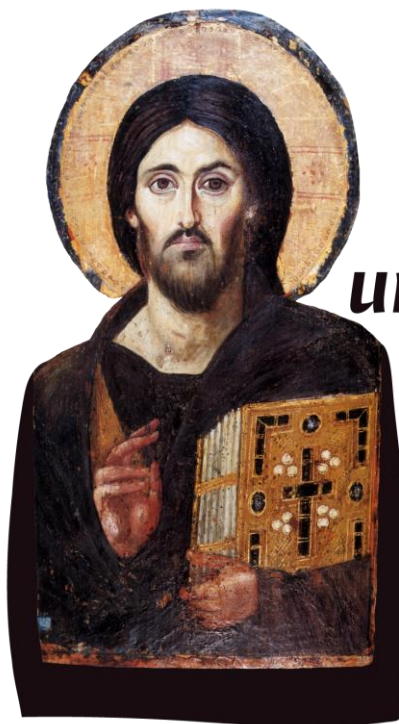




unexpected **TRUTHS**

Real Repentance Looks Different

PEACE
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Houghton, Michigan
Sunday, September 27, 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: *Real Repentance Looks Different*

It might be expected for someone to look sorry when they are caught doing something wrong. You might even see tears and hear words of apology. But you might not be surprised if the shock of being caught wears off and so does the intensity of the repentance.

Real repentance looks different. God doesn't want us to simply go through the religious motions like some sort of show. God's desire is that our repentance would demonstrate sincere sorrow over sin. It might be unexpected, but God wants us to see the grace and forgiveness he has shown us in Christ, and in response, to love him back deeply and sincerely.

Children and Worship

What a blessing to have babies, toddlers, and preschoolers with us in worship! We welcome all ages! During the service we have a special message for young children. Parents are welcome to accompany their child up front for this message, if their child is bashful. We have reserved the back rows for families with small children. If your child becomes restless and you feel the need to leave the worship area, the service can be viewed in our parent's room. The parent's room is located down the hall and to your right just past the restrooms.

Service Participants:

Livestream/Music: Zack Sickmann

Pastor of Peace: Tommy Welch



THE ORDER OF SERVICE

Hymn

Let All Together Praise Our God



1 Let all to - geth - er praise our God be - fore his
2 He leaves his heav'n - ly Fa - ther's throne, is born an
3 He veils in flesh his pow'r di - vine a ser - vant's
4 He un - der - takes a great ex - change, puts on our



high - est throne; to - day he o - pens heav'n a - gain and
in - fant small, and in a man - ger, poor and lone, lies
form to take, in want and low - li - ness must pine who
hu - man frame, and in re - turn gives us his realm, his



gives us his own Son, and gives us his own Son.
in a hum - ble stall, lies in a hum - ble stall.
heav'n and earth did make, who heav'n and earth did make.
glo - ry, and his name, his glo - ry, and his name.

- 5 He serves that I a lord may be—
a great exchange indeed!
Could Jesus' love do more for me
to help me in my need,
to help me in my need?
- 6 For us he opens wide the door
of paradise today.
The angel guards the gate no more;
to God our thanks we pay,
to God our thanks we pay.

Please stand

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.

Confession and Absolution

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

**If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just
and will forgive us our sins
and purify us from all unrighteousness.**

1 John 1:8

1 John 1:9

Let us confess our sins to the Lord.

Holy God, gracious Father,

I am sinful by nature

and have sinned against you in my thoughts, words, and actions.

I have not loved you with my whole heart;

I have not loved others as I should.

I deserve your punishment both now and forever.

But Jesus, my Savior, paid for my sins

with his innocent suffering and death.

Trusting in him, I pray: God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

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.

Silence for meditation and reflection

God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved.

Therefore, it is by Christ's command and with his authority that I say to you what God says to you: In the name of Jesus † your sins are forgiven.

How great is the love the Father has lavished on us that we should be called the children of God.

And that is what we are! Thanks be to God!

1 John 3:1

Glory to God

Gloria

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."

Tune: SALLEY GARDENS

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!

The image shows four staves of musical notation in treble clef. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is written in a simple, folk-like style. The lyrics are written below the staves, with some words hyphenated across lines. The second staff continues the melody and lyrics. The third staff continues the melody and lyrics. The fourth staff continues the melody and lyrics, ending with a double bar line.

Text: Michael D. Schultz

Tune: Irish

Text: © 2021 Northwestern Publishing House. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 734944

Tune: Public domain

Prayer

Mercifully grant, O God, that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts, for without your help we are unable to please you; 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

The Word

First Reading

Ezekiel 18:1–4, 25–32

¹The word of the LORD came to me: ²“What do you people mean by quoting this proverb about the land of Israel:

“ ‘The parents eat sour grapes,
and the children’s teeth are set on edge’?”

³“As surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, you will no longer quote this proverb in Israel. ⁴For everyone belongs to me, the parent as well as the child—both alike belong to me. The one who sins is the one who will die.

²⁵“Yet you say, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’ Hear, you Israelites: Is my way unjust? Is it not your ways that are unjust? ²⁶If a righteous person turns from their righteousness and commits sin, they will die for it; because of the sin they have committed they will die. ²⁷But if a wicked person turns away from the wickedness they have committed and does what is just and right, they will save their life. ²⁸Because they consider all the offenses they have committed and turn away from them, that person will surely live; they will not die. ²⁹Yet the Israelites say, ‘The way of the Lord is not just.’ Are my ways unjust, people of Israel? Is it not your ways that are unjust?

³⁰“Therefore, you Israelites, I will judge each of you according to your own ways, declares the Sovereign LORD. Repent! Turn away from all your offenses; then sin will not be your downfall. ³¹Rid yourselves of all the offenses you have committed, and get a new heart and a new spirit. Why will you die, people of Israel? ³²For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign LORD. Repent and live!

A strong warning to Christians who have grown dismissive of their sin.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Children’s Lesson

Second Reading

Philippians 2:1–11

Moved by
Christ's love and
empowered by
the Spirit, we
seek to imitate
the humility of
Jesus.

¹Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, ²then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. ³Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

⁵In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

⁶Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

⁷rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.

⁸And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death—
even death on a cross!

⁹Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,

¹⁰that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Psalm 51:17

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



Alleluia. My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you will not despise. Alleluia.



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

Gospel

Matthew 21:23–32

²³Jesus entered the temple courts, and, while he was teaching, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him. “By what authority are you doing these things?” they asked. “And who gave you this authority?”

²⁴Jesus replied, “I will also ask you one question. If you answer me, I will tell you by what authority I am doing these things. ²⁵John’s baptism—where did it come from? Was it from heaven, or of human origin?”

They discussed it among themselves and said, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will ask, ‘Then why didn’t you believe him?’ ²⁶But if we say, ‘Of human origin’—we are afraid of the people, for they all hold that John was a prophet.”

²⁷So they answered Jesus, “We don’t know.”

Then he said, “Neither will I tell you by what authority I am doing these things.

²⁸“What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work today in the vineyard.’

²⁹“ ‘I will not,’ he answered, but later he changed his mind and went.

³⁰“Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, ‘I will, sir,’ but he did not go.

³¹“Which of the two did what his father wanted?”

“The first,” they answered.

The ability to forgive others comes from the Spirit enabling us to understand how much God has forgiven us.

Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. ³²For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.

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

Hymn of the Day

Baptismal Waters Cover Me



1 Bap - tis - mal wa - ters cov - er me as I ap -
 2 I look to Christ up - on the tree, his bod - y
 3 Lord, may your wound - ed hand im - part your heal - ing
 4 From your own mouth comes forth a word; your shep - herd
 5 Bap - tis - mal wa - ters cov - er me; Christ's wound - ed



proach on bend - ed knee; my Fa - ther's mer - cy
 bro - ken there for me; I lay be - fore him
 to my bro - ken heart; your love a - lone can
 speaks, but you are heard; through him your hand now
 hand has set me free. Held in my Fa - ther's



here I plead, for griev - ous sins of thought and deed.
 all my sin, my dark - est se - crets from with - in.
 form in me a heart that serves you joy - ful - ly.
 stretch - es out, for - giv - ing sin, de - stroy - ing doubt.
 strong em - brace, with joy I praise him for his grace.

Text: Kurt E. Reinhardt, b. 1969

Tune: Sammlung alter und neuer . . . Melodien, 1742

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Tune: Public domain

Sermon

Ezekiel 18:1–4, 25–32

Please stand

Confession of Faith

Holy God, We Praise Your Name



1 Ho - ly God, we praise your name; Lord of
2 Hark! The glad ce - les - tial hymn an - gel
3 All a - pos - tles join the strain as your
4 You are King of glo - ry, Christ, Son of
5 Ho - ly Fa - ther, ho - ly Son, Ho - ly



all, we bow be - fore you. All on
choirs a - bove are rais - ing; cher - u -
sa - cred name they hal - low; proph - ets
God, yet born of Mar - y, for us
Spir - it, three we name you, though in



earth your scep - ter claim; all in heav'n a -
bim and ser - a - phim, in un - ceas - ing
swell the glad re - frain, and the white - robed
sin - ners sac - ri - ficed, on the cross our
es - sence on - ly one, un - di - vid - ed



bove a - dore you. In - fi - nite your vast do -
cho - rus prais - ing, fill the heav'ns with sweet ac -
mar - tyrs fol - low, and from morn to set of
sins did car - ry; first to break the bars of
God we claim you, and, a - dor - ing, bend the



main, ev - er - last - ing is your reign.
cord: "Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord!"
sun through the Church the song goes on.
death, you have o - pened heav'n to faith.
knee while we own the mys - ter - y.

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. This song encapsulates the teachings found in the Apostle's Creed.

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.

Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

Numbers 6:22-27

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

Oh, How Good It Is



1 Oh, how good it is when the fam - 'ly of God dwells to -
 2 Oh, how good it is on this jour - ney we share to re -
 3 Oh, how good it is to em - brace his com - mand to pre -



geth - er in spir - it, in faith and u - ni - ty. Where the
 joice with the hap - py and weep with those who mourn. For the
 fer one an - oth - er, for - give as he for - gives. When we



bonds of peace, of ac - cept - ance and love are the
 weak find strength, the af - flict - ed find grace when we
 live as one we all share in the love of the



fruits of his pres - ence here a - mong us.
 of - fer the bless - ing of be - long - ing.
 Son with the Fa - ther and the Spir - it.

Refrain



So with one voice we'll sing to the Lord,



and with one heart we'll live out his word,



till the whole earth sees the Re - deem - er has come,



for he dwells in the pres - ence of his peo - ple.

Announcements

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! Join us!

Voter's Meeting

We will hold our quarterly Voter's Meeting on Sunday, October 11th following the worship service. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

Fall Clean Up

On Saturday, October 17th starting at 9:00 AM, we will have a Fall Clean-Up Day! We will be working around the church property sprucing things up before winter. Come for all or part of the morning!

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.



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 contact Judy Limpert, (507-273-5535) Peace's administrative assistant if you have any questions.

Pictures

We are still taking pictures 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.

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



Serving Our Lord and Us Today

Usher Team 2 Steve Krug
Counter – Scott Miers
Livestream/Music – Zack Sickmann
Snacks – Amy Hughes
Children’s Ministry –



Serving Our Lord and Us on Wednesday, September 30th

Student Dinner – Hastreiter

Serving Our Lord and Us on Sunday, October 4th

Usher Team 3 – Cody Stopel, Scott Miers
Counter – Steve Krug
Livestream/Music – Nate Crowder
Snacks – Karin Cooper
Children’s Ministry – Liesel Fiebke



PEACE

LUTHERAN CHURCH

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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.