

From your Council President – March 1, 2022

Welcome to March. After two years and many weekly messages, I am writing to you as your Church Council President one last time. This past Sunday, we celebrated the Transfiguration of Our Lord with a Service of the Word and Sacrament led by Interim Pastor Curtis Zieske. In addition to his sermon and readings, we had nearly our entire choir on hand to sing the liturgy. After the service in the Sanctuary, we moved to the Fellowship Hall/Gym to hold our Annual Congregational Meeting.

We reviewed the past year and many of the projects that had been done in the building. We passed a resolution affirming our budget for this year after some discussion and adding an additional staff position. We elected council members, including your new President, Loran Sell. Finally, we were introduced to the Transition Team members: Karen Halvorson (Chairperson), Margo Jensen, Gae Nichols, Lorraine Odell, Loran Sell and Gary Strand. Both Karen and Pastor Zieske followed with some initial thoughts on what you can expect from the Transition Team. For those of you that could not attend, a video recording of Sunday's activities is on the Holy Cross YouTube channel at; <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiHbmFBDWLG1W-jcI8jRhOQ>

This coming **Sunday, March 6, 2022, at 10:00 AM**, we will celebrate the first Sunday of Lent by beginning a new service liturgy, one you are familiar with, Holden Evening Prayer. We will use this throughout the six weeks of Lent, until we start of Holy Week with a Palm Sunday celebration and reading of the Passion and then the glorious three-day road to Easter resurrection! Please come this Sunday if you are able, begin the season of Lent by receiving ashes and joining your church family as we hear the familiar sounds of Holden.

As I mentioned at the outset, while this is my last letter to you as your council president, I am not going away too far. I have been hired as the Transition Coordinator to keep the daily/weekly functions of our church moving forward. You may continue to see some of the weekly messages from me in that role, along with a few from Loran in his role as your Church President. I am sure that Karen and the Transition Team will also have communications heading your way as we begin to discern what God has planned for the future of Holy Cross Lutheran Church, here on the corner of Lansing & Sunnyview.

One of the themes brought forth by Karen on Sunday and placed in their Notebook is *"The Past is in your Head. The Future is in your Hands."* Let us remember and honor who and how we built up this place as we make changes that reach out positively to our surrounding community and the world.

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve you these past two years. Together let us go forward as faithful servants in Christ!

Bryan Struve, Outgoing Council President

**Worshipping at Home with Holy Cross Lutheran Church
March 6, 2022 – First Sunday in Lent**

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

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

In the name of God, who makes a way in the wilderness, walks with us, and guides us in our pilgrimage. **Amen.**

Silence is kept for reflection.

Holy One,

we confess that we have wandered far from you:

we have not trusted your promises,

we have ignored your prophets in our own day,

we have squandered our inheritance of grace,

we have failed to recognize you in our midst. Have mercy on us!

Forgive us and turn us again to you.

Teach us to follow in your ways, assure us again of your love, and help us to love our neighbor. Amen.

Beloved in Christ, the Word draws near to you,

and all who call out to God shall be saved.

In Jesus, God comes to you again and again and gathers you under wings of love.

In † Jesus' name, your sins are forgiven.

God journeys with you and teaches you how to live in love. **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

O Lord God, you led your people through the wilderness and brought them to the promised land. Guide us now, so that, following your Son, we may walk safely through the wilderness of this world toward the life you alone can give, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

READINGS AND PSALM

Deuteronomy 26:1-11

The LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand

Psalms 91:1-2, 9-16

God will give the angels charge over you, to guard you in all your ways. (Ps. 91:11)

Romans 10:8b-13

If you confess that Jesus is Lord, you will be saved

Luke 4:1-13

The temptation of Jesus in the wilderness for forty days

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God. (Matt. 4:4)

HYMN OF THE DAY ELW 319 “O Lord, Throughout These Forty Days”

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

Drawn close to the heart of God, we offer these prayers for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

We pray for the church. Sharpen its proclamation of the word so that your people learn to reject voices of deception and distraction.

Strengthen all who are tempted to believe lies about themselves or others. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for the earth and all its creatures. Protect wilderness places and all plant and animal species that call them home. Sustain farmers and all laborers who work the land and harvest the fruits of its abundance.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for the nations of the world. Awaken elected leaders and government officials to the needs of those who are oppressed and grant them compassion to deal mercifully with immigrants and refugees who reside among us. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for those in need. Rescue those experiencing mental illness or contending with addiction. Ease the anxiety of those who live with dementia. Command your angels concerning all who are sick (*especially*).

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

We pray for this assembly. Bless those who bake bread and prepare the table for our communion celebration. Accompany those who share the bounty of this meal with those who are homebound or hospitalized.

Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

We give thanks for those who have died (*especially*). Gather them with all the saints into your heavenly dwelling place. Encourage us with the promise that all who call upon your name are saved. Merciful God, **receive our prayer.**

Accept the prayers we bring, O God, on behalf of a world in need, for the sake of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

OFFERING PRAYER

Extravagant God, you have blessed us with the fullness of creation.

Now we gather at your feast where you offer us the food that satisfies. Take and use what we offer here, come among us, and feed us with the body and blood of Christ, in whose name we pray. **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

Blessed Jesus, in this rich meal of grace,
you have fed us with your body, the bread of life.
Now send us forth to bear your life-giving hope
to a world in need. **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

You are children of God,
anointed with the oil of gladness
and strengthened for the journey.
Almighty God,
motherly, majestic, and mighty,
✠ bless you this day and always.
Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Jesus meets you on the way.
Thanks be to God.