



Holy Cross Lutheran Church

CONCORD, CA

LUTHERAN CHURCH MISSOURI SYNOD

Cross Currents

January 2023

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Since Pastor Mundinger is on vacation, I (Joyce) have chosen to share this article from our LCMS President.

Resurrection Courage: Ours in Christ *By Matthew C. Harrison*

The story the world tells is not hopeful. Every day there's something new to fear, some way your life is outside your control, some grave threat to your person or property, some variation of death. It's easy to get caught up in the hand-wringing, to let our Christian hope be drowned out by the constant cacophony and chaos.

But we know a better story. Every November begins with the Feast of All Saints on Nov. 1. Every time I consider those who have preceded us in life, in faith and in death, I remember the words of the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. (Heb. 12:1-2)

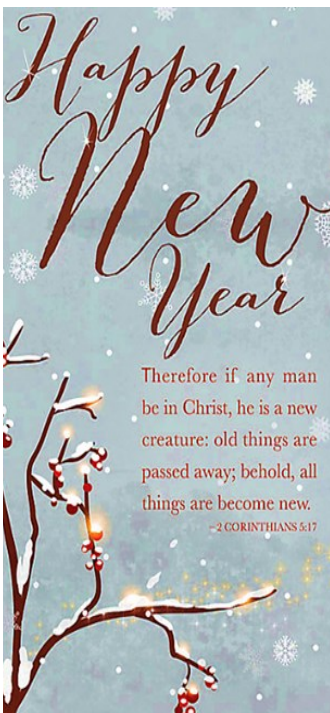
All our loved ones whom we rightly — but not hopelessly — grieve on All Saints' Day still surround us. Jesus teaches that our guardian angels (Luther believed Matthew 18 teaches we all — not just children — have a guardian angel) protect us while beholding the face of our Father in heaven. So we sing “with angels and arch-angels and with all the company of heaven” as Christ comes to meet us and feed us with His body and blood. While they surround us, they do not distract us. Rather, like the crowds that swell as the finish line of a race approaches, they sharpen our focus on what lies ahead. So we fix our eyes on Jesus, who endured a shameful death on the cross, and whose victory over the grave guarantees our own bodily resurrection.

The end of our story is guaranteed. The Lord who endured death and triumphed over the grave, who in Baptism joined us into His very death and resurrection (Rom. 6:3-4; Col. 2:12; Titus 3), will not abandon us to the grave. We know the end of the story, which gives us courage to face the days between now and then.

Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted. In your struggle against sin you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. (Heb. 12:3-4)



Stained glass at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Fort Myers, Fla., depicts the nail-scarred feet of Jesus Christ. (LCMS/Erik M. Lunsford)



The Lord's church is the original resistance movement. She has always resisted the hopelessness, faithlessness and lovelessness of a culture of death. Everything the Lord's church does is founded on this resurrection courage. If nothing can change the future of those who belong to the crucified and risen Christ, then we can face any trial.

Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed. Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. (Heb. 12:12–14)

The church, so far as she is Christ's, never enculturates herself; even as she brings the Gospel to every tribe and nation in languages and ways in which her message can be received, the church is her own culture. Hers is a culture of life, of forgiveness, of rock-solid hope, of courage. Think of what she does with this courage and invites you to do with this courage.

If I didn't believe in the resurrection, I would tell every married couple not to have babies. Don't bring more lives into this sad, dying world.

If I didn't believe in the resurrection, I wouldn't waste a minute going to church. Don't give attention, time or money to a merely human institution built on a false premise (1 Cor. 15:12–19).

If I didn't believe in the resurrection, I would tell fathers not to teach the catechism to their children. Don't squander the fleeting moments you have with your children on such antiquated fairy tales.

If I didn't believe in the resurrection, I wouldn't tell anyone about the death of Jesus on the cross or invite them to receive the forgiveness given out daily in His church, which Luther in the Large Catechism says is "the mother that begets and bears every Christian through the Word of God, which He reveals and preaches, and through which He illumines and enkindles hearts, that they understand, accept it, cling to it, and persevere in it" (LC II 42). Don't be the weirdo always talking about Jesus at the water cooler, I'd say.

If I didn't believe in the resurrection, I wouldn't care for my aging parents. Don't spend time with those approaching an inescapable end.

If I didn't believe in the resurrection, I would grasp for every narcotic to numb the pain of this hopeless life. Don't endure any unnecessary suffering. Suffering without resurrection is pointless.

But I believe in the resurrection. I believe Jesus rose from the dead. And I believe all who die in Him will rise with Him on the Last Day (1 Cor. 15; John 11). I believe in the resurrection, so I see the beauty of each precious, new life as a person who will rise on the Last Day.

I believe in the resurrection, so I let the first hours of the first day of the week be filled with the Word, saved for going to church.

I believe in the resurrection, so I think the holiest, manliest thing men can do is instruct their families in the catechism.

I believe in the resurrection, so I want to share this hope with any I encounter, even if I'm the weirdo at the water cooler.

I believe in the resurrection, so I find courage in caring for my aging family members, and I know it is a privilege to care for those who have cared so much for me.

I believe in the resurrection, so I can endure suffering without needing to escape. Suffering sharpens my hope for what is to come, for resurrection. And it reminds me that the kingdom of this world was never meant to satisfy me eternally. I am awaiting another kingdom. And that kingdom cannot be shaken.

But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. ... Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire. (Heb. 12:22–24, 28–29)

Take courage, dear friends. Death is undone. Join the resistance and do so with joy. Resurrection courage is yours in Jesus.

Originally Posted Oct. 27, 2022

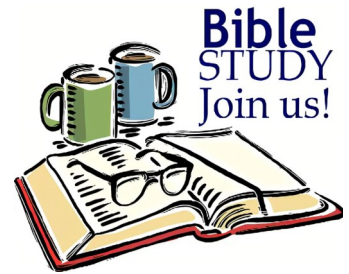
January Bible Studies

Pastor's Sunday Adult Bible Study, 11am, Parish Hall

Monday Women's Bible Study, 10am, Zoom (restarts Jan. 9) **

Pastor's Wed. Evening Bible Study, (restart date in Jan. TBD) **

** Zoom links are the same each week/listed in the Friday Announcements email.



Brittany	1/7	Bill	1/24
Josh	1/15	Addison	1/24
Christl	1/16	Grace	1/26
Luke	1/20	Marc	1/28
Pat	1/22	Samantha	1/29

Peter & Liz	1/10
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We had our **Cookies and Caroling on Sunday, 12/18.**

Wow! Our Holy Cross bakers did not disappoint! . Thank you to all those that contributed such sweet deliciousness! The top 3 winners: Pastor got 1st place with his sugar cookie cut-outs of John 1:14 in Greek (And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.) Cheryl Syrovatka came 2nd place & Jan Walker came in 3rd place. Zac & Addie got a special prize for helping their mom Brittany bake cookies.

Not as much singing was done as we hoped - too much socializing & sampling & voting (the red cups on the table are where we put our votes). Next year we will allow more time. However some of us did have time to address Christmas cards to our Holy Cross friends who have moved away and to our shut ins.

WoHC



Message from Sandy Coyne, LSS Christmas Project Lead: We held our annual Holiday Gift Drive benefitting Lutheran Social Services and supporting 47 individuals. LSS requested blankets for the adults, and various clothing, books, and toys for the children. Gifts support local Mi Casa, Fostering Future Success, and Project Hope programs. Between funds donated, and gifts purchased, Holy Cross members provided items for seven children and twenty-four adults. WoHC provided the funds for the remaining gifts which included a toy and a very fluffy pile of blankets procured from a Costco run! In addition, Abbi Roman donated a large bag of handmade scarves to be distributed through LSS. We had a nice turnout of helpers for our wrapping party on Sat., Dec. 10, including Rachel Flores from LSS. The real excitement was trying to get the wrapped gifts in Rachel's car amidst the pouring rain! Thanks to all who participated!

From Melarie, Treasurer, WoHC: WOW, WoHC out did themselves this year. With the money earned from the Corner Cafe and many generous donations, we finished purchasing gifts AND were able to donate a \$500 check to LSS! Thank you for your time and money to make this endeavor most successful!



(Women of
Holy
Cross):



In the Spotlight



LADIES

**Starting NOW, we will play
Mexican Train Dominos
every 3rd Thursday of the
Month.**

**So, JOIN US
January 19, 1-3pm
in the Parish Hall for
fun & fellowship. No
experience necessary!**

At the December 10th Lutheran Social Services Christmas gift wrapping event, Abbi Roman presented LSS Representative, Rachel Flores, with a large bag of 60 soft, warm, colorful knitted scarves and 9 knitted caps.

Abbi made most of these items during the Covid isolation. She wanted them to go to people in need to keep them warm in the winter months. Abbi loves to keep her fingers busy, knitting on her circular loom. She has become an expert with her scarves and hats, even learning on her own how to insert decorative stitches in her projects.

When Abbi asked me to find a home for the scarves and hats last summer, I was unsure what outlet I could find for them. There is not much demand for winter scarves when the temperature is hovering at 100+! Later, this fall I saw an article from LSS that they were seeking donations, including scarves and hats, for those in need! I responded, telling them that WoHC was sponsoring a Christmas gift event for LSS on December 10th, and asked if they have a need for Abbi's knitting projects. I was thrilled when Rachel quickly emailed me, accepting Abbi's donation, and assured me her handiwork will help keep people warm.

Abbi was able to be at our LSS gift wrapping event and personally meet Rachel. While wrapping gifts is not one of Abbi's favorite tasks, she did enjoy visiting with Kaytlyn Coyne and sampling Sandy's delicious scones in and coffee cake.

Cherylene Brueckner, Abbi's Nana



A big “Thank you!” to all that participated in our 3rd annual Food Drive for the Food Bank of Contra Costa & Solano. I placed a “Thank you” in the December Cross Currents, but recently received a letter from Neil Zarchin, the food drive administrator for the food bank. Over the past three years, Mr. Zarchin has helped me schedule our pick-up of the empty barrels for our food drive, provided colorful posters, and then schedule the pick-up at Holy Cross of our four overflowing barrels. This year there was a little mix-up with picking up our full barrels, but they graciously scheduled a second trip for the 4th barrel in the sanctuary.

Here is the text from Mr. Zarchin’s letter of thanks:

*“You are a hunger-fighting “soup-er” hero! **Your 1,003-pound donation** to the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano on*

12/5/2022 will provide 836 meals in our community. Food drives like yours help provide a greater variety of groceries than food that is purchased by the truckload. You are a critical resource helping serve 1 in 6 people in Contra Costa and Solano Counties. In addition, food drives help raise awareness of hunger in our community and the needs faced by neighbors right where we live! While the need is great, the community has risen to the challenge, including people like YOU who didn’t wait for “someone else” to make it happen. It was YOU, and YOU did it! It takes a village to feed a village. Thank you for being part of the solution.”

Special thanks goes to the YVCS teachers, students, and their families who rose to the challenge of filling our four barrels in 2022. You are credited with the majority of those 1,003 pounds of food!

In a “PS” to Neil’s letter he asked us to consider volunteering at the Food Bank, or putting together a group to sort food at the Concord or Fairfield warehouses. I will look into this and make a suggestion to our Holy Cross Vision Committee. Together we serve, Cherylene





"In 1965, Charles Schulz, a devout Christian and creator of the Peanuts comic strip, was asked to create a Christmas special for CBS featuring the Peanuts Characters.

He agreed with one requirement, that they allow him to include the story of the birth of Jesus. Although the stations executives were hesitant and tried to convince him otherwise, Schulz was insistent.

As a result, for the past 50 plus years, millions of people have watched and "A Charlie Brown Christmas" and heard the story of Jesus and "what Christmas is all about."

It wasn't until a few years back that I realized a "hidden message" in the film. Linus, a child who seems to have some insecurities as he carries a security blanket with him at all times. In fact, Linus NEVER drops his blanket, except once....

While sharing the message of "what Christmas is all about," Linus drops his blanket at the exact moment he says the words, "fear not!"

In this seemingly innocent moment, Linus delivers a powerful reminder of the true meaning of Christmas. We are to "fear not", for Jesus is born. We needn't rely on material things for security, we have God with us, "Immanuel", (Matthew 1:23) Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior - the true meaning of Christmas.

Awhile back, someone informed me, indignantly so, that Linus picks up his blanket at the end of the speech so my interpretation must be wrong. Well, he was right, Linus does pick up his blanket at the end of his speech. However, he "drops" it again later...

Amid big, bright, colorful, shiny artificial trees, Charlie Brown chose the least of these, a little, wooden tree with just a few branches. Shortly thereafter, Linus uses his blanket to wrap about the base of the tree and says, "Maybe it just needs a little love". In that moment, the tree "awakens", stands tall and firm. A reminder that no matter who we are, how many mistakes we've made, a "little love" can make all the difference.

Let's strive to "fear not" (Luke 2:10) and "love one another" (John 13:34), not just at Christmastime, but the whole year through."

Borrowed from Charlene M. Speer & 'Christian Life Ministry' on Facebook... Shared by Joyce

The Gift of the Wise by Ruth Tindugan

It was recess time and some kindergarten kids playing at the playground hovered around me as I was shutting the gate on my way out. Outdoor, unmasked, their happy faces glowed in the sun.

Then one girl grabbed my hand and placed a quarter on it. Surprised, I asked, "Are you giving this to me?"

She said, "Yes".

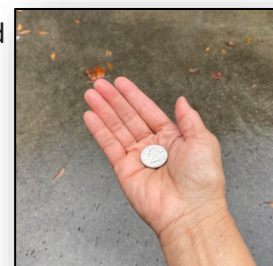
For a moment I silently debated whether I should keep it or not.

"Why?" I asked.

She looked at me, and with seriousness said, "So you can buy something for yourself."

I looked at the coin in my hand, and never felt so poor in my entire life, and yet felt so rich at the same time. I was gifted with extravagant generosity, unexpected, and with no "string-attached" abandon. Coming from a pure heart of a little child, she made me feel so loved and cared for, and all the quarters in the world can't buy that.

I looked up to say "thank you", but she had already ran back to her friends at play. I pondered at her words as I walked to the parking lot. Somehow, the story of the Magi came to mind, and I realized that she, too, was wise.



.WoHC Christmas

appetizer & wine tasting party
Monday, December 12, 5:30pm
Our First Christmas together since 2019!



Pastor Mundinger & Mike Liebe, our wine & cheese servers, socializing before meal, plus sharing by Cherylene, Joyce & Erna.



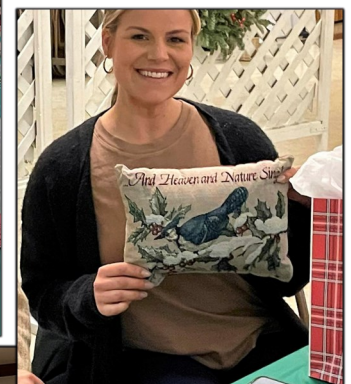


White Elephant Gift Exchange fun!





MORE White Elephant Gift Exchange fun!





**And
MORE
White
Elephant
Gift
Exchange
fun!**



Plus ending the evening with Christmas Carols.



Holy Cross Batch Number Two Going to the Superbowl!

Our Holy Cross brewmeisters gathered December 17 for our second session of brewing. This round we brewed five different types of beer including an IPA, a Christian McCaffery (CMC) red ale and an American light. **Bottling for most of the batches will be Saturday January 7 at 10:30AM.** Join us to observe the age-old process. And the good news is our beers have a bye for the playoffs and already made Superbowl! They will be tapped for tasting at a Superbowl event in our Parish Hall. Plan to drop in for the festivities.

MLBG
(Martin Luther Brewing Guild)



JANUARY 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1  9:30am Worship Service After Coffee Fellowship	2 OFC CLOSED	3 10:30am Prayer Group, Brueckner's 7pm Trivia, Calicraft	4	5 5pm Choir Practice cl	6	7 9am Altar Guild Undecorating 10:30am HC Men's Beer Bottling PH
8 9:30am Worship Service After Coffee Fellowship 11am Pastor's Bible Study E	9 OFC CLOSED 9-9:45am Women's Coffee Zoom 10-11:30am Women's Bible Study Zoom	10 10:30am Prayer Group, Brueckner's 7pm Trivia, Calicraft	11	12 5pm Choir Practice cl	13	14 9am Vision Meeting
15 9:30am Worship Service After Coffee Fellowship 11am Pastor's Bible Study E	16 MLK I HAVE A DREAM DAY OFC CLOSED 9-9:45am Women's Coffee Zoom 10-11:30am Women's Bible Study Zoom	17 10:30am Prayer Group, Brueckner's 7pm Trivia, Calicraft	18	19 9am Men's Mandatory Formation, Huckleberry's 1-3pm WoHC Mexican Train, PH 5pm Choir Practice cl	20 5-8:30pm YVCS Father-Daughter Dance PH	21
22 9:30am Worship Service After Coffee Fellowship 11am Pastor's Bible Study E	23 OFC CLOSED 9-9:45am Women's Coffee Zoom 10-11:30am Women's Bible Study Zoom 6:30pm Council Mtg	24 10:30am Prayer Group, Brueckner's 7pm Trivia, Calicraft	25	26 1pm Nifty Fifty A-Z Dining, "I", TBD 5pm Choir Practice cl	27	28
29 9:30am Worship Service After Coffee Fellowship 5th Sunday Potluck	30 OFC CLOSED 9-9:45am Women's Coffee Zoom 10-11:30am Women's Bible Study Zoom	31 10:30am Prayer Group, Brueckner's 7pm Trivia, Calicraft				

YVCS School Daily Schedule

*Morning Care: 7:30a - 8:40a

Classes Mon-Fri: 8:45a - 3:00p

*After Care: 3:45p - 5:30p



cl=choir loft, C=Conference Room, E=Ed Bldg., PH=Parish Hall



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Find us on YouTube



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Visiting Office Hours: Tues.-Fri. 10am-2pm

President: Mike Liebe

Vice President: Gregg Syrovatka

Council Secretary: Carrie Kroeger

Financial Secretary: Jan Walker

Treasurer: Cheryl Syrovatka

Trustees: Allen Brueckner, Bill Luker

Elders: Bill Riechmann, John Coyne,
Herb Neumann

Secretarial Staff: Joyce Liebe

Church Office Hours: Tues.-Fri. 9am-1pm

Newsletter Editor: Joyce Liebe
editor@holycrossconcord.org

Sunday Worship Schedule:

Worship Service 9:30am

Pastor's Bible Study 11am (In person)

Youth Bible Study 11am

Sunday School 11am

Week Day Bible Study Schedule:

Monday (Ladies) 10am Zoom

Wednesday (Adult) 7pm Zoom

Bulletin & Cross Currents Publication Deadline:

Bulletin: Noon, Tuesday

Feb. 2023 Cross Currents: Jan. 27, 2023