

Holy Cross Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

7901 Westview Dr.

Houston, TX 77055

Tel. 713-686-8253

Website: www.holycross.us

e-mail: hclc@holycross.us

713-686-8254

Rev. Jim Berggren

January 19th, 2025

2nd Sunday after Epiphany

WORSHIP SERVICE

PRELUDE

GATHERING SONG

Now We Join in Celebration

ELW 462

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: **Lord God, source of every blessing, you showed forth your glory and led many to faith by the works of your Son, who brought gladness and salvation to his people. Transform us by the Spirit of his love, that we may find our life together in him, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

January 19, 2025 – 2nd Sunday After Epiphany

FIRST READING: Isaiah 62:1-5

The Vindication and Salvation of Zion

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until her vindication goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a burning torch.² The nations shall see your vindication, and all the kings your glory; and you shall be called by a new name which the mouth of the LORD will give.³ You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.⁴ You shall no more be termed Forsaken, and your land shall no more be termed Desolate; but you shall be called My delight is in her, and your land Married; for the Lord delights in you, and your land shall be married.⁵ For as a young man marries a virgin, so shall your sons marry you, and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall your God rejoice over you.

The word of the Lord.

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

THE PSALM

Psalm 36:5-10

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

Spiritual Gifts

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be uninformed. ²You know that when you were heathen, you were led astray to dumb idols, however you may have been moved. ³Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says “Jesus be cursed!” and no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except by the Holy Spirit.

⁴Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; ⁶and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in everyone. ⁷To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹All these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

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 2:1-11

The Wedding at Cana

On the third day there was a marriage at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; ²Jesus also was invited to the marriage, with his disciples. ³When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” ⁴And Jesus said to her, “O woman, what have you to do with me? My hour has not yet come.” ⁵His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.” ⁶Now six stone

jars were standing there, for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. ⁷ Jesus said to them, “Fill the jars with water.” And they filled them up to the brim. ⁸ He said to them, “Now draw some out, and take it to the steward of the feast.” So, they took it. ⁹ When the steward of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward of the feast called the bridegroom ¹⁰ and said to him, “Every man serves the good wine first; and when men have drunk freely, then the poor wine; but you have kept the good wine until now.” ¹¹ This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Congregational response: Praise to you, O Christ.

YOUTUBE VIDEO – <https://youtu.be/7qkqw4SkcOE?si=LK mz040AISNFdwAj>

Sermon Rev. Jim Berggren

EPIPHANY 2C, 1-19-25, JOHN 2.1-11

SEVENTH VESSEL

Wedding stories are fun. The wilder, the better. I feel sorry for those who try so hard and pay so much money to engineer the ‘perfect’ wedding. How boring. The more remarkable, the more memorable. No accidents, or mistakes, or practical jokes to remember with joy and laughter in years of anniversaries.

A Washington couple got married 18 stories over the Puget Sound, on the Tacoma Narrows Suspension Bridge. They claim the longest aisle at any wedding. I beg to differ with that claim. I have the singular distinction of officiating at a wedding ceremony that had the longest distance walked and climbed, at any aisle in wedding history.

Marla and Rick called to see if there was a pastor in the Vail Valley that could officiate at the summit house of Notch Mountain. They said they had called a few, and nobody would do it. I told them they should have called a Lutheran first. Lutherans cross-country ski from their snow cave to the 7-11, for coffee and pastry. The Notch, was overlooked by the Mount of the Holy Cross, a beautiful cross-shaped natural wonder that on the northeast face of the mountain, held pristine snow year-round. Both mountains faced each other at 14,000 feet. I said, “Let’s do it. But there are some things they will have to know, and be able to do.

“First of all, it is a 4-mile hike with a 4000-foot gain in altitude. It’s best if you can make that trek in 4 hours. If you are not regular hiker, that will be a challenge. Bring extra clothes, water, and a mirror and whistle for signaling. If you get dis-oriented, I’ll find you!”

(The pre-marital session included reviewing and supplying the couple with topographical Forest Service maps, marked with important natural features and trail markings.)

“Oh,” they assured me, “we hike all the time. No problem.”

“Secondly,” I explained, “our ceremony on the top of Notch Mountain should be done anticipating a noon-time descent. Regular mid-summer thunderstorms pass over the Notch, almost daily, in the early afternoon. The risk of being struck by lightning is very high, above the tree-line. 10:00 AM Saturday would be the safest time. I suggest for ease and comfort that you make the hike a party, with your best man, and maid of honor, Michael and Lisa. Start Friday morning. Take your time to enjoy the Holy Cross Wilderness, and camp-out overnight, near or at the Summit House. Camp above the tree-line where bears won’t be foraging, and don’t sleep with your food.”

My fearless, Harley-riding dog, Cleo, and I left the Minturn Trailhead, early Saturday morning. She danced in the forest chasing marmots and watching for bears. I had earbuds to enjoy Joe Satriani’s “Flying in a Blue Dream.” It was breathtaking. The solar basketball was crawling over the Gore Range, lighting a deep valley, to my left, and towering forest to my right. Then Cleo went ballistic. On high alert, I pulled my earbuds.

Cleo had just awakened the wedding party of four. So far, they had made it a fourth of the way and they were lucky. They had slept the night with their food in their tents with them. As we began the arduous hike, they were not happy campers. The bride and groom berated, nagged, cussed out, and yelled at each other about who’s lousy idea this was. I offered to stop and do the ceremony anywhere. All the views were beautiful!”

“NO!! We are getting married on the top!!” At least they agreed on that.

“If y’all can battle with that much enthusiasm, and then kiss and make up and get on with your marriage, then you got my vote. Let’s do it!!” It was the most grueling pre-marital initiation I have ever been a part of. It was a beautiful birth of a new relationship that had just survived a violent gestation. That aisle was four miles long with an altitude gain of 4000 feet. Can you imagine whistling, “Here Comes the Bride”, for 5 hours?

The second chapter of John details the beginning of Jesus' ministry. In the very busy last part of John 1, Jesus is baptized and gathers a cadre of disciples to go with him to Jerusalem for Passover. The plan was to stage a visible protest at the Temple to highlight corruption in high places. It is likely that Jesus worked as a craftsman on the temple renovations and would be well aware of the political collaborations of the temple leaders with Rome and the subjugation and erosion of the Jewish faith community. The Cleansing of the Temple was to be his first public overture, a coming-out event, which would form the context of his mission. Disrupting the moneychangers would have threatening economic implications.

Mother Mary changes everything. She insists that Jesus and his friends come to the wedding at Cana instead, on their way to Jerusalem. She knows that public protests can descend into dangerous violence. It is a small interruption on the way to a volatile demonstration.

Traditionally, wedding guests usually sent gifts of wine for the wedding party well in advance of their arrival. Here, Jesus's invitation seems to be an afterthought including hospitality extended to his friends, unanticipated extra guests. The "plus one" involved several disciples. Too late for Jesus to send wine ahead, and too many drinkers....it ran out fast. Mary casually mentions to her son, "They are out of wine."

That is a huge wedding failure. It dishonors the host families. It is a loss of face for all in attendance as well. No wine, implies that there are no friends of the bride and groom. The whole village will suffer disgrace.

Mary has significant social power, because she told the servants to do whatever Jesus said to do, and they obeyed her, even though this party is cratering fast. What Jesus will demand is outrageous. "Fill the purification jars back up to the top and take a cup to the wedding coordinator to drink." That's the community hand-washing water! Yuuuuccchhh! The servants are afraid: "Heads will roll because of this wedding."

Six large jars were there, holding 30 gallons of water each. A stone jar that big could weigh 100 pounds, and the water in it 200 pounds or so. Those jars don't get moved. You can't throw them in the dish washer. The water wasn't potable or sanitary. But it wasn't just water anymore. Parenthetically....

(The economic implications of attacking the moneychangers are local and confined to the temple precincts of Jerusalem. They help to pay the taxes for the Roman tribute. The economic implications of subverting the wine industry of Rome are global! International markets are affected.)

It was the perfect protest. Rome controlled ALL the wine. It exported to Germany, Spain, Africa, and Gaul. Over 50 varieties of wine were produced in

Italy. Rome by itself drank 25 million gallons of wine annually. That is half a gallon a week for each man, woman, and child, slave or free. The peasant farmers of Cana on very small acreages, self-sufficiently supported large extended families with grain, produce, and livestock. But the Roman demand for acreage to plant vines tended by slave labor destroyed these family farms, forcing people into poverty, starvation and involuntary servitude. Not only does Rome control all the wine, but it also controls all the land, and all its people.

Simply, no. Jesus has shown that he controls it all. This event is equally as significant as the feeding of the multitude. The newlyweds at Cana now have 180 gallons of the finest wine. They can buy the Roman senator who stole their land. These community vessels were all filled and later, in the feeding of the multitude the baskets were all filled with bread and fish and all that abundance was just Messianic Kingdom leftovers.

1st century Jewish literature, specifically, 2nd Baruch 29:2-8, describes the Messianic Age; ten thousand vines will each have 1000 branches, each holding 1000 clusters, each cluster having 1000 grapes, each grape producing 60 gallons of wine. To be painfully literate, at the consummation of all time in the Messianic Age, there will be available 600 trillion gallons of wine. That's the beverage menu. The stick-to-your-ribs vittles include all-you-can-eat Behemoth and Leviathan, with never-ending manna for dessert. This wedding is only 3 grapes out of 10 trillion grapes' worth of the wine of the Messianic Age, which is already beginning in abundance with joy beyond belief.

But wait a minute. Something is missing. Six stone vessels for purification? That's wrong.... there are supposed to be seven. John's favorite number is seven, the number of perfections. Jesus has seven "I Am," sayings. Jesus performs seven miraculous signs in John. Where is the seventh vessel?

In the Gospel of John, Mother Mary appears only twice, and is both times addressed by Jesus as Woman. That address is an honorific title indicating more than just individual selfhood or motherhood. It invokes the archetype of universal nurturance. Mother Universe, Father God. Holy Matrix of all creation. It's a pretty big word even for the Mom who was there at the outpouring of water into wine at Cana, and at the outpouring of water and blood on Golgotha, when his side was pierced. Mary is the Seventh Vessel.

The sacramental wine poured from her body for the salvation of the universe is Jesus. What an Overture. *It all started with a party, not a protest.* Not bitter complaints, but joyous gratitude for abundance.

Now the faith/wine is pure, heady and intoxicating, not the struggle of starvation, revolution and impurity. Now the faith/wine is generous and free, not the expense of destroyed homesteads, depleted soil and the exhaustion of slave labor. Jesus's Overture at Cana inaugurates his kingdom with a joyful celebration of life and God's amazing grace. It is better than we can imagine, this wine poured into us from the Seventh Vessel. The Sacrament of Jesus himself. Most will serve the best wine first, but God saved the best for last. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Brightest and Best of the Stars

ELW 303

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

Thank Be to Thee

Pr. Jim & Rob

piano/organ duet

THE OFFERTORY RESPONSE *Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful*

ELW Hymn 142

THE OFFERING PRAYER

All pray together: God of grace, your love reaches to the heavens, and your abundance to the depths of the seas. Bless what we offer to your service: our gifts, our abilities, and our hearts. Let us overflow with gratitude and generosity, now and always. 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: Nourishing God, at this table you have refreshed us with holy gifts of food and drink. Strengthen us for service and send us out to embody your good news of liberation and healing for the sake of the world. In the name of Christ, we pray.

Congregation: Amen.

THE BLESSING

SENDING SONG

As with Gladness Men of Old

ELW 302

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**
- ♣ **Darnell Lucero**
- ♣ **David Magrill**
- ♣ **Kenneth Magrill**
- ♣ **Louise McDonnold**
- ♣ **Gloria McGarvey**
- ♣ **Jeremy Mitchell**
- ♣ **Geraine Moore**
- ♣ **Dorothy Preuss**
- ♣ **Tommy Roberts**
- ♣ **Ann Taylor**
- ♣ **Jaime Urbanski**
- ♣ **Stephanie Walton**



\COUNCIL MEETING

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

Church Council

USHERS

Month: January

Team # 03

Leader: Linda Cuzzort

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

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

MEMORIAL GIFTS

We thank the family of **Tommy Neuman** for the use of his memorial gifts to upgrade and beautify the Early Childhood Learning Center playground area. Tommy's grandson, Triston Walton, was able to complete his Eagle Scout Award while doing this project. Triston cleaned the grounds, painted the playground equipment, sensory paths, and a "Roadway". He created planter boxes, a little Library, planted a PreK Pizza Garden and painted a mural on an old fence. Several Street signs were added to the "Roadway" and additional interactive playground items were added to the existing playground equipment. Your gifts and Triston's hard work are greatly appreciated and gratefully received.

In memory of **Harold Braun**, we thank his family for the metal borders around all of the nursery beds planted this year to hold the soil and the labor to install it.

In memory of **Delta and Nelda Marburger** the memorial gifts were used to recently plant one of our new trees at Holy Cross Lutheran Church.

We are so grateful for the gifts given in memory of your loved ones.

HCLC Memorial Fund Committee

Tillie Remmert, Chairperson

Penny Schick, Member

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

THIS WEEK AT HOLY CROSS

20 Mon	21 Tues	22 Wed	23 Thurs	24 Fri	25 Sat
<p><u>CROSSTIES DEADLINE</u></p>	<p>10—12 pm <i>ELC Jesus Food —YR</i></p> <p>6:30—8 pm <i>Basketball Team Travis —FLC</i></p> <p>7—8 pm Boy Scouts mtg /FLC room</p>	<p>10—12 pm <i>ELC Jesus Food —YR</i></p> <p>10 am <i>Roundtable group—VR</i></p> <p>11 am <i>Choir practice —CL</i></p> <p>12 pm <i>Bible Study —AT</i></p> <p>7—8:30 pm <i>Basketball Team Jay & Michael —FLC</i></p>	<p>4 pm <i>Food Pantry meeting —FLCA</i></p> <p>6:30—8 pm <i>Basketball Team Seth —FLC</i></p> <p>8 pm <i>AA Women mtg. —FLCA</i></p>		<p>1—5:30 pm <i>SST BLS —MR/YR</i></p> <p>6:00 pm <i>Saturday Informal Service —AT</i></p>

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