

Ascension Lutheran Church

First Sunday of Advent November 28, 2021

Welcome, All, In the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord!

Advent is about the “coming days.” God’s people have always lived in great expectation, but that expectation finds specific, repeated enunciation in the texts appointed for these four weeks. The ancients anticipated a “righteous Branch to spring up for David.” The Thessalonians awaited “the coming of our Lord Jesus with all the saints.” Jesus’ contemporaries hoped for the time “to stand before the Son of Man.” With them we eagerly await the coming days: another Christmas celebration, a second coming, and the advent of Christ in word and supper.

PRELUDE

Please stand as you are able.

CALL TO WORSHIP

[P] Can one be homesick for something you’ve never known?

**[C] We are homesick for a just world, for peace like rivers,
for the end of suffering.**

[P] Yes, we are homesick—

**[C] for joy that is contagious, for nations that feel like neighbors,
and for hospitals that run empty.**

[P] We are homesick for the world God promises.

[C] We are homesick, but we are on our way.

[P] God is here. God is still creating.

[C] Let us worship Holy God.

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.

***CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

[P] When you’re a kid and you get homesick at a sleepover or a summer camp, you call home and your parents come and get you. Sometimes, that’s what love looks like.

Love bails us out.

In the same way, when we call upon God to confess that we've messed up, or forgotten something, or overlooked the truth, God answers with grace. God answers with love. So let us confess today, knowing that nothing could keep God from loving us.

**[C] Gracious God,
We find ourselves with two options every day—
to stay homesick for the world you had in mind, or to allow cynicism to
win.**

Do we hope against hope, or do we throw in the towel?

Do we insist on a better world, or do we assume it's impossible?

Forgive us for the days when cynicism wins.

**Forgive us for numbing our homesick hurt instead of using it to fuel a better
world.**

Kindle in us a hope that won't let go.

Gratefully we pray, amen.

[P] Family of faith, even when we throw in the towel, even when we give up on hope, God does not give up on us. We are loved. We are claimed. We are invited closer to God's home. So hear and trust this good news:

**[C] There is room for us in God's house, and nothing can separate us from
that love. We are claimed. We are forgiven. We are welcomed home.
Thanks be to God! Amen.**

***HYMN #241 "O Lord, How Shall I Meet You"**

***GREETING**

[P] The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

[C] And also with you.

***KYRIE**

In peace, let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,

and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

Lord, have mer - cy.

For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise,

let us pray to the Lord. Lord, have mer - cy.

Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gra - cious Lord. A - men.

***LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH**

***HYMN #257..... "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" Verse 1**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

[P]: We hope for a world where all are fed.

[A]: We hope for a world with more bridges than walls.

[P]: We hope for a world with wide open doors.

[A]: We hope for a world with contagious laughter.

[P]: We hope for a world where trees grow tall and creeks run clean.

[A]: We hope for a world where all people feel at home—in their bodies, in the church, in their physical homes.

[P]: We hope for that world.

[A]: We long for that world.

[P]: We are homesick for that world.

[A]: So today we light the candle of hope, because hope keeps our hearts alive as we wait.

[P]: May this light be a reminder that the wait is always worth it.

[A]: We are close to home. May we carry hope with us. Amen.

Silence for reflection while the first candle is lit.

***HYMN #257..... "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" Verse 3**

O come, O come, O Lord of might, as to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times you gave the law; in cloud, and majesty, and awe.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

[P] Let us pray.

[C] Stir up your power, Lord Christ, and come. By your merciful protection alert us to the threatening dangers of our sins, and redeem us for your life of justice, for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Please be seated.

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 33: 14-16

[A] A reading from Jeremiah.

¹⁴The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and the house of Judah. ¹⁵In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous Branch to spring up for David; and he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ¹⁶In those days Judah will be saved and Jerusalem will live in safety. And this is the name by which it will be called: "The LORD is our righteousness."

[A] The word of the Lord.

[C] Thanks be to God.

PSALMODY: Psalm 25:1-10

To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul. (Ps. 25:1)

¹To | you, O LORD,
I lift | up my soul.

²My God, I put my trust in you; let me not be | put to shame,
nor let my enemies triumph | over me.

³Let none who look to you be | put to shame;
rather let those be put to shame | who are treacherous.

⁴Show me your | ways, O LORD,
and teach | me your paths.

⁵Lead me in your | truth and teach me,
for you are the God of my salvation; in you have I trusted all | the day
long.

⁶Remember, O LORD, your compassion and love,
for they are from everlasting.

⁷Remember not the sins of my youth and my transgressions;
remember me according to your steadfast love and for the sake of your
goodness, O LORD.

⁸You are gracious and upright, O LORD;
therefore you teach sinners in your way.

⁹You lead the lowly in justice
and teach the lowly your way.

¹⁰All your paths, O LORD, are steadfast love and faithfulness
to those who keep your covenant and your testimonies.

SECOND READING: 1 Thessalonians 3:9-13

[A] A reading from First Thessalonians.

⁹How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel
before our God because of you? ¹⁰Night and day we pray most earnestly that
we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith.

¹¹Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way
to you. ¹²And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one
another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. ¹³And may he so
strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God
and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

[A] The word of the Lord.

[C] Thanks be to God.

Please stand.

***GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the
words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

GOSPEL: Luke 21:25-36

[P] The holy gospel according to Luke, the twenty-first chapter.

[C] Glory to you O Lord.

[Jesus said:] ²⁵“There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. ²⁶People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ²⁷Then they will see ‘the Son of Man coming in a cloud’ with power and great glory. ²⁸Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.”

²⁹Then he told them a parable: “Look at the fig tree and all the trees; ³⁰as soon as they sprout leaves you can see for yourselves and know that summer is already near. ³¹So also, when you see these things taking place, you know that the kingdom of God is near. ³²Truly I tell you, this generation will not pass away until all things have taken place. ³³Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away.

³⁴“Be on guard so that your hearts are not weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of this life, and that day does not catch you unexpectedly, ³⁵like a trap. For it will come upon all who live on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶Be alert at all times, praying that you may have the strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

[P] The gospel of our Lord.

[C] Praise to you O Christ.

***PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

[P] God of the stars and God of our hearts—

our days will pass but your words will last.

The earth might fade but your words will last.

Our memories might blur but your words will last.

The grass will wither but your words will last.

The sky could go dark and your words would last.

So as we listen today, help us to hold onto what will last.

Help us hold onto you.

Gratefully we pray,

[C] Amen.

Please be seated.

SERMON

The Rev. Christina Auch

Please stand.

***HYMN #264**

“Prepare the Royal Highway”

***NICENE CREED**

[P] God has gathered his people into one Church through Christ. Together with sisters and brothers throughout the world, we confess our faith...

**[C] 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,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary,**

and became truly human.
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,
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who 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 INTERCESSION**

[A] In this season of watching and waiting, let us pray for all people and places that yearn for God's presence.

Silence is kept for reflection.

[A] God of presence and peace, strengthen your church around the globe to proclaim the message of your love coming to the world. Open our hearts to recognize your face in all people and in all of creation. Hear us, O God.

[C] Your mercy is great.

[A] God of mighty redwoods and microscopic plants, fields and city parks, the wind and the waves, be a healing balm to our wounded planet. May we nurture what you have lovingly created. Hear us, O God.

[C] Your mercy is great.

[A] God of equity and compassion, bring righteousness and goodness to all peoples of the earth. Give a heart of discernment and integrity to leaders in our communities. Hear us, O God.

[C] Your mercy is great.

[A] God of comfort and care, be present with those who watch and wait. Come to all who await births, deaths, divorces, new unions, new jobs, retirements, healing, and life transitions of every kind.. We pray especially for those we name aloud now or silently in our hearts....

Kathy Backof (Donna Lilly's dear friend), **Martha** Beam (Eleanor Hendrick's friend), **Cody** Bryant (Bob Bryant's grandson), **Kathy** Callahan (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Mike** Callahan (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Chuck** Cook (Fred and Nancy DeBell's cousin), **Edna** Cooper (Bill Bridges' Aunt), **Phil** Costello (Donna Lilly's friend), **Sonya** Cress (Jenny White's friend), **The Davenport Family** (Dave and Priscilla Williams' friends), **Charles and Mary** Degree (Karen Long's friends), **Saher** Degree (Gail Sherman's friend), **Tim** Farmer (Pastor Christina and Jamie's friend), **Ashton** Fields (Carol Berger's friend), **Avan** Fields (Carol Berger's friend), **Carol Ann** Forgas (Bill Bridges' friend), **Mike** Greene (Gail Sherman's friend), **Rev. Carl** Greenawald (DeBell's friends), **Wayne** Hector (Jim Wilson's friend), **Judy** Houser (Jennie and Dave Lambert's friend), **Joe** Hutchinson (William Coyne's friend), **Debbie** Irvin (Bill Bridges' friend), **Patti** Jenkins (Priscilla Williams' friend), **Kay** Johnson (Eleanor Hendrick's cousin), **Steve** Jolly (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Mark** Kent (Majorie Olsen's son), **Rachel** Kidwell (Dave William's niece), **Bob and Mary** Cook Koontz (Dale Guffey's parents), **Jim** Lilly (Dick and Donna Lilly's son), **Matt** Lilly (Dick and Donna Lilly's son), **Roberto** Lopez (William Coyne's friend), **Sonya and Gerald** Lovelace (Bill Bridges' friend), **Brenda** Lowery (Gail Sherman's friend), **Eva** McCombs (Sandra Waldrop's mother), **Janice** McGoven (Eleanor Hendricks' sister), **Sheri Dawn** Mack (Relative of Karen Hubbard), **Ed** Marler (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Gay** Helms Melton (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Mary Bell** Moore (Lacy's neighbor and the Hubbard's and Johnson's granddaughter), **Pat** Mullen (Johanna Gillespie's friend), **Wanda** Mullinax (Edith Kelly's niece), **Teresa** Olsen (Marjorie Olsen's daughter-in-law), **Jeanne** Patterson (Karen Long's cousin), **Bob** Patzer (Carol Berger's brother-in-law), **Linda** Patzer

(Carol Berger's sister), **Gerard** Peruzzi (Carol Berger's brother), **Margaret** Peruzzi (Carol Berger's mother), **Liz and Ron** Dal Poggetto (Judy Bridges' friends), **John** Reid (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Beth** Rhyne (Ladley and Jane Burn's friend), **Sue** Rippy (Donna and Dick Lilly's neighbor), **Fred** Ryan (Fred and Nancy DeBell's cousin in law), **Evan** Sealey (Eleanor Hendrick's friend), **Candace** Siddlow (Courtney Richard's mother), **Floyd** Tate, Jr. (John Lilly's friend), **Jean and Jim** Tesseneer (Bill Bridges friend), **Beth** Thomas (Carol Berger's daughter), **David** Tucker (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **David** Waldrop (Sandra Waldrop's husband), **Edith** Walker (Allen and Lisa Philbeck's friend's mother), **Freda Walker** (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Molly and Darryl** Waterstraat (Karen Hubbard's friends), **Alfie** Welch (Renee Buchanan's brother), **Christopher** Willever (David Williams' grandson), **Mary Ann** Woolley (Sandra Waldrop's aunt).

Members: **Dean** Davis, **Lin** Washburn, **Dot** Paul, **Bob** Bryant, **William** Coyne, **Jim** Wilson, **Bobbie** Johnson, **Gerald** Washburn, **Ann** Sipe, and **Marjorie** Olsen.

In Undergraduate College: **Emma** Auch, **Brooke** Buchanan, **Samantha** Hoffman, **Jacob** Stone, **Catherine** Lilly, **Matthew** Lilly.

[A] Hear us, O God.

[C] Your mercy is great.

[A] God of promises kept and new dreams awakened, shelter your people from destructive storms. We pray for those whose lives have been upended by natural disasters, for the work of Lutheran Disaster Response, Lutheran World Relief, and other relief organizations. Hear us, O God.

[C] Your mercy is great.

[A] God of companionship and community, we give you thanks for the saints who journeyed with us and now abide in you. Even in distress and uncertainty, make us confident that your promises endure forever. Hear us, O God.

[C] Your mercy is great.

[A] God of new life, you come among us in the places we least expect. Receive these prayers and those of our hearts, in the name of Jesus.
[C] Amen.

THE PEACE OF CHRIST (We are not “passing” the peace in any physical way. Online you are invited to share a greeting of peace in the comments.)

[P] The peace of Christ be with you always.
[C] And also with you.

CALL TO OFFERING

[P] Family of faith, it does not take long to see that we are not home yet. There are people who are hungry, oceans that are polluted, churches that are fading, walls that are growing. We are clearly not home yet.

So until we reach that promised day, until we make it home, giving what we can to make a better world matters. When we give our tithes and our offerings we help build God’s home here. So with hopeful hearts, let us give.

*Make a one time or recurring gift using **the website** or **the GivePlus app** on iPhone or Android. You can give using ACH (bank account), Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express.*

*Or **text 844-906-2283** and enter the amount you wish to donate.2. Click the registration link and enter your payment information.3. Receive a verification text as well as an email receipt. For future giving, simply send a text to the same number with the amount you wish to give, and your donation will process automatically.*

*Or **mail your regular tithe or offering** to PO Box 266, Shelby, NC 28151.*

Please stand.

***OFFERTORY HYMN #256** **“Doxology”**

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below;
praise him above, ye heav'nly host;
praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

***OFFERING PRAYER**

[A] Let us pray.

Holy God,

We are homesick. We long for the day that you spoke of when swords will be beaten into plowshares, the lion will lie down with the lamb, and justice will roll like waters. Until that holy day comes, take these gifts and use them to build that world here. We are hopeful.

[C] Amen.

***GREAT THANKSGIVING**

The Lord be with you. And al - so 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.

***PREFACE**

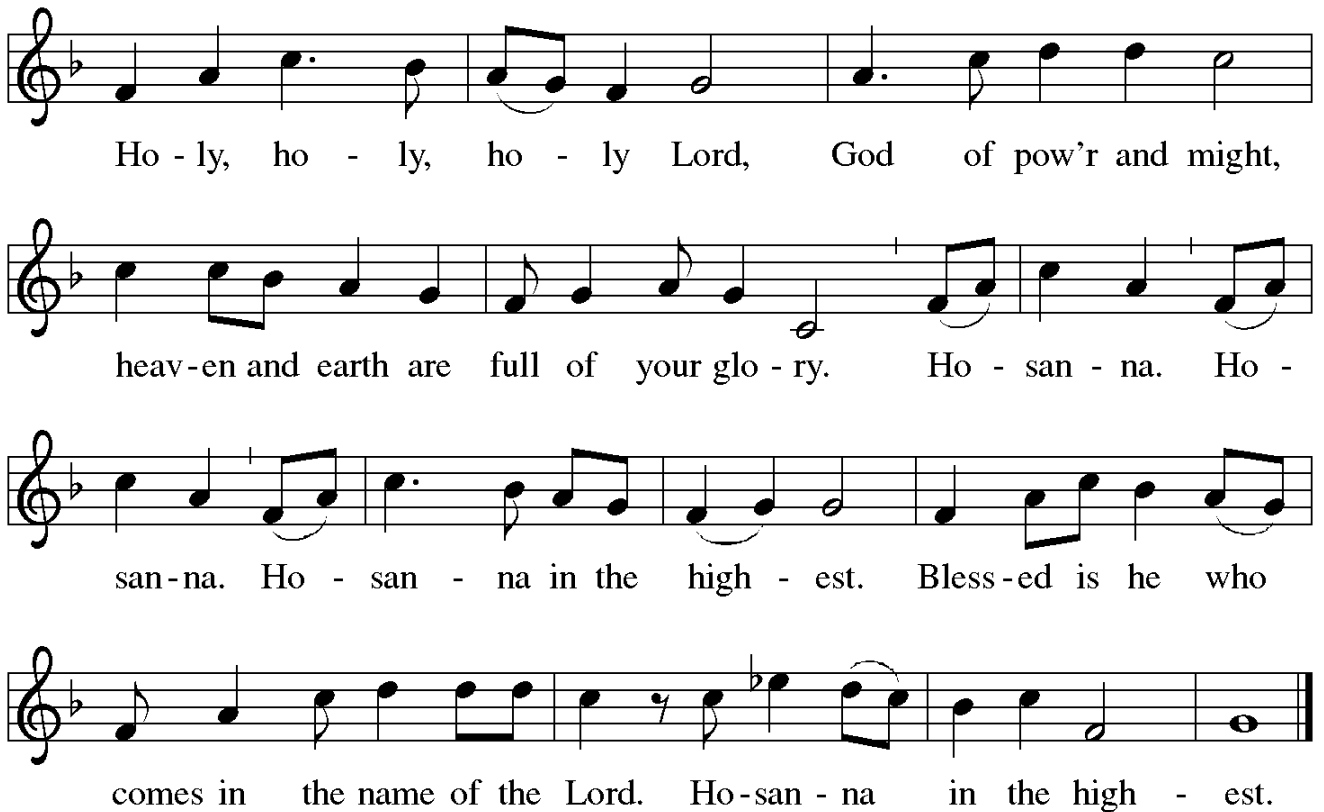
[P] Blessed are you, O God, ruler of the universe!

You draw your people to you
with the promise of salvation.

In your goodness,
every promise you make is fulfilled.

You delivered your people from bondage and exile,
bringing them home and renewing their song.

When your creation was captive to sin,
you sent Christ to restore the whole world.
In your love and by your Spirit,
you have invited us in and welcomed us home
and so we thank you with the faithful of every time and place.



The image shows a musical score for a hymn, consisting of four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff begins with 'Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,'. The second staff continues with 'heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -'. The third staff continues with 'san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who'. The fourth staff concludes with 'comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.'

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na. Ho -
san-na. Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is he who
comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

Gathering God, as grain is collected from the fields,
in Christ, you draw us to yourself;
and as grapes are brought together in one cup,
in this holy meal, you make us one family.

Send your Spirit upon your church
that we may welcome the lost and the lonely,
into the household of Christ,
who at supper with his disciples, took bread, gave thanks,
broke the bread, and gave it to them saying,
“This is my body which is given for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.”

After supper he took the cup
and he gave it to them saying,
“This cup is the new covenant in my blood,
poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

Great is the mystery of faith.

**[C] Christ has died,
Christ is risen,
Christ will come again.**

God of justice,
you have promised to make your home among us:
come quickly to those who wait for you.
Raise up every head that is bent low in sin.
Lift up every heart that is bowed down in shame.
Uphold every soul that is made heavy by oppression.
Inspire every weary throat to sing of the day when justice and mercy
will find their home in you.

Even so, come Lord Jesus.

[C] Amen.

***LORD'S PRAYER**

[P] Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**[C] 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,
forever and ever.
Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

[P] Bread of Life, be Light in our darkness.

[C] Christ is the Light of the world.

Cup of Salvation, be Strength for our journey.

[C] Christ is the Hope of the world.

The gifts of God

[C] for the people of God.

Let us come for all things are now ready.

Please be seated.

DISTRIBUTION

[P] This is the body and blood of Christ, given and shed for you.

[C] Amen.

Please remain seated.

If you are not communing, please receive this blessing for you:

“Jesus loves you and keeps you all the days of your life.”

“LAMB OF GOD”



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the



world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the

POSTLUDE

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Holy Communion When you are worshiping at home, you are encouraged to set up a temporary altar called a tabernacle at home. Find a small table or bench, place on it a nice plate and a cup or goblet. Find a slice or loaf of bread and use either wine or grape juice in the cup. When the time comes for communion, lift the bread and wine with the pastor, giving thanks to God for the gift of communion that offers us forgiveness, community, and new life in Christ.

In person Bible study, led by Pastor Christina, is meeting in the classroom across from the office on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. We are using Augsburg Fortress quarterly materials.

Prayer Concerns: Please call or email the office or text Pastor Christina at 704-472-7783 to update prayer requests. You may leave a voicemail but please provide the spelling of any names, and your relationship to the person being prayed for.

Please continue your tithes and offerings. Make a one time or recurring gift using **the website** or **the Vanco Mobile app** on iPhone or Android. You can give using ACH (bank account), Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express.

Or **text 844-906-2283** and enter the amount you wish to donate. Then click the registration link and enter your payment information. You will receive a verification text as well as an email receipt.

Or **mail your regular tithe or offering** to PO Box 266, Shelby, NC 28151.

Singing at Brookdale Senior Facility A small group will be singing at Brookdale Senior Facility at 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday afternoon, December 1. The program will include familiar Christmas carols and old familiar tunes from the past. *Any Ascension members who enjoy singing are invited as we are trying to grow our ranks.* We will be rehearsing in the Fellowship Hall at 1:00 p.m. Please call Carol Berger 704-472-8518 if you plan to participate.

A LOOK AHEAD

Wednesday, December 1

2:00 p.m. Singing at Brookdale Senior Facility
Rehearsal in ALC Fellowship Hall 1:00p.m.

Thursday, December 2

9:00 p.m. Thursday Night Prayer (Facebook & Zoom)

Sunday, December 5 — Second Sunday of Advent

Hanging of the Greens

9:30 a.m. Bible Study

10:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion
(also on Facebook & Zoom)

Tuesday, December 7

7:00 p.m. Congregation Council Meeting (Zoom)

Thursday, December 9

9:00 p.m. Thursday Night Prayer (Facebook & Zoom)

Sunday, December 12 — Third Sunday of Advent

9:30 a.m. Bible Study

10:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion
(also on Facebook & Zoom)

Thursday, December 16

9:00 p.m. Thursday Night Prayer (Facebook & Zoom)

Sunday, December 19 — Fourth Sunday of Advent

9:30 a.m. Bible Study

10:30 a.m. Worship with Holy Communion
after worship Christmas potluck & fellowship (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, December 21

7:00 p.m. Longest Night Service

Thursday, December 23

9:00 p.m. Thursday Night Prayer (Facebook & Zoom)

Friday, December 24 — 7:00 p.m. Candlelight Worship with Holy Communion

Sunday, December 26 – First Sunday of Christmas

No Bible Study

10:30 a.m. Lessons and Carols

December 27-28 – Church offices are closed

Thursday, December 30

9:00 p.m. Thursday Night Prayer (Facebook & Zoom)

Assisting Today

Presiding Minister: The Rev. Christina Auch, Pastor
Organist: Steve White
Assisting Minister: Sandra Waldrop
Ushers: Max Smolzer and Jake Smolzer

Assisting December 5, 2021 – Hanging of the Greens

Presiding Minister: The Rev. Christina Auch, Pastor
Organist: Steve White
Assisting Minister: Lisa Philbeck
Reader(s) Gail McKillop
Ushers: Ludy Wilkie and Daryl Cook
Soloist: Carol Berger

Ascension Lutheran Church

PO Box 266 Shelby, NC 28151

Ascensionlutheranshelby.com

Facebook.com/ascensionlutheranshelbync

704-487-5679

The Rev. Christina Auch, Pastor 704-472-7783

Debby Chaffin, Secretary

Steve White and Cathy Hubbard, Organists

Rose Cook, Financial Secretary

Ludy Wilkie, Council President 704-487-4269