



ADVENT

IMMINENT ARRIVAL

Imminent Arrival of the Messiah

PEACE
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Houghton, Michigan
Sunday, December 14, 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 Messiah

The Messiah is an important person. "Messiah" is the same word as "Christ" or "Anointed One." He is someone who has been anticipated for a long time. Now we look at a time when his arrival is imminent!

The historic Christian Church gave Latin titles to each Sunday. They titled the Third Sunday in Advent "Gaudete," which means "Rejoice!" As we reach the midway point of Advent, we ask Christ to empower us to do just that. We rejoice because God fulfills all his promises in Jesus.

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: Mary Ann Krug

Pastor of Peace: Pastor Welch



THE ORDER OF SERVICE

For Sunday, December 14th, 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

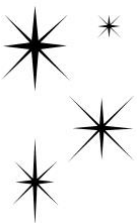
Lighting of the Advent Wreath

We light three Advent candles, remembering Jesus, the Light of the world.
He came to defeat
the prince of darkness.

**We remember Jesus, who came in answer to his people's prayers.
John proclaimed him the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world.**

We hear his call to see the light.
We light three Advent candles as a sign of our trust and confidence.

Come, Lord Jesus, be our guest.
Through your Word and Spirit may our souls be blessed.



The Word

Prayer of the Day

Hear our prayers, Lord Jesus Christ, and come with the good news of your mighty deliverance. Drive the darkness from our hearts, and fill us with your light; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Please be seated.

First Reading

Isaiah 35:1-10

¹The desert and the parched land will be glad;
the wilderness will rejoice and blossom.
Like the crocus, ²it will burst into bloom;
it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy.
The glory of Lebanon will be given to it,
the splendor of Carmel and Sharon;
they will see the glory of the LORD,
the splendor of our God.

³Strengthen the feeble hands,
steady the knees that give way;
⁴say to those with fearful hearts,
“Be strong, do not fear;
your God will come,
he will come with vengeance;
with divine retribution
he will come to save you.”

⁵Then will the eyes of the blind be opened
and the ears of the deaf unstopped.

⁶Then will the lame leap like a deer,
and the mute tongue shout for joy.
Water will gush forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert.

⁷The burning sand will become a pool,
the thirsty ground bubbling springs.



Isaiah tells us
that the
coming of the
Messiah
would change
everything.

In the haunts where jackals once lay,
grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.

⁸And a highway will be there;
it will be called the Way of Holiness;
it will be for those who walk on that Way.

The unclean will not journey on it;
wicked fools will not go about on it.

⁹No lion will be there,
nor any ravenous beast;
they will not be found there.

But only the redeemed will walk there,
¹⁰and those the LORD has rescued will return.

They will enter Zion with singing;
everlasting joy will crown their heads.

Gladness and joy will overtake them,
and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Children's Lesson

Second Reading

James 5:7–11

James points to Job as an example of perseverance in the face of suffering.

⁷Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. ⁸You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. ⁹Don't grumble against one another, brothers and sisters, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door!

¹⁰Brothers and sisters, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹As you know, we count as blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job's perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Please stand

Gospel Acclamation

Matthew 11:10



Alleluia. I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you. Alleluia.

Refrain

Gospel

Matthew 11:2–11

²When John, who was in prison, heard about the deeds of the Messiah, he sent his disciples ³to ask him, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect someone else?”

⁴Jesus replied, “Go back and report to John what you hear and see: ⁵The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor. ⁶Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me.”

⁷As John’s disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swayed by the wind? ⁸If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings’ palaces. ⁹Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is the one about whom it is written:

“ ‘I will send my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.’

¹¹Truly I tell you, among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet whoever is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

John’s disciples wanted to verify that Jesus was the Messiah.


The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Please be seated.

Hymn of the Day

28 *Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord*



1 Let the earth now praise the Lord, who has tru - ly
2 What the fa - thers most de - sired, what the proph - ets'
3 A - bram's prom - ised great re - ward, Zi - on's help - er,
4 Sav - ior, hear my wel - come cry— loud ho - san - nas

kept his word and at last to us did send
heart in - spired, what they longed for man - y a year
Ja - cob's Lord— him of two - fold race be - hold—
lift - ed high! King of glo - ry, en - ter in;

Christ, the sin - ner's help and friend.
stands ful - filled in glo - ry here.
tru - ly came, as long fore - told.
cleanse my soul of ev - 'ry sin.

5 Crush for me the serpent's head
that, set free from doubt and dread,
I may cling to you in faith,
safely kept through life and death,

6 And, when you shall come again
as a glorious king to reign,
I with joy may see your face,
freely ransomed by your grace.

Text: Heinrich Held, 1620–1659, abr.; (sts. 1–3, 5–6): tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.; (st. 4): tr. Christian Worship, 2021
Tune: Geystliche gesangk Buchleyn, Wittenberg, 1524, ed. Johann Walter
Text (st. 4): © 2021 Northwestern Publishing House. Used by permission: OneLicense no. 734944
Text (sts. 1–3, 5–6) and tune: Public domain

Please stand.

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.

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.

Prayer of the Church

Please stand.

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.

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.

Quarterly Congregational Meeting

The congregation will meet to receive an update on the progress of the building project. The committee will present and ask for feedback from the congregation. This discussion will begin about 10 minutes after the service.

Sunday Volunteer Schedule

Date	Usher	Counter	Computer	Piano	Snacks	Children's Ministry
December 14	Cesar	Craig	Mary Ann	x	Heather	Sarah
December 21	Steve	Steve	Mary Ann	x	Amy Spahn	Grace
Christmas Eve	Steve	Cody	Mary Ann	x	x	x
Christmas Day	Steve	Scott	Mary Ann	x	x	x

Christmas Worship Schedule

Christmas Eve – 5:00

Christmas Day – 10:15

Christmas Eve Invitations

On the blue table near the entryway, you will find a stack of invitations to our Christmas Eve service. Grab as many as you want, and pass them out to friends, relatives, associates, and neighbors! If you invite someone to attend our Christmas Eve service and they need a ride, let me know, and we can work together to bring them to church.



PEACE

LUTHERAN CHURCH

47745 Mill Rd.
Houghton, MI 49931

Office: 906-482-1602

Pastor Welch's Cell: 906-231-6835

Pastor Welch's Email: pastor@peacehoughton.org

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.