

“Where there is no guidance, the people fall. But in abundance of counselors there is victory.” Proverbs 11:14

March 8, 2022

Dear friends in Christ: Fellow members and supporters of Holy Cross (i.e., Counselors):

I am writing this week's newsletter as I assume the responsibilities of president of your congregation. Thank you for your vote of confidence. I will do my best to fill the role, but I will need your help. I am requesting your continued support in thought, word, action, and prayer. The Council and I have accepted the responsibility of leading this congregation but the tasks that lay before us are the responsibility of all the counselors. That includes me, the leaders of the congregation and each of you. We have some challenges to face over the next year and it will be important that we all work together to face them.

I am asking for your support in thought. We are at a crossroads on several fronts. Perhaps the most obvious is preparing our Ministry Site Profile to use in our search for a new pastor. Pastor Zieske, both in his annual report and at the annual meeting, asked you to think about 3 questions: What brought you to Holy Cross (Grace or Central)? What keeps you coming back? And what are your hopes and dreams for Holy Cross? Please give them some thought, formulate your own ideas, and generate some questions that might help you and the rest of us plan for the future of Holy Cross.

I am asking for your support in word. As you develop your thoughts, ideas and questions share them. If you have ideas about how we should adjust from Covid restrictions to find our new normal, please share them. The Council is always open to listening to your ideas so bring them to a council member or to me. The primary tasks of the Transition Team is listening. So please share your thoughts with them. Karen Halverson is the team leader and very receptive to what you have to say. A good place to find support in developing your ideas is in The Word. Think about “How can I carry The Word of God into this transition process and all that we do at Holy Cross?”

I am asking for your support in action. Some of you might ask “What can I do?” So, I am including a few suggestions. One or more might work for you.

1. Attend and participate in worship and service activities. There are many church activities to choose from such as Tuesday Crew, Bible study, Faith in Action, Worship and Music, Choir, The Arts, and more. Think about what you enjoy and/or are good at and we will find a place for you to serve.

2. Financially support the church and its many service projects. Suzanne Stephen and Gae Nichols appreciate your continued support of the Faith in Action Committee.
3. Take an active part in the transition process. Attend meetings, share your thoughts, and listen intently to the thoughts of others.
4. Be aware of the needs of others as we began to reopen our building. Help us make and respect the decisions that move us from Covid toward a new normal.

Finally, I asked for your support in prayer. Pray for Pastor Curtis as he leads us in both worship and transition. Pray for your church leaders both local and in the larger church. Pray that we may always keep in mind what Christ would have us do and represent the desires of the congregation. Pray for the direction and health of Holy Cross as we move toward the next phase in the life of the church. Also, please pray for yourself and fellow members that we all may be willing to listen and consider each other's ideas, needs and feelings as we move through the following year and beyond.

My goal as your president is to listen to you and the world around us to better determine how to effectively lead this congregation through changing and uncertain times. Thus, allowing us to continue our mission of serving Christ in our neighborhood and the greater community.

May you feel the love of Christ in all you do,

Loran Sell, President

**Worshipping at Home with Holy Cross Lutheran Church
March 13, 2022 – Second 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

God of the covenant, in the mystery of the cross you promise everlasting life to the world. Gather all peoples into your arms, and shelter us with your mercy, that we may rejoice in the life we share in your Son, 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

Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18

The covenant with Abram and his descendants

Psalm 27

In the day of trouble, God will give me shelter. (Ps. 27:5)

Philippians 3:17--4:1

Our citizenship is in heaven from where we expect a Savior

Luke 13:31-35

I have desired to gather Jerusalem as a hen gathers her brood

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

The Son of Man must be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. (John 3:14-15)

HYMN OF THE DAY ELW 791 "We Sing to you, O God"

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.

You gather the church into a community of mercy and grace. Unify Christians around the globe in efforts to proclaim good news even in the face of opposition and to protect those whose lives are imperiled by the gospel. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

You create the entire universe and call it good. Hinder those who would cause further destruction to our planet's fragile ecosystems, and augment the calls of those who advocate for thoughtful stewardship of the earth's resources. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

You raise up leaders committed to love and justice. Nurture in those who govern patience to receive criticism, openness to new ideas, and courage to change course when needed for the sake of the common good. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

You hear us when we cry to you. Attend to those expecting a child, and console those who have experienced miscarriage. Comfort veterans enduring post-traumatic stress. Shield those endangered by domestic violence. Uphold those who are ill or grieving (*especially*). Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

You kindle faith that moves us into action. Guide children and adults preparing for baptism or confirmation. Empower Sunday school teachers, confirmation leaders, and parents who share their faith with younger generations. Give us all a renewed sense of vocation. Merciful God,

receive our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

You welcome us into your heavenly realm. We give thanks for those whose labors on earth are ended and who now rest with you. On the final day, gather all of us, with them, in your loving arms. 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.