



# HOPE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Anchored in His Word  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Christmas

Order of Worship

January 4, 2026

Words of Welcome

Prelude

Order of Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God, who sends the word with angels, who is made flesh among all peoples, and who breathes peace on all the earth. **Amen**

Trusting in God's mercy, let us confess our sin.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Holy God, **we confess our sin before you.** We replace compassion with competition. We seek what is mighty while ignoring the meek. We are quick to anger but slow to forgive. We have not put on love in harmony with you. Wrap us in the grace of your powerful Word. Swaddle our hearts with your peace, that all we do, in word or deed, may reflect your love born among us. **Amen**

I bring you good news of great joy for all people: God has come among us in the child born of Mary, Christ the Lord. + In Christ your sins are forgiven and you are clothed in peace. **Amen**

Opening Hymn

***Rise, Shine, You People!***

ELW 665

Greeting

From the one who is and who was and who is to come, and from Jesus Christ, the first fruits of the resurrection, grace and peace be with you all. **And also with you.**

Kyrie

In peace let us pray to the Lord. **Lord have mercy.**

For the peace from above and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord. **Lord have mercy.**

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. **Lord have mercy.**

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

Help, save, comfort and defend us, gracious Lord. **Amen**

This is the Feast

**This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us free to be people of God.

**This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

Power, riches, wisdom and strength, and honor, blessing, and glory are his.

**This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

**Sing with all the people of God, and join in the hymn of all creation:**

**Blessing, honor, glory and might be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen**

**This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

**For the Lamb who was slain has begun his reign. Alleluia.**

**This is the feast of victory for our God. Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.**

## Prayer of the Day

Let us pray together. O God our Father, **you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen**

[Sit]

## Youth Message

*"Jesus, Our Light!"*

## Choral Anthem

***Beautiful Star of Bethlehem***

Arr. A. Pace

The Luther Singers

## First Lesson

**Jeremiah 31:7-14**

<sup>7</sup>For thus says the LORD: Sing aloud with gladness for Jacob, and raise shouts for the chief of the nations; proclaim, give praise, and say, "Save, O LORD, your people, the remnant of Israel." <sup>8</sup>See, I am going to bring them from the land of the north, and gather them from the farthest parts of the earth, among them the blind and the lame, those with child and those in labor, together; a great company, they shall return here. <sup>9</sup>With weeping they shall come, and with consolations I will lead them back, I will let them walk by brooks of water, in a straight path in which they shall not stumble; for I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my firstborn. <sup>10</sup>Hear the word of the LORD, O nations, and declare it in the coastlands far away; say, "He who scattered Israel will gather him, and will keep him as a shepherd a flock." <sup>11</sup>For the LORD has ransomed Jacob, and has redeemed him from hands too strong for him. <sup>12</sup>They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of the LORD, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall become like a watered garden, and they shall never languish again. <sup>13</sup>Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy, I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow. <sup>14</sup>I will give the priests their fill of fatness, and my people shall be satisfied with my bounty, says the LORD.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm

**Psalm 147:12-20**

*(Congregation speaks together.)*

<sup>12</sup>Worship the LORD, O Jerusalem;

    praise your God, O Zion,

<sup>13</sup>who has strengthened the bars of your gates

    and has blessed your children within you.

<sup>14</sup>God has established peace on your borders

    and satisfies you with the finest wheat.

<sup>15</sup>God sends out a command to the earth,

    a word that runs very swiftly.

<sup>16</sup>God gives snow like wool,

    scattering frost like ashes.

<sup>17</sup>God scatters hail like bread crumbs.

Who can stand against God's cold?  
<sup>18</sup>The LORD sends forth the word and melts them;  
     the wind blows, and the waters flow.  
<sup>19</sup>God declares the word to Jacob,  
     statutes and judgments to Israel.  
<sup>20</sup>The LORD has not done so to any other nation;  
     they do not know God's judgments. Hallelujah!

## Second Lesson

**Ephesians 1:3-14**

<sup>3</sup>Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, <sup>4</sup>just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. <sup>5</sup>He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, <sup>6</sup>to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. <sup>7</sup>In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace <sup>8</sup>that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight <sup>9</sup>he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, <sup>10</sup>as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. <sup>11</sup>In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, <sup>12</sup>so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. <sup>13</sup>In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; <sup>14</sup>this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

Word of God, Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

## Alleluia Verse

[Stand]

**Alleluia. Lord to whom shall we go?  
     You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia, alleluia!**

## Holy Gospel

The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the first chapter. **Glory to you, O Lord**



<sup>1</sup>In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being <sup>4</sup>in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. <sup>5</sup>The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. <sup>6</sup>There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. <sup>7</sup>He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. <sup>8</sup>He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. <sup>9</sup>The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. <sup>10</sup>He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. <sup>11</sup>He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. <sup>12</sup>But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God. <sup>14</sup>And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. <sup>15</sup>(John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me.'") <sup>16</sup>From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. <sup>17</sup>The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. <sup>18</sup>No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to You, O Christ**

Sermon

*"In the Beginning..."*

[Sit]

Pastor David Smedley

Hymn of the Day

*Of the Father's Love Begotten*

[Stand]

ELW 295

Apostles' Creed

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

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.  
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the virgin Mary.  
He 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, and is seated at the  
right hand of the Father.  
He will come again 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

Joining our voices with the heavenly host and Christians throughout time and space, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence.*

[After each petition, the congregation responds with: **Receive our prayer.**]

Rejoicing in your Word made flesh among us, we commend these prayers to you, confident of your grace and love made known to us in Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen**

The Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

*(The congregation is asked to greet one another with the words of Christ: "Peace be with you.")*

Offering

[Sit]

Offertory

[Stand]

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise him all creatures here below;  
Praise him above ye heav'nly host; Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen**

## Offertory Prayer

Let us pray together. Gracious God, **your Word-made-flesh brings harmony to the earth. As we offer ourselves and these your gifts, prepare us to receive the grace and truth you offer at this table and renew in us the song of your salvation, in Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen**

## Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give him thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty, and our joy . . . (*Here the minister continues with the preface appropriate to the day or season, concluding:*) we praise your name and join their unending hymn.

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might.**

**Heaven and earth are full of your glory.**

**Hosanna, hosanna, hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest.**

## Words of Institution

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.

## 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**

## Lamb of God

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, grant us peace.**

[Sit]

## Communion

*All are welcome at the Lord's table.*

*We're nourished together by the body and blood of our Lord.*

## Communion Hymns

**Come to Me, All Pilgrims Thirsty**  
**As with Gladness Men of Old**  
**O Savior, Precious Savior**

ELW 777

ELW 302

ELW 820

## Post-Communion Canticle

[Stand]

Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev'ry one what he has done.  
Let ev'ry one who seeks the Lord rejoice and proudly bear his name.  
He recalls his promises and leads his people forth in joy  
With shouts of thanksgiving. Alleluia! Alleluia!

## Post-Communion Prayer

Let us pray together. Holy One, **We thank you, wondrous God, for Jesus, God with us, in these gifts of bread and wine. As we have shared this feast of love, strengthen us to share your love with all the world. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen**

Hymn

*Word of God, Come Down on Earth*

ELW 510

Benediction

The God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, so that we may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit, through Christ Jesus, the Word made flesh. **Amen**

“The Peace of God”

Whatsoever things are honest,  
    whatsoever things are true,  
Whatsoever things are pure and lovely,  
    think on these things.  
Whatsoever things are wholesome,  
    whatsoever things are good,  
If there be any virtue, be any praise,  
    think on these things.  
And the peace of God  
    that passes all understanding  
Shall keep your hearts,  
    shall keep your minds  
on Jesus Christ.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Rejoice in Christ our Savior. **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude

*“Our worship is ended; our service and our witness continue!”*

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### Today's Heavenly Helpers

|                      |               |                               |
|----------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|
| * Assisting Minister |               | John Hanson                   |
| * Church Pianist     |               | Sandy Hunter                  |
| * Choir Director     |               | Matt Newton                   |
| * Lector             | 8:15 service  | Carole English                |
|                      | 10:45 service | John Hiscox                   |
| * Greeters           | 10:45 service | Maureen & Ted Grener          |
| * Ushers             | 10:45 service | Mike Hoover & Steven Freese   |
| * Communion Asst.    | 10:45 service | John Hiscox                   |
| * Counters           |               | Barbara Meford & Sylvia Negri |

Last week's attendance, in person and streaming: 84

### Calendar of Events for This Week

|           |  |
|-----------|--|
| Monday    | - Knitting & Crochet ministry, 2 PM                  |
| Tuesday   | - Men's Bible Study/Ellijay, 9 AM, Mike's Restaurant |
|           | - Ladies Bible Study, 12 noon                        |
| Wednesday | - Food Pantry, 9 AM-3 PM                             |
| Thursday  | - Quilters, 10 AM                                    |
|           | - Co-ed Bible Study, 2 PM                            |

### Next Week's Scripture Readings Are...

**First Reading** – Isaiah 42:1-9

**Psalm** – Psalm 29

**Second Reading** – Acts 10:34-43

**Gospel** – Matthew 3:13-17

**Mid-Week Altar Guild** – Ann Buehler

### Next Week's Worship Assistants Are...

8:15 **Lector** – Jan Austin

10:45 **Lector** – Aaron Engels

**Greeters** – Art & Wanda Dodge

**Ushers** – Janice Weber & Jeannine Sieck

**Communion Asst.** – Aaron Engels

**Counters** – Mike Hoover & Mary Leyden

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### 2025-2026 Estimate of Giving

The "Faith Response Estimate of Giving" statements that members completed last fall will be returned to you for your review. They will be in member mailboxes in the narthex.

## Hope Lutheran Church

Ministering in His Mountains



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Ministers: The People of Hope Church

*"Making Christ known through reaching, welcoming,  
praising, equipping and sending"*