

Holy Cross Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

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Rev. Jim Berggren

May 18, 2025

Fifth Sunday of Easter

WORSHIP SERVICE

PRELUDE

GATHERING SONG

Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones

ELW 424

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 Lord God, you teach us that without love, our actions gain nothing. Pour into our hearts your most excellent gift of love, that, made alive by your Spirit, we may know goodness and peace, through your son Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.***

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

May 18, 2025 – Fifth Sunday of Easter

FIRST READING: Acts 11:1-18

Now the apostles and the believers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also accepted the word of God. ² So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, ³ saying, ‘Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?’ ⁴ Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, ⁵ ‘I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance, I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners; and it came close to me. ⁶ As I looked at it closely, I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. ⁷ I also heard a voice saying to me, “Get up, Peter; kill and eat.” ⁸ But I replied, “By no means, Lord; for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth.” ⁹ But a second time the voice answered from heaven, “What God has made clean, you must not call profane.” ¹⁰ This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven. ¹¹ At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. ¹² The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man’s house. ¹³ He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, “Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; ¹⁴ he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved.” ¹⁵ And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning.

¹⁶ And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, “John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” ¹⁷ If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?’ ¹⁸ When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, ‘Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life.’

The word of the Lord.

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

THE PSALM

Psalm 148

SECOND READING: Revelation 21:1-6

21 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ² And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. ³ And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,

‘See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; ⁴ he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away.’

⁵ And the one who was seated on the throne said, ‘See, I am making all things new.’ Also, he said, ‘Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.’ ⁶ Then he said to me, ‘It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life.

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 13:31-35

³¹ When he had gone out, Jesus said, ‘Now the Son of Man has been glorified, and God has been glorified in him. ³² If God has been glorified in him, God will also glorify him in himself and will glorify him at once. ³³ Little children, I am with you only a little longer. You will look for me; and as I said to the Jews so now I say to you, “Where I am going, you cannot come.” ³⁴ I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.’

The Gospel of the Lord.

Congregational response: Praise to you, O Christ.

YOUTUBE VIDEO – <https://youtu.be/W7PqwzLY8yY>

EASTER 5C 5-18-25 John13.31-35

Love! ‘As Is’

I learned the habit from Dad. When you are in a new city or town, first, find the bookstores. I had already been to City Lights Bookstore and Publishing Company in San Francisco, started by Lawrence Ferlinghetti, a beatnik poet.

I had the day off from Raychem in Palo Alto where I was working. It was Thursday, the 4th of July, and I was headed to Telegraph Avenue in Berkeley, to browse at Moe’s, Cody’s and Shambhala Press. The front panel of Shambhala’s awning read, “All Hail to the One Cosmic Mind.” There, I picked up my only expense of the day, *Cosmic Consciousness*, by Richard M. Bucke. I was poor, so this purchase would mean that I would miss a meal or two, but like Jesus told the devil, “Man shall not live by bread alone.”

I thought something like this might happen, so from the play book of The Diggers, I had packed a dozen hardboiled eggs, six potatoes, and a bag of oranges and apples in a backpack. That would feed me and a few hungry street people. We were a year past the hippies and the summer of love. Homelessness, hunger, and addiction, were setting in for the long haul. It wasn’t all beads and flowers anymore. Smart hippies were hitchhiking east to Boulder to start communes.

On this pleasant day of anticipated exploration, I was not aware that Governor Reagan and Mayor Johnson had declared Berkeley to be in a State of Emergency. Five thousand irritated people were protesting on Telegraph. Students were mad about worker strikes in Paris. Civil Rights protesters found a voice with the Black Panthers. Mourners were upset about the assassination of Bobby Kennedy in LA, a month before. The Berkeley curriculum was being questioned. The

housing that would eventually become “People’s Park,” had been demolished and left a wasteland through eminent domain proceedings. Communists, socialists, and fascists shouted from makeshift stages.

Tense..... We’re not in Kansas anymore, Toto! An anticipated of sunshine glory, had an underlying rumble of chaos, dark anarchy and potential violence.....

We sisters and brothers in faith, gather together for fellowship, meaning, support, comfort, and love; in churches, synagogues, schools, theaters, and clubs. Jesus and his disciples had gathered in an upper room for a pleasant and uplifting meal. No one would ever consider that it would be a final meal together. No one in that room full of warmth and fellowship would have thought of a last supper, unless it was a late-night snack before the first breakfast of the new day.

But then there was that uncomfortable shuffling of societal roles when the divine rabbi, Jesus, washed everyone’s feet. Then there was a discomfiting difference of opinion with Simon Peter, and some cryptic comments about betrayal. A darkness was tensely lurking in the shadows of the evening. Jesus was clearly emotional, and Judas was clearly nervous. Judas, with clean feet and a full belly, needed to eat and run. Jesus dismissed him, to set into process the next events of the rest of the evening: betrayal and arrest. He had the devil’s work to do. And Jesus named these things as the beginning of His glory, which will manifest for the whole world, in all time, in His sacrificial love from the cross. His hour has come.

John the Apostle, the Revelator, sets a scene of throbbing chaos and emotions in turmoil, but underneath that is always the persistent and faithful beat of the Heart of God in Christ. Listen. It is the Kingdom of God in our midst, even in a world of turmoil, pain, and chaos. It is the sound of hope overriding the voice of despair. It is glory for the victims of the most demeaning of human events. Jesus faces degradation and humiliation and conquers it through sacrificial love. Jesus remains in solidarity with the persecuted people of God!

Take note! Bad news and cruel events are a part of mortal life. No one is immune, not even our Lord and Savior. As the Incarnation, embedded in the tangled will of man, even Jesus could not do anything more for Judas to stop the near-time events. Suffering is on the menu. When we face it, we can wonder.

We ask, “What good does this bring me?” “What are God and His world trying to communicate?” “What can I learn here?” “How should I respond?”

To those questions, Jesus gives a simple command. “Love one another!” “People will respond when they see how you love one another!” Jesus loves us. We’ve witnessed many ways that he does this. This is how we love one another. People will see and know the glory of God. There is only one way to approach the future and God’s ever-changing newness and that is to love, even when it kills us.

Jesus isn’t asking for an impossible emotional upheaval. He is commanding a specific stance toward the world. A commitment of love. This is an emergency directive. It’s a crisis order, to a community that is about to lose its beloved leader. It is not a cheerful touchy-feely moral maxim. It is a radical command to decide to live in a covenant of love. It is a soul contract.

Our Bible is a determining document of Judaism, Christianity and Western Civilization. Love in the Bible has a “Thou Shalt” promise attached. It is not a demanded emotion. It is a necessary decision for the future of the world and all of us individuals in it.

We are all in the “as is” bin of history and the world. We have faults that are sometimes obvious and mostly well-hidden. We find it a pleasure to fall in love. Christ calls us to the discipline of staying in love through the rational decision to love, no matter what. Jesus asks for and commands a positive morality that we can do, to make life better for everyone. We buy it ‘as is.’ We learn to love it ‘as is.’ That love takes a long view and squeezes fulfillment and even happiness out of pain. Meet the joyful challenge of abiding love. There are unexpected treasures in the ‘as is’ bin.

Our faith straight from Jesus’ lips to our ears, compels us to be thoughtful and compassionate, helpful and unselfish toward others, no matter who they are or what they do. Our whole case stands or falls by that standard. One way that everyone will know us as Christians, is by our love.

This is the personal challenge of individual humanity. It is the I.D. of discipleship. It is the label by which one who is in union with Christ can be known. Look for the union label. The Cross and the command to Love. Love! ‘As Is.’ Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Where Charity and Love Prevail

ELW 359

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

“Variation on An Aria, #6”

Pastor Jim & Rob Carty

Ludwig van Beethoven

Piano / Organ duet

THE OFFERTORY RESPONSE *Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful*

ELW Hymn 142

THE OFFERING PRAYER

All pray together: Risen One, you have gathered us around your table of grace along with these gifts we bring. Come among us again, breathe your life into us, and enliven us with this meal, that we may live as your risen body in the world. 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: Living One, in this feast you have made yourself known to us. Send us now to tell of your wonders, sing of your glory, and proclaim your risen life to a wounded and weary world.

Congregation: Amen.

THE BLESSING

SENDING SONG

Christ is Alive! Let Christians Sing

ELW 389

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
- ♣ Bill Carty
- ♣ Glenda Chavez
- ♣ David Dupleth
- ♣ Darlene Fournier
- ♣ Maureen Fredrickson
- ♣ Anna Gardner
- ♣ Fred Gardner
- ♣ Eliseo Gonzales
- ♣ Mike Hodges
- ♣ Charlotte Jaster
- ♣ Bubba Johnson
- ♣ Wendy Lambeth
- ♣ Nancy Lancaster
- ♣ Kelly Langridge
- ♣ David Magrill

- ♣ **Kenneth Magrill**
- ♣ **Gloria McGarvey**
- ♣ **Jeremy Mitchell**
- ♣ **Geraine Moore**
- ♣ **Steve Newberry**
- ♣ **Dorothy Preuss**
- ♣ **Wayne Schaper**
- ♣ **Steve Schulze**
- ♣ **Joel Selzer**
- ♣ **Randy Slater**
- ♣ **George Schwalm**
- ♣ **Jaime Urbanski**



Next

COUNCIL MEETING

Council meeting will be Sunday **May 25th**,
at 11:00 a.m. in the Annex.

Church Council

COFFEE FELLOWSHIP

Each week after Sunday service there is a Coffee Hour in the FLC.

Coffee, tea and even hot chocolate are provided.

Please sign up to bring goodies (cookies, coffee cake, etc.) to snack on.

The sign-up sheet is in the FLC.

Thank you.

USHERS

Month: May

Team # 03

Leader: Linda Cuzzort

LAY READERS & ASSISTANTS

MAY

4 Reader — Mallory Hileman
P/E — Julie Kilkenny

11 Reader — Ike Thompson
P/E — Nancy Beamesderfer

18 Reader — Alice Braun
P/E — Sharon Wagner

25 Reader — Russell Richter
P/E — John Stokes

P/E stands for Prayers and Eucharist

Nancy Beamesderfer

FRIENDSHIP CLUB

Our next meeting will be Saturday, **May 17**.

We will have a pot-luck at the church.

Nancy Beamesderfer

LWR STAMP PROGRAM

I have received word that Lutheran World Relief
has cancelled the stamp collection program.

Holy Cross has sent many, many stamps for this program.

Thank you for your tremendous support of this project.

Sharon Wagner

CROSS WALL

New additions to the Cross Wall

In Memory of

Nelda & Delta Marburger

Those that have gone before us

Sandra Williams

Donated by

Ruth Circle

Richter Family

Barbara Neumann

HOMEBOUND CARE PACKAGE MINISTRY

We at Holy Cross Lutheran Church are excited to start a Homebound Care Package Ministry to support our homebound church community. Our goal is to provide small gifts and essentials to uplift their spirits and show them care.

What We're Doing:

- Creating care package with items like lotion, lip balm, pens, paper, puzzle books, toothbrushes, fans, candy, socks, trial size items, cosmetics, etc.
- Pastor Jim and others will distribute these packages to individuals as they see it.

How You Can Help:

- Donate small items that can go into the care packages. Even company freebies with or without logos are welcome!
- Monetary donations are also appreciated to help purchase items. Be sure to mark your donation for Care Package Ministry.
- Help with collecting/assembling the care packages.

Drop off your donations in the basket by the sign-in sheets at church. We will check it frequently to gather contributions.

If you have questions or need help, contact

- Julie Richter julsrichter@yahoo.com; (713) 464-3430
- Shannon Martin sl.martin@comcast.net; (713) 202-0083

Thank you for helping us make a difference!

VBS WILL BE HERE SOON!!!

**Vacation Bible School is coming back to Holy Cross Church
from July 28 through August 1.**

We are looking for volunteers to help with a variety of things, no experience required. It runs from 9:00 am-12:00 noon.

If you would like to sign children up for VBS week there is a link on the Holy Cross website to sign them up electronically. If you need a paper copy of the sign-up sheet, they will be available. The cost is \$30 per child.

Along with VBS, there will be a babysitting class for children ages 11—16 year-old. The cost will be \$70 for the first day, and \$10 for each of the next 2 consecutive days. It will run for 3 of the mornings.

Basic safety and CPR skills will be taught and at the end of the session the children will receive Red Cross certification.

Contact Wendy Lambeth for additional information, at wklambeth@comcast.net.
It will be a wonderful week with some amazing children!

Wendy Lambeth

SAFEGUARDS SAFETY TRAINING HOLYCROSS COUPON CODE FOR 15% DISCOUNT: HCLC2025			
CLASS	DAY	DATE	TIME
Adult CPR	Sunday	4/13/2025	1 pm — 4:30 pm
*CPR only (\$79)	Sunday	5/18/2025	1 pm — 4:30 pm
*CPR + First Aid (\$92)	Sunday	6/15/2025	1 pm — 4:30 pm
Adult & Pediatric CPR	Saturday	4/5/2025	1 pm — 5:30 pm
*CPR only (\$85)	Saturday	5/10/2025	1 pm — 5:30 pm
*CPR + First Aid (\$99)	Saturday	6/7/2025	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Saturday	6/21/2025	1 pm — 5:30 pm
Basic Life Support (for Healthcare Providers and Professional Rescuers) (\$89)	Friday	4/4/2025	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Saturday	4/12/2025	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Friday	5/9/2025	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Saturday	5/17/2025	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Saturday	5/24/2025	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Friday	6/6/2025	1 pm — 5:30 pm
	Saturday	6/14/2025	1 pm — 5:30 pm
CPR Instructor Course (\$299)	Saturday	5/3/2025	9 am — 5:30 pm
	Friday	5/30/2025	9 am — 5:30 pm
	Saturday	6/28/2025	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 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

1—4:30 p.m. SST Adult CPR—MR/YR

THIS WEEK AT HOLY CROSS

19 Mon	20 Tues	21 Wed	22 Thurs	23 Fri	24 Sat
10—12 ELC <i>Puppets and Pizza –FLC + Kitchen</i>	10—12 ELC <i>Puppets and Pizza –FLC + Kitchen</i>	10—11 am ELC <i>Chapel –WC</i> 10 am Roundtable Group —VR 11 am Choir practice —CL 12 pm Bible Study —AT	10—11 am ELC <i>Chapel –WC</i> 8 pm AA Women mtg. —FLCA	9—10 am ELC <i>Pre-K Graduation –WC</i>	 1—5:30 pm SST BLS —MR/YR 6 pm Saturday Informal service —AT

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