

Service of Holy Communion

3rd Sunday after Epiphany

January 25th, 2026



INTRODUCTION

Jesus begins his public ministry by calling fishers to leave their nets and follow him. In Jesus the kingdom of God has come near. We who have walked in darkness have seen a great light. We see this light most profoundly in the cross—as God suffers with us and all who are oppressed by sickness, sin, or evil. Light dawns for us as we gather around the word, the font, and the holy table. We are then sent to share the good news that others may be “caught” in the net of God’s grace and mercy.

GATHERING

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

P. Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, creator of heaven and earth, the Word who spoke life into being, the Wind stirring the waters. **Amen.**

P. Let us turn in confession to the one who knows us completely.

The congregation sits or kneels. Silence is kept for reflection.

Mighty God, lover of justice, **you call us to life in community, but we have served our own interests at the expense of our neighbors. We have sown deceit where honesty was needed. We say the right words, but our hearts are far from you. Turn us to seek your face. Knit us together and give us the mind of Christ, that we may do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.**

The former things have passed away, and new things God now declares: Like a

spring of water that never fails, God covers you in the righteousness of Christ, and forgives your sin in † Jesus' name. May the Spirit give you strength to live for others, and bless you with the gift of peace. **Amen.**

Congregation stands

GATHERING HYMN

Listen, God Is Calling

ELW 513

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.

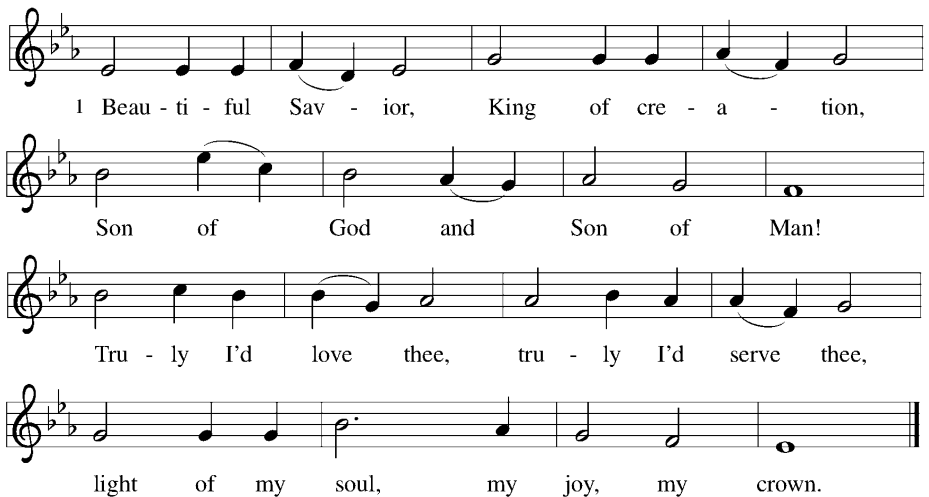
A. For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

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. O God, your lovingkindness always goes before us and follows after us. Summon us into your light, and direct our steps in the ways of goodness that come through the cross of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

Congregation is seated

WORD

FIRST READING: Isaiah 9:1-4

¹ There will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time [the Lord] brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

² The people who walked in darkness
have seen a great light;
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—
on them light has shined.

³ You have multiplied exultation;
you have increased its joy;
they rejoice before you
as with joy at the harvest,
as people exult when dividing plunder.

⁴ For the yoke of their burden
and the bar across their shoulders,
the rod of their oppressor,
you have broken as on the day of Midian.

A. Word of God, word of life. **C. Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 27:1, 4-9 (*read responsively*)

¹ The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom then shall I fear?
The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

⁴ **One thing I ask of the LORD; one thing I seek;**
that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life; to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD and to seek God in the temple.

⁵ For in the day of trouble God will give me shelter,
hide me in the hidden places of the sanctuary, and raise me high upon a rock.

⁶ **Even now my head is lifted up above my enemies who surround me.**
Therefore I will offer sacrifice in the sanctuary, sacrifices of rejoicing; I will sing and make music to the LORD.

⁷ Hear my voice, O LORD, when I call;
have mercy on me and answer me.

⁸ **My heart speaks your message— “Seek my face.”**

Your face, O LORD, I will seek.

⁹ Hide not your face from me, turn not away from your servant in anger.

Cast me not away—you have been my helper; forsake me not, O God of my salvation.

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 1:10-18

¹⁰ Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you but that you be knit together in the same mind and the same purpose. ¹¹ For it has been made clear to me by Chloe’s people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters. ¹² What I mean is that each of you says, “I belong to Paul,” or “I belong to Apollos,” or “I belong to Cephas,” or “I belong to Christ.” ¹³ Has Christ been divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? ¹⁴ I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius, ¹⁵ so that no one can say that you were baptized in my name. ¹⁶ I did baptize also the household of Stephanas; beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else. ¹⁷ For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel—and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power.

¹⁸ For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

A. Word of God, word of life.

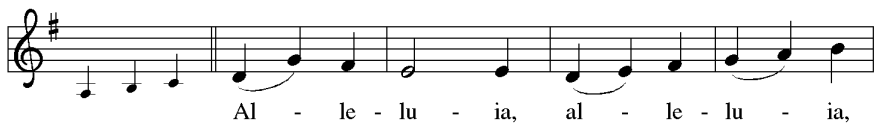
C. Thanks be to God.

A TIME FOR THE CHILD IN US ALL

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

Congregation stands

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



Repeat alleluia



GOSPEL: Matthew 4:12-23

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

¹² Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew to Galilee. ¹³ He left Nazareth and made his home in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, ¹⁴ so that what had been spoken through the prophet Isaiah might be fulfilled: ¹⁵ “Land of Zebulun, land of Naphtali, on the road by the sea, across the Jordan, Galilee of the gentiles—¹⁶ the people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, and for those who sat in the region and shadow of death light has dawned.”

¹⁷ From that time Jesus began to proclaim, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

¹⁸ As he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea—for they were fishers. ¹⁹ And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people.” ²⁰ Immediately they left their nets and followed him. ²¹ As he went from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John, in the boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. ²² Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

²³ Jesus went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people.

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

Congregation is seated

SERMON

Fishers of People

Congregation stands

HYMN OF THE DAY

Will You Come and Follow Me

ELW 798

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. As God's beloved children united in Christ, let us pray for the church, the whole human community, and the well-being of the earth, our home.

A brief silence.

A. Holy Creator, you lavish creation with splendor, and we praise you for the gift of life. Teach us to live as wise stewards, sharing the earth's resources with all inhabitants of this garden planet. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A. Holy Judge, your power is love, and you judge the nations by the measure of Christ. Free any who are unjustly accused or wrongly condemned. We pray for those in authority. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A. Just God, you desire respect and equality for everyone. Raise up prophets who speak truth to the nations. Embolden leaders and those in authority to advocate for people in need. Open the ears of those who hear to repentance and change toward justice. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A. Holy Love, you care for vulnerable young children, frail elders, and any who are sick we pray especially for... those we now say aloud... and those we hold in our hearts. We pray for all who are affected by natural disasters. Provide for their needs and relieve their suffering. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A. Holy Giver, you gather, forgive, and shape us as disciples of Christ. Nurture in us a spirit of patience and respect, that we may love one another as you love us. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A. Holy Savior, you free us from the power of death. Lead and guide us until we come at last into the communion of all your saints in light. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

P. Confident that the Holy Spirit receives our prayers and answers us, we commend all for whom we pray to God's loving-kindness made known to us in Christ Jesus our Savior. **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

I Will Follow You

Tom Fettke

MEAL

OFFERTORY INVITATION

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via Venmo ↓



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Thank you for your generous gifts!

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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... God of majesty, no eye has seen, no ear has heard what you have prepared for those who love you, yet in this meal you reveal the wideness of your mercy. Use what we have gathered to feed us with the reign of God come near, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

DIALOGUE & PREFACE OF THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

P. The Lord be with you.

C. And also with you.

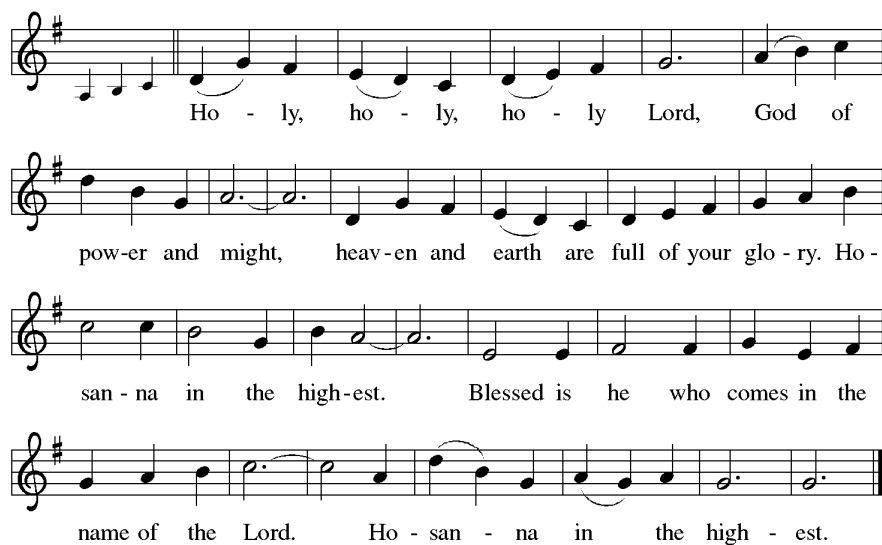
P. Lift up your hearts.

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 give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ; who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by his glorious resurrection opened to us the way of everlasting life. 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:



The congregation sits or kneels.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P. Blessed are you, O holy God: you are the Life and Light of all. By your powerful word you created all things. Through the prophets you called your people to be a light to the nations.

Blessed are you for Jesus, your Son. He is your Light, shining in our darkness and revealing to us your mercy and might.

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 preaching and healing, his dying and rising, and his promise to come again, we await that day when all the universe will rejoice in your holy and life-giving light.

By your Spirit bless us and this meal, that, refreshed with this heavenly food, we may be light for the world, revealing the brilliance of your Son.

Through him all glory and honor is yours, Almighty Father, 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.

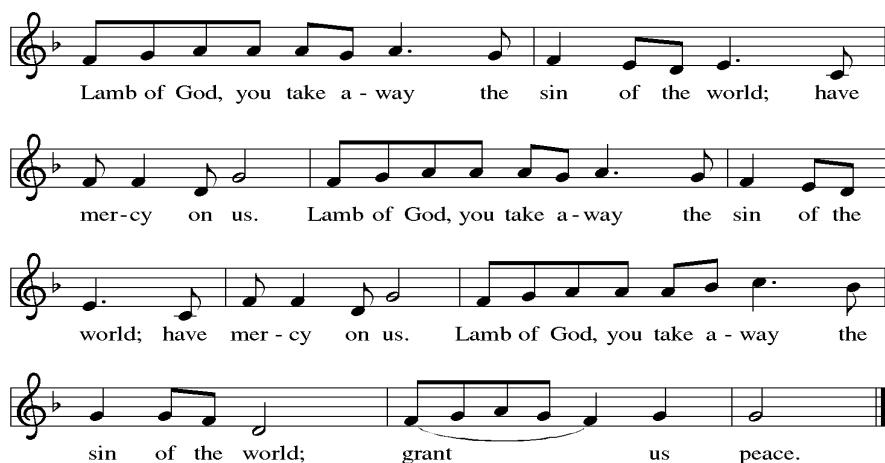
INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Believing in the real presence of Christ, we practice Eucharistic hospitality. All baptized persons are welcome to Communion this morning. Children may come forward for a blessing.

Please come forward, guided by the Ushers, to receive the bread and wine. Gluten free wafers are available, please note this to Pastor Peggy when you come forward. 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 the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! Come to the table, taste and see.

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.

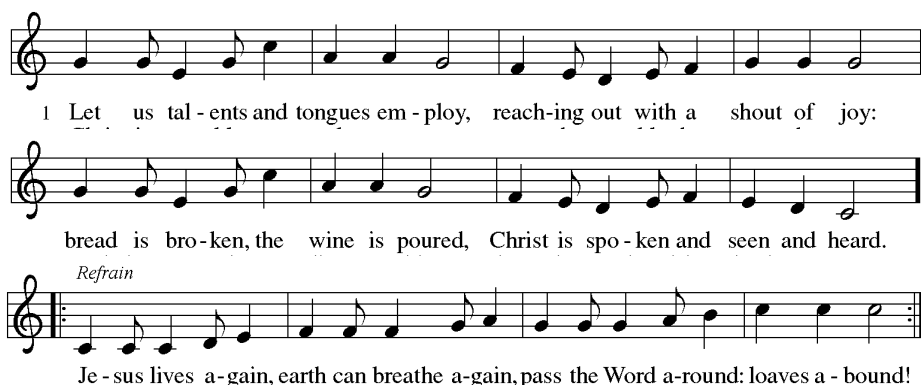
DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

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... Radiant God, we have seen your glory in the face of Jesus Christ. In the sacrament of his body and blood you have drawn us to your heart. Send us from this table with delight, that our lives may reflect the beauty of love, and bear witness to all we have seen and heard, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

SENDING

BENEDICTION

P. May the triune God, who has put a new song in your mouth and tuned your heart for praise ☩ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

SENDING HYMN

I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

ELW 815

DISMISSAL

A. Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy. **C. Thanks be to God.**

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Announcements for January 25th, 2026

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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**Thank you, Emilie Dupont for providing this morning's refreshments!**  
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Volunteers for Today's Worship

Lay Asst.	Pam Kucks
Ushers	Volunteer needed
Comm. Asst.	Volunteer needed
Tech	Volunteer needed
Tellers	Volunteer needed
Refreshments	Volunteer needed

Volunteers for Next Sunday, Feb.1st

All positions open

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

THIS WEEK AT HOLY COUNSELOR

Sunday, Jan 25: Sunday School, 8:45-9:15am

Worship w/Communion, 9:30am

Annual Meeting/Potluck Luncheon following meeting

Monday, Jan 26: Council Reorg Meeting, 6-9pm

Wednesday, Jan 28: Adult Ed, Zoom, 10am & 7pm

Saturday, Jan 31: Sisters in Prayer, Zoom, 8:30am

Sunday, Feb 1: Sunday School, 8:45-9:15am

Worship w/Communion, 9:30am

Choir Practice following worship

Annual Congregational Meeting: Our annual meeting is **TODAY, Sunday, January 25th following worship** with a makeup weather date of February 1st. Please plan to attend to celebrate the 2025 year, hear updates about the church, and approve the 2026 spending plan. **A potluck luncheon will follow, please bring a dish to pass.**

Adult Ed Study: Adult Ed is resuming with a **new study of *Twelve Ordinary Men*** by John MacArthur. You can order your book online. In addition to our usual **10am** time, there will be a **7pm session** for those who are unavailable during the daytime. Please **let Pam Kucks know** if you'd like to participate.

Cluster-wide Grief Study: For the month of February our ELCA cluster will be offering a **4-week series** on grief. Topics include: Identifying Grief Patterns; What is Normal?/Dealing with Thoughts & Feelings; Coping Strategies; and The Spiritual Dynamics of Grief. It will take place on **Zoom from 7-8pm on Thursdays** (2/5-2/26). It's okay if you can't make it every week. All are welcome!

Souper Bowl Sunday Soup Sale: Buy some delicious soup after worship on **Sunday, February 8th to warm up before the big game!** Please see the separate list in the narthex of food items needed to make the soup. **Join the soup making fun!** Soup will be made on Friday 2/6 in the evening and on Saturday 2/7 beginning at 3pm at church! Contact John Heeren regarding Friday evening and Denise Urbaniak regarding Saturday if you'd like to help.

2026 Calendars for Sale: We have a few calendars left! Get yours today! **Our very own Frank Urbaniak created a beautiful calendar using his own photography.** Pam has included scripture verses to meditate on monthly as well. **Calendars are \$20 and the entire cost will go to the church.** Note "calendar" with your payment.

Boiler Replacement & Electric Hot Water Heater: Due to a recent leak, damage and old age of the boiler at the parsonage immediate replacement was needed. Unfortunately, the hot water heater also has a leak and needs to be replaced. Good news is we will be putting in an electric one that will use our solar panels. Please **help support the boiler replacement and hot water heater fundraiser** in the Narthex to cover these costs. **The boiler is almost paid for because of your generosity!** Thank you to all who have given already!

Women's Lenten Retreat: We are hosting our 2nd Annual Woman's Retreat at HCLC on **Saturday, March 7th from 9 am-3 pm**. All women are invited to come explore a Lenten journey this winter about self-care. The day includes Pastor Peggy as our keynote speaker, worship, music, workshops and meditation. Continental breakfast and lunch will be provided. There is a recommended **donation of \$15** for building use. Please **RSVP** to the office (office@hc-lutheranchurch.org) **by Monday, February 9th**. See Kathy Heeren or Pam Kucks with any questions.

Your legacy gift to the church: In your will or trust you can make a difference in the life of the people in this congregation. The new year is always a great time to review your will. Also, as a reminder **if you give electronically** via tithe.ly please update it to reflect your new intent for 2026. Thank you! If you have any questions, please contact John Heeren or Pastor Peggy.

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.

Paper Drive: We are running low on **paper towels**. Please **contribute** to our "Paper Drive" this month. All **donations can be placed** in the fellowship room against the left wall by the chairs. Thank you!

Food Pantry: **Thank you for the recent generous food drives, we are still in need of:** canned chicken noodle soup, boxed cereal, canned stew, canned chili, rice, 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!



Church Office (973) 827-5251
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.

