ASCENSION MEMORIAL CHURCH

A Parish of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts

Flourishing - Family - Community

To bear witness to the Spirit of God we see in Jesus as an Episcopal community open to all, centered in worship, Christian education, table fellowship, care for the environment, and compassion for neighbors local and global.

December 24, 2023
The Fourth Sunday of Advent
Holy Eucharist Rite II at 10:15 AM



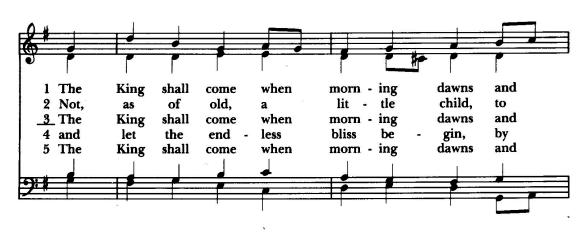
P.O. 547, 31 County Street
Ipswich, MA 01938
e-mail: amcipswich@verizon.net
978-356-2560
www.amcipswich.org

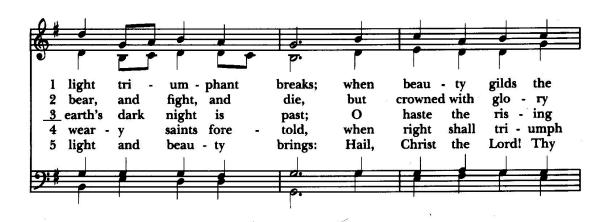
Prelude

The Tower Bell

The Toddlers Corner at the front of the church, by the side altar, is available with rocking chair and carpeted play area for babies and toddlers and their adult chaperones.

Hymn 73 – *The King shall come when morning dawns*







Words: Greek; tr. John Brownlie (1859-1925), alt. Music: St. Stephen, William Jones (1726-1800), alt.

CM

Opening Acclamation

Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.

The Collect for Purity

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. Amen.



Setting: From New Plainsong; David Hurd (b. 1950)

The Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Restore us, O God of hosts; Show the light of your countenance, and we shall be saved.

The Collect

The Lord be with you. And also with you.

Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen*.

The First Reading: 2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16

When the king was settled in his house, and the Lord had given him rest from all his enemies around him, the king said to the prophet Nathan, "See now, I am living in a house of cedar, but the ark of God stays in a tent." Nathan said to the king, "Go, do all that you have in mind; for the Lord is with you." But that same

night the word of the Lord came to Nathan: Go and tell my servant David: Thus says the Lord: Are you the one to build me a house to live in? I have not lived in a house since the day I brought up the people of Israel from Egypt to this day, but I have been moving about in a tent and a tabernacle. Wherever I have moved about among all the people of Israel, did I ever speak a word with any of the tribal leaders of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd my people Israel, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" Now therefore thus you shall say to my servant David: Thus says the Lord of hosts: I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel; and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make for you a great name, like the name of the great ones of the earth. And I will appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them, so that they may live in their own place, and be disturbed no more; and evildoers shall afflict them no more, as formerly, from the time that I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. Moreover the Lord declares to you that the Lord will make you a house. Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me; your throne shall be established forever.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people. *Thanks be to God.*

The Response: Canticle 15 - The Song of Mary Magnificat - Luke 1:46-55

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior; for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.

From this day all generations will call me blessed: the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name.

He has mercy on those who fear him *in every generation*.

He has shown the strength of his arm, he has scattered the proud in their conceit.

He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel, for he has remembered his promise of mercy,

The promise he made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children for ever.

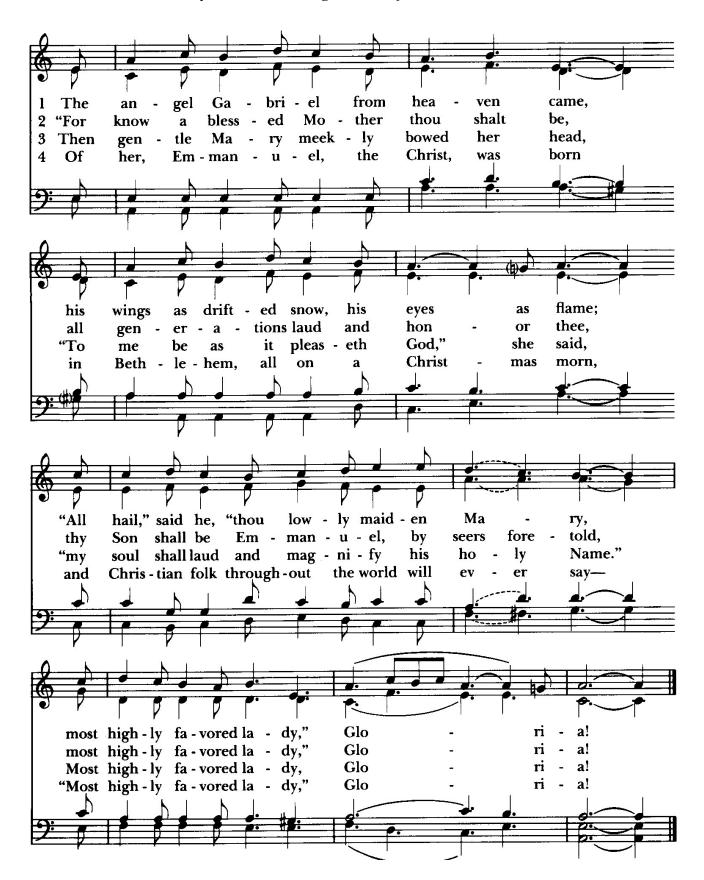
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

The Second Reading: Romans 16:25-27

Now to God who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed, and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the Gentiles, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faith-- to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people. Thanks be to God.

Hymn 265 – The angel Gabriel from heaven came



The Gospel: Luke 1:26-38

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke. *Glory to you, Lord Christ.*

In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." But she was much perplexed by his words and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And now, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his ancestor David. He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" The angel said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be holy; he will be called Son of God. And now, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son; and this is the sixth month for her who was said to be barren. For nothing will be impossible with God." Then Mary said, "Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

The Gospel of the Lord. *Praise to you, Lord Christ.*

The Homily – The Rev'd Bradford D. Clark

The Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

The Prayers of the People

In peace, we pray to you, Lord God. For all people in their daily life and work; For our families, friends, and neighbors, and for those who are alone.

For this community, the nation, and the world; For all who work for justice, freedom, and peace.

For the just and proper use of your creation; For the victims of hunger, fear, injustice, and oppression.

For all who are in danger, sorrow, or any kind of trouble; For those who minister to the sick, the friendless, and the needy.

For the peace and unity of the Church of God;

For all who proclaim the Gospel, and all who seek the Truth.

For Michael our Presiding Bishop, and Alan and Carol our Bishops, and for Brad, our Rector; and for all bishops and other ministers;

For all who serve God in the Church.

We thank you, Lord, for all the blessings of this life. In our own parish family, we pray for Ted and Sarah, our wardens; for the members of the Vestry, and for the staff of this parish. We give thanks and praise for those who celebrate birthdays this week: George Gorman, John Moberger, Anna Staubitz, and Patricia Campbell. We pray for those members of the parish serving in the armed forces: Jared Conway, Christopher Damon, and Aidan Tacheron. Today we offer our prayers in our Diocesan Cycle of Prayer: Episcopal Chaplaincy at Harvard, Cambridge, Lutheran Episcopal Chaplaincy at MIT, Cambridge, The Society of St. John the Evangelist, Cambridge, and Hospital Chaplaincies and Healthcare Chaplaincies. Today we offer prayers for the following Provinces of the worldwide Anglican Communion: The Anglican Church of Chile, The Church of England, and Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui. I invite your own thanksgivings now, either silently or aloud.

(pause for thanksgivings)

For the special needs and concerns of this congregation. In our own parish family, we pray for: *IRIS*; *SKYE*; *MARION* A.; *DJ* Asmutis-Silvia; *DANNY* Beaman; *JANICE* Bowers; *KRISTEN* Breen; *JOHANNA* C; *SARAH ANN* Codding; *MARK* Cotton; *MARY ELLEN* Donahue; *MATTHEW* Doolittle; *TALIA* Duff; *MICHELLE* F.; *WILLIAM* Farefield; *ANDREA* French; *DAVID* French; *BOB* Godbee; *NANCY* Grace; *KATHRYN* Hanauer-Stanton; *JEFF* Hirbour; *CAROL* Horsman Swencki; *KEITH* Humphrey; *CAROL* Kingston; *KRISTEN* Leary; *ROSIE* Lepine; *GLENN* Lohnes; *PHOEBE* Lowell; *MIDGE* Manning; *PATRICK* McCoy; *ELIZABETH* Meffen; *CANDACE* Mesa; *FREDY* Montengro; *PATRICIA* Moody; *MARY* O'Connor; *KAROL* Ostberg; *ANDREW* Parsons; *JOE* Pickul; *DEBORAH* Porter; *MARYANN* Rohrer; *WILLIAM* Rohrer; *LEVI* Shaw; *JANET* Smith; *TONI* Talas; *JAMES* Todak; *SYDNEE* Trimberger; *GEORGE* Walker; *LAURA* Williams; *JULIE* Wilson; *DAVID* Winn; *STEPHEN* Woods; *and BIRTH TO THREE*. I invite your own petitions now, either silently or aloud.

(pause for petitions)

We will exalt you, O God our King. *And praise your name for ever and ever.*

We pray for all who have died, that they may have a place in your eternal kingdom. We especially remember today all those in whose member the Christmas Flowers adorn the altar. I invite your own remembrances now, either silently or aloud.

(pause for remembrances)

Lord, let your loving-kindness be upon them;

Who put their trust in you.

Grant, O God, that your holy and life-giving Spirit may so move every human heart--especially hearts which choose war and self-interest over peace and service to others--that barriers which divide us may crumble, suspicions disappear, and hatreds cease; that our divisions being healed, we may live in justice and peace as your beloved community, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*.

Let us confess our sins against God and one another.

Almighty God, Source of all that is, Giver of every good gift: we confess that we have failed to honor you in the great diversity of the human family. We have desired to live in freedom, while building walls between ourselves and others. Forgive us, Holy God. Give us eyes to see you as you are revealed in all people. Strengthen us for the work of reconciliation rooted in love. Restore us in your image, to be beloved community, united in our diversity, even as you are one with Christ and the Spirit, Holy and undivided Trinity, now and for ever. Amen.

The Absolution

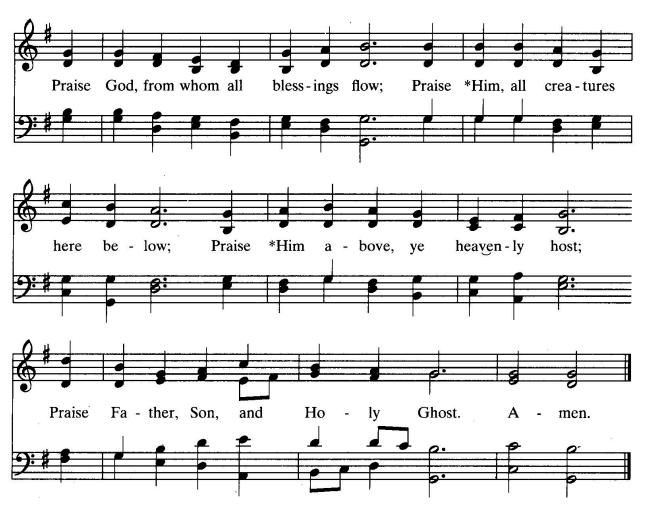
Almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. *Amen*.

The Peace
The Peace of the Lord be always with you. And also with you.

Announcements

The Offertory

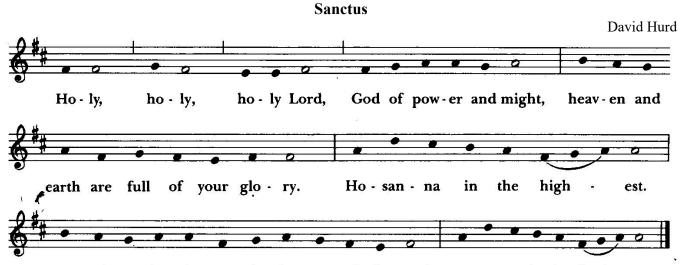
The Doxology



The Great Thanksgiving

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

We praise you and we bless you, holy and gracious God, source of life abundant. From before time you made ready your creation. Your Spirit moved over the deep and brought all things into being: sun, moon, and stars; earth, winds, and waters; and every living thing. You made us in your image and taught us to walk in your ways. But we rebelled against you, and wandered far away; and yet, as a mother cares for her children, you would not forget us. Time and again you called us to live in the fullness of your love. And so, this day we join with Saints and Angels in the chorus of praise that rings through eternity, lifting our voices to magnify you as we sing:



Bless - ed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Ho-san - na in the high - est.

Setting: From New Plainsong; David Hurd (b. 1950)

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from his mother Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me." After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me." Therefore, according to his command, O God,

We remember his death, We proclaim his resurrection, We await his coming in glory;

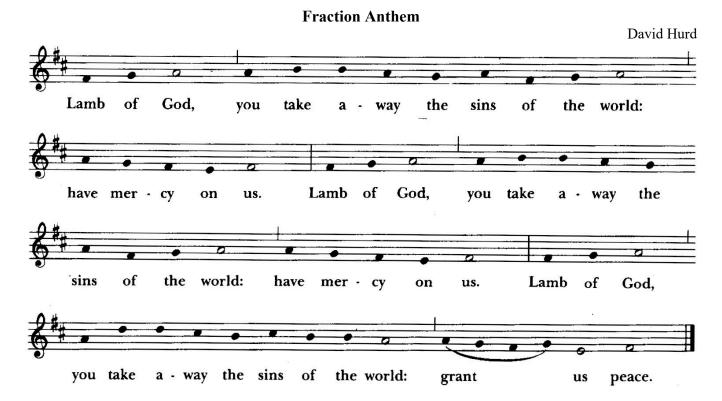
And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine. We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to

your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where, with all your saints, we may enter the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. *Amen.*

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

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, for ever and ever. Amen.

Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!



The Ministration of Communion

As was the practice of Jesus, Ascension Church observes the practice of open table fellowship. Wherever you are in your spiritual journey, you have a place at the table with Christ. If you desire not to receive the Sacraments, but wish to receive a blessing, please come forward to the communion rail and cross your arms over your chest. The celebrant will pause and share a blessing with you.

Please let it be known to the celebrant at the communion rail if you wish to receive a blessed gluten-free wafer.

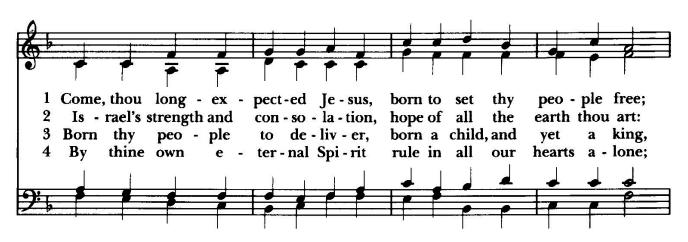
Post-Communion Prayer

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Blessing

Life is short, and we do not have too much time to gladden the hearts of those who walk the way with us; so be swift to love, make haste to be kind, and may the Blessing of the One who created you, redeemed you, and who walks always with you, be with you and all those you love, this day and always. *Amen.*

Hymn 66 – Come, thou long expected Jesus





Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788)

Music: Stuttgart, melody from Psalmodia Sacra, oder Andächtige und Schöne Gesange, 1715; adapt. and harm. William Henry Havergal (1793-1870), alt.

87. 87

The Dismissal

Go forth now into the world in peace to love and serve God and Neighbor. *Thanks be to God.*

Postlude

Permission to print, podcast / stream the music in this service obtained from ONE LICENSE with license #A-725499. All rights reserved.

Assisting at this morning's liturgy:

Altar Guild: Linda Messer, Debbie Moore Acolytes: Ralph Johnson, John Moberger Lectors: Sarah Churchill, Eric Gedsatd Ushers/Teller: Jennifer & Tim Clark Greeter: Sarah Churchill Hospitality: Potluck (Katie Finch setup)

Audio/Visual Technician: Lucas Callahan

Ascension Memorial Church is grateful to all the people who participate in its many active groups and ministries and who serve on the various committees. Below is a complete listing of members of the Committees, Ministries, and Groups, as well as the Staff and Vestry of Ascension. If you would like to know more about Ascension Memorial Church's committees, ministries, and groups, please contact the parish office at 978-356-2560 or amcipswich@verizon.net and we will provide you with the contact information for our leadership team. You may also learn more about our ministries through Realm on our website at amcipswich.org.

THE STAFF

The Rev'd Bradford D. Clark, Rector

Dr. Frank Corbin, Director of Music and Parish Business Administrator
Chase Delano, Coordinator of Communications, Community Engagement, and Special Projects & Programming
Geraldine Ortez, Bulletin Volunteer

THE VESTRY

Ted Flaherty, Senior Warden ~ Sarah Churchill, Junior Warden Kathy Dallos, Treasurer ~ Kristin Hertzig, Clerk Lucy Jepsen, Youth Representative Charlie Quimby, Youth Representative

Class of 2023	Class of 2024	Class of 2025
Joel Barrett	Deborah Couture	Jennifer Clark
Paula Jones	Vicki Hughes	Dawn Edwards
Kathy Pischke-Winn	Kate Turner	Eric Gedstad

COMMITTEES, MINISTRIES & GROUPS

COMMITTEES, MINISTRIES & GROOTS		
Finance	Special Events	Visioneers
Tom Parkins, Chair	Karen Esperson, Chair	Rosemary Attridge
Kathy Dallos	Rosemary Attridge	Kitty Bartholomew
Karen Esperson	Richard Attridge	Don Cheney
Glenn Roundy	Kitty Bartholomew	Kathy Dallos
Beth Smith	Frank Corbin	Chase Delano
ex officio:	Katie Finch	James Field
Brad Clark	Jane Good	Mark Godin
Frank Corbin	Patti Gorman	Lucy Jepsen
Ted Flaherty	Laura Gresh	Arthur Kazianis
	Jody Huffcut	Jenna Lees-Rolfe
Stewardship	Paula Jones	Charlie Quimby
Brad Clark	Gail Lull	Steve Suomi
Joel Barrett	Debbie Moore	
Warren Jaferian	Suzanne Nolan	Ipswich Youth Volunteers
Cindy Cedrone		(AMC Youth Group)
Paula Jones	Communications	Brad Clark
Beth Smith	Chase Delano, <i>Chair</i>	Kristin Hertzig
Steve Suomi	Doug Brendel	Charlie Quimby
Sam Otis	Lucas Callahan	Charlie Jepsen
	Brad Clark	Lucy Jepsen
Endowment	Frank Corbin	
Glenn Roundy, Chair	Ted Flaherty	
Ralph Johnson	Eric Gedstad	
Sam Otis	Karen Hawkes	

Paula Jones

Jenna Lees-Rolfe

Tom Parkins

David Scudder

Youth Ministry Brad Clark, *Chair*

Cristin Bradley
Doug Brendel
Edith Fouser
Glenn Gibbs
Jennifer Godfrey
Jon Green
Laura Gresh
Paula Jones
Kristin Hertzig
Sarah Joss-Green
Jenna Lees-Rolfe
Gail Lull
Jennifer Reed
Joanna Suomi

Community Outreach

Dan Alexson Kitty Bartholomew Doug Brendel Dawn Edwards

Buildings & Grounds Mark Godin, *Chair*

Rick Attridge
Bob Brown
Brad Clark
Eric Gedstad
John Moberger
Sarah Churchill

Green Initiative Jody Huffcut, *Chair*

Kitty Bartholomew
Karen Esperson
Katie Finch
Erica Fuller
Patti Gorman
Paula Jones
Suzanne Nolan

Lawn Barbers Eric Gedstad, Coordinator

Paul Damon Karen Esperson Ted Flaherty Glenn Gibbs Mark Godin

Hospitality - Coffee Hour Katie Finch & Rosemary Attridge Co-Chairs

Richard Attridge Tyler Berube Marge & Bob Brown Deborah Couture Kathy Dallos Karen Esperson Jody Huffcut Ralph Johnson Paula Jones & Robert Spurrier Debbie Moore Suzanne Nolan Alura & R.J. Ollio Joan Williams David Winn & Kathy Pischke-Winn The Vestry

Becoming Beloved Community

Katherine Pischke-Winn, Chair

Rev. Brad Clark Debbie Moore Jane Carolan

Bible Study Carol Kingston, *Chair*

Education for Ministry Vicki Hughes, *Chair*

Book Group Brad Clark, *Chair*

Women's Group Beth Smith, *Chair*

Men's Group Brad Clark, *Chair*

Rick Atridge
Eric Gedstad
Glenn Gibbs
Mark Godin
George Gorman
Charlie Moore
Bryan Townsend
Steve Wilson

Worship Brad Clark, *Chair*

Doug Brendel
Lucas Callahan
Frank Corbin
Dawn Edwards
Ted Flaherty
Caroline Jepsen
Carol Kingston
Paul Philpy
Robert Spurrier

Tiki's Friends Jennifer Clark,

Chair

Jennifer Clark, Chair
Dan Alexson
Doug Brendel
Linda Brown
Marge Brown
Heather Campbell
Christine Day
Ted Flaherty
Glenn Gibbs
Laura Gresh
Ed Rauscher
Lillian Reilly

Judith Grant Scholarships

Brad Clark Trish Everitt Lucy Martineau John Moberger

Helen Ayer Awards

Jennifer Clark Karen Esperson Suzanne Nolan

Lay Visitors Brad Clark, Chair Kitty Bartholomew Doug Brendel Linda Brown Brad Clark Jennifer Clark Jim Di Napoli Karen Esperson Jim Field Paula Jones Carol Kingston Deborah Lindahl John Moberger Anne O'Mara **Dottie Phillips** Paul Philpy Joanne Ventola John Walker

Music Frank Corbin, *Chair*

Doug Brendel
Brad Clark
Trish Everitt
Sonja Dahlgren Pryor
Kate Turner
Jane Wolff

The Choir Frank Corbin,

Lucas Callahan Lori Coppen Christine Day Trish Everitt Marisa Exelby **Roxy Giddings** Ralph Johnson Penny Jones Carol Kingston Hugh McCall John Moberger R. J. Ollio **Tom Parkins** Sherrill Pierce Thomas Schmidt Marion Sokolov Judith Thurston Tanya Tupper

Altar Guild 8:00 Joanne Ventola, *Chair*

Jody Huffcut
Paula Jones
Dottie Phillips
Joan Williams

Acolytes/Lectors 8:00

Richard Ostberg Edward Rauscher Michael Smith Robert Spurrier John Walker

Ushers 8:00

Karen Esperson Margot Hayden Jody Huffcut Rick Ostberg Mike Smith Steve Ventola

Tellers 8:00

Karen Esperson Rick Ostberg Dottie Phillips Stephen Ventola Joan Williams

Altar Guild 10:15 Joanne Ventola, *Chair*

Marge Brown Phyllis Greene Linda Messer Debbie Moore

Acolytes 10:15 Tyler Berube

Jane Carolan Charlie Jepsen Caroline Jepsen Lucy Jepsen Ralph Johnson John Moberger Paul Philpy Charlie Quimby

Lectors 10:15

Tyler Berube
Doug Brendel
Jane Carolan
Kathy Dallos
Dawn Edwards
Ted Flaherty
Eric Gedstad
Glenn Gibbs
Vicki Hughes
Ralph Johnson
John Moberger
Jack O'Mara
Paul Philpy

Ushers 10:15

Joel Barrett
Jane Carolan
Jennifer & Tim Clark
Ted Flaherty
Ralph Johnson
Glenn Roundy
Kate Turner

Tellers 10:15

Donald Cheney Jennifer Clark Ted Flaherty Ralph Johnson Kate Turner