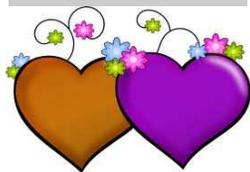


February  
2011



Love one another  
as I have loved you!  
John 15:12

HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH

## Words from the Cross

Holy Cross Lutheran Church  
9770 S. Foothills Canyon Boulevard  
Highlands Ranch, CO 80129  
www.holycrosshrco.org



*“But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation,  
a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies  
of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light”.*

1 Peter 2:9

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In the Old Testament, the people did not deal directly with God. The mediators between them and God were the priests. As prescribed by God, they arranged and led public worship, made the sacrifices, taught the Law, worked in the holy place in the tabernacle and later in the temple, and pronounced the blessing of God upon the people. Whenever the Israelites wanted to approach God, they were directed to the priests. This did not happen because they did not yet stand before God in grace, but rather as a testimony that the promised and expected Messiah would come as the perfect high priest to make the perfect sacrifice in the perfect Holy of Holies. The tearing asunder of the curtain in the temple in Jerusalem at the death of Jesus on the cross was the sign that the Old Testament Levitical priesthood was finished. And so it is.

According to St. Peter, all believers are now priests and the Christian church is the Temple, the house of God where we serve under our great High Priest and Mediator, Jesus Christ, who entered the Holy of Holies, that is heaven, by means of His own sacrificed blood. By the washing of Holy Baptism and the work of the Holy Spirit, we have been anointed as priests of the Most High God. We need no mediator now in order to deal with God. Day and night we have access to our heavenly Father and His throne of grace. To be sure, God has provided that particular men should handle His means of grace in public office. However, pastors do not form a particular class like the priests of the Old Testament, who alone were entrusted with certain privileges and rights. This is why in the New Testament, pastors are never called priests. They are not lords, nor do they possess exclusive rights that the laity does not have. Rather, pastors are stewards of the public offices that have been granted to them by their congregations through the Divine Call. By faith, all Christians are free lords over everything, and by love they are servants of one another. In judgment over spiritual matters, they are subject to no person, but solely to the Word of God and to Christ whom that Word proclaims.

In His Love,

Pastor Skelton

