

On
coming to
the house,
they saw the
child with
his mother
Mary, and
they bowed
down and

Worshiped

him.

MATTHEW 2:11

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church
January 5, 2025

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
106 Scheid Road, Sandusky, OH 44870
(419) 625-2192 www.stjohnlcsandusky.com
Sanctuary Worship 10:30 a.m.

Stacy Lauer-Scovanner, Pastor

January 5, 2025 Epiphany of Our Lord

Welcome to Worship! Within the gospel reading's profound words lies the simple message that God is revealed in a human person. Though we may try to understand how the Word existed with God from the beginning of time, the wonder we celebrate at Christmas is that the Word continues to dwell among us. Christ comes among us in the gathered assembly, the scriptures, the waters of new birth, and the bread and the wine. Through these ordinary gifts we receive the fullness of God's grace and truth.

As Lutheran Christians, we believe and teach that Christ is truly present in the celebration of Holy Communion as he is God with us. Christians of all denominations are encouraged to come to the Lord's table. We commune children of any age who have received communion instruction at St. John or another Christian church. Children who have not yet received communion instruction will receive a blessing. Both red wine and white grape juice are offered to accommodate various traditions. Gluten free wafers are provided for those with dietary restrictions. Please make the pastor aware of your need.

We thank Deacon Carolyn Steinfeldt and Pastor Kathy Shuck for leading our worship this morning while Pastor Stacy is away on vacation. If you are visiting today, please sign the guest register after worship. Plan to worship with us again next Sunday.

Bell

Prelude

"The First Noel" Arr. Carolyne M. Taylor

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Welcome and Announcements

Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

Please stand

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✚ one God, whose steadfast love is everlasting.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.
God-with-us,

**we confess that we have turned away those seeking shelter,
claiming there is no room when we have plenty.
We have made power and wealth our idols,
while you show us true glory: a baby in a manger.
We have overlooked the shepherds, expecting good news in prettier packaging.
Too often, we have valued violence instead of your peace.
Turn us from our ways to your ways. Grant us the grace to begin again.
Free us from all that keeps us bound, and forgive our sin,
through Jesus Christ, who gives himself for us.
Amen.**

Hear the good news and rejoice! You are God's chosen ones, holy and beloved,
✠ forgiven in Christ, and freed to respond in joy.
Amen.

Gathering Hymn

"Brightest and Best of the Stars"

ELW 303

Text: Reginald Herber, 1783-1826, alt. Music: James P. Harding, 1850-1911, adapt. Public Domain

1 Brightest and best of the stars of the morning,
dawn on our darkness and lend us your aid.
Star of the east, the horizon adorning,
guide where our infant redeemer is laid.

2 Cold on his cradle the dewdrops are shining;
low lies his head with the beasts of the stall;
angels adore him in slumber reclining,
maker and monarch and savior of all.

3 What shall we give him, in costly devotion?
Shall we bring incense and offerings divine,
gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean,
myrrh from the forest or gold from the mine?

4 Vainly we offer each ample oblation,
vainly with gifts would his favor secure;
richer by far is the heart's adoration,
dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.

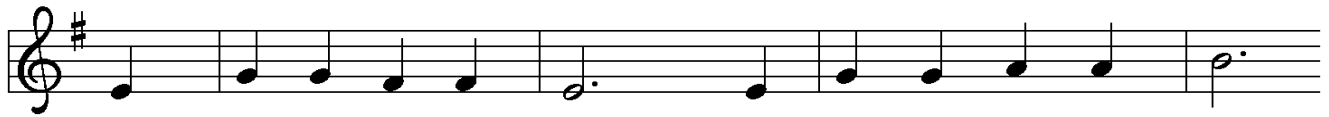
5 Brightest and best of the stars of the morning,
dawn on our darkness and lend us your aid.

Star of the east, the horizon adorning,
guide where our infant redeemer is laid.

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Kyrie



1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.
 2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.
 3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.
 Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.
 Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!

Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen

Please be seated

First Lesson: Jeremiah 31:7-14

A reading from Jeremiah.

God promises to bring Israel back to its land from the most remote parts of exile. In Zion Israel will rejoice over God's gift of food and livestock. Young women will express their joy in dancing; God will give gladness instead of sorrow.

⁷ Thus says the LORD:

Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob,
 and raise shouts for the chief of the nations;
 proclaim, give praise, and say,
 "Save, O LORD, your people,
 the remnant of Israel."

⁸ See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north,
 and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth,
 among them the blind and the lame,
 those with child and those in labor, together;
 a great company, they shall return here.

⁹ With weeping they shall come,
 and with consolations I will lead them back,

I will let them walk by brooks of water,
in a straight path in which they shall not stumble;
for I have become a father to Israel,
and Ephraim is my firstborn.

¹⁰ Hear the word of the LORD, O nations,
and declare it in the coastlands far away;
say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him,
and will keep him as a shepherd a flock."

¹¹ For the LORD has ransomed Jacob,
and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him.

¹² They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion,
and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD,
over the grain, the wine, and the oil,
and over the young of the flock and the herd;
their life shall become like a watered garden,
and they shall never languish again.

¹³ Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance,
and the young men and the old shall be merry.

I will turn their mourning into joy,
I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow.

¹⁴ I will give the priests their fill of fatness,
and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty,
says the LORD.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 147:12-20 (Read responsively)

¹² Worship the LORD, O Jerusalem;
praise your God, O Zion,

¹³ **who has strengthened the bars of your gates
and has blessed your children within you.**

¹⁴ God has established peace on your borders
and satisfies you with the finest wheat.

¹⁵ **God sends out a command to the earth,
a word that runs very swiftly.**

¹⁶ God gives snow like wool,
scattering frost like ashes.

¹⁷ **God scatters hail like bread crumbs.**

Who can stand against God's cold?

¹⁸ The LORD sends forth the word and melts them;
the wind blows, and the waters flow.

¹⁹ **God declares the word to Jacob,
statutes and judgments to Israel.**

²⁰ The LORD has not done so to any other nation;
they do not know God's judgments. Hallelujah!

Second Lesson: Ephesians 1:3-14

A reading from Ephesians.

In Jesus, all of God's plans and purposes have been made known as heaven and earth are united in Christ. Through Jesus, we have been chosen as God's children and have been promised eternal salvation.

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵ He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸ that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹ he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹ In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹² so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴ this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

The word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Please stand

Gospel Acclamation

"Lord Let My Heart Be Good Soil"

ELW 512

Text and music © 1985 Prince of Peace Publishing, Changing Church, Inc.

Lord, let my heart be good soil,
open to the seed of your word.
Lord, let my heart be good soil,
where love can grow and peace is understood.
When my heart is hard, break the stone away.
When my heart is cold, warm it with the day.
When my heart is lost, lead me on your way.
Lord, let my heart, Lord, let my heart,
Lord, let my heart be good soil.

Gospel: John 1:[1-9] 10-18

The Holy Gospel according to John.

Glory to you, O Lord.

John begins his gospel with this prologue: a hymn to the Word through whom all things were created. This Word became flesh and brought grace and truth to the world.

[¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being ⁴ in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

⁶ There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. ⁸ He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. ⁹ The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.]

¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him.

¹² But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") ¹⁶ From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. ¹⁷ The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

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

Please be seated

Youth Time

“Jesus Loves Me”

Text: Anna B. Warner, 1820–1915, alt. Music: William B. Bradbury, 1816–1868 Public Domain

Sermon

Deacon Carolyn

Please stand

Hymn of the Day

“This Little Light of Mine”

ELW 677

Arr. © Horace Clarence Boyer, admin. Augsburg Fortress

1 This little light of mine, I'm goin'-a let it shine;
this little light of mine, I'm goin'-a let it shine;
this little light of mine, I'm goin'-a let it shine,
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

2 Ev'rywhere I go, I'm goin'-a let it shine;
ev'rywhere I go, I'm goin'-a let it shine;
ev'rywhere I go, I'm goin'-a let it shine,
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

3 Jesus gave it to me, I'm goin'-a let it shine;
Jesus gave it to me, I'm goin'-a let it shine;

Jesus gave it to me, I'm goin'-a let it shine,
let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

The Apostles' Creed

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.***

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**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. Amen.**

*Or, “he descended into hell,” another translation of this text in widespread use.

Prayers of the people: God of grace, Receive our prayer.

Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

Please be seated

Choir Offering

“Follow That Star” David N Davenport, Douglas E Wagner

Words and Music ©1994 Lorenz Publishing Corporation, The

Please stand

Offertory

“We Are an Offering”

ELW 692

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The musical score is written in treble clef with a 4/4 time signature. It consists of seven staves of music. Chords are indicated above the notes. The lyrics are written below the notes. The score includes a variety of note values, rests, and triplets. The lyrics are: "We lift our voices, we lift our hands, we lift our lives up to you: we are an offering. Lord, use our voices, Lord, use our hands, Lord, use our lives, they are yours: we are an offering. All that we have, all that we are, all that we hope to be, we give to you, we give to you. We lift our voices, we lift our hands, we lift our lives up to you: we are an offering, we are an offering."

F/G G C² Dm⁷ C²/E C/E
We lift our voices, we lift our hands, we lift our

F C/E 3 Dm⁷ F/G G C² Dm⁷
lives up to you: we are an offering. Lord, use our voices, Lord, use our

C²/E C/E F C/E 3 Dm⁷ F/G G/F
hands, Lord, use our lives, they are yours: we are an offering.

Em⁷ Em⁷/A A Dm⁷ Dm⁷/G Esus D/F# E/G# Am
All that we have, all that we are, all that we hope to be, we

Dm⁷ C²/E Bb/C Dm⁷sus2 Dm⁷ F/G
give to you, we give to you.

G C² Dm⁷ C²/E C/E
We lift our voices, we lift our hands, we lift our

F C/E 3 Dm⁷ Dm⁷/G 3 C
lives up to you: we are an offering, we are an offering.

Offering Prayer

Let us pray.

Good and loving God, we rejoice in the birth of Jesus, who came among the poor to bring the riches of your grace. As you have blessed us with your gifts, let them be blessing for others. With the trees of the field, with all earth and heaven, we shout for joy at the coming of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Thanksgiving at the Table

Holy God, holy and mighty, holy and immortal:
you we praise and glorify, you we worship and adore.

You formed the earth from chaos; you encircled the globe with air;
you created fire for warmth and light; you nourish the lands with water.
You molded us in your image, and with mercy higher than the mountains,
with grace deeper than the seas, you blessed the Israelites and cherished them as your
own.

That also we, estranged and dying, might be adopted to live in your Spirit,
you called to us through the life and death of Jesus.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: 'Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Together as the body of Christ, we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes:

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

With this bread and cup we remember your Son, the first-born of your new creation.
We remember his life lived for others,
and his death and resurrection, which renews the face of the earth.
We await his coming, when, with the world made perfect through your wisdom,
all our sins and sorrows will be no more.

Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, holy and merciful one, holy and compassionate,
send upon us and this meal your Holy Spirit, whose breath revives us for life,
whose fire rouses us to love.
Enfold in your arms all who share this holy food.
Nurture in us the fruits of the Spirit, that we may be a living tree, sharing your bounty
with all the world.

Amen. Come, Holy Spirit.

Holy and benevolent God, receive our praise and petitions,
as Jesus received the cry of the needy, and fill us with your blessing,
until, needy no longer and bound to you in love,
we feast forever in the triumph of the Lamb:
through whom all glory and honor is yours, O God, O Living One,
with the Holy Spirit, in your holy church, now and forever.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us.

**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, forever and ever. Amen**

Invitation to Communion

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Please be seated

Distribution



1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
 2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;
 3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer - cy now, we pray.
 you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer - cy now, we pray.
 e - ter - nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

Distribution Hymn:

“Love Has Come”

ELW 292

Text © 1996 Living the Natural Way, admin. Music Services, Brentwood, TN

1 Love has come--a light in the darkness!
 Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.
 See, all heaven has come to proclaim it;
 hear how their song of joy arises:
 Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior!
 Love! Love! Glory to God on high.

2 Love is born! Come, share in the wonder.
 Love is God now asleep in the hay.
 See the glow in the eyes of his mother;
 what is the name her heart is saying?
 Love! Love! Love is the name she whispers;
 Love! Love! Jesus, Immanuel.

3 Love has come and never will leave us!
 Love is life everlasting and free.
 Love is Jesus within and among us.

Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.
 Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas;
 Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

Distribution Hymn:

“What Feast of Love”

ELW 487

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1 What feast of love is offered here,
 what banquet come from heaven?
 What food of everlasting life,
 what gracious gift is given?
 This, this is Christ the king,
 the bread come down from heaven.
 Oh, taste and see and sing!
 How sweet the manna given!

2 What light of truth is offered here,
 what covenant from heaven?
 What hope of everlasting life,
 what wondrous word is given?
 This, this is Christ the king,
 the sun come down from heaven.
 Oh, see and hear and sing!
 The Word of God is given!

3 What wine of love is offered here,
what crimson drink from heaven?
What stream of everlasting life,
what precious blood is given?

This, this is Christ the king,
the sweetest wine of heaven.
Oh, taste and see and sing!
The Son of God is given!

Please stand

Post Communion Blessing

The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace.

Amen

Prayer after Communion

Let us pray.

Radiant God, with our eyes we have seen your salvation, and in this meal we have feasted on your grace. May your Word take flesh in us, that we may be your holy people, revealing your glory made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ✝ give you peace.

Amen

Sending Hymn

"Shine, Jesus, Shine"

ELW 671

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Refrain

Shine, Jesus, shine

Fill this land with the Father's glory

Blaze, Spirit, blaze

Set our hearts on fire

Flow, river, flow

Flood the nations with grace and mercy

Send forth your word

Lord, and let there be light

Lord, the light of your love is shining

In the midst of the darkness, shining

Jesus, Light of the world, shine upon us

Set us free by the truth you now bring us

Shine on me, shine on me: *Refrain*

As we gaze on your kingly brightness

So our faces display your likeness

Ever changing from glory to glory

Mirrored here may our lives tell your story

Shine on me, shine on me

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Postlude

“Shine, Jesus, Shine”

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St. John’s Evangelical Lutheran Church is:

“A Family of Disciples, Faithfully Making Christ Known”

And a congregation of the

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

PEOPLE OF ST. JOHN’S, MINISTERS

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Ushers: Chuck Thompson

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2025 The Year of Listening Memory Verse.

“Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live...” (Isaiah 55:3a).

Council asks the congregation to pray in this season of Hope, to pray that all people are united in sharing, giving, and loving.

Communion Clean-up today: Elizabeth Libben

Jan. 12 – Set-up – Toni Nossaman

Cleanup – Paula Hoffman Laws

Thank you for your willingness to help with this important ministry. If you would like to help, please see Toni Nossaman, Joleen Dillender or Sandy Thompson.

St. John's Audio Visual Team is looking for two or three people who would like to help with streaming worship. Team will mentor you! Please contact Melinda Zorn, 412639-5477, Jon Baaske, 440-915-5071, or Ann Voigt, 419-357-8483.

New Ministry Lists are posted on the bulletin board for the first quarter of 2025. If you are looking for an opportunity to help with ushering, lay reading, help serve communion or help with streaming our worship, see all the sign-up sheets on the bulletin board.

Annual Meeting/Mark your calendars: St. John's 2024 Annual meeting will be held on Sunday, February 2, 2025 after worship.

Teams and Committees: Team/committee reports for the 2022 annual congregational booklet will be due by January 12th to Sandy Thompson. Please send your report in a Word doc to sandy8110@gmail.com or mail to the church at 106 Scheid Rd Sandusky, OH 44870 attention Sandy Thompson

Happy Birthday to Marcia Dawson, Pastor Stacy and Jacob Deehr.

Thank you, members of St. John's, for all the lovely cards and wishes for our anniversary. They were greatly appreciated. Bev and Augie Hohman.

ST. JOHN'S CALENDAR FOR JANUARY 5TH THRU JANUARY 19TH

Sunday, January 5	9:15 am 10:30 am	Study with Lynn Worship
Tuesday, January 7	1:00 pm	Faith Life Team
Wednesday, January 8	12:00 noon	Scripture & Prayer at Parkview
Sunday, January 12	9:15 am 10:30 am	Study with Lynn Worship
Sunday, January 19	9:15 am 10:30 am	Study with Lynn Worship

The Year of Listening

Welcome to **2025: The Year of Listening**.

Our focus in 2025 is to learn the sacred art of listening. Listening to God. Listening to Ourselves. Listening to Others. And Listening to the Community.

God's invitation to listen is a gift that permeates the Scriptures. From the Shema, "**Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might**" (Deuteronomy 6:4-5).

To the Psalms, "**Hear my cry, O God; listen to my prayer**" (Psalm 61:1).

To the words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount, "**Everyone who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock**" (Matthew 7:24).

To the words the Exalted Jesus repeats to the seven churches in Revelation, "**Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches**" (Revelation 2-3).

God longs for us to hear, so God invites us to listen.

Bless you,

Bishop Daniel G. Beaudoin

Weekly Listening Plan

For this Year of Listening, we have invited local musicians to select a song for collective reflection each month. We encourage you to explore the monthly scripture and weekly listening practices.

We invite you to join us in these four unique listening practices each month!

January 2025

"Shine Jesus Shine" ELW 671

Week 1 – "Lord the light of your love is shining, in the midst of the darkness, shining"

1. Enjoy the song selection video.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FssM5ezQE7g&t=4s:1-5>
2. Read and reflect on the scripture that inspired the song. **Isaiah 60:1-5**
3. Explore weekly practices connected to the lyrics throughout your week.
4. Share your experiences on social media using #YearOfListening.