



Forgiveness is for Me

PEACE
LUTHERAN CHURCH

Houghton, Michigan
Sunday, September 13, 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.

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!

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: *Forgiveness is for Me*

Forgiveness does not come naturally to human beings. It is expected that humans will defend themselves, lash out when attacked, hold grudges, and bite back. So, when human beings hear that they are forgiven, they may even be suspicious or skeptical.

Jesus tells a parable that contrasts the forgiveness of God with our own unforgiving sinful nature. God forgives our huge debt. Who can comprehend such unexpected mercy? Certainly not unmerciful servants, who refuse to forgive small debts. Have mercy on us, Lord, and teach us to forgive like you!

Service Participants:

Computer Organ: Nate Crowder

Pastor of Peace: Tommy Welch



THE ORDER OF SERVICE

Hymn

Jesus Paid It All

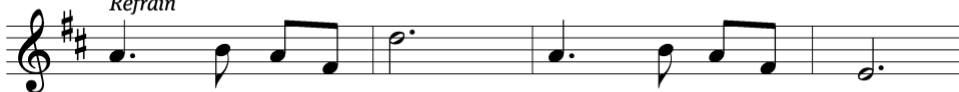


- 1 I hear the Sav - ior say, "Thy strength in - deed is small!
- 2 Lord, now in - deed I find thy pow'r, and thine a - lone
- 3 For noth - ing good have I where - by thy grace to claim;
- 4 And when, be - fore the throne, I stand in him com - plete,



Child of weak - ness, watch and pray, find in me thine all in all."
can _ change the lep - er's spots and _ melt the heart of stone.
I'll _ wash my gar - ments white in the blood of Cal - v'ry's Lamb.
"Je - sus died my soul to save," my _ lips shall still re - peat.

Refrain



Je - sus paid it all, all to him I owe;



sin had left a crim - son stain, he washed it white as snow.

Text: Elvina M. Hall, 1820–1889

Tune: John T. Grape, 1835–1915

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

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.**

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.

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

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

1 John 1:8

1 John 1:9

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.

1 John 3:1

Glory to God

Contrary to the directions below, the congregation will sing the first stanza and then immediately sing the refrain.

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



the might - y rock are 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.



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



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

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

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

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Prayer

Lord God, heavenly Father, you graciously forgive us all our sins and abundantly provide for all our needs of body and soul. Give us confidence in your mercy, and teach us also to be merciful to our neighbor, that we willingly forgive all people, and judging only ourselves, lead blessed lives to your glory; 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

Genesis 50:15–21

¹⁵When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "What if Joseph holds a grudge against us and pays us back for all the wrongs we did to him?" ¹⁶So they sent word to Joseph, saying, "Your father left these instructions before he died: ¹⁷"This is what you are to say to Joseph: I ask you to forgive your brothers the sins and the wrongs they committed in treating you so badly.' Now please forgive the sins of the servants of the God of your father." When their message came to him, Joseph wept.

¹⁸His brothers then came and threw themselves down before him. "We are your slaves," they said.

¹⁹But Joseph said to them, "Don't be afraid. Am I in the place of God? ²⁰You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. ²¹So then, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your children." And he reassured them and spoke kindly to them.

Joseph was quick to forgive his brothers.

Children's Lesson

Second Reading

Ephesians 4:29—5:2

Kindness,
compassion,
and
forgiveness
are marks of
God's Church.

²⁹Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. ³⁰And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. ³²Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

¹Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children ²and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Colossians 3:13

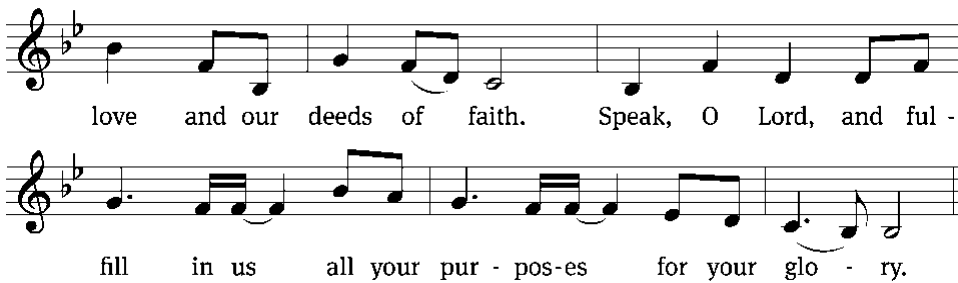
Alleluia. Bear with each other and forgive one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. Alleluia.

Speak, O Lord st. 1

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



1 Speak, O Lord, as we come to you to re - ceive the food
of your ho - ly Word; take your truth, plant it
deep in us, shape and fash - ion us in your like - ness,
that the light of Christ might be seen to - day in our acts of



Gospel

Matthew 18:21–35

²¹Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?”

²²Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.

²³“Therefore, the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. ²⁴As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand bags of gold was brought to him. ²⁵Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt.

²⁶“At this the servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ ²⁷The servant’s master took pity on him, canceled the debt and let him go.

²⁸“But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred silver coins. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded.

²⁹“His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay it back.’

³⁰“But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt. ³¹When the other servants saw what had happened, they were outraged and went and told their master everything that had happened.

³²“Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I canceled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. ³³Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ ³⁴In anger his master handed him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed.

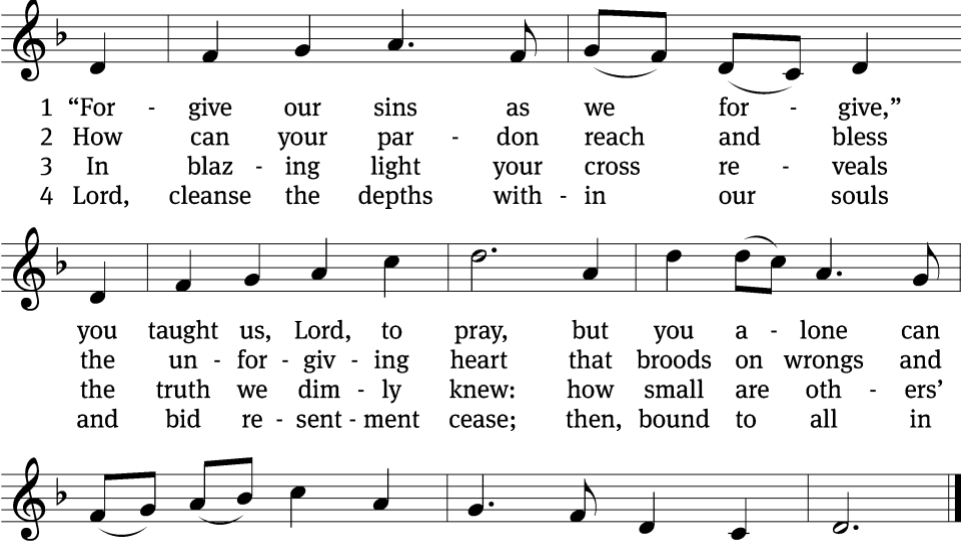
The ability to forgive others comes from the Spirit enabling us to understand how much God has forgiven us.

³⁵“This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

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

Hymn of the Day

Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive



1 “For - give our sins as we for - give,”
2 How can your par - don reach and bless
3 In blaz - ing light your cross re - veals
4 Lord, cleanse the depths with - in our souls

you taught us, Lord, to pray, but you a - lone can
the un - for - giv - ing heart that broods on wrongs and
the truth we dim - ly knew: how small are oth - ers’
and bid re - sent - ment cease; then, bound to all in

grant us grace to live the words we say.
will not let old bit - ter - ness de - part?
debts to us, how great our debt to you!
bonds of love, our lives will spread your peace.

Text: Rosamond E. Herklots, 1905–1987, alt.

Tune: A Supplement to Kentucky Harmony, Harrisonburg, 1820, ed. Ananias Davisson

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Tune: Public domain

Sermon

Matthew 18:21-35

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.

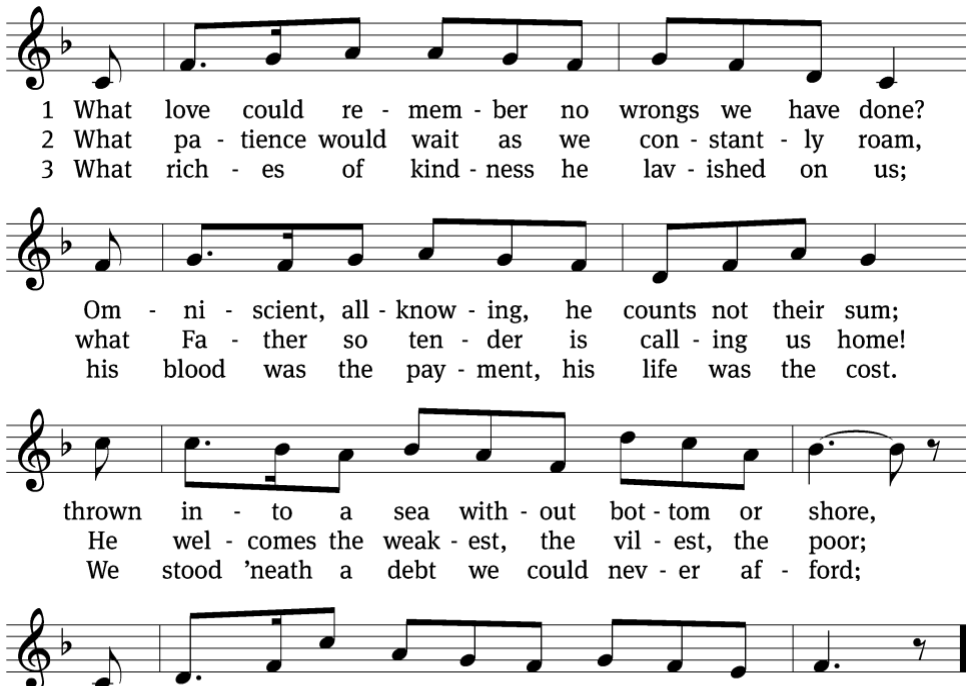
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

Numbers 6:22-27

The Lord look on you with favor and † give you peace. **Amen.**

Hymn

His Mercy Is More



1 What love could re - mem - ber no wrongs we have done?
2 What pa - tience would wait as we con - stant - ly roam,
3 What rich - es of kind - ness he lav - ished on us;

Om - ni - scient, all - know - ing, he counts not their sum;
what Fa - ther so ten - der is call - ing us home!
his blood was the pay - ment, his life was the cost.

thrown in - to a sea with - out bot - tom or shore,
He wel - comes the weak - est, the vil - est, the poor;
We stood 'neath a debt we could nev - er af - ford;

our sins they are man - y, his mer - cy is more.
our sins they are man - y, his mer - cy is more.
our sins they are man - y, his mer - cy is more.

Refrain

Praise the Lord! His mer-cy is more!

Strong - er than dark - ness, new ev - 'ry morn; our

sins they are man - y, his mer - cy is more!

The refrain for stanza 3 is sung three times (twice, with no break between, then a final time).

Text: Matt Boswell, b. 1979; Matt Papa, b. 1983

Tune: Matt Boswell, b. 1979; Matt Papa, b. 1983

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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	Livestream/Music	Snacks	Children's Ministry
September 13	Steve	Steve	Nate	Mary Ann	Liesel
September 20	Cody	Cody	Judy	Amy Hughes	Carolina
September 27	Steve	Scott		Kristie Vlahos	TBD
October 4	Steve	Steve	Nate	Karin	TBD
October 11	Cody	Cody		Amy Spahn	Kenzie

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.

Saturday, Sept 12:	Volleyball Welcome
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



Peace Has Begun Regular Meetings with an Architect

Last Tuesday, 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!



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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.