



HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH

THE CROSS CONNECTION

Providing Strength for the Faith Journey

February 2023

CONGREGATIONAL
LIFE

PAGES 1 - 5

RELATIONAL MINISTRY
PAGE 6

EARLY CHILDHOOD
MINISTRY
PAGE 7

YOUTH MINISTRY
PAGES 8 - 9

BEYOND THE
CONGREGATION
PAGE 10

CALENDAR
PAGE 11

FEBRUARY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

FIRST SATURDAY

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4
5:30 PM - SANCTUARY

SUNDAYS

FEBRUARY 5, 12, 19, 26
8 & 10 AM
SANCTUARY & LIVESTREAM

ASH WEDNESDAY

FEBRUARY 22 AT 7 PM
SANCTUARY & LIVESTREAM

VIEW LIVESTREAM AT
[HOLYCROSSCHURCH.ORG/
SERMONS](https://www.holycrosschurch.org/sermons)

A congregation of the
Evangelical Lutheran Church
in America



Space to Discover God's Love in Our Lives

by Pastor Chris Neptun

It is no secret that we are living in a time of significant change and uncertainty. This may be related to the pandemic we experienced. Perhaps the change was happening already. The events of the last three years brought this change into view for us. We may never know. Regardless, we do know life is different now.

This is true for nearly every aspect of life. Businesses have had change. The education sector has adapted. Healthcare, transportation, the service industry, public safety; every aspect of our lives has changed significantly since early 2020. It is also true for the church. Communities of faith from all traditions, practices, and denominations are adjusting. We are all figuring out where we go from here and what the church may look like going forward.

The times have changed. The technology has advanced. Even so, God's instruction to us remains the same. "Love Me and love one another." Easy, right? For me, this has been a struggle. I imagine it is for you and all who have followed Jesus. As humans, we strive to advance, to get better. Technology advances out of a desire to be better and to improve life. As it relates to faith, hope and love, technology has delivered a mixed bag. In some ways it has made it easier for us to love and in other ways it is easier to do harm to others and ourselves.

As life changes one thing continues to reveal itself to me; my need for God's grace, mercy and love and others' needs for it as well. Jesus' mandate to the disciples on the night he was betrayed was to "Love one another as I have loved you." (John 13:34) We are called to love in ways that do not make sense. Jesus asks us to love in ways that have others in mind first, in ways that don't benefit us at first glance, in ways we haven't loved before. How will we do that?

In the Acts of the Apostles, the believers of early church make space for God's Spirit and for people. Acts 2:43-47 says, "Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved."

We love one another by making space for God's Spirit and others. We make space in our schedules, our hearts, our generosity, our minds, our homes, in all our lives. There is space for you and all in God's kingdom. Matthew's Gospel holds the Sermon on the Mount. This sermon includes the Beatitudes in which Jesus makes room for and blesses the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, the ones who hunger and thirst, the merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers, the persecuted and us when we find ourselves being reviled, persecuted, and slandered on account of Jesus. It doesn't sound like blessing, just the opposite. Still, Jesus makes space for all.

At Holy Cross, our vision is to "Provide strength for the faith journey." To grow in strength requires space, space to experiment and try things out, space to learn and train, space to make mistakes and space to forgive and be forgiven. With the end of Epiphany and the beginning of Lent before us, I hope we discover together where God is being revealed in our lives and have space to grow into that.

Peace be with you,

Pastor Chris

Midweek Lenten Soup Suppers

March 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29

During Lent we will offer a family-friendly fellowship opportunity of gathering before our midweek Lenten worship services for a soup supper. **The soup suppers will begin serving at 6 pm and wrap up by 6:45 pm with the midweek Lenten worship services beginning at 7 pm.** Holy Cross will provide the soup, bread, and beverages, so there's nothing you need to bring. We will gather in the fellowship area where people will be able to social distance as they feel the need to. Any questions may be directed to the church office at office@holycrosschurch.org or (847) 367-4060. All welcome, please join us!



HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH

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PASTORS AND CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Dr. Robert A. Davis, Co-Senior Pastor
Rev. Christopher Neptun, Co-Senior Pastor
Sarah Accettura, Administrative Coordinator
Janet Carr, Congregational Activities
Carmen & Abel Cervantes, Custodians
Beth Fashimpaur, Handbell Choir Director
Deaconess Katie Freund, Director of Early Faith Formation Ministries
Beth Ann Koenemann, Financial Administrator
Carrie Mack, Director of Youth Music Ministries
Steve Oelschlager, Director of Operational Ministries
Ellie Rautenbach, Congregational Communications
Manny Rivera, Property
Dale Tippet Jr., Director of Contemporary Music and Director of Worship Technical Arts
Paul Vander Wee, Organist

EARLY CHILDHOOD MINISTRY

Samantha (Sam) Cooper, Director
Roxanne (Rocky) Kupfer, Assistant Director
Tania Zombolo, Assistant Director

CHURCH COUNCIL

Andy Eidson (*President*), Harold Sargent (*Vice President*),
Karla Boucek, Darin Chartier, Nicole Drake, Ralph Freye,
Mick Garrison, Gail Kelly, Bill Miksch, Jeannine Phillips,
Amy Sekili, John Villani
Secretary, Terry Berger
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Financial Secretary, Tom Miller

VOLUNTEER COORDINATORS

Altar Care: Julie Lucziw
Worship Volunteers: Therese Delli Paoli

The Cross Connection, parish newsletter of Holy Cross Lutheran Church, is published monthly and is available online at HolyCrossChurch.org/newsletters. Articles should be submitted by the **1st** of the month to Janet Carr at janet@holycrosschurch.org

LENT

Hungry - Understanding What Feeds

Ash Wednesday Worship

February 22 at 7 pm

with Imposition of Ashes & Holy Communion

Midweek Lenten Worship

Featuring Interviews with our Hunger Ministry Partners

Wednesday, March 1

7 - 7:30 pm

COOL Ministries

Mindy Lindholm, Executive Director

Wednesday, March 8

7 - 7:30 pm

Feed My Starving Children

Kenzie Mackillop, Development Advisor

Wednesday, March 15

7 - 7:30 pm

ELCA World Hunger

Deacon Brooke De Jong

Program Assistant - Hunger Education

Wednesday, March 22

7 - 7:30 pm

Northern Illinois Food Bank

Jenny Ackerman, Development Officer,
Corporation and Foundation Giving

Wednesday, March 29

7 - 7:30 pm

PADS

Eric Foote, Deputy Executive Director

Maundy Thursday

April 6 at 7 pm

with Holy Communion & First Communion

Good Friday

April 7 at 7 pm

Astounded & Amazed

by Pastor Bob Davis

For the past several months I have been engaged in an email conversation with an individual who has been watching our online worship services. Initially, the comments were very inquisitive in their nature. It felt like there was a “back story” to their questions. I admit I was operating more from intuition than any actual facts. Finally, we developed enough “trust” capital that the conversation changed. It deepened and now there is this exchange between us that is uplifting and rich. I don’t think we will ever meet in-person and while they know who I am and where I work, I know very little about their specifics. And, I am OK with that. I am still very careful of where these exchanges might be going. I don’t think it is because I am suspicious but more about being curious.

Recently, they asked me... “If you were to make a list of the “hard things in life” that you have struggled with what would you put on your list?” My first thought was that this is very personal and unique to each of us. I must admit that this particular question astounded and amazed me and I actually said that to them in my reply. I sensed the time was right to engage on a deeper level and I asked them to share what they were thinking of.

For several weeks there was no response and I began to wonder if I was wrong in my assessment of where our conversation was going. Recently we have been exchanging emails again. We talk about how people can needlessly complicate the Christian life. We have exchanged ideas about how we struggle to know: What God wants us to *do*? What is God’s will? How shall we hear God’s voice and discern God’s plan? We disagreed about moments in scripture and what they might mean and teach us. Like: Do justice. Love mercy. Walk humbly. Pray, listen, learn, and love. Break the bread, drink the wine, bear the burden, and share the peace. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Love your neighbor as yourself. We agreed that the work of forgiveness is some of the hardest work we can do in our lives while it is at the same time some of the most important work we can do in this world. Hand-in-hand with forgiving is loving. It is equally hard to do. We have decided that you can’t have one without the other.

I appreciate moments like these. I consider it an honor and a privilege to be invited into conversations like this. They are life giving and they help me appreciate that spiritual maturity requires movement from certainty to faith, from light to shadow, and, from power to vulnerability. Can you relate? And if you can, then, when was the last time God astounded and amazed you? Can you recall a time in the recent past when the presence of God in your life caught your attention and held it? When a sacred moment, encounter, word, image, or experience brought you to your knees? Were you astounded and amazed?

Peace!



A Year of Holy Days - Candlemas

by Deaconess Katie Freund

I’m willing to bet most of us have never celebrated Candlemas before. This holy day comes from the Catholic tradition and it’s a day to bless (you guessed it) candles. All the church candles for that year are prayed over, and families are invited to bring their own candles from home to be blessed as well. This might seem kind of silly today with everything running on abundant electricity; but remember that we are just now beginning to emerge from the darkest part of the year.

It’s no coincidence that Candlemas is observed on February 2, the day after Brigid’s Day—Lá Fhéile Bríde—the feast day of Ireland’s only female patron saint on February 1. Historically this marks the beginning of spring and honors sacred flame, even before Christianity arrived in Europe. For us, this is the time of year to contemplate the statement of faith: “*The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness does not overcome it.*” (John 1:5) In the Lutheran tradition, this brings to mind the liturgy for Holden evening prayer.

It’s important to know that Candlemas is the same day as the Presentation of Our Lord. Taking place forty days after Christmas, this is when the infant Jesus was brought to the Jewish temple along with offerings to God. This was done according to the Torah for the purification ritual of Mary after childbirth as well as the redemption of the firstborn son. Think of it like a mother and child returning to the worshipping community after a maternity leave. We actually have historical practices like this in the Lutheran tradition. If you look up “churching of women”, in Lutheran practice it would have been forty days after the birth when mother and child would return to church worship to give thanks—specifically for their survival of the birthing journey.

Matching this theology with the turn of the seasons, the beginning of February is when the church gives thanks for Christ, the one who ushers in eternal life and thaws our frozen hearts with God’s eternal love—a gentle springtime for the soul as the sunlight returns. Think of Simeon, the priest of the temple holding the infant Jesus in his arms and calling this small child “a light to the world”.

One last fun connection—February 2 is also commonly known as... (drumroll, please)... Groundhog Day. Thank you to our Pennsylvania Dutch siblings for this uniquely American tradition. Whoever looked at a marmot and thought “I can use that to predict the passing of the seasons” sure was industrious.

May your season be blessed, your candles trimmed, and your shadows grow shorter.

PASTORAL ACTS

BAPTISMS

Lillian Marie Wilk
daughter of Adam and Meredith Wilk
January 7, 2023

Cooper Edward Voorhees
son of Tyler and Melissa Voorhees
January 22, 2023

FUNERALS

Warren Thummel
January 14, 2023

Evelyn Schmidt
January 28, 2023



Chicagoland Voices Winter Concert

Date: Saturday, February 4, 2023
Time: 7:30 pm
Location: Sanctuary
Free admission

**Chicagoland
Voices**

The members of Chicagoland Voices are excited and grateful to have the opportunity to perform for a third time at Holy Cross. This year's winter concert contains a wide variety of choral music sure to appeal to all ages. Pieces include Franz Biebl's setting of "Ave Maria", highly regarded as the G.O.A.T. in settings of this text. We will perform three excerpts from Mozart's Requiem including the stirring "Lacrymosa". "When We Love", a beautiful piece by Elaine Hagenberg, composed to Charles Anthony Silvestri's poem of the same name, will be a debut. Mark Hayes' recent release "Joy!", set in his signature 12/8 time, will be another debut. A moving, heartfelt recent offering from young composer Zachary J. Moore entitled, "I Won't Forget" will also be performed. These plus a Christmas carol, up tempo spirituals, and many more are sure to make for an uplifting and memorable experience that will be the talk of the congregation at church on Sunday morning. Don't miss it!

HolyCrossChurch.org/atc

Pastor Bob's Sabbatical Leave



The sabbatical leave is the final phase of the "Path Forward" transition plan at Holy Cross. It is a three month period beginning March 1, 2023 and concluding on May 31, 2023. What is a sabbatical? It is not a vacation. A sabbatical is an extended period of time away from work that allows for a different pace/rhythm from work responsibilities and a time for study and reflection. During this time, the individual is still employed and paid. While Pastor Bob is on his sabbatical leave, he will not be available for pastoral responsibilities. He will return on June 1, 2023 and move into a part-time role as Pastor Emeritus at Holy Cross through May 31, 2024.

Here is a historical overview of how we got to this moment. A great deal of thoughtfulness and conversation went into the pastoral leadership transition plan. In 2019 Pastor Bob began a conversation with the Staff Support Team and the Church Council about the future leadership needs of Holy Cross. The conventional approach when pastoral change occurs is for the current pastor to resign from the called position and then leave the congregation. The expectation is that the pastor would no longer be a member of the congregation or provide any pastoral support. The church leadership began exploring other options and proposed a different transition plan. After consultation with the Bishop's office of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod the idea was presented to the congregation in January 2020. The Covid pandemic impacted the process in March 2020 and we took a pause. A Call Committee was formed in the first quarter of 2021. The church council and call committee updated the position description and began working with the Bishop's office. Rev. Chris Neptun started his tenure as the new senior pastor at Holy Cross in June 2022. The sabbatical leave has been a part of the transition plan and will culminate the first year of the co-pastorate position. View the full Path Forward outline at HolyCrossChurch.org/transition



Journey faith, discipleship, generosity

The Refreshing Gift of a Meal Together

by Steve Oelschlager

There are over 860 passages in the Bible that reference a meal or eating, highlighting how important food is to our existence. It would be a mistake though to think that these passages are only about people addressing their daily need for sustenance. When Jesus mentions hungering and thirsting no more, he isn't just alluding to our physical appetites, but also our spiritual cravings, human frustrations, and discontent.

Soon after we are born, most of us are blessed to receive the first gifts of life: love, a smile, a hug, eye contact, and food. While simple, these gifts satisfy on many different levels that are not just physical. In some respects, we spend the rest of our lives yearning for these same basic things: unconditional affirmation of who we are, belonging, and heartfelt connection to others.

What is it about eating together and sharing a meal that promotes bonding and wellbeing? When we take in food in the presence of another person, amazingly we seem to take in something of that person too. Not surprisingly, mealtimes were when Jesus chose to communicate some of his most important teachings to his followers. Of all the things Jesus could have been doing with his disciples the night before his crucifixion, eating supper is what they did. The sacrament of Holy Communion is derived from that Last Supper, tapping into the mysterious relationship between Jesus, food, community, and salvation.

Perhaps it isn't a shock what social science tells us about the value of eating together with our children? Kids who regularly eat dinner with their families have lower probabilities of drinking, smoking, drug use, pregnancy, suicide, and eating disorders. It's profound that many of the things we worry about as parents can be positively affected by something as straightforward as preparing a meal, and then sitting down and eating together. Most likely these benefits are not just reserved for kids but are there for adults as well.

I hope this year affords you more chances to be blessed by sharing meals with others. Please watch the Holy Cross newsletter and calendar for opportunities for table fellowship including men's breakfasts, soup suppers, and more.



MEMBERSHIP

Are you interested in becoming a member of Holy Cross? To learn more about membership, please contact the church office at office@holycrosschurch.org or (847) 367-4060.

NEW MEMBER BREAKFAST

Saturday, February 18 at 9 am

RSVP to the church office by Monday, February 13

NEW MEMBER RECEPTION

Sunday, February 19 during 10 am Worship

Faith Formation

ADULT

Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago...Community Learning

Members from Holy Cross joined with others from around the country in the Fall 2022 for a class on ecumenical and interfaith relationships led by Dr. Mark Swanson. Another session is being offered beginning in February 2023. There is no cost involved.

The next offering is: **Martin Luther on the Holy Spirit and the Christian Life** by Dr. Candace Kohli, Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago.

Do Lutherans shout justification and whisper sanctification? This question suggests an over emphasis on Christ and justification in Luther's theology and its reception in modern Lutheranism. Luther actually had much to say in the final decade of his career about the third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit's role in the Christian life. In many ways, in fact, Luther's late "discovery" of the Spirit helped him to answer unresolved questions inherent in his doctrine of justification alone by faith alone, such as the ongoing role of the law in the Christian life, ethical and moral foundations for a life lived in community, and what really happens to the soul in justification. For Luther the Christian life was a life lived in and with the Spirit in thought, word, and deed?

Week 1: A Trinitarian Pneumatology: The Spirit as divine agent of the law and gift of the gospel

Week 2: Did you say "sanctification"? The Spirit as Christ's healing medicine for the soul

Week 3: Fanning Spiritual Flames: The role of prayer in the Spirit-soul relation

Week 4: Christians Do Good Works! The role of the Spirit in supporting the Christian life

The offerings will all be remote. **If you are interested in participating in this offering you will need to register individually online at bit.ly/LSTCspring**



The schedule will be as follows:

Sunday Evenings (Live), starting February 26, 6 - 7:30 pm

5-minute introduction and prayer

20-minute presentation

20-minute small group break out discussion

5-minute report-back

20-minute presentation

15-minute small group break out discussion

5-minute recap and sending with homework assignment

The two 20 minute presentations will be recorded and used in the Wednesday sessions

Wednesday Evenings (Recordings w/ Facilitation), starting March 1, 7 - 8:30 pm

The format of delivery will be the same but the presentations will be the recordings of Dr. Kohli from Sunday (these can also be used for make-up sessions), with our wonderful seminary student Eric Jensen facilitating the report-backs and live interactions throughout. Dr. Kohli will also join live for the closing recap and sending.

Visual Faith Process

When: Sundays between worship services at 9:10 to 9:45 am (*full schedule below*)

Who: Adults and young adults post confirmation

Where: Conference room 208 in the CrossWays Preschool education wing



What you should know...

This is a conversational model led by Pastor Chris and Pastor Bob for any post confirmation people of faith. We know there is creativity in uncovering the power of images for the formation of faith. We will be using content that provides access and insights for people who want to follow Jesus today. As practitioners of the Christian faith, we believe this is an opportunity to disciple one another towards a vibrant faith.

Choices...

Did you know that looking at pictures, images, and photographs connects with the emotional center of your brain? That is where we actually "see." So, processing pictures helps people make immediate internal and emotional connections to their own experiences. We don't bring the same life experiences to formation and discipleship. We will provide material that will allow each person the opportunity to explore a variety of overarching themes, targeted topics, visual image choices, and thoughtful questions.

Topics and Texts...

Visual Faith Process uses Scripture as the basis for topic-explorations that generate natural, vigorous conversations about what it means to follow Jesus today.

Scope and sequence of themes

No advance preparation is required. Take home resources will be available. Or download online at holycrosschurch.org/adultfaith

Visual Faith Process Schedule

Tough Times

February 5: Kept In Peace (*Isaiah 26:3-4*)

February 12: Cared For (*1 Peter 5:7*)

February 19: Do Not Lose Heart (*Luke 21:34-38*)

Forgiveness and Reconciliation

February 26: Mocked and Insulted (*Luke 22:63-65*)

March 5: Dressing Up (*Colossians 3:12-13*)

March 12: Forgive and Be Forgiven (*Matthew 6:14-15*)

March 19: First: Reconciliation (*Matthew 5:23-24*)

March 26: Confession (*1 John 1:9*)

April 2: Living In Peace (*Luke 7:36-50*)



**MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP**

TUESDAYS, FEBRUARY 7, 14, 21 & 28 AT 7 - 8 AM

LOCATION: THE LIBERTY RESTAURANT, 419 S. MILWAUKEE AVE, LIBERTYVILLE

This is a wonderful way to begin the day with coffee, breakfast, fellowship and thought-provoking and stimulating conversation. All men are welcome to join us. Questions? Contact Pastor Bob at pastorbob@holycrosschurch.org

**GROUNDING IN GRACE: FRIDAY NIGHT WOMEN'S GROUP**

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17 AT 6:30 - 8 PM

LOCATION: BUFFALO CREEK BREWING, 360 HISTORICAL LANE, LONG GROVE

Grounded in Grace is a social opportunity for women of faith to connect together in fellowship.

Join us if you can for fellowship and fun. Please note: Buffalo Creek Brewing does not serve food, but frequently has a food truck available. Feel free to bring snacks to share. Questions? Contact Terry Berger at terryberger.08@gmail.com

**SATURDAY MEN'S GROUP**

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4 & 18 AT 7 - 8:30 AM

LOCATION: IN-PERSON (ROOM 208) OR VIA ZOOM

holycrosschurch.zoom.us/j/301891517

This group is for men of faith to come together throughout the year to share their faith and thoughts about challenging topics. Join us in February as we continue to take in ideas and inspiration from a variety of topics as a way to launch our conversation. All welcome. Questions? Contact Pastor Bob at pastorbob@holycrosschurch.org or Steve Oelschlager at steve@holycrosschurch.org

**WOMEN'S DISCUSSION GROUP**

TUESDAYS, FEBRUARY 7 & 21 AT 9:30 AM

LOCATION: ROOM 208

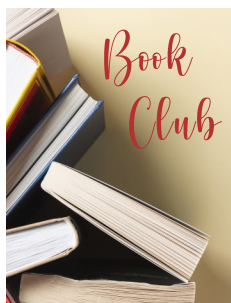
The discussion topics for 2023 will continue to be taken from the book *Wholehearted Faith* by Rachel Held Evans. View the full session schedule at HolyCrossChurch.org/virtualmeetings All women welcome. Contact Pastor Chris at pastorchrist@holycrosschurch.org with any questions.

**PILATES**

MONDAYS, FEBRUARY 6, 13, 20 & 27 AT 6 PM

LOCATION: CELEBRATION! CHILDCARE ATRIUM

To join this group, please contact Jodi Zombolo at (224) 595-8573.

**BOOK CLUB**

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23 AT 7 PM

LOCATION: IN-PERSON (ROOM 208) OR VIA ZOOM

holycrosschurch.zoom.us/j/94321824417

In February we will discuss **The English American** by Alison Larkin. When Pippa Dunn, adopted as an infant and raised terribly British, discovers that her birth parents are from the American South, she finds that "culture clash" has layers of meaning she'd never imagined. In many ways, Pippa Dunn is very English: she eats Marmite on toast, knows how to make a proper cup of tea, has attended a posh English boarding school. Yet Pippa is creative, disheveled, and impulsive to the core—has always felt different from her perfectly poised, smartly coiffed sister and steady, practical parents, whose pastimes include Scottish dancing, gardening, and watching cricket. Our discussion host will be Nancy Scarpelli. If you have any questions, please email Melanie Houser at housermd@comcast.net

**PROJECT HEALING WATERS (PHW) FLY FISHING NORTH CHICAGO**

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8 AT 7 - 8:30 PM

LOCATION: HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH

We always welcome more volunteers to help with hospitality. If you would like to help in this way, please contact office@holycrosschurch.org

**QUILTING GROUP**

WEDNESDAYS, FEBRUARY 1, 8, 15 & 22 AT 9 AM - 12 PM

LOCATION: ROOM 404

We gather on Wednesdays to sew as a group. Completed quilts are donated to COOL Ministries for families residing in the Family Housing program or to Project Linus, an organization that provides blankets to comfort children who are seriously injured, traumatized, or in need. Questions? Contact Deb Sherrock at debs695@aol.com or (630) 267-7802.

**COMMON THREADS**

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 13 AT 1 - 3 PM

LOCATION: FELLOWSHIP AREA

We meet on the second Monday of each month to knit, crochet and visit. No prior crafting experience necessary. Each blanket or shawl created is dedicated at a worship service and then presented to the prayer recipient. These pieces offer the healing power of prayer, crafted as an expression of God's love. Request a prayer blanket or shawl for a loved one by contacting the church office at office@holycrosschurch.org. Questions? Contact Judy Luplow at (847) 367-0242.



CrossWays Preschool



Celebration! Childcare

by Samantha Cooper
Director of CrossWays Preschool & Celebration! Childcare

Sharing is Caring

There is no better time to teach children about sharing, kindness, and friendship than in the month of February! The teachers will be discussing Valentine's Day and the gift of friendship. Included in the Valentine's Day study, students will be having a Valentine's Day party on February 14. Our students will be exchanging Valentine cards with each other as well as enjoying special treats and activities.

In the second half of the month, our teachers will be diving into a Book Study. Our three and four-year-olds will be specifically discussing Dr. Seuss. To end the Seuss study, the children will be celebrating Dr. Seuss' birthday. For our Enrichment classes, the students in the Caterpillar Room will also be doing a literacy study. The little Ladybugs in the four-year-old classroom will be talking all about art.

The importance of reading is crucial in the early years. There are so many benefits that come with children being exposed to books as well as being read to. Included in the benefits of reading with children are: developing a bond with them, improving their language skills, creativity and imagination, supporting their cognitive development, and creating a lifelong love for reading. Within our book study, children will learn to ask "what's next" questions and make predictions. Children can learn important life lessons and relate to characters and situations. Reading at school and home will also help our children to be more prepared for kindergarten. Jessica Logan, a member of Ohio State's Crane Center for Early Childhood Research and Policy* said that children who are exposed to reading early on "are likely to pick up reading skills more quickly and easily."

* Source: earlychildhood.ehe.osu.edu/research/

2023/24 Registration

Registration for CrossWays Preschool's 2023/24 school year will be available soon! We will offer enrollment to our current families and Holy Cross members starting February 15. Following in-house registration, enrollment will be open to the public on March 1.

paperpie Book Fair

Monday, February 27 - Friday, March 3
6:30 am - 6 pm
Celebration! Childcare atrium

We are welcoming back our in-person book fair! Last year, we hosted a virtual book fair due to the pandemic. We are excited to be able to once again offer an in-person book fair to our student families and church members by PaperPie (formerly Usborne Books).

crossways@holycrosschurch.org
(847) 367-4367
cpreschool.org

Be Mine, Valentine

Celebration! Childcare students will be celebrating Valentine's Day on Tuesday, February 14. Teachers will plan engaging activities and interactive games for the special day. We will be swapping Valentine cards with our friends and teachers and enjoying time with our classroom parent helpers. Classrooms will also be learning about Valentine's Day during their weekly curriculum lesson. Students will learn about the meaning of Valentine's Day and the importance of caring for one another and accepting them as they are despite their differences.

Although the winter winds are blowing outside, we are beginning to think about summertime at Celebration! Childcare. Plans for our summer camp program will begin to take shape as we think about weekly curriculum lessons, special activities, and exciting crafts. We are hoping to add some new in-house activities to our program. Any suggestions or ideas are welcomed!

Celebration! Childcare continues to have a waitlist for our classrooms. We have limited part-time availability for students. Our projected availability for full-time enrollment will occur at the end of summer for select classrooms. If you or someone you know is interested in care at Celebration!, please call immediately to ensure that you are added to our waitlist.



Celebration! Childcare

is Hiring Teacher Assistants and Substitutes

We are a fun, flexible workplace that is motivated to help children grow and learn. Assistants are responsible for helping the teacher plan lesson plans, supervise the classroom, and maintain a safe and enjoyable environment. Requirements for a teacher's assistant is a high school diploma or GED. If you or someone you know is interested in working with children, Celebration! Childcare is the place to be! Locate our ad on Indeed, Facebook, or contact Samantha at (847) 367-6208 or sam@holycrosschurch.org to apply.



**ROCKY MOUNTAIN
CHOCOLATE FACTORY**

Friday, February 10 & Saturday, February 11
10 am - 9 pm

Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory
541 N Milwaukee Ave, Libertyville

Spoil your loved ones this Valentine's Day while supporting our early childhood ministries! Shop at Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory and 20% of sales will benefit CrossWays Preschool & Celebration! Childcare. Please make sure to mention CrossWays or Celebration! at check out. Eat chocolate and give back!

celebration@holycrosschurch.org
(847) 367-6208
cchildcare.org

Faith Formation

CHILDREN YOUTH

by Deaconess Katie Freund

This spring we're learning all about Jesus: his life, ministry, and teachings. Interested in helping us rebuild our Sunday school program? We've had a great turn out for volunteers in the first half of the year, and we want more. The goal is to make sure we have plenty of people in rotation so that this joyful task stays joyful. Help us make our children's ministry sustainable in the long run!

Email Deaconess Katie to sign up at deaconesskatie@holycrosschurch.org



Growing In Faith Class Schedule

Drop off: 9:05 am

Pick up: 9:50 am

Location: West Wing (Celebration! Childcare atrium)

February 5 - A Storm (Matthew 8:23-27)

February 12 - Jesus Blesses the Children (Mark 10:13-16)

February 19 - The Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-13)

February 26 - Jesus Heals Two Blind Men (Matthew 20:29-34)

Lent 2023

We're used to the idea of "giving up" something for Lent, and often we're talking about a favorite food or beverage. This year, we're focusing on families who are going without food, but not by choice. Using the Scholastic program "Hungry to Help", we're teaching our kids about the pervasive issue of hunger in the United States. Each Wednesday of Lent we're going to be releasing a video as we explore this issue in an approachable and age appropriate way. The Scholastic materials will be available as a PDF emailed to Sunday school families from the church office, and we'll also have hard copies available by request.



Midweek Lenten Video Schedule

HolyCrossChurch.org/sundayschool

March 1 - Favorite Foods

March 8 - Feeling Hungry

March 15 - Buying Food

March 22 - Who Is Hungry

March 29 - Where Our Food Comes From



CONFIRMATION

6th - 8th Grade Confirmation

This month confirmation is cruising by with events all month. We've recovered from the holidays and know that this time of year can feel like a bit of a slump. So this month we're starting off easy with a movie night and having some fun and engaging field trips to keep our interest and mood up without overtaxing our kids.

Class schedule 6:30 - 8 pm

February 5 - Movie Night at Holy Cross
(Kids' vote: *Black Panther* or *Encanto*)

February 11 (Saturday) - Oriental Institute: 10 am to noon, one parent chaperone needed for every 10 students.

February 19 - PADS Service Night at Shepherd of the Lakes Lutheran Church, Grayslake

February 26 - Charity shopping night - meeting off church property

Future dates:
March 5, 12

PADS Packing Schedule

Second and Fifth Sundays of the month - pack lunches in the Holy Cross kitchen between worship services on February 12 & March 12. Questions? Contact Deaconess Katie Freund at deaconesskatie@holycrosschurch.org



Milestone Ministries

At long last, we're offering a full year of Milestone Ministry opportunities that have been on hiatus in recent years. So while we have a certain age group in mind when crafting our schedule, if there's an event that hasn't been offered to your child in recent years that is now available we are absolutely welcoming all interested kids and families.

Live Your Faith: 5th Grade

Saturday, February 11 from 9:30 - 10:30 am

We're told to follow Jesus, but how? What do you do? Kids and their adults will explore these questions together with focus on the Bible passage from Matthew 25:35-40 before gathering and preparing for a service project.

Toddler Playdate: 2 years old and under

Saturday, February 25 from 9:30 - 10:30 am

Our "easiest" milestone! We offer families with children age 2 and under a chance to connect to each other and offer up resources for raising a child that knows they are loved by God. We know the first words of faith in a child's life are lived out in the joyful praise in play.

For any questions related to Milestone Ministries, please contact Deaconess Katie Freund at deaconesskatie@holycrosschurch.org
To learn more about Milestone Ministries visit HolyCrossChurch.org/milestoneministries



Crossroads Supersized Football Game

Students vs. Parents

by Pastor Chris Neptun

Hey Crossroads students... bring a friend and a parent! Shoot, bring a friend, a parent, and a friend's parent! Join Crossroads on Sunday, February 5 at church for a friendly game of supersized football!

The game will be set up in the parking lot (touch football of course). Then head inside to the fellowship area afterwards for dinner from Buffalo Wild Wings. We'll be sharing some exciting news about the future of Youth Ministries at Holy Cross!

Peace to you,
Pastor Chris

Questions? Contact Pastor Chris, Becky or Nikki
Pastor Chris pastorchrish@holycrosschurch.org
Becky Sawle becky.earthlaughsinflowers@gmail.com
Nikki Spencer nikolspencer@gmail.com

Supersized Football Game
Date: Sunday, February 5
Time: 4 - 5:30 pm followed by dinner from Buffalo Wild Wings in the Fellowship Area
Location: Holy Cross parking lot
Cost: Free
RSVP at HolyCrossChurch.org/crossroads

Christmas Party Recap

On Sunday, December 11, Crossroads students met in the fellowship area for a Christmas Party and Gift Exchange. Dinner was provided from Portillo's and Barnelli's Pasta Bowl, topped off with Portillo's famous chocolate layer cake.



Crossroads Mission Trip - Summer 2023

Group Mission Trips *Week of Hope*

Sunday, July 16 – Friday, July 21

Indianapolis, IN

*Students entering 8th grade through High School
students who graduate in 2023*

Crossroads is planning a mission trip for High School students in July 2023. It's been a few years since we've been able to take a trip (thanks COVID). We're planning on a trip to Indianapolis for Group Mission Trip's *Week of Hope* with the High School youth of Joy! Lutheran in Gurnee.

Indianapolis is famous around the world for fast cars and the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, but the city has a lot more to offer visitors including being the state capital of Indiana, home to the Indianapolis Museum of Art which unveiled the largest contemporary art park in the country, and the legendary Hinkle Fieldhouse, site of the 1954 "Milan Miracle" that inspired the basketball film *Hoosiers*.

The city is also an increasingly diverse place, with 40,000 foreign-born individuals moving to Indianapolis since 2000—a faster pace than even Chicago. Indy is now home to growing Mexican, Chinese, Sikh, Burmese, and Nigerian communities. Domestic violence has become a major issue in Indy. You can be a blessing to many families by supplying food, providing home repairs, or giving children a safe place to be during the day.

As you delight in the sights and activities, you'll enjoy getting to know the people of this amazing community—and Week of Hope offers you an amazing opportunity to serve those who may have been forgotten or may just need a little hope.

Reminder: A deposit of \$250 payable to Holy Cross (Attention: Pastor Chris) is required to participate.



CARE OF CREATION

Composting* A Way of Renewal

by Leo Karris

Last month's article highlighted different types of home gardening projects to consider. Soil is an important aspect to the health and success of gardens and composting is an effective way to add to the soil's health as well as to reduce the amount of waste going to the landfill. Here is information about composting to help you start or expand composting at home.



- Composting is a process of microorganisms breaking down food scraps and other organic materials into healthy soil.
- Food scraps and yard waste together make-up about 30% of what gets thrown away and sent to the landfill. According to a 2020 report by the Natural Resources Defense Council, only about 6% of food waste is composted in the United States.[^]
- Composting keeps materials out of the landfill and uses those materials to make good soil and helps to eliminate the need for chemical fertilizers.
- There are a few ways to compost. The most common way is to set up at-home composting. If you are not able to set up home composting but want to keep food scraps and other organic material out of the landfill check with your local municipality to see if local compost pick-up services are offered.
- Check out the following website for additional information on composting: epa.gov/recycle/composting-home#home
- Check out this website for information on municipal curbside food scrap collection programs in Lake County: swalco.org/319/Residential-Food-Scrap-Composting-Program

And they will say, "This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden." (Ezek 36:35, NRSV)

*Source: Faith in Place's Composting 101 faithinplace.org/composting-101-guide-download

[^] nrdc.org

COOL Ministries

by Jill McKeon



The need for assistance for individuals and families is ongoing. Your food donations are greatly appreciated by those who need assistance and those who are offering the pantry as a resource.

You may also continue to support COOL Ministries by donating online at donate.holycrosschurch.org



Thank you for your continued support of COOL Ministries.

PADS LAKE COUNTY

PADS Ministry Support

by Peg Chartier

The PADS ministry team is excited to share our new endeavor with you. We want YOU on OUR team, and we will make it easy! Whether monetarily, by cooking, providing prepared food items from our needs list, or volunteering a few hours of your time preparing, serving, or cleaning up the meal, you can join the team by scanning the QR code below or emailing me at chartier94@yahoo.com.

PADS Interest Form:



We have three upcoming dinners at Shepherd of the Lakes Lutheran Church in Grayslake on February 27, March 27, and April 24. Each meal will have a different theme, and you can be a part of making it happen. We are also expanding this opportunity to help us provide items for sack lunches, packed by Holy Cross Confirmants, and hearty breakfasts for the PADS guests to start their day. Monetary donations will be used to assist these missions and will also help us address needs at the county level. For example, Holy Cross purchased 300 sweatsuits and \$1,000 worth of diapers and pull-ups last year. There's room for everyone, and we look forward to growing in this ministry with you.

Make your donations online to benefit PADS at donate.holycrosschurch.org



Willow House

Willow House provides grief support services to children, teens, young adults and adult family members coping with the death of a loved one. These groups provide a place in which the challenges and feelings of the grieving experience can be expressed, where loved ones are remembered and honored, and where stories can be shared in a safe and non-judgmental place.

For details on specific meeting dates and more information about Willow House, visit willowhouse.org or email info@willowhouse.org



#GLS23

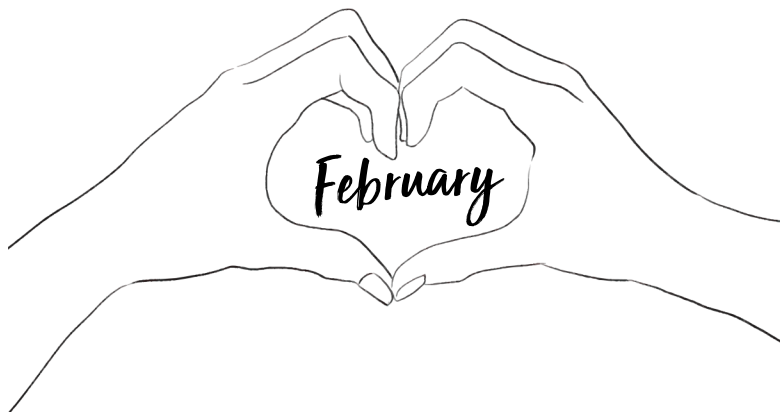
REGISTRATION NOW OPEN

 **THE GLOBAL
LEADERSHIP SUMMIT**
Thursday-Friday, August 3-4, 2023

REGISTER NOW & SAVE »

Visit bit.ly/GLSatHCLC to register at the discounted rate of \$139 until March 31, 2023 using the code: 23PHSHOST



**Wednesday, February 1**

9 am Quilting Group, 404
4 pm Red Rose Choirs, 402

Thursday, February 2

7 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal, 402

Saturday, February 4

7 am Saturday Morning Men's Group, 208
5:30 pm First Saturday Evening Worship with Holy Communion, Sanctuary
7:30 pm Around The Cross Concert: Chicagoland Voices

Sunday, February 5

8 am Worship with Holy Communion, Sanctuary & livestream
9 am Faith Formation
10 am Worship with Holy Communion, Sanctuary & livestream
4 pm Crossroads Supersized Football Game, parking lot
6:30 pm Confirmation, Sanctuary

Monday, February 6

6 pm Pilates, Celebration! Childcare atrium
6:30 pm Willow House, Fellowship Area

Tuesday, February 7

7 am Men's Breakfast Group, The Liberty Restaurant
9:30 am Women's Discussion Group, 208
4 pm Red Rose Choirs, 402

Wednesday, February 8

9 am Quilting Group, 404
10:30 am CrossWays & Celebration! Chapel, Sanctuary
4 pm Red Rose Choirs, 402
7 pm Project Healing Waters, Fellowship Area

Thursday, February 9

7 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal, 402

Friday, February 10

CrossWays Preschool & Celebration! Childcare Fundraiser, Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory, Libertyville

Saturday, February 11

CrossWays Preschool & Celebration! Childcare Fundraiser, Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory, Libertyville
9:30 am Milestone Ministries: 5th Grade, fellowship area
10 am Confirmation, Oriental Institute

Sunday, February 12

8 am Worship, Sanctuary & livestream
9 am Adult Faith Formation
9:15 am Confirmation Class Packs PADS Lunches, Kitchen
10 am Worship, Sanctuary & livestream

Monday, February 13

1 pm Common Threads, Fellowship Area
6 pm Pilates, Celebration! Childcare atrium
7 pm BSA Troop 194 meeting, 404

Tuesday, February 14**Valentine's Day**

7 am Men's Breakfast Group, The Liberty Restaurant
4 pm Red Rose Choirs, 402

Wednesday, February 15**CrossWays Preschool In-House Registration**

9 am Quilting Group, 404
4 pm Red Rose Choirs, 402
7 pm Church Council, 208

Thursday, February 16

7 pm Handbell Choir rehearsal, 402
7 pm Transition Team Meeting

Friday, February 17

6 pm ECM Parents' Night Out
6:30 pm Grounded in Grace, Buffalo Creek Brewing, Long Grove

Saturday, February 18

7 am Saturday Morning Men's Group, 208
9 am New Member Breakfast, Fellowship Area

Sunday, February 19

8 am Worship with Holy Communion, Sanctuary & livestream
9 am Faith Formation
10 am Worship with Holy Communion, Sanctuary & livestream and Reception of New Members
6:30 pm Confirmation, PADS Service Night, Shepherd of the Lakes, Grayslake

Monday, February 20**President's Day**

6 pm Pilates, Celebration! Childcare atrium
7 pm BSA Troop 194 meeting, 404

Tuesday, February 21

7 am Men's Breakfast Group, The Liberty Restaurant
9:30 am Women's Discussion Group, 208
4 pm Red Rose Choirs, 402
7 pm ECM Board Meeting, 208

Wednesday, February 22**Ash Wednesday**

9 am Quilting Group, 404
4 pm Red Rose Choirs, 402
7 pm Ash Wednesday Worship with Holy Communion

Thursday, February 23

10:30 am CrossWays & Celebration! Chapel, Sanctuary
7 pm Book Club, 208 & Zoom

Sunday, February 26

8 am Worship, Sanctuary & livestream
9 am Faith Formation
10 am Worship, Sanctuary & livestream
6:30 pm Confirmation, Charity Shopping Night

Monday, February 27**Book Fair, Celebration! Childcare atrium**

6 pm Pilates, Celebration! Childcare atrium
7 pm BSA Troop 194 meeting, 404

Tuesday, February 28**Book Fair, Celebration! Childcare atrium**

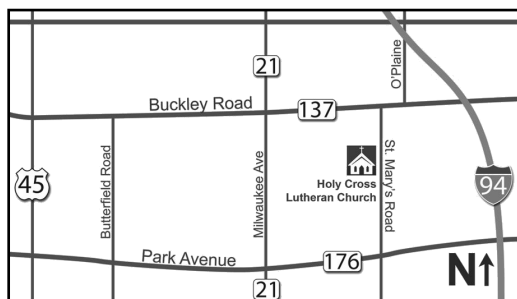
7 am Men's Breakfast Group, The Liberty Restaurant
4 pm Red Rose Choirs, 402



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LENT

Ash Wednesday Worship
February 22 at 7 pm
*with Imposition of Ashes
& Holy Communion*

Details on page 2

Hungry - Understanding What Feeds



**Around
the Cross**

Concert Series *See page 4*

Chicagoland Voices
Winter Concert

Date: Saturday, February 4
Time: 7:30 pm
Location: Sanctuary
Free admission



Faith Formation

CHILDREN YOUTH ADULT

Growing In Faith

Children ages 3 through 5th grade
Sundays, February 5, 12, 19, 26 at 9:05 - 9:50 am
Details on page 8

Confirmation

Youth in 6th - 8th grade
February 5, 19, 26 from 6:30 - 8 pm, February 11 from 10 am - noon
Details on page 8

Visual Faith Process

Post Confirmation Adults
Sundays, February 5, 12, 19, 26 at 9:10 - 9:45 am
Details on page 5



**ROCKY MOUNTAIN
CHOCOLATE FACTORY**

**Eat chocolate and give back to
CrossWays and Celebration!**

**Friday, Feb 10 & Saturday, Feb 11
10 am - 9 pm daily**

Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory,
541 N Milwaukee Ave, Libertyville

See page 7