



What Makes Christians *Different*

Christians Live as Wheat Among Weeds

PEACE
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Houghton, Michigan
Sunday, July 26, 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: What Makes Christians Different?

The Bible says Christians are different. Christians are people who believe in Jesus as their Savior. But they often look the same as those who do not believe in Jesus. How are Christians different? The answer is often something internal, attitudes or perspectives that come only from the work of the Holy Spirit in Word and sacrament. Ultimately, Christians are people who run to Christ for forgiveness because they have failed to live perfect lives. As we receive the mercy of Christ, it moves us to strive with all our being to do all the things that Jesus says Christians do, things that make Christians different.

July 19 – Christians Find Rest in Jesus

July 26 - Christians Live as Wheat Among Weeds

August 2 - Christians Are Planted by the Word

August 9 - Christians Seek Spiritual Wealth

August 16 - Christians Trust God to Provide

Today's Focus: *Christians Live as Wheat Among Weeds*

The wheat that grows in the Middle East is a variety that looks much like wild grass or weeds. It is difficult to tell wheat and weeds apart until shortly before harvest time, when the wheat stalks develop a head containing the kernels of grain. Pulling the weeds out of a wheat field could lead to accidentally pulling up a fair amount of wheat. People need to wait for the harvest to separate wheat from weeds.

Jesus uses that image to illustrate life this side of heaven. What makes Christians different? They are wheat planted by the Lord. Unbelieving evildoers are pictured as weeds. We might want God to take care of evil now, pulling up all the weeds. But he tells us to wait for the harvest of judgment day. So we live as wheat among weeds, being faithful, fruitful, and mindful of the coming harvest.

Service Participants:

Computer Organ: Mary Ann Krug

Guest Preacher Steve Lehman



THE ORDER OF SERVICE

Hymn

Christ, the Sure and Steady Anchor

1 Christ, the sure and stead - y an - chor in the
2 Christ, the sure and stead - y an - chor while the
3 Christ, the sure and stead - y an - chor through the
4 Christ, the sure and stead - y an - chor as we

fu - ry of the storm— when the winds of doubt blow
tem - pest ra - ges on— when temp - ta - tion claims the
floods of un - be - lief— hope - less, some - how, O my
face the wave of death— when these trials give way to

through me and my sails have all been torn,
bat - tle and it seems the night has won,
soul now, lift your eyes to Cal - va - ry.
glo - ry and we draw our fi - nal breath,

in the suf - f'ring, in the sor - row, when my
deep - er still then goes the an - chor, though I
This my bal - last of as - sur - ance, see his
we will cross that great ho - ri - zon, clouds be -
Christ, the shore of our sal - va - tion, ev - er

sink - ing hopes are few, I will hold fast to the
just - ly stand ac - cused; I will hold fast to the
love for - ev - er proved; I will hold fast to the
hind and life se - cure, and the calm will be the
faith - ful, ev - er true— we will hold fast to the

4th stanza repeat italics

an - chor; it shall nev - er be re - moved.
an - chor; it shall nev - er be re - moved.
an - chor; it shall nev - er be re - moved.
bet - ter, for the storms that we en - dure.
an - chor; it shall nev - er be re - moved.

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

All Glory Be to God Alone

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.”

1 All glo - ry be to God a - lone, for -
2 We praise you, God, and you we bless; we
ev - er - more the high - est One, who did our
wor - ship you in hum - ble - ness. From day to
sin - ful race be - friend and grace and peace to
day we glo - ri - fy the ev - er - last - ing
us ex - tend. A - mong man - kind may his good
God on high. Of your great glo - ry do we
will sing, all hearts with deep thanks - giv - ing fill.
and to your throne our thanks we bring.

Text: Martin Luther, 1483–1546, abr.; tr. W. Gustave Polack, 1890–1950, alt.
Tune: Gesangbuch . . . Psalmen, Geistliche Lieder, Strassburg, 1541, alt.
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Prayer of the Day

O God, so rule and govern our hearts and minds by your Holy Spirit that, ever mindful of your final judgment, we may be stirred up to holiness of living here and dwell with you in perfect joy hereafter; 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

Isaiah 44:6–11

⁶“This is what the LORD says—

Israel’s King and Redeemer, the LORD Almighty:

I am the first and I am the last;

apart from me there is no God.

⁷Who then is like me? Let him proclaim it.

Let him declare and lay out before me

what has happened since I established my ancient people,

and what is yet to come—

yes, let them foretell what will come.

⁸Do not tremble, do not be afraid.

Did I not proclaim this and foretell it long ago?

You are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me?

No, there is no other Rock; I know not one.”

⁹All who make idols are nothing,

and the things they treasure are worthless.

Those who would speak up for them are blind;

they are ignorant, to their own shame.

¹⁰Who shapes a god and casts an idol,

which can profit nothing?

¹¹People who do that will be put to shame;

such craftsmen are only human beings.

Let them all come together and take their stand;

they will be brought down to terror and shame.

Like wheat
among weeds,
Christians live
surrounded by
evil in this
world.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Children’s Lesson

Second Reading

Romans 1:18–25

God is not
ambivalent
about evil in
the world. But
his wrath will
be fully
revealed only
at judgment
day.

¹⁸The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness, ¹⁹since what may be known about God is plain to them, because God has made it plain to them. ²⁰For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

²¹For although they knew God, they neither glorified him as God nor gave thanks to him, but their thinking became futile and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²²Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools ²³and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like a mortal human being and birds and animals and reptiles.

²⁴Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. ²⁵They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator—who is forever praised. Amen.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

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 Acclamation

Romans 11:33

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



Alleluia. Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!
How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!
Alleluia.



²⁴Jesus told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field. ²⁵But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and went away. ²⁶When the wheat sprouted and formed heads, then the weeds also appeared.

²⁷“The owner’s servants came to him and said, ‘Sir, didn’t you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from?’

²⁸“ ‘An enemy did this,’ he replied.

“The servants asked him, ‘Do you want us to go and pull them up?’

²⁹“ ‘No,’ he answered, ‘because while you are pulling the weeds, you may uproot the wheat with them. ³⁰Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time I will tell the harvesters: First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned; then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn.’ ”

³⁶Then he left the crowd and went into the house. His disciples came to him and said, “Explain to us the parable of the weeds in the field.”

³⁷He answered, “The one who sowed the good seed is the Son of Man.

³⁸The field is the world, and the good seed stands for the people of the kingdom. The weeds are the people of the evil one, ³⁹and the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is the end of the age, and the harvesters are angels.

⁴⁰“As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of the age. ⁴¹The Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil.

⁴²They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. ⁴³Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Whoever has ears, let them hear.

The Lord has a plan to separate wheat and weeds at the final harvest.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise be to you, O Christ!

Hymn of the Day

Come, You Thankful People, Come



- 1 Come, you thank-ful peo - ple, come; raise the song of har-vest home.
- 2 All the world is God's own field, fruit un - to his praise to yield;
- 3 For the Lord our God shall come and shall take his har-vest home,
- 4 E - ven so, Lord, quick - ly come to your fi - nal har-vest home;



All be safe - ly gath - ered in ere the win - ter storms be - gin.
wheat and weeds to - geth - er sown, un - to joy or sor - row grown.
from his field shall in that day all of - fens - es purge a - way,
gath - er all your peo - ple in, free from sor-row, free from sin,



God, our mak - er, shall pro-vide for our wants to be sup-plied.
First the blade and then the ear, then the full corn shall ap - pear.
give his an - gels charge at last in the fire the weeds to cast,
there, for - ev - er pu - ri - fied, in your gar - ner to a - bide.



Come to God's own tem - ple, come; raise the song of har-vest home.
Lord of har - vest, grant that we whole-some grain and pure may be.
but the fruit - ful ears to store in his gar - ner ev - er - more.
Come with all your an - gels, come; raise the glo - rious har-vest home.

Text: Henry Alford, 1810–1871, alt.
Tune: George J. Elvey, 1816–1893
Text and tune: Public domain

Sermon

Matthew 13:24–30, 36–43

Please stand

Confession of Faith

Apostle's 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.**

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.

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.



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.**

Numbers 6:22-27

Hymn

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty



1 Praise to the Lord, the Al - might - y, the King of cre -
2 Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things is won - drous - ly
3 Praise to the Lord, who has fear - ful - ly, won - drous - ly,
4 Praise to the Lord, who will pros - per your work and de -
5 Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me a -



a - tion! O my soul, praise him, for he is your
reign - ing and, as on wings of an ea - gle, up -
made you, health has be - stowed and, when heed - less - ly
fend you; sure - ly his good - ness and mer - cy shall
dore him! All that has life and breath, come now with



health and sal - va - tion! Let all who hear now to his
lift - ing, sus - tain - ing. Have you not seen how all that's
fall - ing, has stayed you. What need or grief ev - er has
dai - ly at - tend you. Pon - der a - new what the Al -
prais - es be - fore him! Let the a - men sound from his



tem - ple draw near, join - ing in glad ad - o - ra - tion!
need - ful has been sent by his gra - cious or - dain - ing?
failed of re - lief? Wings of his mer - cy did shade you.
might - y can do as with his love he be - friends you.
peo - ple a - gain; glad - ly for - ev - er a - dore him!

Acknowledgments

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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.

Volunteer Schedule

Date	Usher	Counter	Computer	Snacks
July 26	Cody	Scott	Mary Ann	Amy Hughes
August 2	Steve	Steve	Nate	Kristie Vlahos
August 9	Cody	Cody	Mary Ann	Karin
August 16	Steve	Scott	Mary Ann	Amy Spahn

Volunteers Needed

The church needs help with weekly cleaning and mowing. If you are interested in signing up to help or learning more about the required duties, please see the blue table in the entryway.

Congregational Meeting: August 9

A congregational meeting will be held on **Sunday, August 9, immediately following the worship service**. During this meeting, the Church Council will provide updates on several important ministry initiatives, and the congregation will have the opportunity to vote on the following items:

1. **Building Committee Recommendation:** The Building Committee will present its recommendation for an architectural firm and request approval to enter into an agreement for the initial architectural services.
2. **Membership Update & Member Directory:** The Council will provide an update on the congregation's membership and the member directory.
3. **Shepherding Ministry Plan:** The congregation will hear about a new plan for providing intentional spiritual care to our members.
4. **Three-Year Building Fund Drive:** The Council will present the proposed three-year fundraising plan for the upcoming building project and ask the congregation to vote on moving forward with the campaign.
5. **Introduction of Our Administrative Assistant:** We will officially introduce our new administrative assistant, who will become an important part of the ministry at Peace.

Please plan to stay after worship as we continue working together to support the mission and ministry of Peace.



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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.