APOSTLES LUTHERAII CHURCH

THE REVEREND JAY SERAFIN

7092 Main Street, Gloucester, VA 23061 (804) 693-9098 | apostles-elca.org | facebook.com/ApostlesELCA



SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2025 | 10:00 AM

Our Mission is to be a Caring Inclusive Christian Community responding to God's grace through Worship, Service, and Sharing the Gospel.





WELCOME TO APOSTLES LUTHERAN CHURCH!

It is an honor to worship God with you this morning. We pray you experience the Spirit's loving presence as we share our words, our actions, and the Holy Meal.

If this is your first time worshipping with us, please fill out a card in the pew rack with your contact info. A restroom can be found by exiting the rear door of the worship space. It is directly in front of you to the right. Additional restrooms can be found in the back corner of the fellowship area, near the Pastor's office.

RECONCILING in CHRIST

We, the people of Apostles Lutheran Church, follow Paul's message to the Galatians (3:28): "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." Believing that because we are all one in Christ, and created in God's image, all are welcome as beloved children of God. We welcome into the full life of the church all those whom God sends us. **Rejoicing in God's amazing diversity, we welcome people of all ages, races, gender identities and expressions, sexual orientations, and physical and mental abilities.** Centered in Christ, we commit ourselves to racial equity, breaking down dividing walls and building a community where all are beloved.

FOR PASTORAL CARE

The Reverend Jay Serafin is our pastor. Pastor Jay's **schedule is noted in the calendar on the back of this bulletin.** Call Pastor Jay at 570-205-7506 or email him at <u>j80j84@msn.com</u> (preferred) or <u>pastor.apostles@gmail.com</u>. Messages can also be left on the Apostles answering machine 804-693-9098.

PRAYGROUND

Welcome to our youngest members! The area in the front of our sanctuary is for families and young children. There are quiet toys, books and drawing materials. We ask two things:

1) sit in the front pews near your children and 2) please sit with your children in the pews during the sermon. They may return immediately after. Thank you and welcome!

NAME TAGS

Please wear your nametag! Guests: please fill out and put on a name tag before worship today. Blank nametags are in the baskets located in the pews.

GATHERING

Blessings and curses abound on the sixth Sunday after Epiphany. We would do well to listen closely to whom the "blessed ares" and the "woe tos" are directed and to find our place in the crowd among those who desire to touch Jesus. The risen Christ stands among us in the mystery of the holy supper with an invitation to live in him, and offers power to heal us all.

PRELUDE AND SILENT PRAYER

Martin Luther said of music: "Next to the Word of God, the noble art of music is the greatest treasure in the world." Please take a moment to **silence all cell phones.**

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please rise in body or in spirit. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, \pm one God, our creator, our protector, our wellspring of life.

Amen.

Trusting that God receives our words and the meditations of our hearts, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Merciful God,

you speak blessing and compassion into the world. Forgive us for the ways we act with judgment, cruelty, or indifference. We ignore the needs of our neighbors; we resist your call to oppose injustice; we give in to scarcity and fear; we assume the worst about one another. Cleanse us from our faults and release us from their grasp. Show us your lovingkindness. Restore our hearts and repair your world, that we may live in Christ's ways. Amen.

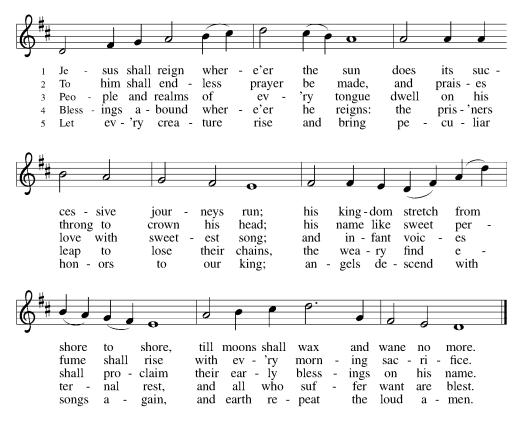
God proclaims these words of assurance: "Do not fear, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name. You are mine." In + Christ, you are forgiven. In the Spirit, you are made free. Refreshed by the waters of mercy, live anew as beloved children of God.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

ELW #434

"Jesus Shall Reign"



Text: Isaac Watts, 1674-1748, alt.

Music: DUKE STREET, attr. John Hatton, d. 1793

APOSTOLIC GREETING

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

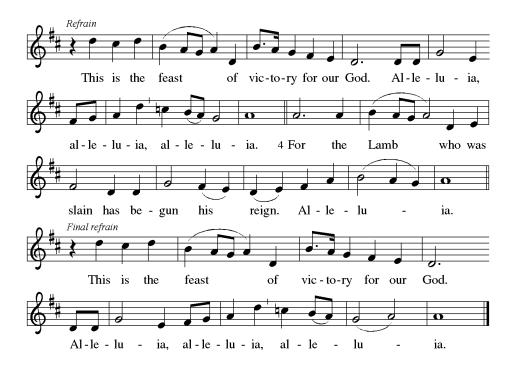
And also with you.

KYRIE



CANTICLE OF PRAISE





PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray. Living God, in Christ you make all things new. Transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace, and in the renewal of our lives make known your glory, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

WORD

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

Sit

FIRST READING

JEREMIAH 17:5-10

These verses compose a poem that is part of a larger collection of wisdom sayings that contrast two ways of life. Life with God brings blessing; the power and vitality of God is active in our life. Life without God brings a curse, the power of death.

⁵Thus says the LORD:

Cursed are those who trust in mere mortals

- and make mere flesh their strength, whose hearts turn away from the LORD.
- ⁶They shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when relief comes.
- They shall live in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land.
- ⁷ Blessed are those who trust in the LORD, whose trust is the LORD.
- ⁸ They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream.

It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit.

⁹ The heart is devious above all else; it is perverse—
who can understand it?
¹⁰ I the LORD test the mind and search the heart, to give to all according to their ways, according to the fruit of their doings.

Response after the First Reading The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PSALM 1

¹ Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel [|] of the wicked, nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats [|] of the scornful!

- ² Their delight is in the law | of the Lord, and they meditate on God's teaching | day and night. R
- ³ They are like trees planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in due season, with leaves that ¹ do not wither;

everything they | do shall prosper.

- ⁴ It is not so | with the wicked; they are like chaff which the wind | blows away.
- ⁵ Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when ¹ judgment comes, nor the sinner in the council ¹ of the righteous.
- ⁶ For the Lord knows the way | of the righteous, but the way of the wicked shall | be destroyed. R

SECOND READING

1 CORINTHIANS 15:12-20

For Paul, the resurrection of Christ is the basis for Christian hope. Because Christ has been raised, those who are in Christ know that they too will be raised to a new life beyond death.

¹² Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³ If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; ¹⁴ and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain. ¹⁵ We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified of God that he raised Christ—whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. ¹⁶ For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised. ¹⁷ If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. ¹⁸ Then those also who have died in Christ have perished. ¹⁹ If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

²⁰ But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died.

Response after the Second Reading
The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Please rise in body or in spirit.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



The gospel is announced.

The Holy Gospel according to Saint Luke, the Sixth Chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

GOSPEL LUKE 6:17-26

After choosing his twelve apostles, Jesus teaches a crowd of followers about the nature and demands of discipleship. He begins his great sermon with surprising statements about who is truly blessed in the eyes of God.

¹⁷ [Jesus] came down with [the twelve] and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon.¹⁸ They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. ¹⁹ And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

²⁰ Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

"Blessed are you who are poor,

for yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹ "Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled.

"Blessed are you who weep now,

for you will laugh.

²² "Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. ²³ Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

²⁴ "But woe to you who are rich,

for you have received your consolation.

25 "Woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry."Woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep.

 26 "Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets."

The gospel concludes:

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

Sit

SERMON

PASTOR JAY SERAFIN

Silence is kept after the reflection.

HYMN OF THE DAY

ELW #806

"O God, My Faithful God"



Text: Johann Heermann, 1585–1647; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt. Music: WAS FRAG ICH NACH DER WELT, Ahasuerus Fritsch, 1629–1701

APOSTLES CREED

With the whole church, let us confess our faith in the words of 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 power of 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.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

With the Spirit of Christ shining upon us, let us boldly pray for the church, the world, and all of creation.

Each portion of the prayers ends with these words: God of grace,

hear our prayer.

We entrust our prayers to you, O God, in the sure and certain hope that your promise is revealed among the people.

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

We share a sign of Peace with our neighbors saying **Peace be with you** to which we respond **And also with you**. Please know that it is fine if you do not want to shake hands but would rather just share a sign of peace.

MEAL

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

Sit

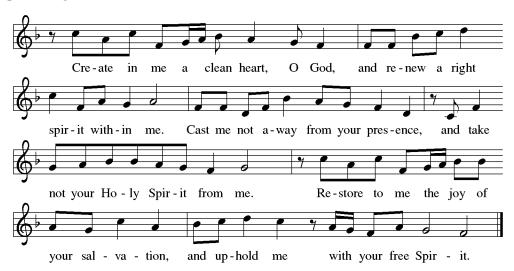
OFFERING

An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need. To give online:

- Visit apostles-elca.org/contributions
- From your mobile phone, text the word GIVE to 844-215-5453

OFFERTORY HYMN

ELW #186



Music: Richard W. Hillert, b. 1923

Music © 1978 Lutheran Book of Worship, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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Please rise in body or in spirit

OFFERING PRAYER

Let us pray. God of grace, your love reaches to the heavens, and your abundance to the depths of the seas. Bless what we offer to your service: our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts. Let us overflow with gratitude and generosity, now and always.

Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

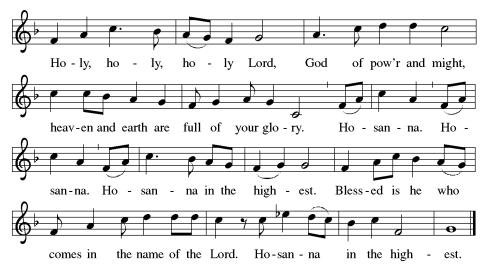
We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

The great thanksgiving continues.

... we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



The great thanksgiving continues.

... Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

The great thanksgiving continues.

... We look with hope for his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

The great thanksgiving continues.

... Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

The great thanksgiving concludes.

... All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

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

The joy of the Lord is our strength. Come, eat this meal of gladness.

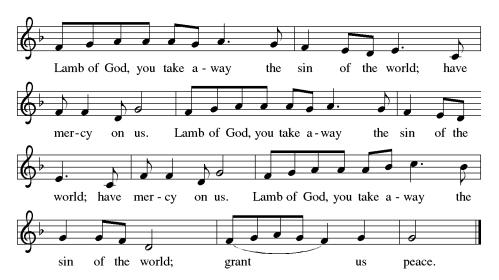
Sit

COMMUNION

All are invited to join us at the Lord's table to receive the presence of Jesus through the bread and wine. Jesus himself invites you and Jesus turns no one away.

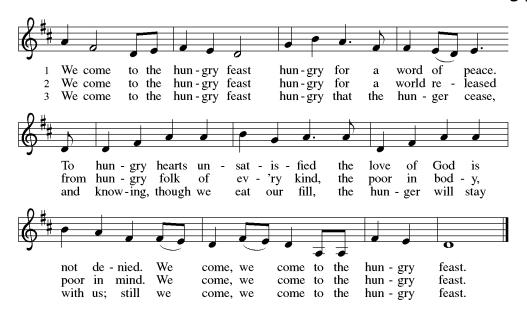
You will be invited to come forward either to receive the elements or to receive a blessing. For those receiving the elements, after receiving the bread, please take a glass from the tray held by the acolyte. There are pre-filled glasses of grape juice in the tray for those who do not drink wine. Gluten free wafers are also available upon request.

LAMB OF GOD



HYMN DURING COMMUNION

"We Come to the Hungry Feast"



Text: Ray Makeever, b. 1943 Music: HUNGRY FEAST, Ray Makeever Text and music © 1982 Ray Makeever, admin. Augsburg Fortress.

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After all have returned to their places, all rise in body or in spirit.

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

Amen.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Let us pray. Nourishing God, at this table you have refreshed us with holy gifts of food and drink. Strengthen us for service, and send us out to embody your good news of liberation and healing for the sake of the world. In the name of Christ we pray,

Amen.

SENDING

God blesses us and sends us in mission back into the world.

BLESSING

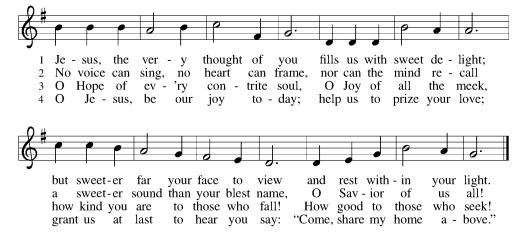
The Spirit of the triune God \oplus bless you with joy, anoint you with compassion, and send you in love.

Amen.

SENDING HYMN

ELW #754

"Jesus, the Very Thought of You"



Text: attr. Bernard of Clairvaux, 1091–1153; tr. Edward Caswall, 1814–1878 Music: ST. AGNES, John B. Dykes, 1823–1876

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Live in hope.

Thanks be to God.

POSTLUDE

APOSTLES LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Today we gather on the original and ancestral homelands of the Pamunkey, Mattaponi, Chickahominy, Rappahannock, and Nansemond peoples and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor all our indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.

WORSHIP LEADERS

	Serving Today	Serving Next Week
Worship Leader/Preacher	Pastor Jay Serafin	Pastor Jay Serafin
Lay Assisting Minister	Sue Turner	Pete Liljeberg
Lector	Judy Wright	Margaret Grimes
Acolyte	Chase Ambrose	Ray Scholz
Accompanist	Kathy Merithew	Kathy Merithew
Altar Care	Judy Wright	Betsy Liljeberg
Communion Bread	Donna Ambrose	Betsy Liljeberg
Greeter/Usher	Judy Wright	Betsy Lilejberg
Technology	Doug Dalager	Chris Hawkins

SERVANTS FOR THE WEEK

	Serving This Week	Serving Next Week
Cleaning Team	Liljebergs	Ambrose/Scholz
Tellers	Chris Hawkins/Don Garfield	Barbara Runk/Ray Scholz
Fellowship Set Up	Ray Scholz	Jennie Hawkins
Fellowship Food	Donna Ambrose/Ellen Quirk	Judy Wright/Nancy Wagner
Fellowship Clean Up	Donna Ambrose/Barbara Runk	Scholzs

READINGS FOR NEXT SUNDAY

First Reading: Genesis 45:3-11, 15

Joseph forgives his brothers

Psalm 37:1-11, 39-40

The lowly shall possess the land; they will delight in the abundance of peace

Second Reading: 1 Corinthians 15:35-38, 42-50

The mystery of the resurrection of the body

Gospel: Luke 6:27-38

Love your enemies

THOUGHTS FOR TODAY

Lutheran theology insists that we are simultaneously sinners and saints. An intersectional understanding of identity and social location might also lead us to recognize that we simultaneously experience privilege and marginality, depending on our context. How might we each locate ourselves in both the blessings and the woes, for the purpose of discovering our responsibilities and needs as we walk on the way of Jesus?

A fundamental decision is placed before us this day: Will we choose the way of blessing or the way of woe? The death and resurrection of Jesus is the pivot on which the decision turns. To be in Christ means that we get planted by streams of water and are rooted among those who thirst for God's reign. The mystery of our faith points the path to life: Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.

COMMEMORATIONS

"The saints are to be remembered so that we may strengthen our faith when we see how they experienced grace and how they were helped by faith."

On February 18th, we Martin Luther, a renewer of the church who died in 1546. Though he began his adult church life as a simple Augustinian monk, Luther challenged the abuses he saw in the church, and his work eventually led to the Protestant Reformation. Luther's accomplishments included liturgical reform, translation of the Bible, and creation of the Small and Large Catechisms.

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FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

The metaphors of the fruitful trees or the chaff make it easy for Christians either to overstress active discipleship, as if salvation requires radically altered behavior, or to spiritualize such language, as if one's interior feelings are all that matter. Can both be equally true?

LUTHER'S LEGACY FOR LAITY

Please join us on **Wednesday, February 19th**, for our next Luther's Legacy for Laity – we have a sandwich at 6:00 PM and the study starts at 6:30 PM.

SUNDAY SCHOOL - TODAY

Sunday School will be held after worship today – all are welcome to attend!

WORLD HUNGER - TODAY!!

Don't forget your offering for ELCA World Hunger today – **UNTIL ALL ARE FED**!

THANK YOU TO ...

Kathy Merithew for playing for our service today – we are so thankful!!

SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM - NEXT SUNDAY!!

Anders Don Peterson, infant son of Nate and Ingrid Peterson will be baptized during our worship service next Sunday – we hope you can join us for this joyful event!!

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS

Heinz Albert, Rich Bitting, Manning Freeman, Don Garfield, Betty Hauch, Ellen Kendzierski, Ellen Quirk, Michael Schlemmer, Keith & Juanita Sturdy, George Thomas, Jewel Thomas, Lena Woodlief

OUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Patricia Armentor, Paul Bauer, Karen Bell (Pam Moore's sister), Bob & Dixie, Calli Bonfey, Patricia Boyd & Brad Zelmer, Amanda Brown, David Brown, Dennis & Dorothy Brown, Sally Burkholder, Amy Carter, the Clements family, Laura Clodfelter, Jackie Collier, Ben Davis (friend of Donna Ambrose), Tommy & Kathie Davis, Jenny DeSha, Colton Elliot (Michael Schlemmer's cousin), Emily, Laura Fleige (Janet Gomez's sister), Teresa Floersheim-Miller (Ingrid Peterson's mother), Suzanne Gibson, Steven Godwin (Juanita Sturdy's grandson), Jimmy & Fay Gray (Chris Hawkins' family), Karen Guire, Mike Hall, Melvin Hawkins (Chris Hawkins' father), Chaneice Hayden (Daniel Hayden), Rosie Heins, Sherry Helpap, Carl & Kaleb Hess, Adam Hewko (nephew of the Hansons), Aris Hibbs (friend of Ray Scholz), Spencer Hodges, Wendy Isernia (Heinz and Irene's daughter), Suzanne Kinkade (friend of Ellen Quirk), the Little Family, Marion Lucier, Manuel, Lotte Mathias, Wayne Mathews, Wayne McCormick, Michael, Sylvia Midgette (grandmother of Krystle McMahan), Debbie Minteins, Keith Morgan, Carol Pascale (Lynn Jaeger's mother), Chastity Perkins (co-worker and friend of Donna Ambrose), Brad Person (Lilly Frost's uncle), Dick Peterson & his brother, Monique Raposa, Joan Ritter, Glen Robertson, Carol Schlemmer, James Schollian (friend of Nancy Wagner), Michael Scholz (nephew of Ray Scholz), Scott, Erin Seamonson (Lara Jaeger), Joseph Serafin (Pastor Jay's father), Kathy Shackleford, Elana Sierson, Fred Smith, Tammy Smith, Jean Sterling, Susie, Dave Wagner (husband of Nancy), Cathy Walker (friend of Linda Hodges), Wayne McCormick, Chuck Webb (Tina Britt's father), Makenzie Webb (niece of Tina Britt), Elizabeth & Steven White, Cory Woodlief, Jim Wright (Judy Wright's husband), Logan & Shannon Wymer, Greg Yvonovich (friend of Margaret & Ben Grimes), **Derek Zwiers** (friend of CK Ambrose)

OUR SPONSORED CHILDREN IN GUATEMALA

Amayra, Hugolino and Manuela

PRAYER REQUESTS

There is a book located at the rear of the worship space for you to write any prayer requests you have for today. Fill out a "Prayer Request" (on the back of each pew) and place it in the offering plate to add a prayer request to the "Prayer List" included in the bulletin and the newsletter. **Please print legibly!**

THIS WEEK AT APOSTLES

FEBRUARY 16, 2025 - FEBRUARY 23, 2025

TODAY	10:00 AM	Worship Service - World Hunger
IODAY	IU.UU AIVI	worship service - world nullger

11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship/Sunday School

MONDAY 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM Pastor Jay in the office

7:00 PM AA

TUESDAY 7:00 PM Al-Anon/AA

WEDNESDAY 4:00 PM - 7:30 PM Pastor Jay in the office

6:00 PM Luther's Legacy for Laity

FRIDAY Girls Scouts

SATURDAY 6:30 PM Young and Sober

SUNDAY 10:00 AM Worship Service – Holy Baptism

11:00 AM Coffee Fellowship/Sunday School

HAPPY BIRTHDAY To ...

Billy Moore – Feb 17th | **Krystle McMahan** – Feb 18th | **Shawn Jaeger, Jr.** – Feb 20th | **Betsy Liljeberg** – Feb 23rd

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO ...

Linda and Spencer Hodges - Feb 18th | Margaret and Ben Grimes - Feb 21st

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