



CHRIST THE SAVIOR IS BORN

PEACE
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Houghton, Michigan
January 4th, 2026

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!

About Our Service

The gospel (or good news) is not just information about what Jesus did to save sinners. It is also the power God uses to work faith in our hearts, transform our lives, and give us lasting peace. Therefore, Lutheran worship places the gospel in central focus in an order of service called the liturgy. In the message and meal (Holy Communion), in specially selected Scripture readings, and in carefully crafted songs, prayers, and creeds, the liturgy proclaims the good news about Jesus from start to finish. Lutheran worship is also designed to include the participation of the entire assembly (including children). For your ease and convenience, the order of service is printed out on the following pages. If a song is not found in this service folder, it can be found in the red or blue hymnals located on the chair in front of you.

Current Worship Series: Christ the Savior is Born

"Silent Night" was written originally in German by Joseph Mohr, with music composed by Franz Gruber. The carol was first performed on Christmas Eve in 1818 at St. Nicholas Church in Oberndorf, Austria. Legend says the church organ was broken, prompting Gruber to compose a simple guitar accompaniment. Subsequently accompanied by many instruments and translated into many languages, the text paints the picture of the incarnation. The last phrase is repeated, so in the second stanza we hear it twice: "Christ the Savior is born!" Every word of that phrase is significant, and every line of the Christmas carol describes a Bible truth. We use the beloved hymn to ponder the profound message of the Twelve Days of Christmas.

Our worship follows this path:

December 24th: Heavenly Hosts Sing Alleluia

December 25th: Holy Infant So Tender and Mild

December 28th: Son of God

January 4th: Love's Pure Light Beams from Thy Holy Face

Today's Focus: Love's Pure Light Beams from Thy Holy Face

The Twelve Days of Christmas are the days between Christmas Day and January 6. What is special about January 6? It is the day when the Christian Church celebrates the Festival of the Epiphany. Epiphany comes from a Greek word meaning "reveal." When the Savior was born, he was first revealed as love's pure light to Israelites: Mary, Joseph, the shepherds. Today we see the Lord miraculously guiding foreigners across countless miles so the Savior's holy face could be revealed to them as well. The Festival of Epiphany is sometimes known as Christmas for the Gentiles. We Gentiles (non-Jews) rejoice in the good news that this Jewish baby is a gift for all people, Christ the Savior of the world.

Service Participants:

Computer Organ: Mary Ann Krug

Pastor of Peace: Pastor Welch



THE ORDER OF SERVICE

For Sunday, January 4, 2026

God's people long to gather together for strength from God and for mutual encouragement. This alternate beginning for worship is intended to prepare God's people to witness the Sacrament of Baptism and contemplate its continued blessings.

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

Invocation

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

Baptism Gathering Rite

**Baptized into your name most holy,
O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
I claim a place, though weak and lowly,
Among your saints, your chosen host,
Buried with Christ and dead to sin.
Your Spirit now shall live within.**

John 3:5,6

I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born
of water and the Spirit.
Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.

Psalm 51:5

Surely we were sinful at birth, sinful from the time our mothers conceived
us.

1 Corinthians
6:11

**But we were washed, we were sanctified, we were justified in the
name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.**

**My loving Father, there you took me
To be henceforth your child and heir.
My faithful Savior, there you let me
The fruit of all your sorrows share.
O Holy Spirit, comfort me
When threat'ning clouds around I see.**

As baptized children of God, we confess our sins.

**Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and
that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have
done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve
your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for
my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have
mercy on me, a sinner.**

**My faithful God, you fail me never;
Your promise surely will endure.
Oh, cast me not away forever
If words and deeds become impure.
Have mercy when I come defiled;
Forgive, lift up, restore your child.**

God saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit and united us to the death and resurrection of Jesus. Every day God forgives your sins, removes your guilt, and strengthens you to defeat Satan's power. His promise is for you and your children, and he will never forsake you. Your sins are forgiven. You are clothed with Christ. You are at peace with God now and forever. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I say to you what God says: your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father and of the Son † and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

The use of the keys of absolution is that special right which Christ gave to his church on earth: to proclaim the forgiveness of sins through Jesus. See John 20:21-23.

**All that I am and love most dearly—
Receive it all, O Lord, from me.
Let me confess my faith sincerely,
And help me your own child to be!
Let nothing that I am or own
Serve any will but yours alone.**



The Sacrament of Holy Baptism

Our Savior Jesus Christ commanded Baptism when he said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Scripture makes plain the need for Baptism. As children of Adam, we belong to a fallen race. From our parents we inherit a sinful nature, and we would be lost forever unless delivered by our Lord Jesus Christ. He willingly took on himself the curse of sin, and by his death on the cross he redeemed us and all people. It is the Father’s will that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and he will raise them up at the Last Day.

Christ’s almighty Word gives Baptism its power to save. Jesus promises in the last chapter of Mark, “Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved.” The apostle Peter declares, “Baptism now saves you.” Scripture also teaches that the power and promise of Baptism are intended for young and old alike. On the day of Pentecost, the apostle testified, “The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.” By water and the Spirit, we are born again and are united with Christ and his people as members of the Church.

Let us pray.

Holding firmly to your command and promise, we ask that you would look with favor on Gretel Welch. Through this water of Baptism, drown in her all sin inherited from Adam and any other evil she may do. Set her apart from the unbelieving world, and hold her safe and secure in the holy ark of the Church. Keep her always fervent in spirit and joyful in hope so that he may honor your holy name and at last receive, together with all your people, the promised inheritance of eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Gretel Sylvie Welch, I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Receive the sign of the cross on the head and heart † to mark you as one redeemed by Christ the crucified.

The almighty God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has given you the new birth of water and the Spirit and has forgiven all your sins. May he strengthen you with his grace all the days of your life. Peace be with you.



The prophet
foretold that
one born king
of the Jews
would draw
kings from
distant
nations to the
light of his
glory.

The Word

First Reading

Isaiah 60:1–6

¹“Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD rises upon you.

²See, darkness covers the earth
and thick darkness is over the peoples,
but the LORD rises upon you
and his glory appears over you.

³Nations will come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

⁴“Lift up your eyes and look about you:
All assemble and come to you;
your sons come from afar,
and your daughters are carried on the hip.

⁵Then you will look and be radiant,
your heart will throb and swell with joy;
the wealth on the seas will be brought to you,
to you the riches of the nations will come.

⁶Herds of camels will cover your land,
young camels of Midian and Ephah.
And all from Sheba will come,
bearing gold and incense
and proclaiming the praise of the LORD.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Children's Lesson

Second Reading

Ephesians 3:2–12

²Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you, ³that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. ⁴In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. ⁶This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

⁷I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power. ⁸Although I am less than the least of all the Lord's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ, ⁹and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. ¹⁰His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, ¹¹according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. ¹²In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

Paul explains that people from all nations are united as equals in the Savior's kingdom of grace.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Hymn of the Day

83 As with Gladness Men of Old



- 1 As with glad-ness men of old did the guid-ing star be-hold,
- 2 As with joy-ful steps they sped, Sav-ior, to thy low-ly bed,
- 3 As they of-fered gifts most rare at thy cra-dle, rude and bare,
- 4 Ho-ly Je-sus, ev-'ry day keep us in the nar-row way;
- 5 In the heav'n-ly coun-try bright need they no cre-at-ed light;



as with joy they hailed its light, lead-ing on-ward, beam-ing bright,
there to bend the knee be-fore thee, whom heav'n and earth a-dore,
so may we with ho-ly joy, pure and free from sin's al-loy,
and, when earth-ly things are past, bring our ran-somed souls at last
thou its light, its joy, its crown, thou its sun which goes not down.



so, most gra-cious Lord, may we ev-er-more be led by thee.
so may we with will-ing feet ev-er seek thy mer-cy seat.
all our cost-liest trea-sures bring, Christ, to thee, our heav'n-ly King.
where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glo-ry hide.
There for-ev-er may we sing al-le-lu-ias to our King!

Text: William C. Dix, 1837–1898, alt.

Tune: Conrad Kocher, 1786–1872, alt.

Text and tune: Public domain

Gospel

Matthew 2:1-12

¹After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ²and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

³When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵“In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written:

⁶“ ‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;
for out of you will come a ruler
who will shepherd my people Israel.’”

⁷Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”

⁹After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

Magi from the east were the first in a long line of Gentiles would join Israel in worshiping Jesus as King.

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

Sermon

Matthew 2:1-12

Nicene Creed

Public
confession is
faith's
response to
God's saving
Word.
Christians
composed the
Nicene Creed
in the fourth
century to
defend the
Bible's
teachings that
both Jesus
Christ and the
Holy Spirit are
true God,
equal to the
Father in one
eternal,
undivided
Trinity.

**We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is,
seen and unseen.**

**We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one being with the Father.**

Through him all things were made.

**For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,
and became truly human.**

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate.

He suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures.

**He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit,
the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,
who in unity with the Father and the Son
is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.**

We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

**We look for the resurrection of the dead
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

Please be seated

Offering

The members of Peace have joined together in the grace of giving (2 Corinthians 8:7) to do the Lord's work of sharing the message of Jesus. Visitors need not feel obligated. You are our guests!

Members and visitors, kindly fill out one of our Connection Cards. You may place it in the offering plate or hand it to an usher.

Prayer of the Church

Please stand. The pastor will speak the prayer of the church and the congregation will join to say the Lord's prayer.

Lord's Prayer

**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.**



The Sacrament

Announcement

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 pastor approaches. 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.

Introduction to the Lord's Supper

1 Cor. 11:28

Everyone ought to examine their hearts before partaking of the Lord's Supper.

Psalm 32:5

I confessed my transgressions to the Lord and he forgave the guilt of my sin.

1 Cor. 11:29

Everyone ought to recognize the true body and blood of the Lord in this Supper.

1 Cor. 10:16

The bread that we break and the cup that we bless are a participation in the body and blood of Christ.

1 Cor. 10:17

Those partaking of the Lord's Supper are to be united in fellowship as one body.

Because there is one loaf, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf.

Hymn

Thank the Lord and Sing His Praise



Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev'-ry-one what he has done.



Let all who seek the Lord re - joice and proud-ly bear his name.



He re-news his prom-is - es and leads his peo-ple forth in joy with



shouts of thanks-giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

Text: John W. Arthur, 1922-1980

Tune: Richard W. Hillert, 1923-2010

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Words of Institution

The pastor speaks the words of institution according to the words of 1 Corinthians 11.

Lamb of God

Lamb of God, Pure and Holy sts. 1, 3

1 Lamb of God, pure and ho - ly, who on the cross did suf - fer,
3 Lamb of God, pure and ho - ly, who on the cross did suf - fer,
ev - er pa - tient and low - ly, your-self to scorn did of - fer.
ev - er pa - tient and low - ly, your-self to scorn did of - fer.
All sin you car-ried for us, else had de-spair reigned o'er us:
All sin you car-ried for us, else had de-spair reigned o'er us:
have mer - cy on us, O Je - sus! O Je - sus!
your peace be with us, O Je - sus! O Je - sus!

Text: Nicolaus Decius, c. 1485–after 1546; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941
Tune: Nicolaus Decius, c. 1485–after 1546
Text and tune: Public domain

Thanksgiving

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good.
For his mercy endures forever.

Whenever we eat this bread and drink this cup,
we proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this saving gift. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look on you with favor and † give you peace.

Amen.

Hymn

Joy Has Dawned



1 Joy has dawned up - on the world, prom - ised from cre - a - tion—
2 Sounds of won - der fill the sky with the songs of an - gels
3 Shep - herds bow be - fore the Lamb, gaz - ing at the glo - ry.
4 Son of Ad - am, Son of heav'n, giv - en as a ran - som;



God's sal - va - tion now un - furled, hope for ev - 'ry na - tion.
as the might - y Prince of life shel - ters in a sta - ble.
Gifts of men from dis - tant lands proph - e - sy the sto - ry:
rec - on - cil - ing God and man, Christ, our might - y cham - pion!



Not with fan - fares from a - bove, not with scenes of glo - ry,
Hands that set each star in place, shaped the earth in dark - ness,
gold— a king is born to - day; in - cense—God is with us;
What a Sav - ior! What a friend! What a glo - rious mys - t'ry!



but a hum - ble gift of love— Je - sus born of Mar - y.
cling now to a moth - er's breast, _ vul - n'ra - ble and help - less.
myrrh— his death will make a way, and by his blood he'll win us.
Once a babe in Beth - le - hem, _ now the Lord of his - t'ry.

Announcements

Foundations of Faith is an introductory class to the Christian faith. It’s for anybody who wants to learn or review the fundamental teachings of the Bible, members and non-members alike!

If you or someone you know are interested in joining, contact Pastor for more information.



Online Offering Option - If you would like to give an online offering today, please scan the QR code. All online donations are secure and go directly to Peace.

Sermon Discussion Guides are on the table by the entryway. These are intended for you and your family to take home as weekly devotional materials, allowing you to meditate on the sermon throughout the week. Take one with you as you exit today.

Sunday Volunteer Schedule

Date	Usher	Counter	Computer	Piano	Snacks	Children's Ministry
January 4	Steve	Steve	Mary Ann	x	Potluck	help needed
January 11	Cesar	Cody	Zack	x	Amy Hughes	help needed
January 18	Steve	Craig	Nate	x	Kristie Vlahos	help needed
January 25	Cody	Steve	Zack	x	Gabriela	Ivy

New Member Potluck - About two times a year, Peace hosts a special meal to welcome our newest members to the Peace family. Please stick around today, enjoy some food, and welcome some of our newest members.



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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.