

Service of Holy Communion

2nd Sunday of Advent

December 7th, 2025



INTRODUCTION

At the heart of our Advent preparation stands John the Baptist, who calls us to repent and make a new beginning. As the darkness increases we turn toward the approaching light of Christ. For Christians he is the root of Jesse, the righteous judge who welcomes all, especially the poor and meek of the earth. We wait with hope for that day when the wolf will dwell with the lamb, and there will be no more hurt or destruction. From the Lord's table we are sent in the spirit of John the Baptist to proclaim that in Christ the kingdom of God has come near.

GATHERING

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

The Congregation stands. All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P. Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, whose home is heaven and earth, whose salvation is sure. **Amen.**

P. Trusting in God's mercy, let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Congregation kneels or sits. Silence is kept for reflection.

P. Long-expected God, **we confess that we look to ourselves for the peace and security only you can provide. We reach for swords and spears, reluctant to release our grip on the ways of war. We become impatient while waiting and weary of keeping awake. Free us from self-reliance, and teach us to live in harmony with our neighbors. Increase our trust in God's timing, and awaken us to your advent among us, that we may abound in the hope you have promised. Amen.**

P. Hear the good news: God judges us not as we deserve, but according to God's own righteousness. ✠ You are freed and forgiven, saved by grace, and ready to welcome the Savior. **Amen.**
Congregation stands

GATHERING HYMN

The King Shall Come

ELW 260

THE GREETING

P. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **C. And also with you.**

KYRIE

- A. In peace, let us pray to the Lord.
- C. Lord, have mercy.**
- A. For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.
- C. Lord, have mercy.**
- A. For the peace of the whole world, for the well being of the church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.
- C. Lord, have mercy.**
- A. For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.
- C. Lord, have mercy.**
- A. Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.
- C. Amen**

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

I Beau - ti - ful Sav - ior, King of cre - a - tion,
Son of God and Son of Man!
Tru - ly I'd love thee, tru - ly I'd serve thee,
light of my soul, my joy, my crown.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P. Stir up our hearts, O God, to prepare the way of your only Son. By his coming, nurture our growth as people of repentance and peace; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Congregation is seated

LIGHTING THE ADVENT WREATH *(read responsively)*

Gonzalez Family

Because of war, because of violence in our communities, because there is still so much unrest in our hearts, we light a candle of peace...

Because hatred is still so strong, because so many swords have not yet been remade into ploughshares, we light a candle of peace...

(Light the second candle in the Advent wreath.)

May the light from this candle overwhelm the world...

May the light from this candle say to all that God's peace is coming, on earth as it already is in heaven.

Friends, be not afraid, God's peace is at hand!

WORD

FIRST READING: Isaiah 11:1-10

¹ A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

² The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him,
the spirit of wisdom and understanding,
the spirit of counsel and might,
the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD.

³ His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see
or decide by what his ears hear,

⁴ but with righteousness he shall judge for the poor
and decide with equity for the oppressed of the earth;
he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,
and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

⁵ Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist
and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

⁶ The wolf shall live with the lamb;
the leopard shall lie down with the kid;
the calf and the lion will feed together,
and a little child shall lead them.

⁷ The cow and the bear shall graze;
their young shall lie down together;

and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

⁸ The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.

⁹ They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain,
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰ On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the
nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

A. Word of God, word of life.

C. Thanks be to God.

PSALM: Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19 (*read responsively*)

¹ Give the king your justice, O God,
and your righteousness to the king's son;

² **that he may rule your people righteously
and the poor with justice;**

³ that the mountains may bring prosperity to the people,
and the hills, in righteousness.

⁴ **Let him defend the needy among the people,
rescue the poor, and crush the oppressor.**

⁵ May he live as long as the sun and moon endure,
from one generation to another.

⁶ **Let him come down like rain upon the mown field,
like showers that water the earth.**

⁷ In his time may the righteous flourish;
and let there be an abundance of peace till the moon shall be no more.

¹⁸ **Blessed are you, LORD God, the God of Israel;
you alone do wondrous deeds!**

¹⁹ And blessed be your glorious name forever,
and may all the earth be filled with your glory. Amen. Amen.

SECOND READING: Romans 15:4-13

⁴ Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that
by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have
hope. ⁵ May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in
harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, ⁶ so that together
you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

⁷ Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the
glory of God. ⁸ For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the
circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the
promises given to the ancestors ⁹ and that the gentiles might glorify God for his

mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will confess you among the gentiles and sing praises to your name”;

¹⁰ and again he says, “Rejoice, O gentiles, with his people”; ¹¹ and again,

“Praise the Lord, all you gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him”;

¹² and again Isaiah says, “The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the gentiles; in him the gentiles shall hope.”

¹³ May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

A. Word of God, word of life.

C. Thanks be to God.

A TIME FOR THE CHILD IN US ALL

Children & Youth are invited forward for a special sermon time with Pastor Peggy.

What's in the Box?!? 1st clue: It is a living thing.

Congregation stands

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.
Repeat alleluia
Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

The musical notation is written on three staves in G major (one sharp). The first staff contains the melody for 'Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,' with lyrics underneath. The second staff continues the melody for 'al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.' with lyrics underneath. The third staff begins with a double bar line, followed by a key signature change to F major (two flats), indicated by a 'C' in a circle. It then contains the melody for 'Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.' with lyrics underneath.

GOSPEL: Matthew 3:1-12

P. The holy gospel according to Matthew. C. Glory to you, O Lord.

¹ In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, ² “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” ³ This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.’ ”

⁴ Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all

the region around the Jordan were going out to him, ⁶ and they were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins.

⁷ But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming for his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? ⁸ Therefore, bear fruit worthy of repentance, ⁹ and do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. ¹⁰ Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

¹¹ "I baptize you with water for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is more powerful than I, and I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

P. The gospel of the Lord. **C. Praise to you, O Christ.**

Congregation is seated

SERMON

Tune into Peace

PRAYER STATIONS

There are 5 prayer stations throughout the sanctuary that you can move to during this time. The 6th option is to stay seated while meditating, praying, and listening to the background music. The prayer stations are the same each week, with the exception of the poem and the image changing weekly. The intention is that you take in 1 or 2 stations each week, visiting each station at least once by the end of Advent. We will spend about 5 minutes at the prayer stations before entering into the Hymn of the Day.

Congregation stands

HYMN OF THE DAY

He Came Down

ELW 253

APOSTLE'S CREED

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's 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 to the dead.**

On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

A. In our waiting and watching, we come to you in prayer, O God, trusting your promise to renew the church, the nations, and the whole creation. *A brief silence.*

A. With wisdom and understanding, inspire the faithful around the world. Unite hearts and minds in work to address poverty, access to housing, and equity among peoples. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

A. With counsel and might, move us to care for creation. As we dream of the day when all creatures will flourish alongside one another, guide us in ways humanity and all creation will mutually thrive. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

A With righteousness and faithfulness, encourage nations to live in harmony with one another. We pray for international student and teacher exchanges, for our partner churches, and for the shared mission of Lutheran World Relief and Lutheran Disaster Response. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

A. With steadfastness and encouragement, strengthen those who have lost hope in the face of grief, depression, or disease. We pray especially for... those we name aloud... and those we hold in our hearts...Renew the spirits of those recovering from surgery and medical procedures. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

A. With welcome and hospitality, embolden us in our shared ministry to overcome all that divides. In acts of repentance, reconciliation, and reparation, may we serve in the way of Christ. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

A. With joy and peace, we remember our ancestors in the faith. Fill us with the hope of the Holy Spirit now and into the ages of ages. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

P. Draw near to us, O God, as we commend all for whom we pray, trusting in your mercy through Jesus Christ, Emmanuel. **Amen.**

SHARING OF THE PEACE

P. The Peace of Christ be with you always.

C. And also with you.

P. Let us share with each other a sign of Christ's peace.

Congregation is seated

CHOIR ANTHEM

Behold, He Has Come

Claire Cloninger & Robert Sterling

MEAL

OFFERTORY INVITATION

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via Venmo ↓



Offering can be given by putting it in the offering plate when it is passed, online directly via the QR codes for Tithely or Venmo, or by requesting your bank to send a check to the church. Find more details on our website.

Thank you for your generous gifts!

Scan to give
via Tithely ↓



Congregation stands

OFFERTORY SONG



1 Let all things now liv - ing a song of thanks - giv - ing to
God the cre - a - tor tri - um - phant - ly raise,
who fash - ioned and made us, pro - tect - ed and stayed us, who
still guides us on to the end of our days.
God's ban - ners are o'er us, God's light goes be -
fore us, a pil - lar of fire shin - ing forth in the night,
till shad - ows have van - ished and dark - ness is ban - ished, as
for - ward we trav - el from light in - to light.

OFFERTORY PRAYER

A. Let us pray... Nourishing God, you are water in the wilderness and streams in the desert. Through this meal, satisfy our parched places, that we may rejoice and be for the world signs of your kingdom come. **Amen.**

DIALOGUE & PREFACE OF THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

P. The Lord be with you.

C. And also with you.

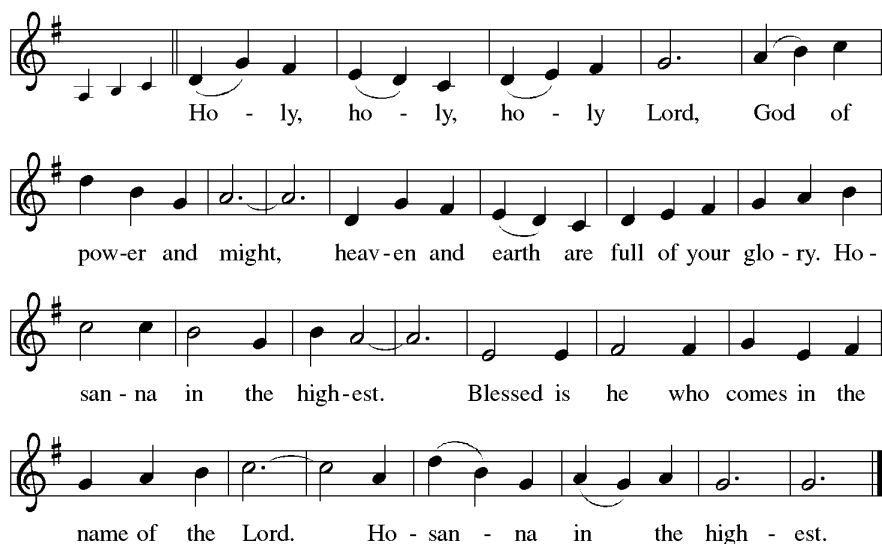
P. Lift up your hearts.

C. We lift them to the Lord.

P. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C. It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P. It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places offer thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. And so with all the choirs of angels, with the Church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Congregation kneels or sits

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P. Holy God, our Bread of life, our Table, and our Food, you created a world in which all might be satisfied by your abundance.

You dined with Abraham and Sarah, promising them life, and fed your people Israel with manna from heaven. You sent your Son to eat with sinners and to become food for the world.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, therefore, his life given for us and his rising from the grave, we await his coming again to share with us the everlasting feast.

By your Spirit nurture and sustain us with this meal: strengthen us to serve all in hunger and want, and by this bread and cup make of us the body of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty God, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy Church, both now and forever. **Amen.**

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.

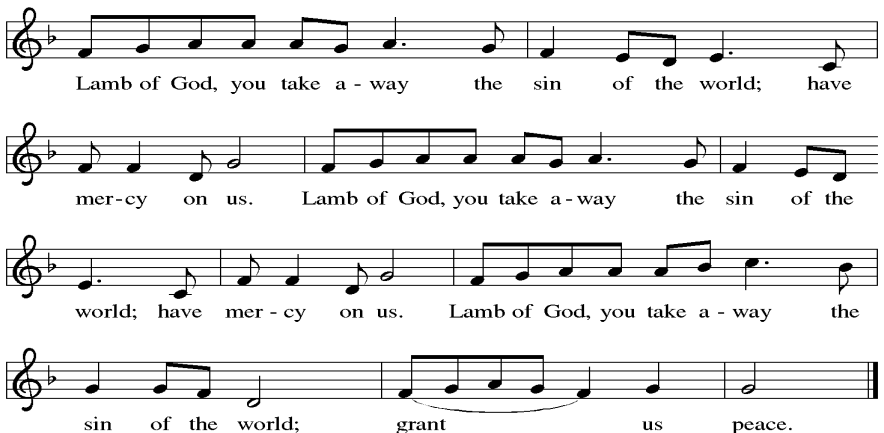
INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Believing in the real presence of Christ, we practice Eucharistic hospitality. All baptized persons are welcome to Communion this morning. Please come forward, guided by the Ushers, to receive the bread and wine. Children are invited to the table for a blessing.

Gluten free and traditional wafers are available, please note this to Pastor Peggy when you come up. The bread is dairy and egg free. Grape juice is available in the second communion plate. As you return to your seat via the side aisles you can place your empty cup in the baskets on either side.

P. Here is life. God is with us. Come, receive what God has promised.

COMMUNION SONG



Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer - cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

After all have received Communion the congregation stands.

TABLE BLESSING

P. The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace. **Amen.**

SONG AFTER COMMUNION



1 Let us tal - ents and tongues em - ploy, reach - ing out with a shout of joy:



bread is bro - ken, the wine is poured, Christ is spo - ken and seen and heard.

Refrain



Je - sus lives a - gain, earth can breathe a - gain, pass the Word a - round: loaves a - bound!

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A. Let us pray... God our host, at this table you have fed us with joy and gladness. Send us forth, eager to share the feast, welcome the stranger, and bear good fruit in the name of Jesus. **Amen.**

SENDING

BENEDICTION

P. May God who comes among us, Father, ☩ Son, and Holy Spirit, grant you patience in waiting, peace in the darkness, and good news to share today and always. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

Light Dawns on a Weary World

ELW 726

DISMISSAL

A. Go in peace. Keep awake. **C. Thanks be to God**

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Announcements for December 7th, 2025

Welcome to Holy Counselor Lutheran Church. May you experience the joy of God's presence in our worship!

*If today is your **first time** worshipping at Holy Counselor, please be sure to fill out the "Guest Book" on the table in the narthex and take a welcome bag.*

*Please ask our ushers any questions you may have regarding worship this morning. **Large print bulletins are available.***

***Worship is live streamed** to our church Facebook page, but the camera is pointed away during Communion and is not on the children when they come forward during A Time for the Child in Us All.*

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**Altar flowers are from the Heeren Family,  
Happy Anniversary to Julia & Brian!**

**Thank you, Nancy Knecht, for this morning's refreshments!**

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Volunteers for Today's Worship

Lay Asst.	Debbie Lennon
Ushers	<i>Volunteer needed</i>
Comm. Asst.	Emilie Dupont
Tech	<i>Volunteer needed</i>
Tellers	<i>Volunteer needed</i>
Refreshments	Nancy Knecht

Volunteers for Next Sunday, Dec. 14th

Lay Asst.	<i>Volunteer needed</i>
Ushers	Diane Rossi
Comm. Asst.	Debbie Lennon
Tech	<i>Volunteer needed</i>
Tellers	<i>Volunteer needed</i>
Refreshments	<i>Volunteer needed</i>

******* Join us for refreshments after worship*******

THIS WEEK AT HOLY COUNSELOR

Sunday, Dec 7: Sunday School, 8:45-9:15am

Worship w/Communion & Baptism, 2nd Sunday of Advent, 9:30am

Choir Practice following worship

Tuesday, Dec 9: Pastor's Community Office Hours, Daily Bean, 11am-1pm

Wednesday, Dec 10: Adult Ed, Advent Study, Zoom, 10am & 7pm

Saturday, Dec 13: Sisters in Prayer, Zoom, 8:30am

Sunday, Dec 14: Sunday School, 8:45-9:15am

Worship w/Communion & Christmas Pageant 3rd Sunday of Advent, 9:30am

Spending Plan Q&A Meeting following worship

Choir Practice following Spending Plan Meeting

Pastor's Community Office Hours: Pastor Peggy will be at Daily Bean, **THIS**

Tuesday, December 9th from 11am-1pm for Community Office Hours. All are welcome to drop in for a visit as she is present in the community.

Spending Plan Q&A: Following worship **NEXT Sunday, December 14th we will have our spending plan Q&A.** This is the time to ask questions about the proposed spending plan for 2026. This allows us to have a smooth annual meeting in January. Please plan to attend.

Food Items & Christmas Gifts: All donations need to be returned to the back fellowship room by **NEXT Sunday, December 14th.** Thank you for your care and love for those in need this holiday season!!

Angels & Stars: Would you like to add a Christmas Angel or Star to our beautiful Christmas tree? **Please fill out the form in the narthex and return to the office by NEXT Sunday, December 14th.** The Angels and Stars are added to our decorations to celebrate and remember anyone you would like this holiday season.

2026 Calendars for Sale: The calendars are here! They are **\$20 each.** They make great gifts in addition to beautifying your own home! All calendar sales go directly to support the church.

Christmas Eve Worship: Christmas Eve candlelight worship will be **Wednesday, December 24th at 5pm.** We hope you and your families will join us! Invite your friends to join us as we celebrate the birth of Jesus.

RaiseRight for Holiday Shopping/Gifts: As you are preparing gifts for the holidays, we want to remind you of our ongoing program RaiseRight! **You can purchase gift cards** to be sent to others as gifts or you can get gift cards for the places you are buying from during this season. Order forms with a sample of cards that can be ordered through HCLC, are by the book in the Narthex. **Deadline to submit order from to John Heeren is December 13th.** Share the forms with your family and friends. It works by simply buying gift cards to stores where you already shop, and then the church gets a percentage of the gift card purchase. **Download the RaiseRight app & link to the church with enrollment code: 53EB2E84IL3275 – this is a new RaiseRight ID#**
Speak with John Heeren for more information.

Prayers for Porch Planks: **A HUGE thank you** to everyone for your generous gifts for the porch replacement!!

Paper Drive: We are running low on toilet paper and paper towels. **Please contribute** to our “Paper Drive” in the months of December and January. **All donations can be placed** in the fellowship room against the left wall by the chairs.

Youth Council Representative: For 2026 we will **need a new youth representative on church council.** If you are a youth interested in this service position please contact Pastor Peggy or Diane Rossi. Thank you to Kevin, who has been our youth rep and will be heading off to college next year.

White Elephant Gift Exchange: **Sunday, January 4th we will be hosting a white elephant gift exchange!** This is purposefully held after Christmas so you can bring a gift you received that you’d like to pass on! **Here’s a little church trivia:** It is still Christmas season in the church calendar until January 6, and in some countries, Christmas is celebrated on that day with Little Christmas or La Befana, **so bring what you have and no longer want (no shopping needed!)** and we will have fun celebrating the end of the Christmas season together!

Food Pantry: **Thank you for the recent generous food drives, we are still in need of:** canned chicken noodle soup, canned stew, instant pudding, jello, children’s juice boxes or pouches, 4-pack toilet paper & toothpaste. You can always bring donations of canned goods, paper goods, and hygiene products. All donations can be **placed in the blue bin** by the sanctuary doors. Thank you!



Contact Information

(973) 827-5251 office

www.hc-lutheranchurch.org

The Reverend Peggy Ludlow: pastorpeggy@hc-lutheranchurch.org

Director of Music: June Tarantino: music@hc-lutheranchurch.org

Office Administrator: Cathy Nemecek: office@hc-lutheranchurch.org

Bookkeeper: Wynn White: accounts@hc-lutheranchurch.org

MISSION STATEMENT

*As Children of God,
we are called to share and serve
Christ's love and bring God's word to all.*

CHURCH COUNCIL

Pastor Rev. Peggy Ludlow

President Nancy Knecht

Vice President Frank Urbaniak

Treasurer Claire Speroni

Recording Secretary Dawn McCormick

Financial Secretary John Heeren

Outreach Coordinator Francine Vince

Nurture Coordinator Fred Schoenagel

Administration Coordinator Diane Rossi

Youth Representative Kevin Drache

PASTORAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Kristina Heeren

Pam Kucks

Matt Moller

Aileen Donovan

Holy Counselor is located on the original and ancestral homelands of the Munsee people, and we give thanks for their presence here since time immemorial. We also wish to recognize and honor our Indigenous siblings who have and continue to call this land their home.

