



HOLY CROSS  
LUTHERAN CHURCH

# The Quest

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



## January 2023

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# JUST A LITTLE *Reminder*

The deadline for inclusion in the February 2023 edition of the Holy Cross Newsletter, Quest, is Monday, January 16.

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 Tuesdays.

Thank you,  
Virginia Muller and Sarah Schulmeyer  
Church Administrators

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

## Find us online!

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



[www.facebook.com/HCLCHerndon](https://www.facebook.com/HCLCHerndon)



@HolyCrossELCA



HolyCrossELCA



Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Herndon VA

## STAFF



Last night (December 21) we hosted the annual *Fiesta de Navidad*, a Christmas celebration for all the participants for Lunch for the Soul, which includes the day workers, their families, and the members of each of the four congregations that work together in this ministry.

The worship was lively. Led by Jeremy and Jesse Colón from Riverside Presbyterian, we sang many familiar Christmas songs (verses alternately sung in English and Spanish) and heard a clear proclamation of the Christmas message given by Pastor Edwin Andrade from Riverside.



The dinner, the work of many hands, was a marvelous gathering of food and fellowship, with our Fellowship Hall filled with delicious smells and buzzing with conversation. Enjoying fantastic tamales, I



looked around the room. Not long before, most of us were strangers to one another, many from very different backgrounds and social situations, but now we were eating and talking, enjoying the food and the company together. Jesus was fond of using a large meal to

explain the Kingdom of God, emphasizing the mixture of all sorts of people at the table. After last night, I can understand that fondness a little bit more.

A little over a year ago, we hadn't heard about the ministry of Lunch for the Soul. A little over a year ago, a phone call invited us to become a partner and so, for a little more than a year we have been working with three other congregations hosting weekly lunches for the day workers in our community. For a little more than a year now, the Spirit has blessed us as we share God's love with our siblings, and they share it back to us.

The Holy Spirit has a wonderful way of calling us to new, exciting things. As we begin a new calendar year, I pray that we keep our hearts and minds open to hear new calls to ever more new and wonderful ways to be part of the Kingdom of God in our community and our world. We never know where it will lead us in Jesus' name.

Pastor Martin

## Director of Music and Liturgy



*We Three Kings* is probably one of the best-known Epiphany carols. It is also one that is most often brought forward into the Christmas season for use at carol services. However, it is a straightforward dramatization of the story of the wise men's visit to Jesus after his birth on Christmas Day. This story is taken out of Matthew 2:7-11

<sup>7</sup>Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup>Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." <sup>9</sup>When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup>When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. <sup>11</sup>On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

The carol was first published in 1884 while its author, Rev. Dr. John Hopkins, was Rector of a parish in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. He wrote it as part of a Christmas pageant for a seminary in New York City. Hopkins is the composer of both the text and music for this hymn. It is interesting to note that Hopkins was very specific to note that there was to be no slowing down on the "O..." that starts each refrain, a request that has been clearly thrown out by modern culture. Hopkins has been criticized by Bible scholars that the first

people to visit Christ from Eastern lands were not kings; nor were there three of them. Yet so many people who learn this carol at a young age carry this misconception into adult life. The Bible simply calls these men “magi.” It is believed that this term refers to a caste of Persian priests or sorcerers who were experts in astrology, divination, and the interpretation of dreams. While they could have been rulers of a sort because of their offices, there is no reason to believe they had great wealth.



What we do know is that these Gentiles traveled some distance, intent upon worshiping the newborn King of the Jews. With them they brought gifts of great worth - gold, frankincense and myrrh. Hopkins explains in his carol that these gifts were to prophesy what the Christ child would be. Gold prophesied his kingship. The frankincense spoke of his purity of life. Myrrh was a spice that embalmed the dead and predicted his coming death.

These gifts could also be interpreted as gifts that God desires from us still today. Gold to symbolize our most precious treasures, our hopes and dreams. Giving a gift of gold is giving from the heart. The frankincense denotes the pleasing fragrance that arises from a life of holiness and offering him our obedience. Myrrh is to proclaim the fact that we have died to self and now live in Christ, this giving him our very life.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Jeremy Shoop, Director of Music and Liturgy

# Thank you!

Thank you to everyone who supported our fifth annual Beer and Carols event at Jimmy's Old Town Tavern! Thank you to those who donated prizes to be raffled off, to those who helped set up and staff the event, to the staff at Jimmy's Old Town Tavern for letting us invade their restaurant and sing carols as we ate and drank, and most of all, to all of YOU who bought raffle tickets and sang your hearts out! Such a joyful event in the community is a lovely way to show everyone how much fun we have at Holy Cross!

Thanks to everyone's generosity, we raised nearly \$2,000 for the ELCA Chaplains Agency!

Our SIXTH ANNUAL Beer and Carols event will be next December!  
Don't miss it!







## COUNCIL



Holy Cross Family –

### **Epiphany**

By the time you read this, the Christmas Season will be half over, and Epiphany will be fast approaching. Epiphany celebrates the visit by the Magi and the revelation of Jesus as the Son of God. In a secular context, an epiphany is a sudden insight or realization of the essential meaning of something. I've been reminded of the same "epiphany" over and over again (I'm a slow learner!): that "nudges" (which I keep ignoring) are often the Holy Spirit trying to guide me. I'm an analytical "Type A" person; I try to study situations, seek advice, weigh alternatives, and then proceed with the course of action that I've determined would be the best. This approach usually works well; however, I am not a patient person, and I find that (more often than I care to admit) what I thought would be the solution just doesn't work out because I've failed to let the Holy Spirit work on its own schedule and in its own way. It's not unusual for me to get a "nudge" in the fellowship of others, in some mundane activity, and it's only in retrospect that I realize that the Holy Spirit was active. I love soaring music in a beautiful cathedral and am usually inspired by the experience, but I've learned to also value the simple acts of kindness and joy I see all around me. A sacred experience can happen anywhere! It's just as likely to occur in the Fellowship Hall conversing with our brothers and sisters in Christ during Lunch for the Soul, or with fellow members during an Advent supper, or with acts of

kindness on the street, as it is in the church sanctuary or a beautiful cathedral, if our eyes and hearts are open. I've found that I'm not alone in this realization. Sarah Bessey, an associate of the late Rachel Held Evans, had a similar observation recently,

"These days, that knowing of God's love rarely happens in the places where I was told to look for God: church services, quiet times, Christian-lady-books, worship music, whatever. These days, I feel God's nearness most in the dark, in the public pool, around the dinner table, on unremarkable sidewalks, under a cover of stars. I feel God's love for all of us in sad songs and the creak of snow under your boots, in the lines of poetry and the long line-up of people snaking down the shopping mall aisles, all waiting to pick up a packet of information, so they can shop for a local family in need and drop off toys for kids they'll never meet."

I think the true "epiphany" that I've found is that we tend to treat church like the living room--we try to keep clean and orderly in case somebody drops by. We need to maintain an attitude of treating others like close friends and family, as we do in the "family room"--where we let our guard down and live our actual lives. I think the genuine welcoming and celebration of all is a key strength of Holy Cross, for it is only with our guards down, that we can be open to seeing the miracles God works in our daily lives and in the lives of those around us.

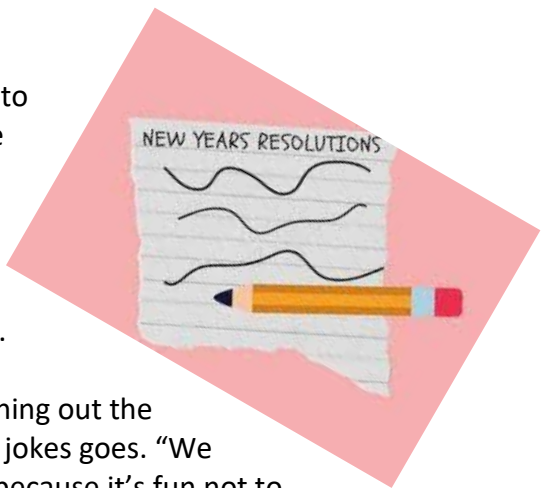
As we close out the Christmas Season and enter the season of Epiphany, may we all see and feel the presence of the Holy Spirit who Christ sent to guide us in our lives and the life of our church. I look forward to seeing what Christ has in mind for us in the new year and beyond!

Yours in Christ,

Sam

## FELLOWSHIP

January is a time of reflection, and to look back on the previous year. We can look back to where we were at this time last year, note any differences in ourselves, and plan to move forward in 2023 in more thoughtful and positive ways.



January is also a time to finish cleaning out the church kitchen. One of my favorite jokes goes. "We keep a potato masher in a drawer because it's fun not to be able to open that drawer." We have that same issue now with several utensil drawers in the kitchen, so look for utensil giveaways in the narthex throughout January.



As always on Sunday, you are invited and encouraged to stop by the Fellowship Hall for some coffee, tea, juice, or water and good food (there is always fruit!). It's a terrific way to meet up with Holy Cross members and visitors.

Regards,  
Anne Geiger, Fellowship Chair

## **EVANGELISM**

### **Beer and Carols was a Success!**

What a festive night we enjoyed with our Holy Cross friends and neighbors as Jeremy, our Master of Ceremonies, led us in some of our Christmas songs and carols. Many thanks to all those who donated door prizes and took home some wonderful winnings. It was estimated we raised nearly \$2,000 to support the efforts of our ELCA Chaplaincy Fund. And a special note of thanks to Jimmy and his wonderful staff for allowing us to host this event every year!

### **A Big Welcome to Our New Members!**

On Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, we welcomed new members and baptized 2 children! Previously we held a New Member Interest Lunch on November 20 for all those interested in learning more about what it means to be a Lutheran, and our life together at Holy Cross. How blessed and excited we are to have our new members join us as part of our ministry here at Holy Cross.

Respectfully submitted,  
Karen Faulkner

*Welcome to our New Members!*

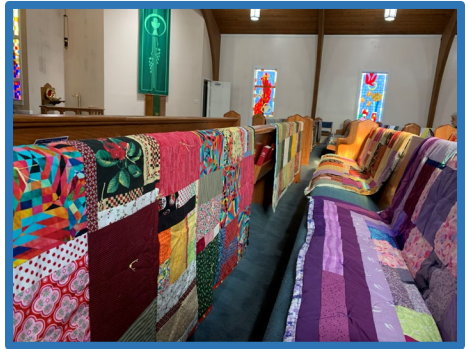
Andrew Barden  
Bonnie Clark  
Shelly Eldred  
Philip Isiah  
Pam Mitcham  
Emma Peron  
Matt Ruckert



## OUTREACH

### **Quilts for Lutheran World Relief**

In November, we dedicated and shipped another large collection of quilts to Lutheran World Relief. The quilts are so beautiful and a source of comfort for those in need. Thank you to our wonderful quilting team for their extraordinary work this year!



**ELL Holiday Party** – After wrapping up another semester of learning, the ELL program celebrated the holidays with a gathering at Holy Cross. The program will resume in-person classes in the spring.

**Advent** - As you know, we are a sponsoring partner of the LINK food pantry. Joy Heuer suggested that during Advent we focus on one food item/group per week to restock the pantry. This would meet a very real need in our local community. We've collected jellies & jams, soups, baking supplies, and canned chicken. The pantry was very grateful for our targeted drive! Thanks to Joy Heuer and Michael Faulkner for delivering items to the pantry!

### **Epiphany/MLK Day of Service –**

During our intergenerational advent activity, our kids helped make wooden Chrismon ornaments. On Christmas Eve, we handed out these ornaments, and attached a list of items needed to assemble Lutheran World Relief Care Kits. These kits provide very basic necessities for people in



difficult and often dangerous situations. We will ask members to bring the items in on Epiphany, January 8<sup>th</sup>

Then, on MLK Day of Service, January 16<sup>th</sup>, we will assemble the care kits to be distributed across the globe. All ages are welcome and encouraged to join us and help assemble the kits! We are again aspiring to assemble 60 kits to celebrate Holy Cross 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. You can learn more about the Care Kits on the Lutheran World Relief website, <https://lwr.org/kits/personal-care-kits>.

**Here is the list of items we'll be collecting for our LWR kits:**

### **Personal Care Kits**

- Light-weight bath size towel, dark colored preferred
- Bath size bars of soap, (2-3 per kit), in original packaging
- Adult size toothbrush in original packaging
- Sturdy comb
- Metal nail clipper



### **Baby Care Kits** – sizes for babies 6-24 months

- Lightweight cotton t-shirts; No Onesies (2 per kit)
- Long or short sleeve gowns or sleepers without feet (2 per kit)
- Receiving blankets, medium-weight cotton or flannel (2 per kit)
- Cloth diapers, flat fold preferred (4 per kit)
- Jacket, sweater or sweatshirt with a hood or include a baby hat
- Socks (2 pair per kit)
- Hand towel, dark color recommended
- Bath-sized bars of gentle soap in original packaging (2-3 per kit)



Thank you for your continued support for our Outreach Programs.

With Love and Gratitude, Deb Reilly





## English Language Learners



We completed our online fall semester December 9<sup>th</sup>. The ELL spring semester will start January 11 and end May 19, 2023. We will teach every Wednesday from 7:00-8:30 pm, in-person, and without breaktime.

Since our classes have been online, we finally met some of our ELL students in person at our first Christmas party since 2019! It was so exciting to see our students in person for the first time! It was also their first time at Holy Cross. Jeremy started our party playing the piano for our Christmas caroling. Pastor Martin helped everyone sing along. Students liked the caroling so much; they took the printed lyrics home! Students and their families at our Christmas party were from Afghanistan, Russia/Belarus, India, Togo and Peru. We have very diverse students in our ELL classes. In addition to the countries represented at the party, we also have students from Mexico, Brazil, Egypt, Venezuela, Thailand, El Salvador and the Dominican Republic.

After our Christmas party, we took students on a tour of the education wing. They liked our classrooms and checked out the US and world maps, posters and books. We answered questions and explained the different classrooms.

We are very fortunate to have Marcia Blanco teaching our Beginner students. Marcia taught an online Zoom class with her daughter, Alejandra, who graduates from Virginia Tech this month.

Congratulations, Alejandra!

Thank you for always supporting our ELL program.

The ELL Team, Ellen, Suzanne, Jeanne, Marcia, Alejandra and Chip.

ELL HOLIDAY PARTY WAS A SUCCESS!



## PROPERTY

Thank you to the Makowski family for all of the extensive tree trimming done in December! They certainly made it a family affair!

They cut a lot of branches to clear the lights directly across from the Sanctuary entrance, and to the four trees at the corners of the grass quad. All the debris was chipped onsite and taken into the wooded areas. This is a huge



improvement to both visibility and lighting in our outside areas! Thanks to Joe, and his sons Kevin and Michael, for all their labor, and to Kathy for helping with the cleanup and providing lunch. Additionally, Mike's company, Rentals Unlimited loaned the lift and chipper free of charge!



**Thank you so much  
to the  
Makowski family!**





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 sustain us. Your generosity makes all things possible.

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

**There are three ways to give when you're not in the sanctuary:**

1. To give online, simply go to our secure website and click **"Donate"** to set up an automatic donation plan.
2. 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.
3. You can also mail a check to the church (Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 1090 Sterling Road, Herndon, VA 20170) or bring a check to the drive-through communion on the 1st and 3rd Sundays at 12:30 PM. An even easier method of sending a single or recurring check donation to the church is by using Bill Pay with your bank or credit union online account or mobile app. Those payments are guaranteed and are shown in your bank or credit union records. Also, there is no fee to you and to the church.

# Mask Guidance for HCLC



At the beginning of mask mandates, the Holy Cross Lutheran Church Council voted to follow the guidance of the CDC and local health authorities. Both Loudoun and Fairfax Counties have been determined to have **Low COVID-19 Community Levels** according to CDC guidelines. Accordingly, Council approved relaxing our mask requirement, and masks are now optional at Holy Cross. 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 [how to protect yourself](#).

## What Prevention Steps Should You Take Based on Your COVID-19 Community Level?

Community Burden Levels		
Low	Medium	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Stay <a href="#">up to date</a> with COVID-19 vaccines</li><li>• <a href="#">Get tested</a> if you have symptoms</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• If you are <a href="#">at high risk for severe illness</a>, talk to your healthcare provider about whether you need to wear a mask and take other precautions</li><li>• Stay <a href="#">up to date</a> with COVID-19 vaccines</li><li>• <a href="#">Get tested</a> if you have symptoms</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wear a <a href="#">mask</a> indoors in public</li><li>• Stay <a href="#">up to date</a> with COVID-19 vaccines</li><li>• <a href="#">Get tested</a> if you have symptoms</li><li>• Additional precautions may be needed for people <a href="#">at high risk for severe illness</a></li></ul>



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