

October 4, 2026



It's Time to Press on Toward the Goal

LIVING HOPE
LUTHERAN CHURCH

welcome to

WORSHIP

We're so glad you decided to worship with us today. You could have chosen to be anywhere this morning, and you chose to spend your time with Living Hope. Thank you! It's an honor to have you here and to have the chance to fill you with hope. Welcome to Living Hope.

CURRENT SERIES INFO

Current Series: The Beginning of the End

The cartoon character holds a sign saying, "The End Is Near." For Christians, this is not a message of fear. Instead, it is a message of watchful hope. Scripture teaches that the End Times began with Christ's first coming, especially his death and resurrection. Christ will come again on judgment day. Now we live in that in-between time, when salvation has been won, but full glory is still to come. It's the beginning of the end.

Jesus himself makes clear that no one knows the day or hour of his return. This uncertainty is not meant to trouble us, but to keep us spiritually awake. Each day becomes an opportunity to live in repentance and faith, turning from sin and trusting fully in Christ's finished work for us.

Our preparation for the end is not about trying to predict signs or earn God's favor. Instead, it is about remaining rooted in Jesus: hearing the Word, receiving the sacraments, and trusting the promises of forgiveness. These are God's ways of keeping us ready.

"The Beginning of the End" reminds us that history is moving toward our own death and toward Christ's return. For believers, that end is truly a beginning.

Today's Focus: Come and Claim Your Prize

You round the final bend; the end is in sight! You're so close, it might be tempting to let up. Especially when you know that the prize at the end is already yours, it has already been won! As we live through the Beginning of the End, waiting for the return of our Savior, we might be tempted to wait passively. After all, Christ has conquered sin and death, the victory is won. But Paul encourages us today in his letter to the Philippians that instead of prompting passiveness, the prize Christ has won for us prompts us to action. His love directs us to live very different lives from the rest of the world while we wait for his return. It's time to press on toward the goal of knowing our Savior!



ABOUT LIVING HOPE

Living Hope Lutheran Church is a brand new mission church on Chattanooga's east side. We are funded by and a member of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, a collection of over 1,300 churches across the United States and Canada.

Living Hope succeeds in its mission when hope forever in Jesus brings hope for every day in life.

For more on our mission, background, and beliefs just visit our website: livinghopechatt.com

ABOUT WORSHIP

Worship at Living Hope is designed to fill you with hope! The message you hear at Living Hope will center you on your Savior, Jesus, and what he's done for you. Worship isn't just about filling up God with praise. Worship is all about *God filling you* with good news!

We follow a basic order of service, called the liturgy. In the message, in specially selected Scripture readings, and in carefully crafted songs, prayers, and creeds, the liturgy proclaims the good news (gospel) about Jesus from start to finish. Gospel-centered worship is also designed to include participation of those in attendance.

- Feel free to get up to use restrooms **at any time** during the service.
- **Restrooms** are located around the corner to your right.
- A **nursery** is available for small children out the left-hand side of the worship space. Just look for the **Kid's Zone sign** just past the info corner by the main entrance. Feel free to use that space during worship. The service will be livestreamed into the room.
- **Kid activity bags** are available on a table by the entrance to the sanctuary.
- Please fill out a **connection card**. It's our best way to stay in touch with you and thank you for joining us today! You'll find connection cards on the table at the entrance.
- Everything you need to enjoy today's worship will be found in this Worship Folder. **Songs** will also be found on the screen.

Show friends where you are—check in!

 [/livinghopechatt](https://www.facebook.com/livinghopechatt)

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Fight the Good Fight

CW 876



1 Fight the good fight with all your might; Christ is your
 2 Run the straight race through God's good grace; lift up your
 3 Cast care a - side, lean on your guide; his bound-less
 4 Faint not nor fear, his arms are near; he chang - es



strength and Christ your right. Lay hold on life, and
 eyes and seek his face. Life with its way be -
 mer - cy will pro - vide. Lean, and the trust - ing
 not, and you are dear. On - ly be - lieve, and



it shall be your joy and crown e - ter - nal - ly.
 fore us lies; Christ is the path and Christ the prize.
 soul shall prove Christ is its life and Christ its love.
 you will see that Christ is Lord e - ter - nal - ly.

Text: John S. B. Monsell, 1811–1875, alt.

Tune: The Methodist Harmonist, New York, 1821

Text and tune: Public domain

The name of the Triune God and sign of the cross remind worshippers of their baptisms.

Call to Worship

In the name of the Father and of the ✝ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

In every worship service we confess our sins then cling to the forgiveness that Jesus gives us. Confession is called the “heartbeat of the Christian.”

Confession & Absolution

God invites us to come into his presence and worship him with humble and penitent hearts. Therefore, let us acknowledge our sinfulness and ask him to forgive us.

Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful,

and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions.

I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good.

For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity.

But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray:

Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.

God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son as the atoning sacrifice for sin. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

How Great Thou Art

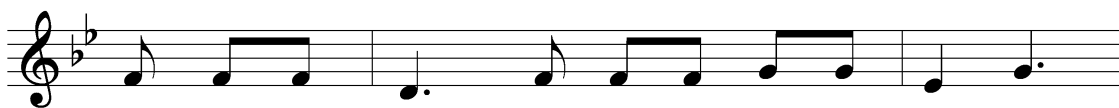
CW 612 sts. 1, Ref, 3



1 O Lord my God, when I in awe-some won - der
3 And when I think that God, his Son not spar - ing,



con - sid - er all the works thy hand hath made,
sent him to die, I scarce can take it in,



I see the stars, I hear the might - y thun - der,
that on the cross my bur - den glad - ly bear - ing



thy pow'r through - out the u - ni - verse dis - played;
he bled and died to take a - way my sin;



Then sings my soul, my Sav-ior-God, to thee, How great thou



art! How great thou art! Then sings my soul, my



Sav-ior-God to thee, How great thou art! How great thou art!

Text: Stuart W. K. Hine, 1899–1989 Tune: Swedish

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Prayer of the Day

Almighty God, in your bountiful goodness, keep us safe from every evil of body and soul. Make us ready, with cheerful hearts, to do whatever pleases you; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

GOD'S WORD

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 5:1–7

¹I will sing for the one I love
a song about his vineyard:
My loved one had a vineyard
on a fertile hillside.

²He dug it up and cleared it of stones
and planted it with the choicest vines.
He built a watchtower in it
and cut out a winepress as well.
Then he looked for a crop of good grapes,
but it yielded only bad fruit.

³“Now you dwellers in Jerusalem and people of Judah,
judge between me and my vineyard.

⁴What more could have been done for my vineyard
than I have done for it?
When I looked for good grapes,
why did it yield only bad?

⁵Now I will tell you

what I am going to do to my vineyard:
I will take away its hedge,
and it will be destroyed;
I will break down its wall,
and it will be trampled.
⁶I will make it a wasteland,
neither pruned nor cultivated,
and briers and thorns will grow there.
I will command the clouds
not to rain on it.”
⁷The vineyard of the LORD Almighty
is the nation of Israel,
and the people of Judah
are the vines he delighted in.
And he looked for justice, but saw bloodshed;
for righteousness, but heard cries of distress.

Psalm

Psalm 80:1-3, 16-19

Hear us, Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph like a flock.
You who sit enthroned between the cherubim,
shine forth before Ephraim, Benjamin and Manasseh.
Awaken your might; come and save us.
Restore us, O God;
make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.

Your vine is cut down, it is burned with fire;

at your rebuke your people perish.

Let your hand rest on the man at your right hand,

the son of man you have raised up for yourself.

Then we will not turn away from you;

revive us, and we will call on your name.

Restore us, Lord God Almighty;

make your face shine on us, that we may be saved. Amen.

Please Stand

The Gospel centers our worship as it shares with us the good news about Christ. We stand out of respect for our Savior as we hear about his words and deeds

Gospel

Matthew 21:33–43

³³“Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place. ³⁴When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit.

³⁵“The tenants seized his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. ³⁶Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way. ³⁷Last of all, he sent his son to them. ‘They will respect my son,’ he said.

³⁸“But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, ‘This is the heir. Come, let’s kill him and take his inheritance.’ ³⁹So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

⁴⁰“Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?”

⁴¹“He will bring those wretches to a wretched end,” they replied, “and he will rent the vineyard to other tenants, who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time.”

⁴²Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures:

“ ‘The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone;
the Lord has done this, and it is marvelous in our eyes’?

⁴³“Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people who will produce its fruit.

The gospel of the Lord

Praise be to Christ!

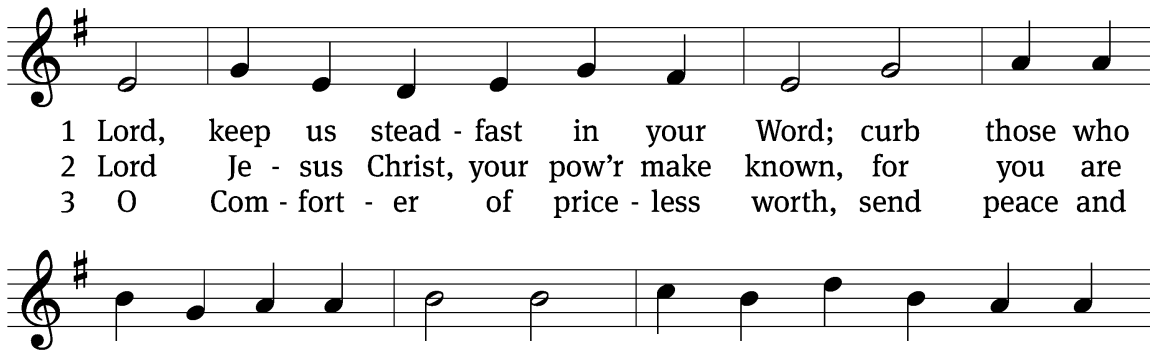
Please be seated

Children's Message

Children are invited to come forward into the front for the children's message. They will be given a special message designed just for them that ties in with the sermon.

Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word

CW 862



1 Lord, keep us stead - fast in your Word; curb those who
2 Lord Je - sus Christ, your pow'r make known, for you are
3 O Com - fort - er of price - less worth, send peace and

by de - ceit or sword would seek to o - ver - throw your
Lord of lords a - lone; de - fend your Chris - ten - dom that
u - ni - ty on earth; sup - port us in our fi - nal



Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.
Tune: Geistliche Lieder zu Wittenberg, Wittenberg, 1543, ed. Joseph Klug
Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon Reading

Philippians 3:12–21

¹²Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.

¹³Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, ¹⁴I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

¹⁵All of us, then, who are mature should take such a view of things. And if on some point you think differently, that too God will make clear to you. ¹⁶Only let us live up to what we have already attained.

¹⁷Join together in following my example, brothers and sisters, and just as you have us as a model, keep your eyes on those who live as we do. ¹⁸For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. ¹⁹Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things.

²⁰But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

Come and Claim Your Prize

Questions to consider while hearing the sermon:

1. What was so strange about Wyndham Halswelle's race?
2. What is the prize Paul is talking about?
3. What kind of knowledge do we have of Christ?
4. Forgetting about our prize means we trade eternity for _____.
5. Running like we are trying to win looks like; _____ what is _____,
_____ toward what is _____ and _____ on toward the _____.
6. Why does Paul press on toward the goal?
7. If someone's "god is their stomach", what does that mean?
8. Why is Paul so confident and focused on his race?
9. Jesus gave you a new identity as a _____.
10. What should direct our thoughts, actions and priorities?

Discussion questions:

1. While we won't fully enjoy Christ's prize until heaven, what limited enjoyment do we have from it right now?
2. Take a look at the gospel reading and the Old Testament reading for this week. In the context of knowing that Jesus has given you a new identity, what comfort can you find from these portions of God's Word?
3. Do you think there is a meaningful difference between the terms "enemies of Christ" and "enemies of the cross of Christ"? Come up with some examples what this term describes.
4. Paul says that "our citizenship is in heaven." How does the context of what we know about the Philippians (Romans living in Macedon) help you understand your heavenly citizenship?

5. Give a few examples of how Christ “carries you to the finish line” in your life.
6. Paul’s encouragements in this reading are a beautiful weaving of justification and sanctification. Put that weaving into your own words for someone that might hear what Paul says and misunderstand it by taking it too far in either direction.

Please Stand

Create In Me a Pure Heart

The musical score is written on six staves of five-line systems. Each staff begins with a treble clef. The melody is composed of quarter, eighth, and half notes, with various rests and phrasing slurs. The lyrics are printed below the notes, aligned with the syllables. The text is: "Cre - ate in me a pure heart, O God, and re - new a right spir - it with - in me. Do not cast me a - way from your pres - ence or take your Ho - ly Spir - it from me. Re - store to me the joy of your sal - va - tion, and up - hold, up - hold me with your free Spir - it." The final note of the piece is a half note on the G line of the sixth staff, followed by a double bar line.

Cre - ate in me a
pure heart, O God, and re - new a right spir - it with -
in me. Do not cast me a - way from your
pres - ence or take your Ho - ly Spir - it from
me. Re - store to me the joy of your sal - va - tion, and up -
hold, up - hold me with your free Spir - it.

Christians have used the Apostles' Creed since the second century to unite themselves together and to obey God's invitation to "confess with our mouth and believe with our hearts" (Romans 10:9).

Apostles' Creed

Living in a world where people believe that the universe was formed through chance and accident, what do you believe?

I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

Living in a world where people are confronted with the guilt and punishment of sin, what do you believe Jesus did for you?

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

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,

suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

Living in a world where people are without hope and certainty, what do you believe?

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church,

the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Please be seated

Offering

We collect offerings out of thanks for what God has done for us so that we can support gospel work here and around the world. You can give using the envelope provided in your worship folder. You'll also find instructions there for how to give online if you'd prefer. Thank you for supporting our gospel ministry! If you are a guest with us don't feel obligated to contribute. This service is our free gift to you!

Praying the prayer of the church is a time when we can pray for people in all kinds of circumstances and for the work of God's church on earth.

Prayer of the Church

Almighty and eternal God, you have shown your glory to all nations in Jesus Christ. Guide the work of the Church. Help it to persevere in faith, proclaim your Word, and bring salvation to people everywhere. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Almighty and eternal God, your Spirit guides the Church and makes it holy. Strengthen and uphold all who serve you and your people. Keep them in health and safety for the good of the Church. Help each of us to do faithfully the work to which you have called us. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Almighty and eternal God, enable those who do not acknowledge Christ to receive the truth of the gospel. Help us, your Church, to grow in love for you and for one another, so that we become more perfect witnesses of your love for all people. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Almighty and eternal God, graciously direct those who have been set in positions of authority among us, so that people everywhere may enjoy justice, peace, freedom, and a share in the goodness of your creation. Lord, in your mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Almighty and eternal God, you give strength to the weary and new courage to those who have lost heart. In your mercy hear the prayers of all who call on you in any trouble, that they may have the joy of receiving your help in their need. We ask this through Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

When Jesus' disciples asked him how to pray he gave them the words of this prayer. (Matt. 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4) Since Jesus advises we pray this way, we say "The Lord's Prayer" every Sunday.

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

The historical "blessing of Aaron" (Numbers 6:24-26) has been spoken over God's people for over 3,500 years.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and ✠ give you peace.

Amen.

Jerusalem the Golden

CW 889



1 Je - ru - sa - lem the gold - en, with milk and hon - ey blest—
2 O sweet and bless - ed coun - try, the home of God's e - lect!
3 The Christ is ev - er with them, the day-light is se - rene;



the sight of it re - fresh - es the wea - ry and op - pressed.
O sweet and bless - ed coun - try that ea - ger hearts ex - pect,
the pas - tures of the bless - ed are ev - er rich and green.



I know not, oh, I know not what joys a - wait us there,
where they who with their lead - er have con - quered in the fight
There is the throne of Da - vid, and there, from care re - leased,



what ra - dian - cy of glo - ry, what bliss be - yond com - pare:
for - ev - er and for - ev - er are clad in robes of white:
the shout of them that tri - umph, the song of them that feast.



to sing the hymn un - end - ing with all the mar - tyr throng,
in mer - cy, Je - sus, bring us to that dear land of rest
To God en - throned in glo - ry the Church's voic - es blend,



a - midst the halls of Zi - on re - sound - ing full with song.
where sings the host of heav - en your glo - rious name to bless.
the Lamb for - ev - er bless - ed, the Light that knows no end.

Text: Bernard of Cluny, 12th cent., abr.; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866, alt.

Tune: Gustav Holst, 1874–1934

Text and tune: Public domain

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Upcoming Services

Current worship series - The Beginning of the End. “The Beginning of the End” reminds us that history is moving toward our own death and toward Christ’s return. For believers, that end is truly a beginning.

Next week: It’s Time to Invite the Unworthy

Thank you to those serving in worship today!

Pastor Eric Melso; presiding—Vicar Michael Zimpelmann; preaching
Emily Knutson; piano – Mark Hennings; trumpet

Sunday School and Bible Study—After worship at 11:30

Sunday School for children and Sunday Study will take place after worship today. The adults are doing a study on the topic of Sanctification.

Children will meet with their appropriate age groups and are taught by a team of teachers with full background checks.

Visits with Vicar

Stop by the fellowship board at church to sign up to host Vicar Michael for a meal! This is a wonderful opportunity to get to know him better and share a little Southern hospitality. You can either host him in your home for a home-cooked meal or treat him to your favorite local restaurant! You’re also welcome to invite vicar over even if you’re not providing a meal.

vicar@livinghopechatt.com (208) 972-2319

Connection Envelopes

We’d love to get your valuable feedback on our worship service today. If this is your first time at Living Hope we also want the opportunity to give you a gift to say “thanks for being our guest!”

You can place your connection envelopes in the offering plate as it passes or in the basket located at the entrance of the sanctuary. Also feel free to just hand it to pastor.

Fall Church Work Day—Saturday October 10 @ 9:00AM—12:00PM

Join Us for Fall Church Work Day: Many Hands Make Light Work! Together, we will refresh and care for the space we call home. We have a variety of tasks lined up for all skill levels, including:

- Deep Cleaning: Giving our sanctuary, classrooms, and common areas a fresh, thorough clean.
- Painting: Touching up walls and refreshing well-loved spaces.
- Organizing & Moving: Rearranging furniture and clearing out spaces to keep our building functional and welcoming.

Whether you can stay for the whole morning or just an hour, your help makes a huge difference! Bonus: Stick around right after we finish at noon for a free pizza lunch to celebrate our hard work and enjoy some fellowship together. Bring a friend, wear comfortable clothes you don't mind getting a little dirty, and let's serve together!

Oktoberfest flyer handout—Saturday October 17th @ 10:00AM

We'll be going to hang some door flyers in local neighborhoods one week before our Oktoberfest event. Come with a good pair of walking shoes and help us invite our neighbors to join us for the event and hopefully allow us a chance to invite them to worship with us too! We'll meet at church and simply place flyers at doors.

Foundations Bible Study

If you're interested in membership here at Living Hope, Foundations is our "next step" class, but even if you're not interested in membership, you'll find it to be a good overview of what God has to say to you in his Word. If you're interested in attending the course just check the box on your connection envelope that says "I'd like to attend a membership class" in order to jump into a new group class or individual class. In-person or online classes are available! Online classes are currently available on Thursdays at 5:00pm. Message pastor for a class link.



Living Hope Small Groups

- Men's Group—Mondays every other week at 7am. (next meeting Mon. Oct 12)
- Women's Group — Mondays every other week at 6:45pm (next meeting Mon Oct 12)
- Theology on Tap—weekly on Tuesday evenings at 7pm
- Hands of Hope—every other Thursday at 10am. (next meeting on Oct 8)
- The Common Table—once a month on a Wednesday (next meeting Wed Oct 21)
- Life on Mission—next session at church on Wednesday Oct 28 at 7pm

See more details for these groups at <https://livinghopechatt.com/small-groups>

Theology on Tap—Tuesday October 6 @ 7:00PM

Grab a drink. Grab a bite to eat. Get a taste for good theology and good conversation in a laid back setting. Each week we'll take a deeper look at Sundays sermon content and discuss how to apply that message to everyday life. Theology on Tap meets at **Lupi's Pizza** in Cambridge Square.

Service Group—"Hands of Hope" - Thursday October 8 @ 10:00AM

This is a service focused group with members working together to clean and maintain our church facilities, as well as supporting other small projects. The group will meet twice a month on Thursday mornings at 10 a.m. (for approximately 2 hours or less) and is open to all members: retired, near-retired, or anyone who has free time! This is a budgeted group, so in addition to the work time there will be a time of fellowship with lunch provided afterward at a restaurant. Contact coordinator: Gretchen Bassett, 423-584-1981 (gretchen.bassett@gmail.com)

Oktoberfest—Save the Date—October 24

Oktoberfest will be Saturday October 24th from 2-5pm. We are partnering up with City Auto across the street again. We were able to meet 100s of neighbors who came to this event last year and it's a great way to be a presence in our community! We hope you can get involved in some aspect of the event to make it a fun and welcoming atmosphere for our guests! Please contact our admin assistant, Melissa Turner, if you would like to find a way to serve! (adminassistant@livinghopechatt.com).

Members' Minute

Birthday Blessings:

Millie Talley 10/7

Julianne Mattson 10/10

Anniversary Blessings:

Ronald and Susan Chandler 10/10

We pray for the following members, family, and friends

Angela and Maverick — Melissa Turner's sister, Angela, had a baby last week and he is experiencing many health concerns and is in the NICU.

Chuck Snyder — Thanksgiving for a successful and relatively smooth hip surgery on Fri.

Service Teams — This week

Sunday Setup Team—Snyder

Snack Provider—Schmidt, Hynson

Ushers—Gorman, Simpson

Acolyte—Emi Ludwig

Service Teams — Next week Oct 11

Sunday Setup Team—Thom

Snack Provider—Bassett, Dyer

Ushers—Frizzell, Ludwig

Acolyte—Kamarriion McNabb

Pastor Eric Melso

pastormelso@livinghopechatt.com

www.livinghopechatt.com

