

Epiphany Sunday

January 4, 2024 • Ascension Lutheran Church • El Paso, Texas

As We Gather

Some time after the birth of Jesus, some wise men from the east came to worship him. Even as a child, the light of Jesus shone on people from different countries. The word "Epiphany" means the "revealing" of the light of Jesus. Today we celebrate the fact that Jesus, the light of the world, has come to save people of every race and nation.



Prelude

"How Brightly Shines the Morning Star" (Dietrich Buxtehude)

Stand

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: Songs of Thankfulness and Praise Lutheran Service Book 394, 1 and 5



1 Songs of thank - ful - ness and praise, Je - sus, Lord, to Thee we raise,
5 Grant us grace to see Thee, Lord, Pres - ent in Thy ho - ly Word—



Man - i - fest - ed by the star To the sa - ges from a - far,
Grace to im - i - tate Thee now And be pure, as pure art Thou;



Branch of roy - al Da - vid's stem In Thy birth at Beth - le - hem:
That we might be - come like Thee At Thy great e - piph - a - ny



An - thems be to Thee ad - dressed, God in man made man - i - fest.
And may praise Thee, ev - er blest, God in man made man - i - fest.

Text and tune: Public domain

Invocation

- P** In the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

Prayer of Confession

- P** Heavenly Father, we live in a dark world. All around us we see selfishness, corruption, evil, sickness, strife, and problems. Other people have hurt us with their words and actions. We also have sinned in many ways. We have not always obeyed you nor have we loved others as you wish. Forgive us, Lord.
- C** **Thank you, Father, for sending Jesus Christ, the light, to our dark world. In the name of Jesus, cleanse me and forgive me. Take away my dark thoughts and feelings, my harsh words, and the things I have done that were not right. Take away everything that is bad in me and help me to live in the light! Amen.**

Words of Forgiveness

- P** Jesus Christ is the light that drives out the darkness! He came to save us, to forgive us, and to give us a new life. The Bible says, "God is light... If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and **the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.**" (1 John 1:5 and 7) Because we trust in Jesus as our Savior, I can tell you with certainty from the Word of God that our sins and wrongdoing are forgiven, in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

Service of the Word

Introit Isaiah 60:1 and 3, Matthew 2:2, John 8:12, 1:4; Luke 2:32, 2 Cor. 4:6

- P** Arise, shine, for your light has come.
C **And the glory of the Lord rises upon you.**
P Nations will come to your light,
C **And kings to the brightness of your dawn.**
P The wise men said, "We saw his star in the east,
C **And have come to worship him."**
P Jesus said, "I am the light of the world."
C **The light shines in the darkness.**
P A light for revelation to the Gentiles,
C **And for glory to your people Israel.**

- P** God made his light shine in our hearts,
C To give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.
A Glory be to the Father and to the ✠ Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

Song of Praise: This is the Feast

Lutheran Service Book 171



A This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia.



C Wor - thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,



whose blood set us free to be peo-ple of God.



Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and strength and



hon - or and bless-ing and glo - ry are His.



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al - le -



lu - ia. Sing with all the peo - ple of

God, and join in the hymn of all cre - a - tion:

Bless - ing and hon - or and glo - ry and might be to

God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

This is the feast of vic - to - ry for our God,

for the Lamb who was slain has be - gun His reign.

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Prayer for Epiphany

- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** **And also with you.**
- P** Let us pray.
- C** **Lord God, you revealed your light to the wise men through a special star. Now, through your Word, make your light shine in our hearts. We want to see Jesus, our Savior, more clearly. In this name of Jesus we pray. Amen.**

Sit

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 60:1-6

(The nations will come to the light of the Lord.)

"Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you. ² See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the LORD rises upon you and his glory appears over you.

³ Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. ⁴ "Lift up your eyes and look about you: All assemble and come to you; your sons come from afar, and your daughters are carried on the hip. ⁵ Then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy; the wealth on the seas will be brought to you, to you the riches of the nations will come. ⁶ Herds of camels will cover your land, young camels of Midian and Ephah. And all from Sheba will come, bearing gold and incense and proclaiming the praise of the LORD. (NIV)

R This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

New Testament Reading (Epistle)

Ephesians 3:1-12

(The mystery that has now been revealed is that all peoples can be saved through Jesus Christ.)

For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—
² Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you, ³ that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. ⁴ In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. ⁶ This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus. ⁷ I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power.

⁸ Although I am less than the least of all the Lord's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ, ⁹ and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. ¹⁰ His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, ¹¹ according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. ¹² In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence. (NIV)

R This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

Alleluia

Lutheran Service Book 173



P The Holy Gospel according to Matthew, chapter 2.

C Glory be to Thee, O Lord.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 2:1-12

(Wise men from the east came to the light of Jesus.)

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."

³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

⁶ "But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel."

⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

⁹ After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route. (NIV)

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise be to Thee, O Christ.**

Song while Children Come to the Front:

This Little Gospel Light of Mine

This little gospel light of mine, I'm going to let it shine!
This little gospel light of mine, I'm going to let it shine!
This little gospel light of mine, I'm going to let it shine!
Let it shine all the time, let it shine!

Children's Message

Hymn: Shine, Jesus, Shine

Make a Joyful Sound (White Booklet) 48

1. Lord, the light of your love is shining,
In the midst of the darkness shining.
Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon us.
Set us free by the truth you now bring us.
Shine on me, shine on me!

Refrain: Shine, Jesus, shine! Fill this land with the Father's glory!
Blaze, Spirit, blaze! Set our hearts on fire!
Flow, river, flow! Flood the nations with grace and mercy!
Send forth your Word, Lord, and let there be light!

2. Lord, I come to your awesome presence,
From the shadows into your radiance.
By the blood I may enter your brightness.
Search me, try me, consume all my darkness.
Shine on me, shine on me! (Refrain)
3. As we gaze on your kingly brightness,
So our faces display your likeness,
Ever changing from glory to glory.
Mirrored here, may our lives tell your story.
Shine on me, shine on me! (Refrain)

Sermon: "The Secret"

Stand

Nicene Creed (Public declaration of our faith)

Lutheran Service Book 174

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life ✝ of the world to come. Amen.

Prayer of the Church

P Heavenly Father, as you have promised, provide what we and our families need each day. Help those among us who are unemployed or who do not have food or other necessities. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

P Lord Jesus, shine your light upon those among us who walk in the shadows of sickness, loneliness, hurt or grief. Heal us and help us. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

P Holy Spirit, help us to reflect the light of Jesus to all the people around us. Help us to show Jesus' love to everyone and to tell about Jesus' love at every opportunity. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

P Lord God, let our church and school – and every church and church school – be bright with your light. Guide our pastors and leaders and help us to love each other as you have loved us. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

P Heavenly King, shine the light of your peace in our country and around the world. Guide our leaders and protect everyone who serves and defends our nation. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

P Christ our Savior, let your love shine in our families and in our hearts. Help us to forgive each other and live together in peace. Lord, in your mercy,

C Hear our prayer.

P Lord, we know that no darkness can stand before your light, and so we put all of our needs in your hands, trusting that you will help us at the right time and in the right way. In Jesus' name.

C Amen.

Sit

Offering

The Bible says that the wise men from the east worshipped Jesus and "opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh." (Matthew 2:10, NIV). 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 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.



Special Music during the Offering: "He Shall Feed His Flock – G. F. Handel
Soloist: Evelyn Karl (Soprano)

Stand

Offering Prayer of Dedication

A Oh Lord, as the wise men from the East gave you gifts from their treasures, we too give you a part of the material things that you have blessed us with. Accept and bless these offerings, Lord. Let them be used so that your light may shine among all nations. In your own name we pray. Amen.

Offertory (Song of Dedication)

Lutheran Service Book 370 v. 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!

✠ Service of the Sacrament ✠

Invitation and Preparation for Communion

Today we celebrate the Sacrament of Holy Communion, one of the precious gifts that God gives to His people. In Communion, God wants to assure us that we have been forgiven through faith in Jesus who gave his body and blood for us on the cross.

To prepare for Communion, we follow what 1 Corinthians 11:28 says: "*Let each man examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks the cup.*" Therefore, if you wish to participate in Communion today, we ask that you review and affirm the following questions:

1. Do I believe I am a sinner, that is, that I have failed to keep God's commands as I should, and that I need forgiveness?
2. Do I trust in Jesus as my personal Lord and Savior, who died and rose for me?

3. Do I believe as I eat the bread and drink the cup, that I also receive the true body and blood of Jesus that He gave for me on the cross – even though I can't fully explain it?
4. Do I intend, with the help of God, to follow Jesus more closely and obey him more faithfully?

If you answer “yes” to these questions, then you share a common faith with our Christian congregation and you are welcome to receive Holy Communion with us. Our common faith is expressed in more detail in the Creed that we confess together during the worship service.

Special Instructions for Communion:

- Children and adults who are not communing are welcome to come forward for a blessing. To indicate this, please cross your arms when the elders or pastor come by. Children do not commune until they have completed basic instruction classes about the Christian faith.
- If you are unable to go to the altar, please let an usher know and the Pastor will bring the Lord's Supper (Communion) to your pew. Please sit close to any of the three aisles in the church.
- During Communion, gluten-free communion wafers (bread) are available. Just ask the Pastor when he comes to give you the bread.
- During Communion, you may take one of the small communion cups from the tray, or you may wait and drink from the common cup.
- On the tray of small communion cups, those cups in the center of the tray have light-colored, non-alcoholic grape juice. The other cups have wine.

If you have any questions, please see the Pastor or one of the elders.

Preface (Preparation for Communion)

Lutheran Service Book 177

- P** The Lord be with you.
- C** **And also with you.**
- P** Lift up your hearts.
- C** **We lift them up to the Lord.**
- P** Let us give thanks unto the Lord, our God.
- C** **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

- P** Oh Lord our God, it is truly good and right that we give you thanks and praise every moment and in every place. For Christ our Lord came to our world and by faith we have seen that he is the Light which scatters all the shadows and darkness. For this reason, with the whole church here on earth and with all the angels of heaven, we praise your name and sing in your honor:

Song of Praise: The Lord is My Light

Lutheran Service Book 723, Refrain

Refrain

The Lord is my light and my sal-va - tion, The Lord is the
strong-hold of my life. Since the Lord is my life, my
strength, and my all, Whom then shall I fear?

To Stanzas

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Lord's Prayer

- P** Lord remember us in Your kingdom and teach us to pray:
- 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.**

The Words of Our Lord

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My ✠ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me."

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My ✠ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

Pax Domini

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

Agnus Dei ("Lamb of God")

Lutheran Service Book 180



C 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 sin of the world;
grant us peace, grant us peace.

Hymns during Communion

As With Gladness Men of Old

Lutheran Service Book 397



1 As with glad-ness men of old Did the guid-ing star be-hold;
 2 As with joy - ful steps they sped, Sav - ior, to Thy low - ly bed,
 3 As they of - fered gifts most rare At Thy cra - dle, rude and bare,
 4 Ho - ly Je - sus, ev - 'ry day Keep us in the nar - row way;
 5 In the heav'n-ly coun - try bright Need they no cre - at - ed light;



As with joy they hailed its light, Lead - ing on - ward, beam-ing bright;
 There to bend the knee be - fore Thee, whom heav'n and earth a - dore;
 So may we with ho - ly joy, Pure and free from sin's al - loy,
 And when earth-ly things are past, Bring our ran-somed souls at last
 Thou its light, its joy, its crown, Thou its sun which goes not down;



So, most gra-cious Lord, may we Ev - er - more be led by Thee.
 So may we with will - ing feet Ev - er seek Thy mer - cy seat.
 All our cost-liest trea - sures bring, Christ, to Thee, our heav'n-ly King.
 Where they need no star to guide, Where no clouds Thy glo - ry hide.
 There for - ev - er may we sing Al - le - lu - ias to our King.

Text and tune: Public domain

Joy to the World


Lutheran Service Book 387




1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re - ceive her
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let men their songs em -
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow Nor thorns in - fest the
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the na - tions



King; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare Him
 ploy, While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
 ground; He comes to make His bless - ings
 prove The glo - ries of His righ - teous -



room And heav'n and na - ture sing, And heav'n and na - ture
 plains Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing
 flow Far as the curse is found, Far as the curse is
 ness And won - ders of His love, And won - ders of His



sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
 joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, Far as, far as the curse is found.
 love, And won - ders, won - ders of His love.


Text and tune: Public domain

Brightest and Best of the Stars of the Morning


Lutheran Service Book 400



1 Bright - est and best of the stars of the morn - ing,
 2 Cold on His cra - dle the dew - drops are shin - ing;
 3 Shall we not yield Him, in cost - ly de - vo - tion,
 4 Vain - ly we of - fer each am - ple ob - la - tion,
 5 Bright - est and best of the stars of the morn - ing,



Dawn on our dark - ness and lend us thine aid;
 Low lies His head with the beasts of the stall;
 Fra - grance of E - dom and of - f'rings di - vine,
 Vain - ly with gifts would His fa - vor se - cure.
 Dawn on our dark - ness and lend us thine aid;



Star of the East, the ho - ri - zon a - dorn - ing,
 An - gels a - dore Him in slum - ber re - clin - ing,
 Gems of the moun - tain and pearls of the o - cean,
 Rich - er by far is the heart's ad - o - ra - tion;
 Star of the East, the ho - ri - zon a - dorn - ing,



Guide where our in - fant Re - deem - er is laid.
Mak - er and Mon - arch and Sav - ior of all.
Myrrh from the for - est and gold from the mine?
Dear - er to God are the prayers of the poor.
Guide where our in - fant Re - deem - er is laid.

Text and tune: Public domain

Beautiful Savior

Lutheran Service Book 537



1 Beau - ti - ful Sav - ior, King of cre - a - tion, Son of
2 Fair are the mead - ows, Fair are the wood - lands, Robed in
3 Fair is the sun - shine, Fair is the moon - light, Bright the
4 Beau - ti - ful Sav - ior, Lord of the na - tions, Son of



God and Son of Man! Tru - ly I'd love Thee, Tru - ly I'd
flow'rs of bloom - ing spring; Je - sus is fair - er, Je - sus is
spar - kling stars on high; Je - sus shines bright - er, Je - sus shines
God and Son of Man! Glo - ry and hon - or, Praise, ad - o -



serve Thee, Light of my soul, my joy, my crown.
pur - er, He makes our sor - r'wing spir - it sing.
pur - er Than all the an - gels in the sky.
ra - tion Now and for - ev - er - more be Thine!

Text and tune: Public domain

Stand

After Communion

Nunc Dimittis (Lord, Now You Let Your Servant Go)

Lutheran Service Book 182



Lord, now You let Your ser - vant go in peace; Your word has been ful -

filled. My own eyes have seen the sal - va-tion which You have pre -

pared in the sight of ev - 'ry peo - ple: A light to re -

veal You to the na-tions and the glo-ry of Your peo-ple Is - ra - el.

Glo-ry be to the Fa - ther and to the Son and to the Ho-ly Spir-it;

as it was in the be-gin-ning, is now, and will be for-ev-er. A - men.

Closing Prayer

- P** Let us pray.
- C** **Holy Spirit, thank you for strengthening my faith in this time of worship. Help me now to live according to your Word. Be with me wherever I go and help me to share Jesus' love! In Jesus' own name. Amen.**

Benediction (2 Corinthians 13:14)

- P** The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all.
- C** **Amen.**

Closing Hymn: I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

Lutheran Service Book 411

1 I want to walk as a child of the light.
 2 I want to see the bright-ness of God.
 3 I'm look - ing for the com - ing of Christ.

I want to fol - low Je - sus.
 I want to look at Je - sus.
 I want to be with Je - sus.

God set the stars to give light to the world.
 Clear Sun of Righ - teous - ness, shine on my path,
 When we have run with pa - tience the race,

The star of my life is Je - sus.
 And show me the way to the Fa - ther.
 We shall know the joy of Je - sus.

Refrain
 In Him there is no dark - ness at all.

The night and the day are both a - like.

The Lamb is the light of the cit - y of God.

Shine in my heart, Lord Je - sus.

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Acknowledgments

Lutheran Service Book Divine Service 2

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Worship Leaders

Pastor:	Rev. Richard Schlak
Organist:	Ruth Ann Ostergren
Soloist:	Evelyn Karl
Elders:	Don Weigert/Andy Barber
Acolyte:	Tom Karl
Reader:	Barbara Lewis
Ushers:	Team 1
Altar Care:	Radach
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.

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.

Bob Gallagher, passed away this last Sunday, just after his wife, Melanie, arrived & she was able to be by his side. Please pray especially for **Melanie Gallagher** & their family as they grieve the loss of Bob. Melanie is grateful for everyone's support & prayers as Bob has struggled with various health challenges. Melanie shared that it's been a long journey, but well worth the blessing of having Bob as her husband & best friend over the years.

Illness and Recovery:

Jerry Rust, his daughter **Amy** arrived to help her father receive hospital care that will be followed up by his physician. He had a lot of tests, and are now awaiting for results.

Amy & Doug, his daughter & son, said that Jerry's memory appears to be returning (please pray for God's guidance for Jerry & his family as to his future care; & peace &

strength for both Jerry & **Norma Rust**, who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's and moved into Mountain View); **Cindy & Don Unsworth**, friends of former Ascension members Cathy & Randy Engel; Cindy has been in hospice care for lung cancer, that is now gone, but unfortunately the cancer, with the meds have done damage to the body & no more can be done; so she is bed ridden, on oxygen full time, and sleeping most of the day, (please continue to pray for God's will for Cindy to pass on, and for peace & strength for her husband, Don to let her go; and they are very grateful for everyone's prayers); **BJ Schwab**, had a biopsy on her thyroid, (please pray for a good outcome on the results); **David Behl**, Steve Behl's brother, needs both a heart & a kidney transplant (please pray for patience for both David & his family as there is a long waiting list for organ availability as well as skilled doctors to be available for the transplant); **Michael Sheridan**, family of Gretchen Schmalz, doctors were unable to remove all of the tumor in a surgery he recently had; so he will be monitored (please pray that he gets rest & his mother is grateful for the prayers); **Jaxon Coles**, nephew of Kari Larson Decker, had an unexplained seizure, had an ambulatory EEG test and are awaiting the results to be read & to have a brain MRI to determine the cause (please pray for correct diagnosis & effective treatment); **Aaron Levenhagen**, Linda Canada's nephew & Cheryl Canada-Karl's cousin, continues to experience GI pain after bowel obstruction surgery (please pray for healing & relief from the pain); **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); **David Kwiatkowski**, 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 Warsaw**, 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); **Aubrey McDermett**, 15-year-old with MS, in hospital due to stroke (pray for healing); **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); **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:

Dick Seiders, Ron Seiders father, received a second medical opinion revealing that the macular degeneration had not worsened to the point that he was losing his vision (praise and thanksgiving to God and grateful for everyone's prayers); **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).

Ascension News and Notes

Flowers for today's service
are provided by Joe & Cheryl Canada-Karl
in celebration of Gabby Karl's 11th birthday.



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.
SIGN UP SHEET IS IN THE FELLOWSHIP HALL.**



Jan. 09 — Steve Wilmeth



**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.**



**WE NEED YOUR HELP TO TAKE DOWN
THE CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS!
PLEASE BE HERE AT THE CHURCH ON
SATURDAY JANUARY 10, 2026 AT
9:00 AM.**

TUESDAY NIGHT Men's Bible Study

**Resuming on January 6th, 2026 in Ascension's
Church Fellowship Hall at 7 p.m.**

**Currently studying *Myth or Faith | Clearing up
Common Misconceptions about Christianity*
(Concordia Publishing House)**

Contact Elliott Werner (915-603-7497) for more information



THURSDAY MORNING WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

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).**



Ladies Fellowship Opportunities in January 2026



Wed. Jan. 21, 2026

6 p.m.

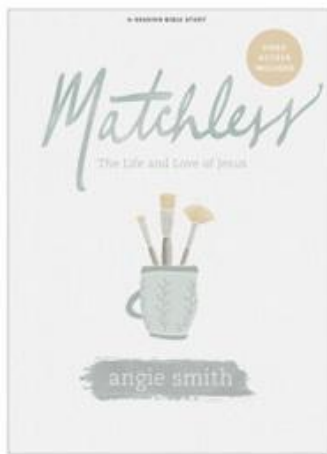
Ardivinos Pizza

865 Resler

**Please join us for food and fellowship!
(Dutch treat)**

**>Contact Robin Wiegert (915-581-5566)
for more information**

Tuesday Ladies Bible Study



Beginning Tuesday, Jan. 27th !

**Join Ascension Ladies & Friends
For Bible Study**

Via Zoom

6:30 – 8 p.m.

**Contact Anita Werner
For more information**



Altar Flowers

Jan. 4th — **Canada-Karl** (Celebration of Gabby's birthday)

Jan. 11th — _____

Jan. 18th — _____

Jan. 25th — _____

**Consider signing up to celebrate or honor someone.
2026 New sign up sheet is in the fellowship Hall
on bulletin board. Both sets of flowers total \$60.**



Sunday Morning Snacks Sign Up

January	
<u>4th</u>	OPEN
<u>11th</u>	Mielke-THANK YOU
<u>18th</u>	OPEN
<u>25th</u>	

Sign-up
sheet on
the kitchen
wall next to
counter

January 4th, 18th, & 25th are open.

Thank you!



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 (January 4)

9:00 AM Adult Bible Study & Sunday School
10:00 AM Fellowship
10:30 AM Worship w/ Communion
11:45 AM Confirmation



HAPPENING THIS WEEK

Monday (January 5)

Church Office Closed

No School (EPISD Winter Break Dec. 19th-Jan.6th)

Tuesday (January 6) Epiphany

6:30 PM Boy Scouts
7:00 PM Mens' Bible Study Resumes (FH)

Wednesday (January 7)

School resumes for both Preschool & EPISD

11:00 AM Sit & Sew (FH)
3:00 PM Elders' Meeting

Thursday (January 8)

9:45 AM Women's Bible Study Resumes(FH)
6:30 PM Choir Practice Resumes (S)

Friday (January 9)

12:00-2:30 PM Preschool Extended Care

Saturday (January 10)

9:00 AM Meet at the church to take down Christmas tree & decorations