

CROSS CURRENTS

HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH, LCMS

PASTOR CHU

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¹⁰And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger... ²⁰ And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them. (Luke 2)

²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: ²³"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel," which means, God with us. (Matthew 1; cf. Isaiah 7:14)

How long does the "Christmas spirit" last? Of course the answer depends on the individual; it certainly depends on what we mean by "Christmas spirit".

Fair to say that for the world and even for some Christians, cheer, goodwill, being extra helpful, giving, or nice even to strangers, shopping, parties, and smiles that hide worries and concerns epitomize the "Christmas spirit," which lasts only until after the Christmas dinner and/or the opening of gifts and almost certainly does survive the return lines at Costco, Macy's, Target, or other favorite stores.

The Christmas spirit of Luke 2, on the other hand, lasts forever and it is cause for year-round celebration.

This Gospel of great joy to all people announced by the angel to the shepherds revealed to them and to us the "spirit" of Christmas: God comes in the flesh to be Immanuel, "God with us," not just during the "Christmas season" but in all times and all circumstances, and whose steadfast love and mercy never cease but are new every morning (Lamentations 3:22-23)

Long after the annual excitement and "spirit" of the season that have become synonymous with Christmas for many people wane, what Christmas is all about and why it makes the difference in our lives and eternal future remain: ***"Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."***

Our "Christmas spirit" and how we feel about Christmas might change with circumstances. That the Son of God took on human flesh and human nature to be "God with us" as the Crucified, Risen, and Ascended Savior remains a constant that transcends feelings and circumstances.

May God bless you richly with the holy presence of His Son, Jesus the Immanuel, who came in history, continues to come in Word and Sacrament, and has promised to come again to give us the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come.

I wish you a blessed Advent, Christmas celebration, and daily and year-round celebration of Immanuel, God with us, and even more importantly, God with you.



CHOIR rehearsals for December will be December 6, 13, and 20 with the rehearsal on Dec 20 beginning at 7:00 pm. (No rehearsal on Dec 27.) The choir could use some additional voices for the Christmas services as well, come join us!

December Birthdays

1	Liz B.
2	Randy S. Marla K.
5	Rayna K.
6	Peter L.
8	Anke W. Olivia A.
9	Kevin L.
12	Emily S.
16	Alex R. Susan S. Ron J.
18	Bill L.
21	Allen B.
22	Mindy W.
25	Marv K.
30	Christopher C.
December Anniversaries	
10	Herb & Marilyn N.

ATTN: MUSICIANS! If you play an instrument and would like to contribute to the joyous celebration of our Savior's birth on Christmas Eve, please contact Diana Meux (dianamcm02@yahoo.com or 510-526-3294) as soon as possible. Thank you so much.





Bake Sale

You are not going to want to miss the Youth Bake Sale next Sunday, December 4th, in the parish hall. The recipes have been chosen, advertising posters made,

and after a month in the works the Youth have set their hopes high. They are looking to bake enough goodies to support Heifer International with funds to purchase a llama. However, they are not stopping there. The sugar rush from so much baking has them looking to split the free will offering with Lutheran World Relief and donate a donkey with a cart.

A llama from Heifer International would provide warm, dense wool so families living in the Andes can either sell the wool for income or make clothing and blankets. Life high in the Andes Mountains is difficult and llamas not only survive in these conditions, they thrive!

Lutheran World Relief has a project in the works in Burkina Faso. Burkina Faso is a country located in West Africa. It is here that the women, with your help, could increase their productivity with a donkey and a cart. A donkey and cart would allow them to travel further, reaching markets faster and return home with supplies.



Cookies for you and supplies for them...sounds like a win, win to me! Come help the Youth reach their goal.

Thanks,
Chris (Roman)

Holy Cross Lutheran extends their Condolences to the following families.

Tim Koch, Bill Koch's son advised the office that his dad passed away on Thursday, October 27. The doctors found a cancer tumor on Wednesday and he passed on Thursday. Please keep Tim and the rest of the family in your prayers.

The church office was notified that Bob and Lauretta Oliver's son, Rob, passed away unexpectedly. We ask for prayers for Bob, Lauretta, and the rest of his family during this difficult time.

With sadness the church office received the news of the death of Ina Dekker's mother, Helen Elliott, on Saturday, November 12. Please keep Ina and the rest of her family in your prayers during this time.

Cleaning "House" - Can You Help?

Hello Holy Cross family! As your new secretary, I'm working through a list of items to re-do, update, clean out, etc. As I love to organize things, these tasks are right up my alley. There is one upcoming task I could use your help with - straightening up the room where our copy machine is. If you've been in this room, you will see many, many, many shelves & drawers of VBS materials, Bible Study material, CDs, cassette tapes, educational materials, etc. Holy Cross does not have any plans for the majority of these items. I would like to find a home for them. Before I go outside Holy Cross to find a place, I want to know if you are interested or know of someone or someplace that is.

I welcome anyone who is interested in going through the items with me. Or if there are certain items you may want, I can set them aside for you to look through. I would like to start this project after Christmas.

Thanks for your support.

Joyce

HOLY CROSS DECEMBER DATES TO REMEMBER

- ♦ *December 4* Youth Bake Sale

Proceeds for Heifer International and Lutheran World Relief

- ♦ *December 5* Women of Holy Cross Christmas Dinner
- ♦ *December 10* Decorating Sanctuary & Angel Tree Gift Pick-UP
- ♦ *December 11* Christmas Sing-Along during the morning worship service
- ♦ *December 15* Nifty Fifty Seniors Christmas Celebration



WORSHIP

- ♦ *December 24* Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at 7:00 p.m.
- ♦ *December 25* Christmas Day Service with Communion at 9:30 a.m.

BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITIES DURING THE MONTH OF DECEMBER

- ♦ Wednesday Night Bible Study on December 7 and 14 at 7:00 p.m.
- ♦ Sunday Morning Bible Class on December 4, 11, and 18 at 11:00 a.m.
- ♦ Women's Bible Study on Mondays at 12:30 p.m.

It is hoped that all who attended our Annual Thanksgiving Dinner enjoyed the fellowship and the food which consisted of turkey, dressing, mashed potatoes, gravy, cranberries, squash, sweet potatoes, ambrosia, apple pie, pumpkin pie and ice cream. A huge thank you to all who helped cook, serve, set up and clean up. Without you, this event could not have happened
Melarie

*Thank
You*

Editor's Note: It was a wonderful meal with great fellowship.



CORNER
CAFE



2016

December 2016 - What's Happening with the WoHC? by Joyce Liebe, President

Wow, it is already December! Seems like just a couple weeks ago we were having our summer Angel Tree BBQ! This time of year can sometimes fly by, with so many things to do & people to see. My goal as I get older is to be a little more careful what I say yes to & then take the time to really enjoy the activities I am participating in. Even if it is just wrapped in blanket reading and enjoying the decorated Christmas tree! May you enjoy Christmas the way you want!

Once again, our Corner Café had a successful run. With Melarie's leadership, we served some tasty food & beverages and earned over \$1000 in the process. The money was split between our LWML Mighty Mites & the Holy Cross Parking fund. Thanks to all who volunteered by baking, decorating, setting up, working a café shift, cleaning up, etc.

Upcoming WoHC activities - MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

Monday, 12/5, Annual Christmas Dinner at La Veranda, Clayton, 5:30pm.

Angel Tree® Gift Pick-Up Saturday, 12/10, 2-3pm. As of Nov. 15, we had 16 children confirmed & another 6-10 we were awaiting responses from. Our Christmas tree is up with a few tags with names/gifts. Even though we raised \$1400+ at our summer Angel Tree BBQ, many folks expressed desire to purchase gifts. Most gifts will be purchased with our BBQ donations. Each child will get 2 gifts (1 fun & 1 clothing), max \$25 each, plus an age appropriate book with Gospel message (provided by Angel Tree). Please bring your unwrapped gifts to church by Dec. 4.

We will distribute gifts at our Angel Tree Gift Pick-Up gathering, Sat., Dec. 10. This year we will be serving light refreshments & beverages. If you are interested in donating 3-4 dozen cookies for Dec. 10, please let us know.

NOTE: any BBQ money not spent this year will either go toward a donation to Angel Tree this year or saved for next year. We will know more early in Dec.

Monday, 1/23, General Meeting & Bunco, 6:30pm, Sue O'Malley's home. Back by popular demand - a fun evening at the O'Malley home (plus her delicious desserts)! We will also be collecting gently used donations for a worthy cause (TBD). Look for details & signup sheet soon.

Sunday, 1/29, 5th Sunday Congregational Potluck & Concord PD Safety Presentation, 11am, Parish Hall. It's the first 5th Sunday of 2017 & we are having a potluck! While we all are gathered to share our family favorites, we invited Mike Roberts, Concord Police Dept., (yes, Don & Marlene's son) to speak about a serious issue these days - safety! Look for another signup sheet for this event.

Activity details are also on our Bulletin Board & Sunday Bulletins. As always, please feel free to contact me or any of the Board if you have questions, comments, or suggestions.



Mary Kay Beard, Angel on Earth: From Emptying Banks to Filling Hearts

Was she the woman raised in an abusive home, leading a life of crime & danger—wanted by both federal & state authorities & the target of a mafia contract? Or, was she a benevolent compassionate big-hearted woman who cared for women & children separated physically & emotionally by the prison system, & the breakdown of the family structure?

Mary Kay Beard was both. The pain & anger she suffered in childhood set the stage for pivotal choices in her life. Which road would she take? By age 27, she became famous—but for all the wrong reasons.

At an age in many young women are finishing college degrees, raising families or embarking on lifechanging missions, her destiny seemed set. She was captured & convicted for armed robbery & grand larceny. Mary was sentenced to 21 years behind prison bars. She also spent time in solitary confinement in an Alabama prison. But it wasn't exactly *solitary* confinement, because she wasn't "alone-alone". She was alone *with* her thoughts, her dreams and... God.

In the confines of prison & the confines of her own thoughts, she found herself at another pivotal juncture in her journey. Would she push back her hope of becoming the woman she was meant to be because of the bad choices she'd made along the way? Would she allow herself, or other voices, to silence the dreams that were meant for her because she didn't feel deserving, capable or good enough to fulfill her own destiny?

In an interview, Bear said: "I was in prison for several Christmases & began to note a phenomenon occurring over & over. Many groups came to prison during the Christmas holidays; they brought gifts & sang Christmas carols & gave us a little tract or whatever. The women who never went to a chapel program always went to those programs, primarily to get whatever was being given away. Initially I was rather

cynical about that, but then I noticed that the women would take those gifts & they would give them to their own children. The gifts were just little bits of toiletry items: a bar of soap, a tube of toothpaste. They would take those & wrap them up for their kids. I realized that a mother's heart doesn't really change toward her children, even when she has broken the law in many other ways. It's still the heart of a mother to give to her children & sacrifice her own needs. I was also surprised by the children -- I expected them to be upset, because children are not known for really being thrilled with a bar of soap, whether it's Christmas or not. And yet each one of them would always give Mama a big hug & say, "Oh Mama, thank you. I love you." Then I realized that although mankind is depraved, when children are with people they love, things aren't as important to them as when they are without people they love. That's when they focus more on what they get."

That's why Mary Kay Beard, Prison Fellowship staffer & ex-bank robber, began Angel Tree®—an outreach to share the message of love, joy, hope & reconciliation to millions of prisoners' children through volunteers who deliver gifts on behalf of their incarcerated parents. They reach across the U.S. & 90 countries worldwide. Since the birth of Angel Tree in 1982, it has reached millions of prisoners' children with the true message of Christmas & the love of Christ.

Families are meant to be together, & when one of us is missing, be it physically, like prison inmates, or even emotionally, like countless other situations—it hurts & children remember.

She is quoted as saying, "I didn't do it. God did it. I had no idea God could use me after the mess I had made of my life. God is not limited by us in any way."

Submitted by Joyce Liebe

🌲 LWML is...

Mites for Missions

*Based on the story of The Widows Mite from Luke 21:1-4. She gave everything she had.

* Grants are funded through mites.

* Tens of millions of dollars in mission grants have been funded since 1942.

* Bible Study. Members reflect Jesus love as they are nourished by women's auxiliary of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. Over 250,000 members in the U.S.

Servants

*Volunteers dedicate their lives to making a difference for others.

*Gospel outreach & faith-sharing help spread God's message of hope around the world.

*Servant activities touch others

LWML IS EVERYWHERE TO LOVE AND TO HELP.

🌲 Merry Christmas from "Women of Holy Cross" 🌲

Pat Easby

Our New Acolyte Team



Thank you for
your willingness
to serve!



Nifty Fifty Senior December Activity

On Thursday Dec. 15th 2016 starting at 11:30 a.m. in the social hall the Nifty Fifty Seniors will have their festive annual "Sing-Along" featuring lunch by Melarie Seidel and a discussion of "HAPPENINGS" by members of our church. This should be very interesting as in addition to "HAPPENINGS" we will be discussing miracles as they are related to their lives or those that we know. We will sing Christmas Carols and the German contingency will sing Silent Night in German. Dave Hawkyard will sing it in Spanish. This is all about the Christmas celebration as a reminder of God's powerful love for us expressed in his gift of Christ Jesus. His divine power has given us everything we need for life and God lives through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness. Sign up in the Social Hall so we know how many to plan on...What a great time to bring a friend. Marv Kreitz



NFS November Recap

On Sunday, November 13 we had 10 signed up and 8 actually went to the Champagne Brunch at Lone Tree Golf Course in Antioch. The brunch was delicious with never ending Champagne or mimosas. Last year we went to Norseman's at DVC and had 16 or 17. The brunch at DVC was more a lunch then a brunch with elegantly set tables with fine silverware linen tablecloths giving the dining room a festive setting. The students were behind their loaded platters of food urging you to try some. The reason I mention this is because even though they both had a buffet setting; they were different. Should we return to DVC next year? Let me know what you think. At Lone Tree we had a great waiter that was there with Champagne or a mimosas when we sat down and was there pouring when we were ready to leave. Most everyone was hungry and went directly to the buffet tables and kept on going until their tummies were full, then went back for more. We are always open to new places to dine or go so please let one of our board members know. Board members, Bill Luker, Bill Riechmann, Trudy Huenninghaus and me. If anyone wants to become a member or attend a board meeting, we meet on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. Marv Kreitz



OUTREACH RECAP

The outreach team gathered early Sunday morning. Mike L. was busy cutting all the fresh fruits and beautifully arranging them on the huge platters. Kim Chu and Idalene Stadler made trays of meat and cheese sandwiches, enough to feed over 100 + mouths. THANK YOU. (All meats donated from Terry Hawkyard, and Eyona Pargman Memorials). Judy West rolled all the meats. We also prepared a huge green vegetable salad with all cut autumn colored vegetables. Mindy Wirtz volunteered to make spaghetti for the group. She had 4 huge pans and we dished out very large servings. They loved it and were very full and appreciative. We had a reading about serving the Lord – how we all can serve Him. They asked for copies. 🙏.

What a mighty crew we have. Thank you Jesus.

Our servers at the shelter were: Allyza, Kevin and Bill Luker, Mindy Wirtz and Pat Easby.

No Outreach on Dec.25.

🎄 Have a very MERRY CHRISTMAS. 🎄

We'll resume Outreach on the 4th Sunday in Jan. 2017

THANK YOU TO ALL that have volunteered your help, cooking, moral support, and donations. It is all very appreciated and helpful.

Gods Blessings,

Pat Easby

Submitted by Pat Easby

Reach out with appreciation!

October was Pastor Appreciation Month but we need and appreciate our clergy throughout the year. Take two minutes this week to show your pastor he is valued as he serves Christ in our church.

- A greeting card expressing your gratitude is enough and valued.
- Thanking your pastor for a specific act of kindness, a favorite sermon, or Bible study will bring a smile to his face.
- Let him know you prayed for him. Let him know prayers continue daily. Give your pastor well-deserved thanks and encouragement every month. In fact, put it on your calendar.

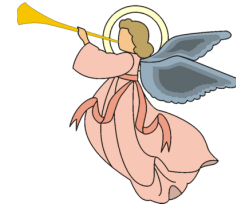


OKTOBERFEST 2016 RECAP IN PICTURES





DECEMBER 2016



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 10a-8p Dekker Family Event 11:00-2:00p Firecracker Forum
4 Mite Box/Hat Sunday 9:30am Worship/Communion 11a Sunday School/Bible Study Bake Sale 2-6p Myanmar Christian	5 12:30p Wm Bible Study (C) 5:30p WoHC Christmas Dinner 7p Scouts	6 7:15p Choir Rehearsal	7 7p Bible Study	8	9	10 9a Sanctuary Décor 11a-2p Firecracker Forum 2-3p Angel Tree
11 9:30am Worship/Sing Along 11a Sunday School/Bible Study 2-6p Myanmar Christian (H)	12 12:30p Wm Bible Study (C) 7p Scouts	13 7:15p Choir Rehearsal	14 1p Senior Brd 7p Bible Study	15 11:30a NFS Christmas Celebration	16	17 11:00-2:00p Firecracker Forum
18 9:30am Worship/Communion 11a Sunday School/Bible Study 2-6p Myanmar Christian (H)	19 12:30p Wm Bible Study (C) 12:30p Bridge 6:30p Church Council 7p Scouts	20 6:30p Elders 7:00p Choir Rehearsal	21	22	23	24CHRISTMAS EVE 11a-2p Firecracker Forum 7p Worship
25CHRISTMAS DAY 9:30a Worship/Communion 2-6p Myanmar Christian (H)	26 12:30p Wm Bible Study (C) 7p Scouts	27	28	29	30	31

cl=choir loft, C=Conference Room, E=Ed Bldg, H=Parish Hall, L=Library, ws=wing room

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Office Hours: M-F 9 AM-1:00 PM

Worship Schedule:

Sunday Service	9:30 AM
Communion	1 st , 3 rd , and 5 th Sundays
Adults Bible Studies	11AM
Sunday School	11 AM

Week Day Bible Study Schedule:

Monday (Ladies)	12:30PM Conference Room
Wednesday	7:00PM Parish Hall

Choir Rehearsal:

Tuesday	7: 15PM-8:45PM
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Outreach:

Fourth Sunday of each month after service

Publication Deadline:

Bulletin: Noon, Tuesday
Jan. 2017 Cross Currents: Dec. 22, 2016