



PEACE
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Blessings Are Cursed; Curses Are Blessed

Houghton, Michigan
Sunday, May 31, 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!

Today's Focus: *Blessings Are Cursed; Curses Are Blessed*

"This is good. That is bad." We often think life is that simple. We believe we can assess a situation accurately determine if it is positive or negative. It's hubris. As Jesus gathered followers, he taught them that his kingdom runs exactly opposite to the principles and priorities of the world. Therefore, much that we think is good is bad, and vice-versa.

If we want to accurately see the world, we need to have this epiphany. That which the world considers a blessing can often be a curse. Things like success and wealth and health can lead us away from our God. We become so enamored with those blessings that we forget about the Blessor. Conversely, there are hidden blessings in what we would normally consider curses. When we fail, when we suffer, and when things don't go our way, it forces us to put our trust in God and for our souls to be satisfied in him. The reality is that perceived blessings can be cursed and perceived curses can be used for our blessing.

Service Participants:

Computer Organ: Mary Ann Krug

Guest Preacher: Seminarian Noah Gernander



THE ORDER OF SERVICE

Hymn

Afflicted Saint, to Christ Draw Near sts. 1–2, Ref, 3–4



1 Af - flict - ed saint, to Christ draw near, your Sav - ior's
2 Your faith is weak, your foes are strong, and if the
3 Should per - se - cu - tion rage and flame, still trust in
4 When called to bear your weight - y cross, or sore af -



gra - cious prom - ise hear; his faith - ful Word you can be -
con - flict should be long, the Lord will make the tempt - er
your Re - deem - er's name. In fi - ery tri - als you shall
flic - tion, pain, or loss, or deep dis - tress, or pov - er -



lieve, that as your days your strength shall be. v. 2
flee, that as your days your strength shall be. *Refrain*
see that as your days your strength shall be. *Refrain*
ty, still as your days your strength shall be. *Refrain*



Refrain
So, sing with joy, af - flict - ed one; the bat - tle's fierce, but the



vic - t'ry's won! God shall sup - ply all that you need;



yes, as your days your strength shall be.

Text (sts. 1–4): John Fawcett, 1740–1817, alt.; (Ref): Constance Dever, b. 1960

Tune: Constance Dever, b. 1960

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

Please stand

Invocation

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

Confession and Absolution

1 John 1:8

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

1 John 1:9

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

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.

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.

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.

1 John 3:1

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

Glory to God



1 Your Word a - lone is sol - id ground,
4 By grace a - lone we have been saved;



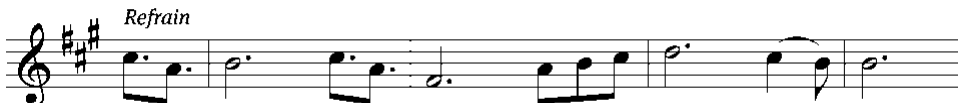
the might - y rock on which we build.
all that we are has come from you.



In ev - 'ry line the truth is found,
Hearts that were once by sin en - slaved



and ev - 'ry page with glo - ry filled.
now by your pow'r have been made new.



Refrain
Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, glo - ry to God a - lone.



Glo - ri - a, glo - ri - a, glo - ry to God a - lone.

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.”

Text: Bob Kaufflin, b. 1955; Tim Chester, b. 1967

Tune: Bob Kaufflin, b. 1955; Tim Chester, b. 1967

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Prayer

O God of power and might, you know that we live in the midst of many great dangers, and in our frailty we cannot stand upright. Give us strength and protection to support us in all peril, and carry us through all temptations; 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

Reading

Jeremiah 17:5–8

A blessed life
is not
connected to
outward
circumstances
like health or
wealth.
Rather, the
one who is
blessed is the
one who has
been given
the gift of
faith, whose
trust is in the
Lord.

⁵This is what the LORD says:

“Cursed is the one who trusts in man,
who draws strength from mere flesh
and whose heart turns away from the LORD.

⁶That person will be like a bush in the wastelands;
they will not see prosperity when it comes.
They will dwell in the parched places of the desert,
in a salt land where no one lives.

⁷“But blessed is the one who trusts in the LORD,
whose confidence is in him.

⁸They will be like a tree planted by the water
that sends out its roots by the stream.

It does not fear when heat comes;
its leaves are always green.
It has no worries in a year of drought
and never fails to bear fruit.”

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Children’s Lesson

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia. The Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore. Alleluia.

Psalms 121:8

Speak, O Lord st. 1



1 Speak, O Lord, as we come to you to receive the food
of your holy Word; take your truth, plant it
deep in us, shape and fashion us in your likeness,
that the light of Christ might be seen today in our acts of
love and our deeds of faith. Speak, O Lord, and fulfill
in us all your purposes for your glory.

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

Luke 6:17–26

In one of his most famous sermons Jesus teaches that the good things we seek are found in places we would least expect.

¹⁷He went down with them and stood on a level place. A large crowd of his disciples was there and a great number of people from all over Judea, from Jerusalem, and from the coastal region around Tyre and Sidon, ¹⁸who had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. Those troubled by impure spirits were cured, ¹⁹and the people all tried to touch him, because power was coming from him and healing them all.

²⁰Looking at his disciples, he said:

“Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹Blessed are you who hunger now,
for you will be satisfied.

Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh.

²²Blessed are you when people hate you,
when they exclude you and insult you
and reject your name as evil,
because of the Son of Man.

²³“Rejoice in that day and leap for joy, because great is your reward in heaven. For that is how their ancestors treated the prophets.

²⁴“But woe to you who are rich,
for you have already received your comfort.

²⁵Woe to you who are well fed now,
for you will go hungry.

Woe to you who laugh now,
for you will mourn and weep.

²⁶Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you,
for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets.

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

Hymn of the Day

Day by Day



1 Day by day, your mer - cies, Lord, at - tend me, bring - ing com - fort
2 Day by day, I know you will pro - vide me strength to serve and
3 Oh, what joy to know that you are near me when my bur - dens



to my anx - ious soul. Day by day, the bless - ings, Lord, you
wis - dom to o - bey; I will seek your lov - ing will to
grow too great to bear; oh, what joy to know that you will



send me draw me near - er to my heav'n - ly goal.
guide me o'er the paths I strug - gle day by day.
hear me when I come, O Lord, to you in prayer.



Love di - vine, be - yond all mor - tal mea - sure, brings to naught the
I will fear no e - vil of the mor - row, I will trust in
Day by day, no mat - ter what be - tide me, you will hold me



bur - dens of my quest; Sav - ior, lead me to the home I
your en - dur - ing grace. Sav - ior, help me bear life's pain and
ev - er in your hand. Sav - ior, with your pres - ence here to



trea - sure, where at last I'll find e - ter - nal rest.
sor - row till in glo - ry I be - hold your face.
guide me, I will reach at last the prom - ised land.

Text: Carolina Sandell Berg, 1832–1903; tr. Robert Leaf, 1936–2005

Tune: Oskar Ahnfelt, 1813–1882

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Reading

2 Corinthians 12:7b–10

Paul had some infirmity he initially viewed as a weakness. He came to see it as a blessing as it forced him to rely on God's strength.

Therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. ⁸Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. ⁹But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. ¹⁰That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Sermon

2 Corinthians 12:7b–10

Please stand

Confession of Faith

Apostle's Creed

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.

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!

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.

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.**

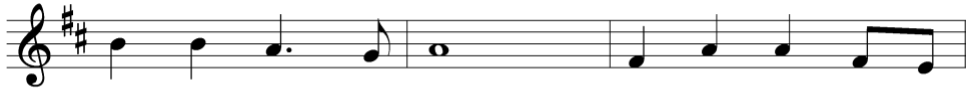
Numbers 6:22-27

Hymn

Psalm 42 – As the Deer



1 As the deer pants_ for the wa - ter, so my
2 You're my friend, and_ you're my broth - er, e - ven
3 I want you more than gold or sil - ver, on - ly



soul longs af - ter you; you a - lone are my
though you are a King. I love you more than
you can sat - is - fy. You a - lone are the



heart's de - sire_ and I long to wor - ship you.
an - y oth - er, so much more than an - y - thing.
real joy giv - er and the ap - ple of my eye.

Refrain



You a - lone are my strength, my shield; to you a -



lone may my spir - it yield. You a - lone are my



heart's de - sire and I long to wor - ship you.

Text: Martin Nystrom

Tune: Martin Nystrom

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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
May 31	Cody	Scott	Mary Ann	Amy Hughes
June 7	Steve	Craig	Mary Ann	Kristie Vlahos
June 14	Cody	Steve	Mary Ann	Karin
June 21	Steve	Cody	Mary Ann	Amy Spahn
June 28		Scott	Mary Ann	Heather

Congregational Meeting On June 14

On June 14, there will be a congregational meeting immediately after worship. There are three major items to discuss and vote on. 1) The building project, 2) the 2026-2027 budget, and 3) the new administrative assistant position. All congregational meetings are important, but this one on June 14 is one you do not want to miss. What we decide in this meeting will influence the work of our church for many years to come.



Backpacking Trip

Every summer, a group of students and members go backpacking the week before the fall semester. This summer, we will head to the Porcupine Mountains on August 26-28th. If you are interested in this trip, you can find more information or register by searching for the event in the app/website or by scanning the QR code.

June Bible Study Procedure

Currently, all adults are invited to join our Sunday morning Bible study at 9:00 AM.

Special June Women's Fellowship Hour: Beginning June 7 through June 28, we're introducing a new Women's Fellowship Hour that will temporarily replace our regular Sunday Bible study format.

Women and Children: Join us at the parsonage for a short devotion, snacks, and meaningful fellowship while the children play. This special time is designed for all women in our congregation—whether you have children or not, you're welcome! Just walk past the campus house and follow the path to the parsonage.

Men: During the Women's Fellowship Hour, men will gather in the fellowship hall for a men's Bible study.

This four-week program offers a wonderful opportunity to strengthen our friendships while providing focused fellowship time for both men and women. Mark your calendars and plan to join us!

Seminarian Noah Gernander

Noah Gernander has a background in biochemistry, but he recently switched career paths to study for the pastoral ministry. He just finished his first year at the ELS seminary, and he has really enjoyed his time there. He has a wife, a kid, and another on the way! He's looking forward to his future studies and getting more experience preaching, so he thanks you for hosting!



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.