

The Quest

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



April 2022

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The deadline for inclusion in the May 2022 edition of the Holy Cross Newsletter, Quest, is Tuesday, April 12.

Articles can be emailed to the Church Administrator at: <u>admin@holycrosslutheranchurch.net</u>.

The deadline for inclusion in the Weekly Update is noon on Tuesday.

Thank you, Teresa Easterly Church Administrator

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

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Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Herndon VA

STAFF



It begins with ashes. Small flakes of dust that mark a cross, reminding us of our mortality, of our connectedness, and of our found-ness. Dusty flakes fall from forehead to face, recalling the Spirit's breath, the mighty wind/*ruach* (Heb. חָרָות) that breathed life into us and all that lives. Grounded thus to Creation and Creator, we hear:

"Remember this, dear child, it is the dust from which you are made. It is a sign of my handiwork and my call and claim for you: You are my beloved, and you are mine."

So fortified, we begin our yearly journey of rediscovery:

- remembering who we are, and to whom we belong;
- realigning our life's direction (the essence of what "repentance/metanoia," (Grk. μετάνοια) is all about;
- renewing our relationships with God, our neighbors, the Creation, and ourselves.

We have gathered (in-person and by screen). We have heard. We have pondered. We have prayed for ourselves and a world when we both are:

- too disconnected,
- too ungrounded,
- too off the path.

And so, the One, the One who chose to come and to walk with us, talk with us, and share with us the humanity that we all share. That One made it happen, sharing a brokenness with us and yet not defeated; sharing pain with us, and yet not overcome; sharing death with us – even death on a cross - and yet not destroyed.

It is that One, who like a waiting, watching parent is always yearning to:

- embrace and enfold us,
- empower and extoll us,
- restore and renew us

to life again, and again, and again until that day when all there will be is life, and light, and love. Forever and ever, Amen.

It is that One, that precious One who has fully connected us back to where and to whom we fully belong. In this faith we continue in our journey - until that day when he will fold all things fully into the New Creation - as creatures of promise, ambassadors of love, and heirs of the Kingdom (Kin-dom) of God.

From ashes to empty tomb, our journey is embraced by love.

The peace of Christ be with you all,

Pastor Martin

Director of Music and Liturgy



Why do we sing? As we return to singing in church without masks on, I thought it would be nice to revisit why we sing in worship.

Lutherans have always been known for their music. Throughout a service, scripture and words of praise are sung in hymns, liturgical songs, psalms, and anthems. There are often times when one (myself included...) can get caught up in the beauty of the music. A few years ago, I was at a conference of the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians in Houston. At this conference there were multiple speakers addressing the need to focus on the text of a song. Music is merely a way to convey the text. Everything must enhance it and make it more meaningful.

In the Lutheran Church, the parishioners do not just sit back and listen to a service. They are directly involved in the singing of the hymns and liturgy. Instead of simply listening to the music, using it as a means of mediation and prayer, we can connect on a deeper level with God. By actually saying the words, themselves the text of a song becomes much more personal and often deepens our faith.

We also teach our faith through music. Hymns like A Mighty Fortress Is Our God, Infant Holy Infant Lowly and I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light are often used in children's choirs to teach them the faith in which they are growing up. While they might not yet understand exactly what they are singing, if the importance of music in worship is instilled in them as a young child, they will begin to read the text more carefully and gain a greater understanding as they grow up. There is a misconception about youth being more interested in praise and worship songs then traditional hymnody. I have found that most youth enjoy "traditional" worship just as much as "contemporary" worship as long as the worship is sincere. If the music is not presented in a way that enhances worship, we get distracted and lose sight of why we are here.

There is a famous quote by Martin Luther, "...next to the word of God, music deserves the highest praise." A key portion of that statement is *next to*. Not above, not below, but next to. Music is not a lesser art than theology. It is a gift from God that allows us to praise God on a deeper level. Poor worship happens when the perfect balance of Word and music is not created. When the music overpowers the Word, we put ourselves before God and lose sight of why we are here. When the music is not performed well, it distracts from the Word and we become bored and do not pay attention to the text we are singing.

There is a beauty in the poetry of our hymns that we often overlook. There are fantastic poets such as Paul Gerhardt, Susan Palo Cherwein and Carl Schalk who beautifully put our faith into words that are worthy to praise our Lord. I encourage you to take an extra moment on Sunday mornings to read through the text of that morning's hymns and appreciate its beauty.

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

COUNCIL NEWS



Holy Cross Family –

"Spring"

Spring is here, and we are concluding our Lenten season and preparing for Easter. We continue to be cautiously optimistic as we "open up" in

our church activities and personal lives. We're still fearful to make any "grand plans" as we emerge from what seems like a 2year Lenten season! Last year we all rejoiced at the opportunity to see each other in person at our outdoor Easter service, and we look forward to this year's Easter service with our entire church family and friends.

I was struck and heartened by some of Pastor Martin's words as he concluded our Confession and Forgiveness:

We believe in a God of compassion and love, who returns again and again to hear the cries of the people, who forgives and restores those who wander off, and who comforts those who struggle. ...If anyone is in Christ, there is a New Creation: A living restoration and reconciliation, A daily welcome and renewal, And an everlasting assurance of God's love.

I can think of no better way to welcome Spring than with those words.

Amen, thanks be to God!

Yours in Christ, Sam Carter

New Mask Guidance for HCLC



At the beginning of mask mandates, the Holy Cross Church Council voted to follow the guidance of the CDC and local health authorities. As circumstances have changed, the CDC has developed a new tool to help communities decide what prevention steps to take based on the latest data. Both Loudoun and Fairfax Counties have been determined to have **Low COVID-19 Community Levels**. Accordingly, Council approved relaxing our mask requirement, and masks are now optional at Holy Cross. We will continue to monitor the situation, and we hope it will not be necessary to return to stricter policies. We are truly thankful as we begin the Lenten season!

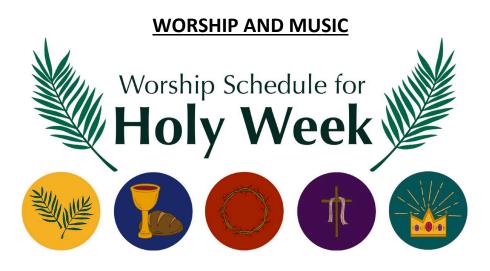
What Prevention Steps Should You Take Based on Your COVID-

19 Community Level?

Community Burden Levels			
Low	Medium	High	
 Stay <u>up to</u> <u>date</u> with COVID-19 vaccines <u>Get tested</u> if you have symptoms 	 If you are <u>at high</u> <u>risk for severe</u> <u>illness</u>, talk to your healthcare provider about whether you need to wear a mask and take other precautions Stay <u>up to</u> <u>date</u> with COVID-19 vaccines <u>Get tested</u> if you have symptoms 	 Wear a <u>mask</u> indoors in public Stay <u>up to</u> <u>date</u> with COVID- 19 vaccines <u>Get tested</u> if you have symptoms Additional precautions may be needed for people <u>at high</u> <u>risk for severe</u> <u>illness</u> 	

People may choose to mask at any time. People with symptoms, a positive test, or exposure to someone with COVID-19 should wear a mask.

If you are immunocompromised, learn more about <u>how to</u> <u>protect yourself</u>.



April 10: Palm Sunday

8:30 & 11:00 AM Join us as we celebrate Christ's triumphant entry into Jerusalem and prepare our hearts for Holy Week.

April 14: Maundy Thursday

7:00 PM

This Thursday is called "Maundy," which means "command," from the verse in John's gospel in which Jesus commands us to love another as he loved us.

April 15: Good Friday

7:00 PM Come to worship on Good Friday and leave all your burdens at the foot of the cross.

April 17: Easter Sunday

8:30 & 11:00 AM

Christ is risen! Alleluia! Join us as we celebrate a risen Christ. Between services there will be coffee hour with homemade goodies in Fellowship Hall.

OUTREACH



Thanks to you, our consistently generous Holy Cross family, our Lenten Appeals are well underway. We have a two-prong approach this year – one local and one global ministry.

To provide *local support*, we will provide non-perishable items for the Lunch for the Soul Ministry. Holy Cross has opened our doors and our hearts to the "Lunch for the Soul" Ministry. "Lunch for the Soul" provides a hot meal, fellowship, and worship for our local day labor community. We are asking members to contribute non-perishable items to support these lunches. Please consider donating:

- Water cases
- Paper bags (to pack items they take with them)
- "To Go" containers that we can put small leftovers in from the lunch
- Large package of paper napkins
- Large package of paper plates
- Large package of sturdy paper/plastic bowls

- Single serve fruit cups
- Snack bars
- Protein bars
- Iced Tea (non-refrigerated)
- Lemonade (non-refrigerated)
- Drinking cups (both for hot and cold beverages)
- Kitchen cleanup wipes
- Paper towels

To provide *global support*, Holy Cross will provide financial support to Lutheran Disaster Response, a branch of the ELCA, which is providing necessities for refugees in eastern Europe.

On Feb. 24, Russian forces invaded Ukraine, launching land, sea, and air attacks. Russia has launched air strikes across the country, including on the capital of Kyiv and other major cities. Airports are now shut, and few railway lines are operational. Millions of civilians fleeing the violence are heading toward Ukraine's western districts and such neighboring countries as Poland, Moldova, Slovakia, Romania, and Hungary. Hundreds of civilians have been killed in the conflict so far, and damage to civilian infrastructure has left hundreds of thousands of people without water or electricity. Ukrainian men of military age (18-60) are forbidden to leave the country, so most of those fleeing the violence are women and children.

According to one report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, more than 1 million people are seeking refuge in neighboring countries including Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, and Moldova. There are major humanitarian concerns for both internally displaced people and refugees. Many of these Ukrainians fleeing their homes need shelter and such basic as food, water, and toiletries. Care for people also includes pastoral and psychological support to address the trauma they've endured.

Lutheran Disaster Response, a branch of the ELCA, is accompanying companion organizations in Ukraine, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia, as well as such ecumenical partners as Lutheran World Federation and Church World Service, in their humanitarian responses to the crisis. These partners provide refugees with immediate support and supplies such as food, blankets, water, and hygiene kits. Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton has joined other religious leaders from Europe and around the globe in issuing an <u>interfaith call for peace</u> in the region.

Please pray for those in Ukraine, Russia and neighboring countries that have been affected by the crisis in Ukraine. May God's healing presence give them peace and hope in their time of need. And if you can, *please give*. Your gifts designated for "Lenten Appeal" will be used entirely (100%) to provide support for people impacted by conflict in the region. Thank you, as always, for your extraordinary generosity in caring for our brothers and sisters across the globe. You can give online, by check (write "Lent Appeal" in the comment) or use one of the purple "Lent" envelopes.

*Summary of invasion taken from ELCA Website, 3/10/22

Thank you for your continued loving generosity!

May love and peace prevail,

Deb Outreach Chair



April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

Holy Cross is partnering with SafeSpot Children's Advocacy Center, a safe, child-friendly location that provides direct services to child victims of sexual and physical abuse in Fairfax

County. Throughout the month of April our "pinwheel garden" will serve as a whimsical symbol of the great childhood that each child deserves and as a means for raising awareness about the problem of child abuse in our community. The pinwheels were provided by SafeSpot.

To learn more about SafeSpot, checkout their website, <u>https://www.safespotfairfax.org/.</u>

LIFE PASSAGES

We invite your friends and family to pray for those Holy Cross members and friends as they go through life passages.

Preparing For Marriage

Kate Reilly & Ron Ashbaugh in April 2022



ALTAR GUILD

Easter Flowers



We will be decorating the sanctuary with lily and hydrangea plants for Easter Sunday services. A donation to this fund will allow you to make a dedication either in *Memory* or *Honor* of someone special. These dedications will appear in the Easter Sunday bulletin. If you would like to take a plant home after the 11:00 am service,

the minimum donation is \$20 per plant. To order, please fill in the form below and put it, along with a check or cash, in the offering plate or mail it to the office. Please make sure your donation is clearly marked for Easter flowers. Thank you!

I would like to donate, but I don't plan to take flowers home: \$_____

I would like to take _____ (enter number of plants) home at \$20 each: Total \$ _____

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Your Name:

As you would like it to appear in the bulletin

IN MEMORY OF (Please print clearly)

IN HONOR OF (Please print clearly)

To have your dedication included in the bulletin, the completed form and funds must be received in the church office **no later than April 10th.**

FELLOWSHIP

Kitchen Spring Cleaning

After the successful church cleaning on March 26th to get ready for Easter, many items were found in the kitchen that do not belong to the church. So, please pick up your plates, utensils, etc., from the kitchen/fellowship hall soon. Anything left will be donated to a worthy cause using the following schedule:

Sat., April 9th, 5pm: Pick up your utensils, covered cake pans, white cake plate, iced tea maker, etc. from the kitchen/fellowship hall.

Sun., April 10th (Palm Sunday): All unneeded/leftover items will be placed in the narthex/fellowship hall for *anyone* to take what they want for their homes.

Mon., April 18th: All leftover items will be donated to a worthy cause.

If you are not able to make it to church to pick up your items, please contact me at <u>fellowshipchair@holycrosslutheranchurch.net</u>, let me know what items are yours and I will set them aside for you.

As Holy Cross opens up and other groups again begin to meet in the church (HALLELUJAH!), space will again be at a premium. There is a need in the kitchen for labeled, dedicated space, especially for Lunch for the Soul every Wednesday. Contact Deb Reilly (<u>outreachchair@holycrosslutheranchurch.net</u>, if you would like to help with this terrific ministry.

Thank you all for your cooperation.

Anne Geiger, Fellowship Chair

EVANGELISM



Evangelism is getting ready to kick off its busy time of year. There are lots of opportunities to get involved!!

New Members – We've been excited about the number of recent visitors who've been back to visit multiple times. We've been working closely with Pastor to capture needed contact information so we can follow-up with those who'd like to make Holy Cross their church home. One consideration would be to see if we could schedule a New Member Sunday over the next few weeks. How wonderful would it be to be able to welcome some new members as we prepare to celebrate our Easter season.

Town of Herndon – Easter Egg Hunt, Saturday, April 16 (Bready Park, Herndon Community Center). We recently applied and were awarded \$250 through Thrivent's Community Action Team network to cover the cost of our registration fee. A special note of thanks to Roy and Anne Geiger who guided your new Evangelism Chair through the step-by-step funding and application process. A promotional flyer including our HCLC logo will be going out soon. Keep a lookout for further event details.

Herndon "Carnival" Festival – June 2-5, Northwest Federal Credit Union. Many of you may have heard, this year Herndon Festival will focus more on the rides, amusement, and food vendors. There are only a limited number of booth sponsors available. Even though we opted not to participate this year, it gives us a good opportunity to put some names and faces together to find more ways for Town staff and Holy Cross to support partners together.



Sterling Fest Saturday, October 8th

Blessings,

Karen Faulkner Evangelism Chair

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

HOSANNA! HOSANNA!

Symbols of the Resurrection Multi-Generation Palm Sunday Festival April 10th: 9:45 – 10:45 am



Make Palm Sunday and Easter Crafts (For kids and adults)

Try Easter Egg-speriments

Dye Easter Eggs

Take Home Treat Bags for KIDS







WHO: Kids (Pre-k - 6th Grade)
WHAT: Sunday Kids Gatherings
WHEN: 10:00 am - 10-45 am Every Sunday (Rain or Shine)

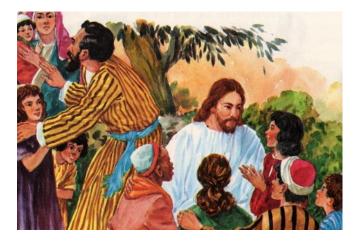
WHERE: Outside on the Portico

WHY: To Learn About God and His Eternal Love

Which of Jesus' miracles will we learn about in March?

What Will We Do?

- ✓ Openings with Mr. Jeremy
- ✓ Miracle stories Bible & Video
- ✓ Science & crafts
- ✓ Share God's love with the world
- ✓ Play!



But Jesus called the children to him and said, "Let the little children come to me." Luke 18:16a

STEWARDSHIP



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. There are three ways to give.

When you're unable to attend in-person, you can mail a check to Holy Cross, 1090 Sterling Road, Herndon, VA 20170.

Bring your offering with you to worship service at 8:30 or 11:00 am or communion on the 1st and 3rd Sundays at 12:30 pm.

Go to our website, <u>www.holycrosslutheranchurch.net</u>, Click "Donate" and fill out the safe and secure donation form. Download the free Vanco Mobile app. Once it's downloaded, you can use our Invite code, 24A7NT to ensure you are linked to the correct church, and login with your current Vanco credentials (whether from the GivePlus app or our website's Donation page. If you do not have an account, you will be prompted to set one up.

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

ELCA SYNOD NEWS







The online presence has enabled this church on the edge of town to reach an audience that extends from Phoenix to the Philippines.





hristian community

lew

When a congregation's location can best be described as "on the road out of town, near the mall," that might be a reason people aren't filling the pews. In fact, in early 2020, Living Christ Lutheran Church, Flagstaff, Ariz., was facing a 65% decline in membership since 2013. Grants from the Grand Canyon Synod, funded by Mission Support, helped sustain Living Christ's ministry.

So when the pandemic struck, the congregation faced an uncertain future.

After in-person worship was halted, Living Christ reignited its ministry by expanding its online footprint to include digital worship, with new sermon videos posted weekly and associated worship materials provided via PDF.

"We were initially just getting anywhere from 30 to 40 viewings for the sermons," said Dean Garner, council member and IT/website manager for Living Christ. "When I put a little more work towards it when the pandemic started, we got up to 70 to 100. Then we put just a few dollars into it [on Facebook], and now we're averaging 500 for the viewing of the sermons."

The online presence has enabled this church on the edge of town to reach an audience that extends from Phoenix to the Philippines.

"The internet has basically been as much of a change for the church as, say, Gutenberg and the printing press was for Luther," said Living Christ's pastor, Kurt Fangmeier. "We're always **trying to find new ways to be faithful, both to** the calling in our baptism but also in the midst of the world as it is."

Though Living Christ may be new to internet outreach, the congregation has long been known for involvement in its community, **particularly Flagstaff's LGBTQIA+ population.** In 2011, the congregation began sponsoring Pride in the Pines, an annual celebration **in Flagstaff that is hosted by the Northern** Arizona Pride Association (NAPA) and typically draws over 4,000 attendees.

"The internet has basically been as much of a change for the church as, say, Gutenberg and the printing press was for Luther."

"There are not too many churches ... that walk the walk and talk the talk," said Debra Taylor, president of NAPA, of the congregation's LGBTQIA+ outreach. "Living Christ does."

Now, in year two of the pandemic, Living Christ has transitioned to a hybrid in-person/ online model and plans to relocate to **downtown Flagstaff, which offers ample** outreach opportunities.

"The building has served us well for over 35 years and will serve us well again by providing us the means to take our mission elsewhere in our community," Garner said. "Jesus did not share the good news from one place, nor shall we.... We are excited about this new journey."



To learn more about Living Christ's ministry, view the video at ELCA.org/SOFIA.



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



1090 Sterling Road Herndon, VA 20170

