priest, or Dip your host into the small cup held by the second minister.*

Communion Music

"The King Shall Come"

1. The King shall come when morning dawns
and light triumphant breaks;
When beauty gilds the eastern hills
and life to joy awakes.

2. Not as of old a little child,
to bear and fight and die,
But crowned with glory like the sun
that lights that morning sky.

3. O, brighter than the rising morn
when Christ victorious rose
and left the lonesome place of death
despite the rage of foes.

4. O, brighter than that glorious morn shall dawn
upon our race
The day when Christ in splendor comes,
And we shall see his face.

5. The King shall come when morning dawns
and light and beauty brings.,
Hail! Christ the Lord! Your people pray:
Come quickly, King of kings.

Words: John Brownlie Music: *Morning Song*, melody att. Elkanah Kelsay Dare

✠ Post-Communion Prayer

Let us pray.

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

✠ The Blessing

May Christ, who came to us out of boundless Love for the world, fill you with grace and peace, and prepare your hearts to greet him with joy at his nativity; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

✠ Recessional Hymn "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus"



1. Come, thou long - ex - pec - ted Je - sus, born to set thy peo - ple free;
2. Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king,
from our fears and sins re - lease us, let us find our rest in thee.
born to reign in us for ev - er, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.
Is - rael's strength and con - so - la - tion, hope of all the earth thou art:
By thine own e - ter - nal Spi - rit rule in all our hearts a - lone;
dear de - sire of ev - ery na - tion, joy of ev - ery long - ing heart.
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

CCLI Song # 31999

Charles Wesley | Rowland Hugh Prichard

© Words: Public Domain; Music: Public Domain

For use solely with the SongSelect® Terms of Use. All rights reserved. www.ccli.com

CCLI License # 259427

✠ The Dismissal: Go in peace, to love and serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

Worship Assistants	December 21	December 24 4:00 pm	December 28
Worship Leader	Martin Villanueva	Martin Villanueva	Mary Butler
Musicians	Praise Ensemble	Praise Ensemble	Adult Ensemble
Ushers	<i>2 needed</i>	<i>2 needed</i>	<i>2 needed</i>
Acolyte	Ellen Anderson	Kat Dittrich	<i>1 needed</i>
Lector	Jim Fariss	John Holbert	Jim Fariss
Chalicians	John Holbert, Sandy White, Jim Fariss, Susan Considine	John Holbert, Susan Considine, <i>2 needed</i>	Sandy White, John Holbert, Jim Fariss, <i>1 needed</i>
Worship Slides	Lynn Lyon-Vaiden	Reagan Dunn	Karen Lance
Audio Visual	Allison Lord	Allison Lord	Allison Lord

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

Attendance: December 14

8:00 am - 8 10:15 am In-person - 22 YouTube - 9 Facebook - 9 **Total: 48**

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

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

Christmas at Ascension

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	Christmas Day Service: Stone Church
Sun. December 28	8:00 am	Holy Eucharist Rite I: Stone Church
Sun. December 28	10:15 am	Holy Eucharist Rite II: Holy Cross Hall

