



Ascension
Lutheran Church



December 31, 2023

Ascension Lutheran Church

Today's Theme: Good News of Great Joy—Peace on Earth

Welcome

God's grace welcomes you, and so do we—the pastor and members of Ascension. Jesus Christ is the only Savior of all people. By his perfect life, innocent death, and triumphant resurrection Jesus won forgiveness for all. God teaches these truths in the Bible—God's complete plan for your salvation and his guidebook for your life. Ascension greets you with a warm welcome. We look forward to seeing you again soon!

For Your Convenience

Restrooms are located near the entrance of the building. If your child becomes restless, that's okay! There is a speaker equipped children's area also near the entrance.

Worship at Ascension

The order of service is printed in this worship folder. Many of the elements in this service have ancient roots in the Christian church. Ascension values your participation in the service. Congregational responses are printed in **bold** and marked with a "C:".

Prayer Before Worship:

Lord Jesus, you promised, "Where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." Be with us as we gather for worship. Answer our prayers. Fulfill our desires according to your perfect wisdom and love. Grant us a greater knowledge of your truth, and the peace of your forgiveness. Amen.

The Sacraments

Baptism - Christians have been baptizing infants and adults for 2000 years. We here at Ascension do as well. You do not need to be a member. If you, or a little one you know, would like to be baptized or learn more about baptism, speak with the pastor at any time. His contact info is on the back page.

Lord's Supper - Two Sundays each month we celebrate the Lord's Supper. Speak with the pastor about details or see the announcement in the back of the worship folder.

Serving in Worship

Pastor John Boeder

Pianist: Bethel Boeder

Cantor: Megan Haag

Choir: Megan Haag, Lori Pike, Dylan and Taylor Guenther, Hans Boeder

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Opening Hymn

Let All Together Praise Our God CW #41



1 Let all to - geth - er praise our God Be - fore his
2 He leaves his heav'n - ly Fa - ther's throne, Is born an
3 He veils in flesh his pow'r di - vine A ser - vant's
4 A won - drous change which he does make: He takes our
5 He serves that I a lord may be— A great ex -



high - est throne; To - day he o - pens heav'n a - gain And
in - fant small, And in a man - ger, poor and lone, Lies
form to take; In want and low - li - ness must die Who
flesh and blood, And he con - ceals for sin - ners' sake His
change in - deed! Could Je - sus' love do more for me To



gives us his own Son, And gives us his own Son.
in a hum - ble stall, Lies in a hum - ble stall.
heav'n and earth did make, Who heav'n and earth did make.
maj - es - ty as God, His maj - es - ty as God.
help me in my need, To help me in my need?

6 For us he opens wide the door
Of paradise today.
The angel guards the gate no more;
To God our thanks we pay,
To God our thanks we pay.

Stand

Opening Words

- P: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you.
- C: **And also with you.**

Confession and Absolution

- P: We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.
- C: **Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.**
- P: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.
- C: **Amen.**
- P: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.

Prayer of the Day

P: Eternal Father, before whom all generations rise and fall, teach us to think earnestly on the brevity of our lives and the immensity of your goodness. Help us to enter the new year trusting in the name of your Son and walking in the way of his peace; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: **Amen.**

Be seated

THE WORD

First Reading

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

¹ There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens:

² a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot, ³ a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, ⁴ a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, ⁵ a time to scatter stones and a time to gather them, a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing, ⁶ a time to search and a time to give up, a time to keep and a time to throw away, ⁷ a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, ⁸ a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace.

P: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Choir

Joy Has Dawned

Second Reading

Hebrews 13:5-8

⁵Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said,

“Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.”

⁶So we say with confidence,

“The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?”

⁷Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. ⁸Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

P: The Word of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Stand

Gospel Acclamation

Luke 2:30-31

C: **Alleluia. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all nations. Alleluia.**

Gospel

Luke 2:22-40

²² When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, “Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord”), ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: “a pair of doves or two young pigeons.”

²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. ²⁶ It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord’s Messiah. ²⁷ Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, ²⁸ Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

²⁹ “Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you may now dismiss your servant in peace. ³⁰ For my eyes have seen your salvation, ³¹ which you have prepared in the sight of all nations: ³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of your people Israel.”

³³ The child’s father and mother marveled at what was said about him. ³⁴ Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: “This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, ³⁵ so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

³⁶ There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷ and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. ³⁸ Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.

³⁹ When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was on him.

P: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: Praise be to you, O Christ!

Be seated

Hymn of the Day

O Jesus Christ, Your Manger Is CW #40



1 O Je - sus Christ, Your man - ger is
2 He whom the sea And wind o - bey
3 Dear Chris - tian friend, On him de - pend;
4 Pon - der a - gain What glo - ry then
5 The world may hold Her wealth and gold;



My par - a - dise where my soul is re -
Comes down to serve the sin - ner in great
Be of good cheer and let no sor - row
The Lord will give you for your earth - ly
But you, my heart, keep Christ as your true

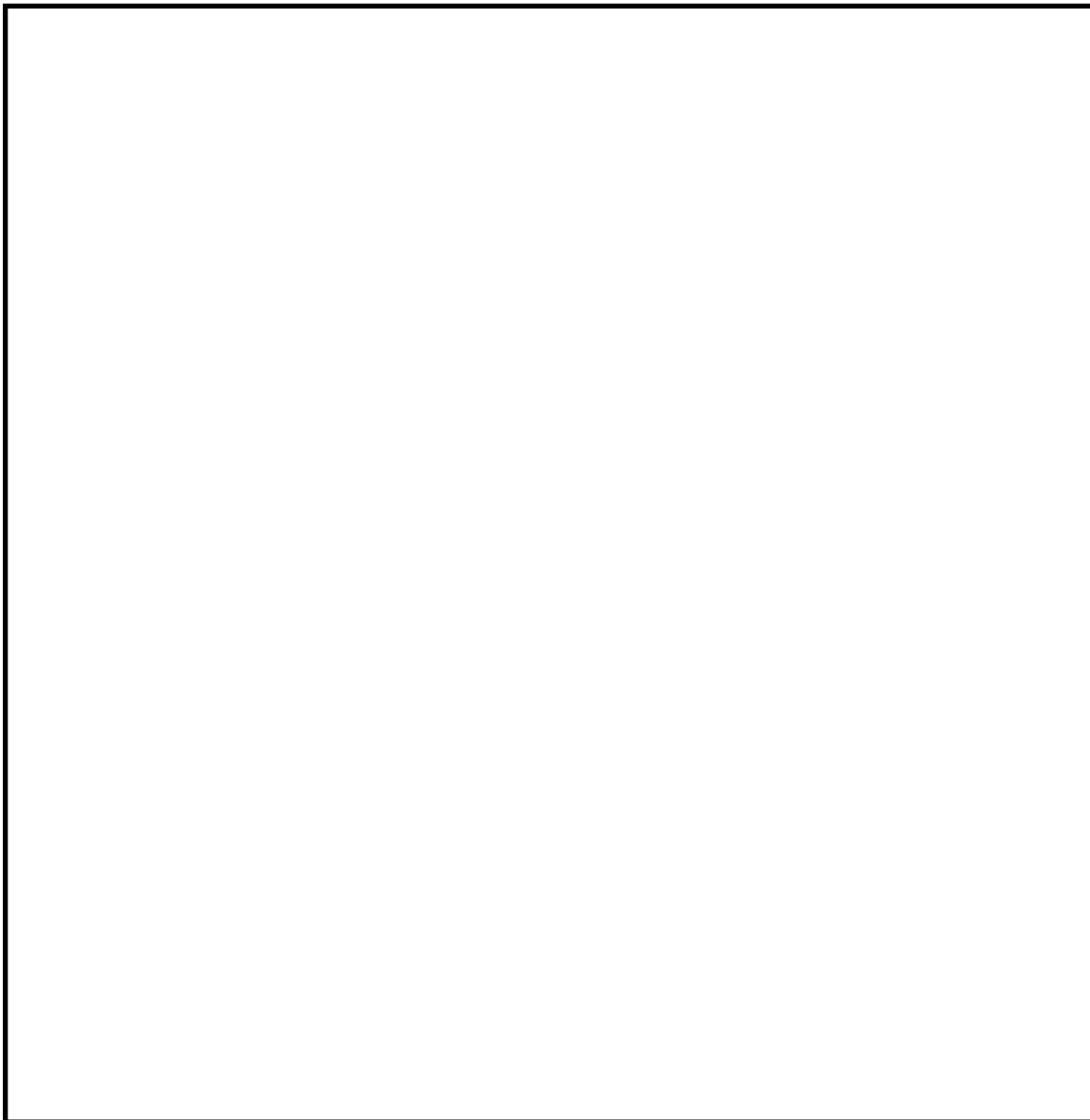


clin - ing. For there, O Lord, We find the Word
meek - ness. Now God's own Son With us is one
move you. For God's own child In mer - cy mild
sad - ness. The an - gel host Can nev - er boast
treas - ure. To him hold fast Un - til at last



Made flesh for us— your grace is bright - ly shin - ing.
And joins us and our chil - dren in our weak - ness.
Joins you to him—how great - ly God must love you!
Of great - er glo - ry, great - er bliss or glad - ness.
A crown is yours and hon - or in full meas - ure.

Sing the Song of a Satisfied Worshiper



Stand

Confession of Faith

The Apostles' Creed

C: I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Be seated

Offering & Connect

Guests, there is no obligation or expectation that you should give to support our ministry at Ascension. This is our members' way of expressing their thanks to God and supporting the work that we do to share the gospel.

We would really appreciate it if you let us know that you are here. Please fill out the yellow "Connect Card" you see on the back of the seat in front of you. Either put it in the offering plate or hand it to the pastor.



Stand

Responsive Prayer for the Close of the Year

P: I will exalt you, my God the King; I will praise your name forever and ever.

C: Every day I will praise you and extol your name.

P: It is fitting, O Lord, in the final hours of this year, to express our gratitude for the countless gifts of grace we have received from you.

C: You have been faithful to your promises and loving toward all you have made.

P: You clothe your creation with beauty; you feed even the birds and tell us that we are much more valuable than they.

C: You know what we need, and you give us all good things.

P: Clothing and food, safety and health, possessions and money, even life itself - all these come to us from your generous hand.

C: We thank you for these blessings, and we ask that you continue to grant them to us.

P: We thank you especially for your Word and Sacraments, which strengthen our faith, shield us from temptation, and equip us for service.

C: Increase our commitments to these precious gifts, so that we may continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Special intercessions may follow

P: Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Silent prayers

P: Almighty and eternal God, you have been gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, and rich in love. As you led your people Israel with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night, so lead us by the light of your Word that we may live our lives to your glory and be prepared to die in your peace.

C: We ask these things in the name of Jesus. In his name we began this year; in his name we bring it to a close. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

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.

Blessing

P: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another. Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

C: Amen.

Be seated

Closing Hymn

Lord, Dismiss Us with Your Blessing CW #329



1 Lord, dis - miss us with your bless - ing; Fill our hearts with
2 Thanks we give and ad - o - ra - tion For the gos - pel's
3 So when - e'er the sig - nal's giv - en Us from earth to



joy and peace. Let us each, your love pos - sess - ing,
joy - ful sound; May the fruits of your sal - va - tion
call a - way, Borne on an - gels' wings to heav - en,



Tri - umph in re - deem - ing grace. Oh, re - fresh us,
In our hearts and lives a - bound! Ev - er faith - ful,
Glad the sum - mons to o - bey, May we ev - er,

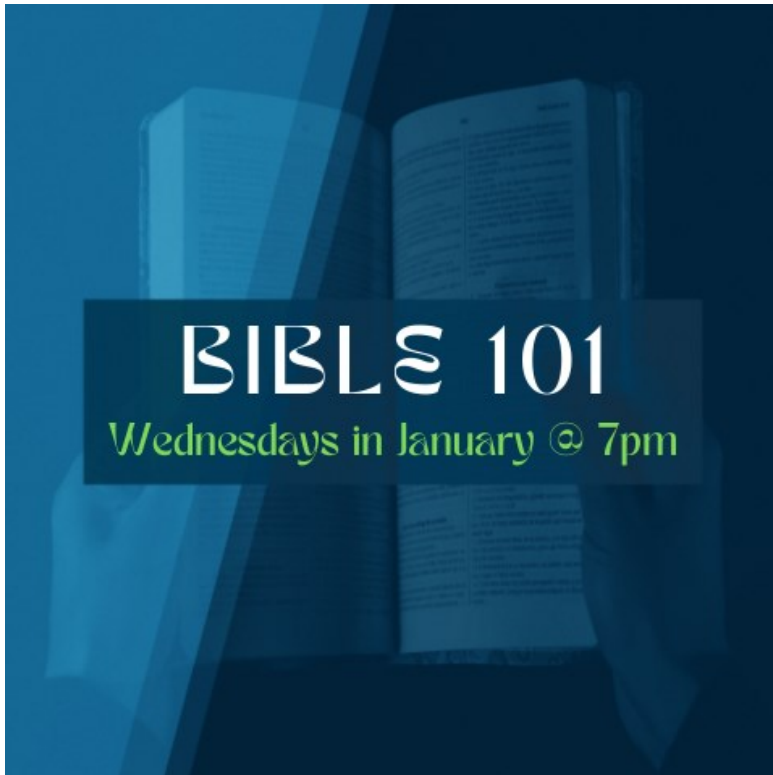


oh, re - fresh us, Trav - 'ling through this wil - der - ness.
ev - er faith - ful To your truth may we be found.
may we ev - er Reign with Christ in end - less day.

Announcements

Bible 101 Class

Start 2024 by spending more time in God's Word. Bible 101 is a great review for lifelong Christians and an introduction to what the Bible teaches for those interested in membership or knowing what the Bible is about. Bible 101 will take place each Wednesday in January at 7 pm in Ascension's Fellowship Hall. Invite a friend, or better yet, bring a friend with you! Talk to Pastor Boeder to get all the details.





*Merry Christmas
& happy new year*



1140 N. Midway Drive
Escondido, CA 92027

760-747-4276

Church email: office@myascension.org

Pastor John Boeder
Email: boederjc@mlc-wels.edu
Cell: 507-404-0624

www.myascension.org

Ascension is a member of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.



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