



ADVENT

IMMINENT ARRIVAL

Imminent Arrival of the Judge

PEACE
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Houghton, Michigan
Sunday, December 7, 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!

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: Imminent Arrival

Do you remember the feeling when someone important is about to arrive at your place? It's a mixture of anticipation and excitement and nervousness. Did you make all the correct preparations? Will the person be happy to see you? When and how will the person arrive? Will there be any surprises?

During these weeks before Christmas, we anticipate the imminent arrival of Jesus. He's an important person! We are about to celebrate his birth. He could return on judgment day at any time. But in worship we realize that he impacts our lives when the Bible is read and when the sacraments are administered. Suddenly, we feel the excitement of an imminent arrival. reign in our hearts.

Our worship follows this path:

November 30th: Imminent Arrival of the King

December 7th: Imminent Arrival of the Judge

December 14th: Imminent Arrival of the Messiah

December 21st: Imminent Arrival of Emmanuel

December 24th, 5:00 P.M. –Heavenly Hosts Sing Alleluia

December 25th, 10:15 A.M. – Holy Infant So Tender and Mild

Today's Focus: Imminent Arrival of the Judge

The judge is an important person. You stand when he enters the courtroom. What he says must be obeyed. If you are the one on trial, his determinations make a big difference in how your life will continue.

You might be quite nervous if the judge is about to arrive. John invited people to turn their nervousness to repentance. He says that the arrival of the Judge is imminent, and the kingdom of heaven is near! You are invited to hear John, repent, and believe the good news of the coming Savior.

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.

Service Participants:

Computer Organ: Zackary Sickmann

Pastor of Peace: Pastor Welch



THE ORDER OF SERVICE

For Sunday, December 7, 2025

Please stand.

Invocation

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

In the name of the Father and of the T Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

Advent Gathering Rite

The cantor/choir introduces the refrain. Then the congregation repeats the refrain and sings it again as indicated.

Lead us to your light, lead us out of dark-ness.

Lead us to your light. Come, Je - sus, come.

Lord, we await your coming to our world;
Bring us the gift of salvation.

Refrain

Come, O come, O come, Emmanuel;
Come with us on earth here to dwell.

Refrain

Confession and Absolution for Advent

Prepare the way for the Lord.

Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.

Isaiah 40:3

The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness.

**Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish,
but everyone to come to repentance.**

2 Peter 3:9

Dear friends, one day Christ will return to deliver his people.

Therefore, let us prepare our hearts to meet him by humbly seeking his forgiveness.

**Almighty and merciful Father, we have strayed from your ways like
lost sheep.**

**We have followed what we have devised and desired in our own
hearts.**

**We have done what you forbid,
and we have failed to do what you command.**

**Have mercy on us, Lord! Spare us, forgive us, and restore us,
according to your promises in Christ Jesus.**

What God promised long ago through his prophets he has fulfilled in his Son, Jesus Christ. Christ came in human flesh. He is Immanuel, God with us. By his holy life, he fulfilled God's law. By his innocent death, he paid sin's penalty. By rising from the grave, he opened heaven's door. Christ now comes to you through his words of light and life:

After his resurrection, Jesus promised that when Christians forgive each other's sins, their words are as valid and certain as his. (John 20:22-23)

Your sins are forgiven in the name of the Father and of the Son † and of the Holy Spirit

Amen.

Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess;
for he who promised is faithful.

Hebrews 10:23

All sing the refrain after a short introduction, the cantor/ choir sings the verse, and then all sing the refrain one final time.

It is customary to begin worship in Advent without an opening hymn or Gloria. This accentuates the solemn penitential and preparatory nature of the season. Christians then look forward to singing the Gloria with the angels at Christmas.



Lord, you are hope and healing for our world;
Come, now, and bring us your good news.

Refrain

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

We light two Advent candles, remembering Jesus, who came in history. He came into a world of sin and death.

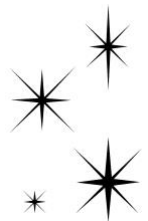
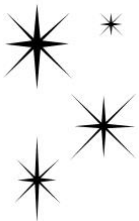
We remember Jesus, who came as the promised Messiah. John the Baptist prepared the way of the Lord.

We hear his call to repent.

We light two Advent candles as a sign of our repentance and desire for renewal.

Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest.

Through your Word and Spirit may our souls be blest.



The Word



Prayer of the Day

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to prepare the way for your only Son. By his coming, give us strength in our conflicts, and shed light on our path through the darkness of this world; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

First Reading

Isaiah 11:1–10

- ¹A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.
²The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him—
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and of might,
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the LORD—
³and he will delight in the fear of the LORD.

He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,
or decide by what he hears with his ears;
⁴but with righteousness he will judge the needy,
with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth.
He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.

⁵Righteousness will be his belt
and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

⁶The wolf will live with the lamb,
the leopard will lie down with the goat,
the calf and the lion and the yearling together;
and a little child will lead them.

⁷The cow will feed with the bear,
their young will lie down together,
and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

Isaiah gives
the
credentials of
the one who
would come
to judge.

⁸The infant will play near the cobra's den,
and the young child will put its hand into the viper's nest.
⁹They will neither harm nor destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his resting place will be glorious.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Children's Lesson

Second Reading

Romans 15:4–13

God's people
face the
coming
judgement
with hope,
not fear.

⁴For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.

⁵May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, ⁶so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. ⁸For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, so that the promises made to the patriarchs might be confirmed ⁹and, moreover, that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written:

"Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles;
I will sing the praises of your name."

¹⁰Again, it says,

"Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people."

¹¹And again,

“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles;
let all the peoples extol him.”

¹²And again, Isaiah says,

“The Root of Jesse will spring up,
one who will arise to rule over the nations;
in him the Gentiles will hope.”

¹³May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him,
so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Please stand

Gospel Acclamation

Luke 3:4,6



Alleluia. Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him. And all people will see God's salvation. Alleluia.

Refrain

John prepared people for the arrival of the judge by emphasizing the nearness of the kingdom of God.

Gospel Reading

Matthew 3:1-12

¹In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea ²and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

³This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah:

“A voice of one calling in the wilderness,
‘Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him.’ ”

⁴John’s clothes were made of camel’s hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. ⁶Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

⁷But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. ⁹And do not think you can say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. ¹⁰The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹“I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹²His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire.”

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

Please be seated.

Hymn of the Day

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry



1 On Jor - dan's bank the Bap - tist's cry an - nounc - es
2 Then cleansed be ev - 'ry life from sin and fur - nished
3 We hail you as our Sav - ior, Lord, our ref - uge
4 Stretch forth your hand, our health re - store, and lift us
5 All praise to you, e - ter - nal Son, whose ad - vent



that the Lord is nigh; come, then, and lis - ten,
for a Guest with - in, and let us all our
and our great re - ward; with - out your grace we
up to fall no more; O make your face on
has our free - dom won, whom with the Fa - ther



for he brings good news a - bout the King of kings.
hearts pre - pare for Christ to come and en - ter there.
waste a - way like flow'rs that with - er and de - cay.
us to shine, and fill the world with love di - vine.
we a - dore and Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er - more.

Text: Charles Coffin, 1676–1749; tr. composite

Tune: Latin, 15th cent., adapt. Michael Praetorius, 1571–1621

Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon

Matthew 3:1-12

Please stand.

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!

Kindly fill out one of our Connection Cards. You may leave it on the pew, place it in the offering plate, or hand it to an usher.



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 Reginald Beiring. Through this water of Baptism, drown in him all sin inherited from Adam and any other evil he may do. Set him apart from the unbelieving world, and hold him safe and secure in

the holy ark of the Church. Keep him 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.**

The Gospel according to St. Mark:

People were bringing little children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on them and blessed them.

We confess the faith into which Reginald will be baptized.

Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day he rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.
From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Public confession is faith's response to God's saving Word. Christians composed the Apostle's 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.

Reginald Hugh Beiring, 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 T to mark you as one redeemed by Christ the crucified.

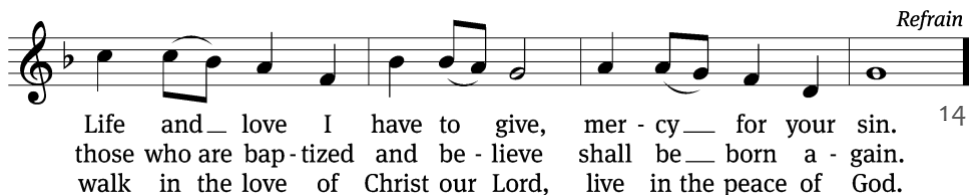
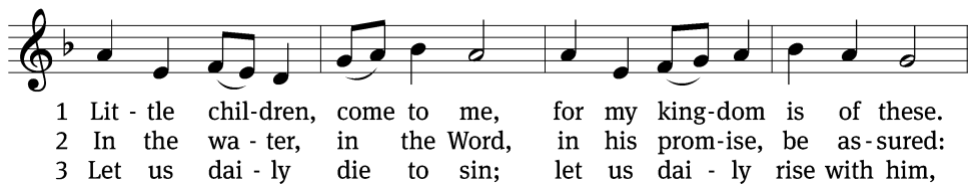
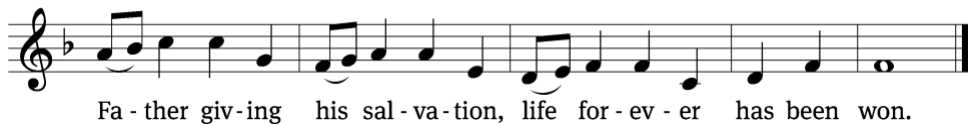
The almighty God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has given you the new birth of water and the Spirit and has forgiven all your sins. May he strengthen you with his grace all the days of your life. Peace be with you.

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.

Hymn

Father Welcomes



The Sacrament

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

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

1 Cor. 11:28

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

Psalms 32:5

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

1 Cor. 11:29

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

1 Cor. 10:16

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.

1 Cor. 10:17

And Christ is Here

Sung to the tune of "In Christ Alone"

And Christ is here
In means divine
Found underneath the bread and wine!
In water poured There with the Word
The living voice of Christ is heard!
And when his Christians Fall to sin
Our Jesus calls us back again
For Christ is here
In means divine –
Blessing us through his design!

Words of Institution

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

Lamb of God

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us.

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us.



Distribution

Please be seated after the song. Communicants will come forward at the usher's direction after the song.

Closing Prayer

Hear the prayer of your people, O Lord, that the lips which have praised you here may glorify you in the world, that the eyes which have seen the coming of your Son may long for his coming again, and that all who have received in his true body and blood the pledge of your forgiveness may be restored to live a new and holy life, through 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 T give you peace.

Amen.

Hymn

Dawning Light of Our Salvation



1 Long in dark - ness Is - rael wan - dered; long in mor - tal
2 He shall raise a might - y Sav - ior; born of Da - vid's
3 Je - sus, Lord, and might - y Sav - ior, Da - vid's son and



shad - ows we walked in bond - age and self - pit - y, trod in
lin - eage, he comes in cov - 'nant love to claim us, from our
yet his King, dawn - ing light of our sal - va - tion, of your



paths of sin and grief. In the proph - ets' words he told us,
sins to set us free. Light to those who dwell in dark - ness,
sav - ing pow'r we sing! Stand, O lame, and dance, ye bro - ken;



long the God of Is - rael spoke; he a - lone in strength would
life to those from death who flee, joy un - to the earth, and
know the Sav - ior's heal - ing grace. Come, O deaf, and hear him



save us from the hands of all our foes.
glad - ness, to your path - ways dawn - ing peace!
sing - ing; turn, O blind, be - hold his face!

Refrain



Ev - 'ry val - ley be ex - alt - ed! Ev - 'ry moun - tain



be made plane! Crook - ed ways re - pent and straight - en;



all cre - a - tion bend in praise!

Announcements

Foundations of Faith

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 safe and go directly to Peace.

Sermon Discussion Guide

On the table by the entryway, you will find a stack of sermon discussion guides. 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 |
|---------------|-------|---------|----------|-------|-----------|---------------------|
| December 7 | Steve | Scott | Nate | Zack | Karin | Leisel |
| December 14 | Cesar | Craig | Mary Ann | x | Heather | Sarah |
| December 21 | Steve | Steve | Mary Ann | x | Amy Spahn | Help Needed |
| Christmas Eve | Steve | Cody | Mary Ann | x | x | x |
| Christmas Day | Steve | Scott | Mary Ann | x | x | x |

Catered Brunch after Worship Today

After worship, Elijah Dosapati is providing a catered lunch for the congregation to celebrate his Birthday. Plan to stick around to enjoy some food and fellowship after worship! There will be a free-will offering to offset the cost.

Congregational Meeting – December 14

We will hold our quarterly congregational meeting after worship on December 14. The building committee will update the congregation on the status of the building project.



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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.