

*Our mission statement:
Celebrating God's love
by worshipping God,
caring for each other,
and serving in community.*

Crossties

*"Sharing the
Ointment for Jesus'
Feet, Giving God
our Very Best"
Cf. John 12:3*

March 2026	<i>Holy Cross Lutheran Church</i>	Vol. 32 No. 3
Bergy's Babble: Paraphrased Lenten musings of Joseph Ratzinger <u>"Jesus of Nazareth"</u>		
<p>In John's Gospel there are 3 Passover feasts celebrated by Jesus during his ministry: The cleansing of the temple in Chapter 2, the multiplication of the loaves in Chapter 6 and the Passover of his Death and Resurrection. Starting in Chapter 12.</p> <p>Matthew, Mark and Luke have only one Passover Feast mentioned, the one of the cross and resurrection.</p> <p>Luke has Jesus ascending from the lowlands of the Sea of Galilee, 690 feet below sea level to Jerusalem at 2500 feet above sea level. The final goal of the ascent is the cross, Jesus' self-offering which replaces any old sacrifices.</p> <p>The growing crowd with Jesus on the way to Jerusalem is fired up by the hope of a Messiah, a new kingdom.</p> <p>Jesus claims the right of kings to requisition his mode of travel. Jacob's death-bed blessing to his son Judah, in Genesis 49: 8-12, indicates that the tethered donkey indicates to the people the one who is to come. Zechariah 9:9, speaks of the king coming on a colt, the foal of a donkey. Jesus wants his path and actions to be understood in the context of the OT promises.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">... /// ...</p>		

... /// ... Bergy's Babble

Luke says that they set Jesus on the donkey. Luke 19:35. Solomon was set on the donkey to go to his anointing as King over Israel. 1 Kings 1:33-34. The spreading of garments also belongs to the tradition of Israelite kingship.

“Hosanna” was at first an urgent prayer. Save now. Help. It was a prayer for rain. As the Feast of Tabernacles developed a celebration mode, it became a shout of jubilation. It had Messianic overtones.

The people in the crowd with Jesus going into Jerusalem were not inhabitants of the city: Not the same crowd that later demanded his crucifixion.

Jerusalem failed to recognize Jesus out of indifference or fear. The children recognize and praise Jesus. Matthew 21:15. This angered the scribes and pharisees. Jesus praised the children, quoting Psalm 8. Jesus is the child of Father God and he identifies with the children and smallness.

The Church sees Jesus coming again and again in the humble form of the bread and wine. We greet the Lord in the Holy Eucharist as the one who is coming now, and the one who is entering into our midst.

Cleansing of the Temple

The cleansing of the temple constitutes not an attack on the temple, but on its misuse. Traders were licensed by the authorities. Currency exchange from Roman to Jewish. There was the convenience of the sale of animals for sacrifice, on the spot.

Jesus was attacking the common practice set up by the Temple aristocracy. He was not violating the law and the prophets. He was implementing the true law. A revival of sorts. This is why the Temple Police and the Roman Cohort stood to one side and refused to intervene during the cleansing of the temple.

... /// ...

... /// ... Bergy's Babble

Some scholars identify this action as political and revolutionary, a part of the Zealot movement which promoted the path of violence to defend Israel's faith, law and freedom. But violence does not build up the Kingdom of God. It only serves inhumanity.

Jesus symbolized this by riding into town on a donkey. By Jesus' time it was the mighty steed that signified the might of the mighty.

Cleansing the temple fits Isaiah's vision of all people coming together to worship God in the House of God. The Court of the Gentiles is the open space to which the whole world is invited. Jesus is removing any obstacles to the recognition and worship of God.

Jeremiah 7:11, fought against the politicization of the faith. In the combination of worship and trade, which Jesus denounces, he sees history repeating itself.

At his trial, Jesus is faced with witnesses who take his words out of context, and say that he threatened to destroy the temple. Those who turn it into a den of robbers and a mirror of evil culture abandon the temple to destruction.

Rejecting and crucifying Jesus, signals the end of this Temple. A new worship is inaugurated in the Temple of his body. A new way to worship God in Spirit and in Truth. Jesus brings healing goodness into the Temple, Mt 21:14. This is the true cleansing.

See you in Worship.....Bergy



Holy Cross Lutheran Church (HCLC)
Minutes for Council Meeting – January 18, 2026

The January 2026 Church Council meeting was called to order by Vice President Jay Byerly on Sunday, January 18, 2026 at 11:08 a.m. Pastor Berggren opened with a prayer.

In attendance were: Pastor Jim Berggren, Jay Byerly, Anita Cooper, Ricki Finstad, Julie Kilkenny, Wendy Lambeth, Russell Richter, Penny Schick and Hans Sunder. Nancy Beamesderfer attended as a special guest. Council President Stephen Schulze was not in attendance.

The first item for Council consideration was Pastor Berggren's presentation of the request for his annual **parsonage allowance** of \$45,100 for 2026. A motion to approve this allowance was made by Wendy Lambeth, seconded by Russell Richter and passed by Council.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Berggren updated Council on his activities for the month. He remarked on the busy month of December. He had the pleasure of representing Santa at the HCLC Sip'n Shop and also at a Houston Police Dept. Toy Distribution. In addition to regular Saturday and Sunday services, there were Wednesday noon Advent services and Contemporary Theology seminars on Wednesday nights. Pastor Berggren thanked the congregation for their prayers during and after his medical procedures in late December. He has started preparations for Lent, which begins with Ash Wednesday on February 18th. Other activities included making phone calls and visits to parishioners; providing counseling and ministering for prayer requests; outreach to the community; weekly Wednesday Bible Study; and various church ministry meetings.

... /// ...

... /// ... Minutes for Council Meeting — January 18, 2026

The **minutes** from the October 2025 and November 2025 meetings were submitted by Secretary Julie Kilkenny and approved by Council. (There was no Council meeting in December 2025.)

In response to questions from previous meetings Treasurer Finstad began his report by distributing a handout with his research on how HCLC staff salaries compare to other (similar size) churches in Houston. There was some discussion, and Vice President Byerly tabled further discussion for a future meeting. Treasurer Finstad then continued with the **Treasurer's Report**. December 2025 offerings were \$28,974, (as compared to \$15,228 in November and \$31,958 in October). Expenses for the month of December were \$33,973, which was \$4,999 greater than offerings. Year-to-date expenses of \$395,939 exceeded offerings of \$273,469 by \$122,470, leaving an average monthly deficit of \$10,205. Average monthly offerings were short of budget amounts by \$10,563/month; Treasurer Finstad noted that actual expenses were within .99% of budget amounts. The checking account balance at December 31, 2025, was \$54,891, not including restricted funds. Treasurer Finstad gave a summary of investments and other items in his report. Council approved the Treasurer's Report.

Committee Reports and Old Business:

Outreach: Ms. Lambeth reported that the Visitors' and New Member packets, which she, Pastor Berggren and Julie Richter have been working on, were nearly complete. She remarked on the importance of publicizing HCLC Lenten activities.

Buildings and Grounds/Maintenance: Mr. Byerly noted that repairs to the FLC (Gym) kitchen refrigerator have been completed.

Other Old Business: Hans Sunder presented his concerns about the world economy and the potential effect on HCLC investments. He distributed a handout to Council members, which included a breakdown of Telge funds and forecasts of various types of investments.

... /// ...

Mr. Sunder asked Council and the FRC to consider additional ways to protect Holy Cross against adverse market **impact**. Several members recommended that Mr. Sunder, as well as certain Council members, be present at the Financial Review Committee meeting(s) at which this is discussed.

New Business:

Building Use Request: Council approved several requests for the use of church facilities: Food Pantry (cooking classes and Thanksgiving Meal-in-a-Bag) and Bayou City Blues Band.

Lenten Preparations:

- Council approved Nancy Beamesderfer's request to contact various groups within the congregation to be responsible for lunches following the mid-week Lenten services. Council will take the first week (February 25th). Ms. Beamesderfer will coordinate groups for the following Wednesdays (March 4, 11, 18, 25), as well as Maundy Thursday (April 2).
- Ms. Lambeth asked Council to approve payment for 2-3 banners for Lent and Easter. A motion was made, seconded and approved by Council.

Nominating Committee/Congregational Meeting Part II:

- Mr. Byerly noted that the Nominating Committee did not have a Council Liaison in place. Ms. Lambeth volunteered for this position (and was approved by Council) and pointed out that a list of nominees needs to be presented at the next Council meeting. She also noted that the Congregational Meeting must be scheduled and publicized with proper notice to the congregation.
- Mr. Byerly suggested a deadline of March 8th for committees to submit reports to be included in the packet for the Congregational meeting.

... /// ...

... /// ... Minutes for Council Meeting — January 18, 2026

Other New Business: Council discussed the need to develop a contract and written job description for church staff, a project that was cut short by COVID. Members discussed the importance of clarifying and putting into writing responsibilities, expectations, sick leave, vacation, etc. Council felt that having a committee for this project would be appropriate and help ensure a fair workplace environment.

The February Council meeting was scheduled for Sunday, February 22, 2026 at 11:00 a.m.

The March Council Meeting was scheduled for Sunday, March 15, 2026 at 11:00 a.m.

The Congregational Meeting Part II was scheduled for Sunday, March 22, 2026 after Worship (and also before the Saturday, March 21st service at 6:00 p.m.).

Upon motion to adjourn, the meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Kilkenny,
Secretary, Church Council



Council Meeting will be Sunday, **March 15**, 2026,
at 11:00 a.m. in the FLCA.

Church Council

Holy Cross Lutheran Church (HCLC)
Minutes from Congregational Meeting, Part I
December 14, 2025

The December 2025 Congregational Meeting (Part I) was called to order by President Stephen Schulze on Sunday, December 14, 2025 at 10:34 a.m. Pastor Berggren opened the meeting with a prayer.

The agenda, a copy of the budget, and ballots were distributed to those present. It was determined that a quorum was in attendance. The first item of business was to approve the minutes from the March 09, 2025 Congregational Meeting Part II. There was no discussion from the floor. A motion was duly made and seconded, and the minutes were approved by acclamation.

The second item of business was the 2026 budget. President Schulze gave a brief synopsis of the budget and asked the congregants to review their copies of the report. There were no questions or comments from the floor. A motion to accept the 2026 budget as proposed was made by Nancy Beamesderfer, seconded by Linda Cuzzort and approved by the congregation (by a show of hands).

The next item of business was congregational consideration of a proposal regarding the use of Telge funds, which President Schulze read aloud:

- ◆ “A proposal to authorize the Treasurer, upon approval of the Church Council, to transfer funds from the Telge Fund to the General Fund in the event this becomes necessary to pay operating expenses. This authorization, if approved by the Congregation, will commence on January 1st, 2026, and automatically ends on December 31st, 2026.” – (per Agenda for 12/14/25 Congregational Meeting)

Nancy Beamesderfer made a motion to approve this proposal (seconded by Scott Wegner). Discussion followed.

... /// ...

... /// ... Minutes from Congregational Meeting Part I — December 14, 2025

There was further discussion among those present about various aspects of the proposal, with Treasurer Finstad giving a recap of HCLC finances and the history of the Telge fund.

Warren Schick expressed his opinion that this proposal should have a cap on the amount that could be transferred to the general fund.

After additional discussion Treasurer Finstad suggested that a maximum of \$100,000 would be reasonable. A second motion was made by Jim Berggren (seconded by Linda Cuzzort) to approve the original proposal with the stipulation that “a maximum of \$100,000.⁰⁰ can be taken out (of the Telge fund) without further congregational approval.” The congregation approved this item by a show of hands.

Upon motion to adjourn, the meeting was ended at 10:51 a.m. Pastor Berggren led the congregation in closing with the Lord’s prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Kilkenny
Church Council Secretary



CONGREGATIONAL MEETING PART II

Congregational meeting will be Sunday, **March 22**, 2026.

Please send your 2025 Reports to Sussy by Sunday, March 8.

Church Council



Altar Flowers

Altar Flowers were donated in February
by Barbara Sledge
in loving memory of Chester Sledge.



EASTER LILIES

Order forms for Easter Lilies will be available
March 1st, through the 22nd.

Lilies will be used to decorate the Sanctuary Easter Sunday.

They will be \$10.⁰⁰ each and may be picked up
after the Easter Service.

Lilies may be dedicated

"In Memory of", In Honor of" or "To The Glory of God".

Order envelopes will be available
in the Atrium and in the Narthex.

Complete the order form and place in the basket. Thank you!

Sharon Wagner



LENTEN SERVICES at 12:00 noon
in the Atrium the following dates:

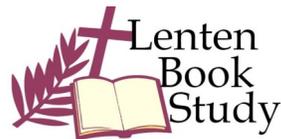
FEBRUARY 25, MARCH 4, 11, 18 & 25
followed by a light meal after the services.

LENTEN MEALS

This is the schedule for the Lenten Meals:



- ◆ 2/25 Council
- ◆ 3/04 Choir
- ◆ 3/11 Ruth Circle
- ◆ 3/18 Fellowship Club
- ◆ 3/25 Men's Breakfast Group



This year we will explore the Lenten study “**Killing Jesus**”
by Bill O’Reilly and Martin Dugard.

Pastor Jim Berggren

FELLOWSHIP CLUB

The Fellowship Club will be meeting Saturday, **March 21**,
at the Hunan Chef located at 8404 I10W at 3:00 pm.

Please let Nancy know by **March 18**, if you plan to attend
(call/text **281-814-4153**; email **nbeamesdefer@comcast.net**).

Hope to see you there!

Nancy Beamesderfer

READINGS and PSALMS

MARCH 2026

DATE	1 st READING	PSALM	2 nd READING	GOSPEL
3/01/2026	Genesis 12:1-4a	121	Romans 4:1-5, 13-17	John 3:1-17
3/08/2026	Exodus 17:1-7	95	Romans 5:1-11	John 4:5-42
3/15/2026	1 Samuel 16:1-13	23	Ephesians 5:8-14	John 9:1-41
3/22/2026	Ezekiel 37:1-14	130	Romans 8:6-11	John 11:1-45
3/29/2026	Isaiah 50:4-9a	31:9-16	Philippians 2:5-11	Matthew 27:11-54

USHERS

Month: March **Team #** 05 **Leader:** Barbara Neumann

LAY READERS & ASSISTANTS

3/01	R	Alice Braun
	P/E	Nancy Beamesderfer
3/08	R	Jay Fort
	P/E	Julie Kilkenny
3/15	R	Ike Thompson
	P/E	Sharon Wagner
3/22	R	Linda Cuzzort
	P/E	Penny Schick
3/29	R	Mallory Hileman
	P/E	Alma Byerly

R = Reader P/E = Prayer and Eucharist

Nancy Beamesderfer

**CHURCH OFFICE
HOURS**

Monday—Thursday: 9— 4 p.m.

Friday: 8:30 a.m. — 2:30 p.m.

ALTAR FLOWERS

You may sign up for flower arrangements in the Narthex.

Suggested donation is \$70.⁰⁰



Holy Cross members celebrating Birthdays
in the month of March:

01 Marie Drosche	15 Scott Schomburg
Alex Saavedra	23 Caroline Irvin
04 Peter Yoder	24 Mitchell Kilkenny
05 Scott Wegner	25 Charlotte Jaster
10 Micah Richter	Robert Manning III
13 John Wenger	28 Sharon Wagner
14 Amy Schomburg	29 Shannon Martin
Anna Matis	31 Russell Richter

*If your name is not listed or if this is incorrect information
please contact the Church Office so that the list can be corrected.*

UPDATE YOUR DIRECTORY

WALBRIDGE, Peter & Anna Matis

William, Alexander (children)

Peter Cell (832) 247-6574

peterwalbridge@gmail.com

Anna Cell 832-445-7885

anna.matis@gmail.com

1211 Ridgewood Place

Houston, TX 77055

PRUITT, Debra

Cell 713-294-2513

5005 Georgi Lane # 24

Houston, Texas 77092

debpruitt27@sbcglobal.net



The homebound, disabled,
long-term ill and
prolonged recovering.

- † Dolores Abrego
- † Alberto Basurto
- † Candy Berggren
- † Elvin Bethea
- † Pat Bethea
- † Barney Boeker
- † David Dukleth
- † Gloria McGarvey
- † Todd Miskel
- † Larry Polzin
- † Rosie Stork
- † Bennie Valites

Ken Beamesderfer
Pat Boessling
Jim Fritze
Eli Gonzales
Paul Houghton
Bruce Jaster
Charlotte Jaster
Joyce Huey
Lane Kelly
Nancy Lancaster
David Magrill
Jeremy Mitchell

Geraine Moore
Ed Peterman
Dorothy Preuss
Lupe Romero
Wayne Schaper
Steve Schulze
Scott Spates
Marilyn Thigpen
Jaime Urbanski
Bennie Valites
Michael Williams
Lin Worsham

TREASURER'S REPORT

If you have any questions call
Ricki Finstad at 713-465-5968

JANUARY 2026

Receipts	\$ 16,227. ⁹⁶
Expenses	<u>25,119.²⁶</u>
Balance	(\$ 8,891. ³⁰)

Operational receipts

Year-to-date received	\$ 16,227. ⁹⁶
Expenditures year to date ..	<u>25,119.²⁶</u>
Balance	(\$ 8,891. ³⁰)



*Prayer Request emails are
sent out often.
If you would like to receive
them please contact:*

Renee Allcorn
allcornr@gmail.com

or call at (713) 254-8638

AVERAGE ATTENDANCE

JANUARY SERVICES

Saturday Informal service	: 16
Sunday Traditional service	: 57
Sunday Jan. 25 cold weather	: 10

Holy Cross Lutheran Church
in Spring Branch

*A Congregation of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)*

7901 Westview Dr.
Houston, Texas 77055
Tel. (713) 686-8253
E-mail: hclc@holycross.us

*“Holy Cross Lutheran Church is a community of Christians
gathered by God’s grace and reaching out through God’s love.”*

TELEPHONE EXTENSIONS		
100	Church Office	
101	Sussy Terry	Office Manager & Events Coordinator
103	Rev. Jim Berggren	Senior Pastor
104	John Lambeth	Bookkeeper
<p>SATURDAY WORSHIP SERVICE Informal Service 6:00 p. m. —AT</p> <p>SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE Traditional Service 9:30 a.m. —WC</p>		
<p><u>EARLY LEARNING CENTER</u> ELC (713) 461-5535 email: holycrosselc4@gmail.com</p>		

<u>CHURCH STAFF</u>								
<p>Rev. Jim Berggren — Senior Pastor email: jlberggren@holycross.us</p> <p>Sussy Terry — Office Manager & Events Coord. email: hclc@holycross.us</p> <p>John Lambeth — Bookkeeper email: finance@holycross.us</p> <p>Robert Carty — Musical Director / Organist email: robcarty1@outlook.com</p>								
<u>OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION</u>								
<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">Steve Schulze</td> <td style="width: 50%;">President</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jay Byerly</td> <td>Vice-President</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Julie Kilkenny</td> <td>Secretary</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ricki Finstad</td> <td>Treasurer</td> </tr> </table>	Steve Schulze	President	Jay Byerly	Vice-President	Julie Kilkenny	Secretary	Ricki Finstad	Treasurer
Steve Schulze	President							
Jay Byerly	Vice-President							
Julie Kilkenny	Secretary							
Ricki Finstad	Treasurer							
								