

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*

<p>February 2024</p>	<p><i>Holy Cross Lutheran Church</i></p>	<p>Vol. 30 No. 2</p>
<p align="center">BERGY'S BABBLE: "HALLOW YOUR DIMINISHMENTS"</p>		
<p>We are solidly into the New Year of 2024 now. I like New Year's resolutions: Started in the Christmas season, sometimes I can keep them well into the Epiphany season. Usually by Lent it is time to revise and renew them with a penitential twist. For example, last year, I started with "Exercise." Somehow, by Lent, in weakness, it had turned into "Extra Fries." It rhymed and sounded tastier.</p> <p>This year I am going with the 7 Ups.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wake UP: <u>Start with a prayer</u>. Thank the Lord for His day. Rejoice and be glad in it. 2. Suit UP: <u>Put on a smile</u>. Even scary, mean people look better when they smile. If you can't smile, whistle a tune. 3. Shut UP: One tongue, two ears. Use proportionally. Listen while praying. 4. Stand UP: <u>Resist evil</u>. Don't argue. Simply be gracious and point to the truth. 5. Look UP: <u>Watch for the Lord</u>. In all events, places and people. In everything. 6. Reach UP: <u>Ask the Lord for help</u>. Pray, give thanks, confess shortcomings, and adore Him. 7. Build UP: <u>Pray for and serve</u> those who aren't doing well. Anyone can tear down. Assess oneself. Constructive criticism begins with self-criticism. Maybe they are not doing well because I am not praying for them. That's Christian malpractice. <p align="right">... /// ...</p>		

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

All of these 7-UPs, are reminders that self-control
is a beautiful gift to develop, part of the Image of God.

One day, I was walking past a green in Memorial Park and a man was lining up a shot with his wedge. It was supposed to go up high with backspin, land near the cup and stop, or better yet fall in. Instead, the ball overshot and rolled into the water hazard behind the green. Apparently, it was an important shot. He turned red, bent his wedge into a pretzel and threw it into the pond, yelling, "Thomas Jefferson!!" Later that day, I was watching the plumber fix a pipe and his wrench slipped, mashing his fingers. With tears in his eyes, he hollered, "Mahatma Gandhi!!!" Since the epithets were heading in an easterly direction, I expected to next, witness somebody stubbing their toe and yelling, "Parmahansa Yogananda."

Just kidding. But don't you think it is strange that people even use Jesus' name to curse in emotional outbursts. You can't get away from this man Jesus. He is in every aspect of life. This baby changed the world. God is with us now. For Him, that is a voluntary diminishment.

God has made himself dependent on humanity. That which is created in his own image. God grows through willing sacrifice. So do we. It's called self-control, part of His Image that we can share. Isn't it nice to know that God has self-control! He submits himself to the processes of the material world, the joys and sorrows of the 3 Laws of Thermodynamics, and Newton's Laws of Motion. No hall pass here. No executive privilege. It is a sacrificial diminishment from the divine perfection of the Godhead.

Born under the law, born of the flesh, Luke underscores the faithful, liturgical Jewishness of Jesus and his family.

Essential to the Jewish and Christian way of living is the praise of God in every situation in life. God is to be honored in rising up and lying down, in leaving and returning. God is to be honored in the acts of eating and making love, sleeping, bathing, and dressing for the day. The sad, secular, modern life has reduced the holy significance of the normal, daily, usual stuff that we do. Daily living is diminished and not held up as dedicated to God.

... /// ...

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

Many see nothing holy about life and don't recognize God. How can they even live, without feeling the glow? Others are able to celebrate with God continually and make holy even the times of disaster and diminishment.

Hallow your diminishments. God has diminished himself into time and flesh and the grinding routine of growing up in both suffering and joy just like us. He's still God and no less holy or divine.

What happens when something divine happens to us, enters us. It's OK.....We still go stage by stage through the realities of law, and truth. What do you do after enlightenment? You do the chores. Clean the toilets. Dust the furniture. Change the diaper. Do the dishes, check the oil, and make someone smile with a loving act. God didn't take any exemptions. I can't improve on that!

Hallow your diminishments. Come to terms with your aggravating weaknesses. Celebrate your stultifying dependence. Swallow the devastating pride that makes it hard to gracefully surrender. I've found that "CROW" makes a good meal. It can nourish growth. It restores shattered relationships. Appreciate your inability to control much at all, and recognize that God has it all in his hands anyway. After all; weakness, surrender, dependence, lack of control----Those are the very things that graciously put us in relationships with other people and so with God.

And part of God's submission under.....surrender to.....and sacrifice of the Law, is his death on the cross. Diminishment with a Capital D. It is the final reality of the Law of this World. God through Jesus fulfills the Law for all time. It is not a victimization. It is a promotion; an elevation from surrender to Resurrection.

We share this not by our strength, but in our Diminishment and God's Grace. Hallow your diminishments.

See you in worship..... BERGY





**Holy Cross Lutheran Church (HCLC)
Minutes for Council Meeting – December 17, 2023**

The December 2023 Church Council meeting was called to order by President Wendy Lambeth on Sunday, December 17, 2023 at 11:02 a.m. Pastor Berggren opened with a prayer.

In attendance were: Pastor Jim Berggren, Wendy Lambeth, Nancy Beamesderfer, Linda Cuzzort, Julie Kilkenny, Wayne Schaper, Warren Schick, and Stephanie Walton. Ricki Finstad did not attend.

The minutes from the November 2023 meeting were submitted by Council Secretary Julie Kilkenny and were approved by Council.

The **Treasurer's report** was presented by Wayne Schaper. November 2023 offerings were \$14,346, a decrease of \$22,398 from October. Expenses for the month of November were \$29,431, which was \$4,277 less than October. The checking account balance at 11/30/23 was \$27,375, not including restricted funds. Mr. Schaper reported that the year-to-date deficit of expenses over offerings at 11/30/23 was just under \$84,000; he cautioned that this situation cannot continue. He also remarked that the value of investments was up this month. Council approved the Treasurer's Report.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Berggren updated Council on his activities for the month. He noted that the Sip'n Shop was a lot of fun. He remarked on how nice the campus looked with the Christmas decorations and the recent landscape projects completed. The Advent services were also going well; the theme for study was The Kings of Christmas. He noted that the basketball teams that use the HCLC gym are gearing up, and he praised Sussy Terry's work to keep the schedules running smoothly.

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... /// ... Minutes for Council Meeting — December 17, 2023

Pastor Berggren asked Council to think about the annual Gulf Coast Synod Assembly, which will be held May 17 and 18, 2024. Pastor Berggren's other activities included preparing for worship services each week; making phone calls and visits to parishioners; providing counseling and ministering for prayer requests (coordinating with Deacon Donahue); outreach to the community; weekly Wednesday Bible Study; attending choir practice and various church ministry meetings.

Committee Reports and Old Business:

Nominating Committee: President Lambeth reiterated that the Nominating Committee must have a Council representative on the committee. Under the current bylaws this person must be a continuing member (of Council), not someone up for reelection. There was additional discussion, and Warren Schick agreed to serve in this capacity; Council approved his nomination to this position. The possibility of changing the bylaws in the future was also discussed.

Improvements to Campus / Building and Grounds (B&G):

- Ms. Lambeth recognized the work of the Memorial Fund Committee (Tillie Remmert, Penny Schick, Hanne-Lore Sunder) and Selvin Young in completing several campus beautification projects including: 1) coordinating the design and installation of the memorial garden in the Westview courtyard, as well as the refurbishment of the breezeway sitting area adjacent to the playground.
- Ms. Beamesderfer added that Alan Lambeth was researching options to update the lighting in the church office after the first of the year. She noted how much Holy Cross relies on his expertise and is thankful for his generosity with his time to help with an aging campus.

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New Business:

President Lambeth reported that, as an end-of-year exercise, she had been reflecting on congregational projects undertaken in 2023, and she wanted to point out some of the “new” items accomplished this year:

- Established Saturday Sundaes service.
- Set up Zelle payment option for offerings.
- Purchased new color copier for office.
- Gave ELC its own copier and office space.
- Reestablished nursery during worship.
- New TV for childcare nursery.
- Gym and church office painted.
- Replaced multiple A/C units (~4-6)
- Multiple trees removed and replanted.
- ESB Food Pantry expansion project begun.
- Ceiling repaired in sanctuary choir loft.
- Improvements to HCLC streaming.
- Stewardship Sunday reinstated.
- New system for coffee preparation.
- New Daisy Girl Scout troop at HCLC.
- Maintenance upgrades and refurbishments.
- New members welcomed into HCLC.
- New fence around A/C unit (Eagle Scouts)

She remarked that there are so many who are working hard at Holy Cross in many different areas, and she wanted to express her appreciation for all their efforts.

The January Council meeting was scheduled for Sunday, January 21, 2024 at 11:00 a.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Kilkenny / Secretary, Church Council



Church Council



COUNCIL MEETING

Next Council Meeting will be Sunday, **February 18th**,
at 11:00 a.m. in the Annex.

Church Council

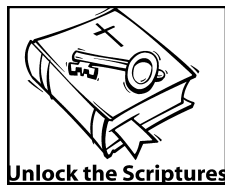
LAY READERS & ASSISTANTS

FEBRUARY

- 4 Reader – Ike Thompson
P/E – Nancy Beamesderfer
- 11 Reader – Linda Cuzzort
P/E – Steve Schulze
- 18 Reader – Penny Schick
P/E – Wendy Lambeth
- 25 Reader – Scott Wegner
P/E – Jay Byerly

P/E stands for Prayers and Eucharist

Nancy Beamesderfer



READINGS, PSALMS & GOSPEL
FEBRUARY 2024

DATE	1 st READING	PSALM	2 nd READING	GOSPEL
02/04/2024	Isaiah 40:21-31	147:1-11, 20	1 Corinthians 9:16-23	Mark 1:29-39
02/11/2024	2 Kings 2:1-12	50:1-6	2 Corinthians 4:3-6	Mark 9:2-9
02/18/2024	Genesis 9:8-17	25:1-10	1 Peter 3:18-22	Mark 1:9-15
02/25/2024	Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16	22:23-31	Romans 4:13-25	Mark 8:31-38



ASH WEDNESDAY & LENTEN SERVICES IN 2024

Ash Wednesday services - February 14

12:00 p.m. — Worship Center

6:00 p.m. — Atrium

Lenten services will be held on Wednesdays
at 12:00 noon in the Atrium the following dates:

February 21, 28, March 6, 13, 20

*Join us for a light meal, following the service,
in the Family Life Center.*

LENTEN STUDY

FOR WEDNESDAY NOON SERVICES

This year we will explore the book, “*The Last Week*”,
by Marcus Borg and John Crossan.

Subtitle: “**What the Gospels Really Teach
About Jesus’ Final Days in Jerusalem**”

- † **February 21:** Preface and Palm Sunday
- † **February 28:** Monday and Tuesday
- † **March 6:** Wednesday and Maundy Thursday
- † **March 13:** Good Friday
- † **March 20:** Saturday and Easter Sunday

Pastor Jim Berggren

SAFEGUARDS SAFETY TRAINING			
HOLYCROSS COUPON CODE FOR 15% DISCOUNT: HCLC2024			
CLASS	DAY	DATE	TIME
Adult CPR *CPR only (\$79) *CPR + First Aid (\$92)	Sunday	1/14/2024	1 pm — 4:30 pm
	Saturday	1/27/2024	1 pm — 4:30 pm
	Sunday	2/11/2024	1 pm — 4:30 pm
	Saturday	3/3/2024	1 pm — 4:30 pm
	Sunday	3/31/2024	1 pm — 4:30 pm
Adult & Pediatric CPR *CPR only (\$85) *CPR + First Aid (\$99)	Friday	1/5/2024	9 am — 1:30 pm
	Saturday	1/20/2024	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Thursday	2/1/2024	9 am — 1:30 pm
	Saturday	2/17/2024	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Friday	2/23/2024	9 am — 1:30 pm
	Saturday	3/9/2024	1 pm — 5:30 pm
Basic Life Support (for Healthcare Providers and Professional Rescuers) (\$89)	Saturday	1/13/2024	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Friday	1/26/2024	9 am — 1:30 pm
	Saturday	2/10/2024	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Saturday	3/2/2024	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Friday	3/15/2024	9 am — 1:30 pm
	Saturday	3/30/2024	1 pm — 5:30 pm
CPR Instructor Course (\$325)	Saturday	1/6/2024	9 am — 5:30 pm
	Friday	2/2/2024	9 am — 5:30 pm
	Saturday	2/24/2024	9 am — 5:30 pm
	Friday	3/22/2024	9 am — 5:30 pm
<p>Classes are in the Youth Room, Media Room and in the Annex.</p> <p>You can sign up online for classes by going to www.safeguards-safety.com and choosing “Register for Classes.”</p> <p>Or call John Lambeth 713-854-8085 for more information</p> <p>Congregation members and their families will receive a discount of 15% for any class by using the above-mentioned coupon code when signing up.</p>			



FRIENDSHIP CLUB

The **Friendship Club** will be meeting at the church
Saturday, **February 17**.

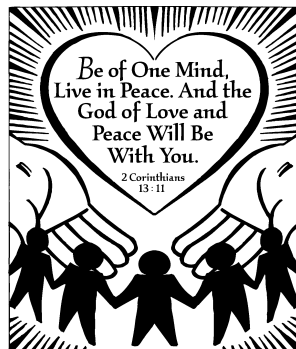
We will begin to gather at **3:00 pm**
and supper will be served at **4:00 pm**.

We will be having baked potatoes with all the trimmings.

It will be important to **RSVP** to Linda Cuzzort
(text her at **513-477-1002**) so she knows how many potatoes to
purchase. Also, please let her know what you will be bringing.

Hope to see y'all there!"

Nancy Beamesderfer

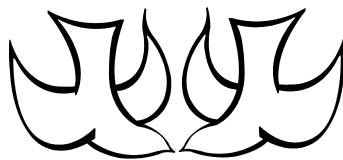




FEBRUARY 2024

Holy Cross members celebrating birthdays this month:

02 Gerri Cooper	14 Warren Schick
04 Mark Kilkenny	18 Ruby Schaper
05 Cesi Saavedra	23 Rilla Farley
11 Lauren Seveney	27 Debra Pruitt
12 David Dukleth	Natalie Hileman
Elizabeth Dukleth	



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

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

The homebound, disabled, long-term ill and prolonged recovering.

- † Dolores Abrego
- † Barney Boeker
- † Louise McDonnold
- † Larry Polzin
- † Rosie Stork
- † Sandra Williams

Rhonda Beamesderfer
 Candy Berggren
 Barney Boeker
 Harold Braun
 Bill Carty
 Vicki Carty
 Lorraine Chavez
 Keisha Chile
 Marilyn Collins
 Cathy Doughty
 David Dukleth
 Anna Gardner

Larry Hyden
 Linda Kuhar
 Kenneth Magrill
 Todd Miskel
 Jeremy Mitchell
 Geraine Moore
 Mike Paine
 LaVerne Pivonka
 Dorothy Preuss
 Jaime Urbanski
 David Watson



If you are not receiving HCLC Prayer Request emails and would like to, please contact:

Renee Allcorn
allcornr@gmail.com
 or call at 713-254-8638

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.

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday—Thursday: 9— 4 p.m.
 Friday 8:30 a.m. — 2:30 p.m.

You may sign up for
ALTAR FLOWERS
 in the Narthex.

Suggested donation is \$65.⁰⁰

TREASURER'S REPORT

If you have any questions call Ricki Finstad at 713-465-5968.

DECEMBER 2023

Receipts	\$ 30,728. ⁰⁰
Expenses	<u>31,042.⁴⁹</u>
Balance	(\$ <u>314.⁴⁹)</u>

Operational receipts

Year-to-date received	\$ 287,401. ³¹
Expenditures year to date	<u>371,542.⁹⁰</u>
Balance	(\$ <u>84,141.⁵⁹)</u>

AVERAGE ATTENDANCE

DECEMBER SERVICES

Saturday Informal Service : 7
 Sunday Traditional Service : 49
 Wed. Advent services : 19
 Christmas Eve service : 44

Holy Cross Lutheran Church
in Spring Branch

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

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Houston, Texas 77055
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Fax (713) 686-9095
E-mail: hclc@holycross.us
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		<u>CHURCH STAFF</u>	
100	Church Office	Rev. Jim Berggren — Senior Pastor Email: jlberggren@holycross.us	
101	Sussy Terry	Office Manager & Events Coordinator	Sussy Terry — Office Manager & Events C. Email: hclc@holycross.us
103	Rev. Jim Berggren	Senior Pastor	John Lambeth — Bookkeeper Email: finance@holycross.us
104	John Lambeth	Bookkeeper	Robert Carty — Musical Director / Organist Email: robcarty1@outlook.com
SATURDAY WORSHIP SERVICE Informal Service 6:00 p. m. —AT		<u>OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION</u>	
SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE Traditional Service 9:30 a.m. —WC		Wendy Lambeth	President
<u>EARLY LEARNING CENTER</u>		Stephanie Walton	Vice-President
ELC (713) 461-5535		Julie Kilkenny	Secretary
email: holycrosselc4@gmail.com		Ricki Finstad	Treasurer
		