

# Holy Cross Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

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713-686-8254

Rev. Jim Berggren

January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Christmas

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## WORSHIP SERVICE

### PRELUDE

### GATHERING SONG

*Love Has Come*

ELW 292

### 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: **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**

**January 5, 2025 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Christmas**

### **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: **Thanks be to God!***

**THE PSALM**

**Psalm 147:12-20**

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

Praise for Spiritual Blessings in Christ

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

**11** 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, **12** in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. **13** 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, **14** 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!***

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:**

*Alleluia,  
Lord, to whom shall we go?  
You have the words of eternal life.  
Alleluia.*

**THE HOLY GOSPEL John 1:1-9**

The Word Became Flesh

<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: Praise to you, O Christ.*

**YOUTUBE VIDEO – <https://youtu.be/7dr-tzQNFN8>**

**Sermon Rev. Jim Berggren**

**CHRISTMAS 2C, 1-5-2025, JOHN 1:1-9**

**WORD**

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 and Darkness, Spirit and Flesh, Law and Grace, and Word. Word.....Logos....that's the big one.

My favorite playthings are words. I started spelling as a 4-year- old. I stood on a chair to help with dishes. We had a container of BAB-O on the sink to clean it. B.T. Babbit. He was a soap manufacturer who opened up his business in New York City in 1836. He boasted the largest soap kettle in the world; 63 feet across, (21 yards or two first downs) and 15 feet deep. He could make 250 tons of curd soap at one time. I'd stare at that green container of powdered soap, on the back of the sink, in the window sill that faced a large oak tree and 100 acres of wheat, and sing, "B - A - B - O, BAB-O!" A radio commercial helped. Mom told me that those were the letters first

and then, the word they spelled. That's the letters and that's the word! To my delight, it all connected!!

I started school on September 6, 1955, the Tuesday after Labor Day. That was the day I started hounding Mrs. Stromquist to teach me how to read. What an incredible gift she gave!

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 have all contributed their favorite words which eventually enjoy common usage. Words scramble meanings to make humor. "Nothing" rhymes with "orange." To which the proper response is, "No, it doesn't."

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 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 one-half of one percent of the available words in our own language and we get by just fine.

One of the shortest words is "A." The Oxford English Dictionary using hardback paper volume metrics, in the smallest print readable with a magnifying glass, devotes 4 pages, 6 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 in 391 BC in his comedy play, "The Assemblywomen." He used 183 letters, and 78 syllables, to describe 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! (The big draw was that Caesar ate there. The café motto was, "He came, he saw, he conquered salad.) It is your turn to order:

"I'd like your house specialty, Lopadotema-choselacho-galeokranio-(I'm gonna skip the rest. Too much. It'll take too long) leipsanodrimhypo-trimmatossilphio-karabo-melitokatakechymeno-kichle-pikos-sypho-phatto-peristeral-ektryonop-tekophallio-kigklopeleio-lagoiosiraio-baphetraganop-terygon. Hold the horseradish, please." I'm hungry.

Words are so basic to human experience that unborn babies can be observed by sonogram to choreograph specific body movements in the womb, 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, with the post-natal reinforcement of waving, scootching, rolling and crawling.

It is miraculous. The Word is the universe becoming aware of itself. You wouldn't notice it, because as far as you or I can remember, 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 feeling.

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 probabilities and 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 the words with undamaged 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 creates the world as we know it. Communication includes all the procedures by which one mind, one consciousness, 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 that God doesn't have to keep talking to Himself eternally in chaos, outside the cosmos.

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. Meaning makes absurdity look stupid.

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. 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 The Word and believe it, are born, not just of blood or the will of the flesh but of God.

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

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 loved me, his child. I hope you don't know any human fathers that waited to acknowledge their fatherhood until their child said, "Daddy." It all starts with the first word of 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 would not exist at all. Amen.

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

*Of The Father's Love Begotten*

**ELW 295**

**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 OFFERTORY RESPONSE** *Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful*

ELW Hymn 142

## **THE OFFERING PRAYER**

**All pray together:** God of heaven and earth, from the beginning, you have called forth life, in which you take delight. The trees, the fields, and the seas sing for joy. Bless now these gifts, received from your bounty, that we may join the chorus of creation to tell of your salvation from day to day. 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**

### **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:** Merciful God, we thank you for Jesus, who is our heavenly food. Strengthened by this goodness, send us forth to announce your peace, comfort the afflicted, and share the good news of great joy.

**Congregation:** Amen.

### **THE BLESSING**

**SENDING SONG**                     *Let All Together Praise our God*                     **ELW 287**

### **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.*





- ♣ **Alberto Basurto**
- ♣ **Bill Carty**
- ♣ **Vicki Carty**
- ♣ **Maureen Fredrickson**
- ♣ **Anna Gardner**
- ♣ **Nancy Lancaster**
- ♣ **David Magrill**
- ♣ **Kenneth Magrill**
- ♣ **Louise McDonnold**
- ♣ **Gloria McGarvey**
- ♣ **Jeremy Mitchell**
- ♣ **Geraine Moore**
- ♣ **Dorothy Preuss**
- ♣ **Tommy Roberts**
- ♣ **Ann Taylor**
- ♣ **Jaime Urbanski**



## **COUNCIL MEETING**

Next Council meeting will be Sunday, **January 19<sup>th</sup>**, 2024  
at 11:00 a.m. in the Annex.

Church Council

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## USHERS

**Month:** January

**Team #** 03

**Leader:** Linda Cuzzort

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## LAY READERS & ASSISTANTS

### JANUARY

- 5 Reader — Jay Fort  
P/E — Julie Kilkenny
- 12 Reader — Mallory Hileman  
P/E — Penny Schick
- 19 Reader — Charlotte Jaster  
P/E — Sharon Wagner
- 26 Reader — Ike Thompson  
P/E — John Stokes

P/E stands for Prayers and Eucharist

Nancy Beamesderfer

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## **THANK YOU!**

Thank you to all who purchased a Poinsettia for our Christmas Service. Our facilities and grounds looked so pretty.

Such a beautiful way to celebrate our Savior's birth.

Sharon Wagner

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## **RUTH CIRCLE**

Ruth Circle meeting will be Thursday **January 9, 2025**,  
at 1:00 p.m. in the Annex.

Nancy Beamesderfer

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## **FRIENDSHIP CLUB**

The Friendship Club will be meeting Saturday, **January 18, 2025**,  
at 3:00 pm in the Annex.

This will be a pot luck gathering so be sure to bring a favorite dish  
to share along with ideas for future meetings.

You no longer need to be 55 in order to attend Friendship Club as we are no longer  
able to secure the precinct buses for trips.

Nancy Beamesderfer

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## **EARLY LEARNING CENTER**

For the entire month of January, Fratelli's is sponsoring "spirit days/nights" for Holy  
Cross ELC. Ten percent (10%) of each order that mentions Holy Cross ELC will  
go back to the school for our spring fundraiser.

Mallory Hileman

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## **TO ALL GROUP LEADERS**

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

### **2025 CALENDAR REQUEST FORMS**

Once again, you are kindly reminded that

### **you must fill out a Calendar Request Form**

to schedule your meetings/events in 2025  
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 somewhere else  
and would like to be scheduled on the church calendar as well.

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

Thank you and Happy New Year!

Sussy Terry

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<b>SAFEGUARDS SAFETY TRAINING</b>			
<b>HOLYCROSS COUPON CODE FOR 15% DISCOUNT: HCLC2025</b>			
<b>CLASS</b>	<b>DAY</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>TIME</b>
Adult CPR	Sunday	1/19/2025	1 pm — 4:30 pm
*CPR only (\$79)	Sunday	2/16/2025	1 pm — 4:30 pm
*CPR + First Aid (\$92)	Sunday	3/16/2025	1 pm — 4:30 pm
Adult & Pediatric CPR	Saturday	1/11/2025	1 pm — 5:30 pm
*CPR only (\$85)	Saturday	2/08/2025	1 pm — 5:30 pm
*CPR + First Aid (\$99)	Saturday	2/22/2025	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Saturday	3/08/2025	1 pm — 5:30 pm
Basic Life Support (BLS) (for Healthcare Providers and Professional Rescuers) (\$89)	Friday	1/10/2025	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Saturday	1/18/2025	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Saturday	1/25/2025	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Friday	2/07/2025	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Saturday	2/15/2025	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Friday	3/07/2025	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Saturday	3/15/2025	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Saturday	3/22/2025	1 pm — 5:30 pm
CPR Instructor Course (\$299)	Saturday	1/04/2025	9 am — 5:30 pm
	Friday	1/31/2025	9 am — 5:30 pm
	Saturday	3/01/2025	9 am — 5:30 pm
	Friday	3/28/2025	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](http://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
- 4—5 p.m.** Girl Scouts meeting —FLC green room

### THIS WEEK AT HOLY CROSS

6 Mon	7 Tues	8 Wed	9 Thurs	10 Fri	11 Sat
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Early Learning Center</b> Classes resume today</p> <hr style="border-top: 1px dashed black;"/> <p><b>6:30—8 pm</b> Basketball Team Travis —FLC</p> <p><b>7—8 pm</b> Boy Scouts mtg /FLC room</p>	<p><b>10 am</b> Roundtable group —VR <b>11 am</b> Choir Rehearsal —CL <b>12 pm</b> Bible Study —AT</p> <p><b>7—8:30 pm</b> Basketball Team Jay &amp; Michael —FLC</p>	<p><b>1 pm</b> Ruth Circle —FLCA</p> <p><b>1—4:30 pm</b> SST Adult CPR —MR/YR</p> <p><b>8 pm</b> AA Women mtg. —FLCA</p>	<p><b>1—5:30 pm</b> SST BLS —MR/YR</p>	<p><b>1—5:30 pm</b> SST Adult &amp; Pediatric CPR —MR/YR</p> <p><b>6:00 pm</b> 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