

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*

October 2026	<i>Holy Cross Lutheran Church</i>	Vol. 32 No. 10
<u>Bergy's Babble: "That's Not Fair"</u> Envy! One of the seven deadly sins. It starts with thinking that someone else has something you don't have; but you think you should have it anyway. You are busy counting someone else's blessings, instead of your own. It is kind of fruitless. I believe that God is very generous, but still only gives us, what we are able to handle as good stewards at any given moment. At first that might not seem fair. As a child, I was very good at noticing when things weren't fair and of course, I would try to bring these discoveries to my parents' attention. Dad would say, "Son, I can show you your Birth Certificate, but you didn't get a Fair Certificate. Nobody does. Sometimes really dumb farmers grow really big potatoes." I can't tell you how many years it took for me to figure out some of the things that Dad would tell me. This was my introduction to undeserved grace. The Theology of Big Potatoes, anyway. The universe is not required to be fair, and God's giving is not restrained by any human understanding of fairness which falls short of the great and miraculous gifts of God. Thank you, Lord for NOT giving me what I think I fairly deserve! God does way better than that, in mercy and generosity. ... /// ...		

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

Even today, farmers will hire more workers up to the eleventh hour to make sure that the harvest happens. If you don't get the wheat in, it can be lost in minutes. One minute it is a moving ocean of golden waves, and suddenly hail or wind or fire flattens it. A muffler backfires on an old dump truck hauling wheat, and now you have ashes. Your family's resources for a year.....up in smoke. Doesn't seem fair, all that work. All those prayers. All that worry. All those dreams unable to be realized! The focus is on the harvest. This is the most important thing here. *The Harvest is the most important thing!!!*

The field downwind north from ours, caught fire. Wind at my back, I stood on our property line stunned by what I saw. The custom cutter, a hired commercial harvester, a rough and dangerous looking man, poured all of his drinking water over his head and clothes, wrapped his face with a wet towel, and jumped up on his combine, a piece of farm equipment worth a small fortune. His whole livelihood was tied up in his state-of-the-art Combine. He drove straight into the flames; harvesting like it was a normal day in Hades. He was using his machine to smother the fire and pick up whatever grain he could. Grace way beyond fair! He literally "bore the burden of the day and the scorching heat," and he got paid the same as usual, and he never said, "That's not fair." Nevertheless, he saved over half of our neighbor's crop.

It is not about individuals and what they earn or deserve. If the harvest isn't successful, nobody gets anything. The *Self-absorption of a few will destroy community efforts at harvest time prosperity.*

In verse 12, the complaint is voiced: "You made them equal to us, who worked through the heat of the day!" That's not fair!

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

The workers are making an accusation that they were treated the same as those who worked for only an hour. They were complaining about perceived inequity. That is not true. Those who were hired later were like the anchor person on a relay team. They see how the race is going, and they know how hard they have to work to win it. It is the responsibility of the late-day hires to make the harvest a success.

Their compensation will be vastly more per hour, but exactly the same per day. Their work output will be vastly more than the all-day laborers, who should be thrilled. Because of the late-day workers, the harvest is a success and all workers will be paid. Without the late-day worker's output of energy, there will be no harvest and no one will get anything. There is a big difference between equality and similarity. Equality and equity are vastly different conditions.

You can get a decent pair of Nike shoes for a hundred bucks. Generally, all Nikes are equal, but some are more in demand, so they are not all the same.

Sotheby's auctioned off a pair of Nike 'Moon Shoes', designed to celebrate the Apollo 17 landing on the Moon, where Cernan and Schmitt bravely travelled over the lunar surface for a distance of 5 miles from the Lunar Landing Module. They had to follow their own tracks back to the module, because at 5 miles distant, it was below the horizon. They couldn't see their home base. And those tracks are still there. The Moon Shoes were worn at the 1972 Olympic trials. Sotheby's hammer fell at \$437,500. You can't get a pair of those at Academy. They are all equal Nikes, but not the same. God values each free soul equally. Equity is a lock-step failure of human aspiration. Make everyone exactly the same in all aspects? Whaddya got? Lazy Zombies.

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

At the time it seemed like a good deal between the landowner and the workers, until they started to compare ourselves negatively with other people. The problem was that they weren't counting their own blessings. They were too busy enviously counting other people's blessings, and then perceiving inequity. Sometimes what looks like a blessing in someone else's life can be an impediment, a curse. Bankrupt lottery winners are a case in point.

We are all equal. We are not all the same. We are all equal before the face of Lord God Almighty, and in an amazing leap of human endeavor, the founding documents of our country affirm the fact that we are all created equal, not the same. Our equality assures the wonders of marvelous diversity. Everyone is included. This gift of God brings with it the freedom to experience differences, to embrace differentiation from others, and to enjoy the pluripotency of God's universe. Sameness/Equity.....it truly is not fair. It stops forward movement and denies God's future. It arrests human ambition and spiritual growth. If it's all 'the same', there won't be a harvest. Equality? That is the outcome of God's grace. The harvest is in. God's party is in progress. That's better than fair. Amen.



COUNCIL MEETING

Next Council Meeting will be Sunday, **October 18**, 2026,
at 11:00 a.m. in the Annex.



**Holy Cross Lutheran Church (HCLC)
Minutes for Council Meeting – August 16, 2026**

The August Church Council meeting was called to order by President Stephen Schulze on Sunday, August 16, 2026 at 11:10 a.m. Pastor Berggren opened with a prayer.

In attendance were: Pastor Jim Berggren, Stephen Schulze, Jay Byerly, Anita Cooper, Ricki Finstad, Julie Kilkenny, Wendy Lambeth, Bert Martin, Russell Richter, and Penny Schick.

The **minutes** from the July 2026 meeting were submitted by Secretary Julie Kilkenny and approved by Council.

The **Treasurer's Report** was presented by Ricki Finstad. He reported that July 2026 offerings were \$28,464, which was \$9,826 greater than June. July expenses were \$55,801, which was \$24,801 greater than June. July expenses were \$27,337 greater than June expenses. Year to date expenses of \$225,197 exceeded offerings by \$69,192, an average deficit of \$9,885/month. The checking account balance at 7/31/26 was \$24,420, not including restricted funds. Treasurer Ricki Finstad gave a summary of investments and other items in his report and noted that the annual insurance premium is included in these figures. Council approved the Treasurer's Report.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Berggren updated Council on his activities for the month. He conducted memorial services for Holy Cross members Marilyn Collins (8/14/26) and Fredda Yurk (8/15/26). He thanked Penny Schick for her help in coordinating details for these services. He noted the official celebration of the Blessing of the Backpacks on August 16th (with an early dedication on August 9th).

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... /// ... Minutes for Council Meeting — August 16, 2026

Pastor Berggren's other activities included weekly Bible study, making phone calls and visits to parishioners; providing counseling and minister-ing for prayer requests; outreach to the community; and various church ministry meetings.

Committee Reports and Old Business:

Buildings and Grounds/Maintenance:

- President Schulze and Wendy Lambeth described ongoing work by Alan Lambeth on the cooling towers for the sanctuary A/C system.
- Council continued the discussion on landscaping the north wall of the sanctuary in the Westview lawn. Tillie Remmert determined that there is \$3,800 available in memorial funds for this project. Ms. Lambeth contacted a landscape contractor who could accomplish the project for this price.
- Mr. Schulze updated Council on the progress to try to fix recent problems with one of the projectors for the Power Point presentation in the sanctuary.

Technology Committee: President Schulze asked Council to consider establishing a Technology Committee to guide the responsible use of digital tools that support worship, communication, and administration. There are several programs that Holy Cross uses that are outdated or being discontinued, and this team would coordinate with users to assess needs, recommend solutions, and help ensure that the technology serves the congregation effectively. Discussion ensued about who should attend, and a meeting was scheduled for Aug. 23rd.

WELCA: Mr. Schulze asked for an update on WELCA activities.

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Ms. Schick did not attend the last meeting, but gave a brief summary of items WELCA is working on, including organizing (and donating extra serving pieces in the Annex kitchen) and scheduling a “deep clean” of both kitchens. Mr. Byerly relayed a comment about new members needing better clarity of WELCA projects and finances to be shared at the meetings.

Food Pantry: President Schulze asked for Council input before he meets with Pantry representatives to review the agreement with HCLC, specifically how the new refrigeration units (and associated electricity costs, as well as natural gas costs for the standby generator) would affect the current agreement. Ms. Lambeth made a motion for President Schulze to propose at that meeting that Holy Cross would be responsible for up to \$100/year for natural gas costs during power outages; the Food Pantry would pay for costs incurred after that. The motion was duly seconded and passed by Council.

Home Visitation: Pastor Berggren reported that the next meeting for the Home Visitation ministry will be August 23rd.

Youth Ministry: Pastor Berggren reported that the first meeting of the Youth Group will be on September 9th. This group of middle and high school students will meet the 2nd and 4th Wednesday evenings of each month in the Youth Room at Holy Cross.

Upcoming Events:

- ⇒ Wednesday Youth Group: 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month, 6 – 8 pm (begins September 9th)
- ⇒ Blessing of the Animals Service: Saturday, October 3, 2026

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- ⇒ Fall Open House / Stewardship Sunday: October 25, 2026
(Stewardship Service also on Saturday, October 24th)
- ⇒ Trunk or Treat: Saturday, October 31, 2026
- ⇒ WELCA ThankOffering Service: Saturday, November 21, and
Sunday, November 22, 2026

New Business:

- President Schulze received a proposal from Modern Elevator to upgrade the control system for the HCLC elevator, as it has become impossible to get replacement parts. Council discussed several options within the proposal (ranging from \$8,500 - \$56,000), as well how this would affect the current maintenance contract.
- Mr. Schulze received a draft of an agreement from Big Little School (1203 Wirt Rd.) to formalize the long-standing arrangement it has had with Holy Cross to shelter in place at HCLC in the event of an emergency at the school. A motion was made (and seconded) to sign the document and formalize this arrangement; Council approved this action.

The September Council Meeting was scheduled for Sunday, September 20, 2026 at 11:00 a.m.

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

Respectfully submitted,

Julie Kilkenny,
Secretary, Church Council





STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY

Stewardship Sunday will be **October 25th**.

Potluck sponsored by WELCA following the service.



SAVE THE DATE

Women of Holy Cross will be sponsoring a pot luck lunch
after service Sunday, **October 25th**.

Please bring your favorite dish to share with others.

Hope to see all of you there!

Nancy Beamesderfer



TRUNK N TREAT

Saturday, October 31st.

Trunk N Treat is coming to Holy Cross. We have 6 cars signed up.

Sign up sheet is in the Atrium. We need at least 10.

Ask friends and neighbors if they would like to join us.

Set up between 4-5. Costumes are always welcome.

BYOC&C! Bring your own car and candy.

If questions, see Julie Richter



Please join us on Saturday, **October 3rd, 2023
for the Blessing of the Animals.**

This is in honor of St. Francis and his love of animals.

What better way to say we love our pets
than to have them receive a blessing!

**Pastor Berggren will be near the West parking lot
at the Fountain Courtyard
from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon to give our pets a blessing.**

We hope to see you and your furry, scaley, feathery,
(*or whatever the case may be*) friends!

MAM

Memorial Assistance Ministries

1625 Blalock Rd. Houston, TX 77080

Amazing things Happening at MAM - **Mark your calendar!**

- Saturday, **October 17** 9 am—12 noon MAM Shred Day
- Fri. & Sat. **November 6-7** Resale Half-Off Sale (Blalock location)

Resale Store— Need volunteers for Restock Days at Blalock,
Scheduled for November 8, 1-4 p.m. Interested please contact Sussy.

The Store is always in need of plastic shopping bags
so please consider recycling and donating those bags,
especially in preparation for the Half-Off sale in November.



FELLOWSHIP CLUB

Fellowship Club will not be meeting for the month of October!

However...

Save the Date: **Saturday, November 21st**, at 4:00 p.m.

We will have a potluck Mexican food feast here at the church!

It's gonna be a good one!

Bring your favorite Mexican dish to share!

Marsha Thompson



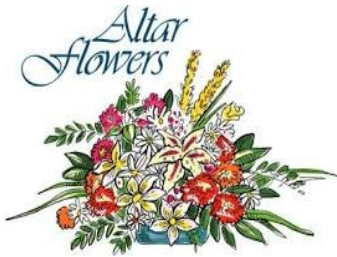
YOUTH PROJECT

Come together in faith and friendship
to our new Youth Project meetings.

We meet every 2nd and 4th Wednesday,
from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. in the Youth Room.

Additional information will be available
on the church Website: holycross.us or [Facebook](#).

Pr. Jim Berggren



ALTAR FLOWERS

In the month of September:

Altar Flowers were given in honor
and celebration of Pr. Jim's Birthday.

READINGS and PSALMS OCTOBER 2026

DATE	1 st READING	PSALM	2 nd READING	GOSPEL
10/04/26	Isaiah 5:1-7	80:7-15	Philippians 3:4b-14	Matthew 21:33-46
10/11/26	Isaiah 25:1-9	23	Philippians 4:1-9	Matthew 22:1-4
10/18/26	Isaiah 45:1-7	96:1-9	1 Thessalonians 1:1-10	Matthew 22:15-22
10/25/26	Jeremiah 31:31-34	46	Romans 3:9-18	John 8:31-36

USHERS

Month: October **Team #** 04 **Leader:** Julie Kilkenny

LAY READERS & ASSISTANTS

10/04	R	Mallory Hileman
	P/E	Nancy Beamesderfer
10/11	R	Linda Cuzzort
	P/E	John Stokes
10/18	R	Charlotte Jaster
	P/E	Jay Byerly
10/25	R	Steve Schulze
	P/E	Wendy Lambeth

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



Birthdays in the month of October:

01	Richard Davidson	12	Renee Allcorn
	Wendy Lambeth		Karen Yoder
04	Laura Smith	13	Nathan Kelm
05	John Echols		Tillie Remmert
	Ike Thompson	15	Sandy Dobbs
06	Mallory Hileman	17	Julie Richter
	Linda Hemphill	18	Peter Walbridge
09	Tristan Walton	19	Shane Berggren
10	Stephen Schulze	26	John Allcorn
11	Candy Berggren	28	Barney Boeker
	Bryan Kile		Jennifer Roberts
	Rose Marie Stork	30	Clara Estes
			Barbara Neumann

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



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

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



*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

Fred Abrego
Ken Beamesderfer
Nancy Beamesderfer
Susan Caradec
Jessica Coleman
Paul Houghton
Joyce Huey
Bryan Kile
Ernest Luker
David Magrill
Stuffy Martinez
Jeremy Mitchell
Geraine Moore

Ed Peterman
Dorothy Preuss
Lupe Romero
Jim Schwabenland
Scott Spates
Patricia Steapp
Gary Sundberg
Bill Tempel
Dave Trickett
Jaime Urbanski
Bennie Valites
Susan Wiles
Michael Williams

TREASURER'S REPORT

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

AUGUST 2026

Receipts	\$ 18,319. ⁰⁰
Expenses	<u>27,890.⁸⁰</u>
Balance	(\$ 9,571. ⁸⁰)

Operational receipts

Year-to-date received	\$ 174,324. ⁷¹
Expenditures year to date ..	<u>253,088.¹⁷</u>
Balance	(\$ 78,763. ⁴⁶)

AVERAGE ATTENDANCE

AUGUST SERVICES

Saturday Informal service : 17
Sunday Traditional service : 54

