



Appearances by Pastor Chris Neptun



I held a brainstorming event in November with several leaders in the congregation. We focused on ideas for possible sermon series. There were three categories we focused on.

- 1) What are needs you hear people talking about that could be a beneficial topic for a sermon series?
- 2) What are the needs you feel people need to hear about but aren't talking about?
- 3) What would be a cool sermon series you would be interested in?

One interesting idea focused on appearances we "keep up" especially on social media. The suggested title was, "What Would Jesus Post?" If Jesus were on Instagram, what would He post? You are likely aware using social media can present self-image issues not only for youth but adults too. When we compare our own lives to the posts of others, we need to keep in mind that users tend to post what makes them look good, happy, successful, and beautiful. People don't tend to post a selfie when they just get out of bed. I'm not that attractive when I wake up!

The season of Epiphany shares stories of appearances. The Greek word literally means "appear, make an appearance or show oneself." The Gospels of Matthew and John give us stories of how Jesus appears in the world. In Epiphany this year we'll hear the stories of the magi's visit, Jesus' baptism, Him calling the disciples, temptation, teaching of God's relationship to the poor, the grieving and downtrodden in the beatitudes, his clarified teaching of the law and the transfiguration where Jesus' appearance literally changes.

As we remember these stories, maybe we get an idea of "What Would Jesus Post?" In each of these stories a fitting post might read, "Things are not always what they seem."

- The wise men find the child born King of the Jews in a house, not the palace.
- John thought Jesus should baptize him not the other way around.
- We think we know what saves us but God shows us what we don't know.
- Jesus refuses to use his divine power to benefit or prove himself.
- The beatitudes describe an "upside-down" kingdom.
- The Law will not be done away with but will reveal how little we understand it.
- Minor offenses are more harmful than they seem.

God is revealed in Jesus who invites us to look beyond the surface, past the first glance, more closely, and deeply. Each of those encountering Jesus are invited to come know God more fully. Our understanding of who God is and what God does changes. It changes as each character engages in relationship with Jesus. They are encountered by an epiphany!

Epiphanies are unexpected. Appearances of the divine surprise us. As Christmas declares "God with us!" I pray we experience God more deeply and unexpectedly to understand life in the Kingdom more fully. "What Would Jesus Post?" I imagine an invitation. "Things are not always what they seem. Come and follow Me. Let's discover together what they are."

Peace be with you,

CONGREGATIONAL
LIFE
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RELATIONAL MINISTRY
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JANUARY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

SUNDAYS

JANUARY 1 AT 10 AM
SANCTUARY & LIVESTREAM

JANUARY 8, 15, 22, 29
8 & 10 AM
SANCTUARY & LIVESTREAM

FIRST SATURDAY

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7
5:30 PM - SANCTUARY

VIEW LIVESTREAM AT
[HOLYCROSSCHURCH.ORG/
SERMONS](http://HOLYCROSSCHURCH.ORG/SERMONS)

Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, January 29 at 10:45 am
Sanctuary

All confirmed members of Holy Cross are encouraged to participate. The Annual Report will be made available starting on Sunday, January 22. View online at HolyCrossChurch.org/resources

Printed copies will be distributed during worship on Sundays, January 22 and January 29

Attention all ministry members: Kindly submit your reports for the 2022 Annual Report to office@holycrosschurch.org by Monday, January 2.

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 Tippett Jr., Director of Contemporary Music and Director of Worship Technical Arts

EARLY CHILDHOOD MINISTRY

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

CHURCH COUNCIL

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Karla Boucek, Darin Chartier, Nicole Drake, Ralph Freye,
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Amy Sekili, John Villani
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Financial Secretary, Tom Miller

VOLUNTEER COORDINATORS

Altar Care: Julie Luczkiw
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

Being Curious...

by Pastor Bob Davis

What sparks your curiosity? Are you curious about how things fit together, how the various facets of this universe work? The dictionary definition of curiosity is quite simple: a strong desire to know or learn something. However, what happens when we stifle curiosity and become more interested in passing judgment than in understanding? For some, curiosity elicits fear. This fear is not entirely unfounded. There is no doubt that the desire to know, to learn, and to understand will sometimes lead to unexpected answers. As people of faith, if we emphasize answers rather than questions, regurgitation, rather than understanding, then, it becomes more challenging to value and nurture curiosity. The curious child of God will be left to seek answers and understanding somewhere else.

Somewhere between Eve's curiosity in the garden being cast as the root of sin in the world, the steady popularization of "black and white" theology, and the need for some people to believe they have all the answers, we unfortunately have internalized the notion that curiosity about God is bad. I know too many individuals who have opted out of organized religion because they have been dismissed, judged, or outright condemned for their questions about God.

Have you ever wondered what our faith formation journey might look like if we embraced "curiosity" as a spiritual practice? Is it possible that "curiosity" is an instrumental faith practice that is not only life giving, but is also essential for the future of a community of faith? Consider the possibility that curiosity gives permission to engage with God, asking questions about one's faith and life. It situates and encourages us to wrestle as if our life depended on it. Curiosity encourages openness and attention to what God might be doing in the world. It grants permission for each person to see the face of Christ in their neighbor, in creation, and in the mundane stretches of everyday life. As these discoveries are shared in community, we begin to discover the art of discernment. As these discoveries are articulated, it democratizes God's story and makes it accessible in the language of the people who are experiencing it.

Curiosity demands an engagement that necessitates integrating one's faith with one's lived experience. This holistic way of being is a challenging way to live, no doubt. My hope is that when we come together in worship, conversation, fellowship and service to others we create space and moments which make way for curiosity. Sometimes this is the intense, exhausting wrestling with God kind of curiosity. But curiosity doesn't necessitate exhaustion. Instead, it's a posture towards God and the world which anticipates the Holy Spirit is up to something that we all have yet to discover. It makes way for a fresh articulation of God's boundless love for the world and equips each of us to do just that.

Are you curious about Christianity's most paradoxical teachings—that there's power in humility, strength in weakness, and light in the darkness of human existence. What do you do with this truth? We get busy and we feel we need more answers and fewer questions. We believe that being certain and confident in our certainty is the pinnacle of being alive. It follows that, if we see our lives in that light, we'd apply that same logic to God. In other words, faith is about becoming more and more certain and less and less curious. But then there's Jesus. Jesus calls disciples who aren't experts, individuals with questions that flow out with frightening regularity. Did you know that Jesus asks and answers 183 questions in the Gospels instead of giving instructions on how God wanted things to be. Then Jesus says this: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the Kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3). Little children. Children who ask 300-400 questions per day.

So what if Jesus is actually more interested in our curiosity than our certainty? What if Jesus is looking for students rather than experts? What if faith is impossible without curiosity? I believe Jesus is inviting us to find our way into a practice of curiosity that takes our questions and turns them into opportunities for God to speak deeply and sweetly to our lives.

Peace!

A Year of Holy Days: Epiphany

by Deaconess Katie Freund

The crescendo of yuletide cheer is receding, huzzah, we made it. Welcome to the new year. Now the energy of the season dips down rapidly and there's a mildly interested encore for epiphany. By and large, our cheerfulness is trailing off into what's left of the dark season, and we wait for the return of the sunshine. But this oft forgotten holiday of the "three kings" has something unique to offer us, I think specifically because it's the quirky, undervalued, little sibling of the holiday season. There's no expectation of interstate travel, extensive meal planning, decorating, gifting, family tradition keeping, or anything else we get ourselves worked up over.



It's still obscure enough that it's celebrated on different days depending on which country you're in. Whether January 1st or 6th, there's a day in early January where we remember three wisemen/magi/kings. These learned globetrotters followed a star in order to come and adore the newborn king of the Jews (who was probably a toddler by then).

Some traditions you may have heard before, such as king cake. Others, like winter swimming, don't strike me as very popular. But if we wanted to adapt an early January polar plunge into our own liturgical tradition we'd be in line with our Eastern Orthodox siblings.

A tradition that's practiced worldwide for honoring our homes is something called "chalking the door" and it's a great one to do with kids. The tradition is to use chalk to write the new year with crosses and the letters c, m, and b up above the home's entryway or lintel. For example, for this year of 2023, it would read: **20 + C + M + B + 23**

The letters can symbolize the names of the three magi: Caspar, Melchior and Balthazar; or can be an abbreviation of the Latin "*Christus mansionem benedicat*" which means "*may Christ bless this house*".

By marking the upper door frame, there's a remembrance of the first "passover" and the Israelites flight from slavery in Egypt. This is when the blood of the lamb saved families from the angel of death. Tradition has also grown around this practice as a show of hospitality and inviting both God and the symbolic stranger (to represent those in need) to be present in our home.

Historically, Epiphany has been the time for home blessings. If I'm being honest, the liturgy of blessing a home is one of my favorite liturgies ever. Anytime someone's home needs some extra prayer just let me know, it's such a joy to do with families. But maybe you're feeling more casual. You can ask family members what they are most grateful for about their home. A simple but surprisingly meaningful practice is to greet your residence when you "come home" and, in turn, thank your dwelling when you leave in the morning. Think of it like the gifts of God coming alive to be in relationship with you through acts of stewardship.

Our prayers are with you whether you use this month for sacred rest, or to savor the precious gift of home, or for some blessed reason you jump into icy waters of Lake Michigan (heaven help you, I'm not liable for hypothermia). May your epiphanytide be restorative, whatever that looks like for you and yours.

Quilting News

by Deb Sherrock

On November 13, 2022 ten twin-sized bed quilts were displayed in the sanctuary and dedicated at the worship services prior to their delivery to the COOL Ministries offices in Waukegan on December 7. The quilts were given to families residing in the Family Housing program.

Late in the summer, the local Project Linus chapter also received eight smaller quilts made by the group. Project Linus is an organization that provides blankets, quilts and afghans to comfort children who are seriously injured, traumatized or in need.

The quilting group meets on most Wednesday mornings from 9 am to noon in the resource center in the basement of the west wing. New members are welcome to join. Cutting fabric and pressing seams are some of the non-sewing tasks that contribute to the group effort.

If you have quilt tops that you no longer want or need, or have sewn a quilt top that you would like to be donated to a good cause, consider giving it to the quilting group. Three of the quilts this year were from quilt tops given to the group. Donations of 100% cotton quilting fabric, either scrap pieces or yardage, are always welcome. For more information, contact Deb Sherrock at debs695@aol.com or (630) 267-7802.

Pictured with COOL Executive Director Mindy Lindholm are the Quilting Group members: Nancy Joiner, Sharon Pierluissi, Melanie Houser and Deb Sherrock



PASTORAL ACTS

BAPTISM

Gia Grace McCarthy

daughter of Linda Lopez Aguilar and Todd McCarthy
December 18, 2022

FUNERALS

Jeffrey Meyer

December 4, 2022

Beth Hansen

December 7, 2022

WE WELCOMED NEW MEMBERS

Sunday, December 11, 2022

Rosalia Hernandez and Rick Jacobs

Loretta Villani

Daniel and Sonja Yost

Kylie and Nathan



Paul Vander Weele Organ Recital

Date: Sunday, January 22, 2023
Time: 3:30 pm
Location: Sanctuary
Free admission



Paul Vander Weele is a graduate of the Eastman School of Music in Rochester, NY and earned a graduate degree in Organ Performance at Northwestern University. He has served as organist and accompanist for Northminster Presbyterian Church, Evanston, IL for 29 years and celebrated his 50th anniversary as organist at North Shore Congregational Israel, Glencoe in November 2022. He has given many organ concerts at both venues and throughout the Midwest and has performed many concerts with the Chicago Brass Quintet and has recorded a CD with them titled Music for Brass and Organ. The January program will include compositions for organ from the 17th century to the 21st.

Chicagoland Voices Winter Concert

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



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 Ava 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!

Chicagoland Voices was founded in 2011 by friends who have spent their lives teaching others to perform but rarely get the chance to sing for themselves. It is an auditioned choir based in Cary, Illinois directed by Jason Krigas, which includes Holy Cross members Mike and Carol Dikelsky. They have performed with every major ensemble in Chicago from the Chicago Symphony Chorus to the Lyric Opera Chorus, Cor Cantiamo, Chicago Master Singers and Lakeside Singers and many others. They were honored to be featured on The Equilibrium Anthology, an album of trailer and commercial music that has been used by many media outlets.

HolyCrossChurch.org/atc

Cookie Walk Update

The 14th Annual Cookie Walk was once again a festive success! A special thank you to all of our bakers who baked their delicious and favorite cookies, to our valuable volunteers and those who came back to purchase items for the Cookie Walk.

From your overwhelming and generous donations, we raised over \$4,000! We could not have accomplished this effort without YOU! Most importantly, these funds will be donated to the Tree of Life, Boys and Girls Club of Rosebud, and the Panther's Clothes Closet of Rosebud Elementary School. These organizations provide many essential services for the Lakota people who face many obstacles on the reservation. We also support our missionary, Dorothy Peterson, who is active and instrumental in providing spiritual support.

Our raffle this year was very popular! Our raffle winners include: Lina Marsh won the beautiful Gingerbread House created and donated by Kris DeGregor; the Creative Kids Basket was won by Abby Sargent; Lia's Lace Ups Basket was won by Barb Sargent; Tabletop Arrangement was won by Amanda Komashka; the Joy Hanging Basket was won by Nancy Ryan; the Skater Hanging Basket was won by Joan Sheldon; the Silver and Gold Basket was won by Julie Eberspacher; the Merry Christmas Basket was won by Donna Klein; the Wine Not Basket was won by Karen Kobeck; and Joan Sheldon won the Baker's Thank You Basket.

Also, thank you to our additional volunteers who graciously donated their time on the day of the Cookie Walk: Lia Boucek, Susan Beck, Beth Ann Koenemann, Greg Kveton, Barb Sargent and her granddaughters, Emma and Abby.

We are thankful that we can carry on this tradition at Holy Cross to support our Lakota friends. Special thank you's to Pastor Chris, Pastor Bob, Sarah, Ellie and Janet who so graciously supported our effort.

We wish you God's blessings and peace throughout the New Year. With sincere appreciation...



The Cookie Walk Team

*Karla Boucek, Therese Delli Paoli, Sue Dittman,
Melanie Houser, Gail Kelly, Carole Kenney,
Amanda Komashka, Joyce Kveton,
Patty Moyer & Joyce Twardock*

Calling All Elves!

*We need your help to un-decorate the
sanctuary after Christmas*



Tuesday, January 3 & Wednesday, January 4

10 am to 3 pm - Take down décor from sanctuary.

Thursday, January 5

7 to 8 pm - Heavy lifters/return décor to basement.

Please contact the church office to let us know if you can assist at any of the times listed above at office@holycrosschurch.org or (847) 367-4060.



Journey faith, discipleship, generosity

The Difference Between Having What We Want and Wanting What We Have

by Steve Oelschlager

Jesus regularly offered a greeting of peace to his friends and disciples, and the Apostle Paul talked about being content in all circumstances. How is it that we struggle so much with peace and contentment despite living in the most prosperous times in human history?

An excerpt on this topic from the book *Status Anxiety* from Alain de Botton.

“Being truly wealthy, Jean-Jacques Rousseau suggested, does not require having many things; rather, it requires having what one longs for. Wealth is not an absolute. It is relative to desire. Every time we yearn for something we cannot afford, we grow poorer, whatever our resources. And every time we feel satisfied with what we have, we can be counted as rich, however little we may actually possess.

There are two ways to make a man richer, reasoned Rousseau: give him more money or curb his desires. Modern societies have done the former spectacularly well, but by continuously whetting appetites, they have at the same time managed to negate a share of their success. For the individual, trying to make more money may not be the most effective way to feel wealthy. Rather than struggling to become bigger fish, we might concentrate our energies on finding smaller ponds or smaller species to swim with, so our own size will trouble us less.

Insofar as advanced societies supply their members with historically elevated incomes, they appear to make us wealthier. But in truth, their net effect may be to impoverish us, because by fostering unlimited expectations, they keep open permanent gaps between what we want and what we can afford, between who we might be and who we really are. Such disparities may leave us feeling more deprived even than primitive savages, who, insisted Rousseau (his argument here reaching the limits of plausibility), felt themselves to be lacking for nothing in the world so long as they had a roof over their heads, a few apples and nuts to eat and the leisure to spend their evenings playing on “some crude musical instrument” or “using sharp-edged stones to make a fishing canoe.”

The price we have paid for expecting to be so much more than our ancestors is a perpetual anxiety that we are far from being all we might be.”

Faith Formation

ADULT

Visual Faith Process

When: Sundays between worship services at 9:10 to 9:45 am

See 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

January 1, 2023: *No Session*

January 8: Pulled in Different Directions (*Luke 3:1-13*)

January 15: The Crippling Power of Fear (*Luke 8:22-25*)

January 22: Ready, Steady, Go (*Psalms 37:23-24*)

January 29: Suddenly Alone (*John 16:32-33*)

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*)

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



**MEN'S BREAKFAST GROUP**

TUESDAYS, JANUARY 3, 10, 17, 24 & 31 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, JANUARY 20 AT 6:30 - 8 PM

LOCATION: LIGHT THE LAMP BREWERY, 2 S. LAKE ST., GRAYSLAKE

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: Beginning in January this group will be meeting on the third Friday of each month. Questions? Contact Terry Berger at terryberger.08@gmail.com or (224) 775-1479.

**SATURDAY MEN'S GROUP**

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7 & 21 AT 7 - 8:30 AM

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

 holycrosschurch.zoom.us/j/301891517

All men of faith are welcome. We are using Rachel Held Evans' book "*INSPIRED...Slaying Giants, Walking on Water, and the Loving the Bible Again.*" Evans has written a love letter to scripture. She takes what has been weaponized against so many and reminds us again that there is a difference between *activity for God* and *intimacy with God*. Evans is honest about teasing out the flaws, beauty, strength and spirit of the scriptural narratives all at the same time. Evans invites us to see the Bible not as a static work but as a living, breathing, captivating and confounding book that is able to equip us and inspire us to participate in God's loving and redemptive work in the world. The book is available either in the church office or on the shelves at the curiosity corner in the gathering space at no charge. Questions? Contact Pastor Bob at pastorbob@holycrosschurch.org or Steve Oelschlager at steve@holycrosschurch.org

**WOMEN'S DISCUSSION GROUP**

TUESDAYS, JANUARY 10 & 24 AT 9:30 AM

LOCATION: FELLOWSHIP AREA

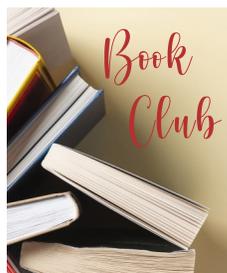
The discussion topics for 2023 will continue to be taken from the book *Wholehearted Faith* by Rachel Held Evans. View the full session schedule at HolyCrossChurch.org/virtualmeetings All women welcome. Contact Pastor Chris at pastorchris@holycrosschurch.org with any questions.

**PILATES**

TUESDAY, JANUARY 3 AND MONDAYS, JANUARY 9, 16, 23 & 30 AT 6 PM

LOCATION: CELEBRATION! CHILDCARE ATRIUM

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

**BOOK CLUB**

THURSDAY, JANUARY 26 AT 7 PM

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

 holycrosschurch.zoom.us/j/94321824417

In January we will discuss *The Woman They Could Not Silence* by Kate Moore, an unputdownable story of the forgotten woman who courageously fought for her own freedom—and in so doing freed millions more. Elizabeth's refusal to be silenced and her ceaseless quest for justice not only challenged the medical science of the day and led to a giant leap forward in human rights, it also showcased the most salutary lesson: sometimes, the greatest heroes we have are those inside ourselves. Our discussion host will be Jeri Powers. If you have any questions, please email Melanie Houser at housermd@comcast.net

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

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 11 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, JANUARY 4, 11, 18 & 25 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, JANUARY 9 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 to learn how to make a prayer square. 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. To request a prayer blanket or shawl for a loved one, please contact 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

New Year, More Fun!

We are welcoming back our students after a two-week break! We hope everyone had a fun and relaxing holiday. Our teachers are looking forward to the stories the children will share about their time off. We ended the year discussing the holiday season and the new year. Our parents had a wonderful time attending the Christmas Concert in December. The children worked so hard practicing their songs. We were able to record the concert as well and give each parent a copy of the concert. Upon returning to CrossWays Preschool, our classrooms will jump into the Winter theme!

There are so many fun and engaging activities and lessons children can participate in for winter. Snow is a great way for children to use many of their developmental skills. Rolling and throwing snowballs improves gross motor skills, building snow castles can challenge critical thinking, and writing numbers and letters can be a fun learning game. In addition to the winter theme, the enrichment program in the Caterpillar Room will be discussing the five senses and the four-year-old Ladybugs will be learning Spanish!

2023/24 registration for CrossWays Preschool will soon be available! We will offer enrollment to our in-house families first in the coming months. Following in-house registration, enrollment for the upcoming school year will be open to the public. Be on the lookout for registration information if you or someone you know is interested in Preschool next Fall.

CrossWays Preschool Important Dates

January 9: Classes resume after winter break
January 16: No school (MLK Day)
January 27: Indoor movie night

Preschool and Childcare Fair

We will be participating in Cook Memorial Public Library's Annual Preschool and Childcare Fair. The event will be held on Saturday, January 21 from 10 am – 1 pm at Aspen Drive Library in Vernon Hills in the Children's Flex Space. The fair allows preschool and childcare facilities to showcase their programs and is free for attendees. Our programs have participated in the event in the past but has not been able to do so since the pandemic. It will be a wonderful opportunity to get back out in the community to show families what we have to offer.



Indoor Movie Night
Friday, January 27
Time: 7 pm (doors open at 6:30 pm)
Movie Title: Raya and the Last Dragon
Location: Holy Cross Basement
Cost: Free! Snack packs provided for students
RSVP required at bit.ly/RAYAmovie

2023, Learning and ME

The holiday season can be a busy time for families and children. It is hard keeping to a routine and structure. Now that we are on the other side of the holiday season, we can get our students back into a steady groove. Many of our students will be transitioning to a new classroom. The first week of January, children will have the chance to visit their new rooms prior to transitioning the following Monday. Celebration! Childcare students will also be discussing topics such as winter, snow, nutrition, and fairytales.

To kick off 2023, we will be offering an indoor movie night for families and staff! Over the past few years, we have been hosting outdoor movie nights in the fall and spring. Due to our Fallin' Into Fun Fundraiser, we decided to skip the fall event. To make it up to our Early Childhood Ministries participants, we are putting together an indoor movie night on January 27. As this will be our first indoor showing, we are looking forward to how it will turn out and getting cozy inside with a good movie.

Celebration! Childcare Important Dates

January 2: No School
January 27: Indoor movie night

Itty Bitty Bedtime Stories Update

We have received wonderful feedback from our parents regarding our story reading posted to social media. Each month on our Facebook page at fb.com/crosswayscelebration we post a video of a staff member reading a short story. Videos are posted in the evening for students to be able to enjoy at bedtime. The best part is that the videos can be watched time and time again! Parents have shared with our staff that their children love to see some of their teachers during their bedtime routines.



Do you love working with children? Join us!

Celebration! Childcare is hiring teacher assistants and teacher substitutes.

We are a fun, flexible workplace that is motivated to help children grow and learn. Assistants are responsible for helping the teacher develop lesson plans, supervise the classroom, and maintain a safe and enjoyable environment. A requirement 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! You can locate our ad on Indeed, or Facebook, or contact Samantha Cooper by phone at (847) 367-6208 or email at sam@holycrosschurch.org to apply.



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



CrossWays
Preschool



Celebration!
Childcare

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

Faith Formation

CHILDREN YOUTH

by Deaconess Katie Freund

It's a new year and we're starting off in the New Testament! Students aged 3 to 5th grade are invited to come join us in Growing In Faith as we learn about Jesus, his life, ministry, and teachings.



Interested in helping us rebuild our Sunday school program? We've had a great turnout for volunteers in the first half of the year, and we could use 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 Fall Class Schedule

Drop off: 9:05 am (west wing - Please note change)

Pick up: 9:50 am (west wing)

January 1: Winter break - Coloring posters with music and hot cocoa will be available for families to enjoy together while our session is on break.

January 8: The 3 Magi (Matthew 3:13-17)

January 22: The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:1-12)

January 29: Woman at the Well (John 4:5-43)



CONFIRMATION

6th - 8th Grade Confirmation

This past fall we looked at the early life of Jesus, the calling of the disciples, and the beatitudes. This term we're focusing on Jesus' ministry, specifically how he served others.

Class schedule

6:30 - 8 pm

Sanctuary

Winter break: November 27 - January 1

January 8: The Gerasene Demoniac

January 22: Rotation of three stations: Human Whack-a-Mole; each grade leads their own worship; history of worship lesson

January 29: The Feeding of the 5,000

Future dates:

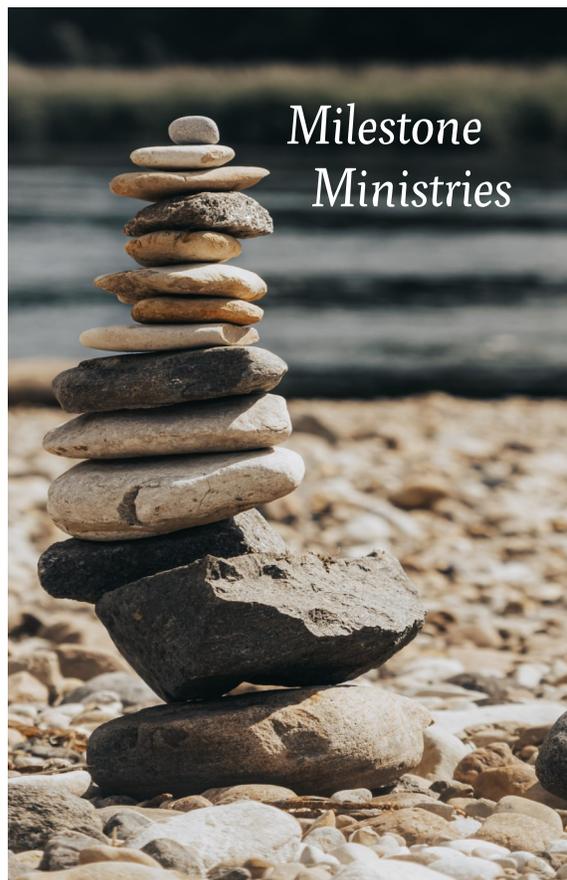
February 5, 12, 19, 26

March 5, 12

PADS Packing Schedule

Second and Fifth Sundays of the month - pack lunches in the Holy Cross kitchen between worship services on January 8 & 29, 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



RL
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A
D
S

High School Youth Group

Turning Hunger Into Hope

by Pastor Chris Neptun

Feed My Starving Children

Date: Saturday, January 21

Time: 4:30 - 6:15 pm followed by dinner at Culver's

Location: 742 East Park Avenue, Libertyville

Cost: Free

RSVP: fmsc.org/join-group?joincode=3B1L3N

Join Crossroads at Feed My Starving in Libertyville on Saturday, January 21 from 4:30 pm - 6:15 pm as we pack meals for the hungry across the globe. Recently I heard from a church pastor in Haiti who is partnering with FMSC as he talked about the impact that Manna Packs are having as the people of Haiti struggle with the political unrest and gang activity that has taken over life there.

After we finish packing food we will head across the street to Culver's for dinner. We hope you can join us and bring a friend along!

Peace to you,
Pastor Chris

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

Bob Ross Paint Party

In November we held our "Bob Ross Paint Party"! We had a great time painting, sharing Chipotle and learning about God and Bob Ross. If you didn't know, Bob was a Master Sergeant in the Air Force. His job was to yell at cadets in bootcamp to whip them into shape. Who would have known the gentle soft-spoken man was hiding inside? Sometimes we are overwhelmed by God's greatness and power and miss the beauty of God's love for us.



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.

A deposit of \$250 payable to Holy Cross (Attention: Pastor Chris) will be required by January 30 to participate in this trip.

Mission Trip Informational Meeting

Date: Sunday, January 8

Time: 7 pm

Location: Joy Lutheran Church

749 S. Hunt Club Rd., Gurnee





Ahh, Spring

by Leo Karris

Happy New Year. So, are you thinking about spring yet? Considering any new projects around the house? How about a...

Native Plant or Vegetable Garden—Native plants, the ones once seen on prairies and savannahs, provide food and habitat for butterflies, birds and bees; key pollinators for the food we eat and the beauty we see in the landscape. Vegetable gardens are fun to have and provide delicious and nutritious food. Think about the distance grocery store produce has travelled, (“fresh” produce travels, on average, 1500 miles before it makes it to our plates*) compared to the few steps for produce grown in your garden. Remember, if you are just starting out, be proud of a small garden, not frustrated or overwhelmed with a large garden. Plant what you like to eat. Supplement the rest from local farms or farmer’s markets.

or maybe a...

Rain Garden—the deep root systems of plants in a rain garden help reduce flooding and erosion by holding the soil in place. Rain gardens also allow water to slowly soak into the ground, rather than running off onto paved surfaces causing flooded streets and overwhelmed storm water systems. Rain gardens are planted with plants that can periodically withstand large amounts of water and are situated close to the source of the runoff, such as near a gutter. Not only can a rain garden preserve water quality, it can also provide habitat for birds and butterflies.

Keeping and caring for gardens connect us to the land and soil and helps us to remember and live in relationship with the created world.

“I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel, and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit.” - Amos 9:14, NRSV

*foodwise.org

Additional rain/native garden information can be found at cnt.org/sites/default/files/uploads/RainReady-Native-Plants.pdf

Information about gardens taken from faithinplace.org. Faith in Place is a non-profit organization who partners with communities of faith from diverse religious traditions in the following program areas: climate change & energy, sustainable food and land use, water preservation, advocacy, and youth empowerment.

COOL Ministries

by Jill McKeon



A huge thank you to all those who have contributed to COOL this past year. We especially had a very successful few months. We are so grateful for the extra donations for our “Veteran’s month” drive. We collected two full boxes of toiletry items for the veterans that COOL Ministries serves.

The Giving Tree Gift Tags were all claimed within two Sundays and donated gifts were distributed to the transitional housing residents. Holy Cross members also generously contributed to the holiday meal boxes. I have a special shout out to Linda Norby for all the hats and scarves that she made. The accessories were split between PADS and COOL Ministries. They will be handed out with the toiletries to the Veterans.

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 Ministry Support

by Peg Chartier

The PADS Ministry Team would like to wish you a blessed 2023. Thank you to all of you who considered PADS in your holiday giving.

Holy Cross PADS volunteers served a delicious Feliz Navidad-themed dinner at Shepherd of the Lakes Lutheran Church in Grayslake on December 26. Thank you to everyone who gave their time and talents and shared the season’s spirit with the PADS guests. Homelessness doesn’t take a break for the holidays, and neither do we. We have three more dinners planned, one per month in February, March, and April. We will be including you! Keep an eye out for more information!

This month our confirmands will be packing lunches between worship services on January 8 and 29. PADS guests are very grateful to have these sack lunches to take with them for the cold day ahead. Thank you to all of you for supporting this vital ministry at Holy Cross.



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



January Calendar

Sunday, January 1

New Year's Day

10 am Worship with Holy Communion, Sanctuary & livestream

Tuesday, January 3

10 am Undecorating, Sanctuary

6 pm Pilates, Celebration! Childcare atrium

Wednesday, January 4

9 am Quilting Group, 404

10 am Undecorating, Sanctuary

Thursday, January 5

7 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal, 402

7 pm Undecorating, Sanctuary

Saturday, January 7

7 am Saturday Morning Men's Group, 208

5:30 pm First Saturday Evening Worship with Holy Communion, Sanctuary

Sunday, January 8

8 am Worship with Holy Communion, Sanctuary & livestream

9 am Faith Formation

9:15 am Confirmation Class packs PADS lunches, kitchen

10 am Worship with Holy Communion, Sanctuary & livestream

6:30 pm Confirmation, Sanctuary

Monday, January 9

1 pm Common Threads, Fellowship Area

6 pm Pilates, Celebration! Childcare atrium

6:30 pm Willow House, Fellowship Area

Tuesday, January 10

7 am Men's Breakfast Group, The Liberty Restaurant

9:30 am Women's Discussion Group, 208

4 pm Red Rose Choirs, 402

Wednesday, January 11

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

7 pm Church Council, 208

Thursday, January 12

7 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal, 402

Sunday, January 15

8 am Worship with Holy Communion, Sanctuary & livestream

9 am Adult Faith Formation

9:15 am Confirmation Class Packs PADS Lunches, Kitchen

10 am Worship with Holy Communion, Sanctuary & livestream

Monday, January 16

6 pm Pilates, Celebration! Childcare atrium

7 pm BSA Troop 194 meeting, 404

Tuesday, January 17

7 am Men's Breakfast Group, The Liberty Restaurant

4 pm Red Rose Choirs, 402

Wednesday, January 18

9 am Quilting Group, 404

4 pm Red Rose Choirs, 402

Thursday, January 19

7 pm Handbell Choir rehearsal, 402

Friday, January 20

6:30 pm Grounded in Grace, Light The Lamp Brewery, Grayslake

Saturday, January 21

7 am Saturday Morning Men's Group, 208

4:30 pm Crossroads, Feed My Starving Children, Libertyville

Sunday, January 22

8 am Worship, Sanctuary & livestream

9 am Faith Formation

10 am Worship, Sanctuary & livestream

3:30 pm Around The Cross Organ Recital, Sanctuary

6:30 pm Confirmation, Sanctuary

Monday, January 23

6 pm Pilates, Celebration! Childcare atrium

7 pm BSA Troop 194 meeting, 404

Tuesday, January 24

7 am Men's Breakfast Group, The Liberty Restaurant

9:30 am Women's Discussion Group, 208

4 pm Red Rose Choirs, 402

Wednesday, January 25

9 am Quilting Group, 404

4 pm Red Rose Choirs, 402

Thursday, January 26

10:30 am CrossWays & Celebration Chapel, Sanctuary

7 pm Book Club, 208 & Zoom

Friday, January 27

7 pm CrossWays & Celebration Movie Night, basement

Sunday, January 29

8 am Worship, Sanctuary & livestream

9 am Annual Congregational Meeting

9 am Faith Formation

9:15 am Confirmation Class packs PADS lunches, kitchen

10 am Worship, Sanctuary & livestream

6:30 pm Confirmation, Sanctuary

Monday, January 30

6 pm Pilates, Celebration! Childcare atrium

7 pm BSA Troop 194 meeting, 404

Tuesday, January 31

7 am Men's Breakfast Group, The Liberty Restaurant

4 pm Red Rose Choirs, 402

Happy New Year!

Altar Flowers



Purchase flowers for the altar on Sunday mornings in memory of a loved one or to celebrate with joy a birthday, anniversary, baptism, wedding or other event. For convenience, **altar flower order options are offered online where you now have the opportunity to select your desired date (by the 25th of the month prior)** and craft a dedication which will appear in the bulletin on your chosen day. The price for an arrangement including delivery is \$50 per bouquet. You are welcome and encouraged to take the flowers home to enjoy following the 10 am service on the day you donate. (We ask that the vases be returned during the following week or on the next Sunday so that we can continually rotate them back to the florist.) It is our hope that the altar flowers will be a visible reminder in our lives and in our worship setting of the beauty, the joy and the love that God has given to each of us. **To order, visit bit.ly/orderaltarflowers**

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LIBERTYVILLE, IL 60048 -1575

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**Annual
Congregational Meeting**
*Sunday, January 29, 2023
at 10:45 am
Sanctuary*

All confirmed members are encouraged
to participate. *Details on page 2*

*Around
the Cross*

Concert Series *See page 4*

Paul Vander Wee
Organ Recital

Date: Sunday, January 22
Time: 3:30 pm
Location: Sanctuary
Free admission



 **Faith Formation**
CHILDREN YOUTH ADULT

Growing In Faith

Children ages 3 through 5th grade
Sundays, January 8, 22, 29 at 9:05 - 9:50 am
Details on page 8

Confirmation

Youth in 6th - 8th grade
Sundays, January 8, 22, 29 at 6:30 pm
Details on page 8

Visual Faith Process

Post Confirmation Adults
Sundays, January 8, 15, 22, 29 at 9:10 - 9:45 am
Details on page 5



Celebration! Childcare

is Hiring
Teacher Assistants and Teacher
Substitutes

Immediate openings available.
See more details on page 7

