



# ***THE ASCENSION***

## ***HERALD***

Volume 5

Advent 2018

### **From the Rector:**

The great advantage of being a liturgical church – that is, a church where worship is relatively structured – is that it allows us to move through a calendar of what it means to be human. There is a season of birth, a season of growing excitement and ripples, a season of death and repentance, a season of newness, and a season of growth – and prefacing all of them is Advent. Advent has long been my favorite season, because somehow the darkness of the season, the candles, the readings from the prophets, and the preparations for the birth of the Messiah perfectly frame my yearning. It captures both my disappointment in the darkness of the world and my hope that God is at work in the midst of it all doing something unspeakably mysterious and beautiful that is bringing about peace. According to Psalm 85 Salvation and Peace are intertwined. Psalm 85 puts it this way.

- 7 Show us your mercy, O LORD, \*  
and grant us your salvation.
- 8 I will listen to what the LORD God is saying, \*  
for he is speaking peace to his faithful people  
and to those who turn their hearts to him.
- 9 Truly, his salvation is very near to those who fear him, \*  
that his glory may dwell in our land.
- 10 Mercy and truth have met together; \*  
righteousness and peace have kissed each other.
- 11 Truth shall spring up from the earth, \*  
and righteousness shall look down from heaven.
- 12 The LORD will indeed grant prosperity, \*  
and our land will yield its increase.
- 13 Righteousness shall go before him, \*  
and peace shall be a pathway for his feet.

When we turn our hearts to God, salvation is near, and with salvation we hear the call to righteousness – which is right relations with God and each other, and we hear the call to peace. God's Salvation enables us to live in both mercy and truth, without which neither righteousness nor peace is possible.

All of this is profoundly communal. I went searching online for images of peace. Ironically, I found that the vast majority of them have no people – a few have one. That says something. It seems that we have a failure of imagination when it comes to peace. If that is the case, I blame it on the "peaceful" images of Christmas and silent nights.

**Continued on page 3**

## Church of the Ascension Staff

### **Bishop, Southern Virginia**

The Rt. Rev. Herman Hollerith IV

**Church Office** 757-423-6715

### **Rector**

The Rev. Stewart Mason Tabb

### **Director of Family Formation**

Patti Glowatsky

### **Director of Music Ministries**

Ginny Chilton

### **Day School Director**

Mark Hattler

### **Treasurer**

Jane Webster

### **Secretary**

Nellwyn Beamon

### **Financial Secretary**

Tracey Trimyer

## Church of the Ascension Vestry & Commission Liaisons

**Sr. Warden:** Susan Motley

**Jr. Warden:** Chuck Beers; Finance, Building & Grounds (with Tim Westfall)

**Register:** Kristan Huddle

Lana Butler; Outreach (Food Pantry coordinator)

Sherlyn Horton; Stewardship

Donna Killmon; Pastoral Care

Ann McMellin; Liturgy

Suzi Montagna; at large

Tim Westfall Building & Grounds; Communications

Courtney Wheeler; Outreach (projects)

Patti Glowatsky; Director Family Formation

Roni Porfert; Fellowship

Vestry minutes are on the website. Go to <http://ascension-norfolk.org/vestry-minutes-2/>

---

**Confirmation: The third time was the charm--**Nine people were eagerly waiting to be confirmed or received this past fall. The first date we set was February 4, a Sunday afternoon at the Mission of the Holy Spirit. All was ready: and then the Lay leader there, Keith Josey, became very ill. So, we arranged for Bishop Jay Magness to come here on October 7 for confirmation. Ah! He ended up in the hospital the day before! Well, finally, he was able to be here on November 8. What a wonderful and uplifting service! We welcomed into the Ascension family Robert Baird, Bill Hall, Matt Huddle, Kris Huddle, Brian Beasley, Julie Beasley, and Miles Tate. Then, three more people were confirmed at the Mission of the Holy Spirit on Sunday, November 18: Bobbi Colucci, Elizabeth Jones, and Victoria Jones. We are delighted that all of you have made Ascension your church home. Welcome!

---

Bishop Hollerith retires December 31. Here is the prayer that the search committee asks us to pray during the search process.

Almighty and most gracious God, source of all wisdom and guidance, send your Holy Spirit to guide us as we seek and discern a shepherd for the Diocese of Southern Virginia. Inspire us with hope, hearts to love you, and a desire to serve one another. Grant us grace to entrust you with the future of your Church and all things. We ask in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ Our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, now and forever. Amen.

## Continued from page 1

What we fail to realize is that if we want peace, all we need imagine, all we need study -- is Jesus. Not just the babe in the manger, but the man on the cross who gave himself that the world might find its way through him to reconciliation with God and each other.

That we spend so much of our time insisting on what is ours tells me that we have neither sat in his truth -- which includes a call to repentance -- nor drunk in his mercy in such a way that we can extend it to each other and the world. This Advent, I hope you will slow down enough to do that. I believe that when we sit in the presence of the Prince of Peace, when we learn his ways, our behavior begins to move in his rhythm and our lives begin to pulse with his light.

“Making Peace” by Denise Levertov

A voice from the dark called out,  
'The poets must give us  
imagination of peace, to oust the intense, familiar  
imagination of disaster. Peace, not only  
the absence of war.'  
But peace, like a poem,  
is not there ahead of itself,  
can't be imagined before it is made,  
can't be known except  
in the words of its making,  
grammar of justice,  
syntax of mutual aid.  
A feeling towards it,  
dimly sensing a rhythm, is all we have  
until we begin to utter its metaphors,  
learning them as we speak.  
A line of peace might appear  
if we restructured the sentence our lives are making,  
revoked its reaffirmation of profit and power,  
questioned our needs, allowed  
long pauses . . .  
A cadence of peace might balance its weight  
on that different fulcrum; peace, a presence,  
an energy field more intense than war,  
might pulse then,  
stanza by stanza into the world,  
each act of living  
one of its words, each word  
a vibration of light—facets  
of the forming crystal.

---

## Advent Thursdays

Thursdays from 5:30 to 6:30 with a potluck dinner to follow. Family members will come together to worship in an informal setting and learn that in Jesus, God is with us as our Potter, our Shepherd, our Living Branch, and our Guide. The order of service includes the lighting of the Advent wreath, hymns, special responses, prayers, a message, a family craft project, and discussion questions to take home. Please consider joining us in the special time of waiting.

Advent is a time of stillness and waiting, and I want so desperately to feel the hunger for something new and refreshing in the birth of Jesus and to await a glorious light in the darkness. But how on earth do I do that and also “pull off” Christmas as we as American consumers have come to envision it? With school parties, grand parades, holiday movies, made for TV specials and endless commercials for the “best toy ever,” how on earth do I find a minute and a half to be still and wait? At our house, we begin each day of the season with an advent Christmas tree (which most mornings just feels like one more thing to do before we all rush out the door). Every morning we place a new ornament on the tree until at last it is only missing the star on top. The excitement builds to a fervor as Emerson not so patiently awaits this final placement. But what are we really counting down to? I am easily lost in the holiday competition to be the hostess and gift giver extraordinaire while Emerson greedily awaits the bounty under the tree and Dennis can't wait to put it all back in the attic and get back to business as usual. We have all forgotten about the star! John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son...How do we harness and redirect that anticipation towards the coming of something beautiful and peaceful and full of pure and simple love? For me this year the answer lies in gratitude, and I must show it to God in deeply heartfelt prayer. Prayer as I drive from A to B, when I shower and brush my teeth, when I unload the groceries and when I fold the laundry. I can't always find the time to stop and find a quiet moment because most days there are none, but God is there even (and hopefully especially) on the busiest days, and I know God is listening. Maybe the stillness comes from God. Maybe when I cannot be still without being trampled and left in the dust, God is still for me and waiting and I just need to remind myself (and my family) of the most precious gift of all, that I am loved by God!

---

**From the Senior Warden****Susan Motley**

As we enter the Advent season, the stewardship campaign is wrapping up and the 2019 budget development is beginning. So I guess it's not surprising that I've been thinking about family and gratitude, about traditions, and about change.

Members of healthy church families know that our shared faith community is more precious than any individual desires, and I am grateful every day to see members of Ascension striving to adapt and grow into the future that lies ahead for us, the future that will be the manifestation of God's call to us. It is a future that includes a focus on family centered Christian formation, community outreach through our day school and refurbished food pantry, and connection to our neighboring churches through our combined services.

Members of healthy church families also know that financial well-being guarantees strong programs that benefit us and our community. I am grateful for your support for Ascension through your response to our giving campaign. And I am joining others who have reminded you that if you have not yet turned in a pledge card, you still have time to show your support for the work of Ascension by completing one.

Most of all, I want you to know that I am grateful for the dedication of the Ascension family. Stewart tells me all the time that Ascension has a heart of gold, and I see evidence of this everywhere. I see it in the way we reach out to each other in times of need. I see it in clothing donations and Christmas stockings for needy children. I see it in our concerted effort to feed and house homeless people during one week each winter. Thank you for your support and for your prayers. Peace to you!

## **Lessons and Carols, Ascension Style**

**From your music minister, Ginny Chilton**

When I first arrived at Ascension three years ago I was a little intimidated, but mostly excited, to learn that our church has a tradition of doing an Advent Lessons and Carols every year. I was intimidated because the phrase "Lessons and Carols" brings to mind King's College in all its glory; who can compare to that?? I was excited, though, because that left open the opportunity to get as creative as we wanted. This will be my fourth Lessons and Carols here at Ascension, and I'm proud of the tradition we now have here. As I've planned these services over the years there are a number of interesting things that I have noted that may be of interest to you, too. Here are just two of them:

### **Lessons and Carols is a lot like Easter Vigil**

Both services alternate Bible readings with a musical response. More importantly, both services retell the story of Salvation. If you've ever been to a really good Easter Vigil service, you know how thrilling it is hear about Jesus's resurrection after you've listened to the stories and music that retell humankind's wandering in darkness. The lights are dim, the music is mostly somber, then--wow!-- Jesus is alive! Dramatic services like Easter Vigil help us feel the elation of that first Easter. The Lessons and Carols tradition uses the same tools, but ends with Jesus's birth. The arrival of Jesus feels that much more meaningful when you've just been reminded how long it took to get there.

### **Lessons and Carols is for the congregation**

Lessons and Carols became a formalized thing around 1918 (happy 100th, L&C!), but before that it was just a yearly tradition of gathering in different people's homes to read the Bible and sing Christmas carols around the family piano. The good thing about bringing that tradition into the church building is that now you don't need a formal invitation in order join in. The bad thing is that, over the years, professional choirs have taken over what used to be everyone's job. In many cases, Lessons and Carols has become more of a concert than a worship service. Those versions have their place, but here at Ascension Lessons and Carols still belongs to the people. Most of the music is for the congregation to sing, and includes familiar Advent hymns as well as new music. Our choir is also singing, and each one of our choir members is a volunteer. These are folks who volunteer their time because they love music and they love sharing it with their faith community. We also have a percussionist, trumpeter, flautist, and horn player, all from our congregation, volunteering their talents. That's pretty remarkable.

God has blessed our congregation with incredible gifts. Come be a part of the Lessons and Carols journey on December 16th, at 11:00 AM.

---

### **Lego Nativity -- Sunday, December 9 at 9:30 AM**

Everyone will meet in Rose Hall and break into groups to create a massive Nativity Scene out of LEGO's. It will remain on display through the season!

### **Paper Bag Christmas Pageant -- Saturday, December 22 at 4:00 PM**

Our pageant with a twist: arrive a half-hour before the service starts, and each child will receive their pageant role in a paper bag. The pageant will include music that the children have been learning in Sunday School and Family Choir, and will include familiar Christmas carols. **Introductory meeting to discuss this is Sunday, December 2 at 1:30 PM.**

The eleventh hour, of the eleventh month, of the eleventh year. 1918. One hundred years ago last month, the guns in Europe fell silent, marking the beginning of the Armistice, ending four years of global struggle. Known as: The Great War. THE World War. The War to End All Wars. The First World War. World War One. Or simply, WWI.

Originally named Armistice Day, it celebrated those service members who lost their lives during WWI. Changes occurred over the years and following the end of World War II, the holiday was extended to include all veterans. In 1954, in the United States it officially became Veterans Day, and honors all those who have served in the branches of the U.S. military.

Two other holidays exist for honoring military personnel, the oldest being Memorial Day in May. Having its origins during our American Civil War, it was at first called Decoration Day in the north, and Remembrance Day in the south, with Memorial Day being common after WWII. Officially named that in 1967, this holiday pays tribute to all those who have fallen in the military service

Armed Forces Day in June honors those who are currently serving in the military.

Given the current state of the world, a move has been afoot during the last few years to create a First Responders holiday. Twenty-three states currently recognize this in September, with Virginia marking it on the 27<sup>th</sup>.

---

**Outreach Projects--What amazing generosity!****Courtney Wheeler**

This autumn season has provided us with many opportunities for helping others.

In September we were able to donate an awesome number of school supplies to the children living in the Union Mission Women and Children's shelter in Norfolk . The kids were thrilled when they saw our bags overflowing with items they needed to start their school year off right.

In October we collected enough gently-used clothing to be able to offer donations to three different Norfolk organizations. We presented 18 large (garbage-sized) bags to Advent Episcopal Church for the Clothing Closet that accompanies their food pantry, and 5 large bags went the Working Women's Wardrobe at Talbot Park Baptist Church. And finally, we donated five additional bags to the clothing drive at the Masonic Temple. The donations were all received with much appreciation!

As November comes to a close, we are so thankful to be able to fill 50 Christmas stockings that will be donated to the Salvation Army as part of the Fill A Stocking campaign for children in our area. The Salvation Army deadline is the first week in December, so if you haven't done it yet, please bring the filled stockings back to church on Sunday, December 2nd and place them in the Christmas collection bin in the Narthex.

Once again, the generosity of our congregation has been unbelievable, and we are moved by your willingness to support such worthy projects!

## **Food Pantry**

**Lana Butler**

The Church of Ascension Food Pantry is planning to reopen on January 8 after a period of remodeling and retraining. You are all welcome to come and see the new and improved pantry. We will be open on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10:00 to 11:30. This is a core mission of our church, and if you would like to volunteer to be a greeter, in-take computer specialist, or bagger, please call Lana Butler. Other ways to help include donating food to the big blue barrel in the Narthex or writing a donation check to our church and putting *Food Pantry* in the memo line. We are in a partner relationship with the Food Bank and as such, we are required to raise both food and funds. We are no longer in the USDA program and will not be receiving free surplus food. It is important that we work together to support our Food Pantry now.

Let me explain a little about the hierarchy of how Ascension's hunger prevention mission operates:

We are under the umbrella of a large nonprofit organization called "Feeding America." Feeding America is our nation's largest domestic hunger-relief organization, and it oversees a group of more than 200 food banks across the U.S. It has been in operation for 35 years and their motto is - "Working Together to End Hunger." If you are interested in more information go to [Feedingamerica.org](http://Feedingamerica.org).

Our Food Pantry is connected under Feeding America to the Food Bank of Southeastern Virginia. This is also a non-profit, and we fall under their guidelines in order to participate. We receive training from the Food Bank so that we are able to purchase food for our pantry at greatly discounted prices. Our volunteers drive to the Food Bank located on Tidewater Drive, pick up hundreds of pounds of food, and bring it back to our church on Fridays so we are prepared to distribute it the following week. (If you are interested in this ministry please let me know.) For more information on the Food Bank go to [foodbankonline.org](http://foodbankonline.org).

I hope this overview helps answer some of your questions. I think all of us at Ascension are very eager to get back in the business of helping the hungry and needy in our community. We saw the need last week when nearly 50 people showed up to receive Thanksgiving turkey baskets in spite of the fact that we had been closed since last April.

And, finally, a great big thank you to everyone who has worked to paint, clean, lay a new floor, install a new air-conditioner, and build shelves. Our church thanks you!!!

---

## **Finances and Stewardship news**

**Chuck Beers**

Good news for this time of year--income is closely tracking expenses, and pledges are hanging close to budget. We are about \$3100 in the red (spent more than taken in). That is much better than where we were last year. Thanks to all for your support of the financial side of the church. If you can close out your pledges at the end of the year, we have the chance to break even for 2018

The Vestry has developed and implemented this year's stewardship effort. There have been three home meetings to inform the parish how the budget is formulated and implemented with the money pledged, and the Senior Warden sent a letter to all the families in the church directory. Many have responded with a pledge card, but there are about 25 families that we have not heard from. The Vestry is emailing and calling each of those families to see what their support will be for this year in order to formulate the 2019 budget. If you have not made a pledge this fall please contact Jane Webster in the office. Thank you for your support of the church.

If you have any questions or want any more information please call or email Chuck Beers.



# ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS SCHEDULES

<b>Thursday November 29</b>	5:30 pm	God with Us Advent program
<b>Saturday December 1</b>	9:00 - Noon	Advent Fun Day
	5:00 "until"	Ascension at Virginia Chorale: gather at Websters' home
	7:30 pm	Virginia Chorale at St. Andrew's, Norfolk
<b>Sunday December 2 2018 Advent I, Year C</b>		
<b>Thursday December 6</b>	5:30 pm	God with Us Advent program
<b>Sunday December 9</b>	<b>Advent II</b>	
<b>Thursday December 13</b>	5:30 pm	God with Us Advent program
<b>Friday December 14</b>	12:00 pm	Poinsettia order deadline
<b>Sunday December 16</b>	<b>Advent III</b>	
	8:00 am	Holy Eucharist
	11:00 am	Lessons & Carols
	12:15 pm	Christmas Dinner
<b>Tuesday December 18</b>	4:00 pm	Dayschool Christmas program
<b>Thursday December 20</b>	5:30 pm	God with Us Advent program
<b>Saturday December 22</b>	<u>4:00 pm</u>	<u>Christmas Pageant</u>
<b>Sunday December 23</b>	<b>Advent IV</b>	
	10:00 am	Holy Eucharist and Memorial service for Gertrude Batts Greening of the church and lunch afterwards
<b>Monday December 24</b>	Noon	Office closes
	4:30 pm	Christmas Eve service
	<b>8:45 pm</b>	Carols & Festival Christmas Eucharist
<b>Tuesday December 25</b>	<b>10:00 am</b>	<b>Christmas Day Holy Eucharist</b>
<b>December 26 - 28</b>	<b>Office Closed for the holiday</b>	
<b>Sunday December 30</b>	8:00 am	Holy Eucharist
	11:00 am	Holy Eucharist
<b>Tuesday January 1</b>	Office Closed	
<b>Sunday January 6</b>	<b>Feast of the Epiphany</b>	
	8:00 am	Holy Eucharist
	9:30 am	Christian Formation
	11:00 am	Holy Eucharist
		Removing greenery

Church Calendar: Ctrl+ click for [Event Calendar](#)



**LOVELY CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS:** *(deadline to order is December 14)*

In order to purchase a poinsettia, please fill out the form below and place it on the office door. They are \$10.00 each. Order as many as you like. They will be used to decorate our beautiful Altar. After Epiphany Sunday, you may take them home.

\* \* \* \* \*

YOUR NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

HOW MANY POINSETTIAS: \_\_\_\_\_

IN LOVING MEMORY OF:

\_\_\_\_\_

OR IN HONOR OF:

\_\_\_\_\_

Cash amount enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

Check # and amount \_\_\_\_\_