

Holy Cross Lutheran Church

School and Early Learning Center



December 31, 2023

"Go Forward"

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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.

"Go Forward"
December 31, 2023
New Year's Eve

Opening Hymn #441....."O God, Our Help in Ages Past"

1 O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Our shelter from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home,

2 Under the shadow of your throne
Your saints have dwelt secure;
Sufficient is your arm alone,
And our defense is sure.

3 Before the hills in order stood
Or earth received its frame,
From everlasting you are God,
To endless years the same.

4 A thousand ages in your sight
Are like an evening gone,
Short as the watch that ends the night
Before the rising sun.

5 Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Soon bears us all away;
We fly, forgotten, as a dream
Dies at the op'ning day.

6 O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come,
Still be our guard while troubles last
And our eternal home!

Invocation

M: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

Responsive Reading of Psalm 8:

M: O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! Set this glory of yours above the heavens.

C: From the lips of little children and nursing babies you have established strength because of your foes, to put a stop to the enemy and the avenger.

M: Whenever I look up at your heavens, the works of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place—

C: what is man that you remember him, the son of man that you pay attention to him!

M: Nevertheless, you make him suffer need, apart from God for a while, but you crown him with glory and honor.

C: You make him the ruler over the works of your hands.

M: You put everything under his feet:

C: all flocks and cattle, and even the wild animals,

M: the birds of the sky, and the fish of the sea, which pass through the currents of the seas.

C: O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth!

Confession of Sins (taken from Psalm 51) and Individual Absolution

C: Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your unfailing love. According to Your great compassion blot out my transgressions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned and done what is evil in Your sight, so that You are justified when You judge and proved right when You speak. Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me... Cleanse me and I will be clean. Wash me and I will be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones, which you have crushed, rejoice. Hide Your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity. Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence or take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and grant me a willing spirit. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare Your praise!

M: Martin Luther wrote in his Large Catechism: "Christ himself entrusted absolution (forgiveness) to his Church and commanded us to absolve one another from sins. So if there is a heart that feels its sins and desires consolation, it has here a sure refuge when it hears in God's Word that through a fellow human being, God absolves a person from sins." Everyone (men, women and children, members and guests) is invited to come forward to the front of the church, to receive the declaration of the forgiveness of all your sins.

(At the altar the pastor will say) "By the authority of God I declare to you the gracious forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

Epistle LessonRomans 8:31-39

Go forward knowing that nothing will separate us from God's love in Christ.

31 What then will we say about these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 Indeed, he who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also graciously give us all things along with him?

33 Who will bring an accusation against God's elect? God is the one who justifies! 34 Who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus, who died and, more than that, was raised to life, is the one who is at God's right hand and who is also interceding for us! 35 What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will trouble or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? 36 Just as it is written:

For your sake we are being put to death all day long.

We are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.

37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor rulers, neither things present nor things to come, nor powerful forces, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything else in creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Prayer of the Day

M: Let us pray:

C: Almighty and everlasting God, we give you thanks for all the spiritual and earthly blessings you have bestowed on us this past year. Grant us a favorable and joyful new year in your grace; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Gospel Lesson.....Matthew 1:18-21

Go forward in the hope that the name of Jesus brings.

18 This is how the birth of Jesus Christ took place. His mother, Mary, was pledged in marriage to Joseph. Before they came together, she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. 19 Joseph, her husband, was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her. So he decided to divorce her privately. 20 But as he was considering these things, an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.

Hymn #69 vs 1-3....."Across the Sky the Shades of Night"

1 Across the sky the shades of night
This New Year's Eve are fleeting.
We deck your altar, Lord, with light,
In solemn worship meeting,
And, as the year's last hours go by,
We raise to you our earnest cry,
Once more your love entreating.

2 We gather up in this brief hour
The mem'ry of your mercies.
Your wondrous goodness, love, and pow'r
Our grateful song rehearses,
For you have been our strength and stay
In many a dark and dreary day
Of sorrow and reverses.

3 Before the cross, subdued, we bow,
To you our prayers addressing,
Recounting all your mercies now
And all our sins confessing.
We ask you, Lord, this coming year
To keep us in your faith and fear
And crown us with your blessing.

Sermon.....Pastor Piet Van Kampen....."Go Forward"

Exodus 14:13-15

Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. Stand firm, and see the salvation from the Lord, which he will perform for you today. For the Egyptians you see today, you will never see again. 14 The Lord will fight for you. You must wait quietly."

15 The Lord said to Moses, "Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to set out."

Confession of Faith..... *The First Article of the Apostles Creed and Explanation*

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?

I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears and all my members, my reason and all my senses, and still preserves them; that He richly and daily provides me with food and clothing, home and family, property and goods, and all that I need to support this body and life; that He protects me from all danger, guards and keeps me from all evil; and all this purely out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me; for all which I am in duty bound to thank and praise, to serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true.

Offering

Prayer of the Church for New Year's Eve

M: Lord God, eternal Father and Giver of every good gift, we commit to Your mercy the year now ending. Forgive us our sins where we have done wrong, work in our hearts true repentance and faith, and redeem us from all the evil of this past year.

C: Help us to live in the assurance that nothing can separate us from Your love in Christ Jesus.

M: Lord God, You have preserved this congregation in the faith for another year. We give You thanks for Your blessing and guidance. Grant that, by Your grace, we may continue to serve You in this place. Preserve our preaching and teaching so it is faithful to Your Word. Ensure that Your Holy Sacraments are administered according to Your commands and promises, and help us to reach out in love to everyone around us.

C: Lead us according to Your Word, and renew in us clean hearts that trust You and show love toward our neighbors.

M: Lord God, hear our prayers for our nation and its government. Preserve our republic. Give health and competence to those who serve in positions of authority.

C: Protect those who serve in the line of danger for our safety, and give peace in our time according to Your will.

M: Lord God, we give thanks to You for the many mercies and gifts You showered upon us this past year. You have given life, healed and comforted. You have provided for our spiritual and physical well-being. You take care of us every day. All this You have done, not because of any merit in us, but only out of Your love for us in Jesus, our Savior. Comfort and sustain Your children who suffer from sickness, need or affliction.

Special prayers and intercessions may follow.

M: Lord God, You neither slumber nor sleep as You keep watch over us. Pour out Your Spirit upon us, that in faith we would stay dressed for action with our lamps burning until our Master comes.

C: Abide among us in this new year with Your Holy Spirit, that we may always trust in the saving name of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Amen.

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.

Hymn #321..... "Savior Again to Thy Dear Name We Raise"

1 Savior, again to thy dear name we raise
With one accord our parting hymn of praise.
Once more we bless thee ere our worship cease,
Then, lowly bending, wait thy word of peace.

2 Grant us thy peace upon our homeward way;
With thee began, with thee shall end the day.
Guard thou the lips from sin, the hearts from shame,
That in this house have called upon thy name.

3 Grant us thy peace, Lord, through the coming night;
Turn thou for us its darkness into light.
From harm and danger keep thy people free,
For dark and light are both alike to thee.

4 Grant us thy peace throughout our earthly life,
Our balm in sorrow and our stay in strife.
Then, when thy voice shall bid our conflict cease,
Call us, O Lord, to thine eternal peace.

Prayer

M: O Lord God, our heavenly Father, pour out your Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep us strong in your grace and truth, protect and comfort us in all temptation, and bestow on us your saving peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Blessing

M: As this year ends and a new one begins:
The Lord bless you and keep you,
The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you,
The Lord lift up his countenance on you, and give you peace.

C: Amen.

Attendance

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. So if three of you watch the service on Sunday, your subject line would say, "Attended 3". Please don't write anything in the text of the email, since our secretary, Anna Poellet, will not be responding to emails that say "Attended" in the subject line. Thanks.

Holy Cross News & Notes

December 31, 2023

Calendar for the Week – December 31 - January 7

Monday

- NO WORSHIP

Wednesday

- Bible Study - 10:00 am
- Adult Handbells - 6:15 pm

Sunday

- Worship - 8:30 and 10:30 am
- Bible Class- 9:45 am
- Sunday School - 9:45 am

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

CALLED HOME TO HEAVEN

On Sunday, December 24, the Lord allowed his servant, Norman Marozick, to depart in peace from this earthly life, having seen with eyes of faith the salvation that He has prepared for us in Christ Jesus. The funeral service was held here at Holy Cross this past Friday, December 29, at 10:30 a.m. We pray that, during this time of grief, the Lord would dry the tears of those who mourn with the good news of peace, joy and hope found in the Savior Jesus Christ, who was born to set us free from sin and from the power of the grave.

ANDREW SCHOENFELD HAS A CALL TO NORTHLAND LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL

Dear members of Holy Cross,

On December 21, Northland Lutheran High School in Kronenwetter, WI called me to be Recruitment Director, teach P.E., and work with their Mission Advancement team. I am truly humbled to receive this Divine Call. This is an opportunity to evaluate where my gifts best fit in God's mission field. Over the next several weeks, I will deliberate where best to serve the Lord and His kingdom. I would ask that you pray for Holy Cross, Northland Lutheran, and my family as I deliberate. I welcome any prayers, encouragement, and questions you may have.

In Christ,

Andrew Schoenfeld

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.

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.

12/24/23 - Good News of Great Joy: A Savior Has Been Born - Pastor Piet Van Kampen

<https://vimeo.com/897656269?share=copy>

12/25/23 - The Nativity of Our Lord - Pastor Mark Bartels

<https://vimeo.com/897746070?share=copy>

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.

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>

BIBLE INFORMATION CLASS

Our next class begins Monday, January 8 at 7:30 pm and runs for 10 consecutive Monday evenings. The goal of the class is to give you a ground-level view of what we believe at Holy Cross. Here are some reasons to be a part of this class: you're interested in learning basic Bible doctrine or teaching; you want to learn how Lutheran doctrine compares to the church you currently attend, or grew up attending; you're interested in becoming a member at Holy Cross; you want to explore what your spouse or fiancé (who may already be a Holy Cross member) believes, and why, and/or you would like to more fully understand the spiritual influence Holy Cross school is having on your children who may be attending here. The class will be informative, and we invite lots of questions. The class will be "team taught" by both of us pastors, so you can get to know us and we can get to know you :-)