

Our mission statement:

*Celebrating God's love
by worshipping God,
caring for each other,
and serving in community.*

Crossties

*"Sharing the
Ointment for Jesus'
Feet, Giving God
our Very Best"
Cf. John 12:3*

December 2021	<i>Holy Cross Lutheran Church</i>	Vol. 27 No. 12
BERGY'S BABBLE: "NAILING IT DOWN"		
<p>The expert witness, a renowned psychologist was called to testify. She was the image of a severe, no-nonsense professional, hair pulled into a tight bun, tailored dark suit. After swearing to tell the whole truth, as she took her seat, leaning forward, she smoothed her skirt so it wouldn't wrinkle.</p> <p>The district attorney approached and said, "Will you please state your name for the court?" She leaned back and the legs of the chair fell off of the back of the witness stand. She tumbled backward, landing on the court reporter and files and exhibits and papers.</p> <p>The bailiff determined that she was not hurt and helped her back onto the witness stand. She glared at the stunned and embarrassed silence, daring anyone to even smirk.</p> <p>"Well, doctor," continued the district attorney, "perhaps we could start with an easier question."</p> <p>And there we go. Mark continues to pepper his gospel message with questions. How do you nail down eternal life? Who can be saved? The answers are: "If you nail eternal life down, it is no longer eternal!" And, "No one is saved on their own power, but everyone is saved in God's power." Plug in.</p> <p>The questioners are the rich young man, an admirable and competent fellow, and the disciples, a sincere and dedicated group of believers in, and followers of Jesus. They have all done well in their day-to-day worldly pursuits.</p> <p>... /// ...</p>		

... /// ... Bergy's Babble

They have done nothing egregiously wrong, and most things admirably right. Surely, they must be getting some worries and future concerns nailed down: Some spiritual shekels in the heavenly bank. The rich young man looks to Jesus for validation of his life, well-spent, and some tips on nailing down the future. There is a little buttering up going on there. "Good Teacher." Jesus jumps on that like a chicken on a June Bug, by pointing out the First of the Ten Commandments. God is good and you shall have no other gods before him.

Jesus' one question is, "Why do you call me, 'Good'?" "God is good. You know that. You know the commandments." Don't murder. Don't discount and discard your closest relationships. Don't steal. Don't tell lies and spread untruths, not even with 'innocent' but fraudulent questions. Love your parents.

This is an amusing straight line from Jesus. It is an opportunity for the young man to get honest and say, "Oh yes, I have not been perfect on all counts. I am putting many things before God; a 1st commandment violation." But, nooooo! He is not thinking that way.

His response is more like, "Of course, I've never thought seriously about robbing a bank." I'll bet most of us can say that too. But he asked an ultimate question so he got an ultimate answer. Clear everything out, that is in the way of your relationship to God. Give it up. Lighten up. Nailing it down is an illusion.

Jack Benny reported that once he was accosted by an armed robber who said, "Your money, or your life." He hesitated. The man waved his pistol threateningly. Benny said, "I'm thinking. I'm thinking!"

God always votes "YES" for eternal life. The devil always votes "NO." Your vote breaks the tie.

Jesus tells him to get everything you can out of what you think is yours, and then give it up. Remit the ownership of your life back to God.

... /// ...

... /// ... Bergy's Babble

The man is crushed. He is thinking about his ledger sheet. He knows that the law of the synagogue restricts giving offerings of more than 20% of your net worth. If one gives more than 20%, that person might end up impoverished and a new drain on the charity of the community. That would be a sin. Also, possessing wealth, according to popular opinion, is a sign of the God's love. Jesus is asking him to sin, by giving up his valiant and obsessive attempts to nail it all down.

Truth and beauty are gifts of God, not for sale, not dogs that come every time you whistle.

Jesus blesses the children precisely because they know they have little control of their future. They know that they are dependent and are not able to be self-sufficient. But as we grow older, we learn the merits of negotiation. The politicians call it *quid pro quo*. One hand washes the other. I pat your back and you will pat my back, back.

We have learned that life can frequently be made to respond positively to us, with the right effort. We all know that our relationship to God is important. The only problem is that we think it is up to us to establish, cultivate and maintain it. It's okay if I have to do more. I'll do anything by my own decision and sovereign will.

Twenty five (25) years ago, I went to Dr. Ebling, my optometrist. He gave me the bad news. "The reason you can't read phone books or maps (you might remember those), the reason why, is that you have presbyopia."

"What's that?" "I'm a Lutheran. Not Presbyterian."

"Well, Jim, the muscles in your eye that help you focus, get old, and they can't narrow your focus down as well, so you need reading glasses for small print."

To this day, I can't believe my response. It was so typical. "Well Doc, can't you prescribe some eye exercises so I can build those muscles up and see small print better?"

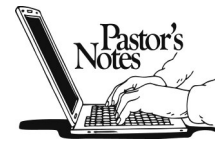
... /// ...

... /// ... Bergy's Babble

Like Jesus' reaction to the young man who thought he had his world nailed down, Dr. Ebling looked at me, shook his head affectionately, and said, "Sorry Jim, it doesn't work that way. You simply can't do that." I was crushed. After all, I had done my own therapy on a blown knee and fractured leg, without surgery or a cast, and it worked fine. How hard can an eye-sphincter be?"

We are successful people in some way or another. It is natural to begin to see the Kingdom of God as another personal accomplishment. And then we get perplexed when we think, what we had nailed down, is just out of our grasp. We get self-verification from the world around us. The Kingdom of God is from within. God's love is eternal. He has it nailed down for us. Amen.

See you in worship Bergy



Congregational Meeting



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING PART I

will be Sunday, **December 5, 2021**,
following the service in the nave (Worship Center)
The budget of 2022, will be presented at this meeting.

Pr. Jim Berggren



MINUTES FOR COUNCIL MEETING

October 25, 2021

The September 2021, Church Council meeting was called to order by President Jay Byerly on Monday, October 25, 2021, at 6:35 p.m. Pastor Berggren opened with a prayer.

In attendance were: Jay Byerly, Pastor Jim Berggren, Nancy Beamesderfer, Linda Cuzzort, Ricki Finstad, Julie Kilkenny, Warren Schick, Stephanie Walton, Scott Wegner and Peter Yoder (attending via Zoom).

The minutes from the September 2021 meeting were submitted by Council Secretary Julie Kilkenny and approved by Council.

The **Treasurer's report** was presented by Ricki Finstad. Treasurer Finstad reported September 2021 offerings of \$17,591, which was \$3,139 less than August. Year-to-date September 2021 offerings of \$212,955. Expenses for the month of September 2021 were \$15,545; this was \$4,707 less than August. September offerings were \$2,046 greater than expenses. Year-to-date 2021 expenses exceeded offerings by \$48,630. (Year-to-date Holy Cross is operating at an average \$5,400/month deficit.) HCLC continues to earn interest on proceeds from the Telge lots, and the Endowment Committee has \$1,024 available for disbursement. The checking account balance at 9/30/21 was \$145,066, not including restricted funds. This included the ELC reimbursement for its share of the annual insurance premium.

Pastor's Report:

Pastor Berggren updated Council on his activities for the month. He noted the passing of Holy Cross members Lucy Candler and Margaret Drushel. He conducted Ms. Candler's memorial service on October 23rd, and Mrs. Drushel's service will be on October 30th.

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The Early Learning Center has 56 students enrolled (maximum capacity is 72), and the Prayer Pal partnership with the Pre-school class continues this year. Pastor Berggren reported that the Food Pantry is gearing up for the annual Thanksgiving “Meal in a Bag” project, and they have requested use of the gym for the month of November. He reminded Council that he will be taking vacation November 8th-23rd. He is still working to line up guest pastors for the two weekends he will be away. He announced the topic for mid-week Advent services will be *The Lord’s Prayer*.

Committee Reports and Old Business:

Nancy Beamesderfer reported on **WELCA** activities:

- They are exploring options for future Saturday movie events.
- The September movie event went well, and they are considering adding a movie geared toward ELC families in 2022.
- The October 24th, Potluck Lunch was a big success.
- The Fratelli’s fundraiser continues through November 13th.
- WELCA continues discussion about the possibility of bringing back the Rummage Sale in October 2022.

Pastor Berggren remarked on several **Building and Grounds** items:

- 1) The removal of a large tree on the ELC playground,
- 2) A/C issues in the gym and narthex, and
- 3) malfunctioning electrical outlets in the gym, which Alan Lambeth is looking into.

President Byerly reported that a problem with the sanctuary roof repairs regarding removal of the old patching material was due to internal communication problems with the roofing company, and has been rectified. Thanks to Alan Lambeth for overseeing this project. Other maintenance items include fixing the oven door in FLC (gym) kitchen and addressing the pest control services on the church campus.

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Warren Schick reported that **Livestreaming** has improved markedly. The “cracking and popping” sound issues have been resolved. He is exploring whether it is feasible for our AV technician to handle both the Power Point presentation and livestreaming. Mr. Schick determined that it is not possible to get a direct feed from the organ to the current sound board. There was a short discussion on live-streaming, and Peter Yoder reminded members that increases in viewership will most likely be from word-of-mouth interaction.

Stephanie Walton reported that the **Website** now has a Prayer Request page. It is now possible to click on the *Prayer Request* tab and leave prayer request information for Pastor Berggren or get information to contact Renee Allcorn by email or phone. Mr. Yoder brought up the need to get an online Giving page on the website. He proposed that members split up the research into several companies to learn about fee structures, whether the platforms are compatible with the HCLC website, etc., and try to schedule presentations to Council.

Scott Wegner noted positive feedback on the **Weekly Announcements** Power Point presentation before Sunday worship. He expressed thanks to Sussy Terry and Warren Schick for their help in communicating items of interest to include in the presentation. He is considering adding music while the slides are showing.

Ms. Walton noted the enthusiastic support for the **Cross Wall**, currently at 41 crosses with 12 more to be added in October. She reported that Crafty Ladies has crosses available for those who do not wish to purchase their own.

New Business:

- President Byerly updated Council on his research into gutter guards for the church buildings. His plans are for he and Alan Lambeth to install 120 feet of guards, saving approximately \$1,500.

... /// ...

... /// ... Minutes for Council Meeting — October 25, 2021

- Scott Wegner reported on developments with **Christmas decorations** and the response to the decorations fund (via red envelopes available at services). He noted he has been approached by members wishing to donate outdoor decorations, including a manger scene, and proposed that plywood cutout decorations would show up well on the church grounds. Ms. S Walton remarked that Crafty Ladies was willing to help out with the cost of plywood, and she could cut out and paint these decorations.
- Ms. Kilkenny asked Council to think about a request by several parishioners to consider changing the Sunday worship service to a later time.

The November Council meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 22, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

Upon motion to adjourn, the meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Kilkenny



Next
COUNCIL MEETING

will be Monday, **December 20th**, 2021,
at 6:30 p.m. in the FLCA (Annex)

Church Council

CHRISTMAS SING-A-LONG

Please join us **December 12**, in the Family Life Center
for a holiday sing-a-long.

We'll have a wonderful fellowship time with our favorite Christmas songs.

We'll have cookies + cocoa beginning at 10:45 a.m.

We invite you to join us to share the holiday spirit.

Sharon Wagner



POINSETTIA TIME

Order forms are available for Poinsettias
to be used to decorate the Sanctuary for Christmas.

Poinsettias will be \$10.⁰⁰ each and can be given
"In Honor Of", "In Memory Of", or "To The Glory Of God".

Complete the order form and place in the basket.
Or if you wish, contact Sharon Wagner by cell phone
and give the information and send your payment
to the Church Office and note, Poinsettias.

You may pick up your plant after the Christmas Eve Service.
Thank You! The Poinsettias add so much to our Celebration.

Sharon Wagner

FRIENDSHIP CLUB

The Friendship Club will NOT be meeting in December.
Our next gathering will be **January 15, 2022**.

Nancy Beamesderfer



ADVENT DEVOTIONAL BOOKLETS

Advent devotional booklets, "The Fullness of Time",
with reflections and prayers inspired by the writings of Henri Nouwen,
are available in the narthex.

Spend a few minutes every day to grow closer to God
and prepare for the celebration of the Birth of Jesus.

Sharon Wagner

READINGS, PSALMS & GOSPEL

DECEMBER 2021

DATE	1 st READING	PSALM	2 nd READING	GOSPEL
12/05/2021	Malachi 3:1-4	Luke 1:68-79	Philippians 1:3-11	Luke 3:1-6
12/12/2021	Zephaniah 3:14-20	Isaiah 12:2-6	Philippians 4:4-87	Luke 3:7-18
12/19/2021	Micah 5:2-5	Luke 1:46-55	Hebrews 10:5-10	Luke 1:39-45
12/26/2021	1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26	148	Colossians 3:12-17	Luke 2:41-52

Worship Schedule

ADVENT SERVICES 2021

Wednesdays

December 1 — 12:00 noon —AT

December 8 — 12:00 noon —AT

December 15 — 12:00 noon —AT



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

Friday, December 24

6:00 p.m. —Worship Center (WC)



CHRISTMAS ORGAN CONCERT

Christmas Organ Concert
will be at 5:30 p.m.
prior to Christmas Eve Service.



CROSS WALL

NOVEMBER DEDICATIONS

IN MEMORY OF

Melissa Lambeth
Mike & Jane O'Conner
Lucy Candler
Our Parents

Harry & Wilma Jester
Curtis & Mamie Magrill
Charlotte & Bruce Jester
Lee Jaster & Don Magrill

Brothers
Jean Baxter
Christian Enebak Wignes
Christian David Wignes
Lucy Candler
Lela & Ted Ninman

DONATED BY

The Lambeth Family
Nancy Beamesderfer
Deborah Circle

Charlotte & Bruce Jester
Marti, Mary, Bill
Mim Wignes
Mim Wignes
Friendship Club
Phil & Eba

IN HONOR OF

Pastor Tim Anderson
Pastor John Groettum (1957-1961)
Pastor Mark Beebe

DONATED BY

Melissa Compton
Sharon Wagner
Sharon Wagner

WITH GRATITUDE

Deacon Karen Davidson

Julie Kilkenny

DONATED BY

John Wenger



TO ALL GROUP LEADERS

**Deborah Circle, Early Learning Center (ELC)
Guitar Class, Friendship Club, Food Pantry,
Hymn Selection, Lutheran World Relief (LWR), WELCA
Rummage Sale, Ruth Circle, Upcycled Crafty Ladies, etc.**

2022 CALENDAR REQUEST FORMS

Once again, you are kindly reminded that
you must fill out a Calendar Request Form

to schedule your meetings and/or events in 2022
on the forms located on the table in the Atrium.

**Anything not written on the calendar
may lead to a conflict in scheduling.**

This applies to anyone and/or any group
that meets and uses the church facilities,
and if any church related group or circle meets at homes
and would like to be scheduled on the church calendar as well.

For instance, if you meet the “second Tuesday of each month,”
that information needs to be included in the church calendar for each month.

Your meetings/events will be announced in the Sunday News,
Monthly Crossties Calendar and on the Church website.

In advance, I thank you and wish you very Merry Christmas
and a Happy New Year!

Sussy Terry



MERRY
CHRISTMAS

DECEMBER 2021

Holy Cross members celebrating birthdays this month:

09	Elise Fisher	27	Suzanne Doler
13	Doris Wahlberg	29	Anna Gardner
16	Ted Flick	30	Alfredo Martínez
17	John Cooper	31	Virginia Stuart
23	Noel Giesecke		César Majano

*If your name is not listed or if this is incorrect information
please contact the Church Office so that the list can be corrected.*

WELCA




will be holding a General Meeting, Saturday, **December 4**, at 10:00 a.m.

Please make plans to attend as we have many topics to discuss.

Lunch will be provided by the WELCA Board.

Hope to see you there!

Nancy Beamesderfer

REMEMBER IN PRAYER								
The homebound, disabled, long-term ill and prolonged recovering.	Ben Baring Ken Beamesderfer Bernie Brown	Richard Kirsch Victor Ordonez Lorna Patt						
Ed Cooper Elaine Snell	Rosie Stork Doris Wahlberg	Ed Cooper David Dukleth Loyd Haley Francine Hill Steve Johnson						
<div></div> <p><i>If you are not receiving HCLC Prayer Request emails and would like to, please contact:</i></p> <p>Renee Allcorn <u>allcornr@gmail.com</u> or call at 713-254-8638</p> <p><i>Note that Prayer Request emails are sent out daily. If you are on the email list and did not receive any email, please contact Renee.</i></p>	<p>Treasurer's Report</p> <div></div> <p>TREASURER'S REPORT</p> <p>If you have any questions call Ricki Finstad at 713-465-5968.</p> <p><u>October 2021</u></p> <table><tr><td>Receipts</td><td>\$ 22,428.⁸⁴</td></tr><tr><td>Expenses</td><td><u>26,332.²⁵</u></td></tr><tr><td>Balance</td><td>< \$ <u>-3,903.⁴¹</u>></td></tr></table> <p>Operational receipts Year-to-date received \$ 235,383.³⁴ Expenditures year to date <u>287,917.⁴⁸</u> Balance < \$ <u>-52,534.¹⁴</u>></p>	Receipts	\$ 22,428. ⁸⁴	Expenses	<u>26,332.²⁵</u>	Balance	< \$ <u>-3,903.⁴¹</u> >	Jaime Urbanski Uzo Uzo
Receipts	\$ 22,428. ⁸⁴							
Expenses	<u>26,332.²⁵</u>							
Balance	< \$ <u>-3,903.⁴¹</u> >							
<p>CHURCH OFFICE HOURS</p> <p>Monday—Thursday 9:00 a.m. — 4:00 p.m. Friday 8:30 a.m. — 2:30 p.m.</p>	<p>AVERAGE ATTENDANCE OCTOBER SERVICES IN 2021</p> <p>Sunday Traditional Service : 37 Saturday Informal Service : 10</p>							
<div></div> <p>You may sign up for Altar Flowers in the Narthex. Suggested donation is \$50.⁰⁰ and \$12.⁰⁰ for a rose.</p>								

Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Spring Branch

*A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America (ELCA)*

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Website: www.holycross.us

*"Holy Cross Lutheran Church is a community of Christians
gathered by God's grace and reaching out through God's love."*

TELEPHONE EXTENSIONS		
100	Church Office	
101	Sussy Terry	Office Manager and Events Coordinator
103	Rev. Jim Berggren	Senior Pastor
104	John Lambeth	Bookkeeper
SATURDAY WORSHIP SERVICE Informal Service 6:00 p. m. —AT SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE Traditional Service 9:30 a.m. —WC		
EARLY LEARNING CENTER ELC (713) 461-5535 email: holycrosselc4@gmail.com		

CHURCH STAFF

- ♦ Rev. Jim Berggren — Senior Pastor
Email: jberggren@holycross.us
- ♦ Sussy Terry — Office Manager
Email: hclc@holycross.us
- ♦ John Lambeth — Bookkeeper
Email: finance@holycross.us
- ♦ Robert Carty — Musical Director / Organist
Email: robarty@alliancemusic.com

OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION

Jay Byerly	President
Linda Cuzzort	Vice-President
Julie Kilkenny	Secretary
Ricki Finstad	Treasurer

