



Holy Cross Lutheran Church

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Making peace by the blood of his cross – Colossians 1:15-20

Grace, peace, and mercy to you from our Lord and Savior, Emmanuel!

Our theme for this Advent is the image of God. Centuries before Jesus' birth, the Bible's teaching about our creation in God's image was groundbreaking. Gentiles with ears to hear recognized a foundation for true justice in Moses' teachings. Who could imagine the fulfillment of creation in God's image? With Jesus, God took on our flesh. Now, God is truly imaged as one of us. The ground once broken to hide seeds now erupts with new life.

Genesis 1:26-27 describes the Creator's fashioning of humanity. "God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." How much is contained in these brief words! We are not accidents but made with purpose. God's image is not solitary, and neither can we be; family is in our DNA. Whether Jew or Gentile, male or female, rich or poor, all share the dignity of God's image. No human accomplishment or work will ever surpass the holiness of our creation; I cannot do something that renders me better than a being made in the image of God.

There are fireworks of glorious implications here. "God is love" erupts from this teaching. Racism and sexism are debarred by this doctrine. Though death will enter the world with sin and degrade our bodies, alienation from our own flesh cannot have the final or defining word. When our works cannot surpass our created stature, salvation can only come by grace through a faith that restores our relationship with our Creator.

Most wonderful of all, the promise of incarnation follows. The Father made us in the Divine image, preparing us for His Son to become one of us. The Word made flesh recreates us, restores what was sullied by sin. "To all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God, who were born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God" (John 1:12-13).

Join us this Advent to meditate on and grow in this theme. We will have vespers services on Wednesdays at both 5 PM and 7 PM. A fellowship meal will be held between the two services. Join with your church in watching and waiting.

The restoration of the image of God does not happen in a small or lonely way but with the Shepherd regathering His flock from all peoples. The lonely part of this work happened on the cross, when Jesus was abandoned, the image of God denied in every way. "But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by mankind and despised by the people" (Psalm 22:6). Now He is risen, sending His followers to every tribe and nation (Matthew 28:19-20). Indeed, His first coming, which we celebrate on Christmas, called for that community from the beginning, gathering both shepherd and Magi, Jew and Gentile, poor and rich. The "family portrait" of the Nativity cannot be just one blood family, but those who were once strangers made into the new community of the Christ.

That family portrait, first in David's city with shepherds and foreign rulers, is still being drawn and expanded. We, who gather around the Christ and His gifts, are drawn into this eternal family, the image of God being restored in His holy community. O Come, o come, Emmanuel, who ransoms captive Israel!

Your servant in Christ,

Pastor Daniel Guagenti



Celebrations in December

Birthdays

- 7- Braylon Mumphrey
- 7- Corrie Brian
- 8- Shane DeVary
- 9- George Wilson
- 11- Jackie Hilbert Fowler
- 12- Robin O'Neil
- 12- Brian Gehrman
- 13- Jennie Shreve
- 15- Will Chapman
- 17- Melinda Rutledge
- 18- Bitsy Scott
- 18- Shawna Nelson
- 20- Tammy Chesher
- 20- Steve Rusch
- 22- Josh Wilbur

Anniversaries

- 2- Joe & Sandy Jager (1972)
- 18- Alan & Kim Whitehouse (2001)
- 21- John & Merrie Feole (1984)

HOLY CROSS FUNDRAISER

As a church we are still experiencing a financial shortfall situation. As the end of the year approaches and we consider our church giving, we have been blessed with a challenge of a matching donation. We can get up to \$5000 matched for any donations **above and beyond** our normal giving up to and ending 12/31. Please note the amount of your donation on your envelope or check that you want applied to Holy Cross's end of year fundraiser. Thank you for your prayerful consideration on this important matter!

ADVENT

Advent Wednesday evening services will be held Dec. 6, 13, & 20 at both 5pm and 7pm. Advent meals will be held between the services from 6:00-6:45. This year's theme is "The Image of God" and how that affects the way we live in the world today.



LADIES LUNCH/COOKIE EXCHANGE: DECEMBER 2

Ladies get your recipes and mixers ready for a cookie exchange and lunch on Saturday December 2. We will do the cookie exchange at 10:30 and then go to lunch at 11:45 at Bell House. Please bring two dozen of you favorite cookies to exchange with others. Rita

HANGING OF THE GREENS: DECEMBER 3

Hanging off the greens is Sunday 12-3 after Devine service. All are welcome to stay and help. The more volunteers we have the easier and faster it will be to decorate the church for the holidays.



DAY-TIMERS: DECEMBER 6

Day-timers will meet Wednesday, December 6 at 10am. For more information please see Charlie Moody.

VOTERS' MEETING: DECEMBER 10

There will be Voters' Meeting on December 10 following the church service. We will vote on the 2023 budget and council officers. All Holy Cross members are asked to attend.

PICTURES WITH ST. NICK

Evangelism is running a Pictures with St. Nick event this year on December 16, from 12-2PM.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM: DEC 17

This year's Sunday School Christmas program will take place during the 11:00 service on December 17. "Light a Candle" for the Savior, this unique children's service involves the lighting of candles to represent the good news of God's love. Rehearsals will take place during the Sunday School hour

BREAKFAST GATHERINGS

Friday morning, at 9:45 AM, our Louisville shut-ins meet at the Chic-fil-a, 3420 Bardstown Rd for fellowship and Holy Communion. All are welcome to join us.

2023 KENTUCKIANA ZONE LWML STOCKING STUFFER PROJECT



STUFFING STOCKINGS-

Please Join Us

DATE: Tuesday December 05, 10:00-Noon

AT: Grace Lutheran Church

1787 Klerner Ln, New Albany

Lunch will be provided

ITEMS NEEDED FOR THE STOCKINGS

Small toys (includes McDonalds), Coloring Books, Christian items, Small Stuffed Animals, Mittens/Gloves, Hats, Children's personal care items, Hair decorations, Card games, Baseball cards, Crafts/Art, Games, Stickers, Small cars/trucks, small school supplies, Dolls, Jewelry, Playdough, Small Books. Anything that will fit in a Christmas stocking. Please no gum, play guns, or anything that would encourage violence.

Stockings will be given to children with an incarcerated parent, children in youth shelters, and other children needing help and support.

ITEMS MAY BE DROPPED OFF AT GRACE
LUTHERAN CHURCH BETWEEN 8:30 & 4

Weekdays (812-944-1267) Or

Call Dolly Jenkins 812-989-3093

Note to Thrivent Members: If your church has a collection or fund raiser for this, it could be a Thrivent Project.

YOU MIGHT BE A LUTHERAN IF...

- Your mother reminds you often that she wishes you'd studied the organ.
- You dress up as your favorite reformer for Halloween.
- You think lime Jell-O with cottage cheese and pineapple is a gourmet salad.

We don't change the message,
the message changes us.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY

Zoom Bible Study is on Wednesday nights at 7pm. We will be looking at the stories and Scripture passages behind favorite hymns. To Join the Zoom Meeting:

:[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89139535214?](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89139535214?pwd=d3pSUXM5eWhMSWc3Y01FR3VLNWVnQT09)

[pwd=d3pSUXM5eWhMSWc3Y01FR3VLNWVnQT09](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89139535214?pwd=d3pSUXM5eWhMSWc3Y01FR3VLNWVnQT09)

Meeting ID:89139535214 Passcode: holycross

LUTHERANISM 101: THURSDAYS 4:30-5:30PM

Lutheranism 101 covers the basics and history of the Bible, the church, Jesus' teachings and why Lutherans are Lutheran. Classes are on Thursday 4:30-5:30pm. Please let Pastor know if you have any interest.

POINSETTIAS

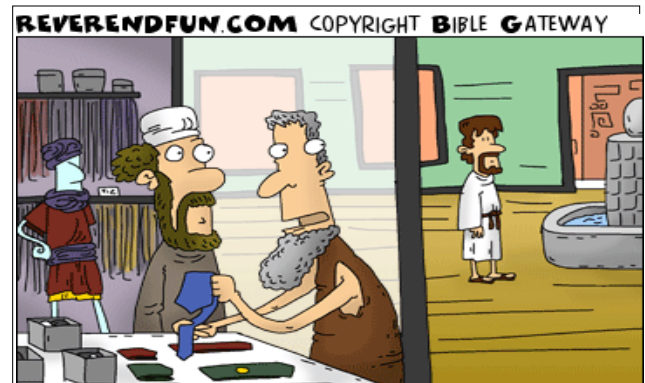
Orders for poinsettias are now being taken to decorate our church for the Christmas holidays. Cost this year is \$10. Please make checks payable to Holy Cross Lutheran. Flowers may be ordered in memory of someone or in honor of someone. Order forms are available. The last day to order is Sunday, Dec. 10th. Poinsettias may be taken home after the Christmas Eve Service.



MILK & HONEY & BLOOD:

WHY WAR INHABITS THE HOLY LAND

Adult Sunday School class is looking at the history of the Holy Land from the Old Testament to Jesus' time to today. Why has there been so much blood shed in the Promised Land? Are there prophecies we need to know for today? What did Jesus teach His disciples about Jerusalem and Judea? For these questions and more, please join us at 9:45am.



WHAT DO YOU BUY THE GUY WHO HAS
EVERYTHING, MADE EVERYTHING, AND HAS
GIVEN US EVERYTHING?

12-22-2014

LIFE QUOTES

"While it is true that we need to be good stewards of God's earthly gifts, it is sinful to think that we are in full control of preserving this world. It is sinful to fret about the destruction of this world before the Last Day. This world will not run out of natural resources. We will not be wiped out by climate change, a worldwide pandemic, or a meteor shower if and when those things happen. God says that as long as this earth endures—until Judgment Day—seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease. God is in control. God will protect, provide, and preserve this world. Trust in God and see His grace and mercy, especially when sin affects this world. Trust that He gives you what you don't deserve and more than you could imagine."

Rev. Peter Sulzle, St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church, Redwood Falls, Minnesota – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • lutheransforlife.org

KNOW YOUR BIBLE



Unfaithful Wife

What Old Testament prophet was directed by God to take a harlot as a wife?

Look for the answer in the January's Newsletter
November's answer: Jeremiah (see Jer. 13:23)

VOLUNTEER SCHEDULE

SUNDAY	ACOLYTE	READER	USHER	CLEAN	NURSERY	ALTAR GUILD
December 3	Zachary Semeniuk	Nancy Kovach	Charlie Adams Corrie Brian	Franke family	Suzanne Rutledge	Brenda moody Annette Semeniuk
December 10	Nathaniel Guagenti	David Franke	Cindy Alvano Zoe Shreve	Sandy Runner	Merrie Feole	Jennifer Harrod Annette Semeniuk
December 17	Masyn Botkins	Corrie Brian	Don Saltzman John Feole	Theresa Tippet Jennifer Harrod	Anita Themer	No communion
December 24	Nathaniel Semeniuk	Jason VanEvera	Charlie Moody Tammy Clark	Roxanna Pontius Guagenti Family	Suzanne Rutledge	No Communion
December 31	Eliza Pierce	Charlie Moody	Alex VanPelt Jason VanEvera	Don Saltzman	Merrie Feole	Rita Whitehouse Annette Semeniuk

IF YOU CANNOT SERVE ON THE APPOINTED DAY, PLEASE CALL SOMEONE TO SERVE IN YOUR PLACE.

Christmas

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, everyone to his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city called Nazareth, into Judea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem: (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) to be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them at the inn.



And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone about them; and they were sore afraid. And the angel said to them,

Fear not: for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born today in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying:
Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men.



And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said to one another,

Let us go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us.

And they came with haste, and found, Mary, Joseph and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.

The Gospel according to St. Luke Chapter 2 verses 1-20.



The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

LCMS Stewardship Ministry

Newsletter article – December 2023

THE MEASURE OF OUR GENEROSITY

If you open up the Small Catechism, you'll find a shortened version of the Third Commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy." But if you look up the list of the Ten Commandments in Exodus, you'll find the full version:

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. (Ex. 20:8–11)

Why did Luther shorten this commandment for the Small Catechism? Was it so that the kids wouldn't have so much to memorize? No, it was because Luther knew that all the details of the Third Commandment were part of the "shadow" of the Old Testament (Col. 2:16). Or as St. Paul puts it, there is "letter" in the Old Testament law and "spirit" (2 Cor. 3:6). The details of not working on Saturday were fulfilled by Christ. That part of the Sabbath regulation no longer applies. But the spirit of the law does remain: We need to dedicate sufficient time each week to hearing God's Word and giving it honor and respect. Or as Luther sums it up in the Small Catechism's explanation to the Third Commandment: "We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it."

The same sort of analysis applies to our giving. In the Old Testament, God commanded the Israelites to give a tenth of their income to the Levites so that those men could dedicate their lives to serving in God's house, teaching the people, conducting worship, etc. In the New Testament, there is a rigid requirement listed about handing in your tax forms to church to make sure you've given enough. But the mandate to have a full-time ministry, which is the spirit of that law concerning tithing to the Levites, is right there in 1 Corinthians 9:14: "The Lord has ordained that those who preach the Gospel should make their living from the Gospel."

The New Testament church's job is significantly larger than the job of Old Testament Israel. We are commanded to preach the Gospel to all nations. There was only the temple to maintain in the Old Testament, but we have churches, schools, universities and seminaries, plus missionaries everywhere. So you tell me: Can we really undertake the work of the ministry if our giving doesn't even measure up to Old Testament levels of generosity?

HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH 2023 NOMINEES

The nominating committee has concluded its work for 2023. We will vote at the December 10 Voters Meeting.

The following nominees have all agreed to serve:

President - Dave Pontius

Dave currently serves as Vice President in the first year of a two year term. If elected, a new Vice President would be sought to complete the second year of the term.

Head Elder - Charlie Moody

Charlie is our current Head Elder and is standing for re-election.

Vice President - David Franke

David Franke will be finishing the second year of the term started by Dave Pontius.

Chair of the Board of Education - Suzanne Rutledge

Suzanne is currently serving her second term as Chair of Stewardship. If elected, a new Stewardship chair would be sought to complete the second year of the term.

Chair of the Board of Evangelism - Jason Van Evera

Jason is currently serving in this office and is standing for re-election to a second term.

Chair of the Board of Fellowship - Mike Boardman

Chair of the Board of Stewardship - Rita Whitehouse

Rita is currently serving as Chair of the Board of Fellowship. If elected, Rita will be finishing the second year of the term begun by Suzanne Rutledge.

Youth Group Leader - Danielle Botkins and Annette Semeniuk

Peace in Christ! - Pastor

THANK YOU TO VICE PRESIDENT-DAVE PONTIUS, HEAD ELDER- CHARLIE MOODY, DEE CARNES, ANNETTE SEMENIUK AND PASTOR GUAGENTI FOR SERVING ON THIS YEARS NOMINATING COMMITTEE.

DAY-TIMERS COMMUNITY PROJECT

Holy Cross Day-timers participate in a community project the 3rd Monday of each month. We prepare a meal for the women who reside at Awake Ministries in Shelbyville. The food does not have to be homemade. We provide a main dish, salad, dessert, bread, and drinks. The women are always so appreciative! If anyone would like to help, please speak with Brenda Moody.

ISSUES, ETC.

EQUIPPING THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS... Issues, Etc. is a radio talk show and podcast produced by Lutheran Public Radio in Collinsville, IL and hosted by LCMS Pastor Todd Wilken. You can listen on-demand at www.issuesetc.org, the LPR mobile app and your favorite podcast provider.

HOLY CROSS FOOD BOX

The food box in our driveway is the result of an idea from the Day-Timers group. This is an outreach to the community that all the members of Holy Cross can share and participate in.

Several have been very generous in stocking the box but we continue to need help. There is a list of items on the kitchen door that are suggestions for donations.

However, the food box is getting low. We need canned tuna and chicken, beef stew, ravioli, spaghetti o's, soups, fruit cups, jello, pudding cups, mac & cheese, spaghetti, tomato sauce, vegetables, peanut butter and jelly. Money donations, or if those of you who have the Thrivent card would like to share, that too would be appreciated. Thanks to all who are helping and we look forward to future donations. Day-Timers Group



SHARING THE POWERFUL GOSPEL!

HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH
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EMAIL-SECRETARY@HOLYCROSSLUTHERAN-KY.ORG

EVERY SUNDAY
BIBLE STUDY AND SUNDAY SCHOOL-9:45AM
DIVINE SERVICE-11:00AM

DECEMBER NEWSLETTER 2023



*Join us as we celebrate
our Savior's birth!*

Children's Christmas Program, December 17, 11 a.m.

Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 24, 11 a.m.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, December 24, 7 p.m.

Christmas Morning, December 25, 10 a.m.

Holy Cross Lutheran Church

181 Old Seven Mile Pike, Shelbyville
502.647.3696 ☪ holycross.360unite.com
Divine Service: Sundays at 11 a.m.