

# Service of Holy Communion

## Fourth Sunday of Easter

### April 26th, 2026



#### **INTRODUCTION**

Today is sometimes called “Good Shepherd Sunday.” Jesus is called the “gate” of the sheep in today’s gospel. The risen Christ opens the way to abundant life. He anoints our heads with oil and guides us beside the still waters of our baptism. Each Sunday he spreads a feast before us amid the world’s violence and war. We go forth to be signs of the resurrection and extend God’s tender care to all creation.

#### **GATHERING**

#### **THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM**

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

P. Alleluia! Christ is risen.

**C. Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

P. Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne and to the Lamb!  
**Amen.**

P. Let us give thanks for the gifts of baptism.

Merciful God, you are the one who was, who is, and who is to come. You lead us beside still waters. We thank you for the waters of creation: morning dew, gentle rain, roaring waves. We thank you for the waters that nourish us. Blessed are you.

**You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

Jesus Christ, you are the faithful witness who accompanies us on our journeys. We give you thanks for your life-giving death and resurrection. We praise you for joining us in joy and sorrow. Blessed are you.

**You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

Holy Spirit, you anoint our head with oil and our cup overflows. Break down barriers that divide us. Fill us with the breath of peace. Blessed are you.

**You guide us to springs of the water of life.**

Holy One, we thank you for the gifts and grace of baptism, and for making us a new creation. We join with saints and angels, giving you honor and praise, now and forever. **Amen.**

## **GATHERING HYMN**

Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing

ELW 807

## **THE GREETING**

P. Alleluia! Christ is risen!

**C. Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

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

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.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

P. O God our shepherd, you know your sheep by name and lead us to safety through the valleys of death. Guide us by your voice, that we may walk in certainty and security to the joyous feast prepared in your house, 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*

## WORD

### **FIRST READING: Acts 2:42-47**

<sup>42</sup> [The baptized] devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

<sup>43</sup> Awe came upon everyone because many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. <sup>44</sup> All who believed were together and had all things in common; <sup>45</sup> they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. <sup>46</sup> Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, <sup>47</sup> praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

A. Word of God, word of life.

**C. Thanks be to God.**

### **PSALM: Psalm 23** (*read responsively*)

<sup>1</sup> The LORD is my shepherd;

I shall not be in want.

<sup>2</sup> **The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures  
and leads me beside still waters.**

<sup>3</sup> You restore my soul, O LORD,  
and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

<sup>4</sup> **Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no  
evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.**

<sup>5</sup> You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

<sup>6</sup> **Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,  
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

### **SECOND READING: 1 Peter 2:19-25**

<sup>19</sup> It is a commendable thing if, being aware of God, a person endures pain while suffering unjustly. <sup>20</sup> If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, what credit is that? But if you endure when you do good and suffer for it, this is a commendable thing before God. <sup>21</sup> For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps. <sup>22</sup> "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth."

<sup>23</sup> When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. <sup>24</sup> He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, having died to sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. <sup>25</sup> For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and

guardian of your souls.

A. Word of God, word of life.

C. Thanks be to God.

### A TIME FOR THE CHILD IN US ALL

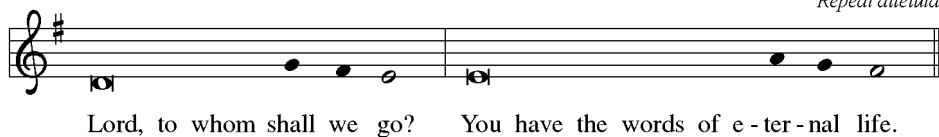
Children & Youth are invited forward for a special sermon time with Pastor Peggy.

Congregation stands

### GOSPEL ACCLAMATION



*Repeat alleluia*



### GOSPEL: John 10:1-11

P. The holy gospel according to John.

C. Glory to you, O Lord.

[Jesus said:] <sup>1</sup>“Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. <sup>2</sup>The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. <sup>3</sup>The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. <sup>4</sup>When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. <sup>5</sup>They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.” <sup>6</sup>Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

<sup>7</sup>So again Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. <sup>8</sup>All who came before me are thieves and bandits, but the sheep did not listen to them. <sup>9</sup>I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. <sup>10</sup>The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.” <sup>11</sup>“I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.

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

*Congregation is seated*

**SERMON**

The Good Shepherd

*Congregation stands*

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

Savior, Like a Shepherd Lead Us

ELW 789

**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. Trusting in the power of Christ's resurrection to heal and redeem our broken world, let us pray for the needs of all creation. *A brief silence.*

A. Shepherding God, draw all people to yourself and lead them in paths of righteousness. Embolden your church to enter the valleys of the world and guide us beside the still waters of your grace. We pray for military and prison chaplains serving near and far. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A. Creator God, by the resurrection of your Son, show us your steadfast love and instruct our hearts in your ways. Help us to revere and protect the wonders of your creation. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A. Righteous Judge, strengthen and uphold those who work for justice and advocate for human rights. Bring an end to oppression and save us from the temptation of violence or vengeance. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A. Great Physician, walk with those who are grieving, and anoint those who are ill or injured. We pray especially for... those we name aloud... and those we hold in our hearts... Restore them to health of body, mind, and spirit. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A. Good Shepherd, continually seek us out as lambs of your flock, and form us into a community where all are honored and cared for. Spread a feast before us and fill our cups to overflowing. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

A. Living God, we praise you for the saints who have died in faith and now dwell in your love. At our end, bring us, with them, to our heavenly home. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

P. God of resurrection power, use us and these prayers to proclaim the good news of new life to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our risen 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**

The Shepherd Knows Your Name

*Phillip Keveren*

### **MEAL**

### **OFFERTORY INVITATION**

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*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

*Refrain/Estribillo*

To - ma, oh Dios, mi vo - lun - tad, y haz - la tu - ya, na -  
Take my life, that I may be con - se - crat - ed, Lord,

da más; to - ma, sí, mi co - ra - zón  
to thee; take my mo - ments and my days;

*To stanzas* | *Last time*  
y tu tro - no en él ten - drás. ten - drás.  
let them flow in cease - less praise. less praise.

2 Take my sil - ver and my gold,  
not a mite would I with - hold;  
take my in - tel - lect and use ev - 'ry  
*Refrain/Estribillo*  
pow'r as thou shalt choose.

## OFFERTORY PRAYER

A. Let us pray... Merciful God, accept the fruits of our labor, gathered to give you glory. You have set a table before us, a glimpse of that great day when we will hunger and thirst no more. Nourish us with the body and blood of Jesus, that goodness and mercy may follow us and bless the world you love. In the name of Jesus, **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:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of  
pow-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -  
san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the  
name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

*Congregation kneels or sits*

## THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

P. Holy, living, and loving God, we praise you for creating the heavens and the earth.

We bless you for bringing Noah and his family through the waters of the flood, for freeing your people Israel from the bonds of slavery, and for sending your Son to be our Redeemer.

We give you thanks for Jesus who, living among us, healed the sick, fed the hungry, and with a love stronger than death, gave his life for others.

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, 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-giving death and glorious resurrection, we await your promised life for all this dying world.

Breathe your Spirit on us and on this bread and cup: carry us in your arms from death to life, that we may live as your chosen ones, clothed in the righteousness of Christ.

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.**

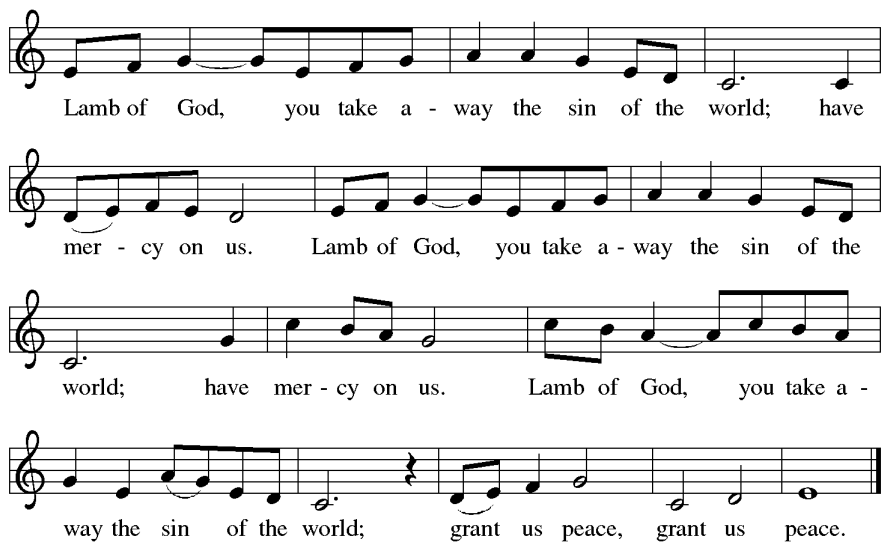
#### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

*Believing in the real presence of Christ, we practice Eucharistic hospitality. All baptized persons are welcome to Communion this morning. 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. Come to the table of new life. Receive the risen Lord.

## 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, grant us peace.

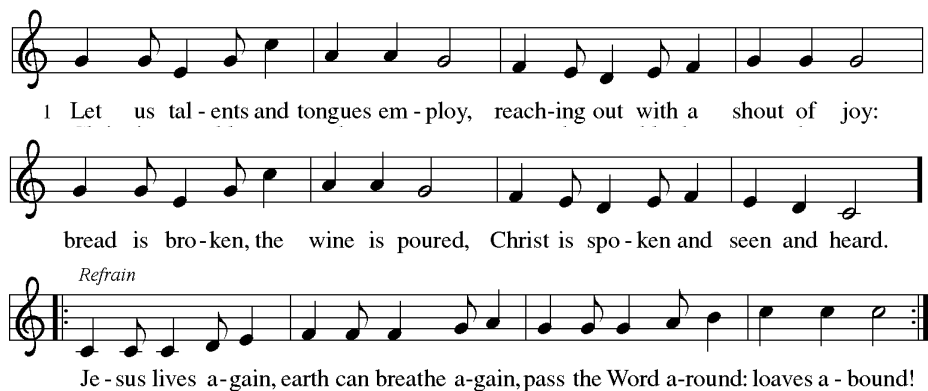
## DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

*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... Holy One, through this meal you have made your home among us and are making all things new. Send us now to speak peace to anxious hearts, to love our enemies, and to bring your healing to the nations. In the name of Jesus, **Amen.**

**SENDING**

**BENEDICTION**

P. God Almighty, who is the beginning and the end, Jesus Christ, the firstborn of the dead, and the Spirit, our advocate and peace, ✠ bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

**SENDING HYMN**

What a Fellowship, What a Joy Divine

ELW 774

**DISMISSAL**

A. Go in peace. Praise the Lord. Alleluia!

**C. Thanks be to God. Alleluia!**

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# **Announcements for April 26th, 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** worshiping 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.**

The **Pray-ground** is a special place to help **support kids and families** in worshiping. We love the sound of kids in worship! God made kids wiggly and curious, and we celebrate that here. **Tips:** explain, participate, and move around together. Need to leave? No problem, but please come back!

**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. **Anyone on the altar is on camera.**

~~~~~  
**Thank you, Gale MacPeek, for this morning’s refreshments!!**  
~~~~~

### Volunteers for Today's Worship

Lay Asst.	<i>Nancy Knecht</i>
Ushers	<i>Volunteer needed</i>
Comm. Asst.	<i>Volunteer needed</i>
Tech	<i>Volunteer needed</i>
Tellers	<i>Volunteer needed</i>
Refreshments	Gale MacPeck

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

### THIS WEEK AT HOLY COUNSELOR

- Sunday, April 26:** Sunday School, 8:45-9:15am  
Worship w/Communion, 9:30am  
Choir Practice following worship
- Monday, April 27:** Council Meeting, 6:30-8:30pm
- Wednesday, April 29:** Adult Ed, Zoom, 10am
- Thursday, April 30:** Meditation & Mindfulness Study, Zoom, 7-8pm
- Saturday, May 2:** Sisters in Prayer, Zoom, 8:30am  
Ladies Tea, 2-4pm
- Sunday, May 3:** Sunday School, 8:45-9:15am  
Worship w/Communion, 9:30am  
Cinco de Mayo Fiesta, following worship  
Choir Practice following worship

**Council Meeting:** The Council meets **tomorrow, Monday April 27th from 6:30-8:30pm** in the Sunday School classroom for their monthly meeting.

**Cluster-wide Meditation Study:** Our cluster-wide study series continues with 4 sessions called: **Meditation and Mindfulness for Here and Now**. The group is meeting on **Zoom from 7-8pm from Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>-Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup>**. All are welcome to participate. Reach out to Pastor Peggy with any questions.

**Ladies Tea:** The Ladies Tea is **THIS Saturday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> from 2-4pm**. You are invited to attend even if you didn't sign up at the auction. **Ticket donations are \$20. RSVP to Pam Kucks TODAY!**

**Cinco de Mayo Fiesta:** Our annual Cinco de Mayo party will be following worship **NEXT Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>!** All are invited to stay for delicious Mexican food, games, and fun! Invite your friends, all are welcome!

**AED Donations:** Our AED expired and a grant was obtained to help cover the costs of a new one! However, AEDs are quite expensive and the outstanding cost not covered by the grant is \$1349.98. If you would like to **donate to help cover the cost of the new AED** please note 'AED' with your donation. Thank you for helping our church be a safe place if an emergency ever occurred.

**Vacuum Volunteer:** Volunteers are needed to vacuum at church **between May 24<sup>th</sup> – June 5<sup>th</sup>**. Please **sign up on the chart**. Our dedicated Debbie will be traveling, and we need some extra help during that time. Thank you!

**Spring Clean-up:** Mark your calendars for **Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup> from 9am-3pm** for our annual spring church cleanup. Youth or teens looking for service hours? This is a great way to serve. All are welcome to pitch in at any time. Bagels, coffee & pizza will be available for meals.

**Community Yard Sale:** Want to sell some of your goods from your spring cleaning? **Saturday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>** we will be hosting a Community Yard Sale in our parking lot from **9am-2pm**. Spots are \$30. You keep what you sell; you bring a table, chairs, tent, etc. Spots with table and chairs set up for you is \$50—limited number available. Call the office or **sign-up** on the sheet in the narthex **to reserve your spot**. Don't have anything to sell? Come shop! Contact Claire Speroni for more info.

**Sunday Morning Lay Leaders Survey:** You are invited to **fill out the survey** to participate in worship leadership on Sunday mornings. We are hoping to have enough volunteers to **create a rotation schedule** for the various roles (tech, lay assistant, lector, teller, and usher). If you've ever been interested in helping, now is a great time to get involved!

**Vacation Bible School:** Mark your calendars for **God's Good Creation VBS this summer July 20<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> from 1-4pm!** We hope the afternoon timeslot will allow for more participants. Help spread the word. Registration is open at [myvbs.org/hclcvernon](http://myvbs.org/hclcvernon)

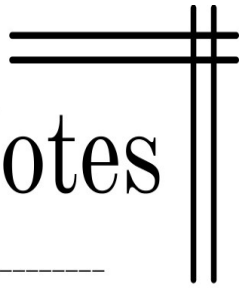
**Food Pantry:** **Food items to help restock:** canned tuna, boxed cereal, canned chili, canned corn, children's juice boxes or pouches, 4-pack toilet paper, liquid dish soap, & toothpaste. You can always bring donations of canned goods, paper goods, and hygiene products. All donations can be **placed in the blue bin** by the sanctuary doors. Thank you!




For God's Children of all ages!

# Worship Notes

Sunday's Date: \_\_\_\_\_



 My Favorite Song:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

This week, I'm praying for:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_




I'm curious or have a question about:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Today's Focus Scripture: \_\_\_\_\_

I would draw it like:



**Word Count**

How many times did you hear each of these words today? Make a tally.

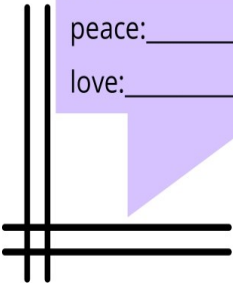
grace: \_\_\_\_\_

joy: \_\_\_\_\_

peace: \_\_\_\_\_

love: \_\_\_\_\_

### ||





## Contact Information

(973) 827-5251 office

[www.hc-lutheranchurch.org](http://www.hc-lutheranchurch.org)

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Director of Music: June Tarantino: [music@hc-lutheranchurch.org](mailto:music@hc-lutheranchurch.org)

Office Administrator: Cathy Nemecek: [office@hc-lutheranchurch.org](mailto:office@hc-lutheranchurch.org)

Bookkeeper: Wynn White: [accounts@hc-lutheranchurch.org](mailto: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

## 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.*

