

# Holy Cross Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

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713-686-8254

Rev. Jim Berggren

March 2, 2025

Transfiguration of Our Lord

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## WORSHIP SERVICE

### PRELUDE

### GATHERING SONG

*Beautiful Savior*

ELW 838

### 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: *Holy God, mighty and immortal, you are beyond our knowing, yet we see your glory in the face of Jesus Christ. Transform us into the likeness of your Son, who renewed our humanity so that we may share in his divinity, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.*

## **SCRIPTURE LESSONS**

### **March 2, 2025 – Transfiguration of Our Lord**

#### **FIRST READING: Exodus 34:29-35**

#### **The Shining Face of Moses**

<sup>29</sup> When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, with the two tables of the testimony in his hand as he came down from the mountain, Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. <sup>30</sup> And when Aaron and all the people of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him. <sup>31</sup> But Moses called to them; and Aaron and all the leaders of the congregation returned to him, and Moses talked with them. <sup>32</sup> And afterward all the people of Israel came near, and he gave them in commandment all that the LORD had spoken with him in Mount Sinai. <sup>33</sup> And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face; <sup>34</sup> but whenever Moses went in before the LORD to speak with him, he took the veil off, until he came out; and when he came out, and told the people of Israel what he was commanded, <sup>35</sup> the people of Israel saw the face of Moses, that the skin of Moses' face shone; and Moses would put the veil upon his face again, until he went in to speak with him.

*The word of the Lord.*

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

#### **THE PSALM**

#### **Psalm 99**

**SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 3:12—4:2**

<sup>12</sup> Since we have such a hope, we are very bold, <sup>13</sup> not like Moses, who put a veil over his face so that the Israelites might not see the end of the fading splendor. <sup>14</sup> But their minds were hardened; for to this day, when they read the old covenant, that same veil remains unlifted, because only through Christ is it taken away. <sup>15</sup> Yes, to this day whenever Moses is read a veil lies over their minds; <sup>16</sup> but when a man turns to the Lord the veil is removed. <sup>17</sup> Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. <sup>18</sup> And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

**Treasure in Clay Jars**

**4** Therefore, having this ministry by the mercy of God, we do not lose heart. <sup>2</sup> We have renounced disgraceful, underhanded ways; we refuse to practice cunning or to tamper with God's word, but by the open statement of the truth we would commend ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

*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 9:28-43a**

**The Transfiguration**

<sup>28</sup> Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. <sup>29</sup> And as he was praying, the appearance of his countenance was altered, and his raiment became dazzling white. <sup>30</sup> And behold, two men talked with him, Moses and Eli'jah, <sup>31</sup> who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was to accomplish at Jerusalem. <sup>32</sup> Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, and when they wakened, they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. <sup>33</sup> And as the men were parting from him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is well that we are here; let us make three booths, one for you and one for Moses and one for Eli'jah"—not knowing what

he said.<sup>34</sup> As he said this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were afraid as they entered the cloud.<sup>35</sup> And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, “This is my Son, my Chosen; listen to him!”<sup>36</sup> And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silence and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.

### **Jesus Heals a Boy with a Demon**

<sup>37</sup> On the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a great crowd met him.<sup>38</sup> And behold, a man from the crowd cried, “Teacher, I beg you to look upon my son, for he is my only child;<sup>39</sup> and behold, a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly cries out; it convulses him till he foams, and shatters him, and will hardly leave him.<sup>40</sup> And I begged your disciples to cast it out, but they could not.”<sup>41</sup> Jesus answered, “O faithless and perverse generation, how long am I to be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here.”<sup>42</sup> While he was coming, the demon tore him and convulsed him. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the boy, and gave him back to his father.<sup>43</sup> And all were astonished at the majesty of God.

*The Gospel of the Lord.*

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

**YOUTUBE VIDEO – <https://youtu.be/q9-E12YyeiM?si=VjKB-NqfykYjf62B>**

## **Sermon Rev. Jim Berggren**

**TRANSFIGURATION, 3-2-25, Luke 9.28-36**

### **STUCK IN THE DREAM**

The Transfiguration is a glimpse of glory, not to be held onto, but to motivate the followers of Jesus and encourage them in their path of service to the world of need and suffering.

Beautiful views from the mountaintop, impart holy, healing power. Through our senses we can apprehend so much more than we can possibly see or feel: Overlooked beauty and detail. Each colorful aspen leaf. Each fragrant pine needle. Each lichen covered boulder. Each perfect pebble sphere coursing down each ten feet of water. Rushing rapids. Each splash, on each rock, limned in light. Each shimmering rainbow drop, prismatically, momentarily defying gravity in a hopeful burst toward freedom, before it's inevitable incorporation back into the waters of the earth, the Blessed Planet! Every moment of every perception of every experience that you have, can be, and actually is, a Scenic Overlook into Eternity.

Raphael's painting of the Transfiguration includes both the scene of the mountaintop glory, and the healing of the demon-possessed boy down below. It is both sublime and messy. Given a choice, I'd say that it would be more comfortable to stay stuck in the transfiguring dream. That's a perfect moment. But not real for the long haul, and very rare.

There are burial options now where after cremation, your ashes can be formed into a manufactured diamond, virtually indistinguishable from a real diamond, and then you can wear your deceased loved one as jewelry for the rest of your life. It is a very costly process. The only way you can tell the difference between a real diamond and a well-manufactured diamond is that the synthetic diamond is too perfect. No invisibly tiny carbon spots which give each real gem its individual signature and value.

Every advertisement for weight-loss pills presents the before and after pictures of glorious success, a transfigured body from plump to muscular. Just take those dreamy pills. And the fine print on the package says, "Actual results may vary. Works best with diet and exercise." Well duh! Of course, it does. Actually, the pills might not work at all, without diet and exercise. But then everything in your life works better...for free, with the discipline of diet and exercise. You can't buy an easy way out, to make a dream real.

The way it works is through work and the joy of service. Everyone would like an easy booth on the mountaintop, a peaceful retreat. In the book of Luke just before this Transfiguration text, Jesus is explaining about his suffering and death, and on the third day his Resurrection. In the verses immediately following today's text, once again Jesus talks about his betrayal.

Those are not fun words. The disciples, the very people closest to Jesus, who understand him best, do not want to entertain the idea that it is difficult, downhill from the Transfiguration. Those perfect holy moments that mean so much get tested in the real world, down on the plain. After every mountaintop experience you come down to the reality where people have messed up; where grief and fear shatter, where troubles won't leave us alone. You want to close up shop and just go back up the mountain, to celebrate, THAT one great and memorable day.

Entering the day-to-day world effectively as a disciple of Jesus requires regular personal changes in assumptions, thinking, and lifestyle, as we adapt to the need that is here. The need changes constantly and frankly we don't like change. Let's get honest about that. My seminary classmate received a call to a congregation that looked like a perfect match, considering his employment profile, and the congregation's needs profile. He was introduced to one of the elders who had been a member for 60 years. The young pastor said, "I'll bet you've seen a lot of changes. The elder said, "Yep, and I voted agin every one of them."

Billy Graham said, "The world needs changing, society needs changing, the nation needs changing, and the church needs changing. We will never change it until we ourselves are changed." Along the same lines, Leo Tolstoy mused, "Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself." The Rev. Jimbob says, "You can't wind up a sundial, so call it a new day and move forward. Trust God's Power and Plan."

Those moments of awesome transfiguration cannot be held onto and repeated over and over again, and still be effective. It is the drug addict's conundrum. You will never, ever again feel that first high. You can't box up the glory days and do the same thing over and over to get the original experience back. We can't domesticate God. Jesus is not on a leash. He is on a cross, a free sacrifice for us. We say, "Heaven and earth are full of Thy Glory." Then we act like we don't

believe that, all fearful and worried, unfocused and fretting. We are swimming in God's glory. It is there if we look for it now and tomorrow instead of yesterday. You can't drive very far using only your rear-view mirrors.

Peter wanted to build booths to preserve the moment. It was a great idea! The Festival of the Booths in Israel was one of the three required annual pilgrimages to Jerusalem for the men of Israel. It was a triple-header, three-names fantastic festival. As the Festival of the Tabernacles, it celebrated the successful crossing of the desert during the 40-year wilderness wandering after the slavery in Egypt: Remembering and reliving Moses, and tents in the desert. As the Festival of Dedication, it celebrated the anniversary of the dedication of the Temple of Solomon. As the Festival of the Booths, it celebrated the completion of the harvest. You built a booth on your property or in your pilgrimage caravan for a week-long camp-out thanksgiving celebration. On the eighth day there was a trail-ride style parade with the waving of palm branches and other greens that you retrieved from your dismantled booth, and the people shouted, "Hosanna, Hosanna, Blessed is He Who Comes in the Name of the Lord!!!!" Hmmmmm. Sounds familiar.

Peter saw a time to celebrate the completion of the messianic dream with this Transfiguration. Luke indicates that it is eight days after Peter's naming of Jesus as the Messiah, when Jesus stunned everybody by saying, "If so, here is how it happens to the Messiah; I suffer helplessly, I am judicially tortured and murdered, and I am raised three days later." God forbid. The disciples are crushed at this news.

Peter wanted to celebrate a completion like the Festival of the Booths. Jesus simply points out that this a commencement, not a completion. We are not celebrating a finality. We are just getting started. This is the kick-off and its going to be a hard game of thousands of years before completion. It will be 'first and ten' when we come off this mountain and hit a crowd full of needs, and tackle a demon that is shattering and tearing a child to pieces.

There are good times and they strengthen us for hard times. The final scene at the foot of the mountain shows what Jesus will face on his journey to Jerusalem. For Peter it may be spiritual whiplash. They start with a glorious time. Then they descend into the middle of disbelief, suffering, misunderstanding, evil, rejection and death.

Jesus left the glory of heaven and his Father God to go out to the world and die for new life's sake instead of curling up and living for death's sake. Everything is on the move in God's Creation. You can't get stuck in the dream.

Once upon a time, there was a group of people who decided to build a house of God, on the corner of Wirt and Westview. That group had a dream. It was a good dream that thrived in the hard times. That start-up dream could not have possibly imagined over 50 years of education of children from Toddlers to Pre-School; over 50 years of a food pantry that would feed several hundred thousand people, 30,000 people a year for only the last three years. It was a beautiful dream, that changed and grew through Service. Over 70 years and 31 pastors later, we are not looking for ways to relive the first dream. God has spoken through the clouds of human endeavor to provide new dreams in Service. We are not stuck in an old dream. In this transfigured moment, we are commencing to enter and serve the new Creation with a new dream of new hope and vitality! Amen.

**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**

*Alleluia, Song of Gladness*

**ELW 318**

**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 Dukleth**
- ♣ **Maureen Fredrickson**
- ♣ **Anna Gardner**
- ♣ **Bryan Kile**
- ♣ **Nancy Lancaster**
- ♣ **Darnell Lucero**
- ♣ **David Magrill**
- ♣ **Kenneth Magrill**
- ♣ **Tracy Makris**
- ♣ **Gloria McGarvey**
- ♣ **Jeremy Mitchell**
- ♣ **Geraine Moore**
- ♣ **Dorothy Preuss**
- ♣ **Steve Schulze**
- ♣ **George Schwalm**
- ♣ **Ann Taylor**
- ♣ **Jaime Urbanski**



*Next*

**COUNCIL MEETING**

Council meeting will be Sunday, **March 23<sup>rd</sup>**, 2024  
at 11:00 a.m. in the Annex.

Church Council

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## **USHERS**

**Month:** March

**Team #** 05

**Leader:** Barbara Neumann

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## **LAY READERS & ASSISTANTS**

### **MARCH**

- 2 Reader — Jay Fort  
P/E — Julie Kilkenny
- 9 Reader — Steve Schulze  
P/E — Penny Schick
- 16 Reader — Ike Thompson  
P/E — Sharon Wagner
- 23 Reader — Russell Ritcher  
P/E — Alice Braun
- 30 Reader — Linda Cuzzort  
P/E — Wendy Lambeth

P/E stands for Prayers and Eucharist

Nancy Beamesderfer

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## **CONGREGATIONAL MEETING PART II**

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

Church Council

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## **WELCOME BACK!**

Today, we welcome Cathy Elijah as she will be playing the organ during the service.

It is wonderful to be with her in worship this week and enjoy her musical gifts.

Pastor Jim Berggren

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## **FRIENDSHIP CLUB**

The Friendship Club will be meeting Saturday, **March 15**, at Don Jose Mexican Restaurant located at 5305 Antoine Houston, Texas 77091. (corner of Antoine and Pinemont Dr.)

Because we will be on Daylight Saving Time, **we will begin to gather at 4:00 pm.**

Hope everyone can make it!"

Nancy Beamesderfer

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## **LENTEN DEVOTIONAL BOOKLETS**

The Lenten season is here and the daily devotion booklet "The Way, the Truth, and the Life" is available in the Narthex and Atrium.

The daily messages are based on writings from Henri Nouwen. They are short but very meaningful and such a lovely way to prepare for the season. Please pick up a copy. Thank you.

Sharon Wagner

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**ASH WEDNESDAY  
AND  
LENTEN SERVICES IN 2025**

**Ash Wednesday services: March 5<sup>th</sup>,**  
12:00 noon and 6:00 pm in the Worship Center

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

**March 12, 19, 26, 30 and April 2, 9.**  
followed by a light meal after the services

**LENTEN STUDY  
FOR WEDNESDAY NOON SERVICES**

This year we will explore the Lenten study series  
**Words from the Cross** written by Pastor Jim Berggren.

**Ash Wednesday**

March 5: “Father, forgive them; for they do not know  
what they are doing.” *Luke 23:34a*

**Lent 1**

March 12: “Today you will be with me in Paradise.” *Luke 23:43*

**Lent 2**

March 19: “Woman, here is your son.” *John 19:26-27a*  
Then he said to the disciple, “Here is your mother.”

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” *Matthew 27:46b*

**Lent 3**

March 26: “I am thirsty.” *John 19:28b*

**Lent 4**

April 2: “It is finished.” *John 19:30a*

**Lent 5**

April 9: “Father, into your hands I commend my spirit.” *Luke 23:46*

<b>SAFEGUARDS SAFETY TRAINING HOLYCROSS COUPON CODE FOR 15% DISCOUNT: HCLC2025</b>			
<b>CLASS</b>	<b>DAY</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>TIME</b>
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](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

