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

November 2026 | Holy Cross Lutheran Church | Vol. 32 No. 11

Bergy's Babble: "**Prepare -Wait and Watch**"

I had a friend who was OCD before obsessive-compulsion got all popular with the pharmaceutical industry. One day in the locker room after football practice I asked him, "Why do you do that? You put on your jockeys, and then boxers, and then your gym shorts. Then you put your pants on and hold them up with a belt AND suspenders. Why? Don't things get a little crowded?" He said, "If I have a car wreck, and break my arm, my suspenders will make a good sling. If I am bleeding, the belt will be a great tourniquet, and I can use the pant legs for bandages. If the car is totaled, I will still have gym shorts on, to run for help." He had a plan. Just in case.

Now, you might want to count on your life being run by God in a much more respectable and better organized fashion, but while you are making your plans, be ready for God's possible alternate plan, an unplanned surprise! In real life, time runs out. The parable indicates that faith is a relationship with God, there will be a point where God claims us, as partners in the relationship. In a relationship, you relate. If you are out running around, worrying about yourself and other stuff, you will be avoiding the relationship. He will see whether we were invested in waiting and watching or not. We either say yes or no. You can't say maybe forever.

… /// ...

… /// … Bergy's Babble

All of the bridesmaids were invited. Gifts will be given. The Bridal Registry at *Heaven'sMart,* has one gift item listed. LAMPS! Nothing else. Just LAMPS. The invitation said, "Come-As-You-Are and bring a lamp." 5 wedding gift lamps will be immediately available for the happy couple to use, if the wedding goes past sundown. 5 lamps will require extra effort to get the necessary oil and do the essential lamp maintenance. They are not useful yet. They won't be immediately useful. But they can be extremely useful. There is an implication here that this party might go on for a long time. The foolish bridesmaids dutifully bring their gift lamp that is unnecessary for an afternoon event, following the rules, just so they won't look funny, because clearly they think that the wedding is about them, not the Bridegroom. "What will everybody be wearing? What are the colors? What is the menu? Is my gift lamp pretty enough? Does this lamp make me look fat? Should I take a Prilosec before dinner? We get it all worked out, and then the Bridegroom is late. None of those concerns address the person of the Bridegroom. They are about Self. Pure, undiluted self.

The wise virgins were planning for the long haul with God. They are focused. "There won't be enough if we give you our oil," doesn't seem like a whole lot of Christian charity. But this is a story about faith. We can encourage faith in each other, but we can't have faith for each other. I can't do aerobics for you. Please do my cardio so I can watch TV, eat pizza and popcorn and lose weight. In fact, I was kind of counting on your diet to make me skinny. The wise virgins accept that it doesn't work that way. The foolish virgins had better options, other than trying to perfect their self-image. They could have explained, "We brought the lamps but we have no oil. Nevertheless, we are here for you!" And the Bridegroom would have said, "That's the ticket! Come on in! We can always use more light!"

If you trust God, you are a truster, living in his presence; whether he shows up early or late; whether you are perfectly prepared or not. If we distrust, we close out the one important relationship with ultimate reality, the Ground of Being, that is freely offered.

… /// ...

… /// … Bergy's Babble

According to wedding custom, the bridegroom was twelve hours late for his noon wedding. Five bridesmaids watched and waited and won. Five bridesmaids worried and wandered and went home empty. They didn't relate very well to their companion watchers and waiters, the five wise women, who were prepared for unusual contingencies. One should try to learn from people like that. If the foolish ladies had been friendly at noon, they would have had conversations. They would have shared information and had plenty of time to improve and finalize their preparation for the Bridegroom. If they couldn't relate very well with other guests of the Bridegroom, they were not going to have much fun at the wedding anyway. They are too busy looking, to watch.

We watch for God and wait, because it would be a pity to miss all of the fun. We trust God and in so doing, we prepare for a variety of contingencies, because the world always comes up with a custom selection of interesting surprises just for you. It's easier to adapt your plan than to ignore God's plan. Jesus plainly says, "Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour." Most certainly, faith has a now or never urgency to it. We need it for the daily stuff, even as we wait and watch faithfully for the world-changing advent of the Bridegroom.

We needlessly fear the finality of a last judgment, because the Lord evaluates us moment by moment in our ongoing devotion. After all, we are watching for a good time. The Master of Ceremonies, the Perfect Bridegroom is Jesus Christ. Prepare, Watch and Wait. That is exciting! Talk to God and his people daily. Wait and watch for him when he seems distant. He is here, now! Amen .

See you in worship ……. Bergy





THANKOFFERING

Saturday, November 21, and Sunday, November 22

The idea of collecting in small offering boxes goes back to the very early 1800's when women formed "mite" or "cent" societies to raise money. Lutheran women were given small Thankoffering boxes to place in a special location in their homes as a visible reminder of blessings received.

Women would add coins to those boxes almost daily as particular blessings were noted. From their use came the idea of an annual church service to celebrate their collection.

Thankofferings show gratitude for God's blessings and give us an important and tangible way to express that gratitude. It is a tradition grounded in our celebration of community, of meeting together to joyfully give thanks for what God has given us. Thankofferings have always been and still are, our opportunity to say thank you to God in both significant and ordinary moments.

The women of Holy Cross are encouraged to express their thankfulness by donating "coins" and/or items for the East Spring Branch Food Pantry.

Nancy Beamesderfer

Holy Cross Lutheran Church (HCLC)
Minutes for Council Meeting – September 20, 2026

The September Church Council meeting was called to order by President Stephen Schulze on Sunday, September 20, 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, Wendy Lambeth, Bert Martin, Russell Richter, and Penny Schick. Warren Schick attended as a special guest. Secretary Julie Kilkenny was not in attendance.

The **minutes** from the August 2026 meeting were submitted by President Stephen Schulze and approved by Council.

The **Treasurer's Report** was presented by Ricki Finstad. He reported that August 2026 offerings were $18,319, which was $10,145 less than July. August expenses were $27,891, which was $27,910 less than July. Expenses for the month of August were $9,572 greater than offerings. Year to date expenses of $253,088 exceeded offerings by $78,763, an average deficit of $9,845/month. The checking account balance at 8/31/26 was $41,314, not including restricted funds; this increase was due to the transfer of funds from one of the stock dividend accounts. Treasurer Finstad gave a summary of investments and other items in his report. Council approved the Treasurer's Report.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Berggren gave a brief report on his activities for the month. He conducted a memorial service for Brent Sutherland. He remarked that a new family from the neighborhood had attended the Saturday service; he was hopeful that the 13-year-old would come to a Youth Group meeting. He updated Council on the status of several Holy Cross members and friends who were ill. Pastor Berggren's other activities included weekly Bible study, making phone calls and visits to parishioners; providing counseling and ministering for prayer requests; outreach to the community; and various church ministry meetings.

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Committee Reports and Old Business:

Food Pantry: President Schulze asked Warren Schick to sit in on the Pantry portion of this meeting to bring him up to speed on Council discussions regarding revisions to the agreement between the Food Pantry and HCLC, specifically how energy costs attributable to the new refrigeration units and standby generator during extended power outages (such as hurricanes or winter storms) would affect the current agreement. Mr. Schulze reiterated that, at the August meeting, Council agreed that Holy Cross would be responsible for up to $100 per year (*not* per occurrence) for additional natural gas costs during power outages; the Food Pantry would pay for costs incurred after that. There was further discussion about additional signage regarding Pantry and church parking spaces.

Buildings and Grounds/Maintenance:

- President Schulze noted that the **landscape** contractor ground the stumps of the shrubs along the north wall of the sanctuary in the Westview lawn, and the new plants will be installed when the weather cools off. Ms. Lambeth added that the lawn maintenance crew will adjust their trimming for narrower beds in preparation for the smaller plants.
- Mr. Schulze reported that the **projector** in the sanctuary for the Power Point presentation has been fixed. He expressed his appreciation to Warren Schick for underwriting this repair, which was significantly impacted by the high sanctuary ceiling. Council briefly discussed whether the purchase of a motorized lift by HCLC would help in the future.
- President Schulze and Wendy Lambeth updated Council on the ongoing dispute with the HVAC manufacturer of the chilled water pump for the **sanctuary A/C system**.

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It is the opinion of Steve Finley of Optimal Air (the HVAC installation company), Mr. Schulze, and Alan Lambeth that the problem was that the equipment was defective and should be covered by warranty. Mr. Schulze elaborated on the technical details of the equipment failure. The manufacturer will not honor the warranty for its equipment, as they consider the problem to be a cavitation problem, not faulty equipment, and therefore not covered by warranty. Messrs. Finley, Lambeth and Schulze agree that taking the manufacturer to court would be difficult and quite costly, with no guarantee of victory. Mr. Finley proposed that Optimal Air would be willing to cover 2/3 of the replacement cost if Holy Cross would cover $5,000. Ms. Lambeth stressed that Optimal Air has been a fierce advocate for Holy Cross in trying to resolve this issue and gave several examples. Additional discussion ensued, and Dr. Finstad made a motion for HCLC to pay Optimal Air $5,000 toward the replacement pump; the motion was seconded by Mr. Richter and approved by Council.

WELCA: Penny Schick reported that the Heavenly Quilters were in need of additional storage space that could be locked. She requested that an underused closet in the Volunteer Room be designated for this purpose. Council approved this action.

Home Visitation: Pastor Berggren reported on progress of the Home Visitation ministry, which is continuing in a systematic way, with several volunteers making calls to homebound parishioners.

Youth Ministry: Pastor Berggren reported that the Youth Group is off to a slow start, but that was not unexpected. The first meeting was 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. Council discussed additional ways to publicize this group.

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Stewardship Sunday / Fall Open House / Potluck Lunch: October 25, 2026, (Stewardship Service also on Saturday, October 24th) There was a brief discussion of ideas for Stewardship Sunday. Ms. Lambeth is working on making a list of ministries and volunteer opportunities to be displayed in the Gym, as well as a map of the church campus to for distribution. President Schulze will seek a volunteer to present the temple talk regarding financial stewardship.

New Business:

Treasurer Finstad remarked that HCLC received a bill for an annual cleaning/maintenance of an older copy "folding" machine. After checking with the church office manager, he determined this was not a necessary expense, as a new machine would be about the same cost. President Schulze asked to formalize this decision, and a motion was made by Dr. Finstad to discontinue this service; it was seconded by Mr. Richter, and passed by Council.

- President Schulze asked for Council action to clear up administrative issues regarding HCLC's **Vanguard** accounts. 1) Vanguard is changing over to a new type of account, so HCLC Cross will need to convert to this new system. 2) Currently John Stokes (Financial Review Committee) is not an authorized signer on the account, and Vanguard representatives will not give him any information regarding these accounts; this has been an extremely frustrating and cumbersome situation for him. He is asking Council to add him as an authorized signatory for the Holy Cross Vanguard accounts.

  1. motion was made by Wendy Lambeth (seconded by Ricki Finstad) to approve converting the HCLC Vanguard account to the new Vanguard system. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

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2. A motion was made by Wendy Lambeth (seconded by Ricki Finstad) to add John Stokes as a signatory to the Holy Cross Vanguard account. The motion was approved by a unanimous vote.

The October Council Meeting was scheduled for Sunday, October 18, 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

MAM

Memorial Assistance Ministries

1625 Blalock Rd. Houston, TX 77080

- 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.



CROSS WALL

	In Memory of	Donated by
†	Fredda Yurk	Holy Cross Lutheran Church Friends
†	Fredda Yurk	Barbara Neumann
†	Marilyn Finer Collins	Her Family

Upcycled Crafty Ladies

BABY CARE KITS FOR LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

With the birth of our daughter Laura's first child coming in January, I have felt the leading to help with making more Baby Care Kits for Lutheran World Relief.

I just can't imagine as an expecting mother not having the resources to keep my baby warm, clean and dry. I am asking for your help either donating money or items from the list below.

Sizes should be between 6 to 24 months.
Please contact me at (713) 870-1297 for any questions.
I will also put up poster in the Family Life Center.

Thank you so much for your love and support!

Alma Byerly



FELLOWSHIP CLUB

Fellowship Club will have a potluck Mexican food feast Saturday, **November 21, 3:00 p.m.** 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 is available
on the church Website: **holycross.us or Facebook.**

Pr. Jim Berggren



COUNCIL MEETING

Next Council Meeting will be Sunday, **November 29**, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. in the Annex.

Church Council

READINGS and PSALMS

NOVEMBER 2026

DATE	1st READING	PSALM	2nd READING	GOSPEL
11/01/26	Revelation 7:9-17	34:1-10, 22	1 John 3:1-3	Matthew 5:1-12
11/08/26	Amos 5:18-24	70	1 Thessalonians 4:13-18	Matthew 25:1-13
11/15/26	Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18	90:1-8	1 Thessalonians 5:1-11	Matthew 25:14-30
11/22/26	Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24	95:1-7a	Ephesians 1:15-23	Matthew 25:31-46
11/29/26	Isaiah 64:1-9	80:1-7, 17-19	1 Corinthians 1:3-9	Mark 13:24-37

USHERS

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

LAY READERS & ASSISTANTS

11/01	R	JR Abrego
	P/E	Nancy Beamesderfer
11/08	R	Ruby Schaper
	P/E	Julie Kilkenny
11/15	R	Bert Martin
	P/E	Penny Schick
11/22	R	Linda Cuzzort
	P/E	Sharon Wagner
11/29	R	Scott Wegner
	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 $70.^{00}$

Safeguards Safety Training

Holy Cross Lutheran Church - 7901 Westview Drive, Houston, TX 77055

Call John Lambeth @ 713-854-8085 to register, or register online:

https://events.humanitix.com/host/634c6d6ed7a0c9053d9f6f58

Class		Price	Day	Date	Time
Adult & Pediatric CPR					
	CPR Only	$98	Saturday	14-Nov	1:00 pm - 5:30 pm
	CPR + First Aid	$108	Sunday	22-Nov	1:00 pm - 5:30 pm
Basic Life Support		$94	Friday	13-Nov	1:00 pm - 5:30 pm
			Saturday	21-Nov	1:00 pm - 5:30 pm
			Saturday	19-Dec	1:00 pm - 5:30 pm
CPR Instructor Course		$299	Friday	6-Nov	9:00 am - 5:30 pm
			Friday	11-Dec	9:00 am - 5:30 pm
RCP para adulto, niño y bebé			Friday	4-Dec	1:00 pm - 5:30 pm
	RCP solo	$49			
	RCP + primeros auxilios	$59			

Holy Cross Congregation Members receive a 15% discount.
Use coupon code: HCLC2026

Holy Cross Lutheran Church

In Remembrance

of those who have gone before us.



November 2025 - November 2026

†	*Daniel Ernest Lyons*	*1/10/26*
†	*Julia Anne Yanta*	*2/18/26*
†	*Betty Jean Larson*	*4/17/26*
†	*Marilyn Finer-Collins*	*8/03/26*
†	*Fredda Collette Yurk*	*8/08/26*
†	*Doreen Fowler*	*9/01/26*
†	*William Brent Southerland II*	*10/18/26*
†	*Larry Polzin*	*10/21/26*





Birthdays in the month of November:

02	Dolores Fojt	23	Karen Davidson
04	Kay Vaccaro		Penny Schick
05	Kim Rose	25	Marsha Thompson
16	Jean Seveny	28	Cassie Walker Case
	Maria Reynaga	29	John Wegner
18	Alan Lambeth		John Stokes
20	Maria McCormack Grinde	30	John Lambeth
21	Natalie Hansen		Andrea Hernandez



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
- † 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	Jeremy Mitchell
Susan Caradec	Geraine Moore
Jessica Coleman	Ed Peterman
Eli Gonzalez	Dorothy Preuss
Jack Griffin	Lupe Romero
Audrey Holtan	Scott Spates
Paul Houghton	Patricia Steapp
Joyce Huey	Gary Sundberg
Bryan Kile	Bill Tempel
Brian Lindner	Dave Trickett
Ernest Luker	Jaime Urbanski
David Magrill	Bennie Valites
Stuffy Martinez	Michael Williams

TREASURER'S REPORT

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

SEPTEMBER 2026

Receipts	$ 17,630.^{00}
Expenses	29,316.^{87}
Balance	($ 11,686.^{87})

Operational receipts

Year-to-date received ….	$ 191,954.^{71}
Expenditures year to date ..	282,724.^{59}
Balance	($ 90,769.^{88})

AVERAGE ATTENDANCE

SEPTEMBER SERVICES

Saturday Informal service : 13
Sunday Traditional service : 56

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

SATURDAY WORSHIP SERVICE
Informal Service 6:00 p. m. —AT

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE
Traditional Service 9:30 a.m. —WC

EARLY LEARNING CENTER
ELC (713) 461-5535
email: holycrosselc4@gmail.com

CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Jim Berggren — Senior Pastor
email: *jlberggren@holycross.us*

Sussy Terry — Office Manager & Events Coord.
email: *hclc@holycross.us*

John Lambeth — Bookkeeper
email: *finance@holycross.us*

Robert Carty — Musical Director / Organist
email: *robcarty1@outlook.com*

OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION

Steve Schulze	President
Jay Byerly	Vice-President
Julie Kilkenny	Secretary
Ricki Finstad	Treasurer

