

# Holy Cross Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

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Rev. Jim Berggren

January 3, 2021

Christmas 1B  
Organist: Rob Carty

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## WORSHIP SERVICE

### PRELUDE

HYMN (*Please stand*)

O Come, All Ye Faithful

1 O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant! O  
2 The high - est, most ho - ly, light of light e - ter - nal,  
3 Sing, choirs of an - gels, sing in ex - ul - ta - tion,  
4 Yea, Lord, we greet thee, born this hap - py morn - ing;

come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem;  
born of a vir - gin, a mor - tal he comes;  
sing, all ye cit - i - zens of heav - en a - bove!  
Je - sus, to thee be . . . glo - ry giv'n!

come and be - hold him, born the king of an - gels:  
Son of the Fa - ther now in flesh ap - pear - ing!  
Glo - ry to God . . . in . . . the . . . high - est:  
Word of the Fa - ther, now in flesh ap - pear - ing:

*Refrain*  
Ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus, ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus,  
O come, let us a - dore him, O come, let us a - dore him,

ve - ni - te a - do - re - mus Do - mi - num,  
O come, let us a - dore him, Christ the Lord!

## CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

P: *In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*

C: **Amen**

*(Please sit)*

P: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: **Amen**

P: If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

P: Most merciful God,

C: **we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.**

P: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for you, and for his sake God forgives you all your sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ he gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

## HYMN OF PRAISE



1 Glo-ry be to God in heav-en; peace, good-will to all the earth.

2 Glo-ry be to Christ for - ev - er, Lamb of God and Lord of love.

3 Ho - ly One we now ac-claim you; Lord a - lone, to you we call;



Might-y God of all cre - a - tion, Fa - ther of sur - pass - ing worth:

Son of God and gra-cious Sav - ior, you have come from heav'n a - bove;

Ho - ly One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:



we ex - alt you, we a - dore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.

on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.

Je - sus Christ, with God the Spir - it, in the Fa - ther's splen - dor bright.



Saints and an - gels bow be - fore you; here on earth our songs we raise.

Hear our prayer; re - store, for - give us; in your prom - ise firm we stand.

For the peace that we in - her - it, glo - ry be to God on high!

## APOSTLES' CREED

*(Please stand)*

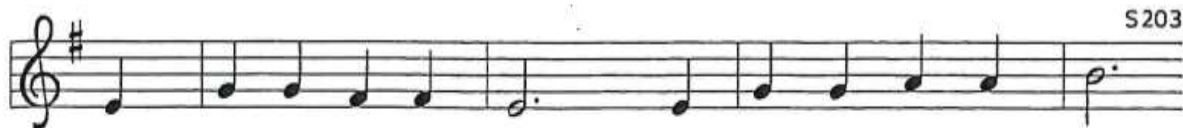
P: God has made us His people through our Baptism into Christ. Living together in trust and hope, we confess our faith:

**C: I believe in God the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,  
born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate,  
was crucified, died and was buried;  
he descended to the dead.  
On the third day he rose again;  
He ascended into heaven,  
He is seated at the right hand of the Father,  
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,  
the holy catholic church,  
the communion of saints,  
the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body,  
and the life everlasting.**

*(Please sit)*



1 Have mer - cy on us, Lord, and hear our sol - emn prayer.  
2 Have mer - cy on us, Christ, and wash a - way our sin.  
3 Have mer - cy on us, Lord; make sin and shame de - part.



We come to hear your liv - ing word; it saves us from de - spair.  
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may be - gin.  
Re - new us with your sav - ing pow'r; cre - ate in us new hearts!

## THE PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also, with you.**

P: Let us pray, together.

**C: Almighty God, you have filled all the earth with the light of your incarnate Word. By your grace empower us to reflect your light in all that we do, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

## SCRIPTURE LESSONS

### **FIRST READING Jeremiah 31:7-14**

<sup>7</sup>This is what the LORD says:

“Sing with joy for Jacob; shout for the foremost of the nations. Make your praises heard, and say, ‘LORD, save your people, the remnant of Israel.’ <sup>8</sup> See, I will bring them from the land of the north and gather them from the ends of the earth. Among them will be the blind and the lame, expectant mothers and women in labor; a great throng will return. <sup>9</sup> They will come with weeping; they will pray as I bring them back. I will lead them beside streams of water on a level path where they will not stumble, because I am Israel’s father, and Ephraim is my firstborn son.

<sup>10</sup>“Hear the word of the LORD, you nations; proclaim it in distant coastlands: ‘He who scattered Israel will gather them and will watch over his flock like a shepherd.’ <sup>11</sup> For the LORD will deliver Jacob and redeem them from the hand of those stronger than they. <sup>12</sup> They will come and shout for joy on the heights of Zion; they will rejoice in the bounty of the LORD—the grain, the new wine and the olive oil, the young of the flocks and herds. They will be like a well-watered garden, and they will sorrow no more. <sup>13</sup> Then young women will dance and be glad, young men and old as well. I will turn their mourning into gladness; I will give them comfort and joy instead of sorrow.

<sup>14</sup>I will satisfy the priests with abundance, and my people will be filled with my bounty,” declares the LORD.

*The word of the Lord.*

*Congregational response following the reading is: **Thanks be to God!***

### **SECOND READING Ephesians 1:3-14**

<sup>3</sup>Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. <sup>4</sup> For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love <sup>5</sup> he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— <sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. <sup>7</sup> In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace <sup>8</sup> that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, <sup>9</sup> he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, <sup>10</sup> to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

<sup>11</sup> In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, <sup>12</sup> in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. <sup>13</sup> And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, <sup>14</sup> who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.

*The word of the Lord.*

*Congregation response following the reading is: **Thanks be to God!***

**THE HOLY GOSPEL**     **John 1:1-9** (*please stand*)

*Congregation response preceding the Gospel is: **Glory to you, O Lord.***

<sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was with God in the beginning. <sup>3</sup> Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. <sup>4</sup> In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. <sup>5</sup> The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

<sup>6</sup> There was a man sent from God whose name was John. <sup>7</sup> He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. <sup>8</sup> He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light.

<sup>9</sup> The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world.

*The Gospel of the Lord.*

*Congregational response following the Gospel is: **Thanks be to God!***

**SERMON** (*Please sit*)

**Video Link - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gXTpxR7HWZg>**

**LOGOPHILIA BY LOGODORE**

The first chapter of the gospel of John is the table of contents for the whole book. It is a Grand Overture previewing the magnificent themes to come: Life and Light, Light versus Darkness, John and Jesus, Spirit and Flesh, Law and Grace and Truth and Word. Word.....Logos....that's the big idea.

My favorite playthings are words. I started school on September 6, 1955. That was the day I started hounding Mrs. Stromquist to teach me how to read. What an incredible gift she gave me!!

Words are endlessly fascinating. English has the record amount boasting 600,000 words and counting. The polyglot of cultures and ethnic groups that speak English all contribute their favorite words which eventually enjoy common usage. Slang is neat, beat, cool, hot, groovy, it, all that, dank, dope, happening, sick, boss, and bad. Leave a couple of words lying around unsupervised and they will begat.

The person who has literally demonstrated the greatest vocabulary is William Shakespeare. He used 30,000 different words in his plays and poems. This is off-the-charts unusual! Even the most educated people today only use about 15,000 words.

Most other normal folks use only about 3,000 words, 1,200 of which are trade-oriented, referencing their particular occupations. Imagine that! Most of us use only one-half of one percent of the available words in our own language and we get by, sorta ok.

One of the shortest words is "A." The Oxford English Dictionary using hardback volume metrics, devotes 4 pages, 3 columns per page to describe the meaning and proper use of

“A.”

The longest word ever to appear in literature comes from a comedy written by Aristophanes several centuries before Christ. With 181 letters, and 79 syllables, it describes a fricassee with seventeen sweet and sour ingredients. Imagine. You are doing lunch at the Eureka Eatery, with your pal, Archi Medes. The sign on the door says, VENI, VIDI, VICI INSALATA! (Caesar would eat there one day. He came, he saw, he conquered salad.) It is your turn to order:

“I’d like your house specialty, Lopadotema-choselacho-galeokranio-leipsanodrimhypotrimatosilphio-parao-melitokatakechymenokichle-pikospophosiphon-phattoperisteral-lektryonoptekophallio-kigklopeleio-lagoiosiraio-baphotraganopterygon, and hold the horseradish, please.” Ordering that will make anyone hungry. It puts little Bobby Tilton’s speaking in tongues to shame.

Words are so basic to human experience that unborn babies can be observed by sonogram to choreograph specific body movements to the sounds of specific words. Before a new born develops the capacity for a long-winded squall, language is already hardwired in her brain through body movement and later reinforcement with waving, scootching, rolling and crawling.

It is miraculous. The Word is the universe becoming aware of itself. You wouldn’t notice it, because you’ve always had the Word, but the universe is roiling chaos, an incessant battering flow of sensation.....of all experiences in all time, an abyssal maelstrom of untrammelled sensation.

The Word creates from this chaos. The Word organizes the flow and stabilizes meaning. The Word packages memory. The Word is a channel for order, linear movement in time, and the sorting of priorities.

The Word is canon, measurement, quantity and quality. The Word reaches out to meet needs, diffuse extreme emotions and to help and guide. Being at a loss for a Word is frustrating and devastating. A left-brain stroke victim with aphasia, knows all of his words, but is unable to release them into the world. Sometimes singing his words with right-brain melody memory will free them for release. Having a good Word is a great convenience and comfort. The Word is foreground, background, context and text.

The Word replicates itself in its own image. Communication includes all the procedures by which one mind may affect another. Typical of all creation is the innate drive to relate and communicate. It is a built-in God-Thing. Maybe the one point of all creation is so’s He don’t have to keep talkin’ to Himself forever, outside the cosmos.

Learn a new language, get a new soul. Here’s an excerpt from the Bible, my friend, PK, brought me back from her trip to Paris. *C’est dans l’Evangile selon Jean:*

*Jean 1:1. Au commencement etait la Parole; et la Parole etait avec Dieu, et la Parole etait Dieu. 2. Elle etait au commencement avec Dieu. 3. Toutes choses ont ete faites par Elle, et rien de ce qui a ete fait n’a ete fait sans Elle. 4. En Elle etait la vie, et la vie la lumiere des hommes.*

Or translated: John1:1. In the beginning was the Word; and the Word was with God,

and the Word was God. 2. She was in the beginning with God. 3. All things being were by Her and nothing that was, had being without Her. 4. And She was the life, and the life was the illumination of humanity.

How about those little differences and meaning shifts?

For an English speaker, an interesting peculiarity in French and other Mediterranean languages is the assignment of gender to nouns. If political correctness is really important to you, then don't read the Bible in another language. It just messes with your head too much. We're not even going to get into the *Ihalmiut* translation, of the 'Lamb of God'. The *Ihalmiut* are a dwindling tribe of aboriginal North Central Canadians. They don't know about lambs. Their translation reads, "Baby Seal of God."

Regardless, the creative Logos/Word transcends any other approximate words.

Jesus Christ speaks the first Word, the creative Word, the Incarnate Word and the last Word. All action, beginning, middle, to end is a result of the Logos/Word in Christ spoken, to creatively order the chaotic void. The Man, Jesus walks on water. Cosmos dances on chaos.

Martin Luther was totally opposed to any suggestion that a human being takes the first step in becoming a child of God. God acts and we respond, always in that order. Infant baptism demonstrates this dramatically. In describing the action of God's grace, there is good reason to call it second birth. Birth happens to us. To the best of our knowledge, we don't pick our parents, race, sex, IQ or inherent abilities. We are expelled in a pitocin rush from the bodies of our mothers and our first response better be a deep breath.

Baptism is spiritual birth. Like human birth it is something which happens to me. Being 'born again' isn't something I do. I am acted upon, by God's first Word.

John does something radical here. Whereas Matthew and Luke write about Jesus and his virgin birth, John extends that virgin birth to all believers, born of God, born of the Spirit. All who receive him who believe in his name are born not just of blood or the will of the flesh but of God.

Cats, crustaceans, condors, cockroaches, canines and copperheads; Paramecia, pines, platypi, porpoises, pangolin, and people, though distinctly different by genera and environment of choice are all equally born of the will of the flesh. Those who believe on his name are virgin born of the will of God. It's a new creation.

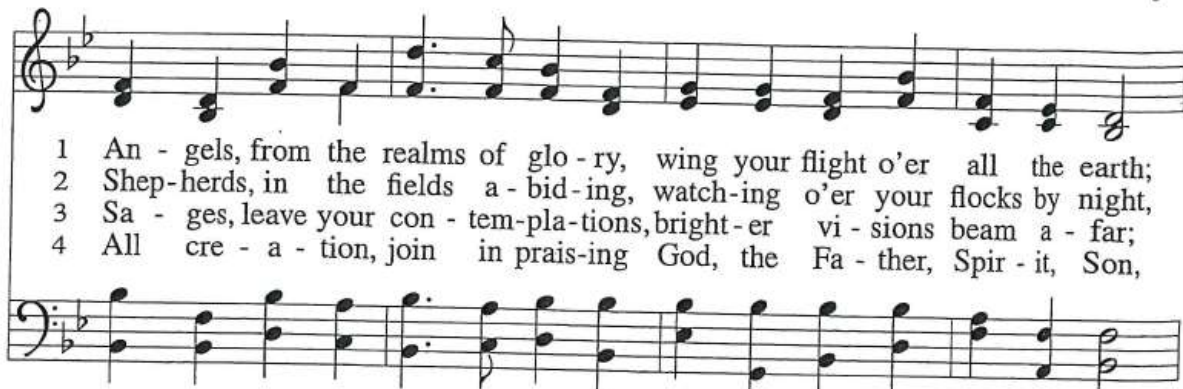
God acts, and I react. I respond all through life to that relationship begun for me at the baptismal font on November 6, 1949, where I was given a second birth from above. I didn't have to wait until my brains or heart or age or maturity told me that God wished me to be his child. I hope you don't know any human fathers that wait to acknowledge their fathership until their child can say, "Daddy." It all starts with the first word, God through Jesus Christ.

Every word we know is like one drop of water that makes up the pool in which we live. The First Word, the Incarnate Word and the Last Word is the Love of Christ in which we always live, without which we could not exist at all. Amen.

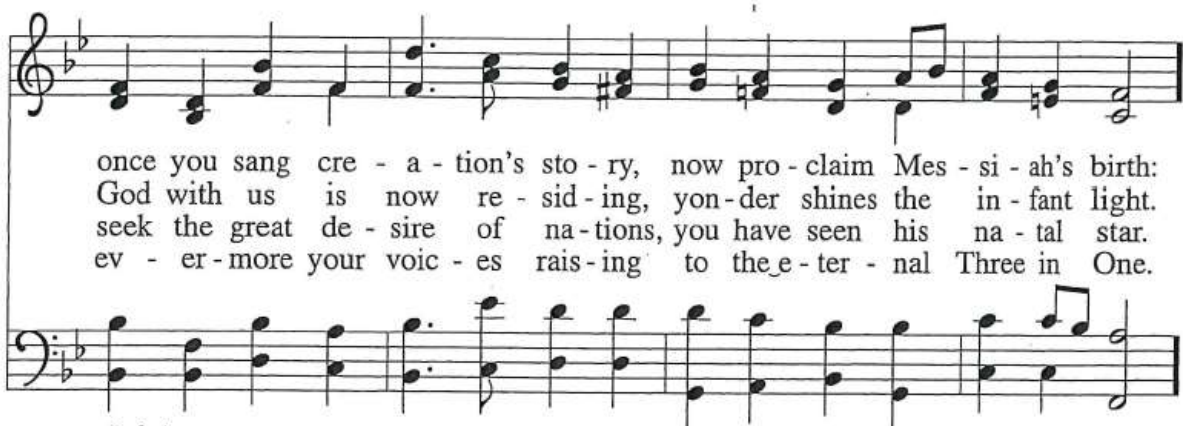


HYMN (Please remain seated)

# Angels, from the Realms of Glory

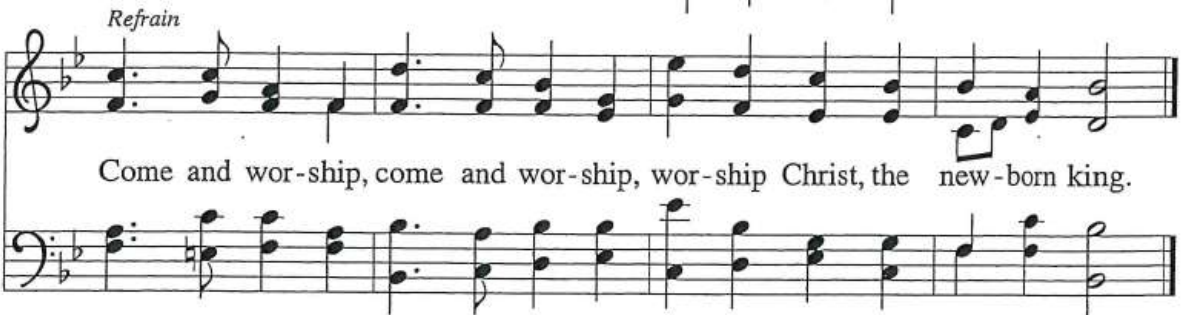


1 An - gels, from the realms of glo - ry, wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
2 Shep - herds, in the fields a - bid - ing, watch - ing o'er your flocks by night,  
3 Sa - ges, leave your con - tem - pla - tions, bright - er vi - sions beam a - far;  
4 All cre - a - tion, join in prais - ing God, the Fa - ther, Spir - it, Son,



once you sang cre - a - tion's sto - ry, now pro - claim Mes - si - ah's birth:  
God with us is now re - sid - ing, yon - der shines the in - fant light.  
seek the great de - sire of na - tions, you have seen his na - tal star.  
ev - er - more your voic - es rais - ing to the e - ter - nal Three in One.

*Refrain*



Come and wor - ship, come and wor - ship, wor - ship Christ, the new - born king.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION



COMMUNION





1 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;  
 2 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;  
 3 O Lamb of God, you bear the sin of all the world a - way;



you suf-fered death our lives to save: have mer-cy now, we pray.  
 you set us free from guilt and grave: have mer-cy now, we pray.  
 e - ter-nal peace with God you made: give us your peace, we pray.

### WORDS OF INSTITUTION

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

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks and gave it for all to drink saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this in remembrance of me.

### 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.**



### COMMUNION

The Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and preserve you in Eternal Life.

### POST COMMUNION

☐ Thank the Lord and sing his praise; tell ev - 'ry - one what  
 he has done. Let ev - 'ry - one who seeks the Lord re -  
 joice and proud - ly bear his name. He re - calls his prom - is -  
 es and leads his peo - ple forth in joy with shouts of thanks -  
 giv - ing. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

**PRAYERS**

God of all goodness, generations have turned to you, gathered around your table, and shared your abundant blessings. Number us among them that, as we gather these gifts from your abundance, and give thanks for your rich blessings, we may feast upon your very self and care for all that you have made, through Jesus Christ, our Sovereign and Servant.

**Amen.**

**BENEDICTION**



RECESSIONAL HYMN (Please stand)

# Angels We Have Heard on High

1 An - gels we have heard on high, sweet - ly sing - ing o'er the plains,  
2 Shep - herds, why this ju - bi - lee? Why your joy - ous strains pro - long?  
3 Come to Beth - le - hem and see him whose birth the an - gels sing;

and the moun - tains in re - ply, ech - o - ing their joy - ous strains.  
What the glad - some tid - ings be which in - spire your heav'n - ly song?  
come, a - dore on bend - ed knee Christ the Lord, the new - born king.

*Refrain*

Glo - ri - a

in ex - cel - sis De - o; glo - ri - a in ex - cel - sis De - o.

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It features a treble and bass clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The piece is in 3/4 time. The lyrics are arranged in three systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The first system contains the first three lines of the hymn. The second system contains the next three lines. The third system is the refrain, which is repeated twice. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and moving lines in the bass clef. The vocal line is in the treble clef. The lyrics are placed below the vocal line.

*Please be seated for the Postlude*

**GO IN PEACE, SERVE THE WORLD**

**OFFERING PLATE IN NARTHEX**



**PSALM 19:14**

*Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart  
be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.*



Dolores Abrego  
David Dukleth  
Freddie Gardner  
John Krueger  
Marshall Long  
Nanette Luker  
Larry Polzin  
Laura Ruthstrom  
Billy Sosa  
Dolores Sosa  
Uzo Uzo  
Michael Vaccaro  
Tristan Walton  
victims of CoVid-19



## WELCA NEWS

WELCA will be taking donation year-round for the Houston Seafarers Christmas Box Program. Countless sailors pass through the Port of Houston every day and we seek to make them more comfortable by giving them boxes filled with the following:

Toothpaste	Aspirin	Small games
Toothbrush	Lotion	Hard candy
Combs	Caps	Kleenex
Socks	Notepads	Bactine
Shampoo	Pencils	Playing cards
Body soap		

These items can be dropped off in the annex. If possible, please include an empty shoe box. Thank you.

Nancy Beamesderfer

## PRAYER SHAWL MINISTRY

Our Prayer Shawl Ministry has begun. Unfortunately, we have not been able to meet in person, but thanks to many volunteers we have collected quite an array of shawls in all sizes, shapes, and colors.

If you know anyone that would like a shawl, please let us know. We will continue to work individually until such time as we can meet together.

Wendy Lambeth (713) 854-1573



*Next*

### COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday, **January 20**, 2021, at 1:15 PM in the Annex.

Church Council

## THIS WEEK AT HOLY CROSS

4 MONDAY	5 TUESDAY	6 WEDNESDAY	7 THURSDAY	8 FRIDAY	9 SATURDAY
<p><b>5:30--6:30 pm</b> Basketball Team —FLC</p>	<p><b>5—6 pm</b> Basketball Team —FLC</p>		<p><b>6—7:30 pm</b> Basketball Team — FLC</p> <p><b>8 pm</b> AA Women —FLCA</p>	<p><b>4—5 pm</b> Basketball Team —FLC</p>	<p><b>4:30 pm</b> Guitar class —CR</p> <p><b>6:00 pm</b> Saturday Informal service—AT</p>
<p>AT=Atrium, CR=Choir Room, FLC= Family Life Center, FLCA=Annex, Media Room=MR            PL=Parking Lot, WC=Worship Center, YR=Youth Room, ELC=Early Learning Center</p>					