

Holy Cross Lutheran Church

School and Early Learning Center



December 17, 2023

"Rejoice in the True Christmas Spirit"

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WELCOME TO HOLY CROSS!

OUR SAVIOR WELCOMES YOU AND SO DO WE! Whether you are a first time visitor or returning guest, we are delighted to share our worship with you! Please come back and worship with us again!

PARENTS OF LITTLE ONES We love to have children in worship! However, parents who find a need to take their children out of the service are welcome to use the narthex/lobby area while you quiet your little one. The infant care room is also available for nursing mothers. You'll be able to hear the service from the speaker system in the narthex and in the infant care room. A changing table is in the men's and women's bathrooms. If needed, please ask an usher for assistance.

REGISTRATION CARDS are in the hymnal racks. Guests may use the registration cards to let us know how we may further assist you. We encourage all members and guests to fill out a registration card and place it in the offering plate. Thank you!

A HEARING LOOP is installed in our sanctuary for your convenience. If your hearing aid has a t-switch, you'll need to activate it when you're in the sanctuary, in order to benefit from the hearing loop.

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES Holy Cross offers a full Christian elementary school (grades PreK3 – 8), Kids Crossing Early Learning Center (6 weeks – 5 years), Sunday School and children's youth activities.

PRAYER CONCERNS? Contact Sherri Bartels, sbbartels.sb@gmail.com. Our prayer chain is a large group of Holy Cross members who join you in calling upon God with your prayer concerns. Galatians 6:2 says "Carry each other's burdens and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ."

USHERS are on duty during church services. Please speak with them if you need assistance.

LIVE STREAM WORSHIP If you or a loved one are unable to attend worship, our 8:30 am service is live streamed on the church website.

PHONE-IN WORSHIP Sundays at 8:30 a.m. (Call any time after 8:20 a.m.; dial 1 (978) 990-5164 followed by access code 6279900#)

ON DEMAND WORSHIP View or listen to any of our past worship services by visiting our website and click the tab labeled Live Stream/Sermons and click sermons.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE Sunday, 8:30 am 10:30 am and Monday, 6:30 pm.

TRANSPORTATION FUND If you have no other way to church, taxi rides to and from church are available. Please speak with the Pastor or call the church office at 249-3101.

THE LORD'S SUPPER is offered on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month and the following Mondays. We believe the Lord's Supper is an expression of our unity of faith in our Savior as well as our unity in all scriptural teachings. Since the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod profess full unity in biblical teaching, members of these church bodies are welcome to commune with us. If you are a member of a different Christian church, we ask that you wait to commune until you have closely examined what we teach and are convinced that we are a church that preaches the true Word of God, and that you are in agreement with our teachings. Please speak with a pastor if you are a guest and would like to commune.

MISSION STATEMENT The mission of Holy Cross Lutheran Church and School is to bring the Gospel of Christ to our community through the Means of Grace, reaching out to the lost, and nurturing our fellow believers. This we do through worship, education, service and fellowship that God's kingdom may grow.

"Rejoice in the True Christmas Spirit"

**December 17, 2023
Third Sunday in Advent**

The Common Service – Page 15

Opening Hymn #12 (vs 1-3)....."Hark the Glad Sound! The Savior Comes"

1 Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes,
The Savior promised long;
Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne
And ev'ry voice a song.

2 He comes the captives to release,
In Satan's prison held.
The gates of brass before him burst;
The iron fetters yield.

3 He comes the broken heart to bind,
The bleeding soul to cure,
And with the treasures of his grace
To enrich the humble poor.

Invocation

M: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.



C: A - men.

Confession of Sins

M: Beloved in the Lord: let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

C: Holy and merciful Father, I confess that I am by nature sinful and that I have disobeyed you in my thoughts, words, and actions. I have done what is evil and failed to do what is good. For this I deserve your punishment both now and in eternity. But I am truly sorry for my sins, and trusting in my Savior Jesus Christ, I pray: Lord, have mercy on me, a sinner.

Lord, Have Mercy



C: Lord, have mer - cy on us. Christ, have mer - cy



on us. Lord, have mer - cy on us.

M: God, our heavenly Father, has been merciful to us and has given his only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Therefore, as a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Prayer and Praise

M: In the peace of forgiveness, let us praise the Lord.



C: A - men.

Glory Be to God



C: Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will toward men.



We praise you, we bless you, we wor-ship you, we glorify you,



we give thanks to you, for your great glory, O Lord God, heav'n-ly King,



God the Fa-ther al - mighty. O Lord, the only begotten Son, Je-sus Christ;



O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, you take away the



sin of the world; have mercy on us. You take away the



sin of the world; re - ceive our prayer. You sit at the right hand of



God the Father; have mercy on us. For you on-ly are holy;



you on - ly are the Lord. You only, O Christ, with the Ho - ly Spirit,



are most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

Salutation

M: The Lord be with you.



C: **And al - so with you.**

Prayer of the Day

M: Let us pray.

Hear our prayers, Lord Jesus Christ, and come with the good news of your mighty deliverance. Drive the darkness from our hearts and fill us with your light; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C: **A - men.**

Old Testament LessonIsaiah 61:1-3, 10-11

Rejoice for the good news of salvation the Anointed One brings.

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the afflicted. He sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release for those who are bound, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance for our God, to comfort all who mourn, to provide for those who mourn in Zion, to give them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, a cloak of praise instead of a faint spirit, so that they will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord to display his beauty... 10 I will rejoice greatly in the Lord.

My soul will celebrate because of my God, for he has clothed me in garments of salvation.

With a robe of righteousness he covered me, like a bridegroom who wears a beautiful headdress like a priest, and like a bride who adorns herself with her jewelry.

11 For as the earth produces its growth, and as a garden causes what has been sown to sprout up, so God the Lord will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up in the presence of all the nations.

Psalms of the DayPsalm 71

(selected verses)

M: In you, Lord, I have taken refuge. May I not be put to shame forever.

C: **In your righteousness rescue me and deliver me. Turn your ear to me and save me.**

M: Be my rock and my refuge to which I can always go for you are my rock and my fortress.

C: **For you have been my hope, Lord God, my confidence since my youth.**

M: Even when I am old and gray, O God, do not forsake me,

C: **Till I declare the strength of your arm to the next generation, your power to all who are to come.**

Verse of the Day

M: Alleluia. I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you. Alleluia. (Matthew 11:10 cf. NIV'84)



C: Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia!

Gospel Lesson.....John 1:6-8, 19-28

John faithfully points to the light of the coming Christ.



C: Glo - ry be to you, O Lord!

There was a man, sent from God, whose name was John. 7 He came as an eyewitness to testify about the light so that everyone would believe through him. 8 He was not the light, but he came to testify about the light... 19 This is the testimony John gave when the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him, "Who are you?"

20 He confessed and did not deny. He confessed, "I am not the Christ."

21 And they asked him, "Who are you then? Are you Elijah?"

He said, "I am not."

"Are you the Prophet?"

"No," he answered.

22 Then they asked him, "Who are you? Tell us so we can give an answer to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

23 He said, "I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' just as Isaiah the prophet said."

24 They had been sent from the Pharisees. 25 So they asked John, "Why then do you baptize, if you are not the Christ, or Elijah, or the Prophet?"

26 "I baptize with water," John answered. "Among you stands one you do not know. 27 He is the one coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie."

28 These things happened in Bethany beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing.



C: Praise be to you, O Christ!

Nicene Creed

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one being with the Father. Through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and became fully human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate. He suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who in unity with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Lighting of Third Advent Candle: The Shepherd's Candle

Hymn #19....."O Lord, How Shall I Meet You"

1 O Lord, how shall I meet you,
How welcome you aright?
Your people long to greet you,
My Hope, my heart's Delight.
O Jesus, let your word be
A lamp to light my way,
To show me how to please you,
To guide me ev'ry day.

2 Love caused your incarnation;
Love brought you down to me.
Your thirst for my salvation
Procured my liberty.
Oh, love beyond all telling
That led you to embrace
In love, all love excelling,
Our lost and fallen race!

3 Rejoice, then, you sad-hearted,
Who sit in deepest gloom,
Who mourn o'er joys departed
And tremble at your doom.
Despair not; he is near you,
He's standing at the door
Who best can help and cheer you
And bids you weep no more.

4 Sin's debt, that fearful burden,
Let not your souls distress;
Your guilt the Lord will pardon
And cover by his grace.
He comes, for you procuring
The peace of sin forgiv'n,
His children thus securing
A heritage in heav'n.

5 He comes to judge the nations,
A terror to his foes,
A light of consolations,
And blessed hope to those
Who love the Lord's appearing.
O glorious Sun, now come,
Send forth your beams most cheering,
And guide us safely home.

Sermon.....Pastor Piet Van Kampen....."Rejoice in the True Christmas Spirit"

1 Thessalonians 5:16-24

16 Rejoice always. 17 Pray without ceasing. 18 In everything give thanks. For this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. 19 Do not extinguish the Spirit. 20 Do not treat prophecies with contempt. 21 But test everything. Hold on to the good. 22 Keep away from every kind of evil.

23 May the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it.

Create in Me

C: Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -
new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -
way from your pres - ence, and take not your Ho - ly Spir - it
from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of your sal - va -
tion, and up - hold me with your free Spir - it. A - men.

Offering

Prayer

The 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.

Preface

M: The Lord be with you.

C: And al - so with you.

M: Lift up your hearts.

C: We lift them up un - to the Lord.

M: Let us give thanks to the Lord, our God.



C: It is good and right so to do.

M: It is truly good and right that we should at all times and in all places give you thanks, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared when he called people to repentance and pointed to Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Therefore, with all the saints on earth and hosts of heaven, we praise your holy names and join their glorious song:

Holy, Holy, Holy



C: Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of heav - en - ly hosts:



heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san -



na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.



Bless - ed is he, bless - ed is he, bless - ed is he who



comes in the name of the Lord. Ho - san -



na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Words of Institution

M: Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, took bread; and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Then he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them saying, "Drink from it, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always.



C: A - men.

O Christ, Lamb of God



C: O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;



have mer - cy on us. O Christ, Lamb of God,



you take a - way the sin of the world; have mer - cy on us.



O Christ, Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world;



grant us your peace. A - men.

Distribution & Hymn #38 (vs 1-7, 13, 15)....."From Heav'n Above to Earth I Come"

1 "From heav'n above to earth I come
To bear good news to ev'ry home;
Glad tidings of great joy I bring,
Whereof I now will say and sing:

2 "To you this night is born a child
Of Mary, chosen virgin mild;
This little child of lowly birth
Shall be the joy of all the earth.

3 "This is the Christ, our God most high,
Who hears your sad and bitter cry;
He will himself your Savior be
From all your sins to set you free.

4 "He will on you the gifts bestow
Prepared by God for all below,
That in his kingdom, bright and fair,
You may with us his glory share.

5 "These are the signs which you shall mark:
The swaddling clothes and manger dark.
There you will find the infant laid
By whom the heav'ns and earth were made."

6 How glad we'll be to find it so!
Then with the shepherds let us go
To see what God for us has done
In sending us his own dear Son.

7 Come here, my friends, lift up your eyes,
And see what in the manger lies.
Who is this child, so young and fair?
It is the Christchild lying there.

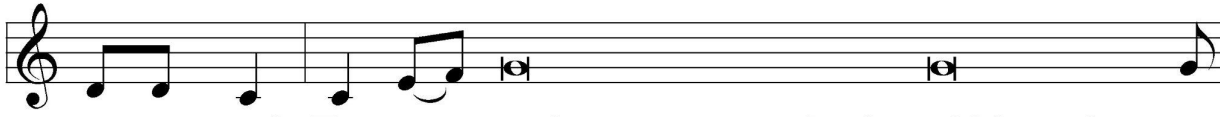
13 Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,
Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled
Within my heart, made clean and new,
A quiet chamber kept for you.

15 Glory to God in highest heaven,
Who unto us his Son has given!
While angels sing with pious mirth
A glad new year to all the earth.

Song of Simeon



C: Lord, now you let your servant de - part in peace ac-cord-ing



to your word. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have pre-

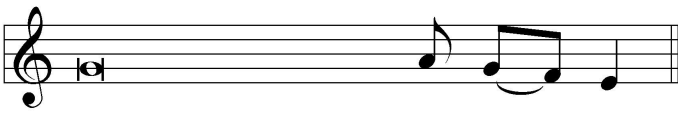


pared be - fore the face of all people, a light to light - en the



Gen - tiles and the glo - ry of your peo-ple Is - ra - el.

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.



C: And his mercy endures for - ev - er.

Prayer after Communion

M: We give thanks, almighty God, that you have refreshed us with this holy supper. We pray that through it you will strengthen our faith in you and increase our love for one another. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.



C: A - men.

Benediction

M: The Lord bless you and keep you.
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.



C: A - men. A - men. A - men.

Announcements If you attended online services at Holy Cross, please send an email to frontoffice@holycrossmadison.org, and in the subject line write "Attended" and after that the number of people who watched from your home.

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Holy Cross News & Notes

December 17, 2023

Calendar for the Week – December 18 - December 24

Monday

- Worship Committee - 5:00pm
- Worship - 6:30 pm

Tuesday

- Senior Ministry - 9:15am

Wednesday

- School Chapel - 8:10 am
- Bible Study - 10:00 am
- Adult Handbell Choir - 6:00 pm
- Senior Choir - 7:00 pm

Thursday

- Esther Circle - 1:00pm

Sunday (Christmas Eve)

- Worship
 - Advent 4 - 9:00am
 - Christmas Eve - 2:30pm & 4:30pm

Please pray for our homebound and for those in nursing homes.

BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Max Kenneth Schoenfeld was baptized into Christ on Saturday, December 9, 2023, in a private ceremony at the hospital. Congratulations to Max and to his parents, Andrew and Heather Schoenfeld! The Lord bless and keep Max in his care!

FOR ONLINE GIVERS: ONLINE GIVING PAGE UPDATE

Holy Cross is pleased to announce our new and improved online giving page! Vanco, our electronic giving provider, has updated their online giving platform to make it easier to make one-time gifts or set up recurring donations to our church. The new page is now live on our website. Nothing about our online giving has changed except for the visual look of the page. You can adjust existing donations, set up new gifts and update personal information much as you have before. How to sign up? It's easy! If you're a new online giver to Holy Cross, simply visit our website at <https://www.holycrossway.org/holy-cross-lutheran-church/donate>, and then click the "Donate Now" button. From there you can sign up to create a Vanco Online account and give to our various ministries. If you already have a Vanco account (if you have already set up a user-name and password on our online donation page), you can log in to the new page using the same username and password as before. Simply tap or click the "Log In" button at the top right of your screen. From there you can update scheduled donations or set up new recurring gifts by clicking "Profile" and then "View Scheduled Donations." You can also check out this Vanco Online How-To Guide for step by step instructions: https://www.vancopayments.com/hubfs/Updated_Downloadable_Assets/Faith/Vanco_Online_How_to_Guide_FINALE.pdf. Please stop by the church office or call/email us if you have questions or need assistance.

24-25 KINDERGARTEN INFORMATION MEETING

Mark your calendar for January 10, 2024 for a presentation on Kindergarten for the 24-25 school year. It will be held in the Fireside room from 4:30-5:30 PM. This event is for parents to hear about our program and meet the teacher and principal. Please use this link to sign up. Spread the word about our great school!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30EoD4EAFAB2CAFA7-46493473-kindergarten>

ENDOWMENT FUND MATCHING OPPORTUNITY

A gracious donor has offered to match dollar for dollar any donations given to the Endowment Fund up to \$10,000. A gift to the Holy Cross Endowment Fund is a gift which 'keeps on giving.' Once a gift is given to the fund, it builds interest or income. Only the interest is spent annually. The larger the fund grows, the greater the amount of interest that's available for the congregation to use for key non-budgeted items. This is an important fund for Holy Cross. For example, this year the Fund was used for the purchase and installation of 12 outdoor security cameras. Currently the Endowment Fund balance is approximately \$385,000. Praise God for this wonderful opportunity!

SERMON VIDEO LINKS

Holy Cross will begin sharing videos of our most recent sermons with you. Our hope in doing this is twofold. First of all, we hope that, as you watch these videos yourself as a part of your own regular devotional life, the Holy Spirit would strengthen your faith during the week. Secondly, we ask that you share these videos with your friends, relatives, and neighbors as you see fit. You could forward this email on to those you think would be interested, or simply copy and paste the links to your social media feed for all your online friends. For example, if there's a sermon that addresses a particular topic, such as grief, you can pass it on to someone you know is grieving. Our Savior told His disciples to "preach the gospel to all creation" (Mk 16:15), and this is just one more we can fulfill His great commission. And we have the promise from God that, as the apostle Paul says, "Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the Word of Christ" (Ro 10:17). The Holy Spirit will work on human hearts wherever His Word is proclaimed.

12/10/23 - Prepare the Way of the Lord - Pastor Mark Bartels

<https://vimeo.com/893065318?share=copy>

HOLIDAY GREETINGS FROM OUR EARLY LEARNING TEAM!

Love spreading holiday cheer? This season, consider spreading some holiday cheer to our Early Learning Center classrooms!

We have ideas both big and small to help our children learn and grow.

Click the link below, or scan the code with your camera, to check out our Amazon wishlist. In the comment section, you will see which classroom the item is for. Dreamers: infant room, Explorers: one-year-old room, Growers: two-year-old room, Movers: 3K, Thinkers: 4K

Thank you very much for your love, generosity, and support!



SPECIAL HOLIDAY WORSHIP SERVICES SCHEDULE

- Sunday School Christmas Program: Sunday, Dec. 17 @ 10:30 am
- Holy Cross School Christmas Program: Wednesday, Dec. 20 @ 4 pm
- Sunday, Dec. 24
 - 9 am Advent 4 worship service
 - Christmas Eve Worship at 2:30 pm & 4:30 pm
- Christmas Day Monday, Dec. 25 @ 9 am
- New Year's Eve Sunday, Dec. 31 @ 9 am (with individual absolution)
- New Year's Day, Monday, Jan 1 : No worship service

HOLY CROSS YOUTH PACKER PARTY

Attention 7th-12th graders! The Holy Cross Youth Group December event will be a Packers Party!

When: Sunday, December 17th, after the 10:30AM Sunday School Christmas Program.

Where: Holy Cross, Fireside Room.

Time: 12:00PM - 3:30PM.

We will be streaming the Packers vs Buccaneers game in the Fireside room. There will also be food, games, and card-making for our homebound members and for those in local assisted living and nursing homes. Please use this link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050B49AEAD2CA1F85-46448963-december> to RSVP. We would love to see you there - wear your favorite Packers attire! Questions? Please speak with Pastor Van Kampen or Sophie Griffin. Thank you!

2024 ALTAR FLOWER CHART

The 2024 altar flower chart is posted on the bulletin board in the Welcome Center near the Fireside Room. If you would like to provide flowers for the altar, sign up with your name, contact information, and the occasion. You can bring in your own flowers or the Altar Guild will order flowers for you. The usual bouquet is \$40 but you can make it any amount you like. Make checks payable to HOLY CROSS ALTAR GUILD. Drop off or mail your check in an envelope marked ALTAR FLOWERS. You may take the bouquet after the last service and enjoy it at home.

ELS/WELS BIBLE CLASS OPPORTUNITY

A lot of people believe in "Jesus," but once you start talking about the "Jesus" they believe in, you find that he is nothing like the Jesus you believe in. Phony Jesuses abound and seem almost hip-deep everywhere you look. Now comes the hard question – is the Jesus whom you believe in the one revealed in the Bible, or is he someone you find comforting but who you have patched together from ideas you have heard at various times in your life? In his book entitled *Will the Real Jesus Please Stand Up?*, Rev. Matthew Richard explores this issue. In a 12-session class at 6:30 pm on Thursday evenings beginning January 4, Dr. Arthur Eggert will lead a class through the book and show how to be sure that you are believing in the biblical Jesus. The live sessions will be held at Peace Lutheran in Sun Prairie and will be 90 minutes long. The class will be split, with 6 sessions before Lent and 6 after. If you cannot attend in person, you can join the class online or view the recorded sessions later. All the necessary information for registering and attending is available on the Online Classes page of the In Terra Pax website www.interrapaxlp.com. Necessary information, class notes, and session videos will be updated on this website on a weekly basis.