

Holy Cross Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

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Rev. Jim Berggren

May 10, 2026

6th Sunday of Easter

WORSHIP SERVICE

PRELUDE

WELCOME / ANNOUNCEMENTS

GATHERING SONG

Come, Thou Almighty King

ELW 408

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 Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Almighty God strengthens 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: **Almighty and ever-living God, you hold together all things in heaven and on earth. In your great mercy receive the prayers of all your children, and give to all the world the Spirit of your truth and peace, 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

May 10, 2026 – Sixth Sunday of Easter

FIRST READING: Acts 17:22-31

²² Paul then stood up in the meeting of the Areopagus and said: “People of Athens! I see that in every way you are very religious. ²³ For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD. So, you are ignorant of the very thing you worship—and this is what I am going to proclaim to you.

²⁴ “The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by human hands. ²⁵ And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else. ²⁶ From one man he made all the nations, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he marked out their appointed times in history and the boundaries of their lands. ²⁷ God did this so that they would seek him and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from any one of us. ²⁸ ‘For in him we live and move and have our being.’ As some of your own poets have said, ‘We are his offspring.’

²⁹ “Therefore, since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone—an image made by human design and skill. ³⁰ In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. ³¹ For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.”

The word of the Lord.

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

THE PSALM

Psalm 66:8-20

SECOND READING: 1 Peter 3:13-22

¹³ Who is going to harm you if you are eager to do good? ¹⁴ But even if you should suffer for what is right, you are blessed. “Do not fear their threats; do not be frightened.” ¹⁵ But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, ¹⁶ keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander. ¹⁷ For it is better, if it is God’s will, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil. ¹⁸ For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. ¹⁹ After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits— ²⁰ to those who were disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, ²¹ and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a clear conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

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: John 14:15-21

Jesus Promises the Holy Spirit

¹⁵ “If you love me, keep my commands. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. ¹⁸ I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹ Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. ²¹ Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

Congregational response: Praise to you, O Christ.

PR. JIM'S SERMON:



EASTER 6A 5-10-26,

SPIRIT OF TRUTH

JOHN 14. 15-21

When John wrote his Gospel, he devoted one-fourth of his chapters to one night, the night of the Last Supper. Jesus starts the evening by washing his disciples' feet. He ends the evening with his longest recorded prayer, after which he and his disciples go to the Garden of Gethsemane. There he awaits betrayal and arrest, and then torture and death by crucifixion. We are listening to his last words, his last will and testament. His main concerns are revealed in his fervent prayer for all his disciples.

He is facing his own worst possible future outcome and his deliberate and systematic erasure from the world's scene. Nevertheless, he assures us that we are not abandoned or orphaned, that we are safe in him and in Father God, and that we will be given constant spiritual power as a gift of God to those who follow Jesus. That is his Will; his Legacy for us!!

Jesus anticipates a very complicated future, and he sends us help for our very complicated present!

The material world is a very complex matrix in which we live and have our being. We talk about the things, “out there” as if they were composed of a rock-solid absolute, easily delineated otherness from our self. There is me, and then not me. For me, this gives rise to the question, “Okay, so then, where do “I” end and where does “out there” begin?” It seems too

simple to arbitrarily draw the boundary line at our skin. Social distancing awareness started at 6 feet away from your skin and extended outward in both space and time from the location of your skin. Skin is a semipermeable membrane, regulating constant flow between the realms of out there and in here. Nevertheless, I persistently identify myself with my skin, and it's always-changing contents.

In that constant flow, the only Absolutes that I can really know are Resurrection, Grace, and Sanctification. Jesus said, "Because I live you will live also." That's the Truth; the one reality you can count on.

It is a simplification to say that there is an "independent" world out there. All of our world views are reflections of our individual sensory apparatuses that register them. Our perception, takes in only the tiniest percentage, less than one part per billion, of all the total electromagnetic energy vibrating in any given environment. Put a bat, an octopus, or a dog, in the same space, and they are in a completely different truth/reality: Panoramic sonic landscapes for the blind bat, towering eight-octave glissandos of tactile touch for the nine brains of the octopus, and earth-shaking avalanches of technicolor aroma for the dog. What is both "out there", and "in here", is raw data waiting for an interpreter.

We take a radically amorphous flowing quantum soup and use our senses to congeal it into a solid four-dimensional world. It would seem that being blueprinted and crafted by God in His image, we also do what he does creatively: We Invade chaos, We Subvert chaos and we Repurpose chaos with a creative Word. The first job that God gave us was to Name it, Till it and Keep it: Recognize it, Work with it, and Nurture it! The Spirit of Truth is simple. Because he lives, we live also, in wondrous variety. The Spirit of Truth reminds us that Easter shines in the darkness of Good Friday bad times.

As we cope with the world's chaos, we grow and learn. One way to double your practical intelligence and awareness of detail is to try to receive as many signals as possible from other people and sources, however wrong-headed or alien we may think their reality map is. I have learned better olfaction and gained a practiced, better sense of smell by carefully observing what receives my dog's attention, as she navigates her unique position in the universe. Nostrils flared, she stands at the edge of downwind scentless darkness, and the upwind information flood, of odors of extravagant sensation. Experiences, both positive and negative, enhance a person. Judgements can restrict our grasp of the world around us. Our usual habit of screening out all signals not immediately agreeable with our own favorite worldview, is the mechanism which keeps us all far less informed than we could be.

Jesus is looking at a crushing wall of negative future events. For good reason, the disciples are simply not able to see it. Jesus is preparing us and assuring us of help, safety and power in the Spirit of Truth which we receive as we face the daunting challenges of the future. It is a gift of God! Call it the essence of God embedded in you.

The belief that world should not have treated us the way that it did, is absurd. It already happened, ok? It's okay to not like it. We probably won't be able to change it. But we can turn it over to the Spirit of Truth. The fear of abandonment stuff that we carry around is ours. God

with his Spirit of Truth, will make it all work, if we are able to give it over to him. Gratefully rejoicing in the promise of God's great gift of the Spirit of Truth, I prayerfully invoke its activity in my daily decisions and interactions. We are not orphans. We are Children of God. We have sensed that our whole lives. *Mommy is the Name of God on Children's lips!*

But what about suffering?

C. S. Lewis was asked, "Why do the righteous suffer?" "Why not?" he replied. "They're the only ones who can take it." It is reported that of the 318 official delegates to the First Nicene Council in 325 A.D., all but about a dozen of them had the marks of torture that they had suffered as a result of their faith: Amputations, blindness, lameness. But they weren't orphaned. The Spirit of truth carried them through.

On the cross, unable to mercifully get it all over with sooner, tortured, helpless, and naked.... somehow.... Jesus gave it over to God, in trust. The chaos doesn't change, but the Spirit of Truth invades it and we, who observe and live through the chaos, change. Our battle with horror, pain and evil is a spiritual battle. On our team in this battle is the perfect tag team partner, the Great Holy Spirit of Truth, Trinity 3.0!

The attitude of accepting that it happened releases us to use the gift of the Spirit of Truth. Because he lives, we live in an Easter universe that is working perfectly, and yet giving us the opportunity to make choices in our Good Fridays: To be successful spiritual beings in difficult mortal bodies. We are at once the protagonists in our own lives, and extras in a divine drama with unpredictable plot twists. Easter proclaims that a free will within a completed universe is not a paradox. It is the norm. We battle through a thousand Good Fridays and lose. And at the for-sure, no-doubt-about-it, helplessly dead point, God is there raising us in Christ, through a thousand Easter mornings. Because he lives, we also live!

With all of that going on, just the fact that we can live in human community and compassionate fellowship is a miracle of the highest order. Ah, the Body of Christ.... we are members all. We are not orphans. Use and enjoy your Gift of the Spirit of Truth. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Loving Spirit

ELW 397

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 **“Can You Count The Stars?”** Robert J. Powell

THE OFFERTORY RESPONSE *Let the Vineyards Be Fruitful* ELW Hymn 142

THE OFFERING PRAYER

All pray together:

Merciful God, accept the fruits of our labor, gathered to give you glory. You have set a table before us, a glimpse of that great day when we will hunger and thirst no more. Nourish us with the body and blood of Jesus, that goodness and mercy may follow us and bless the world you love. In the name of Jesus. 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:

Holy One, through this meal you have made your home among us and are making all things new. Send us now to speak peace to anxious hearts, to love our enemies, and to bring your healing to the nations. In the name of Jesus.

Congregation: Amen.

THE BLESSING

SENDING SONG

Alleluia! Sing to Jesus

ELW 392

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.*



♣ **JR Abrego**

- ♣ Pat Boessling
- ♣ Jim Fritze
- ♣ Paul Houghton
- ♣ Joyce Huey
- ♣ Bryan Kile
- ♣ Nancy Lancaster
- ♣ David Magrill
- ♣ Geraine Moore
- ♣ Ed Peterman
- ♣ Dorothy Preuss
- ♣ Lupe Romero
- ♣ Wayne Schaper
- ♣ Scott Spates
- ♣ Jaime Urbanski
- ♣ Bennie Valites
- ♣ Susan Wiles
- ♣ Michael Williams

COUNCIL MEETING

Council meeting will be today, **May 17**, at 11:00 a.m. in the Annex.

Church Council

USHERS

Month: May

Team # 03

Leader: Linda Cuzzort

LAY READERS & ASSISTANTS

MAY

3 Reader — Mallory Hileman

P/E — John Stokes

10 Reader — Ruby Schaper
P/E — Steve Schulze

17 Reader — Jay Byerly
P/E — Alma Byerly

24 Reader — Julie Kilkenny
P/E — Nancy Beamesderfer

31 Reader — Alice Braun
P/E — Sharon Wagner

P/E stands for Prayers and Eucharist

Nancy Beamesderfer

ATTENTION HOLY CROSS MEMBERS

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

You must to fill out a Calendar Request Form or send an email. Thank you!

WOMEN'S MORNING STUDY GROUP

We meet on the **3rd Saturday** of each month from **9:00 am to 10:00 am** in the **Annex**. Our first series will focus on the *Women of the Bible* examining the lives of biblical women to discover spiritual lessons, focusing on their faith, struggles, and roles in God's story.

Come enjoy coffee and a bite during our time of fellowship and growth as we dive into God's Word together. We hope to see you there! Invite a friend.

This is open to all women.

Contact Alma Byerly 713-870-1297 with questions.

Kindly reminder:

SUNDAY SCHOOL AND NURSERY

We are looking for volunteers to support our Sunday School and Nursery!

To give our weekly teachers the opportunity to attend services,
we are building a rotation.

Whether you can help **once a month or even once a quarter**, we need you.

The role is simple: supervise 2–4 children, bring them in for Bible Time, and lead a small activity. It's a low-pressure way to serve our church family.

Please reach out to Wendy Lambeth or Julie Richter if you can help!

Julie Richter

FELLOWSHIP CLUB

The Fellowship Club will be meeting Saturday, **May 16**,
at Hunan Chef (8404 Katy Fwy Ste 100) at **4:00 p.m.**

Be sure to come hungry as they have a huge buffet stocked with Chinese and American foods! If you prefer, you can order from a menu.

If you plan to attend, please contact Linda Cuzzort (513-477-1002).

Nancy Beamesderfer

Cheers to 50 years!

Rev. James Berggren – Sunday, June 7

Let's count his years by friends and supporters, not by years!

Holy Cross wishes him all the courage and confidence to shine in his own unique way for the next 50 years! And another 20 years at Holy Cross!

Please consider a donation to celebrate his outstanding accomplishments at Holy Cross and those of his vast career experiences. Donation envelopes and donation box will be next to our sign-in sheets in the Atrium. **No donation is too small.** Donations accepted through Sunday, May 31. Make checks payable to Marsha Thompson. Should you have any questions please contact Nancy Beamsderfer (281-814-4153) or Marsha Thompson (281-935-4988)

SUNDAY’S SCHEDULE

HAPPY MOTHER’S DAY!

9:30 a.m. Traditional Worship service with Rev. Jim Berggren —WC

*Sunday School / Nursery is available for small children during the service
— Crib Room*

10:30 a.m. Coffee fellowship following the service —Gym

THIS WEEK AT HOLY CROSS

11 Mon	12 Tues	13 Wed	14 Thurs	15 Fri	16 Sat
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<p>6 pm Boy Scouts Eagle Scout Court of Honor ceremony –WC followed by a small reception in the Gym</p>		<p>10 am Roundtable Group –FLCA</p> <p>11 am Choir practice –CL</p> <p>12 pm Bible Study –VR</p>	<p>11—12 pm ELC Chapel –WC</p> <p>12:30—2:30 pm Food Pantry cooking class –Gym kitchen</p> <p>1 pm Ruth Circle meeting –FLCA</p> <p>8 pm AA Women mtg. –FLCA</p>	<p>11—12 pm ELC Chapel –WC</p>	<p>9—10 am Women's Bible Study –FLCA</p> <p>4 pm Fellowship Club –Hunan Chef restaurant</p> <p>6 pm Saturday Informal service –AT</p>
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AT =Atrium, CL=Choir Loft, CR=Choir Room, ELC=Early Learning Center,
 FLC= Family Life Center = **GYM**, FLCA=Annex, KiM= Kids in Motion, MR=Media Room,
 VR=Volunteer Room, WC=Worship Center, YR=Youth Room,
 SST=Safeguards Safety Training (CPR classes)