

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church January 26, 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, PastorJanuary 26, 2025Third Sunday after Epiphany

Welcome to Worship! God's glory is revealed in the reading of scripture. People stand at attention. People weep. People prostrate themselves in prayer. The unity of the church is another reflection of God's glory. Most gloriously, the promises of God are fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. Gather round. Listen up. Glimpse the glory of God.

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.

If you are visiting today, please sign the guest register after worship. Plan to worship with us again next Sunday.

Bell Prelude

Adoration from "The Holy City" by A.R.Gaul ©1947 by Theodore Pressor Co.

Welcome and Announcements

Gathering

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

Confession and Forgiveness

In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another. Most merciful God,

we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Gathering Hymn"O Zion, Haste"ELW 668Text: Mary A. Thomson, 1834-1923Music: James Walch, 1837-1901

Refrain Publish glad tidings, tidings of peace, tidings of Jesus, redemption, and release.

2 Publish to ev'ry people, tongue, and nation that God, in whom they live and move, is love; tell how he stooped to save his lost creation and died on earth that we might live above. Refrain 2 Publish to ev'ry people, tongue, and nation that God, in whom they live and move, is love; tell how he stooped to save his lost creation and died on earth that we might live above. Refrain

3 He comes again! O Zion, ere you meet him, make known to ev'ry heart his saving grace; let none whom he has ransomed fail to greet him, through your neglect, unfit to see his face. Refrain

Greeting

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

Canticle of Praise

Pastor: Glory to God in the highest and peace to God's people on earth.



Prayer of the Day

Let us pray.

Blessed Lord God, you have caused the holy scriptures to be written for the nourishment of your people. Grant that we may hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that, comforted by your promises, we may embrace and forever hold fast to the hope of eternal life, through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen *Please be seated*

First Lesson: Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10

A reading from Nehemiah.

The exiles have returned and rebuilt Jerusalem. Now Ezra, the priest, reads the law of Moses to them in the public square. When they hear it, they weep for their sins and for the long years in exile, but Ezra reminds them that "the joy of the LORD is your strength."

¹ All the people [of Israel] gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had given to Israel. ² Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. ³ He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. ⁵ And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. ⁶ Then Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people answered, "Amen, Amen," lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshiped the LORD with their faces to the ground. ⁸ So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

⁹ And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, "This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep." For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. ¹⁰ Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our LORD; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength."

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

Psalm 19 (Read responsively)

¹ The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky proclaims its maker's handiwork.

²One day tells its tale to another, and one night imparts knowledge to another.

³ Although they have no words or language, and their voices are not heard,

⁴ their sound has gone out into all lands, and their message to the ends of the world,

where God has pitched a tent for the sun.

⁵ It comes forth like a bridegroom out of his chamber;

it rejoices like a champion to run its course.

⁶ It goes forth from the uttermost edge of the heavens and runs about to the end of it again;

nothing is hidden from its burning heat.

⁷ The teaching of the LORD is perfect and revives the soul; the testimony of the LORD is sure and gives wisdom to the simple.

⁸ The statutes of the LORD are just and rejoice the heart; the commandment of the LORD is clear and gives light to the eyes.

⁹ The fear of the LORD is clean and endures forever;

the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether.

¹⁰ More to be desired are they than gold, more than much fine gold, sweeter far than honey, than honey in the comb.

¹¹ By them also is your servant enlightened, and in keeping them there is great reward.

¹² Who can detect one's own offenses?

Cleanse me from my secret faults.

¹³ Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins; let them not get dominion offense.

¹⁴ Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight,

O LORD, my strength and my redeemer.

Second Lesson: 1 Corinthians 12:12-31a

A reading from 1 Corinthians.

The apostle and pastor Paul uses the metaphor of the human body to describe how intimately connected we are in the church. For this struggling congregation in Corinth, Paul delivers a vital message of unity that is a mark of the church today.

¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

¹⁴ Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵ If the foot would say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear would say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where

would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸ But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹ If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many members, yet one body. ²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." ²² On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and those members of the body that we think less honorable we clothe with greater honor, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; ²⁴ whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honor to the inferior member, ²⁵ that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. ²⁶ If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it.

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. ²⁸ And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. ²⁹ Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? ³⁰ Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? ^{31a} But strive for the greater gifts.

The word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Please stand

Gospel Acclamation

clamation"Lord, Let My Heart Be Good Soil"ELW 512Text and music © 1985 Prince of Peace Publishing, Changing Church, Inc.ELW 512

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: Luke 4:14-21 The Holy Gospel according to Luke. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

Near the beginning of Jesus' public ministry, he visits his hometown of Nazareth. In the words of Isaiah, he states and claims his identity, purpose, and mission.

¹⁴ Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. ¹⁵ He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone.

¹⁶When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written:

¹⁸ "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,

because he has anointed me

to bring good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives

and recovery of sight to the blind,

to let the oppressed go free,

¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

²⁰ And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. ²¹ Then he began to say to them, "Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

The Gospel of the LordPraise to you, O Christ.Please be seated

Youth Time

Sermon *Please stand*

Hymn of the Day

"Canticle of the Turning"

ELW 723

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 My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the God of my heart is great, and my spirit sings of the wondrous things that you bring to the ones who wait. You fixed your sight on your servant's plight, and my weakness you did not spurn, so from east to west shall my name be blest. Could the world be about to turn?

Refrain

My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the fires of your justice burn. Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn. 2 Though I am small, my God, my all, you work great things in me, and your mercy will last from the depths of the past to the end of the age to be. Your very name puts the proud to shame, and to those who would for you yearn, you will show your might, put the strong to flight, for the world is about to turn. *Refrain*

3 From the halls of pow'r to the fortress tow'r, not a stone will be left on stone. Let the king beware for your justice tears ev'ry tyrant from his throne. The hungry poor shall weep no more, for the food they can never earn; there are tables spread, ev'ry mouth be fed, for the world is about to turn. *Refrain* 4 Though the nations rage from age to age, we remember who holds us fast:God's mercy must deliver us from the conqueror's crushing grasp.

This saving word that our forebears heard is the promise which holds us bound, till the spear and rod can be crushed by God, who is turning the world around. *Refrain*

Prayers of the people: God of grace,

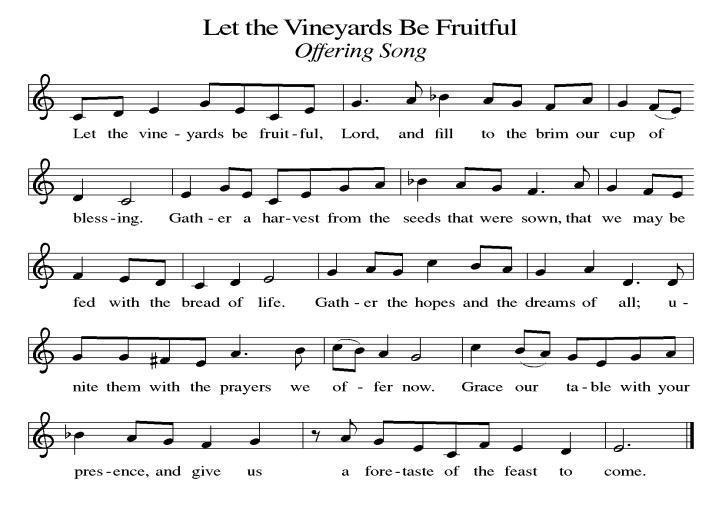
Hear our prayer.

Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always. **And also with you.** *Please be seated* **Offering** "And

"Andante Religiosos" by Ludwig van Beethoven © 1947 by Theodore Pressor Co.

Please stand **Offertory**



Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980 Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923

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Offering Prayer

Let us pray. God of all creation, all you have made is good, and your love endures forever. You bring forth bread from the earth and fruit from the vine. Nourish us with these gifts, that we might be for the world signs of your gracious presence in Jesus Christ, our Savior and 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.**

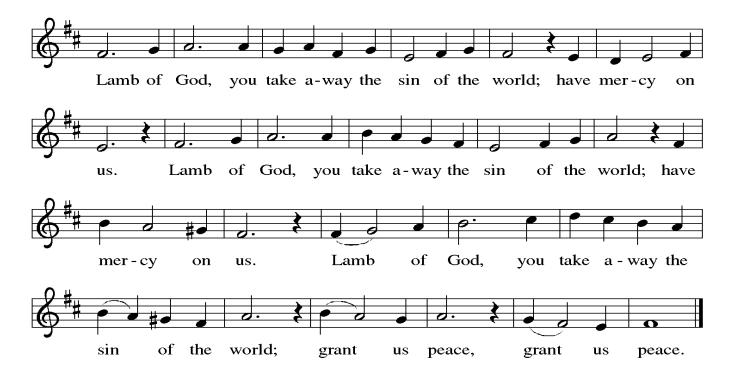
The Lord's Prayer

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



Distribution Hymn:"One Bread, One Body"ELW 496Text and music © 1978 John B. Foley, SJ and OCP Publications, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland, OR
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Refrain

One bread, one body, one Lord of all; one cup of blessing which we bless, and we, though many throughout the earth, we are one body in this one Lord. 1 Gentile or Jew, servant or free, woman or man, no more. Refrain

2 Many the gifts, many the works, one in the Lord of all. Refrain

3 Grain for the fields, scattered and grown, gathered to one for all. Refrain

Distribution Hymn:	'Har	k, the Glad Sound!"	ELW 239
Text: Phillip Doddridge,	1702-1751	Music: Thomas Haweis,	1734-1820 Public Domain

1 Hark, the glad sound! The Savior comes,	2 He comes the pris'ners to release,
the Savior promised long;	in Satan's bondage held.
let ev'ry heart prepare a throne	The gates of brass before him burst,
and ev'ry voice a song.	the iron fetters yield.
3 He comes the broken heart to bind,	4 Our glad hosannas, Prince of peace,
the bleeding soul to cure,	your welcome shall proclaim,
and with the treasures of his grace	and heav'n's eternal arches ring
to enrich the humble poor.	with your beloved name.

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.

We give you thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us through the healing power of this gift of life. In your mercy, strengthen us through this gift, in faith toward you and in fervent love toward one another; for the sake of Jesus Christ our 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.**

Amen.

Sending Hymn"The Spirit Send Us Forth to Serve"ELW 551Text © 1993 Delores Dufner.Published by OCP Publications, 5536 NE Hassalo, Portland OR 97213.
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1 The Spirit sends us forth to serve;	2 We go to comfort those who mourn
we go in Jesus' name	and set the burdened free;
to bring glad tidings to the poor,	where hope is dim, to share a dream
God's favor to proclaim.	and help the blind to see.
3 We go to be the hands of Christ,	4 Then let us go to serve in peace,
to scatter joy like seed	the gospel to proclaim.
and, all our days, to cherish life,	God's Spirit has empowered us;
to do the loving deed.	we go in Jesus' name.
Dismissal	

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

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Postlude

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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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Nathan Samsa, Organist

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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).

In this season of Hope, Council asks the congregation to pray that all people remain united in sharing with those suffering from unimaginable loss due to wildfires and severe weather, that we patiently help those struggling with day-to-day issues, and that we refocus and recommit to God's word and work at our Annual Congregational Meeting.

Communion explanation

The beginning of bread bakery is unknown, but archaeologists have found signs of it 14,000 years ago in Jordan where they uncovered stone fireplaces with breadcrumb

residue. In the early 1700's B.C. small clay ovens began to show up in homes as well as commercial bakeries in Greece. Then, the early Egyptians began to produce beer. This process produces CO_2 that is what makes bread rise – yeast!

Early societies decorated their loaves with symbols to depict their culture, religion, family, etc. Clay baking pots have been found with ornate symbols, such as wreaths and flowers. Early Christians would include a cross or fish design so others seeing it would recognize a fellow believer.

We've always assumed the bread Jesus broke during his celebration of the Passover was unleavened. But we know that yeast was in use and that Jesus used what was on the table. What matters is not how the elements are made, but the presence of the Lord. That's why every service of Holy Communion includes the liturgy and prayer.

This week our Holy Communion bread is Mrs. Widen's Swedish Bread. The ancestors of Mrs. Widen brought this family recipe from Sweden and she continued to bake it for her congregation as well as her family in Texas.

Communion Clean-up today: Sue and Lynn Schlessman

Feb. 2 – Set-up – Toni Nossaman Cleanup – Sandy Thompson
Feb. 9 – Set-up – Jim Kluding Cleanup – Paula Hoffman Laws
Feb. 16 - Set-up – Joleen Dillender Cleanup –
Feb. 23 –Set-up – Elizabeth Libben Cleanup - Elizabeth
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.

Youth event!! Most schools are off February 14th. We will go to Norwalk Rec Center and enjoy swimming at the pool. There are life guards on duty, and parents are not required to swim unless youth are under 6 years of age. Once they release their schedule, we will finalize times. Hope you can join us!

Bible Study: The Northwestern Ohio Synod of the ELCA has a focus this year on 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.

We will do a five-week Bible study on listening. It begins February 3rd at 10 AM and will go for five Mondays (not including President's Day), ending on March 10th. No experience with Bible studies is necessary, this is a small-time commitment, and we hope you will join us!

ST. JOHN'S CALENDAR FOR JANUARY 26 TH THRU FEBRUARY 9 TH				
Sunday, January 26	9:15 am 10:30 am	Study with Lynn Worship		
Tuesday, January 28	10:00 am	Book Discussion Chapters 7 & 8		
Thursday, January 30	6:00 am	Choir Practice		
Sunday, February 2	9:15 am 10:30 am 11:30 am	Study with Lynn Worship Annual Congregational Meeting		
Tuesday, February 4	1:00 am	Faith Life Team		
Wednesday, February 5	12 noon	Scripture and Prayer at Parkvue		
Sunday February 9	9:15 am 9:30 am 10:30 am	Study with Lynn Sunday School Worship		

Happy Birthday to Mia Scovanner.



Winter "Love at the Laundromat" is a new joint outreach ministry for Zion and St. John's. There is a need in the community for this help more than once a year. Our goal is to help struggling families by paying for their machine use at the laundromat. We are sharing God's love in a practical way! This outreach will be at the Lakeshore Laundromat in the Huron Plaza on West Cleveland Road.

Preparations are underway and many hands will be needed. If you are available for a few hours **on Saturday, February 15** from 10am until 2pm, **please check the sign-up sheets** on the display on the table in the sanctuary. There are a wide variety of opportunities to help. Many can be done sitting down. The event is broken down into

two shifts and you can work one shift, or sign up for jobs in both shifts depending on your time schedule and energy. Come and see the blessing this is to our community and joy you receive from serving with God's love. Feel free to talk with Paula Hoffman if you have concerns or questions.

We are asking for **donations** of cartons of individual packages of cookies and chips, juice boxes, and dessert cookies. Distribution of towel sets with soap or bodywash, toothbrushes and toothpaste is also planned. Please see the donations sign-up sheet.

Please place donations in the bin in the back of the sanctuary. Monetary donations may be placed in the collection plate designated for "Love at the Laundromat."

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 671Week 4 – "Blaze Spirit Blaze, set our heart on fire."

- 1. Enjoy the song selection video. <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FssM5ezQE7g&t=4s:1-5</u>
- 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. Share warmth (bonfire, soup, hot coca) with someone you don't often make time to listen to. What senses were engaged?