

# Holy Cross Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

7901 Westview Dr.

Houston, TX 77055

Tel. 713-686-8253

Website: [www.holycross.us](http://www.holycross.us)

e-mail: [hclc@holycross.us](mailto:hclc@holycross.us)

713-686-8254

Rev. Jim Berggren

January 11, 2026

Baptism of Our Lord

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## WORSHIP SERVICE

### PRELUDE

GATHERING SONG      **Christ, When for Us You Were Baptized**

ELW 304

### 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 God our Father, at the baptism of Jesus you proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit. Make all who are baptized into Christ faithful to their calling to be your daughters and sons, and empower us all with your Spirit, 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 11, 2026 – Baptism of Our Lord**

**FIRST READING: Isaiah 42:1-9**

### **The Servant of the LORD**

“Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will bring justice to the nations. <sup>2</sup> He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets. <sup>3</sup> A bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; <sup>4</sup> he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his teaching the islands will put their hope.” <sup>5</sup> This is what God the LORD says— the Creator of the heavens, who stretches them out, who spreads out the earth with all that springs from it, who gives breath to its people, and life to those who walk on it: <sup>6</sup> “I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, <sup>7</sup> to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness. <sup>8</sup> “I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not yield my glory to another or my praise to idols. <sup>9</sup> See, the former things have taken place, and new things I declare; before they spring into being I announce them to you.”

*The word of the Lord.*

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

### **THE PSALM**

**Psalm 29**

**SECOND READING: Acts 10:34-43**

<sup>34</sup> Then Peter began to speak: “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism <sup>35</sup> but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right. <sup>36</sup> You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. <sup>37</sup> You know what has happened throughout the province of Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached— <sup>38</sup> how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

<sup>39</sup> “We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a cross, <sup>40</sup> but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. <sup>41</sup> He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen—by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. <sup>42</sup> He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. <sup>43</sup> All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

*The word of the Lord.*

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

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION:**

ELW Pg. 151

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

**THE HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 3:13-17**

**The Baptism of Jesus**

<sup>13</sup> Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. <sup>14</sup> But John tried to deter him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?”

<sup>15</sup> Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John consented.

<sup>16</sup> As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. <sup>17</sup> And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”

*The Gospel of the Lord.*

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

**PR. JIM'S SERMON: <https://youtu.be/DBU7DzVvF84?si=ABAQa7pLoY1QM6Dq>**

## **BAPTISM OF OUR LORD A, 1-11-26, Matthew 3.14-17**

Hi. Aloha. Guten tag. Hola. Hello there. Hey you. (Whistle.) Greetings people of God! Those are calls. You can't say you haven't been called today.

I call can be used to get somebody 's attention. To turn us around. To send us somewhere to do a job. To greet us with concern. To raise our spirits. We wait in anticipation by the phone for that call from someone special. We wait for a call to ease our loneliness. A call means we are remembered. We are needed. We are loved. That someone thinks we are important enough to try to get our attention.

Today we celebrate the Baptism of our Lord. As we celebrate, it is good for us to remember our baptisms, also, and look for things we have in common with our Lord's experience. We share the common experience of baptism as call. Jesus' baptism is his public, official call to gather the community of the citizens of the Kingdom of Heaven. We are also called, chosen through our baptism for our inclusion in God's family. For our joy in gathering God's team together. For the pleasure and privilege of knowing Jesus. For the delight and excitement of sharing and showing Jesus and making Him known!

It is a cosmic event in 4 verses.

Matthew 3:14: John the Baptizer, the great prophet of the New Covenant, recognizes the anointment of Jesus. He sees the Divine Christ. He knows the chain of command, so to speak.

Verse 15: This Baptism is necessary. It is a GRACE, not a reward. This Baptism stimulates righteous functioning in humanity. Jesus indicates to John, "You are doing something bigger than you know and YES, I am, I must be a part of it. It is God's intent that we should be saved!"

Verse 16: Something Profound and Mysterious happened. More than a SIGN. The whole Universe shifted. The Spirit of God, the great Ruach, the Creative Word materialized and was visible. It settled like a great dove, enveloping Jesus.

Verse 17: A voice from outside of Creation, the Voice of Creation claims and acknowledges: "This is my Beloved Son! I am pleased, thrilled, happy and fulfilled." I, God have become human and the Kingdom of Heaven is all around us.

Fran Tarkenton was a preacher's kid. He loved football and felt called to something special, as a youth, to be a great quarterback. Unfortunately, he was a third-string sophomore with the Georgia Bulldogs. He probably would never get to play college ball. The bench was deep with good quarterbacks.

The Bulldogs were not doing so well against the UT Longhorns, in Austin, in the fall of 1958. It was late in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter and they still hadn't got a first down. It was a brutal defensive game. Their defense had held the Longhorns at 6 points, but their offense was simply not there that day. The Bulldogs special team fielded a punt right at their end zone, and the offensive team ran out on the field. Fran Tarkenton put on his helmet and ran out with them. The starting quarterback, Charlie Britt was distracted and the coaches each thought that another coach had sent Fran out on the field. He took the ball 95 yards in 21 plays for a touchdown. Now, this was the first year that the NCAA put into place the 2-point conversion rule. Fran studied the game and knew about it.

He was one of the first to even try it. Fran waved off the kicking team and threw the pass for the 2 points putting the Bulldogs in the lead by one point. The rest, as they say is history. Tarkenton said, "I wanted to help my team. I had to play. I had to get in the game."

Jesus' baptism was his call to public vocation. He had to get in the game. The word 'vocation' means, to call. Our baptism is a call to life-long vocation as a Christian.

From Clarence, the President of the New Gottland Lutheran Church Council, through Examining Committees, to fellow Christians, I have been asked, "What was your call?" The answer was always simple. "My baptism." Clarence was there, the day of my baptism. I was only two months old and I couldn't see too well. But Clarence witnessed. Nothing fancy happened, like an angelic visitation or a burning bush. Not a lightning bolt causing post-traumatic stress. Just a splashing of the water of new life that framed my whole life's experience in the church. Wonderful spiritual things happened, and terrifying life things happened, that brought me along many paths, but it all started in the water of Baptism. Clarence had seen me at my best and he had seen me at my worst, and he trusted my baptismal call, recommending me to the church for matriculation into seminary. What faith!

We are all called to Christian ministry through our baptisms. That ministry can happen at the gas pump or the pulpit, behind the bar, or in front of the bench, pulling the plow or wielding a scalpel. We are called to take each moment seriously, as an opportunity to share the Kingdom of Heaven.

There was a jester in the 12<sup>th</sup> century who went into the great cathedral to worship. He entered the magnificent structure and went to the altar area with a roller, a balance board, and a bag full of balls and knives. There, he went through his regular routine of balancing, and juggling tricks, and practiced new skills for his trade as a busker in the streets.

Some monks standing at the back of the nave, were appalled at his blasphemous behavior, and rebuked him for desecrating the House of God. The clown said, "This is all I possess, all that I can do, and I want to give God the best that I have."

John the Baptizer wanted to prevent Jesus' baptism. He wanted Jesus to skip that part and baptize him, John, instead. Perhaps John still couldn't get his mind around that Immanuel stuff. God Is With Us!!! Really!!!! It is hard to imagine.

John tells Jesus he is exempt. "Baptize me and you take over." Part of repenting maybe is looking past the old ways of seeing things and grabbing hold of that daily, Immanuel, God Is With Us, reality.

In the old days, we knew that there was One who is more exempt from everything than a congressman. The One who enjoys all privilege, power, and entitlement. And we call him God, right?

Well, that was B.C. John says to Jesus, "Sorry Cousin, don't get wet or muddy, you have a baptismal exemption. You already get it. You understand what this whole mess is about and you can fix it!" John is willing to extend executive privilege and save Jesus from the mess. That's a sweet audacity! Trying to save Jesus? It makes me smile, to think of the care and honor and hope that John offered.

Dr. McClain, professor at Wesley Theological Seminary met a South Korean tailor on a trip to Seoul. The tailor introduced himself as "Smitty Lee." McClain was fascinated and said,

“Well, that sounds like a good Korean name. How did you get it?”

The tailor explained that during the war, his life was saved by an American soldier from Virginia, named Smitty Ransom. He described a custom in his culture, in two sentences: “He saved my life. I took his name.”

Christ saved our life. We took His name. We are part of God’s family now. We are called and set aside for Christ’s service and along with Christ we are pronounced, God’s beloved children.

Why was Jesus baptized? To identify with you and me. Solidarity. Why are we baptized? To join our personhood with his. It is an act of grace. An act of love for the whole world.

Hey You! We are called by God to love Him, love Jesus, and be empowered by His Holy Spirit to love His world. Amen.

## **HYMN OF THE DAY**

## **Crashing Waters at Creation**

ELW 455

## **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 glory, great are your wonders among us and many are the blessings you bestow. Use us and these your gifts for the needs of the world, that all the ends of the earth may rejoice in your saving grace, through Christ our Savior. 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:**

Incarnate God, you are among us at this table. May we treasure this gift and ponder in our hearts the mystery of your presence. Move us to discover the wonders of your love in the everyday moments of our lives, through Christ born in us.

**Congregation: Amen.**

**THE BLESSING**

**SENDING SONG**

**Shall We Gather at the River**

ELW 423

**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.*



- ♣ **Ken Beamesderfer**
- ♣ **Pr. Jim Berggren**
- ♣ **Darlene Fournier**
- ♣ **Jim Fritze**
- ♣ **Eliseo Gonzales**
- ♣ **Joyce Huey**
- ♣ **Shital Hungerford**
- ♣ **Nancy Lancaster**
- ♣ **Kelly Langridge**
- ♣ **David Magrill**
- ♣ **Chuck McWilliams**
- ♣ **Jeremy Mitchell**
- ♣ **Geraine Moore**
- ♣ **Ed Peterman**
- ♣ **Dorothy Preuss**
- ♣ **Lupe Romero**
- ♣ **Wayne Schaper**
- ♣ **Scott Spates**
- ♣ **Steve Schulze**
- ♣ **Jaime Urbanski**
- ♣ **Bennie Valites**
- ♣ **Michael Williams**

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## **COUNCIL MEETING**

Council meeting will be Sunday, **January 18, 2026**,  
at 11:00 a.m. in the Annex.

Church Council

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## USHERS

**Month:** January

**Team #** 3

**Leader:** Linda Cuzzort

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## LAY READERS & ASSISTANTS

### JANUARY

4 Reader — Jay Fort  
P/E — Wendy Lambeth

11 Reader — Ike Thompson  
P/E — Penny Schick

18 Reader — Alice Braun  
P/E — John Stokes

25 Reader — Mallory Hileman  
P/E — Russell Richter

P/E stands for Prayers and Eucharist

Nancy Beamesderfer

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## **FELLOWSHIP CLUB**

The Fellowship Club will be meeting **January 17, 2026** at Katz,

located at 10321 Katy Freeway (713-510-5001).

Please let Nancy know by text, email or phone call (**281-814-4153**) by Wednesday,

January 14, if you plan to attend. We will begin to gather at 3:00 pm.

Hope to see y'all there!

Nancy Beamesderfer

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## **TO ALL GROUP LEADERS**

Crafty Ladies, Choir Rehearsal, Early Learning Center (ELC), Fellowship Club,  
Food Pantry, Hymn Selection, Lutheran World Relief (LWR),  
Men's Breakfast, Roundtable Group, Ruth Circle, WELCA, etc.

### **2026 CALENDAR REQUEST FORMS**

Once again, you are kindly reminded that  
you must fill out a Calendar Request Form  
to schedule your meetings/events in 2026,  
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,  
Crossies Calendar and on the Church website.

Sussy Terry

Office Manager & Events Coordinator

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### **ATTENTION HOLY CROSS MEMBERS**

Following the Church Safety Protocol, please contact Sussy if you would like to  
make a reservation to use the church facilities for private events.

You must to fill out a Calendar Request Form as well.

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