

Holy Cross Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

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Rev. Jim Berggren

May 5th, 2024

Sixth Sunday of Easter

WORSHIP SERVICE

PRELUDE

GATHERING SONG

I Come with Joy

ELW 482

INVOCATION

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

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

C: *Amen.*

P: God of all mercy and consolation, come to the help of your people, turning us from our sin to live for you alone. Give us the power of your Holy Spirit that we may confess our sin, receive your forgiveness, and grow into the fullness of Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

C: *Amen.*

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Most merciful God,

C: *We confess that we are captive 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: God, who is rich in mercy, loved us even when we were dead in sin, and made us alive together with Christ. By grace you have been saved. In the name of V Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthen you with power through the Holy Spirit, that Christ may live in your hearts through faith.

C: *Amen.*

PASTORAL GREETING

THE KYRIE

CANTICLE OF PRAISE

This is the Feast

PRAYER OF THE DAY

P: The Lord be with you.

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

P: Let us pray, together.

C: **O God, you have prepared for those who love you joys beyond understanding. Pour into our hearts such love for you that, loving you above all things, we may obtain your promises, which exceed all we can desire; through Jesus Christ, your Son and our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

May 5, 2024 – Sixth Sunday of Easter

FIRST READING: Acts 10:44-48

⁴⁴ While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. ⁴⁵ The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles. ⁴⁶ For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God.

Then Peter said, ⁴⁷ “Surely no one can stand in the way of their being baptized with water. They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have.” ⁴⁸ So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

The word of the Lord.

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

THE PSALM

Psalm 98

SECOND READING: 1 John 5:1-6

Faith in the Incarnate Son of God

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. ²This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. ³In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, ⁴for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. ⁵Who is it that overcomes the world? Only the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God.

⁶This is the one who came by water and blood—Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.

The word of the Lord.

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

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:

ELW Pg. 151

Alleluia.

Lord, to whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life.

Alleluia.

THE HOLY GOSPEL John 15:9-17

⁹“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹²My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one’s life for one’s friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. ¹⁷This is my command: Love each other.

The Gospel of the Lord.

*Congregational response: **Praise to you, O Christ.***

YOUTUBE VIDEO – https://youtu.be/ndmyAvqWbYY?si=NG68nId_3YIDqMsi

Sermon Rev. Jim Berggren

EASTER 6B, 5-5-24, John 15.9-12 JOY

Jesus was a man of joy. The Psalmist counsels us to “Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth!” We are children of joy, in a faith of joy, led by the man of joy. Worshipful solemnity might be a contradiction of terms or a misrepresentation of our Christlike example. The Lutherhill camp song had it right, “Joy is the flag flown high from the castle of my heart!” Or...” I’ve got the joy, joy, joy, joy, down in my heart!” Somehow those precious children grew in faith, even noisily, without sitting still and being quiet.

You do know that in Las Vegas, surprisingly, there are more churches than casinos. It should come as no surprise that all the congregations receive casino chips and credits in their offering plates. And they always come from a variety of different casinos. Cashing them in is a real problem of sorting them out. A volunteer from the Franciscan monastery took on the task of organizing the gambling offerings from each casino, cashing them in, and getting checks to the correct churches. The Las Vegas Pastor’s Association, affectionately call him, the Chip Monk.

The New Testament pulls no punches in saying that Christ was a pretty sunny-hearted character. The prim and proper religious establishment of his day did not associate him too well with ‘serious’ religion. Speaking to the Pharisees, Jesus says, “What’s up? John the Baptist fasts and doesn’t drink, and you say he has a demon. I eat and drink and you say, ‘Look, a glutton and a drunkard, that parties with tax collectors and sinners.’ You are joyless knuckleheads.”

We are people who have made a glorious discovery. We are thrilled about that discovery. The act of celebrating in joy, may describe the behavior of Jesus the best.

Humor, laughter and joy are essential to life. Dorothy Parker, serious feminist, civil rights leader, humorist, and acid wit said, “There is not one shred of evidence that supports the notion that life is serious.” Her beatitude was, “Blessed are they who can laugh at themselves, for they shall never cease to be amused.” More whimsically she said, “No husband has ever been shot while doing the dishes.”

And, “A hospital bed is a parked taxi with the meter running.” And she asked, “Can you buy a complete chess set in a pawn shop?” She willed her whole estate to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the NAACP. Meanwhile, Erma Bombeck warned, “When humor goes, there goes civilization.”

And of course, Jesus said, concerning abiding in his love, that, “I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete!”

In the world of the New Testament, joy was a word that primarily described the health of the Christian mind as compared to the dulling pleasures of the Greco-Roman age. In that culture and age, one did not simply eat and enjoy. You ate gluttonously and continuously with a vomitorium nearby. Joy was at the opposite end of the scale from satiation and gratification. It was not ecstasy or elation or euphoria but instead the joyful tension in the zest of living. It is a deep expression of faith. With faith, comes joy.

A Soviet diplomat went to a farm in Russia to interview the farmer.

“How are the carrots?” he asked.

The farmer replied, “They are huge and orange and it takes a wheelbarrow to haul just one.”

“I see, and how are the beets?”

“Sir, if Putin saw these beets he would weep for joy!”

“And what about the potatoes?”

“Sir, if we stacked the potatoes, they would be high enough to reach God.”

The diplomat stared coldly, at the farmer, and said, “Comrade, we don’t believe in God.”

“Good,” said the farmer, “Because there aren’t any potatoes, either.”

In modern Post-Christian life, joy got unhooked from pleasure. It is possible and preferable to some, to experience only fleeting pleasure with absolutely no sense of joy at all. Pleasure is the release of tension, freedom from distress. Pleasure seeks equilibrium, and stasis. Joy on the other hand, is a disequilibrium that is productive. Joy is that thrilling moment in a song or a musical phrase between the second to the last chord and the last chord. Beautiful joy floats in the eternity between dissonance and resolution. It is not an end, but instead is an attitude that anticipates greater fulfillment. It is a Christian bonus to step joyfully into tension and full aliveness.

Joy is not always happiness. There was an old Star Trek episode where the crew of the Enterprise lands on this planet where everyone is perfectly happy. No conflict, no strife, no spirit, no spunk, and no spark. It was discovered by the crew, that an artificial intelligence was programming the race without taking creativity into account, because creativity causes tension. When the computer is confounded and disabled by Spock's logic, it destroys itself, because it had harmed the race with its joyless control. Captain Kirk gets his report from the planet, as he flies into warp drive, "It's just great! We've already had two domestic quarrels this morning." The joy of creativity.

Joy is a shared feeling. One of the founding fathers of early psychotherapy, Alfred Adler, said that joy is the emotion which clearly bridges the distance from person to person. It is expressed in the embrace, in playing together, in singing together, in reaching out and sharing. Joy doesn't happen alone. It involves the risk of connecting and the relief of letting go.

Adler also commented that laughter is the cornerstone of joy. He felt he could analyze a person's character better through his laughter than through a psychological evaluation. Laughter stimulates the heart, steps up digestion, moves blood pressure to a better place whether it is too high or too low. Laughing is generally one of the healthier things that one can do. Laugh out loud and shed carbon dioxide at 70 miles per hour, feeding the plants with life-giving gases. In stuntman school we were trained in how to land from aq high fall; flat on our backs, to maximize surface area on the mat, and to shout out, "Ha!!" on impact, emptying your lungs. You couldn't get the air knocked out of you. With a mighty exhalation you gave your breath back to God. Your internal organs would be relaxed, and less likely to rupture. And the pain in your body was expelled before you felt it.

My father was on to that, 25 years before, and then, I always thought he was a little weird. Speaking kindly to his only child, he would counsel me to laugh when I was in pain. He claimed that laughing bounced the pain out while sobbing jerked it back in with bad breathing and irregular gasping. He was aware of something that is a physiological fact. Laughter will clear your pharyngeal tree and expel stale residual air from the bottom lobes of your lungs. It may be the only exercise your diaphragm gets! If you are laughing so hard your sides ache, it is working. Smart doctors will tell you that the easier it is to get a patient to laugh, the easier it is to help them recover.

John Cleese, co-founder of Monty Python, notes that "Laughter connects you with people. It's almost impossible to maintain any kind of distance or any sense of social hierarchy when you're just howling with laughter. Laughter is a force for democracy!" I would add only one observation. When is the last time you saw a

demonstrator smiling or laughing?

How often do we stifle our joy with a silent but polite chuckle, when we could share our joy with a galloping guffaw.

Joy is a Christian bonus when we share it. Joy is the zest for life, the vigor of maturity, creativity, and an inward sign of health that the world cannot give or take away.

Christ's joy is in us, and our joy can be full!!!! Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love

ELW 708

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS AND COUNCIL MEMBERS

APOSTLES' CREED

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.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

THE LORD'S PEACE (Please share the Peace with a neighbor)

THE OFFERING

“The Easter Song”

A. Herring

THE OFFERTORY RESPONSE *Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful*

ELW Hymn 142

THE OFFERING PRAYER

Presider: Risen One, you call us to believe and bear fruit. May the gifts that we offer here be signs of your abiding love. Form us to be your witnesses in the world, through Jesus Christ, our true vine.

Congregation: Amen.

AGNUS DEI

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,
have, mercy upon us.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,
grant us thy peace.

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 DISTRIBUTION

Lamb of God

ELW Pg. 146

POST COMMUNION BLESSING

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

POST COMMUNION SONG

Thankful Hearts and Voices Raise

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Presider: Shepherding God, you have prepared a table before us and nourished us with your love. Send us forth from this banquet to proclaim your goodness and share the abundant mercy of Jesus, our redeemer and friend.

Congregation: Amen.

THE BLESSING

SENDING SONG

Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee

ELW 836

GO IN PEACE, IN SERVICE

C: Thanks be to God!

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.*



- ♣ **Antonio Benavides**
- ♣ **Candy Berggren**
- ♣ **Elvin Bethea**
- ♣ **Pat Bethea**
- ♣ **Barney Boeker**
- ♣ **Bill Carty**
- ♣ **Vicki Carty**
- ♣ **Lorraine Chavez**
- ♣ **Patty Conberi**
- ♣ **Cathy Doughty**
- ♣ **David Dukleth**
- ♣ **Anna Gardner**
- ♣ **Nadine Jones**
- ♣ **Linda Kuhar**
- ♣ **Daniel Lara**
- ♣ **Kenneth Magrill**
- ♣ **Todd Miskel**
- ♣ **Jeremy Mitchell**
- ♣ **Geraine Moore**
- ♣ **Mike Paine**
- ♣ **Dorothy Preuss**
- ♣ **Rosie Stork**
- ♣ **Vern Terry**
- ♣ **Jaime Urbanski**
- ♣ **Bennie Valites**
- ♣ **David Watson**



COUNCIL MEETING

Council meeting will be Sunday, **May 19th, 2024** at 11:00 a.m. in the Annex.
Church Council

FRIENDSHIP CLUB

The Friendship Club will be meeting Saturday, **May the 18th**,
at the church for a pot luck supper.

We will begin to gather at 4:00 pm and supper will be served at 5:00 pm.

Ike Thompson is planning to cook a brisket so bring any dish
you feel would go well - baked beans, coleslaw, potato salad, etc.

Hope to see y'all there! - Nancy Beamesderfer

LAY READERS & ASSISTANTS

MAY

- 5 Reader – Charlotte Jaster
P/E – Alice Braun
- 12 Reader – Leigh Rothharpt
P/E – Wendy Lambeth
- 19 Reader – Julie Kilkenny
P/E – Nancy Beamesderfer
- 26 Reader – Sharon Wagner
P/E – Penny Schick

P/E stands for Prayers and Eucharist

Nancy Beamesderfer

MAM

Memorial Assistance Ministries
1625 Blalock Rd. - Houston, Texas 77080

Memorial Resale Store

QUARTERLY HALF OFF SALE!

Friday May 17, and Saturday May 18, 2024

MAM will have almost everything 50% off at Blalock location.

(Excluding Boutique and new Jewelry)

*Resale proceeds typically make up 20-30% of MAM's annual revenues,
so, any effort to increase sales directly supports ALL programs and services!*

LOOKING FOR A NEW OR BETTER JOB?

MAM Employment Services

is opening a new vocational training class **May 30, thru June 29, 2024**
for Electrocardiography (EKG Technician) Interpretation Training.

See posted flyer for details! or you can log in to **www.mamhouston.org**
If someone you know is looking for a new or better job, this might be a fit.
Healthcare professions generally pay well and are fairly recession resistant.

SAFEGUARDS SAFETY TRAINING
HOLYCROSS COUPON CODE FOR 15% DISCOUNT: HCLC2024

CLASS	DAY	DATE	TIME
Adult CPR *CPR only (\$79) *CPR + First Aid (\$92)	Sunday	4/7/2024	1 pm — 4:30 pm
	Saturday	5/4/2024	1 pm — 4:30 pm
	Sunday	5/26/2024	1 pm — 4:30 pm
	Sunday	6/9/2024	1 pm — 4:30 pm
Adult & Pediatric CPR *CPR only (\$85) *CPR + First Aid (\$99)	Saturday	4/6/2024	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Friday	4/19/2024	9 am — 1:30 pm
	Saturday	5/18/2024	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Friday	5/31/2024	9 am — 1:30 pm
	Saturday	6/15/2024	1 pm — 5:30 pm
Sunday	6/30/2024	1 pm — 5:30 pm	
Basic Life Support (Healthcare Providers and Professional Rescuers) (\$89)	Saturday	4/13/2024	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Friday	5/3/2024	9 am — 1:30 pm
	Friday	5/17/2024	9 am — 1:30 pm
	Saturday	5/23/2024	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Saturday	6/8/2024	1 pm — 5:30 pm
Saturday	6/27/2024	1 pm — 5:30 pm	
CPR Instructor Course (\$325)	Saturday	4/20/2024	9 am — 5:30 pm
	Friday	5/10/2024	9 am — 5:30 pm
	Saturday	6/1/2024	9 am — 5:30 pm
	Friday	6/21/2024	9 am — 5:30 pm

Classes are in the Youth Room, Media Room and in the Annex.

You can sign up online for classes by going to

www.safeguards-safety.com and choosing “Register for Classes.”

Or call 713-854-8085 for more information

Congregation members and their families will receive a discount of 15% for any class by using the above-mentioned coupon code when signing up.

John Lambeth

SUNDAY'S SCHEDULE

9:30 a.m. Traditional Worship service with Rev. Jim Berggren –WC

Nursery is available for small children during the service – Crib Room

10:30 a.m. Coffee fellowship following the service –FLC

3:30—5:30 p.m. Girl Scout meeting –FLC green room

THIS WEEK AT HOLY CROSS

6 Mon	7 Tues	8 Wed	9 Thurs	10 Fri	11 Sat
<p>11—12 pm ELC Chapel —WC</p>	<p>11—12 pm ELC Chapel —WC</p>	<p>9—12 pm ELC KiA –FLC 10 am Roundtable Group –VR No Choir rehearsal today 12 pm Bible Study —AT</p>	<p>9—12 pm ELC KiA –FLC 12—3 pm Cooking class—FLC Kitchen 1 pm Ruth Circle —FLCA 8 pm AA Women meeting –FLCA</p>	<p>9 am-5:30 pm SST CPR Instructor —MR/YR</p>	<p> 4:30 pm Guitar class —CR 6:00 pm Saturday Informal Service —AT</p>

AT =Atrium, CL=Choir Loft, CR=Choir Room, FLC= Family Life Center, FLCA=Annex,
 KiA= Kids in Action, MR=Media Room, WC=Worship Center, YR=Youth Room
 BLS=Basic Life Support, SST=Safeguards Safety Training, UCL=Upcycled Crafty Ladies