

## **From your Council President – February 22, 2022**

This past President's Day weekend we held a Service of the Word led by your lay leaders at Holy Cross. It was short and simple with no music nor the Sacrament of Communion, but those that attended heard a thoughtful message from Andrew Miller. In addition to his reflections on nature and the Oregon coast, he delved into the story of the prophet Elijah as told in 1<sup>st</sup> Kings and the many ways God shows his presence and invites us to listen to where he is guiding us. After the service, we enjoyed coffee, cookies and a brief time for fellowship and conversation. For those of you that could not attend, a video recording of the service is available on the Holy Cross YouTube channel at; <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiHbmFBDWLGIW-jcI8jRhOQ>

This coming **Sunday, February 27, 2022, at 10:00 AM**, we will celebrate Transfiguration Sunday with a service of the Word and Sacrament led by our interim Pastor, Curtis Zieske. Members of the choir will sing the liturgy accompanied by Gail on the piano. We will continue to sit socially distant and wear masks. Please come if you are able. Following worship, we will move to the Fellowship Hall to conduct our Annual Congregational Meeting that was postponed in late January due to the Omicron rise in COVID cases. We will ratify the approved budget for 2022, elect Council members, Synod & Endowment representatives and be introduced to your Transition Team members. A short presentation and discussion on the future of your church will follow and the Transition Team needs your input.

At our last council meeting, I led off with a devotional about Hope, derived from writings of ELCA Pastor Ken Smith in Wisconsin. I feel it captures where we, the congregation of Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Salem, Oregon finds ourselves. After two years of dealing with the pandemic, a summer of unrest, natural and manmade disasters, an uncertain economy and now in an interim period due our Pastor's retirement what do we have to look forward to?

*Hope. What is it? It is a condition of the human spirit, a longing that we hold within, a sense that things will work out, a confidence that the present difficulties will end, a decision that we make to continue toward a goal.*

*Hope is often something that wells up naturally within us. But sometimes hope can be tested. Perhaps the recent pandemic has tested our sense of hope. Difficulties, sorrows, loss, illness, loneliness, anxiety, fear, emotional and economic stress have all taken their toll on our inborn capacity to be hopeful people. Sometimes we are more fearful than hopeful. Hope becomes something we may need to work on.*

*And it is worth it to work on hope. Hope is what keeps us going. Hope gives us strength to continue, especially when things are not going well. Hope sustains us when we are suffering. Hope renews us when we are exhausted with struggles. So, hope is a valuable thing. It is worth working for.*

*How do we make our hope strong? How do we build our confidence that our future will be better in some way? We might consider several things:*

*When our fear, worries, and anxiety are very high, we need to express them, let them out of us, share them with another person, or work our way through them so there is room for hope to grow in their place. If we keep fears bottled within, they tend to grow greater, and our souls become darker. Exhale your fear.*

*It is important then not only to share our fears, but our hopes and dreams as well. Unlike fears which grow smaller when shared, hope increases when it is shared. Community is built when hope is shared, and each person's hope actually helps others to feel hopeful in their own ways.*

*Hope is kindled when we remember. When we recall the times we have made it through past difficulties, when we recall how we have overcome our fears, when we look back at how we have grown stronger in adversity; then we feel more confident about how things will turn out this time. Remembering also brings the wisdom we need to shape our actions and emotions for what we are facing now. Remembering together is especially helpful for growing hope.*

*Hope is generated in prayer, in reflection and conversation with God. Prayer provides an opportunity to reflect on the path of our life, and the vision of God walking that path with us. In prayer we sense again the presence of a loving God, sustaining us. And that generates hope in our hearts.*

*Hope is kindled in our hearts when we sing. Sometimes the songs are laments as we exhale our fears. Sometimes the songs are thanksgivings for life's blessings. Sometimes the songs are hymns of courage, reminding us of our inner strength sustained by God's presence. Sometimes the songs are old friends that resonate in our hearts, renewing us for what lies ahead.*

*And hope is born when we talk with others about how God has been active in our lives: giving us blessings, and standing with us in challenges, shaping us along the way, calling us to be better than we are, and showing us a pathway into that mysterious hope we share in new life through death.*

Let me conclude my time as President of this congregation with a prayer for the future of Holy Cross Lutheran Church.

God, in difficult times, give us hope. Fill us with courage rather than fear. Help us to feel your presence with us. Help us to share with others our anxieties and dreams. Bind us together in mutual affection and courage. Help us to sing. Help us to remember how you have been with us, and how you will be with us through all things. Amen.

Always, together with you in Christ, your faithful servant,

Bryan Struve, Outgoing Council President

**Worshipping at Home with Holy Cross Lutheran Church  
February 27, 2022 – Transfiguration of Our Lord Sunday**

**INVOCATION**

*All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.*

We gather in the name of God, the Creator of Light; † Jesus, the Light of the World; and the Holy Spirit, the Light who illumines our path.

**Amen.**

**CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,  
who creates us,  
redeems us,  
and calls us by name.

**Amen.**

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Most merciful God,

**we confess that we have sinned against you  
and your beloved children.**

**We have turned our faces away from your glory  
when it did not appear as we expected.**

**We have rejected your word when it made us confront ourselves.**

**We have failed to show hospitality to those you called us to  
welcome.**

**Accept our repentance for the things we have done  
and the things we have left undone.**

**For the sake of Jesus Christ, have mercy on us.**

**Forgive us and lead us, that we may bathe in the glory of your Son  
born among us,**

**and reflect your love for all creation. Amen.**

Rejoice in this good news:

In † Christ Jesus, your sins are forgiven.

You are descendants of the Most High,  
adopted into the household of Christ,  
and inheritors of eternal life.

Live as freed and forgiven children of God. **Amen.**

## **GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,  
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.  
And also with you.

**KYRIE** (An expression of God's constant mercy)

Have mercy on us lord, and hear our solemn prayer.  
We come to hear your living word; it saves us from despair.  
Have mercy on us Christ, and wash away our sin.  
Pour out your grace and make us whole that new life may begin.  
Have mercy on us, Lord; make sin and shame depart.  
Renew us with your saving power; create in us new hearts!

## **PRAYER OF THE DAY**

Holy God, mighty and immortal, you are beyond our knowing, yet we see  
your glory in the face of Jesus Christ. Transform us into the likeness of  
your Son, who renewed our humanity so that we may share in his  
divinity, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the  
Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## **READINGS AND PSALM**

### **Exodus 34:29-35**

*Coming down from Mount Sinai, Moses' face shone*

### **Psalm 99**

Proclaim the greatness of the LORD; worship upon God's holy  
hill. (Ps. 99:9)

### **2 Corinthians 3:12--4:2**

*With unveiled faces we see the Lord's glory as we are transformed*

### **Luke 9:28-36 [37-43a]**

*Jesus is transfigured on the mountain*

## **GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

*Alleluia.* This is my Son, my Chosen, listen to him! *Alleluia.* (Luke 9:35)

## **HYMN OF THE DAY ELW 671 "Shine, Jesus, Shine"**

## **APOSTLES' CREED**

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.  
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

The Spirit of the Lord is poured out upon us in abundance; so we are bold to pray for the church, the world, and all that God has made.

*A brief silence.*

Transform us by your greatness, O God. Send us down the mountain to share joy with all people. Make us agents of change, confident that your hope will vanquish despair and your goodness will conquer evil. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

The mountains and valleys sing your praise. Dazzle us with your presence in every landscape: bluffs built by ancient glaciers, canyons carved by flowing rivers, flat horizons with uninterrupted views, and sands shaped by ocean tides. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

You love justice and establish equity. Strengthen leaders of local governments, community nonprofits, and grassroots campaigns. Bless them with gifts of integrity, creativity, and sound conscience. Build up safe and joyful communities where all people may thrive. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Heal those who are in distress (*especially*). Give patience to those waiting for answers. Grant hope to those who have reached the limits of treatment. Give compassionate hearts to those who accompany loved ones through illness and uncertainty. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Today we shout alleluia from the mountaintop; this week we enter the wilderness of Lent. Bless all who prepare and lead us in worship during this change of season: pastors, deacons, musicians, and all who contribute to our worship life (*especially*). God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

Blessed are they who listened to Christ's voice in this life and now rest with him (*especially*). Transform us from glory into glory, and give us your peace, that we do not lose heart. God of grace,

## **hear our prayer.**

Since we have such great hope in your promises, O God, we lift these and all of our prayers to you in confidence and faith; through Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

## **OFFERING PRAYER**

Blessed are you, O God, Sovereign of the universe.  
You offer us new beginnings and guide us on our journey.  
Lead us to your table, nourish us with this heavenly food,  
and prepare us to carry your love to a hungry world,  
in the name of Christ our light. **Amen.**

## **✠ GREAT THANKSGIVING**

When our congregation gathered for the celebration of Holy Communion, we heard again the story of God's mighty acts and of the love shown us in the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

With thanksgiving we remembered that "in the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."

The people of our congregation were given assurance of our Lord's presence through the gift of his Holy Spirit. Now we bring to you this same bread of life and this same cup of blessing, that you may be strengthened through your participation in the body of Christ. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life, whoever comes to me shall never hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."

***At this time, you may remember the gift of holy communion with your own bread and cup.***

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace. Amen

## **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,  
now and forever. Amen.

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

We give you thanks, gracious God,  
for we have feasted on the abundance of your house.  
Send us to bring good news  
and to proclaim your favor to all,  
strengthened with the richness of your grace  
in your Son, Jesus Christ.

**Amen.**

### **LAMB OF GOD**

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.  
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
grant us peace, grant us peace, Lamb of God.

### **BLESSING**

God, who leads you in pathways of righteousness,  
who rejoices over you,  
and who calls you by name,  
✠ bless your going out and your coming in,  
today and forever.

**Amen.**

### **DISMISSAL**

Go with Christ into a weary world.  
Share the good news. **Thanks be to God.**