

Grace Episcopal Church

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

Visitation by the Bishop of WNC Confirmation and Reception December 21, 2025

10:30 A.M. HOLY EUCHARIST RITE II

# Welcome and Announcements

**Prelude:** Savior of the Nations, Come

J.S. Bach

As the bells ring, the congregation is asked to stand.

**Opening Hymn:** O come, O come, Emmanuel verses 1, 6-8 of **56** 

### The Acclamation

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

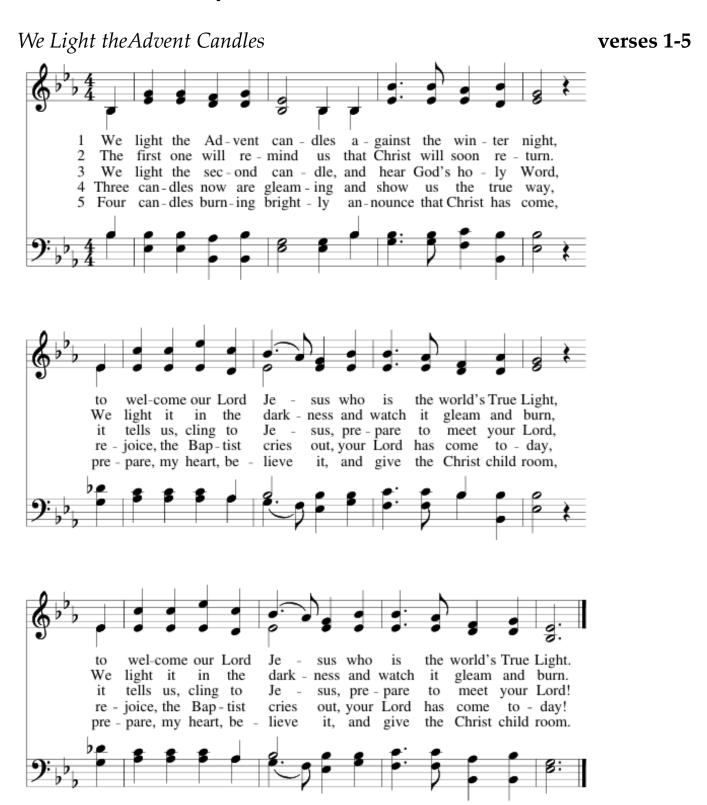
People And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen.

Bishop There is one Body and one Spirit;

People There is one hope in God's call to us;

Bishop One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism; People One God and Father of us all.

# The Collect for Purity



## THE WORD OF GOD

#### The First Lesson: Isaiah 7:10-16

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, saying, Ask a sign of the LORD your God; let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, and I will not put the LORD to the test. Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel. He shall eat curds and honey by the time he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good. For before the child knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land before whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted."

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

People Thanks be to God.

### **Psalm 80:1-7, 16-18** (chanted)

Hear, O Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph / like a flock; shine forth, you that are enthroned u-pon the cherubim. In the presence of Ephraim, Benjamin, / and Manasseh, stir up your strength and / come to help us.

Restore us, O / God of hosts; show the light of your countenance, and we / shall be saved. O Lord / God of hosts, how long will you be angered, despite the prayers / of your people?

You have fed them with the / bread of tears; you have given them bowls of / tears to drink. You have made us the derision / of our neighbors, and our enemies laugh / us to scorn.

Restore us, O / **God of hosts**; show the light of your countenance, and we / **shall be saved**. Let your hand be upon the man of / **your right hand**, the son of man you have made so strong / **for yourself**.

And so will we never turn a-way from you; give us life that we may call u-pon your Name.

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

#### The Second Lesson: Romans 1:1-7

Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, set apart for the gospel of God, which he promised beforehand through his prophets in the holy scriptures, the gospel concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh and was declared to be Son of God with power according to the spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name, including yourselves who are called to belong to Jesus Christ,

To all God's beloved in Rome, who are called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

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

People Thanks be to God.

**Gospel Hymn:** Watchman, tell us of the night **640** 

Reader The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

# The Gospel: Matthew 1:18-25

Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,"

which means, "God is with us." When Joseph awoke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him; he took her as his wife, but had no marital relations with her until she had borne a son; and he named him Jesus.

Reader The Gospel of the Lord.

People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Homily

The Right Reverend José McLoughlin

#### The Presentation and Examination of the Candidates

Bishop The Candidates will now be presented.

Presenter I present these persons for Confirmation.

#### **Confirmands**

Jeff Ambrose\* Christian Millican

Kathy Ambrose\*
Gael Paschall
Hannah Booth
Leslie Schoof
Patrice Crabtree
Roger Snyder

Stephen Crabtree

Carole Lentz

Presenter I present these persons for Reception.

# Reception

Mia Lehrer Sharon Mosher\*

Kerry Mosher\* \*From St. Philip's, Brevard

Bishop Do you reaffirm your renunciation of evil?

Candidate I do.

Bishop Do you renew your commitment to Jesus Christ?

Candidate I do, and with God's grace I will follow him as my Savior and Lord.

After all have been presented, the Bishop addresses the congregation, saying

Bishop Will you who witness these vows do all in your power to support

these persons in their life in Christ?

People We will.

Bishop Let us join with those who are committing themselves to Christ

and renew our own baptismal covenant.

The Baptismal Covenant

Bishop Do you believe in God the Father?

People I believe in God, the Father almighty,

creator of heaven and earth.

Bishop Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

People I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit

and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate,

was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven,

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Bishop Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

People I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy catholic Church,

the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body,

and the life everlasting.

Bishop Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship,

in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers?

People I will, with God's help.

Bishop Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever

you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

People I will, with God's help.

Bishop Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News

of God in Christ?

*People* I will, with God's help.

Bishop Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving

your neighbor as yourself?

People I will, with God's help.

Bishop Will you strive for justice and peace among all

people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

People I will, with God's help.

# **Prayers for the Candidates**

Bishop Let us now pray for these persons who have renewed their

commitment to Christ.

*Leader* Deliver them, O Lord, from the way of sin and death.

People Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader Open their hearts to your grace and truth.

People Lord, hear our prayer.

*Leader* Fill them with your holy and life-giving Spirit.

People Lord, hear our prayer.

*Leader* Keep them in the faith and communion of our holy Church.

People Lord, hear our prayer.

*Leader* Teach them to love others in the power of the Spirit.

People Lord, hear our prayer.

Leader Send them into the world in witness to your love.

People Lord, hear our prayer.

*Leader* Bring them to the fullness of your peace and glory.

People Lord, hear our prayer.

Bishop Almighty God, we thank you that by the death and

resurrection of your Son Jesus Christ you have overcome sin and brought us to yourself, and that by the sealing of your Holy Spirit you have bound us to your service. Renew in these your servants the covenant you have made with them at their Baptism. Send them forth in the power of that Spirit to perform the service you set before them; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.** 

# The Confirmation and Reception

# The Prayers of the People: Form III

The Leader and People pray responsively

*Leader* Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;

*People* That we all may be one.

Leader Grant that every member of the Church may truly and

humbly serve you;

People That your Name may be glorified by all people.

Leader We pray for all bishops, priests, and deacons;

People That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and

Sacraments.

Leader We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations

of the world;

People That there may be justice and peace on the earth.

Leader Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;

People That our works may find favor in your sight.

Leader Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;

People That they may be delivered from their distress.

*Leader* Give to the departed eternal rest.

People Let light perpetual shine upon them.

Leader We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;

People May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.

Leader Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.

Silence. The People may add their own petitions.

Leader For Sean, our Presiding Bishop, for José, our own Bishop, for all bishops and other ministers, and for all the holy people of God; and in the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, for The Anglican Church of Burundi; and in the Diocesan Cycle of Prayer, Holy Family, Mills River and St. Mary's & St. Stephen's, Morganton.

Leader Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit; give them courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of your salvation. We pray especially for Linda & David Adams, Joan & Allyn Aldrich, David Gentry, Anne Jarema, Todd Kaderabek, Nancy Lewis, The Reverend Timothy McRee, Wayne & Laura Parton, Elaine Potter, Debra Rice, Ann Robinson, Kyle Rhodes, Jeff Russell, Becky & Bill Smith, Laura, Tsz-yan (G-Yen) and Roger Snyder, Lydia Sweatt, Shannon Townsend, and Lydia Vader Voort & Andy Steele, Ed & Marla Woeckener... Are there others?

Leader Let us give thanksgiving for those celebrating birthdays, especially Ed Woeckener, Nora Jones, Bill Smith, and Andy Sneed; as well as for those celebrating anniversaries, especially Susan & Andy Sneed, Chal & Hugh Vaughan, Judy & Earl Booze, Kim & Rick Hayes.

Leader We commend to your mercy all who have recently died, especially Bob Ray, Peggy MacDonald Hobson; and on the anniversary of their deaths we pray for Ann Herman, Bob Bruce, Jim McCredie, Mary Beth Buchholz, and Jack Keith, and for those who still grieve them...Are there others? For all who have died in the communion of your Church, and those whose faith is known to you alone, that, with all the saints, they may have rest in that place where there is no pain or grief, but life eternal, we pray to you, O Lord.

The Celebrant adds a concluding Collect.

#### The Peace

Bishop The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People And also with you.

The Ministers and People greet one another in the name of the Lord.

# THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Anthem: Daughter Zion, Now Rejoice J.S. Bach

**Doxology** Dix

Praise to God, immortal praise,
For the love that crowns our days;
Bounteous Source of every joy,
Let Thy praise our tongues employ,
All to Thee, our God, we owe,
Source whence all our blessings flow.

# The Great Thanksgiving: Eucharistic Prayer A

**BCP 361** 

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

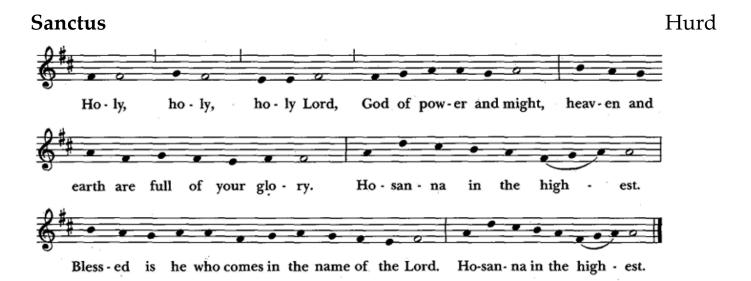
Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People We lift them to the Lord.

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.People It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Celebrant It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Because you sent your beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:



The people stand or kneel.

*Celebrant* Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to

share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, 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 we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

*Celebrant* We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ: 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*.

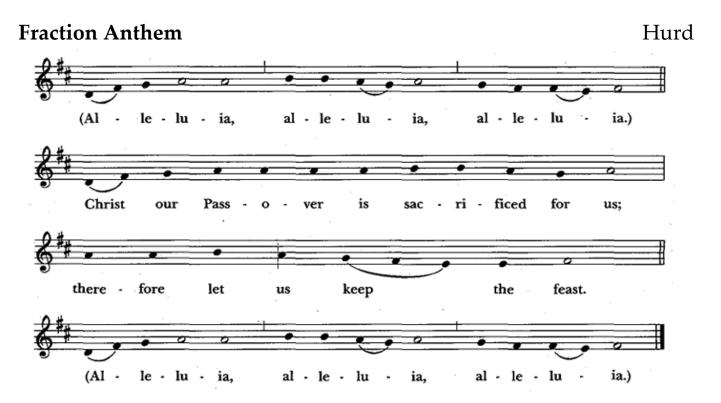
## The Lord's Prayer

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

# People and Celebrant

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.

# The Breaking of the Bread



#### **Invitation to Communion**

(gluten free wafers available upon request)

# **Communion Hymns:**

Savior of the nations, come! 54
Creator of the stars of night 60

# **Post Communion Prayer**

Celebrant Let us pray.

Celebrant and People

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.

# Sending Forth of the Lay Eucharistic Visitors

When a Eucharistic Minister is to be sent forth, the following is said

Celebrant In the name of God and this congregation, we send you forth

bearing these holy gifts, that those to whom you go may share

with us in the Communion of Christ's body and blood.

People We who are many are one body because we all share

one bread and one cup.

# The Blessing

Closing Hymn: Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates 436

#### **Dismissal**

Leader Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

# People Thanks be to God.

**Postlude:** Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates David Lasky

CC DO

The Aumbry Candle is given to the Glory of God by Nora & Steve Jones in celebration of the birthday of their grandson, Walker Webb.

The Altar greenery is given to the glory of God by Vickie Sealock in honor of her sister Nancy Anders' birthday.



<u>Confirmands:</u> Jeff Ambrose, Kathy Ambrose, Hannah Booth, Patrice Crabtree, Stephen Crabtree, Carole Lentz, Christian Millican, Gael Paschall, Leslie Schoof, Roger Snyder.

Reception: Mia Lehrer, Kerry Mosher, Sharon Mosher.

### LAY MINISTERS

<u>Crucifer</u>: Jack Frue <u>Torches</u>: Steve Birkhofer, Susie Dupree <u>Chalicist</u>: Greg Townsend <u>Lectors</u>: Ben Dupree, Jenny Thomas <u>Intercessor</u>: Vicki Vest <u>Presenters</u>: Sally & David Withers <u>Ushers</u>: Paul & Vicki Vest <u>Greeters</u>: Ginny Moser, Melanie Drunkenmiller <u>Vestry Member of the Day</u>: Ron Sims

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

# Bishop's Discretionary Fund Offering

Today our open plate offering (undesignated cash, change and checks) goes to support the Bishop's discretionary fund. Please be generous.

Remember to join us in the Parish Hall after the service for lunch.



The Flower Guild will decorate the altar and chancel areas, as well as the two front doors. Therefore, donations are welcomed to cover the costs for this special display. The memorials and thanksgivings will be published in the newsletter after Christmas. Use one of the Christmas Offering envelopes located in the pew. If you have questions, please contact Jennifer Witt at jmwitt5384@gamil.com.

# **Pastoral Care Requests**

The Pastoral Care Team is asking that your prayer requests now be submitted to the team by using the Prayer Request Form, which can be found on our Website – Graceavl.com – or in the Growing in Grace Newsletter. This will ensure the accuracy of our master prayer list which is used to produce the bulletin, Prayers of the People and the GIG newsletter. Your Pastoral Care Team appreciates your support.

# Special Advent Taizé Service 6:00 p.m. this Tuesday Evening

Consider an early gift just for yourself — a well deserved respite-moment with Grace's Taizé styled service. The Tuesday, December 23 service will feature special music as well as a sneak peek at the church decked out in her greens. The service promises an inviting and soothing sanctuary of authentic peace and quiet to unburden, replenish and reflect. Please join us!



4:00 p.m. – Christmas Eve and Paper Bag Pageant

8:00 p.m. – Christmas Eve Choral Festival & Holy Eucharist

10:00 a.m. – Christmas Day Holy Eucharist

10:30 a.m. - Christmas Lessons & Carols - December 28

# WEEKLY GATHERINGS

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd: On hiatus.

**Monday Morning Bible Study:** *Mondays at 10:30 a.m.* 

We study the scriptures for the upcoming Sunday service. Please join us virtually by clicking on the button at graceavl.com.

Taizé: Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m.

Weekly Taizé services are held in the sanctuary. Healing prayer is offered throughout the service for oneself or on behalf of someone else. For more information on Taizé at Grace, visit: graceavl.com/taize-grace.

On Hiatus until January 7: Soaking Prayer: Wednesdays at 12:00 noon Meets in the Sanctuary. This 45 minute service uniquely blends Holy Silence with Holy Spirit. The silence allows the Spirit to move deeper into the needs and life struggles that we face week-to-week.

On Hiatus until January 8: Women Walking the Way: Thursdays at 8:20 a.m. Meet in the Bird Sanctuary parking lot by Beaver Lake for a walk around the lake and some spiritual reflection with like-minded women. For more information, contact Ann Lewis at annaflewis7@gmail.com or call her at 815-441-2282.

#### GRACE'S PRAYER LIST

For Parishioners: Linda & David Adams, Joan & Allyn Aldrich, David Gentry, Anne Jarema, Todd Kaderabek, Nancy Lewis, Fr. Timothy McRee, Wayne & Laura Parton, Elaine Potter, Debra Rice, Ann Robinson, Kyle Rhodes, Jeff Russell, Becky & Bill Smith, Lydia (E) Sweatt, Shannon Townsend, Laura, Tsz-yan (G-Yen) and Roger Snyder, Lydia Vander Voort & Andy Steele, Mary Ann & Bill Warren, Ed & Marla Woeckener.

For Homebound Parishioners and Those in Healthcare Facilities: Martha Boyette, Ed Denison, Nancy Sink, Rita Spragg, Walt & Joyce Noble.

For Others: (Names will remain on the list for six weeks unless we hear otherwise). Geraldine Allen (aunt of Carole McClellan); Allen (brother of Cheryl Aull); Aubrey (friend of Joe & Cheryl Aull); Bridget Black (cousin of Lorie Tola); the Brongel family (daughter and family of Jackie Schauer); **Donna Boone** (mother of Hannah Buckner's daughter-in-law); Bob Brennan (relative of Anne Jarema); Molly Breslin (friend of Gary Coffey); Mary Daniels Chapman and Tim Chapman (friends of Nancy Porter); Peter Fitzpatrick (friend of Eleanor Jameson); Jill Franklin (friend of Rusty Herman); **Alex Freeman** (son-in-law of Rusty Herman); Randy Herron (friend of Lucy & Larry Bowen); Jenny Gettys (sister of Katherine Kaderabek); Debbie Howard (mother of Sara Howard); Tom Hunnicutt (friend of Rusty Herman); Jim Kaderabek, (father of Todd Kaderabek); Sue Larsen (sister of Kristen Dusenbery); Judy Wells Meehan (friend of Rusty Herman); Bunky Manship (friend of Rusty Herman); Daniel McRee (son of Fr. Timothy McRee) and David (husband of Daniel McRee); Megan (friend of George & Pat Davis); Mel (cousin of Pat Davis); **Diana Noble** (daughter of Walt & Joyce Nobel); Meredith Peppers (cousin of Carole McClellan); Kip & Val Pritchard (friends of Cliff); Valerie (daughter of Sharon & Jim Rains); Kevin Randall (friend of Ron & Jeanne Sims); Sarah Ray (cousin of Doug McClellan); Tom Ressler (friend of Anne Plyler); Peter John Rouse, Sr. (grandfather of Mike Vines); Wiley Thornton (cousin of Carol McClellan); Stephanie Tugurian (daughter of Ron & Jeanne Sims).

For the recently deceased: Bob Ray, Peggy MacDonald Hobson.

For those celebrating birthdays: Ed Woeckener, Nora Jones, Bill Smith, Andy Sneed.

For those celebrating anniversaries: Susan & Andy Sneed, Chal & Hugh Vaughan, Judy & Earl Booze, Kim & Rick Hayes.

For Those in Service to Our Country: **Tommy Brown** (grandson of Ed & Marla Woeckener); **Matt** & **Martha Cardenas** (daughter & son-in-law of Hannah Buckner); **John Davids** (nephew of Elaine Potter); **Matthew George** (son of Zoe Davis); **Jason Marino** (son of Lynda

McCredie); **Brady Paschall** (granddaughter of Gael Paschall); **Sarah Jane Wilkey** (daughter of Diane & Tony Wilkey).

For Those in the Episcopal Church: Sean, our presiding Bishop; José, our Bishop; the clergy, vestry, staff, ministries, and people of this parish; in the Anglican Cycle of Prayer, we pray for The Anglican Church of Burundi; and in the Diocesan Cycle of Prayer, Holy Family, Mills River and St. Mary's & St. Stephen's, Morganton.

For our Nation and the Wider World: For the President and his Cabinet; for Congress; and for our country; for victims of violence around the world; for local agencies and those who work for relief of the poor; for stewardship of the environment; for resolution of crises throughout our world.



#### **Grace's Mission Statement**

Grace Church exists as a diverse community of the Body of Christ, to serve Jesus Christ our Lord. Our mission is to nurture and develop each individual to reach out and share God's love.



## **Grace Episcopal Church**

871 Merrimon Avenue, Asheville, NC 28804 828-254-1086 Office Hours: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Wednesday 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. office@graceavl.com

The Right Reverend José McLoughlin, Bishop
The Reverend Timothy McRee, The Reverend John Rice, Clergy
James Cassarino, Director of Music
Cathy Adkins, Organist
Anne Spruance, Office Administrator
Katie Douglas, Finance Manager
Angel Stoudt, Sexton