

## E-News for the Week of Sunday, December 6

2nd Sunday of Advent  
Contemporary Worship

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### Readings

Malachi 3:1-4

Luke 1:68-79

Philippians 1:3-11

Luke 3:1-6

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### Worship Participants

**Celebrant:** Pr. Nancy Wright

**Altar Guild:** Julie Valliere

**Communion Assistant:** TBA

**Organist:** Denise Puisto

**Lector:** Herb Tilley

**Liturgical Assistant:** Valerie Rittershausen

**Ushers:** Doug Dreibelbis, Marcia Gustafson, and Harriet Richards

**Greeters:** Beth and Doug Dreibelbis

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### Upcoming Week

#### **Wednesday, 12/2**

4:30-5:30 p.m. Tai Chi (rental)

6:15 p.m. Contemporary

7:15 p.m. Bells

#### **Thursday, 12/3**

5:00-7:00 p.m. Tai Chi (rental)

#### **Sunday, 12/6**

9:00 a.m. Sunday School

10:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship Service

11:15 a.m. Congregational Meeting

12:30 p.m. Worship Team

#### **Monday, 12/7**

3:00-6:00 p.m. Music Lessons (rental)

#### **Tuesday, 12/8**

3:00-6:00 p.m. Music Lessons (rental)

6:00-8:00 p.m. Property Meeting

### **Wednesday, 12/9**

4:00-5:30 p.m. Tai Chi (rental)

6:15 p.m. Choir

7:00 p.m. Social Action

7:15 p.m. Bells

Click [HERE](#) for a long-range calendar.

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### **Upcoming Birthdays**

12/2 Kristy Heppner

12/5 Gretchen Dreibelbis

12/6 Natalie Tylenda

12/7 Susan Moore Westney

12/8 Janet Schroeter

12/11 Timothy Kemp

12/13 Sam Swanson

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### **Pastor's Message**

Dear Ascension parishioners,

This Sunday we will have a congregational meeting, when we vote on the Long-Range Plan and the Constitution. I am very excited about the vision for our ministry for the next three years. I want now to thank all those who participated in the Long-Range Planning process: the Long Range planning committee (Beth Dreibelbis, Doug Dreibelbis, Mousa Ishaq, Kristen Peterson Ishaq, Amy Harrison, Kim Fry, Johanna White, Steve Snook, Sam Swanson, Richard Butz, Marcia Gustafson, Bonnie Lombardi, Denise Puisto, Barry Lemley, and Eranthie Yeshwant). Each committee member contributed enormously. A good beginning is getting us half-way there. I especially thank Amy Harrison, for getting us off to a very wonderful start, leading the neighborhood meetings and other important gatherings, and setting an optimistic tone for change. And, I thank Steve Snook, chair of the committee, for guiding us forward. The whole plan is the beginning of a new chapter in Ascension's life. For the written plan itself, thanks to the authors of the chapters (Richard Butz, Steve Snook, Eranthie Yeshwant), and to all the committees who created their long-range plans.

In the end, the Holy Spirit guides Ascension. Each Ascension parishioner has such depth (I realize this as I have interviewed parishioners who worked on the meditation trail for my second doctoral course "Radical Spirituality").

Thank you from the bottom of my heart. And, see you Sunday!

Blessings, Pr. Nancy

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## Daily Advent Reflections\*

### **Wednesday, 12/2**

Today, pray by humming, low and deep, for at least 3 minutes.

### **Thursday, 12/3**

Listen today. Really LISTEN, without judgment, or crafting your next response. Be curious, and listen beyond the words.

### **Friday, 12/4**

Sabbath time: Leave ALL the screens off today. Without TV, smartphone, tablet, what does God say to you in the quiet night?

### **Saturday, 12/5**

Go to a pet store. Hold a creature. "You only have to let the soft animal of your body love what it loves."

### **Sunday, 12/6 Second Sunday in Advent: PEACE/Hanukkah**

Sing, Pray or chant this apophatic mantra: God is peace, God is not peace, God is *not not* peace.

### **Monday, 12/7**

Read 1 Kings 19:11-12. Have you been listening to the wrong God?

### **Tuesday, 12/8**

Put tape over your mouth. Who has silenced you in your life? Who have you silenced? What power is there in keeping mum, in speaking up?

### **Wednesday, 12/9**

Subtract two things from your day. Use the extra time to serve a fellow human.

*\*Shared from an Advent calendar prepared by Rev. Molly Phinney Baskette (Keynote speaker from the 2015 New England Synod Assembly)*

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## HARK! IMPORTANT UPCOMING NEWS AND EVENTS

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### **Congregational Meeting**

Please hold Sunday, December 6, for a congregational meeting immediately following worship. We will consider and vote on the Constitution and the Long-Range Plan, 2016-2018. Documents were sent out in a special email on November 20. You can read the letter [HERE](#). The documents that were attached for you review are here:

[Ascension Lutheran Church Long Range Plan 2016-2018  
Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions](#)

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### **Christmas Poinsettia Order**

Orders for Christmas Poinsettias must be submitted to the church office no later than **Wednesday, December 16** ([church.office@alcvt.org](mailto:church.office@alcvt.org) or 862-8866). Please indicate your color preference (red, pink, or white) and the names of those you wish to have remembered. The cost of each plant is \$12.

### **Upcoming Sunday School Events**

**December 20** will be our Sunday School Christmas tableau presentation, in church. We will rehearse on **December 13** and **December 20** at 9:00 a.m. The theme this year will be the Little Drummer Boy, as a vehicle for the tableau. Volunteers with special talents are welcomed!  
NO SUNDAY SCHOOL on **December 27**.

### **Quilt top kits available**

If you would like to help make mission quilts for Lutheran World Relief but cannot join us on the first and/or third Thursday or the month at church, you can assemble quilt tops at home. There are kits that consist of cut fabric squares (11" x 11") along with directions. Let Karen Martin know if you are interested.

Next Quilter's Group Meeting is **Thursday, December 3**.

### **The Holiday Giving Tree!**

We will be sponsoring families through Howard Center again this year. The tree is now up with tags in the Narthex! Gifts should be returned to church unwrapped by **December 13**. We will also have a cookie bake sale on December 13th with donations going to the giving tree families. If you have any questions, please contact Cheryl Couillard at [checouillard@yahoo.com](mailto:checouillard@yahoo.com) or 999-5512.

### **Women's Holiday Event**

What: Cookie Baking and Holiday Movie Night

When: **Friday, December 11th at 6:30 p.m.**

Where: Leah Burke's House (see directory)

We will enjoy baking cookies and watching one or two holiday favorites. Cookies will be donated to the cookie sale for giving tree families. Questions? Contact Cheryl Couillard at [checouillard@yahoo.com](mailto:checouillard@yahoo.com) or 999-5512. Please join us!

### **Interfaith Prayer and Remembrance Vigil**

Have you marked your calendar? Please attend the interfaith prayer and remembrance vigil—"A Moral Call: People of Faith Confronting the Tragedy of Gun Violence" on **Sunday, December 13, 3 p.m.** at the Unitarian Universalist Society in Burlington. The vigil will help start sacred conversations about gun violence in this country and give you an opportunity to learn more about the issue and to pray together about solutions.

For more information, contact Marcia Gustafson at [marciagus@earthlink.net](mailto:marciagus@earthlink.net), or call 864-5908.

### **Men's Breakfast**

There will be no Men's Breakfast for the month of December. Worry not, Men of Ascension, we will continue in January!

### **ELCA World Hunger Matching Funds Challenge**

Until December 31, 2015, friends of ELCA World Hunger are challenging one another with a \$150,000 match. Gifts received by December 31 can help meet the match. To take advantage of this match, please give online at [www.ELCA.org/WorldHunger](http://www.ELCA.org/WorldHunger)

### **Adult Class**

All are welcome to join the 9 am adult class, regularly on even for one Sunday. The class is led by Pr. Nancy and the whole group. The class will study the Beatitudes (Matt. 5:1-11) through October. In November the class will study Pope Francis I's Encyclical on Climate Change and Inequality: On Care for Our Common Home.

### **COFFEE HOUR NEEDS YOU!!!**

Thank you for the great response to the new Coffee Hour sign-up sheet. If you were unable to sign up for a week or two, please check out the list hanging on the bulletin board in the fellowship room. There are several empty dates to be filled in yet. Coffee Hour is fun for members but also a very important time for us to greet visitors and new members. We often joke about coffee, food and Lutherans going together as a natural....and they do....so please sign up for Coffee Hour and let's continue this wonderful tradition. Also, the Coffee Can (to defray costs) is on the table to help pay for the coffee. Thanks.

See Beth Dreibelbis with questions.

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### **Additional News and Volunteer Opportunities**

#### **Vermont Choral Union December Concerts**

**Saturday, December 5, 7:00 p.m.** at Bliss Auditorium, St. Albans Historical Society and Museum, 9 Church St, St. Albans

**Sunday, December 6, 3:00 p.m.** at St. Paul's Cathedral, 2 Cherry St, Burlington

In the midst of winter's darkness, the Vermont Choral Union anticipates the wonder and mystery of dawn's golden light in holiday concerts the first weekend in December. From medieval song to the intimacy and intricacy of a cappella music from Renaissance times to the present, the Choral Union gives voice to historic narratives and traditional carols to depict the glory of a morning star that breaks the darkness. The ensemble performs three settings of the melody *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern* (How Bright Appears the Morning Star): J.S. Bach's chorale, a vibrant early Baroque arrangement for eight voice parts by Praetorius, and early 20th-century composer George Schumann's rich, sonorous "choral-motette." The singers intone chant tunes transcribed from ancient British manuscripts and present captivating sixteenth-century polyphony by Palestrina and innovative counterpoint by Gesualdo to portray the rising dawn. From Russia and England, the choir gives voice to tranquil works by Vaughan Williams, Rachmaninoff, and Britten depicting the promise of a light-filled sky as a Savior is born of a Virgin. In addition to fascinating arrangements of familiar carols, the Choral Union offers a contemporary setting of Mary's song, the Magnificat, scored for choir and cello by Norwegian composer Ola Gjeilo. The choir presents other new composers as well: in *Lux Aurumque*, Eric Whitacre captures the aura of golden light as angels sing to the new-born baby, while award-winning Scottish conductor-composer James MacMillan brilliantly sets the Advent text of the title piece of the program, *O Radiant Dawn*.

#### **Shelburne Museum Volunteer Opportunity**

Winter Greeters: Are you friendly, outgoing, easy to approach, and interested in welcoming visitors to our community? Shelburne Museum seeks volunteers for morning (10-12:30) and afternoon (12:30-3; or 3-5:15) visitor greeter positions, year-round. Shifts available daily, however, volunteers may sign up for as few as 1 per week, or for more. For more information please contact Laura Need at 985-0865 or [lneed@shelburnemuseum.org](mailto:lneed@shelburnemuseum.org)

#### **Tai Chi at Ascension!**

##### **Tai Chi for All Generations**

Wednesdays, 4:30-5:30 p.m. with Elizabeth Wirls

Classes are ongoing and everyone is welcome to come as you are, whenever you wish. All generations are welcome! Please note that we have decided to offer these classes on a "pay as you can" basis. That way everyone who is interested will be able to join us! For more information, see the attached brochure and feel free to contact Elizabeth in the church office, 862-8866

[CLICK HERE](#) for full brochure.

### **Mindful Breath Tai Chi**

Thursdays, 5:00-7:00 p.m. through December 3 with Janet Makaris

Yang Style, for more information please visit her website:

<http://mindfulbreathtaichi.com/about.html>