



Grace is Amazing

PEACE
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Houghton, Michigan
Sunday, September 20, 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: Unexpected Truths

The opening lines of the United States Declaration of Independence boldly assert that certain truths are “self-evident”—truths accessible to human reason and widely recognized by observation of the world. Among these are that all people are created equal and possess unalienable rights such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. The founders appealed to principles they believed reasonable people could recognize simply by reflecting on human nature and justice. These truths were meant to be obvious, clear to the mind, and persuasive in the public square.

Lutherans, however, note that the most important truths revealed in the Bible are not self-evident at all. In fact, they frequently appear surprising or

even contrary to human expectations. Scripture teaches that humanity is not naturally good but deeply sinful. It declares that salvation cannot be achieved through human effort but comes entirely by God's grace. Most unexpected of all is the message that God brings forgiveness and eternal life through the suffering and death of Jesus Christ

Biblical truth is revealed by God rather than discovered by reason alone. While some truths may seem obvious to human judgment, the truths of the Bible are often unexpected.

August 30: Cross Comes Before Crown

September 6: I Am My Brother's Keeper

September 13: Forgiveness is for Me

September 20: Grace is Amazing

September 27: Real Repentance Looks Different

Today's Focus: *I Am My Brother's Keeper*

Give a single bag of M&Ms to siblings in middle school and tell them to share. You will witness counting done with accounting-like precision. Each child will get an equal amount of candy because that is fair. That's what's expected. Human beings have an incredibly strong sense of fairness.

That is why it can be so amazing when we see how God unexpectedly dispenses blessing and grace. The prophet Jonah was perplexed when he saw God's mercy on a nation that was an enemy to Jonah's people. Like Jonah, we need to stop expecting God to be fair. He does not give us what we deserve. Instead, in his grace, he shows us mercy. That's amazing!

Service Participants:

Computer Organ: Judy Limpert

Pastor of Peace: Tommy Welch



THE ORDER OF SERVICE

Hymn

By Grace I'm Saved



1 By grace I'm saved, grace free and bound-less; my soul, be -
2 By grace God's Son, our on - ly Sav - ior, came down to
3 By grace! O mark this word of prom - ise when you are
4 By grace to tim - id hearts that trem - ble, in trib - u -
5 By grace! On this I'll rest when dy - ing; in Je - sus'



lieve and doubt it not. Why wa - ver at this word of
earth to bear our sin. Was it be - cause of your own
by your sins op - pressed, when Sa - tan plagues your trou - bled
la - tion's fur - nace tried, by grace, de - spite all fear and
prom - ise I re - joice, for though I know my heart's con -



prom - ise? Has Scrip - ture ev - er false - hood taught? So then this
mer - it that Je - sus died, your soul to win? No, it was
con - science, and when your heart is seek - ing rest. What rea - son
trou - ble, the Fa - ther's heart is o - pen wide. Where could I
di - tion, I al - so know my Sav - ior's voice. My heart is



word must true re - main: by grace you, too, shall heav'n ob - tain.
grace, and grace a - lone, that brought him from his heav'n - ly throne.
can - not com - pre - hend God by his grace to you did send.
help and strength se - cure if grace were not my an - chor sure?
glad, all grief has flown since I am saved by grace a - lone.

Text: Christian L. Scheidt, 1709–1761, abr.; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt.

Tune: Cornelius H. Dretzel, 1697–1775

Text and tune: Public domain

Please stand

Invocation

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

Confession and Absolution

Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.
Blessed are they whose sin the Lord does not count against them.

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Almighty and merciful Father,

we have strayed from your ways like lost sheep.

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

We have offended you and sinned against your holy law.

**We have done those things that we should not have done,
and we have not done those things that we should have done.**

Have mercy on us, Lord!

**Spare us, forgive us, and restore us,
according to your promises in Christ Jesus.**

Silence for meditation and reflection

Absolution

Our gracious Father in heaven has been merciful to us. He sent his only Son, Jesus Christ, who gave his life as the atoning sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. 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.

You are at peace with God now and forever.
Amen.

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

Psalm 32:1-2

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.

Glory to God

Gloria

Tune: ELLACOMBE

Jesus said that
the angels in
heaven rejoice
over one sinner
who repents. In
response to the
repentance
expressed
through
confession and
absolution, the
church sings as
the angels sang
on Christmas
night: "glory be
to God on
high."

1 To God on high be glo - ry and peace to all the earth,
2 O Lamb of God ex - alt - ed, you take all sin a - way;
for God has shown his fa - vor in Je - sus' ho - ly birth!
ex - tend to us your mer - cy and hear us as we pray.
Al - might - y God and Fa - ther, our hum - ble thanks we bring;
With God the Ho - ly Spir - it at God the Fa - ther's throne
we wor - ship you, we bless you, Lord God, our heav'n - ly King.
you reign, O Christ, for - ev - er, for you are Lord a - lone!

Text: Michael D. Schultz

Tune: Gesangbuch der Herzogl. Hofkapelle, Württemberg, 1784

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Tune: Public domain

Prayer of the Day

Lord God, you call us to work in your kingdom and promise to reward us according to your grace. Help us to rid our minds of worldly expectations and rejoice that you freely pour out the blessings of salvation to all people; through the merits of Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Please be seated

The Word

First Reading

Jonah 3:10—4:11

¹⁰When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened.

¹But to Jonah this seemed very wrong, and he became angry. ²He prayed to the LORD, “Isn’t this what I said, LORD, when I was still at home? That is what I tried to forestall by fleeing to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity. ³Now, LORD, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live.”

Jonah is perplexed by the amazing grace of God.

⁴But the LORD replied, “Is it right for you to be angry?”

⁵Jonah had gone out and sat down at a place east of the city. There he made himself a shelter, sat in its shade and waited to see what would happen to the city. ⁶Then the LORD God provided a leafy plant and made it grow up over Jonah to give shade for his head to ease his discomfort, and Jonah was very happy about the plant. ⁷But at dawn the next day God provided a worm, which chewed the plant so that it withered. ⁸When the sun rose, God provided a scorching east wind, and the sun blazed on Jonah’s head so that he grew faint. He wanted to die, and said, “It would be better for me to die than to live.”

⁹But God said to Jonah, “Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?”

“It is,” he said. “And I’m so angry I wish I were dead.”

¹⁰But the LORD said, “You have been concerned about this plant, though you did not tend it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight. ¹¹And should I not have concern for the great city of Nineveh, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left—and also many animals?”

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Children’s Lesson

Second Reading

Romans 9:6–16

God shows
mercy and
grace to those
he chooses.

⁶It is not as though God's word had failed. For not all who are descended from Israel are Israel. ⁷Nor because they are his descendants are they all Abraham's children. On the contrary, "It is through Isaac that your offspring will be reckoned." ⁸In other words, it is not the children by physical descent who are God's children, but it is the children of the promise who are regarded as Abraham's offspring. ⁹For this was how the promise was stated: "At the appointed time I will return, and Sarah will have a son."

¹⁰Not only that, but Rebekah's children were conceived at the same time by our father Isaac. ¹¹Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad—in order that God's purpose in election might stand: ¹²not by works but by him who calls—she was told, "The older will serve the younger." ¹³Just as it is written: "Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."

¹⁴What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all! ¹⁵For he says to Moses,

"I will have mercy on whom I have mercy,
and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."

¹⁶It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God's mercy.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Ephesians 2:8

For centuries
in preparation
for hearing
the Gospel,
Christians
have sung or
spoken
"Alleluia!" and
a Scripture
verse
reinforcing
the theme of
the day.

After an introduction, the congregation will join to sing the verse.



Alleluia. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God. Alleluia.



Gospel

Matthew 20:1–16

Jesus tells a story of God's amazing generosity.

¹“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. ²He agreed to pay them a denarius for the day and sent them into his vineyard.

³“About nine in the morning he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. ⁴He told them, ‘You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ ⁵So they went.

“He went out again about noon and about three in the afternoon and did the same thing. ⁶About five in the afternoon he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, ‘Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?’

⁷“‘Because no one has hired us,’ they answered.

“He said to them, ‘You also go and work in my vineyard.’

⁸“When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, ‘Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first.’

⁹“The workers who were hired about five in the afternoon came and each received a denarius. ¹⁰So when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius.

¹¹When they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner.

¹²“These who were hired last worked only one hour,’ they said, ‘and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the work and the heat of the day.’

¹³“But he answered one of them, ‘I am not being unfair to you, friend. Didn’t you agree to work for a denarius? ¹⁴Take your pay and go. I want to give the one who was hired last the same as I gave you. ¹⁵Don’t I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?’

¹⁶“So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Hymn of the Day

Salvation unto Us Has Come sts. 1-6



1 Sal - va - tion un - to us has come by God's free grace and
2 What God did in his law de - mand and none to him could
3 It was a false, mis - lead - ing dream that God his law had
4 From sin our flesh could not ab - stain, sin held its sway un -



fa - vor; good works can - not a - vert our doom, they help and
ren - der caused wrath and woe on ev - 'ry hand for man, the
giv - en that sin - ners could them-selves re - deem and by their
ceas - ing; the task was use - less and in vain, our guilt was



save us nev - er. Faith looks to Je - sus Christ a - lone, who
vile of - fend - er. Our flesh has not those pure de - sires the
works gain heav - en. The law is but a mir - ror bright to
e'er in - creas - ing. None can re - move sin's poi - soned dart or



did for all the world a - tone; he is our one Re - deem - er.
spir - it of the law re - quires, and lost is our con - di - tion.
bring the in - bred sin to light that lurks with - in our na - ture.
pu - ri - fy our wick - ed heart, so deep is our cor - rup - tion.

- 5 Yet as the law must be fulfilled
or we must die despairing,
Christ came and has God's anger stilled,
our human nature sharing.
He has for us the law obeyed
and thus the Father's vengeance stayed
which over us impended.

- 6 Since Christ has full atonement made
and brought to us salvation,
each Christian therefore may be glad
and build on this foundation.
Your grace alone, dear Lord, I plead,
your death is now my life indeed,
for you have paid my ransom.

Text: Paul Speratus, 1484–1551, abr., alt.; tr. The Lutheran Hymnal, 1941, alt.
Tune: Etlich Cristlich liden, Wittenberg, 1524
Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon

Matthew 20:1-16

Please stand

Nicene Creed

Credo

**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.**

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 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

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.

Psalm 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.

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

1 Cor. 10:16

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

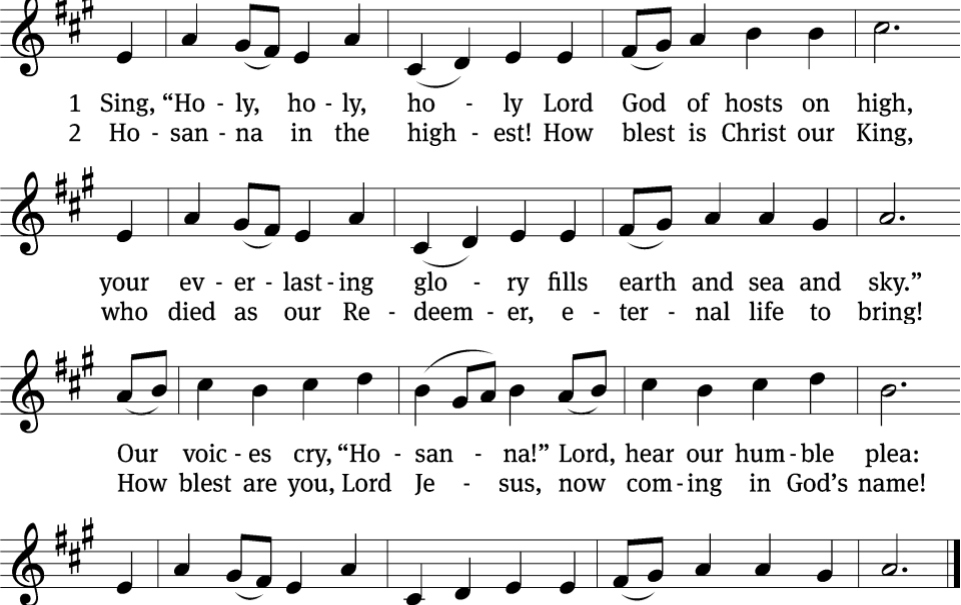
1 Cor. 10:17

Holy, Holy, Holy

Sanctus

Tune: ELLACOMBE

Sanctus means
“holy.” This
canticle
echoes the
song that the
seraphim (six-
winged
angels) sang
before Isaiah.
The angels
sang the triple
“holy,” giving
glory to our
Triune God.
The Sanctus
has been used
in celebration
of the Lord’s
Supper since
the second
century.



1 Sing, “Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of hosts on high,
2 Ho - san - na in the high - est! How blest is Christ our King,
your ev - er - last - ing glo - ry fills earth and sea and sky.”
who died as our Re - deem - er, e - ter - nal life to bring!
Our voic - es cry, “Ho - san - na!” Lord, hear our hum - ble plea:
How blest are you, Lord Je - sus, now com - ing in God’s name!
in mer - cy, come and save us; in love, come set us free.
“Ho - san - na in the high - est!” our grate - ful hearts pro - claim.

Words of Institution

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my † body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.”

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you; this is my † blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **Amen.**

Lamb of God

Agnus Dei

Tune: SUANTRAI

1 O Lamb of God, once lift - ed high up - on a
2 O Lamb of God, your sac - ri - fice has can - celled
cross to bleed and die, in per - fect love you took our
sin, has paid its price; your per - fect love will nev - er
place— be - stow on us your sav - ing grace.
cease— have mer - cy, Lord, and grant us peace.

Text: Michael D. Schultz

Tune: Gaelic, 19th cent.

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Tune: Public domain

John the Baptist declared Jesus to be God's Lamb, who was offered as a sacrifice for sin once for all.

Distribution

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

Closing Prayer

Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

His mercy endures forever.

Psalms 118:1

O God the Father, source of all goodness, in your loving-kindness you sent your Son to share our humanity. We thank you that through him you have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament. We also pray that you will not forsake us but will rule our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit so that we willingly serve you day after day; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Blessing

Numbers 6:22-27

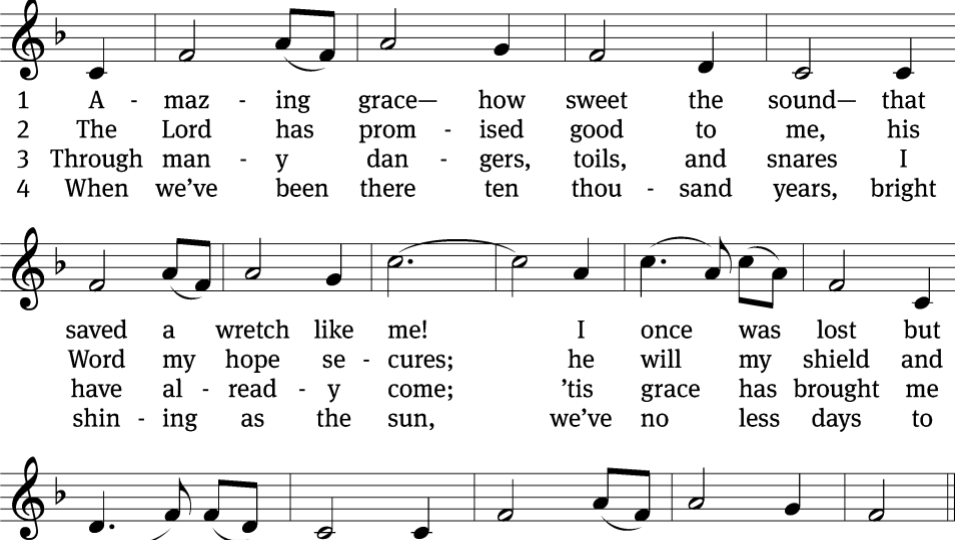
The Lord bless you and keep you.

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

Amazing Grace



1 A - maz - ing grace— how sweet the sound— that
2 The Lord has prom - ised good to me, his
3 Through man - y dan - gers, toils, and snares I
4 When we've been there ten thou - sand years, bright
saved a wretch like me! I once was lost but
Word my hope se - cures; he will my shield and
have al - read - y come; 'tis grace has brought me
shin - ing as the sun, we've no less days to
now am found, was blind but now I see.
por - tion be as long as life en - dures.
safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.
sing God's praise than when we'd first be - gun.

Text (sts. 1–3): John Newton, 1725–1807, alt.; (st. 4): A Collection of Sacred Ballads, Richmond, 1790
Tune: Columbian Harmony, Cincinnati, 1829, ed. Benjamin Shaw; ed. Charles H. Spilman
Text and tune: Public domain

Announcements

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) or scan the QR code. 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.



You're Invited!

You're invited to stay a few minutes after worship for snacks and refreshments. We would love to get to know you!

Wednesday Meals

One of the staples of our campus ministry is the Wednesday dinners and Bible studies. These dinners are sometimes prepared by members and other times by students. Please consider providing a meal this semester. You can prepare it in advance and leave it for the students to serve on their own, or you can stay and serve the meal if you would like. Either is just fine. You can sign up on the table in the entryway or speak to Judy Limpert, Peace's administrative assistant if you have any questions.

Pictures

We'd like to update our member and student picture board. If you are new to Peace or would just like to update your picture, please get your picture taken after worship! Look for Ben Grady who will have a camera set up outside, weather permitting.

Upcoming Events

The semester events are found below. All these events are in addition to the weekly Wednesday dinner and Bible study. You can find more information about events on the Peace Lutheran Houghton app or the website. The QR code will bring you to the event page on the website.

Wednesday Sept 23:	Bonfire after Bible Study
Sunday, Oct 11:	Hike after church
Saturday Oct 17:	Make A Difference Day
Sunday Nov 1:	Baking for Bake Sale
Tuesday, Nov 3:	Bake Sale
Saturday, Nov 7:	Pickleball Tournament
Wednesday, Nov 18:	Thanksgiving Dinner
Saturday, Dec 5:	Christmas Canvassing and Dinner
Friday, Dec 11:	Christmas Caroling



Mission Trip

A potential student mission trip to Africa is in the works. We are currently gauging interest. What we know for sure is that if the trip happens, it will take place in the first two weeks of May. Pricing and other details will come later. If you are interested, please sign up in the fellowship hall. If you do sign up, you are not committing just yet. You are simply reserving your spot until more information is available. Reach out to the Peace Campus Ministry President, Zack Sickman, with any questions.

Peace Has Begun Regular Meetings with an Architect

The Peace Building Committee met with Excel Engineering, the architectural firm that we hired to develop plans for our building project. The building committee discussed the wants and needs of our congregation, and meetings are scheduled bi-weekly for the coming months. Representatives from Excel told us that we can expect to receive drawings and renderings in 2-3 months! Praise God!

Serving Our Lord and Us Today

Usher Team 1 – Craig Hughes
Counter – Cody Stopel
Livestream/Music – Judy Limpert
Snacks – Kristie Vlahos
Children's Ministry – Carolina Grady



Serving Our Lord and Us on Wednesday, September 23rd

Student Dinner – **Help is needed!**

Serving Our Lord and Us on Sunday, September 27th

Usher Team 2 Steve Krug
Counter – Scott Miers
Livestream/Music – Zack Sickmann
Snacks – Amy Hughes
Children's Ministry – **Help is needed!**



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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.