

December 21, 2025



ADVENT

IMMINENT ARRIVAL

The Word of Life Appeared

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: Imminent Arrival

People eagerly anticipate the Christmas season. The Latin word *adventus* means arrival, and in the Christian church we eagerly anticipate three arrivals of Christ: the commemoration of his birth, his return on judgment day, and the moments he touches our hearts in Word and sacrament. This time of year (and always!) we get to feel the excitement of an imminent arrival. The Lord is near!

Today's Focus: The Word of Life Appeared

In words that echo the first chapter of his gospel, John proclaims what he, too, has "seen and heard." Jesus has come to bring the light of salvation from sin, righteousness and fellowship with God. The Word of life has appeared for all the world to see!

We welcome guest Pastor Wayne Uhlhorn, Pastor Eric's father-in-law, who will share the sermon with us today. He serves as a Mission Counselor Pastor and visits many of the new WELS church plants in our region and also helps identify new areas for starting churches. Starting next year Pastor Uhlhorn will be transitioning to a new call as the executive director of Truth in Love Ministries, which is an organization in our synod (WELS) that exists to bring hope and gospel peace to Mormons and ex-Mormons.



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

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

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ADVENT GATHERING SONG

Cantor sings 1st refrain then the congregation sings the refrain on repeat as the cantor sings the verses.

James J. Chepponis

Gently
mp

Come, come Em - man - u - el.

Come, Em - man - u - el.

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1. God will give us a sign, so...
2. For a child from the virgin will...
3. And his name will be Jesus, so...

Music continues to play as the call to worship and confession is spoken.

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 Son (+) and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Confession & Absolution

Prepare the way for the Lord,

make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

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."

Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain.

And the glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it together.

Dear friends, one day Christ will come in glory to deliver his people. Therefore, let us prepare our hearts to meet him by humbly seeking his forgiveness.

Merciful Lord, shine your light into the shadows of our hearts.

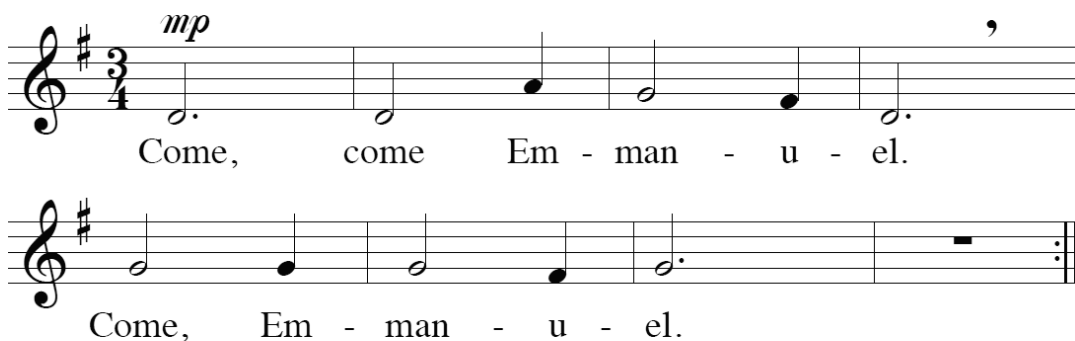
For we have sinned and have failed to honor you as Immanuel.

Chase away our darkness and fill us with your light.

Trusting in you we pray: Lord, have mercy on us.

In Christ Jesus, the glory of the Lord has been revealed and all people have seen the salvation of our God. With his perfect life, Christ kept the law in our place. With his innocent death, he paid the price of our redemption. Christ now comes to you through his words of light and life: I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.



4. Oh the King of glory shall...
5. He will save us from sin so...
6. For the Son of God will...

Prayer of the Day

Stir up your power, O Lord, and come. Take away the burden of our sins, and make us ready for the celebration of your birth, that we may receive you in joy and serve you always; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

GOD'S WORD

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 7:10–14

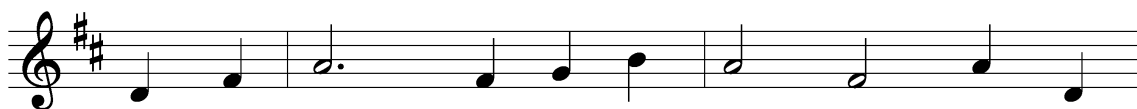
¹⁰Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, ¹¹“Ask the LORD your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights.”

¹²But Ahaz said, “I will not ask; I will not put the LORD to the test.”

¹³Then Isaiah said, “Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of humans? Will you try the patience of my God also? ¹⁴Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

146C Praise the LORD, Sing Hallelujah

Psalms 146C



1	Praise	the	LORD!	Sing	hal - le - lu - jah!	Come, our
2	Hap - py	are		the	ones pro - fess - ing	Ja - cob's
3	Food	he	dai -	ly	gives the hun - gry,	sets the
4	Praise	the	LORD!	Sing	hal - le - lu - jah!	Come, our



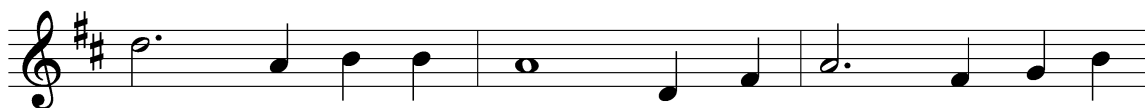
great Re - deem - er praise. I will sing the glo - rious
God to be their aid. They are blest whose hope of
mourn - ing pris - 'ner free, rais - es those bowed down with
great Re - deem - er praise. I will sing the glo - rious



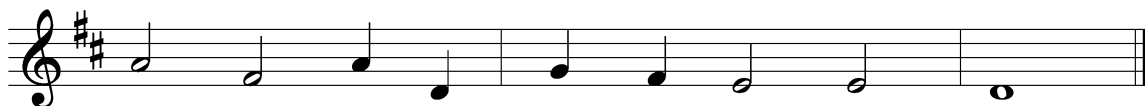
prais - es of my God through all my days.
bless - ing on the LORD their God is stayed.
an - guish, makes the sight - less eyes to see.
prais - es of my God through all my days.



Put no con - fi - dence in princ - es, nor on
Heav'n and earth the LORD cre - at - ed, seas and
God our Sav - ior loves the right - eous, and the
O - ver all God reigns for - ev - er; through all



hu - man help de - pend. They shall die, to dust re -
all that they con - tain. He de - liv - ers from op -
stran - ger he be - friends, helps the or - phan and the
a - ges he is King. Un - to him, your God, O



turn - ing; all their thoughts and plans shall end.
pres - sion; right - eous - ness he will main - tain.
wid - ow, judg - ment on the wick - ed sends.
Zi - on, joy - ful hal - le - lu - jahs sing.

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 1:18–25

¹⁸This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

²⁰But after he had considered 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 home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”

²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).

²⁴When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

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.

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

CW 327 sts. 1, Ref, 2-4



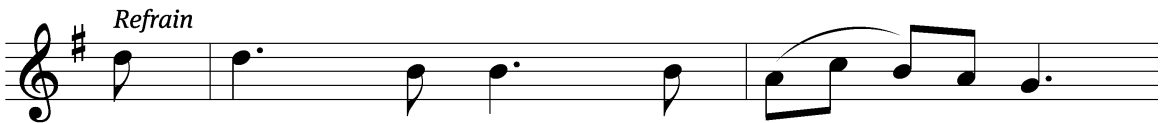
1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som
2 O come, O Root of Jes - se, free your own from
3 O come, O Day-spring from on high, and cheer us
4 O come, O Key of Da - vid, come, and o - pen



cap - tive Is - ra - el that mourns in lone - ly
Sa - tan's tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell your
by your draw - ing nigh; dis - perse the gloom - y
wide our heav'n - ly home; make safe the way that



ex - ile here un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
peo - ple save, and give them vic - t'ry o'er the grave.
clouds of night, and death's dark shad - ows put to flight.
leads on high, and close the path to mis - er - y.



Re - joice! Re - joice! Em - man - u - el



shall come to you, O Is - ra - el!

Text: Latin, c. 12th cent., Psalterium Cantionum Catholicarum, Köln, 1710; tr. John Mason Neale, 1818-1866, alt.

Tune: French, 15th cent., alt

Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon Reading

1 John 1:1–9

¹That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. ²The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. ³We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. ⁴We write this to make our joy complete.

⁵This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. ⁶If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. ⁷But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

⁸If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

The Word of Life Appeared

Questions to consider while hearing the sermon:

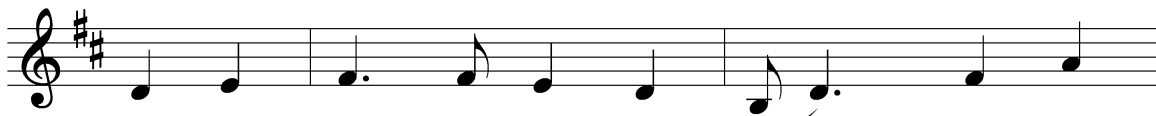
1. Why did the apostle John call Jesus “The Word of Life”
2. What seems like a “contradiction” with Jesus’s birth?
3. What does it mean that Jesus was both “born in the usual way” but also “Born of the Virgin Mary” and “conceived by the Holy Spirit”?
4. How come, in order to be our Savior, Jesus had to be a Substitute and a Sacrifice?
5. Why is it important that we “come clean” about our sin?
6. What does “fellowship” mean?
7. What are the benefits of “being of the same mind as God”?
8. How can we be “light” in a dark world?
9. What does being a “light” do for our opportunity to witness Christ’s Light?
10. When Jesus was born, how come we can say a light turned on?

My sermon notes:

Please stand

Holy Is Your Name

CW 956



1 My — soul is filled with joy as I
2 I am low - ly as a child, but I
3 I pro - claim your pow'r, O God! You work
4 To the hun - gry you give food, send the
5 In your love you now ful - fill all you



sing to God, my Sav - ior. You have looked up - on your
know from this day for - ward that my name will be re -
won - ders for your ser - vants; you have scat - tered the proud -
rich a - way with noth - ing. In your mer - cy you are
prom - ised to your peo - ple. I will praise you, God, my



ser - vant, you have vis - it - ed your peo - ple.
mem - bered, and the world will call me bless - ed.
heart - ed, you have lift - ed up the low - ly.
mind - ful of the peo - ple you have cho - sen.
Sav - ior, ev - er - last - ing is your mer - cy.

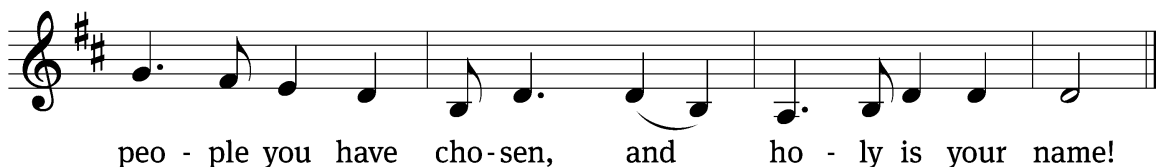
Refrain



And ho - ly is your name through all gen - er -



a - tions! Ev - er - last - ing is your mer - cy to the



Text: anonymous, alt.
Tune: Scottish
Text and tune: Public domain

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

Eternal Father, we give you thanks and praise for sending your one and only Son to share our humanity, carry our guilt, and become for us the perfect Lamb who takes away the sin of the world.

O Lord, we adore you.

Keep our faith in your Son alive and strong. Nourish us with your Word and Sacrament and, by your Holy Spirit, give us strength to overcome Satan's power and pride. Help us to withstand the temptations the world and our sinful nature put on our path.

O Lord, give us faith and courage.

We pray for our great city, for its neighborhoods and suburbs, and for all who live and work and find delight here. Give to the leaders of our government wisdom, courage, and unity as they address the serious challenges facing our country. Grant our nation peace and prosperity that we may have the opportunity and resources to spread the good news to people around the world.

Govern and prosper your people.

Fill us with kindness and arouse us to do good to all people, especially those who are less fortunate than we. Bring your healing to those who are sick or diseased in body or mind and comfort those who are mourning the death of someone they love. We especially pray for brothers and sisters who care for the sick and stand at the side of the dying.

Sustain those who endure the troubles of life.

Be a source of strength to all your people and fill them with your power and peace. Let us continually rediscover the joy that comes from Christ alone.

Let your peace reign in the hearts of all.

As you sent your Son to bring peace to all people on earth, so we pray for all people, those known and those unknown to us.

We pray through Jesus 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.

Comfort, Comfort All My People

CW 312



1 “Com - fort, com - fort all my peo - ple; speak of peace,” so
2 All their sins our God will par - don, blot - ting out each
3 John the Bap - tist’s voice is cry - ing in the des - ert
4 Then make straight the crook - ed high - way; make the rough - er



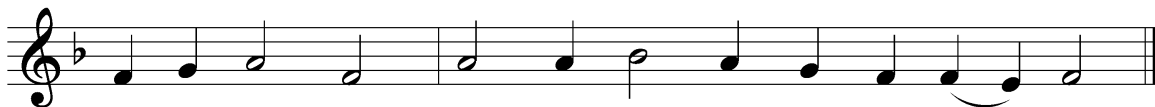
says our God. “Com - fort those who sit in dark - ness, groan - ing
dark mis - deed; all that well de - served his an - ger he no
far and near, call - ing peo - ple to re - pent - ance for the
plac - es plain. Let your hearts be true and hum - ble, read - y



from their sor - rows’ load. Speak to all Je - ru - sa - lem
more will see or heed. They have suf - fered man - y a day;
king - dom now is here. O that warn - ing cry o - bey!
for his ho - ly reign. For the glo - ry of the Lord



of the peace that waits for them; tell them that their
now their griefs have passed a - way. God will change their
Now pre - pare for God a way; let the val - leys
now o’er earth is spread a - broad, and all flesh shall



sins I cov - er, that their war - fare now is o - ver.”
ach - ing sad - ness in - to ev - er - spring - ing glad - ness.
rise to meet him and the hills bow down to greet him.
see the to - ken that his word is nev - er bro - ken.

Text: Johann G. Olearius, 1611–1684; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.
Tune: Trente quatre Pseaumes de David, Geneva, 1551, ed. Louis Bourgeois
Text and tune: Public domain

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Upcoming Services

Christmas Eve—Wednesday December 24 @ 6:30PM

There will be a hot chocolate bar with cookies after the Christmas Eve service. If able, please bring a plate of your favorite Christmas cookies to share. Thanks!

Christmas Day—Thursday December 25 @ 11:00AM

(abbreviated devotion service with Lord’s Supper— 11AM instead of our normal 10AM with a light brunch beforehand)

Lessons and Carols Service—Sunday December 28 @ 10:00AM

Thank you to today’s musicians and vocalists!

Mark Hennings; piano

We also thank Pastor Wayne Uhlhorn for his message today!

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.

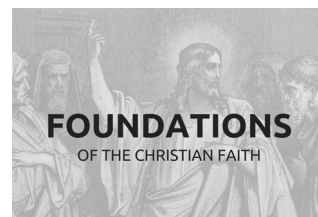
Living Hope Small Groups

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. Dec 29)
- Hands of Hope—Thursdays twice a month at 10am.

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.

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 by the window.
- Books in the library include copies of The People's Bible, audio books, and religious oriented texts and biographies.
- 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. Donated books should be religious in nature.

Members' Minute

Birthday Blessings:

Terry Lundquist—Dec 24

Rita Hansen—Dec 26

Anniversary Blessings:

Kate and Shane Talley—Dec 21

Service Teams — This week

Sunday Setup Team—Open

Snack Provider—Cundiff, Chandler

Ushers—Rice, Schulz

Acolyte—Emi Ludwig

Service Teams — Next week Dec 28

Sunday Setup Team—Thom

Snack Provider—Appugliese, Bogue, Bunting

Ushers—Mayer, Smith

Acolyte—Natalie Melso



LIVING HOPE
L U T H E R A N C H U R C H

HOPE FOR EVERYDAY

Pastor Eric Melso

423-933-2452

pastormelso@livinghopechatt.com

www.livinghopechatt.com

