

# Ascension Lutheran Church

Second Sunday after Christmas ..... **January 3, 2021**

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

Birthdays: William Coyne; Priscilla Williams; Rick Washburn; Dale Guffey; Gail McKillop; Karen Long

*Within the gospel reading's profound words lies the simple message that God is revealed in a human person. Though we may try to understand how the Word existed with God from the beginning of time, the wonder we celebrate at Christmas is that the Word continues to dwell among us. Christ comes among us in the gathered assembly, the scriptures, the waters of new birth, and the bread and the wine. Through these ordinary gifts we receive the fullness of God's grace and truth.*

## **PRELUDE**

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

## **CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God,  
who was in the beginning,  
who makes a dwelling among us,  
who covers us with justice and mercy.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence for reflection.*

God of goodness and lovingkindness,  
**we confess that we have sinned against you  
and our neighbors.**

**We have turned away from your invitation to new life.  
We have turned away from the lowly and downtrodden.  
In your abundant mercy, forgive us our sins,  
those we know and those known only to you,  
for the sake of the one who came to live among us,  
Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.**

Hear the good news of peace and salvation!  
 God forgives us all our sins, not through our own work,  
 but through † Jesus Christ, made known to all people.  
 With all who come to the manger, rejoice in this amazing gift of grace.  
**Amen.**

**HYMN #292** ..... **“Love Has Come”**  
**Verses 1-2**



1 Love has come— a light in the dark - ness! Love shines forth in the  
 2 Love is born! Come, share in the won - der. Love is God now a -  
 3 Love has come and nev - er will leave us! Love is life ev - er -



Beth - le - hem skies. See, all heav - en has come to pro - claim it;  
 sleep in the hay. See the glow in the eyes of his moth - er;  
 last - ing and free. Love is Je - sus with - in and a - mong us.



hear how their song of joy a - ris - es: Love! Love! Born un - to  
 what is the name her heart is say - ing? Love! Love! Love is the  
 Love is the peace our hearts are seek - ing. Love! Love! Love is the



you, a Sav - ior! Love! Love! Glo - ry to God on high.  
 name she whis - pers; Love! Love! Je - sus, Im - man - u - el.  
 gift of Christ - mas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

Text: Ken Bible, b. 1950  
 Music: UN FLAMBEAU, F. Seguin, *Recueil de noëls composés en langue provençale*, 1856  
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## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Let us pray.

Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## **PSALM 147:12-20**

*Worship the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise your God, O Zion. (Ps. 147:12)*

<sup>12</sup>Worship the LORD, O Jerusalem; praise your God, O Zion,

<sup>13</sup>who has strengthened the bars of your gates  
and has blessed your children within you.

<sup>14</sup>God has established peace on your borders  
and satisfies you with the finest wheat.

<sup>15</sup>God sends out a command to the earth, a word that runs very swiftly.

<sup>16</sup>God gives snow like wool, scattering frost like ashes.

<sup>17</sup>God scatters hail like bread crumbs. Who can stand against God's cold?

<sup>18</sup>The LORD sends forth the word and melts them;  
the wind blows, and the waters flow.

<sup>19</sup>God declares the word to Jacob, statutes and judgments to Israel.

<sup>20</sup>The LORD has not done so to any other nation;  
they do not know God's judgments. Hallelujah!

## **GOSPEL: John 1:1-18**

The holy gospel according to John, the first chapter.

**Glory to you O Lord.**

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He

himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

<sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

<sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. <sup>15</sup>(John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") <sup>16</sup>From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. <sup>17</sup>The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup>No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

The gospel of our Lord.  
**Praise to you O Christ.**

**SERMON** ..... The Rev. Christina Auch

**HYMN #487** ..... **"What Feast of Love"**  
Verses 1-2



- 1 What feast of love is of - fered here, what ban-quet come from heav - en?
- 2 What light of truth is of - fered here, what cov - e - nant from heav - en?
- 3 What wine of love is of - fered here, what crim-son drink from heav - en?



What food of ev - er - last - ing life, what gra - cious gift is giv - en?  
What hope of ev - er - last - ing life, what won - drous word is giv - en?  
What stream of ev - er - last - ing life, what pre - cious blood is giv - en?



This, this is Christ the king, the bread come down from heav - en.  
This, this is Christ the king, the sun come down from heav - en.  
This, this is Christ the king, the sweet - est wine of heav - en.



Oh, taste and see and sing! How sweet the man - na giv - en!  
Oh, see and hear and sing! The Word of God is giv - en!  
Oh, taste and see and sing! The Son of God is giv - en!

Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, b. 1939

Music: GREENSLEEVES, English ballad, 16th cent.

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## **NICENE CREED**

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

**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.**

## **INSTALLATION OF 2021 CONGREGATION COUNCIL**

### **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

Joining our voices with the song of the angels, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

*Silence for reflection.*

Redeeming God, you gather together your people from the farthest parts of the earth. Protect your church from stumbling. Let it not be overcome by sorrow, division, or despair. Make us radiant with goodness, that we might live always to the praise of your glory. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You bring together heaven and earth. All creation testifies to your splendor. Hold the ecosystems of this earth in delicate balance, from coastlands to farmlands, forests to wetlands, deserts to rainforests. Show us new ways to live in harmony with the world around us. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You overflow with grace upon grace. Expand the imaginations of those who serve in positions of authority. Open their hearts to the needs of their nations and communities. Protect all those in harm's way and those risking danger for the sake of others. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You bring consolation to those who weep. Embrace those who feel far-off, excluded, or defeated. Accompany those living with chronic and invisible illness. Sustain the weak and weary. Refresh those who labor under the

weight of pain or sickness. We pray especially for those we name aloud or silently in our hearts...

**Grant** Adcock (Bob and Vicki Jones' grandson), **Fran** Auch (Jamie Auch's uncle), **Kathy** Backof (Donna Lilly's friend), **Dan** Birch (Carol Berger's brother-in-law), **Carolyn** Blitz (Bill Bridges' friend), **Christine** Bridges (Libby Stone's aunt), **Cody** Bryant (Bob Bryant's grandson), **Mike** Callahan (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Chris** Carman (Judy Bridges' friend), **Martha** Cash (Bill Bridge's friend), **Edna** Cooper (Bill Bridges Aunt), **The Davenport Family** (Dave and Priscilla Williams friends), **Charles and Mary** Degree (Karen Long's friends), **Saher** Degree (Gail Sherman's friend), **Gloria** Dellinger (Greg Blalock's aunt), **Charles** Duval (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Maurice and Barbara Duval** (Ludy Wilkie's friends), **Tim** Farmer (Pastor Christina and Jamie's friend), **Avan** Fields (Carol Berger's friend), **Ann** Fitzsimmons (Steve and Jenny White's friend), **Mike** Greene (Gail Sherman's friend), **Markye and Carl** Greenwald (DeBell's friends), **Rena** Huffman (Jim Wilson's sister-in-law), **Michael** Huntsinger (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Joe** Hutchinson (William Coyne's friend), **Patti** Jenkins (Priscilla Williams' friend), **Steve** Jolly (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Kirk** Kent (Marjorie Olsen's son), **Mark** Kent (Majorie Olsen's son), **Rachel** Kidwell (Dave William's niece), **Bryan** Legrand (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Jim** Lilly (Dick and Donna Lilly's son), **Sonya and Gerald** Lovelace (Bill Bridges friend), **Brenda** Lowery (Gail Sherman's friend), **Pam** Lucas (Ludy Wilkie's friend), **Eva** McCombs (Sandra Waldrop's mother), **Janice** McGoven (Eleanor Hendricks' sister), **Sheri Dawn** Mack (Relative of Karen Hubbard), **Maribeth** Norris Mies (Carol Berger's cousin), **Wanda** Mullinax (Edith Kelly's niece), **Teresa** Olsen (Marjorie Olsen's daughter-in-law), **Bob** Patzer (Carol Berger's brother-in-law), **Linda** Patzer (Carol Berger's sister), **Margaret** Peruzzi (Carol Berger's mother), **Liz and Ron** Dal Poggetto (Judy Bridges' friends), **Tommy and Paula** Price, (Edith Kelly's nephew and niece), **Bonnie** Reidy (Dave and Jennie Lambert's friend), **Beth** Rhyne (Ladley and Jane Burn's friend), **Lola** Ritchie (Rose Cook's mother), **Shannon** Sellers (Libby Stone's cousin), **Jean** Tesseneer (Bill Bridges friend), **Pam** Unger (Willi and Ray Lacy's friend), **Edith** Walker (Allen and Lisa Philbeck's friend's mother),

**David** Waldrop (Sandra Waldrop's husband), **Molly and Darryl** Waterstraat (Karen Hubbard's friends), **Alfie** Welch (Renee Buchanan's brother), **Lan** Welch (Renee Buchanan's mother), **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, **Ray** Valentine, **Lucinda** Wallen, **Lisa** Upton, and **Jenny** White.

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

**Ministry Partners:** Hospice Cleveland County staff, leaders and those they serve.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You come to us in the beauty of darkness and of light. Bring justice and reconciliation to communities divided by oppressions and misuse of power. Guide us to speak holy words of advocacy and truth. Help us to honor your image in one another. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You turn our mourning into joy. We give thanks for those who have died in faith. With all the saints, give us our inheritance in Christ. In the fullness of time, gather us all together in your mercy. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

God of mercy, come quickly to us with grace upon grace as we lift these and all our prayers to you, in the name of Jesus.

**Amen.**

### **PASSING OF THE PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

*The people may greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace on video or say: "Peace be with you" from wherever you are or type it in the chat or comments.*



## **OFFERING**

*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. Then click the registration link and enter your payment information. You will 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.*

## **OFFERTORY**

## **“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.

## **THANKSGIVING FOR THE WORD**

Let us pray...

Holy God, the Beginning and the Ending, our Hope as we wait,  
we praise you for joining us to your people of old.

We bless you for your prophets who call us to righteousness  
and promise a new earth with peace for all.

For the Word of your covenant, we thank you, O God.

**We thank you, O God.**

We praise you for the coming of Jesus our Lord,  
who lifts up the lowly, heals the suffering world,  
and proclaims your way of mercy and truth.

For your Word who is Christ, we magnify you, O God.

**We magnify you, O God.**

Send your Spirit on all who receive your Word.  
Nurture our faith with your grace,  
accompany us with your might,  
and empower our zeal for your justice and joy.  
For your Word through the church, we praise you, O God.  
**We praise you, O God.**

All praise to you, holy God,  
today, tomorrow, and forever. Amen. **Amen.**

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.  
**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.**

### **SENDING OF HOME COMMUNION**

When our congregation gathered for Holy Communion with all the saints from every time and place, we heard again the story of God's mighty acts and the love shown us in Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. The holy meal of the Lord's supper was shared. Now we share this Word of life, and this bread and cup of blessing, that we may share in these same gifts and be strengthened by the Christian community, even though we gather separately for a time.

Gathered at the Lord's table, our congregation remembered with thanksgiving that "in the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."

This is the supper of our Lord Jesus Christ. This bread and cup, shared in our community of faith, are here given for you.

*Share the bread, saying, "The body of Christ, given for you." And share the wine or grape juice, saying, "The blood of Christ, shed for you."*

Let us pray.

Gracious God, in this meal you have drawn us to your heart, and nourished us at your table with food and drink, the body and blood of Christ. Now send us forth to be your people in the world, and to proclaim your truth this day and evermore, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

### **BLESSING**

Almighty God,  
who sent the Holy Spirit to Mary, proclaimed joy through the angels,  
sent the shepherds with good news, and led the magi by a star,  
bless you this day ✠ through the Word made flesh.

**Amen.**

### **HYMN #408**

### **"Come, Thou Almighty King"**

### **Verses 1-2**



1 Come, thou al - might - y King, help us thy name to sing;  
2 Come, thou in - car - nate Word, mer - ci - ful, might - y Lord;  
3 Come, ho - ly Com - fort - er, thy sa - cred wit - ness bear  
4 To thee, great One in Three, e - ter - nal prais - es be



help us to praise; Fa - ther all - glo - ri - ous, o'er all vic -  
our prayer at - tend. Come and thy peo - ple bless, and give thy  
in this glad hour! Thou who al - might - y art, rule now in  
hence ev - er - more! Thy sov - 'reign maj - es - ty may we in



to - ri - ous, come and reign o - ver us, An - cient of Days.  
word suc - cess, and let thy righ - teous - ness on us de - scend.  
ev - 'ry heart, nev - er from us de - part, Spir - it of pow'r.  
glo - ry see, and to e - ter - ni - ty love and a - dore.

Text: source unknown, c. 1757, alt.

Music: ITALIAN HYMN, Felice de Giardini, 1716–1796

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **POSTLUDE**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Coronavirus Response:** Our sanctuary remains closed, but the fellowship hall is available for small groups (less than 10) with social distancing and masks required. Contact Debby in the church office for more information.

**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 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. Then click the registration link and enter your payment information. You will 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.

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### **Ascension Lutheran Church**

PO Box 266 Shelby, NC 28151

Ascensionlutheranshelby.com

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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**