

# THE QUEST

**Holy Cross Lutheran Church**

*Transforming the world & ourselves,  
together in community,  
fellowship and faith.*



**April 2020**



## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>Staff News</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Council News</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Outreach</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Christian Education</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Stewardship</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Synod and Church-Wide News</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Property</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Serving in Worship</b>	<b>22</b>

# JUST A LITTLE *Reminder*

The deadline for inclusion in the May 2020 edition of the Holy Cross newsletter, *Quest*, is Monday, April 13th.

Articles can be emailed to the Church Administrator at:  
[admin@holycrosslutheranchurch.net](mailto:admin@holycrosslutheranchurch.net).

The **deadline** for inclusion in the **Weekly Update** is noon on the Tuesday prior to the Sunday the bulletin will be released.

Thank you,  
Teresa Easterly  
Church Administrator

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Holy Cross Lutheran Church Herndon VA



@HolyCrossELCA



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## STAFF NEWS

# *Message from the Pastor*

### **“May you live in interesting times.”**

The old proverb seems apropos for where we are today. We are indeed living in a season of great uncertainty. Just in the past week, what seemed to be the things we could count on, such as: the schedule of our day, the ample opportunity to greet and gather with friends, and the joy of worshipping with one another in the place we name “sanctuary, have all gone away for the most part.

A few days ago, through the wonder of the internet and a meeting program called Zoom, I gathered with Bishop Ortiz and 57 of my colleagues in rostered ministry in our synod. We gathered for worship and for discussion. We gathered for community. Together, we listened to and prayed through the March 22<sup>nd</sup> Gospel reading, John 9. It is the story of a man born into blindness, and Jesus’ healing light. It is a story of many, blessed with physical vision, who are unwilling to see God’s new and wonderous grace in their midst.

Jesus calls us to be open to God’s presence in our time, to be open-minded and open-eyed to God’s amazing love and grace, no matter what things look like around us. Bishop Leila reminded us that we are now seeing the church in new ways, that the situation in which we find ourselves has given us the opportunity to witness God’s work in and among us, despite what our typical expectations might be.

We are living in interesting times. We are living in troubling, scary times. But we are also living into what it means, in Christ, to be the people of Jesus in all times. I am abundantly thankful for each of you. I praise God for Jeremy, Teresa, Deb, and the whole leadership team at Holy Cross. Through their work, we are finding new ways to reconnect with our congregation, especially through our on-line check-ins, devotions and worship.

Our on-line efforts cannot be the only way we help one another, however. Please take time to reach out to one another through phones, emails and texts. Pray for each other, asking for God's peace and hope for each of us.

Finally, take care of yourselves. Today, we pastors, and other rostered leaders heard clearly and passionately from our Bishop to take care of our own needs as well as those of others. I pass that on to you as well – be gentle with yourself and with those in your home. We are all stressed. We are all afraid. We all need to be assured and reminded that we are loved. Spring has begun, and I hope we can all go outside and enjoy the flowers and the trees and pause to give thanks to the Creator of us all.

We live in interesting times, but we are claimed and loved by the God of all time.

Peace,

*Pastor Martin*

## DIRECTOR OF MUSIC AND LITURGY UPDATES

A main focus of my sabbatical was worship. As the Director of Music and Liturgy I spend the majority of my time making sure HCLC worship is at its best.

With the coronavirus and quarantining going on right now, there is a lot of discussion in various church related Facebook groups that I am in about whether or not “online worship” is “real worship”.

I’d like to share a story with you that I heard while on sabbatical.

*A young girl was sitting in the park with her grandfather who was a minister. He was teaching her about what it means to give freely of oneself, or to be a cheerful giver. He told her a parable:*

*There was a homeless man shivering on the street. One passerby bought a coat for him and waited for people to be watching to give it to him so he could be properly thanked, and people could witness his generosity.*

*Another passerby bought a coat and privately gave it to the homeless man so he could be thanked, but with no people around to witness his generosity.*

*A third passerby noticed there were homeless shivering in the street. That passerby went out and purchased coats to leave on park benches so anyone in need could find them and be warm. The generosity of that passerby was never witnessed, and they were never thanked.*

*The grandfather asked his granddaughter which passerby knew how to best be a Christian and give freely.*

*The granddaughter said the third passerby and that she was only going to be like that person.*

*The grandfather asked her, but what if you were only able to give like the first passerby? Should you not give until you are able to act like the third passerby who wanted no recognition?*

*Some things are worth doing because they are inherently good.*

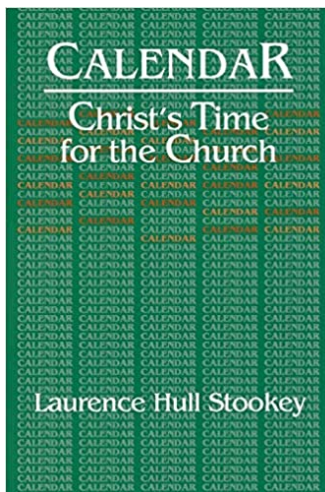
Right now, for us, worship is one of those things. We are in uncharted territory. Worship is intended to happen in an assembly of people. However, it is important in these times to gather in any way we can and be the body of Christ.

Holy Cross is streaming worship on Sunday mornings at 10 AM. These services are also available to view on Facebook after the service has ended.

As are many other churches, Holy Cross is celebrating the Service of the Word on Sunday mornings. We are taking time to fast from Holy Communion and learning how God comes to us, not in bread and wine, but in the scriptures.

Right now, we are in Lent. The three R's that Pastor Martin framed our season are Reflect, Remember and Return. One of the intentions of Lent is to Reflect on our Christian lives. Exactly how do we reflect on our Christian lives?

A book I read on sabbatical, *Calendar: Christ's Time for the Church* has an extensive list of prompts that I'd like to share with you on how you can spend some time in reflection.





- What progress am I making in sharing gladly what I have with others, particularly with the stranger and the poor?
- What attitudes do I convey to those who irritate me? How can awareness of my own need of God's grace enable me to be more gracious to them?
- How has my sense of interconnectedness in corporate worship grown of late, and how can I move ahead in appreciating the contributions and needs of other members in the congregation to which I belong?
- Am I as charitable and thoughtful to family members as to others? Or do I "take it out" on my family when life at school or work gets hectic?
- Can I redistribute my long-range personal budget in order to have more money to give away?
- When I hear someone being unjustly maligned, do I speak up to correct the record, or am I a silent accomplice?
- How can I more effectively and consistently support legislation and social programs that help the disadvantaged rather than hurt them?
- In devotional acts of prayer and reading, am I increasing my attention span and discovering new ways of listening rather than of talking, of giving thanks rather than of complaining?
- As I uncover and attempt to deal with one level of prejudice in my life, what other levels do I find lurking underneath, and how can I confront them?
- In addition to intercessory prayer, what habits can I develop that allow me to be more responsive to the sick, the distressed, and the bereaved, particularly when their needs emerge suddenly and require immediate attention? Can I plan spaces into my life to allow for such unanticipated opportunities to minister to others?
- Am I, by consistent attendance at worship, a witness to others of the worthiness of the God I follow? Or am I, by my sporadic attendance, suggesting that God is worth serving sometimes, but not others?

We all have extra time on our hands at home right now. Be sure to take time to Reflect, Remember and Return.

Let us pray.

*Shepherding God, you provide structure to our lives of faith with the church year calendar. Help us to take this season of Lent to reflect on how we can best live out your kingdom goals here on earth. Be with us as days of quarantine continue. Clear our minds of worry so we can see your blessings in everything around us. Amen.*

Soli Deo Gloria,  
Jeremy Shoop, Director of Music and Liturgy

## COUNCIL NEWS



First, thank you all for your patience as we learn to be more adaptive in the face of the Coronavirus pandemic. These are extraordinary times. Please pray for each other, for health care workers, for those who will suffer financial hardship, and for the World.

On February 29th, the HCLC Council and Staff held an energizing retreat, during which we developed a 3-year plan for Holy Cross. In anticipation of the retreat, we read the book, *"Ask, Thank, Tell"*, which provided a framework for shifting our thinking from "members" to "disciples" and healthy, constructive suggestions for ministry and mission growth. Each member was also asked to think about 3 questions: What brought them to Holy Cross the first time, why they came back a second time, and why they continue to come to Holy Cross. These questions offered us a deeper appreciation for each other and our spiritual journeys. I am grateful to the Council for their willingness to share their personal stories.

### **In developing the 3-year plan, we:**

- 1) Validated that our goals and focus were still in the right place,

- 2) Considered both current work and new ideas that would meet those goals,
- 3) Prioritized the ideas,
- 4) Volunteered to lead and participate in the prioritized ideas and
- 5) Identified when the ideas should be executed (on a 3-year timeline).

### **Our plans for 2020 include:**

Growing our Partnership with Herndon Middle School by collecting books, clothes, food and funds as their needs emerge; providing assistance by organizing their clothes closet and food pantry; offering our experiences to their Career Day; offering our time to their Tutoring and Mentoring Programs; and continuing support for their PTA. Interested in helping with any of these items? Please contact Suzanne Flegal.

Reaching out to our Community in both new and familiar ways by launching a program called “Community Conversations” to develop a deeper understanding of our brothers and sisters in the greater Herndon/Reston/Sterling area. We will continue reaching out to our community through providing support and sponsorship in the Sterlingfest and the Herndon Homecoming Parade. We will explore providing a table at the Reston Pride Festival. And of course, we will hold our Annual Beer and Carols in December. Want to lend a hand with any of these events? Please contact Roy Geiger.

Other Ministry Opportunities abound! We have already launched our first Mission Minutes, which are opportunities for participants and leaders in various ministries to share something about their ministry with the congregation and to ask for help as needed. Suzanne Flegal shared our Lenten Appeal in March, by sharing a letter from Herndon Middle School’s Director of Student Services. In the future, we would love to have Mission Minutes from our

ELL instructors, our Embry Rucker volunteers, LWR Quilters, etc. We plan to re-focus energy into developing deeper relationships and caring for each other. This could be done through small groups as well as fellowship opportunities. We seek your ideas and input on how best to develop more in this area. We aspire to launch a Spanish Language Learner program for our members and staff, to more effectively communicate with people in our community. We will treat Stewardship as a year-round activity, shifting our focus from “asking for money” to sharing the good news of our ministries work and the impact they make in our community. We will continue to explore ways to ensure that ALL people feel welcome and safe at Holy Cross. Interested in helping with any of these important areas of our work? Please talk to Pastor Martin or Deb Reilly!

While churches don’t like to use the “M” word, Marketing is a key component of sharing who we are and what we believe. To that end, we will engage in a number of marketing activities, including developing a HCLC logo, updating our brochures and letterhead, and reworking our website. We plan to be more intentional in our follow up with visitors. We will introduce better seasonal street signage. We plan to invite new people in our community to worship with us. This is an area where we could use the help of anyone with who is willing to help! Please contact Roy Geiger or Deb Reilly.

I pray that you will consider what intellectual and time gifts you bring to Holy Cross and see where you can best serve. This is an exciting time for all of us. Please join in wherever you can!

Peace and health,

Deb

## OUTREACH

### It's Pinwheel Time again!

For the third year, we will participate in the ***Pinwheels for Prevention*** of child abuse campaign in April. April is Child Abuse Prevention Month and we want to raise awareness of the problem of this issue in our community and encourage people to Speak Up for a child if they suspect abuse.



The pinwheel is a whimsical symbol of the great childhood that each child deserves and is a colorful way to highlight the problem. We will plant a "pinwheel garden" again during April to bring attention to this serious problem in our community. As we did last year, we will have a NOISY COLLECTION on Mother's Day to benefit Safe Spot, the Children's Advocacy Center of Fairfax County. SafeSpot provides child victims of sexual abuse and severe physical abuse a safe, child-friendly environment where the child is interviewed by a trained forensic interviewer. In addition, non-offending family members receive support and advocacy from the time of the very first intervention. SafeSpot also provides no cost therapy services to children and families to assist them on their journey of hope and healing.

So, what's a Noisy Collection? The kids in our church family will help with a special offering. They will go out into the congregation with buckets and ask for your loose change (paper money is also quite acceptable). You will be amazed at how much noise the kids can make with those buckets of coins—and how those coins can add up! So, and save those pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters...and bring them on Mother's Day to make a joyful noise to support a most worthy cause. Go to <https://www.safespotfairfax.org> for more information.

## Herndon Women's Club

In an effort to support local groups in their efforts to help those in need, we are sharing this information from the Herndon Women's Club.



### Diapers & Wipes Annual Drive

We are collecting Diapers & Wipes for the Northern Virginia Diaper Bank. The bank's immediate needs at present are for sizes 5 and 6 diapers and pull ups for toddlers. Checks are also accepted and should be made out to Northern Virginia Diaper Bank.

If you would like to make a donation, contact Cheryl Smith, a member of Holy Cross as well as the Women's Club, at 703-689-3731 or email her at [cismith1@verizon.net](mailto:cismith1@verizon.net). Items may also be dropped off at church.

You may visit the Diaper Bank's website, <https://novadiaperbank.org/about-us>, for mor information.

## Herndon Middle School



### **Volunteer Opportunities in Our Community**

Herndon Middle School is having a 'Career Day' event on April 16<sup>th</sup> where students will have the opportunity to learn about different careers and fields. They are seeking representatives from various career clusters to share about their job and professional journey. Participants will be required to attend from 12:15 - 2:15 pm. If you are interested, please complete the form found at <https://herndonms.fcps.edu/> and share this with others (community members, friends, colleagues, etc.) who may also be interested.

Please email Elyana Genovese ([eagenovese1@fcps.edu](mailto:eagenovese1@fcps.edu)) or 703-904-4867) for more information or with any questions.



## CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



Happy Spring everyone. This time of the year tends to get very busy. Kingdom Kids are still doing interesting activities. They recently made unleavened Lenten Pretzels, a tradition that dates back to the times of early Christians. Lenten Pretzels are

unleavened bread shaped with arms crossed to emulate the way they prayed with their arms crossed across their chests.

The past three years of VBS have been joyful; a great learning experience and very well attended. Last year's VBS was the largest attended one since starting VBS three years ago. It is great to see this growth in attendance.

Vacation Bible School plans are in progress. Currently, the dates for this year's VBS is August 9 - 13. Mark, your calendars and check Holy Cross newsletters and social media for updates as we deal with these uncertain times.



## STEWARDSHIP

### **Lenten Appeal**



For this year's Lenten Appeal, the Outreach and Stewardship Teams are combining forces to continue our support for Herndon Middle School, our neighbors a few blocks away. In 2018 – 19, 53% of the students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. The not so obvious implications of that are that if the kids need help with food, there's probably not enough money for the things that

most of us take for granted for our kids—clothes, field trip fees, year books and school supplies.

To do what we can as Holy Cross, the Outreach Team will be collecting clothes to fill the HMS Clothes Closet. There are some clothing needs on the school's Amazon Wish List. The Food Pantry is adequately supplied at the moment. Here's the link:

<https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1GC0NATM8E2Y?&sort=default>, but we are also asking for donations of spring/summer clothes for middle school kids. As always, gently used clothes — that means your child would wear it—are welcome.

The Stewardship Team will use the funds from the Lenten Appeal to go to a designated account at the school to enable students whose families cannot afford the extra costs most of us supply without much thought.

As always, your generosity is most appreciated. These gifts truly will make a positive difference in the lives they touch.

## WAYS TO GIVE

We must keep the Church alive. With, the shutdown of most “in person” activities, we’ve seen a dramatic reduction in both rentals of our church property, and offerings from our members and friends. If we aspire to keep Holy Cross Lutheran Church a thriving, serving community of God’s people, we will each need to make a determined effort to ensure that our offerings can sustain us through this time.



You can:

1. Drop a check in the mail.
2. Go to our website, <http://www.holycrosslutheranchurch.net>, Click “Donate” and Fill out the safe and secure donation form.
3. Download the **Give+** app from the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store, Search for Holy Cross Lutheran Church. (It will appear near the bottom of the list) and follow the prompts as desired.

Please, please help. Together, we will ride out this storm. We are not afraid. We trust in God’s grace and take peace and comfort in God’s promise:

*“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; who will never leave you or forsake you.”*

*Deuteronomy 31:6*

We pray for that same peace on each of you.

# SYNOD AND CHURCH-WIDE NEWS

## GLOBAL CHURCH

### Rooted in relationships



ELCA missionaries and pastors Rachel Eskesen and Zachary Courter are partners in work, life and ministry. The married couple has served in Central Europe since 2015, accompanying the Lutheran Church of Hungary (LCH) and Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Augsburg Confession in Serbia and coordinating the ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) program in Central Europe.

"We're filled with gratitude to walk alongside the YAGM volunteers and their host communities here in Central Europe."

Eskesen and Courter oversee a small group of YAGM volunteers, who serve schools, soup kitchens, homes for those with disabilities, nonprofits, refugee organizations, Roma communities and other ministries.

"One of the things I love about our program is matching the gifts of the YAGM volunteers to the needs of the communities with which they'll serve," Eskesen said.

"We're filled with gratitude to walk alongside the YAGM volunteers and their host communities here in Central Europe," Courter added.

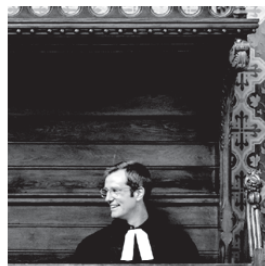
In addition, the couple preaches and presides at City Park Lutheran Church in Budapest and partners with its ministries.

*Mission Support funding enables their work mentoring young adults and walking alongside companions in Hungary and Serbia.*

Though the political environment there can be tough, Eskesen said she and Courter are inspired by the commitment of their colleagues to proclaim the gospel. The relationships they are forming — as they preach, teach, learn and receive the gifts of the global church — keep them grounded.

Eskesen appreciates how ministry abroad allows her and Courter to use their gifts and grow in faith. "We live in a global context right now that's increasingly polarized and isolationist," she said. "Every day, when we work with young adults, I can see how God is calling us to relationships that are bigger than any relationship we have. A big part of my daily faith experience is seeing not only how we can welcome volunteers into the communities that we love but also how we've been welcomed here."

*To follow this missionary couple, visit their blog ([zachandrachel.wordpress.com](http://zachandrachel.wordpress.com)) and [Facebook.com/YAGMCentralEurope](https://www.facebook.com/YAGMCentralEurope).*



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

# PROPERTY



We know that these are difficult and confusing times for all of us with all of the closings of schools, working from home, quarantines, changes to our normal life and being worried about Coronavirus and the health of our family and love ones. With warm beautiful days to come, we all are thinking about, what can we do to get out of the house and not be around lots of people? One suggestion could be to find time to come to Holy Cross and help get it prepared for spring and Easter. There are many small projects to be done around the church to help clean up our grounds.

## **Some of the projects are:**

- Raking leaves
- Pulling weeds in garden and flower beds
- General cleanup around the building
- Mulching the flower beds
- Replacing a motion light on outside of church

Even those of you with children. This could be a fun activity for the whole family; to be outside with your children to work together as a family.

If you are willing to work on any of these projects, please contact me via [dennpatt@verizon.net](mailto:dennpatt@verizon.net). Please put “cleanup” in the subject line to let me know this is for the church. If you are planning on working a project and need materials to do the job, let me know when you plan to be at the church, what your needs are and I will make sure you get what you need to complete the job.

Thanks everyone in advance! This will help make the spring cleanup before Easter a lot easier and less time consuming for all of us.

Dennis Pattison  
Property Council

## **SERVING IN WORSHIP**

With a ban on public gatherings of more than 10 people, we will no longer be gathering in person for worship. Until further notice, worship will only be online. At 10:00 am, Pastor Martin, Jeremy Shoop, Music and Liturgy Director, an assisting minister and a videographer will meet to live stream a service on Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/HCLCHerndon>.



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