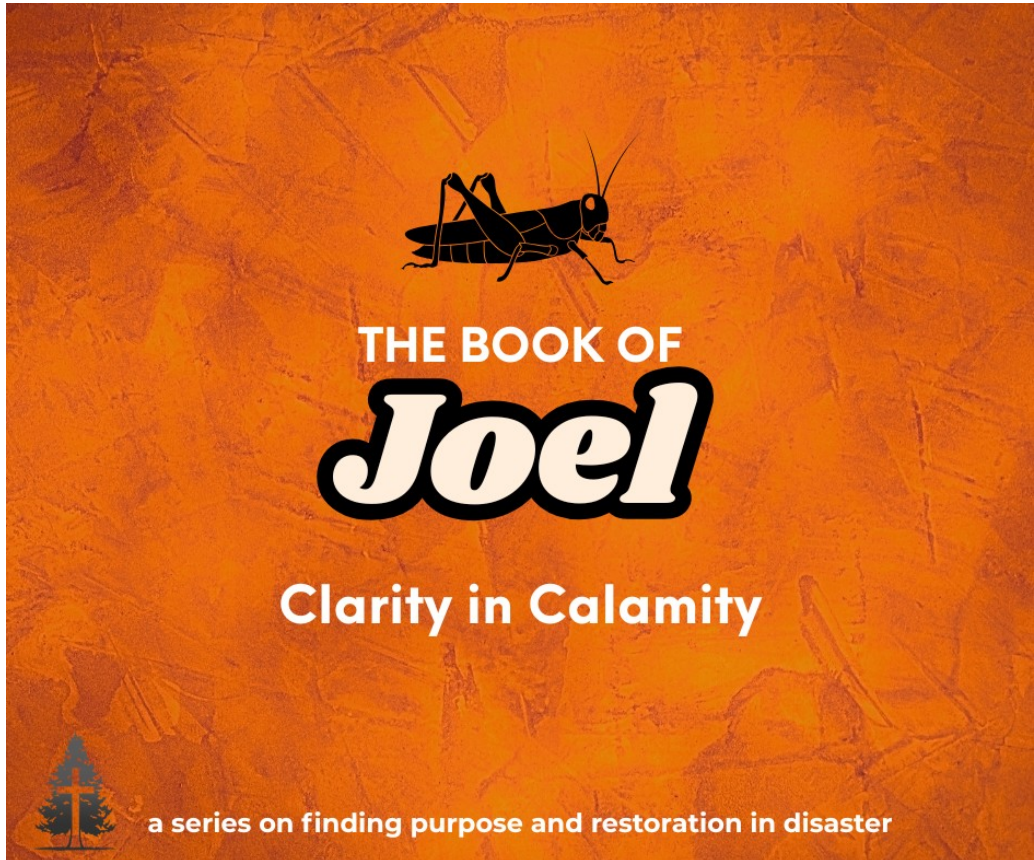


November 16, 2025



**Your Refuge in the Valley of Decision**

**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 Book of Joel—Clarity in Calamity**

When disaster strikes—when the world feels stripped bare and life seems out of control—where is God? The book of Joel begins with devastation: locusts, drought, and despair. Yet through the chaos, God speaks with surprising clarity. Joel calls God's people not to panic, but to return—to repent, to renew hope, and to rediscover God's faithfulness.

In this series, Clarity in Calamity, we'll journey through Joel's powerful message of warning and restoration. We'll see how God uses crisis to call his people closer, how repentance opens the door to renewal, and how the promise of the Spirit gives hope beyond destruction.

Even in the ruins, God's voice cuts through the noise—offering direction, mercy, and a future filled with his presence.

**Today's Focus: Your Refuge in the Valley of Decision**

"The day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision." The Valley of Decision. Is that a place you want to visit? Probably not. The sickle will swing. The grapes will be trampled in the winepress. The Valley of Decision is the place where final Judgment will be divvied out on the Last Day and wickedness will not be allowed to stand. But there's a game-changing difference for us. Even when there is cosmic upheaval and the sun and moon stop shining, even when the earth and the heavens tremble and God tramples wickedness in his winepress, we will be safe and secure. Because we have a refuge.



**LIVING HOPE**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

## 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](http://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

*Music reprinted under OneLicense.net A-730027 and CCLI A-21626251*

# Rejoice, Rejoice, Believers

CW 493 sts. 1, 3-4



1 Re - joice, re - joice, be - liev - ers, and let your lights ap - pear;  
3 You saints, who here in pa - tience your cross and suf - f'ring bore,  
4 Our hope and ex - pec - ta - tion, O Je - sus, now ap - pear;



the eve - ning is ad - vanc - ing, and dark - er night is near.  
shall live and reign for - ev - er when sor - row is no more.  
a - rise, O Sun so longed for, a - bove this shad - owed sphere.



The Bride - groom is a - ris - ing and soon is draw - ing nigh.  
A - round the throne of glo - ry the Lamb you shall be - hold,  
With hearts and hands up - lift - ed we plead, O Lord, to see



Up, pray and watch and wres - tle; at mid - night comes the cry.  
in tri - umph lay be - fore him your shin - ing crowns of gold.  
the day of earth's re - demp - tion that sets your peo - ple free.

Text: Laurentius Laurenti, 1660–1722, abr.; tr. Sarah B. Findlater, 1823–1907, alt.

Tune: Swedish

Text and tune: Public domain

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

## Call to Worship

In the name of the Father and of the  $\text{✝}$  Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

## Confession & Absolution

The prophet Joel cries out,

“Even now,” declares the Lord, “Return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.”

Let us return to the Lord, who is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.

**Merciful Lord,**

**we confess that we have turned away from you.**

**Like the people in Joel’s day,**

**we have ignored your warnings,**

**trusted in our own strength,**

**and failed to live as your people.**

**We have allowed our hearts to grow dry,**

**our prayers to grow faint,**

**and our compassion to fade.**

**Have mercy on us, O God.**

**Tear open our hearts so they may be healed.**

**Renew in us a right spirit,**

**and restore to us the joy of Your salvation.**

**Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

Hear the good news from the prophet Joel:

“I will pour out my Spirit on all people... And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

*Joel 2:28, 32*

In Jesus Christ, the promise is fulfilled—

God has turned his face toward us in mercy.

Your sins are forgiven, your heart is made new,

and the Spirit of life is poured out upon you.

**Thanks be to God! 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.”

# 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



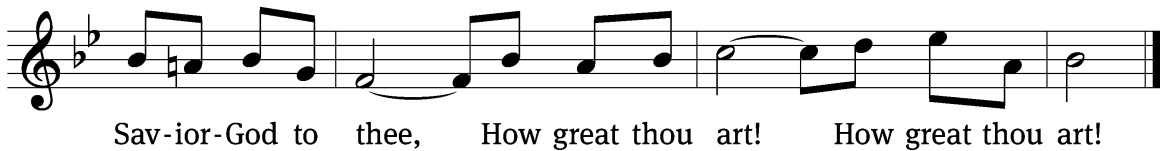
thy pow'r through - out the u - ni - verse dis - played;  
he bled and died to take a - way my sin;



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



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



Text: Stuart W. K. Hine, 1899–1989

Tune: Swedish

Text and tune: © 1949, 1953 The Stuart Hine Trust . US print rights admin. Hope Publishing Co. All other rights admin. Capit ol CMG Publishing. . Used by permission: OneLicense no. 730027

## Prayer of the Day

Lord God Almighty, so rule and govern our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit that we may always look forward to the end of this present evil age and the day of your righteous judgment. Keep us steadfast in true and living faith, and present us at last holy and blameless before 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

### Epistle Reading

*1 Thessalonians 4:13–18*

<sup>13</sup>Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. <sup>14</sup>For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. <sup>15</sup>According to the Lord’s word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. <sup>16</sup>For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. <sup>17</sup>After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. <sup>18</sup>Therefore encourage one another with these words.

*Please Stand*

## **Gospel**

*John 5:19–30*

<sup>19</sup>Jesus gave them this answer: “Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. <sup>20</sup>For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, and he will show him even greater works than these, so that you will be amazed. <sup>21</sup>For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. <sup>22</sup>Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, <sup>23</sup>that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.

<sup>24</sup>“Very truly I tell you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be judged but has crossed over from death to life. <sup>25</sup>Very truly I tell you, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. <sup>26</sup>For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself. <sup>27</sup>And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man.

<sup>28</sup>“Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice <sup>29</sup>and come out—those who have done what is good will rise to live, and those who have done what is evil will rise to be condemned. <sup>30</sup>By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.

The gospel of the Lord

**Praise be to Christ!**

## **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.*

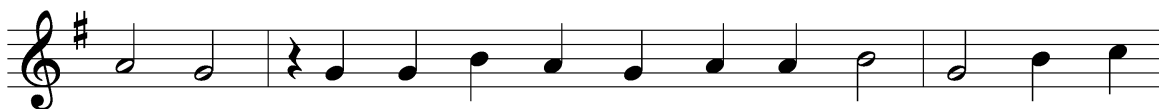


# The Day Is Surely Drawing Near

CW 488 sts. 1, 3, 5-6



1 The day is sure - ly draw - ing near when Je - sus, God's a -  
 3 A book is o - pened then to all, a rec - ord tru - ly  
 5 My Sav - ior paid the debt I owe and for my sin was  
 6 O Je - sus Christ, do not de - lay, but has - ten our sal -



noint - ed, shall with great maj - es - ty ap - pear as judge of  
 tell - ing what each has done, both great and small, when they on  
 smit - ten; with - in the Book of Life I know my name has  
 va - tion; we of - ten trem - ble on our way in fear and



all ap - point - ed. All mirth and laugh - ter then shall cease when  
 earth were dwell - ing, and ev - 'ry heart be clear - ly seen, and  
 now been writ - ten. I will not doubt, for I am free, and  
 trib - u - la - tion. Your saints are wait - ing pa - tient - ly; come



flames on flames will still in - crease, as Scrip - ture tru - ly teach - es.  
 all be known as they have been in thoughts and words and ac - tions.  
 Sa - tan can - not threat - en me; there is no con - dem - na - tion!  
 soon, Re - deem - er, make us free from ev - 'ry e - vil. A - men.

Text: Bartholomäus Ringwaldt, 1532–1599, abr.; tr. Philip A. Peter, 1832–1919, alt.

Tune: Geistliche Lieder aufs new gebessert, Wittenberg, 1535, ed. Joseph Klug

Text and tune: Public domain

## Sermon Reading

Joel 3:1-3, 12-16

<sup>1</sup>In those days and at that time,  
when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem,

<sup>2</sup>I will gather all nations  
and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat.

There I will put them on trial

for what they did to my inheritance, my people Israel,  
because they scattered my people among the nations  
and divided up my land.

<sup>3</sup>They cast lots for my people  
and traded boys for prostitutes; they sold girls for wine to drink.

<sup>12</sup>“Let the nations be roused;  
let them advance into the Valley of Jehoshaphat,  
for there I will sit to judge all the nations on every side.

<sup>13</sup>Swing the sickle,  
for the harvest is ripe.  
Come, trample the grapes,  
for the winepress is full  
and the vats overflow— so great is their wickedness!”

<sup>14</sup>Multitudes, multitudes  
in the valley of decision!  
For the day of the LORD is near  
in the valley of decision.

<sup>15</sup>The sun and moon will be darkened,  
and the stars no longer shine.

<sup>16</sup>The LORD will roar from Zion  
and thunder from Jerusalem; the earth and the heavens will tremble.  
But the LORD will be a refuge for his people,  
a stronghold for the people of Israel.

*Please be seated*

## **Your Refuge in the Valley of Decision**

### **Questions to consider while hearing the sermon:**

1. Who is deciding what in the “Valley of Decision”?
2. How is God’s sense of justice both a *Law* and *Gospel* message?
3. For whom will these words be especially comforting?
4. Why would we rightly need to tremble in this Valley of Decision too?
5. What “Day of the Lord” has actually already taken place?
6. What is the verdict for us?
7. How does God repeatedly make it clear in the book of Joel that he claims us?
8. “You have been weighed. You have been measured.  
You have been found \_\_\_\_\_.”

### **My sermon notes:**

*Please stand*

## Create in Me Pure Heart, O God

The musical score is written on six staves, each with a treble clef. The melody is composed of eighth and quarter notes, with some phrases spanning across bar lines. The lyrics are printed below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span multiple notes. The score concludes with a double bar line on the final staff.

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**

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

**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.**

**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.**

## **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**

Loving God and Lord, you created the universe that surrounds us and the globe on which we live. You control all things through your Son, who sits at your right hand in glory.

**Comfort us with the promise of your eternal presence.**

Give your Word power as it works in our hearts and minds. Clear away our confusion, and demolish our doubts. Send your Spirit to strengthen both our confidence in your promises and our desire to live according to your will.

**Take away our love of sinning, and restore us each day by your grace.**

The signs of the times warn us that the end of time is near. Protect us from scoffers who sneer at your truth. Spare us and Christians around the world from all forms of hate and persecution.

**Give us courage to carry the cross with patience and joy.**

Instill in the hearts of our children a desire to follow you as they prepare for future days. Help them distinguish between what is passing and what is eternal, between instant thrills and lasting joy. Encourage more young people to prepare for service in the public ministry of the gospel.

**Mold us and move us to be good examples for our youth.**

Hold in your care, Lord, those who are experiencing physical or emotional pain and all who are afflicted by disease or facing death. Pour out your compassion on the grieving, and comfort the mourners who miss someone they loved.

**Move us to pray for these brothers and sisters and to help when we can.**

Whether we pray together or alone, you have promised to hear and answer us. Give us patience to accept your blessings in whatever way you send them. In your love and wisdom, prepare us for the day when you will take us to be with you forever.

**Hear us for Jesus' sake. 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.**

# My Soul Finds Rest in God Alone

CW 818



1 My soul finds rest in God a-lone, my rock and my sal - va - tion;  
2 Find rest, my soul, in God a-lone a - mid the world's temp-ta - tions;  
3 I'll set my gaze on God a-lone and trust in him com-plete - ly;



a for-tress strong a - gainst my foes, and I will not be  
when e - vil seeks to take a hold, I'll cling to my sal -  
with ev - 'ry day pour out my soul, and he will prove his



shak - en. Though lips may bless and hearts may curse, and  
va - tion. Though rich - es come and rich - es go, don't  
mer - cy. Though life is but a fleet - ing breath, a



lies like ar - rows pierce me, I'll fix my heart on  
set your heart up - on them; the fields of hope in  
sigh too brief to mea - sure, my king has crushed the



right - eous - ness, I'll look to him who hears me.  
which I sow are har - vest - ed in heav - en.  
curse of death and I am his for - ev - er.



### *Refrain*



O praise him, hal-le - lu - jah, my de-light and my re - ward;  
ev - er - last - ing, nev-er fail - ing, my Re - deem-er, my God.

Text: Aaron Keyes, b. 1978; Stuart Townend, b. 1963

Tune: Aaron Keyes, b. 1978; Stuart Townend, b. 1963

Text and tune: © 2007 Thankyou Music, admin. CapitolCMGPublishing.com. Used by permission: CCLI no. A-21626251

### **Acknowledgments**

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide.

Liturgical and musical settings of Scripture based on text from The Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide.

Software distributed in partnership with Northwestern Publishing House.

Created by Christian Worship: Service Builder © 2025 Concordia Publishing House.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Upcoming Services**

Current worship series - Clarity in Calamity: the Book of Joel. In this series we'll journey through Joel's powerful message of warning and restoration. We'll see how God uses crisis to call his people closer, how repentance opens the door to renewal, and how the promise of the Spirit gives hope beyond destruction.

Next week: Thanksgiving with Joel

### **Thank you to today's musicians and vocalists!**

Gretchen Bassett; piano

## 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 book of Judges called Broken Savors as we take a deep dive into a very rich and messy book of the Bible full of applications for us today.

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



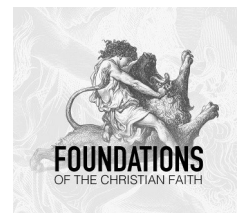
## Living Hope Small Groups

Find more information on the small groups bulletin board in the lobby about available groups to get involved with.

- Theology on Tap and Women's Group — (ON BREAK)
- Men's Group—Mondays every other week at 7am. (next meeting Mon. Nov 17)
- Hands of Hope—Thursdays twice a month at 10am. (next meeting Thurs Nov 20)

## 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. There are both in-person or online classes available!



In person classes are available on Saturdays at 11:00am at church.

Online classes are available on Thursdays at 7:30pm. Message pastor for a class link.

## 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.

## Members' Minute

### Birthday Blessings:

|               |       |               |       |
|---------------|-------|---------------|-------|
| Derek Kilberg | 11/19 | Jameson Falls | 11/20 |
| Sarah Dyer    | 11/19 | Clay Smith    | 11/22 |

### **Living Hope Food Pantry Stock-up**

Our church food pantry is running low, and we are asking our church family for help in blessing our neighbors. We'd love donations of pop-top canned items and family-friendly non-perishables. This would be things like:

baked beans, mac n' cheese, ramen, canned pastas, soups, vegetables, peanut butter, jam, and other easy staples.

Every item you give helps a family sit down to a comforting meal. We give this food out to people who contact us directly for help and to our neighbors in Cromwell Hills. If you're able, please drop donations on the table in the fellowship area. Thank you for sharing Christ's love in this way!

### **New Church Library**

Our member Mary Snyder is heading up a new library program here at Living Hope. We'd love our members to make use of the solid Biblical teaching in some of the resources we'll have available. Here's some notes about our new church library.

- The library is located in the gathering area on the bookshelves on the stage.
- Books in the library include copies of The People's Bible, audio books, and religious oriented texts, as well as biographies of John Newton and Martin Luther.
- There is a sign out sheet in a binder near the books. Please sign on the appropriate line for the book borrowed and also sign the book back in when returned.
- If anyone would like to donate to the library, please contact Mary Snyder who will add the books to the list and forward to Jean Bogue to be added to the sign out sheet. Donated books should be religious in nature.

### **Call to Christ, Pewaukee returned**

Pastor Eric has returned his Divine Call to serve as outreach pastor at Christ Lutheran in Pewaukee, WI. That means he will be staying to serve as pastor here at Living Hope. He thanks everyone for their prayers, conversations, and support. There's exciting work to be done here in Chattanooga and more souls to reach with Jesus!

**Service Teams — This week**

Sunday Setup Team—Snyder  
Snack Provider—Rice, Thom  
Ushers—Lundquist, Spann  
Acolyte—Ember Turner

**Service Teams — Next week Nov 23**

Sunday Setup Team—Frizzell, Turman  
Snack Provider—Appugliese, Bogue, Bunting  
Ushers—Schulz, Smith  
Acolyte—Kamarrion McNabb



**LIVING HOPE**  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

**HOPE FOR EVERYDAY**

Pastor Eric Mello  
423-933-2452  
pastormello@livinghopechatt.com  
www.livinghopechatt.com

