

# First Sunday of Advent

## Get Ready!

November 30, 2025 • Ascension Lutheran Church • El Paso, Texas

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### As We Gather

The ancient song “Oh Come, Oh Come, Emmanuel” says: “Oh come, thou **Key of David**, come!” Jesus is the Key of David. He is the Son of David who opens the door to heaven. Jesus opens heaven to us because he died for our sins and rose again for us. He has promised that he will come again visibly to take us to be with him.

We wait in hope for that great day! Get ready, because Jesus is coming. We spend so much time getting ready for Christmas by buying gifts and making food – but it’s so much more important to get ready for Christ by repenting and living for him. Oh come, thou Key of David!

### The Season of Advent

The word “Advent” means “coming”. Jesus Christ came once in order to save us. He will come again in glory. Are you ready?

The four Sundays before Christmas are “Sundays of Advent”. It’s a time to get ready for Jesus. It’s a time to repent and to turn to our Savior in faith.

### Prelude

### Words of Welcome

Stand

### Call to Worship (Choir)

1. *Come now, oh Prince of peace. Make us one body.  
Come, oh Lord Jesus, reconcile your people.*
2. *Come now, oh God of love. Make us one body.  
Come, oh Lord Jesus, reconcile your people.*
3. *Come now and set us free, oh God, our Savior.  
Come, oh Lord Jesus, reconcile all nations.*
4. *Come, Hope of unity. Make us one body.  
Come, oh Lord Jesus, reconcile all nations.*

## Sharing God's Peace with One Another

We greet one another in the name of the Lord, saying "Peace be with you" as a sign of our unity and reconciliation in the Holy Spirit. As we are forgiven by God, so we forgive each other. (Matthew 5:22-24; Ephesians 4:1-3)

### Opening Hymn Oh Come, Oh Come, Emmanuel

LSB 357, verses 1 and 5



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, And ran - som  
5 O come, Thou Key of Da - vid, come, And o - pen  
cap - tive Is - ra - el, That mourns in lone - ly  
wide our heav'n - ly home; Make safe the way that  
ex - ile here Un - til the Son of God ap - pear.  
leads on high, And close the path to mis - er - y.  
*Refrain*  
Re - joice! Re - joice! Em - man - u - el  
Shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

Text and tune: Public domain

### Invocation

**P** In the name of the Father and of the  Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**C** **Amen.**

**P** Jesus is the Key of David.

**C** **He is the Son of David who opens the door to heaven.**

**P** Jesus opens the door to heaven because he died for us.

**C** **He died on the cross so that our wrongdoing would be forgiven.**

**P** Jesus opens the door to heaven because he rose from the dead.

**C** **He lives and he promises us that we will live forever with him.**

**P** Jesus has promised that he will come again visibly,

**C** **To take us to be with him in glory.**

**P** We eagerly await that day!

**C** **Oh come, thou Key of David!**

**P** Jesus will come suddenly, when we least expect it.

**C** **Oh come, thou Key of David!**

**P** Let us live in the light, because he is coming soon.

**C** **Oh come, thou Key of David! Amen.**

## Let All Together Praise Our God

Lutheran Service Book 389, stanza 6

6 He is the key and He the door To bless-ed par-a-dise; The an- gel bars the way no more. To God our prais-es rise, To God our prais-es rise.

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Tune: Public domain

## Prayer of Confession

**P** Our Lord Jesus Christ has said that he will come again visibly to judge the earth. John the Baptist tells us: "Prepare the way for the Lord! Make straight paths for him! Repent, for the kingdom of God is near!" (Matthew 3:2-3)

**C** **Almighty God, we confess to you all our sins and wrongdoing. We acknowledge that we have offended you and deserve punishment. However, we trust in you, Lord Jesus, who came into the world to save sinners (1 Timothy 1:15). Because of that, even though we have often failed, we trust in your wonderful promise of forgiveness.**

## Sung Prayer

Lutheran Service Book 361, verse 4

Oh holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray.  
Cast out our sin, and enter in. Be born in us today!  
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell.  
Oh come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!

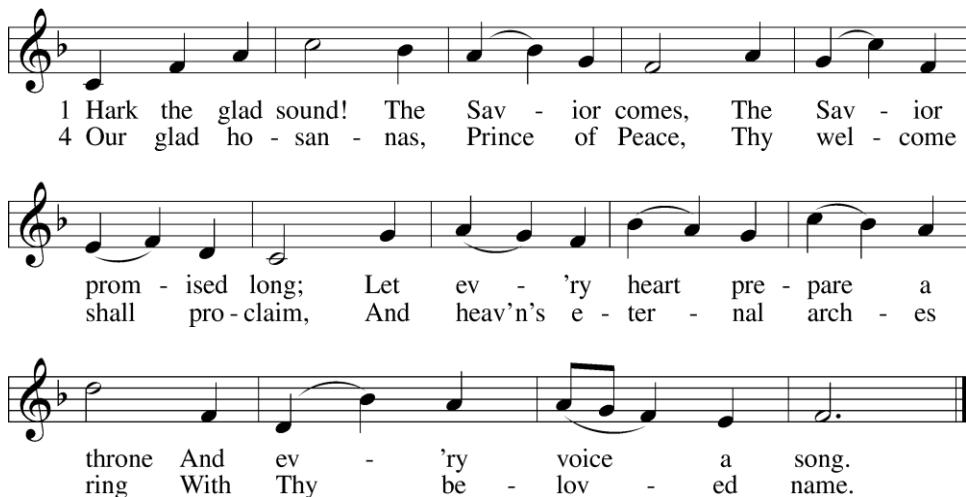
## Words of Forgiveness

**P** Jesus Christ, in his great love, came to our world as a baby in a dirty manger in a poor stable. He came for one reason: to take away the sins of the world. Jesus died for our failures and rose from the dead to assure us that we have new life and will eventually be raised also. God himself wipes away our wrongdoing! Since you trust in Jesus, by his Word I tell you that you are forgiven, in the name of the Father and of the  Son and of the Holy Spirit!

**C** Amen.

## Service of the Word

**Hymn of Praise: Hark the Glad Sound**    Lutheran Service Book 349, verses 1 and 4



1 Hark the glad sound! The Sav - ior comes, The Sav - ior  
4 Our glad ho - san - nas, Prince of Peace, Thy wel - come

prom - ised long; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare a  
shall pro - claim, And heav'n's e - ter - nal arch - es

throne And ev - 'ry voice a song.  
ring With Thy be - lov - ed name.

Text and tune: Public domain

**Hymn: Glory in the Highest**

Libro de Liturgia y Cántico 297

Refrain: Glory in the highest and peace on the earth!  
Glory in the highest and peace on the earth!  
Sing out the glad tidings of our Savior's birth!  
Sing out the glad tidings of our Savior's birth!

1. Jesus seeks no lodging that sets him apart.  
Jesus seeks no lodging that sets him apart.  
He looks for a place now to dwell in your heart.  
He looks for a place now to dwell in your heart.
2. Open up your heart, then, Christ wants to come in.  
Open up your heart, then, Christ wants to come in.

And all of your days will be Christmas again.  
And all of your days will be Christmas again.

## The Advent Wreath

The word "Advent" means "coming". Jesus Christ came once in order to save us. He will come again in glory. Are you ready?

We light the candles on the Advent Wreath – a symbol of hope that Jesus the Light of the World is coming to us! Today we light just one candle: the candle of Hope. For Christ is our Light and our Hope. *The first candle of the Advent Wreath is lit.*

The Advent Wreath, like the colors and candles on the altar, is a symbol. It reminds us that Christ will come again visibly, and that we need to be prepared. The Advent Wreath is in the shape of a circle, because just as a circle has no end, Christ came to give us life without end. The Wreath has four colored candles, one for each Sunday before Christmas. The center candle is called the Christ Candle and is lit on Christmas Day itself. Just as we prepare to celebrate Christmas – Christ's first coming – the Advent candles remind us that we need to prepare for Christ's second coming in glory. We need to admit our failures to do God's will, ask for God's forgiveness, and live for him.

## Advent Wreath Song:

## It's Coming!

Libro de Liturgia y Cántico 282

Refrain: It's coming, it's coming, it's Christmas coming again!  
It's coming, it's coming, it's Christmas coming again!

1. Light a candle for hope, a candle-light for hope!  
Light a candle for hope, a candle-light for hope!  
And with the candle, bring to all the hope of the Lord.  
And with the candle, bring to all the hope of the Lord. (Refrain)

Sit

## Old Testament Reading

## Isaiah 2:1-5

*(The day is coming when the Lord will bring peace and all nations will seek him.)*

The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

<sup>2</sup> It shall come to pass in the latter days  
    that the mountain of the house of the Lord  
shall be established as the highest of the mountains,  
    and shall be lifted up above the hills;  
and all the nations shall flow to it,  
<sup>3</sup> and many peoples shall come, and say:  
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,  
    to the house of the God of Jacob,

that he may teach us his ways  
and that we may walk in his paths.”  
For out of Zion shall go forth the law,<sup>[a]</sup>  
and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.  
<sup>4</sup> He shall judge between the nations,  
and shall decide disputes for many peoples;  
and they shall beat their swords into plowshares,  
and their spears into pruning hooks;  
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,  
neither shall they learn war anymore.

<sup>5</sup> O house of Jacob, come, let us walk  
in the light of the Lord.

**R** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

### New Testament (Epistle) Reading

Romans 13:11-14

*(The night is ending; live in the light of Christ, for the day of salvation is at hand.)*

You know the time, that the hour has come for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed. <sup>12</sup> The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light. <sup>13</sup> Let us walk properly as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and sensuality, not in quarreling and jealousy. <sup>14</sup> But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

**R** This is the Word of the Lord.

**C** Thanks be to God.

Stand

### Alleluia and Verse

Lutheran Service Book 173



C Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

## Reading from the Gospel

Matthew 24:36-51

*(We need to be ready, because when we least expect it, Jesus will return.)*

**P** The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 24<sup>th</sup> chapter.

**C** **Glory to You, O Lord.**

[Jesus said,] "But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.<sup>37</sup> For as were the days of Noah, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.<sup>38</sup> For as in those days before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark,<sup>39</sup> and they were unaware until the flood came and swept them all away, so will be the coming of the Son of Man.<sup>40</sup> Then two men will be in the field; one will be taken and one left.<sup>41</sup> Two women will be grinding at the mill; one will be taken and one left.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, stay awake, for you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.<sup>43</sup> But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what part of the night the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and would not have let his house be broken into.<sup>44</sup> Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

<sup>45</sup> "Who then is the faithful and wise servant, whom his master has set over his household, to give them their food at the proper time?<sup>46</sup> Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.<sup>47</sup> Truly, I say to you, he will set him over all his possessions.<sup>48</sup> But if that wicked servant says to himself, 'My master is delayed,'<sup>49</sup> and begins to beat his fellow servants and eats and drinks with drunkards,<sup>50</sup> the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour he does not know<sup>51</sup> and will cut him in pieces and put him with the hypocrites. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

**P** This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**C** **Praise to You, O Christ.**

## Prayer

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** **And also with you.**

**P** Let us pray together:

**C** **Stir up your power, Lord Jesus, and come. We eagerly await your coming. Protect us with your power and save us from the dangers that threaten us because of our sins. For you are God and Lord, and you open for us the gates of heaven. Amen.**

Sit

**Song while Children Come to the Front: Away in a Manger**

(LOSP 82)

1. Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.  
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
The little Lord Jesus, asleep on the hay.
3. Be near me, Lord Jesus. I ask thee to stay  
Close by me forever. And love me, I pray!  
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,  
And take us to heaven to live with thee there.

**Children's Message****Hymn** Come, Thou Long-expected Jesus

Lutheran Service Book 338



1 Come, Thou long - ex - pect-ed 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 Spir - it Rule in all our hearts a - lone;



Dear de - sire of ev - 'ry na-tion, Joy of ev - 'ry long-ing heart.  
By Thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it Raise us to Thy glo-ri-ous throne.

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**Sermon**

Stand

## Apostles' Creed

**C** I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth. And 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 sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence 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  $\ddagger$  everlasting. Amen.

## Prayers and Petitions

While we wait for Jesus to come in glory, we pray and put before him all our needs, because he has promised to answer us and help us.

**P** Lord God, prepare our hearts for when Jesus comes again. Help us to resist the temptation to get swept up in the Christmas fever for things; instead, help us to show your love in everything we do. Lord, in your mercy,

**C** **Hear our prayer!**

**P** Heavenly Father, provide for our daily needs as you have promised. Give work to those who are unemployed. Give your help to those who are hungry or in need. Help us to follow your example and be generous in helping others. Lord, in your mercy,

**C** **Hear our prayer!**

**P** Jesus, our Savior, help those among us who are sick or hurt or lonely, or sad because they are missing someone who has passed away. Especially we pray for our family and friends who need your help: (*See our prayer list at the back of the bulletin*). Heal our hurts and give us your comfort, so that we can serve you this Christmas with joy. Lord, in your mercy,

**C** **Hear our prayer!**

**P** Holy Spirit, use us to touch the hearts of those who do not yet believe in Jesus. Raise up faithful leaders in the church. Bless our preschool and Sunday school teachers, our elders and council leaders, and everyone who serves. Prepare all of us so that we can share your Word with others. Lord, in your mercy,

**C** **Hear our prayer!**

**P** Lord God, bring peace to our country and to the nations of the world. We particularly pray that you would bring healing to Israel and the Middle East, and that you would bring the Jews back to faith in you, the Messiah. Bless

and protect our leaders here in this country, as well as all who protect and defend our freedom and our well-being. Lord, in your mercy,

**C Hear our prayer!**

**P** We leave all of our concerns in your hands, oh Lord, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ our Savior.

**C Amen.**

## Lord's Prayer

**A 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.**

Sit

## Offering

The Bible says that wise men from the east worshipped Jesus after his birth. They "opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh." (Matthew 2:10, NIV) In the same way, our offerings are part of our worship, part of our response to God's love. What we give is used to support the work of our church and missions throughout the world.

### Offering Options

You can contribute offerings using any of the following methods:

**In-Person donations:** You can place your donation in the offering plate as it is passed during the service.

**On-line Banking donations:** You can utilize the on-line bill pay option at your financial institution to donate to Ascension Lutheran Church, 6520 Loma de Cristo, El Paso, TX 79912.

**Mail donations:** Mail your check to the church office: Ascension Lutheran Church, 6520 Loma de Cristo, El Paso, TX 79912. The mail is checked daily.

**Other Electronic donation option:** You can make a secure contribution from your credit card or bank account at [www.alconnect.faith](http://www.alconnect.faith) or by scanning the QR code below. We use Vanco, a reputable agency which specializes in donations to churches and nonprofit organizations. Your contribution can be set up to be recurring, such as each week or month, or as a one-time donation.

**Donations via an app:** If you prefer using your phone or tablet, you can download the Vanco Mobile app. You can easily set up an account and donate through the app.

*The ministries of Ascension are supported by the love, generosity and sacrificial giving of our members and friends. As a guest, please do not feel obligated in any way to make*

*a contribution. We believe that any gift to the Lord should be uncoerced and from the heart — as a loving response to God's grace.*



### **Choir Anthem during the Offering: Keep Your Lamps Trimmed and Burning**

1. *Keep your lamps trimmed and burning.  
Keep your lamps trimmed and burning.  
Keep your lamps trimmed and burning, for the time is drawing nigh.*

*Refrain: Children, don't grow weary. Children, don't grow weary.  
Children, don't grow weary, for the time is drawing nigh.*

2. *Darker midnight lies before us. Darker midnight lies before us.  
Darker midnight lies before us, for the time is drawing nigh.*
3. *Lo, the morning soon is breaking. Lo, the morning sun is breaking.  
Lo, the morning sun is breaking, for the time is drawing nigh.*
4. *Keep your lamps trimmed and burning.  
Keep your lamps trimmed and burning.  
Keep your lamps trimmed and burning, for the time is drawing nigh.*

### **Offering Prayer of Dedication**

**A** **Oh Lord, you left behind all the glory of heaven to be born in a poor manger, in order to save us. In gratitude, we offer you these gifts. As you dedicated yourself totally to us, so help us dedicate to you all that we are and all that we have. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.**

### **Sung Prayer**

Lutheran Service Book 370, verse 3

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh. Come, peasant, king, to own him!  
The King of kings salvation brings; Let loving hearts enthrone him!  
Raise, raise the song on high. The virgin sings her lullaby!  
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, The babe, the son of Mary!

## Closing Prayer

**P** Let us pray.

**C** **Heavenly Father, go with me now as I leave this place. Help me to show Jesus' love in everything I do and say. Help me to share with others how Jesus came to save us and is coming again in glory. In Jesus' own name. Amen.**

## Benediction (Numbers 6:24-26)

LSB 183

**P** The Lord bless you and keep you.  
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.  
The Lord look upon you with favor and  $\ddagger$  give you peace.

**C** **Amen.**

## Closing Hymn The Advent of Our King

Lutheran Service Book 331



1 The ad - vent of our King Our prayers must now em - ploy,  
2 The ev - er - last - ing Son In - car - nate deigns to be,  
3 O Zi - on's daugh - ter, rise To meet your low - ly King,  
4 As judge, on clouds of light, He soon will come a - gain



And we must hymns of wel-come sing In strains of ho - ly joy.  
Him - self a ser - vant's form puts on To set His ser - vant's free.  
Nor let your faith - less heart de - spise The peace He comes to bring.  
And His true mem - bers all u - nite With Him in heav'n to reign.

5 Before the dawning day Let sin's dark deeds be gone,  
The sinful self be put away, The new self now put on.

$\triangle$ 6 All glory to the Son, Who comes to set us free,  
With Father, Spirit, ever one Through all eternity.

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## Acknowledgments

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## **Worship Leaders**

|                |                    |
|----------------|--------------------|
| Pastor:        | Richard Schlak     |
| Organist:      | Ruth Ann Ostergren |
| Elder:         | Andy Barber        |
| Acolyte:       | Rahel Meraz        |
| Reader:        | Bryan Perdue       |
| Ushers:        | Team 3             |
| Altar Care:    | Coordinated effort |
| Projectionist: | Jacob Canada       |
| Sound/Camera:  | Mike Mielke        |

### **Prayer Ministry**      **Philippians 4:6-7**

Please call the church office @ 915-833-1009 to include a prayer request or update for the bulletin. If you have a prayer request or update for the prayer chain, please e-mail Jan Schlak at [oveja6925@aol.com](mailto:oveja6925@aol.com).

### **Grieving the Loss of Loved Ones:**

We pray for peace, comfort, and hope for all those who are grieving from the loss of loved ones, especially these whose loss is most recent:

For **Sue Overstreet**. Please pray for comfort for the family.

For **Austin, Bryan Perdue's** great nephew. Please pray for especially for Austin's father, **Jeremiah** (Bryan's nephew), Bryan, & all of the family as they grieve.

For **Leah Short, Ross Provencio's**. Please pray for comfort for Ross and the family.

### **Special Prayer Requests:**

Please pray for **the teachers and students of El Paso Leadership Academy** where Maritza Schlak teaches. Many of her coworkers were let go unexpectedly just recently. Also, all the teachers who continue to teach at the school, received pay cuts to their salaries and are now taking on extra teaching duties. Due to the suddenness of the situation, many teachers are going to be in financial distress. In addition, please pray for all the students at the school because the class sizes are larger, making things more difficult for the students, too.

### **Illness and Recovery:**

**Melanie Gallagher**, recovering with a second course of antibiotics after wound became infected from acute appendicitis surgery, (pray that infection is treated by the antibiotics and no more will be needed); **Jaxon Coles**, nephew of Kari Larson Decker, 20 year old had an unexplained seizure, at home in Tampa with his parents, Kim & Dan. Tests are being done by a neurologist to determine the cause (please pray for correct diagnosis &

effective treatment); **Connie Swinney**, had successful surgery on her hand, (please pray for continued recovery with no complications); **Michael Sheridan**, family of Gretchen Schmalz, was diagnosed with a brain tumor (please pray that the doctors have a successful surgery); **Aaron Levenhagen**, Linda Canada's nephew & Cheryl Canada-Karl's cousin, is improving after a surgery for a bowel obstruction, is still experiencing GI pain (please pray for relief from the pain); **Norma Rust**, recovering from hip surgery at White Acres after a fall, & she is diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease (please pray for a good recovery from hip injury, & for strength as she and **Jerry**, and their son, **Doug** move forward with difficult decisions after receiving the diagnosis); **Wayne Woolery**, who is the chairman of the board of directors of the Lutheran Hispanic Missionary Institute, asks to pray for his 12 year old grandson, **Reuben**, who is undergoing chemotherapy for cancer; **Dorothy Lenz**, surgery to remove some lymph nodes showed no malignancy, but she will undergo more tests to be certain the parathyroid is not malignant (please pray for a good outcome); **Elizabeth Hinson**, Mary Lou Provencio's daughter, waiting on the pathology results for evaluation of a nodule on her thyroid (asking for God's mercy & favor that the nodule is benign); pray for **Rachel**, Elizabeth Hinson's daughter, who is hoping to find employment (pray that she finds a nursing job soon); **Gilbert Provencio**, Mary Lou's husband, who has not improved since the shunt placement, (pray for the neurologist treating him to be able to increase the cerebrospinal fluid to improve his walking gait & balance); **Bruce Walker**, father of Daren Walker, receives maintenance care for Parkinson's disease (please pray for strength & comfort for him and his family); **Kelly Alberson**, breast cancer (please pray for strength and comfort); **Cindy & Don Unsworth**, friends of former Ascension members Cathy & Randy Engel; Cindy is in hospice care for lung cancer (please continue to pray for God's will for Cindy and for peace & strength for her husband, Don); **David Kwiatakowski**, friend of Connie Swinney, continues on in receiving different treatments for brain cancer, (please continue to pray for successful treatment); **Sandy Spott**, daughter-in-law of Barb Spott, is being treated by radiation & medication for recurring breast cancer (please pray for successful treatment); **Laurie Sterling**, continues to undergo treatment for colon cancer (please pray for treatment to be successful); **Maisie Warsau**, Marjy Brady's daughter Lauren's friend, at a facility in Atlanta that works with specialized injuries (pray for strength and continued healing for Maisie, & for peace and strength for her family); **Barbara Brock**, sister of Becky Hite, Becky & Gary Hite (former members), Barbara is in the hospital & she is not in good condition (please pray for healing); **Abigail Kailukatis**, friend of Jan Schlak's daughter Elizabeth, is still in a wheelchair, & limited in activities (praise the Lord that she is doing a little better, and please continue to pray for healing); **Martha Neal**, will need further leg surgery to improve blood circulation (pray for healing); **Jennifer Solich**, past Ascension administrative assistant, diagnosed with a brain tumor, (please pray for successful treatment & strength to tolerate the medication); **Kirstin Hervin**, daughter of Mike & Christy Mielke, experiencing a recurrence of lupus affecting her kidneys & is receiving

injections, (please pray that the treatment is effective with no side effects; **Andy Barber** (for pain relief radiating from neck to hands) & for his wife, **Suzette Barber** (pray for her as she copes with OCD & anxiety as a result of her condition); **Marsha**, friend of the Barber's, has a lump in her breast, (please pray for strength); **Gloria Voge** (for successful leg therapy & healing from spine fracture); **Aubrey McDermett**, 15-year-old with MS, in hospital due to stroke (pray for healing); **Dick Seiders**, Ron Seiders' father (continued cancer recovery); **Patty Jones**, Martha Neal's sister in stage 4 breast cancer (pray for strength); **Sean Sweeney**, has a brain tumor (pray for strength); **Mariella Kraus**, has cancer (pray for healing); **Bob Gallagher, Brian Stickney** (pray for continuing health issues that cause them to be homebound); **Linda Seiders** (pray for continuing health issues); **Daniel Mendoza** rapidly losing kidney function (pray for strength).

### **Praise and Thanksgiving:**

**Gretchen Schmalz**, treatment for the bladder cancer was successful & there is no sign of cancer (give praise to the Lord, & she is grateful for the prayers from everyone); **Sharon**, Melanie Gallagher's niece, cancer treatment was successful (give praise to God, & she is grateful for the prayers); **Coby Clark**, cancer is in remission (give thanks that he is doing well); **Barb Spott**, treatment for vertigo is working (give thanks for the relief from the condition); **Mary Spott**, Barb Spott's niece, Keighley Spott's mother, on medication for heart related issues (give thanks & praise that she is doing well); **Ryan Walker**, nephew of Daren Walker, cancer is in remission (give thanks to God that he is doing better).

## **Ascension News and Notes**

**Flowers for today's service are provided by  
the Morales family in celebration of  
Adam & Lindsay's anniversary.**



**BOTH SETS OF FLOWERS ARE \$60.00.**

**NOTE: CONSIDER SHARING THE COST WITH SOMEONE ELSE.  
THEN YOU EACH PAY \$30.00**

**PLEASE PLACE YOUR CHECK IN THE OFFERING PLATE OR  
DROP IT OFF IN THE CHURCH OFFICE.**



**Dec. 03 — Diana Holguin**

**Dec. 03 — Tatum Walker**

**Dec. 04 — Barbara Lewis**

**Dec. 06 — Donna Tuchenhagen**



Help Our  
Organist



Hearing Aid

**HEARING AIDS FOR MUSIC DIRECTOR:** Our music director, Ruth Ann, is struggling with serious hearing difficulties that blur and confuse the organ sounds and the voice of anyone using a microphone (like the pastor during worship). She needs some specialized hearing aids; without them, she will not be able to continue to serve the Lord as organist and choir director. Insurance will cover part of the cost, but there will still be a shortfall of \$2,800.00, which is out of Ruth Ann's reach. Over the next 2 weeks, we will be taking up a freewill offering to help Ruth Ann with these hearing aids. If you would like to help out, you can place an envelope with a check or cash in the offering plate, with the words "Music Director Hearing Aids" written clearly on the outside. Ruth Ann has been a faithful servant of our congregation for many years; now we have an opportunity to support her, so she can continue to serve the Lord in music ministry.



**THE 2026 LUTHERAN WITNESS  
RENEWAL FOR SUBSCRIPTION IS  
HERE. THE RENEWAL AMOUNT IS  
\$20.65 FOR THE YEAR. PLEASE SEND  
IN YOUR CHECK TO THE CHURCH  
OFFICE BY JANUARY 9, 2026.**

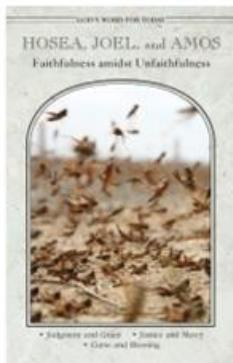


## Holiday Worship Services Ascension Lutheran Church

Sundays and Wednesdays, Thanksgiving through New Years 2025

| SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES                 | MIDWEEK EVENING SERVICES  |
|---|---|
| Sunday, November 23<br>10:30 am Worship | Wednesday, November 26<br>7:00 pm Thanksgiving Eve Worship                    |
| Sunday, November 30<br>10:30 am Worship | Wednesday, December 3<br>6:00 pm Soup Supper<br>7:00 pm Midweek Worship       |
| Sunday, December 7<br>10:30 am Worship  | Wednesday, December 10<br>6:00 pm Soup Supper<br>7:00 pm "Lessons and Carols" |
| Sunday, December 14<br>10:30 am Worship | Wednesday, December 17<br>6:00 pm Soup Supper<br>7:00 pm Midweek Worship      |
| Sunday, December 21<br>10:30 am Worship | Wednesday, December 24<br>5:00 pm Christmas Eve Service                       |
|   | Thursday, December 25<br>10:00 am Christmas Day Service                       |
| Sunday, December 28<br>10:30 am Worship | Wednesday, December 31<br>5:00 pm New Years' Eve Service                      |

## THURSDAY MORNING WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY



will meet on December 4th at 11:30 am at  
Magic Bistro for lunch.

We will resume on January 8th, 2026.

We gather at 9:45 and  
begin the lesson at 10:00 and end at 11:00.  
All women are welcome to join us. If you have  
any questions,  
contact **Gretchen Schmalz (915-584-6143)**  
**or Jan Schlak (915-584-8920).**



### Ornament Exchange:

Please bring a  
wrapped  
ornament to  
exchange.

ALL Women of Ascension are invited to a

***Christmas Brunch & Ornament Exchange***

Saturday, Dec. 13, 2025 | 10 a.m. to Noon

At the home of Maritza Schlak

6317 Franklin Vista Drive | 915-238-3283

*Please bring a plate of your favorite brunch goodies  
(savory or sweet) to share with everyone.*



## **Congregational Meeting**

December 14th, 2025  
Immediately after the service

Voting on the  
Proposed 2026 Budget &  
Proposed Slate of Council and Elders

\*The following copies are available in the church office to  
be printed upon request:

Congregation Agenda (Dec. 14, 2025),  
Prior Congregation Minutes (July 13, 2025),  
Proposed 2026 ALC Budget  
Proposed 2026 Slate of Council & Elders



**NO "LADIES NIGHT OUT"**

**Attention!! All Ladies of Ascension**

There will be **No "Ladies Night Out" in December**  
due to the holidays.  
**It will resume again in January 2026.**

# December Calendar, Monthly Newsletter, and Portals of Prayers (Oct.-Dec. 2025)

## are all available for pick-up in the narthex entrance of the church.

Be sure to pick up your calendar in the narthex.

**December 2025** NEW

| Sunday   | Monday   | Tuesday  | Wednesday  | Thursday   | Friday   | Saturday  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| 7<br>7:00 am Bible Study<br>8:00 am Fellowship<br>8:30 am Worship<br>9:30 am Confirmation<br>10:30 am Advent<br>11:00 am Confirmation  | 8<br>Church Office Closed<br>Students return from Thanksgiving Break<br>6:30 pm Boy Scouts<br>6:30 pm Choir (2)  | 9<br>9:00 am Preschool<br>10:00 am Preschool<br>Students return from Thanksgiving Break<br>6:30 pm Boy Scouts<br>6:30 pm Choir (2) | 10<br>6:00 pm Preschool Chapel (2)<br>6:30 pm Boy Scouts<br>6:30 pm Choir (2)      | 11<br>10:30 am Women Bible Study (with Magie Brattin)<br>6:00 pm Preschool Chapel (2)<br>6:30 pm Boy Scouts<br>6:30 pm Choir (2) | 12<br>Preschool Extended Care 12:00-2:30pm (2)<br>6:00 pm Preschool Chapel (2)     | 13<br>10:30 am Preschool Chapel (2)<br>6:00 pm Preschool Extended Care 12:00-2:30pm (2)<br>6:00 pm Preschool Chapel (2)<br>6:30 am-12:00 pm LKML, Advent<br>Choir, Advent Caroling on<br>Marlene Schatz's 90th<br>12:00 pm Preschool Chapel (2) |
| 14<br>7:00 am Bible Study<br>8:00 am Fellowship<br>8:30 am Worship<br>9:30 am Confirmation<br>10:30 am Advent<br>11:00 am Confirmation | 15<br>Church Office Closed<br>6:30 pm Boy Scouts<br>6:30 pm Choir (2)  | 16<br>Church Office Closed<br>6:30 pm Boy Scouts (PM)<br>6:30 pm Choir (2)   | 17<br>6:00 pm Preschool Chapel (2)<br>6:30 pm Boy Scouts (PM)<br>6:30 pm Choir (2) | 18<br>Last day of Preschool<br>2:00pm - December<br>bulletin due in<br>office.   | 19<br>6:00 pm Preschool Chapel (2)<br>6:30 pm Boy Scouts (PM)<br>6:30 pm Choir (2) | 20<br>10:30 am Preschool Chapel (2)<br>6:00 pm Preschool Chapel (2)<br>6:30 pm Boy Scouts (PM)<br>6:30 pm Choir (2)   |
| 21<br>7:00 am Bible Study<br>8:00 am Fellowship<br>8:30 am Worship<br>9:30 am Confirmation<br>10:30 am Advent<br>11:00 am Confirmation | 22<br>Church Office Closed<br>6:30 pm Boy Scouts (PM)<br>6:30 pm Choir (2)   | 23<br>Church Office Closed<br>6:30 pm Boy Scouts (PM)<br>6:30 pm Choir (2)   | 24<br>6:00 pm Christmas Eve<br>Carol Service/Communion                             | 25<br>Christmas Day  | 26<br>Church Office Closed<br>10:00 am Christmas<br>Worship Service w/Communion    | 27<br>New Year's Day  |
| 28<br>8:00 am Adult Bible Study or<br>9:00 am Preschool Chapel<br>10:30 am Worship<br>11:00 am Confirmation                            | 29<br>Church Office Closed<br>8:00 am Boy Scouts (PM)<br>9:00 am Preschool Chapel (PM)<br>10:00 am Worship<br>11:00 am Confirmation<br>Dec. 29-Jan. 2<br>Pastor's vacation | 30<br>8:00 am Boy Scouts (PM)<br>9:00 am Preschool Chapel (PM)<br>10:00 am Worship<br>11:00 am Confirmation<br>Dec. 29-Jan. 2      | 31<br>8:00 am New Year's Day<br>Worship Service w/Communion                        | Jan. 1<br>8:00 am New Year's Day<br>Dinner (at Grace<br>Lutheran Church Land & Castle)   | Jan. 2<br>Church Office Closed   | Jan. 3  |

**December Birthdays**

Shana Halgren 12/03  
Tatum Walker 12/03  
Barbara Lewis 12/04  
Doris Tschellenzen 12/06  
Tina Goss 12/07  
Bradley Vogt 12/17  
Jacobs Canada 12/23  
Michael Francisco 12/28  
Gabiella Karl 12/29  
I graduate from college I am thankful  
and looking forward  
Profile 139 line

**December Anniversaries**

David & Jenkins Peep 12/03  
Daniel & Gloria Voge 12/06  
Tim & Diana Halgren 12/08  
Steve & Linda Goss 12/08  
Pence & Taylor Martind 12/11  
and many more... see inside  
page and look for the green  
stars to see.

**Location**  
(FH) - Fellowship Hall  
(L) - Library  
(S) - Sanctuary  
(PO) - Pastor's Office

**Connections**  
Newsletter of Ascension Lutheran Church • El Paso, Texas • November 2025

**"Sharing God's Love By Connecting People To Christ"**

**Ascension Lutheran Church Newsletter**  
November 2025

**Pastor's Desk**

**Count Your Blessings**

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say this... Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men... (Psalm 107:1, 2, 8 NIV)

Years ago, at Thanksgiving, Ascension used to pass out printed sheets with spaces to write down plenty of things we are thankful for. Each page had maybe 30 or so blank spaces to be filled in. When my family finished Thanksgiving, we would mail the sheets back to the church. I don't know if the first time this happened, I was so thrilled. I looked at that sheet with all the enthusiasm of a grade school kid having to write an essay about what they did over summer vacation. Didn't we have enough forms to fill out in life? Why ruin Thanksgiving with another one?

I started writing, thinking that I would have to really stretch to be able to find enough things to be thankful for to fill in all the spaces. But it wasn't at all like I thought it would be. I started with family. I wrote that I was thankful for my wife, for my son, for my two daughters, for my mother, for my mother-in-law, and each of my extended family members. In fact, I wrote that I was thankful for my best friend. I could have filled in all of my time just with family. Then I started writing about the physical blessings that God had given me: clothes and shoes, food on the table, a roof over my head, a job, a place to live, a car, a place to go on vacation, and so on. Again, I had to stop because I could have used up another two or three just with those things. I was so thankful for all the things I had, but I had to stop because I could have used up another two or three just with those things with which God had blessed me. Then there were friends and co-workers and brothers and sisters at church... better just to write the general category of friends and family. I could have written about our church, our pastor, our room, and what about health and eyesight and hearing and being able to walk and talk and think clearly and taste and smell and hike in the desert... before I sat down again, and then there were spiritual blessings: God's Word, the Word of Christ, the Word of the Bible, the Word of the Word, the Word, is with me when I pray, encourages me, loves me no matter what, and so on. Then what about the country in which I live, the freedoms I enjoy, the people who sacrifice to serve my community...

8320 Loma de Orozco Drive  
El Paso, TX 79927-3701  
(915) 533-1029  
(915) 533-1030  
Fax: (915) 533-1042  
E-mail: [ascension@elptx.org](mailto:ascension@elptx.org)

**NOW AVAILABLE**  
PICK UP YOUR FREE COPY  
TODAY IN THE NARTHEX.

**Portals of Prayer**

**PERSONAL AND FAMILY DEVOTIONS**  
OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2025

**NEW**

Be refreshed daily in God's living Word!



## **Sunday Morning Snacks Sign Up**

**December**

7th

14th

21st

**OPEN**

28th: There is **NO** Bible

Study/Sunday School

Sign-up  
sheet on  
the kitchen  
wall next to  
counter

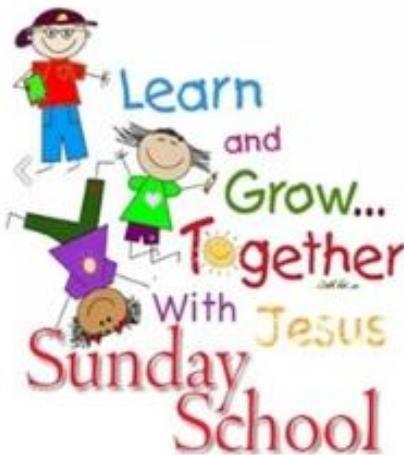
**December 7th, 14th, & 21st are open.**

**Thank you!**

**For I was hungry and you gave me food,  
I was thirsty and you gave me drink...**

**Matthew 25: 35**

**God's blessings as we serve each other!**



Sunday School: God calls us to encourage each other in studying His Word and putting it into practice. A great way to do this is to come and join us for Sunday School and Bible Study right before church on Sundays! We meet from 9:00-10:00 am.

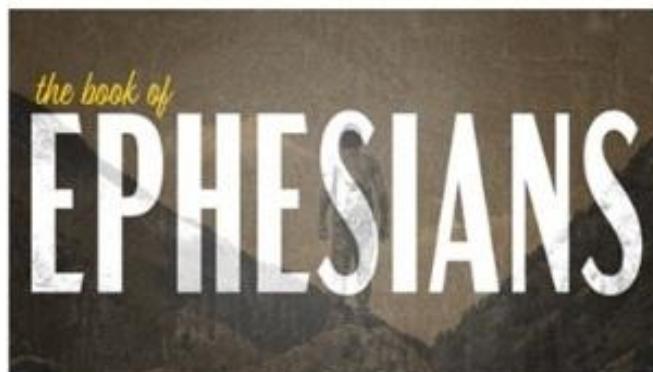
**Kids meet in the Preschool Library**

**Youth meet in the Church Library**

**Adults meet in the Fellowship Hall**

## **Adult Bible Study**

**9 to 10 am in the Fellowship Hall**



## This Week @ Ascension

### **Sunday (November 30)**

|          |                                   |
|----------|-----------------------------------|
| 9:00 AM  | Adult Bible Study & Sunday School |
| 10:00 AM | Fellowship                        |
| 10:30 AM | Worship                           |
| 11:45 AM | Confirmation Class                |



HAPPENING THIS WEEK

### **Monday (December 1)**

Church Office Closed

Students return from Thanksgiving Break

### **Tuesday (December 2)**

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| 9:00 AM | Winkel Pastor's Meeting at Ascension Lutheran Church (FH) |
| 6:30 PM | Boy Scouts  |
| 6:30 PM | Choir Practice (S)  |

### **Wednesday (December 3)**

|          |                         |
|----------|-------------------------|
| 9:00 AM  | Preschool Chapel (S)    |
| 11:00 AM | Sit & Sew (FH)          |
| 6:00 PM  | Soup Supper (FH)        |
| 7:00 PM  | Midweek Worship Service |

### **Thursday (December 4)**

|          |   |
|----------|---|
| 11:30 AM | Thursday Morning Bible Study Group (Lunch at Magic Bistro)<br>(Let Gretchen Schmalz know if you will be attending in<br>order to have the correct # of people for reservation.) |
|----------|---|

### **Friday (December 5)**

12:00-2:30 PM Preschool Extended Care

### **Saturday (December 6)**