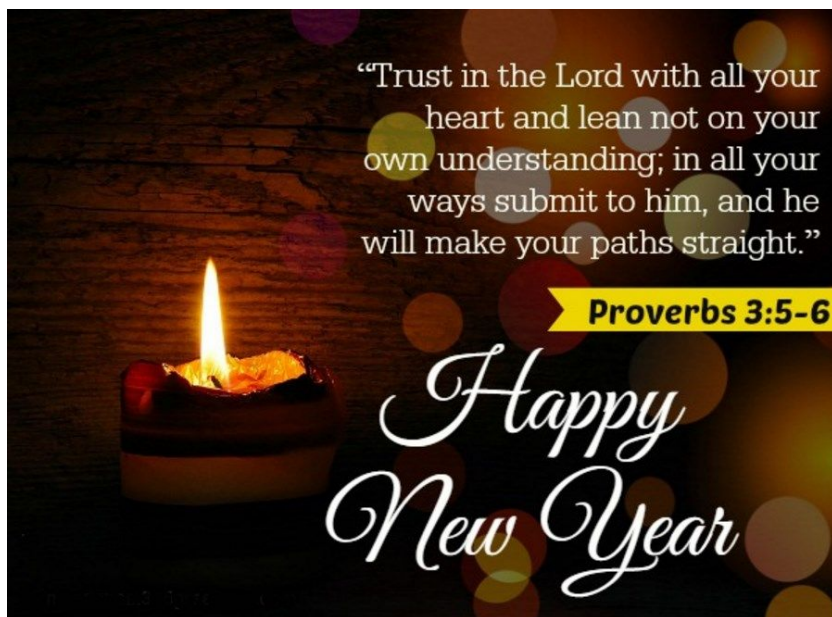


# THE QUEST

## Holy Cross Lutheran Church

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



## January 2021

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>Staff News</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Council News</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Evangelism</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Outreach</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Youth</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Stewardship</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Synod and Church-Wide News</b>	<b>26</b>

# JUST A LITTLE *Reminder*

The deadline for inclusion in the February 2021 edition of the Holy Cross newsletter, *Quest*, is Tuesday, January 12.

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

Holy Cross Lutheran Church  
1090 Sterling Road  
Herndon, VA 20170  
703-437-1883

Find us online!

[www.holycrosslutheranchurch.net](http://www.holycrosslutheranchurch.net)



Holy Cross Lutheran Church Herndon VA

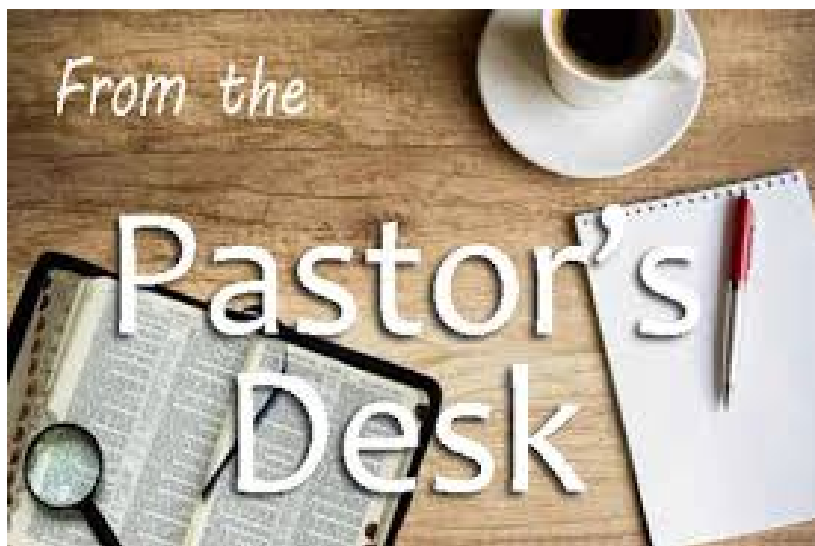


@HolyCrossELCA



HolyCrossELCA

## STAFF NEWS



*And the Word became flesh and lived among us,  
and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son,  
full of grace and truth.*

*John 1:14 – Gospel for Second Sunday of Christmas (Jan. 3).*

Beloved Siblings in Jesus,

We generally begin each new year with a certain hope and excitement, celebrating the ending of the past year and anticipating the one yet to come. We often use the turning of the calendar as a time to collect thoughts, contemplate our situation, and resolve new pathways and actions for the future. If this past year has taught us anything, however, it is how precarious our plans and resolutions can be. A year ago, I am certain none of us anticipated the global reach of the situation we have found ourselves during the year that was 2020. How then do we face 2021?

We all know uncertainty is the very definition of the future, yet this past year has really emphasized that, hasn't it? We have been reminded, in a very powerful and sometimes tragic fashion, that we humans are not always in control of everything. That is nothing new. Humanity has often found itself humbled but in our lifetimes, these last few months have been beyond anything we have experienced as a global community.

It would be easy and understandable to resort to pessimism. The Promise given to all Creation at Christmas, however, reminds us that God is passionately, intimately, and positively connected to us for all of time – past, present and future. The Incarnation is God's loving embrace for all life. The path may be uncertain, the way rocky and even perilous, but the faithfulness of God to be with us remains true.

In the midst of winter as we are, there is always the hope of new life and the warmth of spring. Even now, there are signs of positive change in the face of the pandemic. As I write, the vaccines are beginning to be administered and we are starting to see a glimmer of light after a long, gloomy journey. How long it might take to "get back to normal" is anyone's guess, but I believe that we will be able to gather, together again sometime in the not-too-distant future.

As Resurrection people, we are a community of hope, new birth, and life from death. As a community formed in this Promise, we greet the new year with the hope that comes from a power greater than our own. No matter what the new year will bring, we will face it together - supported and embraced by the one who walks among us in Jesus Christ.

Peace to us all,

*Pastor Martín*

## DIRECTOR OF MUSIC AND LITURGY



We don't often get to celebrate the day of Epiphany. It is regularly tossed aside as we recover from numerous Advent and Christmas festivities. This year the day of Epiphany falls on Wednesday (1/6/21). One of my favorite hymns for Epiphany is "Brightest and Best of the Stars". It is both a great hymn from the Romantic period and a poetic expression on the season of Epiphany.

"Brightest and Best of the Stars" was written by Bishop Reginald Heber (1783-1826), one of the finest Romantic hymn writers. Heber's most famous hymn is "Holy, Holy, Holy" (*ELW* 413). Heber was born into a family of wealth and position. He was bright and a hardworking student of the Bible, even at a young age. Heber entered Oxford at 17 and soon won two prizes for poetry.

He took orders in the Anglican Church in 1807 and became a rector in his father's church. During his 16 years at this parish, he took on the task of improving hymn singing in the congregation. When he arrived, they were still singing only metrical psalms. He couldn't find the hymns he wanted, especially those that would fit the Anglican liturgy and the requirements of the *Book of Common Prayer*.

Heber decided to prepare his own hymnal and invited other poets to contribute, including Sir Walter Scott and Henry Milman. Hymn singing was not firmly established in the Anglican Church at this time, and the bishop of London refused Heber's request to publish a hymnal. "Brightest and Best of the Stars" was thus first published in the *Christian Observer* in November 1811 before his wife Amelia Heber published it in 1827 as *Hymns Written and Adapted to the Weekly Service of the Church Year*.

Images of light, a dominant theme of the Epiphany season, pervade the hymn's first stanza: "brightest," "morning," "dawn," "star" and "horizon." The "Star of the East" that once guided the magi now guides us to "where our infant Redeemer is laid."

*Brightest and best of the stars of the morning,  
dawn on our darkness and lend us your aid.  
Star of the east, the horizon adorning,  
guide where our infant redeemer is laid.*

The second stanza is full of wonderful Romantic images:

*Cold on his cradle the dew-drops are shining,  
Low lies his head with the beasts of the stall:  
Angels adore him in slumber reclining,  
Maker and Monarch and Savior of all.*

The third stanza asks us what extravagant gifts we have to offer:

*Say, shall we yield him, in costly devotion,  
Odors of Edom and offerings divine?  
Gems of the mountain and pearls of the ocean,  
Myrrh from the forest or gold from the mine?*

The fourth stanza reminds us that "the prayers of the poor" are

far more highly favored than gifts offered by those simply wishing to “buy salvation”.

*Vainly we offer each ample oblation,  
Vainly with gifts would his favor secure,  
Richer by far is the heart's adoration,  
Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.*

The final stanza repeats the first exactly, providing bookends to one of the classic hymns of the Epiphany season.

I hope you have a blessed Epiphany season as we continue to celebrate the birth of Christ.

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



## COUNCIL



Holy Cross Family –

This is my first Quest article as President, and I wanted to let you know the importance of each and every one of you, and not just to Holy Cross. Over the last couple of years, I have come to realize the multiple things so many in our church family do daily to ensure we continue to BE the Church. While setting up and maintaining our security cameras, I have had the opportunity to observe so many of you in action, quietly doing so much for our church and the wider community.

At our Annual Meeting, we confronted the harsh reality of our reduced income and its impact on our ministry as we passed an austere budget with draconian cuts to staff compensation. Almost hoping against hope, we gave the Council authorization to make thoughtful adjustments should our outlook improve. Once again, the Holy Cross family stepped up and we had a strong November and pledges are up significantly.

As I write this in mid-December, we are not out of the woods, but the response so far has been sufficient for the Council to be able

to hold off on implementing the pay cuts at least until we see where we end the year. Traditionally December is our best month of giving, but in these uncertain times, we really don't know what to expect. Our Church family continues to inspire and amaze with not just financial support, but ongoing service to others. It is clear that the Holy Spirit is alive at Holy Cross!

Sharon and I have been watching the series *The Chosen* online, and, whenever I am feeling overwhelmed by the enormity of the tasks at hand, she reminds me of their admonition that I don't need to do it all, I just need to bring the loaves and fishes; I am humbled to be serving with so many of you who bring your loaves and fishes as well. With the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit, we will get through these challenging times together; we're off to a great start!

Sam Carter

[srclutheran@gmail.com](mailto:srclutheran@gmail.com)

## EVANGELISM



Back in the late 1960's, I was a junior high student attending a rural Lutheran church in Southeastern Pennsylvania. I was getting ready to start my three-year Confirmation class. My congregation had called a new Pastor, Pastor Dale, and he and his young family were starting their life and ministry with us.

Pastor Dale taught me about how to "do" Evangelism by how he lived and practiced it. As soon as he and his family were moved in, he set out to meet, visit and get to know ALL of our congregational members. Secondly, since he grew up as a Boy Scout, he volunteered to actively serve as the Chaplain for all the Boy and Girl Scout units that our congregation sponsored. On any given Sunday, he might first conduct a service at a scout camp and be back at our church in time for our Sunday morning service. It didn't matter if the scouts and scouters were members of our church – or even Lutheran – he was **their** Chaplain!

Pastor Dale loved and admired our village's Volunteer Fire Company and its volunteers. He joined the Fire Company as their Volunteer Chaplain – and had his own fireman clothes, helmet

and boots! The helmet and boots were always kept in our pulpit every Sunday – just in case the community fire alarm sounded!

Every January our congregation celebrated Epiphany with a church service and a community bonfire (“The Burning of the Greens”). Everyone was invited to bring their used Christmas trees and leftover Christmas cookies. With Pastor Dale’s encouragement, our community “fire folks” both helped keep our bonfire safely under control and they joined us in our service celebration! Church members or not, Lutherans or not, all attended and enjoyed the service, the bonfire, the hot chocolate and the leftover cookies! Thanks to the “smokiness” of the firefighter’s clothes they wore to our service, our sanctuary smelled like smoke for at least a week thereafter! Maybe the lingering smell of **active** Evangelism?

Thanks, Pastor Dale! Let’s all resolve to be a bit like Pastor Dale in our Evangelism efforts throughout 2021!

***Have a Happy, Healthy and Spirited 2021 filled with God’s Peace!***

Roy Geiger and the Evangelism Team

## OUTREACH



### **The Good News From 2020**

The news from 2020 was both heartbreaking and heartwarming. While there was so much to cause worry, grief and fear, there was also much to promote hope and even joy. Our staff and Worship and Music Team provided many opportunities not just for us to worship, but also to reach out to friends and family and who live far away. Our church family and other community members like the Herndon Woman's Club generously supported our School Supply, Food Drives and Embry Rucker lunches. Individual members reached out to friends and neighbors who then contributed to our efforts to support the increasing number of our neighbors affected by the shut-down. Our dedicated ELL teachers kept the program going even when they could not meet in person and were generously helped by a donation of 24 computers from The Newton School in Sterling!

So, what is in store for 2021? All of these activities will continue:

- ✓ Our ongoing Food Drives
- ✓ Sponsoring the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday Lunch every other month at the Embry Rucker Shelter

- ✓ Supporting Herndon Middle School as the opportunity arises
- ✓ Giving special help when requested by families in crises
- ✓ Supporting organizations that support the homeless or victims of abuse
- ✓ Supporting The Closet by donations and volunteering
- ✓ Working with the ELL program
- ✓ Our annual Advent and Lent drives

All of this is possible through your generosity in giving of your resources, time, and talents. While we do not know what 2021 will bring, we do know we can count on your support in meeting the needs of our community as they arise. If you are interested in helping to plan and carry out any of these, contact Suzanne Flegal at [suzflegal@verizon.net](mailto:suzflegal@verizon.net) or the church office at [admin@holycrosslutheranchurch.net](mailto:admin@holycrosslutheranchurch.net).







Donations to LINK



Food and Clothing Donations



HMS Family in Need Donations



Coat Drive Donations



## Outreach: Ways to Serve Through the ELCA



### Relief and Development

We are a church that rolls up our sleeves and gets to work.

One billion of our neighbors — that's one in seven people in our world today — live in poverty. As members of the ELCA, we are called to respond. Working through Lutheran connections in the United States and around the world, we start by listening to the needs of our neighbors and getting their ideas to help break the cycle of hunger and poverty. Then we partner with them to make their dreams and hopes a reality. From health clinics to microloans, water wells to animal husbandry, food pantries to soup kitchens, we work together to support innovative solutions that get at the root causes of hunger and poverty.

The ELCA has a long history of being present in communities, working to help and serve where the needs are greatest. Participating in this work that God calls us to in the world compels us to be attentive to complex and changing situations, as well as to the importance of both immediate relief and ongoing, long-term assistance for our sisters and brothers and the communities in which they live.

Our relief and development work is pursued and accomplished through a variety of bold, active ministries and initiatives:

- ELCA World Hunger
- HIV and AIDS Ministry
- Lutheran Disaster Response
- Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service

Each effort strives for justice, peace and change in the world, and draws its strength and effectiveness from working in partnership with others who share a common vision of serving and loving our neighbor and restoring and reconciling communities in Jesus Christ's name.

For more information, please visit, <https://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Relief-and-Development>.

## English Language Learners (ELL)



### First Online Zoom Semester Completed!

We started our 18<sup>th</sup> year September 2020, teaching English to our immigrant students online via Zoom. Teaching virtual classes is very new to the teachers. I'm extremely grateful to Dayna Sowd, Chip Edwards, Suzanne Baggett and Jeanne Maysonett for enthusiastically learning how to use the Zoom application. Some of us had to learn or relearn PowerPoint to create lessons and YouTube for enhancement. We are still learning!

We started with very few students per class but have continuously added more over time. We ended up with close to thirty students for the fall semester. We were blessed with donated computers from The Newton School in Sterling. Grateful students keep telling us how much better and easier it is to learn English using the laptop rather than their small cell phones. We teach once a week on Wednesday from 7:00-8:30 pm. The classes are free of charge for our students. Every teacher pays for their own Zoom class and any other needed tools to create the lessons. We all miss teaching our students in the classrooms at Holy Cross. Hopefully, we can get back to in-person teaching sometime next year!

We learned a lot about our students. Several students and their families were sick with COVID-19. Some of them still experience symptoms. One of our students lost her taste and smell last July when she was sick with

the virus and is still waiting for it to return. Others still experience fatigue but usually say that it is getting better.

We have three students from Togo, Africa. Gustav and Didier share an apartment and both work at Belfort Furniture Store. They are very good friends. When asked if they always knew each other they told us that they met on the airplane coming to America. Gustav is from South Togo and Didier is from the North! Our third student, Kamy, who is also a friend, is from the middle of Togo.

Thank you to everyone in our congregation for supporting our ELL program.

Ellen Atwell and the ELL Team

## YOUTH

### **Scout Sunday 2021**

A Scout is reverent. Sunday, February 14, 2021 is Scout Sunday at Holy Cross. The BSA Troop 12 charter for 2021 will be given to Pastor Martin by the Troop 12 Chartered Organization Representative Anne Geiger at the 10 am service.

Scouts and Scouters, please wear your scout uniforms at home to celebrate the 2021 Scout Sunday.



## STEWARDSHIP



### **Stewardship Drive Update**

Thank you all for your tremendous response to our 2020 Stewardship Drive. As we all know, this is a year unlike any we have encountered. Through this past year the people of Holy Cross have maintained their financial stewardship and sustained the ministry of our congregation in the face of very uncertain times.

As we looked ahead to the new year, we asked if people would prayerfully consider increasing their financial giving to Holy Cross by at least 10% for the upcoming year, 2021. The response you returned was gracious and generous! We had a greater amount of people who returned a financial pledge than the last number of years. Of those who were able to pledge, the majority rose to the challenge and indicated

an intent to increase their financial support of God's mission among us by 10% or even more!

Thank you! Our use of God's gifts to us is one aspect of our spiritual discipleship as we follow the path of Jesus. In the face of a still uncertain future, your generosity and statements of faith allow us to plan our common ministry with much more clarity. At this point, it looks as if we will be able to move forward with a restored budget, rather than the more restricted one. This restored budget would return the staff compensation to their full amounts. Thank you!

## Capital Campaign Update

It is snowing outside as I prepare this note. Who doesn't love a snow day? The Holy Cross roof certainly did NOT! While we completed some roof repairs at the beginning of the campaign (December 2018) we recently noticed leaks above the doors to the Narthex and Administrative wings. We have known for some time that we could no longer store items in the shed either, because there were holes in the roof. But, ***thanks to your generosity*** and some excellent research and coordination by Dennis Pattison, we have a totally new roof on the shed AND have resolved the issues near the doors.

The team's focus for 2021 will be in two areas: Evangelism and Restroom Renovations.

On the Evangelism side, we will continue our outreach into the community, seeking opportunities to serve our neighbors. Roy Geiger continues to put great energy into his work and hopefully, in 2021 we will again be able to come together to meet and serve our neighbors.

The restroom renovation planning is underway. The main idea is to make the Fellowship Hall restrooms welcoming to all. To that end, we are looking into making four single restrooms, with at least two of them ADA compliant and at least two of them “family friendly”. Many thanks to Ned Johnson and his friend Luigi for their knowledge and time as they help guide us through what might be involved.

***Thank you all for your continued support of and generosity toward the “Building on the Best” Capital Campaign!***

Peace,

Deb Reilly  
Capital Campaign Chair



## WAYS TO GIVE

We must keep the Church alive. 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. Your generosity makes all things possible.



1. Drop a check in the mail or bring your offering with you to communion on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays.
2. Go to our website, [www.holycrosslutheranchurch.net](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.

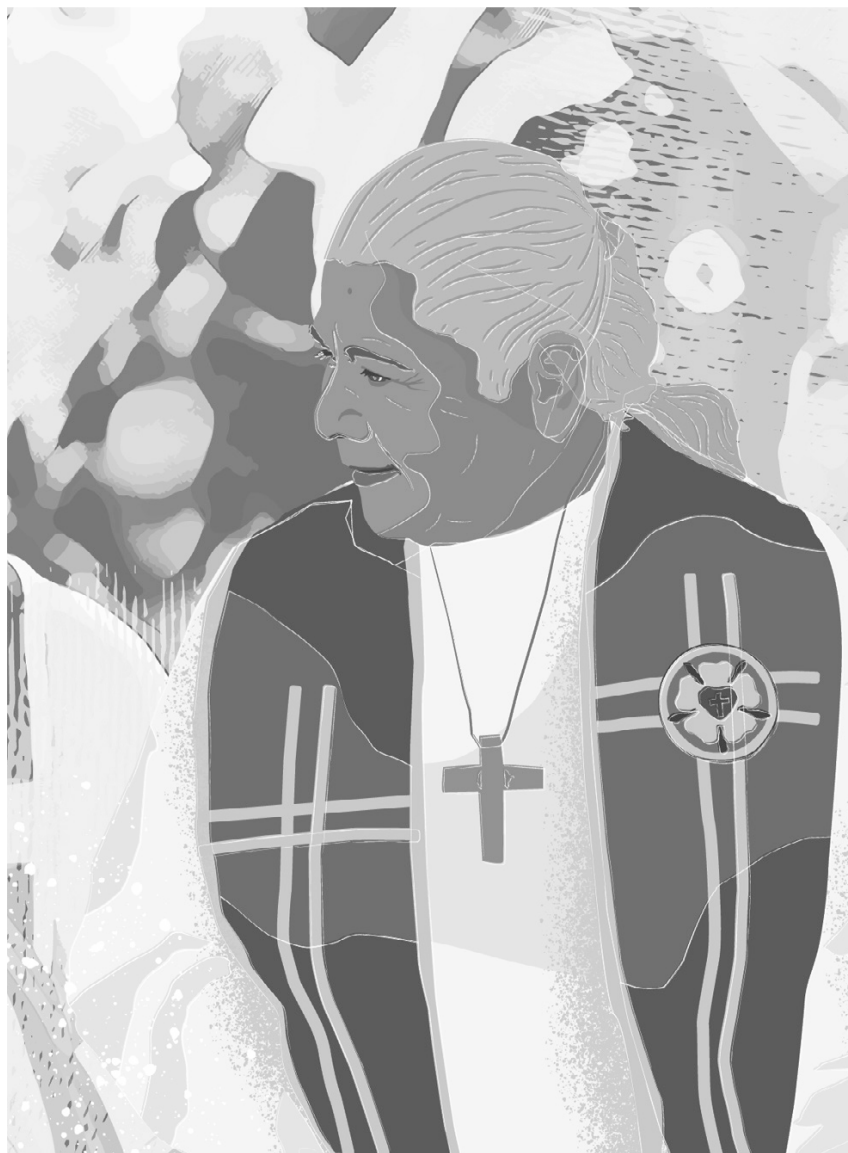
Together, we will ride out this storm. We are not afraid. We trust in God's grace and take peace and comfort in God's promise:

*"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*

## **SYNOD AND CHURCH-WIDE NEWS**

### **STORIES OF FAITH IN ACTION 2020-21**



*Margarita Moreno is one of 14 pastors ordained into the Salvadoran Lutheran Church in August 2019.*



# "GOD HAS ENLIGHTENED US"

On Aug. 5, 2019, as the ELCA Churchwide Assembly met to elect leaders and make decisions regarding the future, Salvadoran Lutherans gathered for a similar reason. For them, the day was historic: the Salvadoran Lutheran Church (SLC) ordained 14 pastors, increasing its roster from 35 to 49.

"Never in our [47-year] history has there been such a large group of ordinations," said Medardo Gómez Soto, SLC bishop. **Boosted in part by Mission Support funds, the SLC provided training and support for these new leaders as they pursued a path to ordination.**

One of those leaders is Margarita Moreno. Her service in the SLC began in the middle of the Salvadoran Civil War (1980-1992). During that time, Lutheran church workers, including the bishop, were persecuted for ministering to war victims.

"I started as a Sunday school teacher, then worked as a trained health promoter," she said. "After the war ended, the [church] began **offering continuing education and training** for its catechists and evangelists. I signed up."

SLC leaders noticed Moreno's gifts for ministry and installed her as a deacon pastor of the Espiritu de Paz (Spirit of Peace) congregation in Tepeagua, where she's served for over a decade. Last August, after completing an alternative, experience-based path to ordination called *Presbiterio por Madurez* (Presbytery for Maturity), she is now the pastor there.

Moreno, in turn, has gone on to mentor more lay leaders. "I've already prepared three youth to serve as Sunday school teachers," she said. "Now I'm motivating other church members to prepare themselves as catechists and evangelists."

Gómez Soto believes the SLC is seeing a boost in leaders and members due to its long-standing commitment to social justice and public witness. "God has enlightened us

**"NEVER IN OUR [47-YEAR] HISTORY HAS THERE BEEN SUCH A LARGE GROUP OF ORDINATIONS," SAID MEDARDO GÓMEZ SOTO, SLC BISHOP.**

as a church to respond to key moments in Salvadoran history, to be part of our country's history," he said. "That is how we've grown. Guided by that same vision, these new pastors will keep our church growing."

*Thank you for your generous gifts of Mission Support, which made this story of faith in action possible. Mission Support is the portion of your offering your congregation shares with your synod, and your synod shares with the churchwide organization. To learn more, visit [ELCA.org/SOFIA](https://elca.org/SOFIA).*



1090 Sterling Road  
Herndon, VA 20170

