

Holy Cross Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

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Rev. Jim Berggren

February 16, 2025

6th Sunday after Epiphany

WORSHIP SERVICE

PRELUDE

GATHERING SONG

Jesus Shall Reign

ELW 434

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: *Living God, in Christ you make all things new. Transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace, and in the renewal of our lives make known your glory, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen*

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

February 16, 2025 – 6th Sunday After Epiphany

FIRST READING: Jeremiah 17:5-10

Thus says the Lord:

Cursed are those who trust in mere mortals and make mere flesh their strength, whose hearts turn away from the Lord. ⁶They shall be like a shrub in the desert, and shall not see when relief comes.

They shall live in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land.

⁷Blessed are those who trust in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. ⁸They shall be like a tree planted by water, sending out its roots by the stream. It shall not fear when heat comes, and its leaves shall stay green; in the year of drought it is not anxious, and it does not cease to bear fruit.

⁹The heart is devious above all else; it is perverse— who can understand it? ¹⁰I the Lord test the mind and search the heart, to give to all according to their ways, according to the fruit of their doings.

The word of the Lord.

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

THE PSALM

Psalm 1

SECOND READING: 1 Corinthians 15:12-20

¹² Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? ¹³ If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; ¹⁴ and if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation has been in vain and your faith has been in vain. ¹⁵ We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified of God that he raised Christ—whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. ¹⁶ For if the dead are not raised, then Christ has not been raised. ¹⁷ If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. ¹⁸ Then those also who have died in Christ have perished. ¹⁹ If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied.

²⁰ But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have died.

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 Luke 6:17-26

¹⁷ He came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. ¹⁸ They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. ¹⁹ And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

²⁰ Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

‘Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹ ‘Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you will be filled.

‘Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh.

²² ‘Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. ²³ Rejoice on that day and leap for

joy, for surely your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

²⁴ ‘But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.

²⁵ ‘Woe to you who are full now, for you will be hungry.

‘Woe to you who are laughing now, for you will mourn and weep.

²⁶ ‘Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Congregational response: Praise to you, O Christ.

YOUTUBE VIDEO – https://youtu.be/QXl41W-CMfw?si=EFkRk01dIttU_m2o

Sermon Rev. Jim Berggren

EPIPHANY 6C, LUKE 6:17-26

UNEXPECTED BEATITUDES

Jesus opens his Sermon on the Plain, talking to us on the level, with the word “BLESSED.” Isn’t that wonderful: An announcement from the Son of God concerning happiness, fulfillment, and serenity. Who couldn’t possibly like blessings? Blessed are....who? Well, frankly, people we don’t always admire; the poor, the hungry, the depressed, and the rejected. It sounds a little bit like, ‘the worse off we are, the better off we are.’ Gee. Thanks. Johnny Winter in his song “World of Contradictions,” has some choice lines: “Some folks say you can’t sing blues,

When you’re feelin’ good,
I’m just feeling lousy,
So I’m gonna knock on wood.
I guess the worse things get,
The better they must be.
I make my living feeling rotten,
But I feel good when I play blues.”

So, who gets the anti-blessings, The Woes: Those with total coverage health insurance, whose houses and cars are paid off. Those who are persistently energetic and upbeat. Those popular folks who go to bed with full tummies.

Wow, the world calls some people wretched and Jesus calls them blessed. The world caters to the successful, and Jesus warns, “Be careful. The only thing that doesn’t change is that Things Always Change. That’s life.” Job 1:21. “The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away.

Blessed be the Name of the Lord.”

It is a habit of staying focused on God, with blessed serenity. Count to ten, breathe deeply and reflect. Pray. It helps to level life’s varying gifts. Jesus preaches on the level plain in Luke’s Gospel, illustrating the blessedness of staying level in our world. No use in getting puffed up about good times or bad times. Balloons get popped. No use in getting all worried and despondent. There is always the upside of growth in the spirit, fulfillment in a world of need. The Holy Spirit is alive and working whether we feel it or not! Blessedness, from crucifixion to Resurrection is about being centered in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Poor will get more. What do the rich worry about and look forward to? Getting less! Who worries the most? The more things you put on your shelf, the more things you have to dust.

Hunger will get you full. Full will make you miserable, plus you will get hungry again later.

Watch the action at an all-you-can-eat buffet. Several diners are stuffed and miserable and still going back for more because they are not happy yet. A news story told of a brawl that broke out at a Golden Corral over the steak running out. Looked like the OK Corral after the dust settled.

Cry now. A time of laughing will come. But you can’t laugh forever. You’ll run out of breath and your diaphragm will cramp. Emotions are little tyrants! They feel like forever things, when we are caught up in them. Observe and accept them. Enjoy them and let them transform into new serenities.

Speak the truth. It will make folks mad. Then you can be happy that you are in good company with those who value reality, even if rejected.

Or tell convenient lies. Make folks happy. They’ll brag on you. Then you are in company with toadies and yes-men.”

Simple statements. Powerful aphorisms. All things pass through the heart of God.
Poor to rich is an economic scale.
Hungry to full are the two poles in biological need.
Weeping to laughing are the extremes of emotional experience.
Revulsion to acceptance is a social continuum.

Every second, we all live somewhere on those scales, and our location is temporary. We live in a flux. We flow in constant process. It all moves, and Jesus calls us to marvel at this miracle. Rejoice and be happily blessed in it.

Having left for San Francisco after my last freshman final, I was free at last from Central Plains conservatism. My plan was to prosper at a West Coast job for a year while establishing residency, so that I could study General Semantics, tuition free, at San Francisco State University, under the famed Philosopher Professor, Dr. S. I. Hayakawa. Shortly after I arrived,

Hayakawa was moved from Professor to President of SFSU to deal with demonstration problems on campus. He wouldn't be teaching. He eventually served in the US Senate. '77 to '83.

Freedoms were drifting into slaveries. Jobs were scarce. Using my thumb for transportation I finally was hired as a temporary employee at Raychem Plastics. It barely provided subsistence for me and my two lazy travel companions. Usually, I could panhandle enough money for bus fare from Redwood City, past Stanford University to south Menlo Park to work. Two months was enough of being sole provider, dumpster diving, hitchhiking, hunger and worry. It was a moment of biblical *déjà vu*, when I said to myself, "I'm tired of feeding these pigs. I'm going home and talk to Dad about my future in menial labor!"

I cashed my last paycheck and headed east across the arid American West, thumbing through truck stops and small airfields. Pilots in training needed hours in the air and would go anywhere in range, for round trip gas money.

I ended up in Salina, 15 miles from home and called for a ride. Dad asked if I was hungry, and I said, "Yeah, I've been hallucinating a ham sandwich from P.J.'s for a month!" Dad said, "A feast of the fatted hog it will be, and while I beat you at a game of pool, we can talk about how you can help me the rest of the summer." "Yes sir, I will do anything!!!"

"Mom is taking two weeks of continuing ed for music teaching requirements, at Morehead State University in Western Kentucky. She's leaving in a few days. I don't want her making that trip alone. Can you drive her? Take your French Horn to the band camp, and pick up 6 easy hours for your transcript. Whaddyasay?"

I had just left one of the richest, most cosmopolitan urban areas in the world. While there, I was poor, hungry, crying and reviled. I was headed to one of the poorest, most depressed Appalachian rural areas in the country, and there I would be rich, full, laughing and successful all within scant hours and days.

It was a full summer, 1968. Luke's Beatitudes in action all over the map, economically, biologically, emotionally, and socially: From the top of Mt. Tamalpais to the bottom of Mammoth Cave. I heard Janis Joplin, Iron Butterfly, and then two or three toothless guys on a porch under a shade tree playing a bluegrass moan. I backpacked into the hollers with fresh fruit and some dollar bills to share for the privilege of playing mouth harp with them. In turn, I drank in their hospitality and then went back to the University to a pristine cafeteria and my struggle with the French Horn part in Howard Hanson's Symphony.

Life is full of blessings and woes, but no matter where you are in that range of experience, the breath of God flows through you and the grace of Christ welcomes you home and builds you up for new adventures in mission, as a precious gift to the world in the communion of saints. Unexpected Beatitudes.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Jesus, the Very Thought of You

ELW 754

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 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

Let Justice Flow Like Streams

ELW 717

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.*



- ♣ **Lynn Ballard**
- ♣ **Alberto Basurto**
- ♣ **Bill Carty**
- ♣ **David Dupleth**
- ♣ **Maureen Fredrickson**
- ♣ **Anna Gardner**
- ♣ **Bryan Kile**
- ♣ **Nancy Lancaster**
- ♣ **Darnell Lucero**
- ♣ **David Magrill**
- ♣ **Kenneth Magrill**
- ♣ **Tracy Makris**
- ♣ **Louise McDonnold**
- ♣ **Gloria McGarvey**
- ♣ **Jeremy Mitchell**
- ♣ **Geraine Moore**
- ♣ **Dorothy Preuss**
- ♣ **Tommy Roberts**
- ♣ **Steve Schulze**
- ♣ **George Schwalm**
- ♣ **Ann Taylor**
- ♣ **Jaime Urbanski**



Next

COUNCIL MEETING

Council meeting will be Sunday, **February 23rd**, 2024
at 11:00 a.m. in the Annex.

Church Council

USHERS

Month: February **Team #** 04 **Leader:** Julie Kilkenny

LAY READERS & ASSISTANTS

FEBRUARY

- 2 Reader — Scott Wegner
 P/E — Nancy Beamesderfer
- 9 Reader — Alma Byerly
 P/E — Jay Byerly
- 16 Reader — Linda Cuzzort
 P/E — Russell Richter
- 23 Reader — Charlotte Jaster
 P/E — Nancy Beamesderfer

P/E stands for Prayers and Eucharist

Nancy Beamesderfer

CELEBRATION OF MEMBERSHIP

In appreciation for all of our faithful and hardworking congregation, and in special thanks to those who have most recently joined us in worship and service, we will gather in joy for a celebration of Membership today.

There will be a reception after the service at the coffee hour in the Family Life Center.

Pr. Jim Berggren

WELCA

WELCA will be having a General Meeting Saturday, **March**, at 10:00 AM. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend.

Nancy Beamesderfer

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING PART II

Congregational meeting will be Sunday, **March 9**, 2025 following the service in the Worship Center.

Church Council

Altar Flowers

Altar flowers are by Charlotte & Bruce Jaster in honor of their wedding anniversary.

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*

THIS WEEK AT HOLY CROSS

17 Mon	18 Tues	19 Wed	20 Thurs	21 Fri	22 Sat
<p><i>Happy President's Day!</i></p>	<p><i>11—12 pm ELC Chapel —WC</i></p> <p><i>7—8 pm Boy Scouts mtg /FLC room</i></p>	<p><i>10 am Roundtable group —AT</i></p> <p><i>11 am Choir practice —CL</i></p> <p><i>11—12 pm ELC Chapel — WC</i></p> <p><i>12 pm Bible Study —AT</i></p>	<p><i>9:30—12 pm Lutheran World Relief —FLCA</i></p> <p><i>8 pm AA Women mtg. —FLCA</i></p>		<p><i>1—5:30 pm SST Adult & Pediatric CPR —MR/YR</i></p> <p><i>6:00 pm 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