



CHRIST+THE SAVIOR IS BORN

PEACE
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Houghton, Michigan
Christmas Day, 2025

Welcome to Worship

God's grace welcomes you, and so do we — the pastor and members of Peace! Jesus Christ is the only Savior of all people. By his perfect life, innocent death and triumphant resurrection, Jesus saves all sinners. We learn these truths from the Bible — God's complete plan for our salvation and his guidebook for our lives. Peace greets you with a warm welcome. We look forward to seeing you again soon!

A Connection Card

was given to you as you entered. Please fill out the card and leave it where you are sitting or place it in the offering plate. We would love to connect with those who are visiting us this evening.

Prayer Before Worship

Almighty God, you made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that as we have known on earth the wonder of that Light, we may also behold him in all glory in the life to come; through your only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion

We believe what God's Word says. God's Word clearly teaches that along with the bread and wine we receive Christ's body and blood for the forgiveness of sins (Matt. 26:26,28; Mk. 14:22,24; Lk. 22:19-22). God's Word also tells us that those who take Communion together are to:

1. Recognize that Christ's true body and blood are miraculously present in the Sacrament (1 Cor. 10:16; 11:29),
2. Examine their hearts (1 Cor. 11:28), and
3. Be united in faith with the congregation with which they commune (1 Cor. 10:17).

Therefore we ask that those who have not had the opportunity to understand our Scriptural confession would speak with the pastor before participating in the Lord's Supper this morning. If you would like to come forward to receive a blessing, simply cross your arms as the ministers approach. It is our sincere desire to share in the blessings of the Lord's Supper with you according to the pattern Jesus himself has given in his Word.

The Advent Wreath

The Advent wreath is a combination of two Christian symbols: light and the fir tree. From the early centuries of Christianity it has been the practice to represent Christ with a burning candle. In the meantime, the symbolic use of the fir tree, and consequently also the Advent wreath, originated hundreds of years ago among the Lutherans of Germany. Four candles adorn the wreath. These represent hope, peace, joy, and love, all of which are found in the Christ, who is represented with the white candle at the center. Week by week we light one more candle on the Advent wreath, the amount of light increasing as we approach the celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ, the Light of the world.

Today's Focus: Holy Infant So Tender and Mild

From eternity, Jesus has been God, holy and majestic. When we look tenderly at the holy infant, we are looking at the same God who once told the prophet Moses, "No one may see me and live." Yet, Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds all saw their holy God and survived. How? God became human, hiding his glory within flesh, so that he could come to us without instilling fear or dread.

A famous theologian once said, "We are to think of the Lord's birth, where the Word became flesh, not as a past event which we recall, but as a present reality on which we gaze." It's not that Christ the Savior was born. It's that Christ the Savior is born.

Service Participants:

Computer Organ: Mary Ann Krug
Pastor of Peace: Pastor Welch



THE ORDER OF SERVICE FOR CHRISTMAS DAY

This order of service focuses the hearts and minds of worshipers on the great mystery of the Incarnation. From the depths of God's Word, to the richness of the songs, and to our participation in the Sacrament, Christians ponder the blessings of the Savior who has been born to us. He is Christ the Lord!

Hymn

Joy To The World



1 Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth re -
 2 Joy to the earth, the Sav - ior reigns! Let men their
 3 No more let sins and sor - rows grow nor thorns in -
 4 He rules the world with truth and grace and makes the



ceive her King; let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare him
 songs em - ploy, while fields and floods, rocks, hills, and
 fest the ground; he comes to make his bless - ings
 na - tions prove the glo - ries of his right - eous -



room and heav'n and na - ture sing, and heav'n and na - ture
 plains re - peat the sound-ing joy, re - peat the sound-ing
 flow far as the curse is found, far as the curse is
 ness and won - ders of his love, and won - ders of his



sing, and heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
 joy, re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.
 found, far as, far as the curse is found.
 love, and won - ders, won - ders of his love.

Invocation

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

*The name of
the triune
God and the
sign of the
cross remind
worshippers of
their
baptisms.*

Responses

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. *Isaiah 9:2*

**The light shines in the darkness,
but the darkness has not understood it.** *John 1:5*

On those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned. *Isaiah 9:2b*

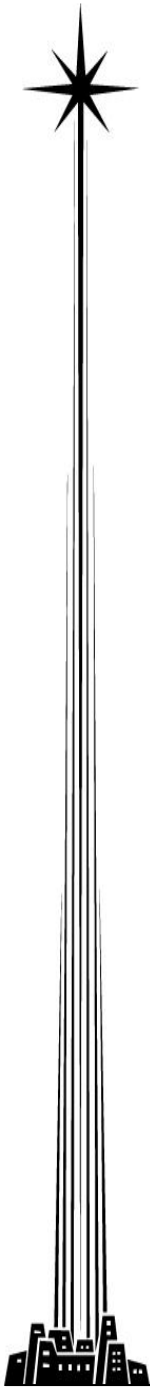
**We have seen his glory, the glory of the only Son,
who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.** *John 1:14*

In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. *John 1:4*

Prayer

O loving God, you once caused this holy night to shine with the brightness of the true Light. Turn our thoughts toward Bethlehem and the Christ-child.

May the words of Scripture we hear today dwell richly in our hearts.
May the carols we sing proclaim the mystery of His birth.
May the candles we see remind us of your Son, the Light of the world.
May all who have known that Light on earth come
to the full measure of its joys in heaven. **Amen.**



Dear friends, let us join with the angels in praising the Lord:

“Today in the town of David, a Savior has been born to you!
He is Christ the Lord!”

Luke 2:11

“Glory to God in the highest!”

Luke 2:14

Hymn

Angels We Have Heard on High



- 1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,
- 2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?
- 3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;



and the moun - tains in re - ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.
What the glad - some ti - dings be which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born King.



Glo

ri - a



in ex - cel - sis De - o;

glo

-



ri - a

in ex - cel - sis

De

- o.

Text: tr. The Crown of Jesus, Part 2, 1862, alt.; French
Tune: French
Text and tune: Public domain

THE WORD



First Reading

Isaiah 52:7-10

⁷How beautiful on the mountains
are the feet of those who bring good news,
who proclaim peace,
who bring good tidings,
who proclaim salvation,
who say to Zion,
“Your God reigns!”

⁸Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices;
together they shout for joy.
When the LORD returns to Zion,
they will see it with their own eyes.

⁹Burst into songs of joy together,
you ruins of Jerusalem,
for the LORD has comforted his people,
he has redeemed Jerusalem.

¹⁰The LORD will lay bare his holy arm
in the sight of all the nations,
and all the ends of the earth will see
the salvation of our God.

The prophet
foretold that
the Lord
would dwell
among us
and do what
was
necessary to
bring the
good news
of salvation
to the ends
of the earth.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.



Hymn

Once in Royal David's City



1 Once in roy - al Da - vid's cit - y stood a low - ly
 2 He came down to earth from heav - en who is God and
 3 And our eyes at last shall see him through his own re -
 4 Not in that poor, low - ly sta - ble with the ox - en



cat - tle shed, where a moth - er laid her ba - by in a
 Lord of all, and his shel - ter was a sta - ble, and his
 deem - ing love, for that child, so dear and gen - tle, is our
 stand - ing by shall we see him, but in heav - en, set at



man - ger for his bed: Mar - y was that moth - er
 cra - dle was a stall; with the poor and mean and
 Lord in heav'n a - bove, and he leads his chil - dren
 God's right hand on high. Then like stars his chil - dren



mild, Je - sus Christ her lit - tle child.
 low - ly lived on earth our Sav - ior ho - ly.
 on to the place where he is gone.
 crowned, all in white, his praise will sound.

Text: Cecil F. Alexander, 1818–1895, abr., alt.

Tune: Henry J. Gauntlett, 1805–1876

Text and tune: Public domain

Second Reading

Hebrews 1:1–9

¹In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, ²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. ³The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. ⁴So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

In the past God sent angels and prophets as messengers to his people. Now God speaks to us directly through his Son.

⁵For to which of the angels did God ever say,

“You are my Son;
today I have become your Father”?

Or again,

“I will be his Father,
and he will be my Son”?

⁶And again, when God brings his firstborn into the world, he says,

“Let all God's angels worship him.”

⁷In speaking of the angels he says,

“He makes his angels spirits,
and his servants flames of fire.”

⁸But about the Son he says,

“Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever;
a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.

⁹You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions
by anointing you with the oil of joy.”

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Hymn

Where Shepherds Lately Kneled



- 1 Where shep-herds late - ly knelt and kept the an - gel's word,
- 2 In that un - like - ly place I find him as they said:
- 3 How should I not have known I - sa - iah would be there,
- 4 Can I, will I for - get how Love was born, and burned



I come in half - be - lief, a pil - grim strange - ly stirred;
sweet new - born babe, how frail! And in a man - ger bed:
his proph - e - cies ful - filled? With pound - ing heart I stare:
its way in - to my heart— un - asked, un - forced, un - earned,



but there is room and wel - come there for me,
a still, small voice to cry one day for me,
a child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me,
to die, to live, and not a - lone for me,



but there is room and wel - come there for me.
a still, small voice to cry one day for me.
a child, a son, the Prince of Peace for me.
to die, to live, and not a - lone for me?

The Word
became flesh
and made his
dwelling
among us.

¹In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning. ³Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

⁶There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. ⁸He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

⁹The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. ¹⁰He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. ¹¹He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. ¹²Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—¹³children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

¹⁴The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹⁵(John testified concerning him. He cried out, saying, "This is the one I spoke about when I said, 'He who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.' ") ¹⁶Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given. ¹⁷For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. ¹⁸No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!



Hymn

Of the Father's Love Begotten sts. 1–2, 5



1 Of the Fa - ther's love be - got - ten ere the worlds be -
 2 Oh, that birth for - ev - er bless - ed when the vir - gin,
 5 Christ, to thee, with God the Fa - ther, and, O Ho - ly



gan to be, he is Al - pha and O - me - ga,
 full of grace, by the Ho - ly Ghost con - ceiv - ing,
 Ghost, to thee hymn and chant and high thanks - giv - ing



he the source, the end - ing he,
 bore the Sav - ior of our race,
 and un - end - ing prais - es be,



of the things that are, that have been,
 and the babe, the world's Re - deem - er,
 hon - or, glo - ry, and do - min - ion



and that fu - ture years shall see ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 first re - vealed his sa - cred face ev - er - more and ev - er - more.
 and e - ter - nal vic - to - ry ev - er - more and ev - er - more.

Text: Aurelius Clemens Prudentius, 348–c. 413, abr.; (sts. 1–2): tr. John Mason Neale, 1818–1866, alt.; (st. 5): tr. Henry W. Baker, 1821–1877, alt.

Tune: plainsong, 13th cent.

Text and tune: Public domain

Confession of Faith from the Athanasian Creed

It is necessary for eternal salvation truly to believe that our Lord Jesus Christ also took on human flesh. Now this is the true Christian faith:

We believe and confess that our Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son, is both God and man.

He is God, eternally begotten from the nature of the Father, and he is man, born in time from the nature of his mother, fully God, fully man, with rational soul and human flesh;

**equal to the Father as to his deity,
less than the Father as to his humanity;**

and though he is both God and man, Christ is not two persons, but one,
**one, not by changing the deity into flesh,
but by taking the humanity into God;**

one, indeed, not by mixture of the natures, but by unity in one person; for just as the rational soul and flesh are one human being,
so God and man are one Christ.

He suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose the third day from the dead.

**He ascended into heaven,
is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty,
and from there will come to judge the living and the dead.**

This is the true Christian faith.

This creed is named after St. Athanasius, a staunch defender of the Christian faith in the fourth century. It was prepared to assist the Church in combating two errors. One error denied that God's Son and the Holy Spirit are of one being or Godhead with the Father. The other denied that Jesus Christ is true God and true man in one person.



THE SACRAMENT

† *Peace practices closed communion. This means that biblical conversation with our church and a unified confession of faith take place beforehand. It is our desire to share in the eternal blessings of this Sacrament according to the instructions that God himself gives. (See additional notes on pages 2-3.)*

† *If you are new to Peace, please know that many of those around you were new at one time, too. As you can see by their presence, this preliminary discussion has only brought us closer together to celebrate the Lord's Supper in the way the Lord has prescribed. For a further explanation, contact our pastor at any time.*

The Preface

These
opening
words mark
the beginning
of the
Sacrament
and are
among the
oldest words
in the liturgy.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is good and right so to do.

It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, for in the wonder and mystery of his birth you have opened our eyes to the glory of your grace and renewed in our hearts the fervor of your love.

The Words of Institution

The pastor speaks the words of institution and the congregation joins to sing the song on the next page.

Peace Came to Earth | Angus Dei

1 Peace came to earth at last that cho-sen night when an-gels
3 You show the Fa-ther none has ev-er seen, in flesh and
clove the sky with song and light and God em-bod-ied
blood you bore our griefs and pain, in bread and wine you
love and sheathed his might— Who could but gasp: Im-man-u-el!
vis-it us a-gain— Who could but see: Im-man-u-el!
Who could but sing: Im-man-u-el!
Who could but thrill: Im-man-u-el!

Text: Jaroslav J. Vajda, 1919–2008

Tune: arr. Mark Kellner, 1959–2015, alt.; Richard Jeffrey, b. 1952

Text: © 1984 Concordia Publishing House. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 734944

Tune: © 2000 MorningStar Music Publishers, Inc. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 734944

Right before receiving the Lord's Supper, Christians traditionally ask for God's mercy by singing, "O Christ, Lamb of God (Latin Agnus Dei), who takes away the sin of the world, have mercy on us." This Christmas version reminds us that through his very body and blood in the Sacrament of Holy Communion, Jesus continues to be "Immanuel" (God with us). Where Jesus is, there peace is also.

Distribution

The congregation will come forward at the usher's direction. During the distribution, please take a moment to fill out our connect card.

Prayer

Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child, prepare a bed, soft, undefiled within our hearts that it may be a quiet chamber kept for thee. *(Martin Luther)*

Amen.

Blessing

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

Amen.

Closing Hymn

Now Sing We, Now Rejoice



- 1 Now sing we, now re - joice, now raise to heav'n our voice;
- 2 Come from on high to me; I can - not rise to thee.
- 3 Now through his Son doth shine the Fa - ther's grace di - vine.
- 4 Oh, where shall joy be found? Where but on heav'n - ly ground,



he from whom joy stream - eth poor in a man - ger lies;
Cheer my wea - ried spir - it, O pure and ho - ly Child;
Death was reign - ing o'er us through sin and van - i - ty
where the an - gels sing - ing with all his saints u - nite,



not so bright - ly beam - eth the sun in yon - der skies.
thro' thy grace and mer - it, blest Je - sus, Lord most mild,
till he o - pened for us a bright e - ter - ni - ty.
sweet - est prais - es bring - ing in heav'n - ly joy and light.



Thou my Sav - ior art!	Thou my Sav - ior art!
draw me un - to thee!	Draw me un - to thee!
May we praise him there!	May we praise him there!
Oh, that we were there!	Oh, that we were there!

Text: tr. Arthur T. Russell, 1806–1874, alt.; Latin and German, 14th cent.
Tune: German, 14th cent., alt.
Text and tune: Public domain

Announcements

WELCOME TO OUR GUESTS AND VISITORS! We are glad that you are here. We hope you can join us again soon!

THANK YOU! Thank you to those who have served in any number of ways: ushering, offering musical gifts, reaching out to others and inviting them, cleaning, encouraging, and praying. Your service to your Lord and to others honors the God who first served you through his Son Jesus Christ.

FOUNDATIONS OF FAITH CLASS Foundations is for everyone: people interested in becoming members, those looking to build their faith, or the curious observer who wants to study the Bible without feeling obligated to join a church. This study is Bible-based and discussion-centered. Classes can be arranged to fit personal schedules.

To get plugged in or to request more information, contact Pastor Welch (pastor@peacehoughton.org). Childcare is available upon request.

ONLINE OFFERING OPTION If you would like to give an online offering today, please scan the QR code. All online donations are safe and go directly to Peace.



CHRISTMAS WISHES

May the Holy Spirit continually lead you to marvel at the manger and the cross, and to celebrate the Savior born to you so that he might die for you.
“He is Christ the Lord!”

From our family to yours,
Merry Christmas!



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Peacehoughton.org

Our mission is to spread the gospel of Christ, to gather college students and the local community into a family of believers, and to share the message of hope and the promise of salvation through grace.