

# Holy Cross Lutheran Church

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

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713-686-8254

Rev. Jim Berggren

June 21, 2026

4<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost

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## WORSHIP SERVICE

### PRELUDE

### WELCOME / ANNOUNCEMENTS

### GATHERING SONG

Let the Whole Creation Cry

ELW 876

### 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:** **Teach us, good Lord God, to serve you as you deserve, to give and no to count the cost, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labor and not to ask for reward, except that of knowing that we do your will, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

## **SCRIPTURE LESSONS**

**June 21, 2026 – Pentecost 4A**

**FIRST READING: Jeremiah 20:7-13**

### **Jeremiah's Complaint**

<sup>7</sup> You deceived me, LORD, and I was deceived; you overpowered me and prevailed. I am ridiculed all day long; everyone mocks me. <sup>8</sup> Whenever I speak, I cry out proclaiming violence and destruction. So, the word of the LORD has brought me insult and reproach all day long. <sup>9</sup> But if I say, "I will not mention his word or speak anymore in his name," his word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot.<sup>10</sup> I hear many whisperings, "Terror on every side! Denounce him! Let's denounce him!" All my friends are waiting for me to slip, saying, "Perhaps he will be deceived; then we will prevail over him and take our revenge on him."

<sup>11</sup> But the LORD is with me like a mighty warrior; so, my persecutors will stumble and not prevail. They will fail and be thoroughly disgraced; their dishonor will never be forgotten.

<sup>12</sup> LORD Almighty, you who examine the righteous and probe the heart and mind, let me see your vengeance on them, for to you I have committed my cause. <sup>13</sup> Sing to the LORD! Give praise to the LORD! He rescues the life of the needy from the hands of the wicked.

*The word of the Lord.*

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

**THE PSALM          Psalm 69:7-10, 16-18**

**SECOND READING: Romans 6:1b-11**

**Dead to Sin, Alive in Christ**

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? <sup>2</sup> By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? <sup>3</sup> Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into his death? <sup>4</sup> We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

<sup>5</sup> For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. <sup>6</sup> For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— <sup>7</sup> because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

<sup>8</sup> Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. <sup>9</sup> For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. <sup>10</sup> The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

<sup>11</sup> In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

*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 10:24-39**

<sup>24</sup> “The student is not above the teacher, nor a servant above his master. <sup>25</sup> It is enough for students to be like their teachers, and servants like their masters. If the head of the house has been called Beelzebul, how much more the members of his household!

<sup>26</sup> “So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. <sup>27</sup> What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. <sup>28</sup> Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in

hell. <sup>29</sup> Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father's care. <sup>30</sup> And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. <sup>31</sup> So don't be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows.

<sup>32</sup> "Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. <sup>33</sup> But whoever disowns me before others, I will disown before my Father in heaven.

<sup>34</sup> "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. <sup>35</sup> For I have come to turn "a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law— <sup>36</sup> a man's enemies will be the members of his own household.' <sup>37</sup> "Anyone who loves their father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves their son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. <sup>38</sup> Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. <sup>39</sup> Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.

*The Gospel of the Lord.*

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

## CHILDREN'S SERMON

### PR. JIM'S SERMON:



**PENTECOST 4A 6-21-26**

**Mt 10.34-38**

### **DISTURBING PEACE**

In 1924, the Resurrection Catholic Church was built on South Lorena Street in Los Angeles, California. The building was sold in 1950 to help fund a move to Opal Street to accommodate the growing congregation. The Lorena Street location became an athletic club and the Resurrection Athletic Center opened to serve the youth of the neighborhood. Some of the murals on the walls were not painted over.

The area behind the placing of the old altar featured a mural picturing Jesus, offering the bread of His Holy Presence. That picture is the first thing that you see, with the title underneath it, "RESURRECTION A C," in the movie ROCKY. Then the camera pans down to the boxers below the mural, Rocky Balboa versus Spider Rico, snarling and flailing and clinching with each other in mortal combat: A church, turned fight club. Reconciling life contrasted with combative life. Peace broken with disturbance. Community but conflict. The point is clear and the

religious symbolism is clear through the whole *Rocky* franchise. Beaten and broken, Rocky is a struggling has-been who is resurrected. It's not a mistake or coincidence that Apollo Creed is a play on Apostles' Creed. Today's Gospel reading is a scriptural passage that has a great deal to say about disturbing peace.

Jesus is asking for a real and full commitment from his disciples. He is asking for an aggressive stance against the dominant culture of empire, not fearful and not accommodating. Jesus doesn't ask us to be average Christians, whatever that is. Our baptismal rite includes the renouncing of the devil and forces that defy God, renouncing the powers of the world that rebel against God, and the ways of sin that draw us away from God. Those are big orders. The bottom line is, we are subject to Christ, not the world.

The first clear point that Jesus makes is that he is not an anesthetic. Peace is not the absence of conflict. His mission is not to chocolate cover the world with sweetness. He is not a ball-bearing in the great wheel of life to ease the friction. Friction is necessary. If there isn't friction, you'll never get a grip.

The way he puts it, "I'm not casting down peace on earth, but a sword." It is a gauntlet in challenge. Revelation 1:16 describes that out of his mouth comes a sharp two-edged sword. What he says is either true or false. We must decide. We confirm on that basis. It is not up to anyone else. We decide. The cross is either failure or redemption. We decide. When the Word of God breaks into history, the lines are drawn.

Jesus speaks differently than the other leaders of his day. His images are current in the traditional language concerning the Days of the Messiah, but with a difference. He describes war, not waged against Israel's enemies, but rather an internal war of personal conscience and civil conflict in political and religious priorities. He talks about the collapsing of the era of principalities and powers and the birthing of a new age. It sounds impossible. Hard to imagine.

Written at a time when persecution of Followers of Jesus' Way was heating up, he points out that it is an illusion to think that his coming brings instant peace of mind and serenity of life or that the conflict he initiates will be a brief skirmish. It is a disturbing text.

The text may help us to grapple with priorities. What do we value the most? What is our focus? Life is ambiguous. God is a mystery. We must decide on our course.

Jesus illustrates by pointing to a typical family, split on issues of priorities. Man against Father. Daughter against Mother. Daughter-in-law against Mother-In-Law. It looks like there is a little bit of a generation gap going on here in what Jesus describes as open hostilities. Generational cohorts tend to hold together because of similar experiences, histories and interests. It is an historical problem. Maybe, more pronounced now than ever before.

Today we have a few remaining of the Great Generation, builders of American culture with memories of the Great Depression and World War II. Then ‘boomers’ were born between 1944 and 1964. They are followed by Gen X, 1965-1979. The culture was shifting radically. Then along comes Gen Y or Millennials, born from 1980 to 1994. This group is the first which have now spent most of their life with computers. Then there is Gen Z, 1995-2015.

Gen Y consumers, the Millennials, are earning half of the income in the U.S. this year, 2026. 96% of Americans have a smartphone but Gen Z (the youngest) is the highest user of personal handheld electronic connections to the world, and buffers against the world of experience. The differences we experience are vast. Much vaster than the differences experienced by families in Jesus’ time. This is due to obvious reasons of exponential technological invention and innovation.

Dissimilar interests, wavering mutual affections, and the ambiguities of social and moral consensus will not hold the family unit together in our world. It barely would in Jesus’ world.

Jesus’s object is not to split up families, but hopefully, on the contrary, to bring them together with a higher priority of shared mission. With Jesus as the central figure in our most intimate of relationships, we will be able to survive the human impossibility of always maintaining mutual affections in unbelievably trying times. Jesus distinguishes between “eros”, and “philos,” the loves of attraction and of mutual affection and “agape,” a divine love, **commanded**. Jesus stands between us in all of our relationships, a divine buffer zone; a divine call to mutual forgiveness in the midst of impossible conflict. He calls us from easy love that is easy to lose, into intentional love that strives to love the unlovable, as a matter of course. Like

Jesus does. With us.

With the Word of God as our priority, our affections are not limited to just those we like or get along with, but can reach out to those very much different than us.

Picking priorities is challenging and disturbing because it means including some things and omitting others. One day I was riding my motorcycle a little too fast, at least for Monrad Street, at that time a sandy lane, bordered by discarded heavy trash. I was wearing an open buttoned shirt; big mistake. Smart bikers wear t-shirt or zippered jackets. A wasp flew into my shirt. He did what confused and frightened wasps do, and whooooooeee, it hurt. My natural inclination was to jump up and down and scream and swat, but I had a higher priority requiring personal discipline and commitment to staying alive. That meant driving like nothing was happening, so I grinned and kept on riding. Mr. Wasp, after all, had only one sting, and then, he was no longer a problem.

In Jesus' time, during Roman occupation, with betrayals of political leadership, and deadly persecutions, he gave permission to live, by taking up crosses. It is the ultimate permission to give ourselves away rather than to let time trudgingly bear us away. It is making moments instead of monuments, of enjoying eternity instead of fussing over minutes.

Life is not generally found where we naturally are inclined to seek it.....in the obvious and easy directions. It is usually discovered in the opposite direction down the path of self-giving and sacrifice.

In the movie, "Butterflies Are Free," Goldie Hawn is portrayed in the act of running away from her blind lover. She says the reason why is because he's blind and so he's crippled in life.

The young man replies, "No, I'm not crippled, I'm sightless. You are crippled because you can't commit yourself to anyone."

Jesus helps us to see that life is disturbing. There are generational conflicts, emotional betrayals and political differences. That stuff doesn't change because of the cross, or the Resurrection or the Messiah.

But Jesus' coming pushes to the extreme the necessity for all of us to put the stamp of

relativity upon everything which is not ultimate; the ultimate that Jesus represents and embodies. Jesus is not trying to destroy the precious qualities of nation, family, self and charity. He is trying to clarify the ultimate things that really hold nation, family, self, and charity together. If they themselves pretend to ultimacy they will be shattered on the shoals of time, not by God's judgment, but by human weakness hoping for more than human power or human institutions will ever be able to offer.

From the extremes of national politics, through personal persecution, to ordinary affairs of the household-----that's the all-inclusive horizon of Christ's radical claim on us. Now that may be disturbing, but it is peace as well. The peace of Christ is action-packed, hectic, decisive, sometimes divisive and sometimes even serenely calming. It is a disturbing peace. It is a peace that does pass all understanding. It is a peace that does keep our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

**HYMN OF THE DAY**

**Children of the Heavenly Father**

ELW 781

**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:**

Loving God, we offer at your table the gifts of our hearts. Help us take heart in you and share freely of your love, so that all creation can taste your abundance. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit abiding with us now and forever. 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:

Compassionate God, through the gifts of bread and wine our hearts are filled with the abundance of your love. Strengthen us that we, through this holy meal, may share your love freely, as you have shared with us. We ask this in the name of Jesus, through the Spirit nourishing us now and forever.

**Congregation: Amen.**

### THE BLESSING

**SENDING SONG**                      **If You But Trust in God to Guide You**                      ELW 769

### 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.*



- ♣ Fred Abrego
- ♣ Pat Boessling
- ♣ Anita Cooper
- ♣ Jim Fritze
- ♣ Paul Houghton

- ♣ Joyce Huey
- ♣ Bryan Kile
- ♣ Nancy Lancaster
- ♣ David Magrill
- ♣ Geraine Moore
- ♣ Ed Peterman
- ♣ Dorothy Preuss
- ♣ Lupe Romero
- ♣ Wayne Schaper
- ♣ Myrtl Slade
- ♣ Scott Spates
- ♣ Patricia Steapp
- ♣ Jaime Urbanski
- ♣ Bennie Valites
- ♣ Susan Wiles
- ♣ Michael Williams

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## **COUNCIL MEETING**

Council meeting will be Sunday, **July 19**, at 11:00 a.m. in the Annex.

Church Council

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## **USHERS**

**Month:** June

**Team #** 04

**Leader:** Julie Kilkenny

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## **LAY READERS & ASSISTANTS**

### **JUNE**

- 7 Reader — Linda Cuzzort  
P/E — Nancy Beamesderfer

14 Reader — Ike Thompson  
P/E — Penny Schick

21 Reader — Scott Wegner  
P/E — John Stokes

28 Reader — Charlotte Jaster  
P/E — Russell Richter

P/E stands for Prayers and Eucharist

Nancy Beamesderfer

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### **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.

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## **MAM**

1625 Blalock Rd. Houston, TX 77080

### **MAM is offering Basic Computer Skills Classes**

#### **Basic Computer Skills for Seniors**

- **Schedule:** 4 Fridays, 10:00 AM–12:00 PM (no class Friday, July 3rd)
- **Dates:** Starting **June 26**
- **Location:** Christ the King (CTK) Presbyterian Church - 1201 Silber Rd.

This class is designed specifically for older adults who are new to computers or looking to build confidence with basic skills. (Enrollment is not limited by age - but younger folks should know that the majority of the class will be older people.) If you have any questions, please contact Sussy in the Church Office or call at 713-686-8254.

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Holy Cross Lutheran Church prides itself on giving back to our community. To continue this tradition, we have partnered with [Memorial Assistance Ministries](#) to help children get new school clothing through their [Back to School](#) program. Families living in poverty in our community often have a hard time paying the bills and feeding their children. Additional costs for Back to School, means they might fall behind on rent or bills.

We encourage our Holy Cross members and friends to join us in supporting MAM's Back to School Program. Each \$50 donation means a child will start the school year with new uniforms, ready to learn. Please consider sponsoring a child today!

If you would like to help please make a check payable to: **Memorial Assistance Ministries** (MAM) include in the memo: [Back to School Program](#). Please send or bring the check to the Church Office and give it to our MAM-Church Representative Sussy Terry.

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## **ALTAR FLOWERS**

Altar Flowers are given by Charlotte Jaster

in honor of Bruce Jaster's birthday.

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# SUNDAY'S SCHEDULE

## HAPPY FATHER'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**

<b>22 Mon</b>	<b>23 Tues</b>	<b>24 Wed</b>	<b>25 Thurs</b>	<b>26 Fri</b>	<b>27 Sat</b>
<b><u>CROSSTIES DEADLINE</u></b>		<i>12 pm Bible Study -VR</i>	<i>8 pm AA Women mtg. —FLCA</i>		<i>6 pm Saturday Informal service -AT</i>

### **JUNE 22-26 / VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL (VBS) / FLC/FLCA/YR/MR**

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)