

April 20, 2022

Dear friends of Christ and fellow Holy Cross Lutheran Church of Salem Oregon members.

Reminder: The past is in our heads and the future is in our hands. With that in our minds we move forward with making a path for Holy Cross with many things influencing where we are and how we got to this point. Some historical high points;

1984 merger of Grace and Central Lutheran churches – changing membership and evolving neighborhoods at both, locations with nowhere to expand facility. The location at Lansing and Sunnyview had an active childcare facility as part of its ministry as well as a licensed commercial kitchen used for preparing Meals on Wheels meals.

1992 Mat & I started attending services and became members in October at a point when there was a bell choir of about 10 people, a voice choir of about 20. 3 or 4 different small ladies' groups with 15 to 20 in each group, and a group of at least 10 men for Tuesday Crew. If an event such as a wedding or funeral was scheduled there were over 20 women to manage all the serving and their spouses set up tables and chairs. There was an active youth group of about 15 kids. Mat and I along with other adults chaperoned several youth mission events, the last for either Mat or I was in 2010. The last years having sporadic events revolving around the National ELCA Youth assembly. There were several events throughout the year to raise funds for mission services in our community – Lefse making, bazaar, auctions, all requiring 10 or more people to organize them.

2000's found a rapidly dwindling number of individuals to help, and many activities have since stopped happening or are happening at a far more limited basis than the previous decades. Mat and I have been very active at many different levels of support and leadership over the years. We both love and enjoy what has been our church and local family for almost 30 years. We also realize we are not as capable of doing as we were in the past and we are not the only ones. The larger groups I mentioned earlier most have ceased to exist because there are not enough people in our congregation to diversify. Time has put us at a point where what several groups with 10 or more participants were doing pieces of;

Building care / Communion care / Bible studies / Cleaning
Serving receptions / Counting offering / Raising service dollars
Hosting Foster Children / Hosting Houseless Families

are now all done by a core group of about 15 people.

2022 We are older; the building is 58 years old on the Sanctuary end and the newer part is over 30 years old. There are functioning systems, but they are old and require a lot of coaxing to keep them functioning – both internally and professionally. The heating system in sanctuary is the most noticeable. There are only 2 people who can comfortably coax the system by bleeding the lines and managing the timers to have it come on in time to warm the building for events like worship, practicing, hosting renters. I don't even understand the concept of bleeding the lines so if either of those 2 people left HMMMMMM. We will likely be cold for a long time. There are several leaks in the building that if not addressed soon the damage will be more extensive. There is already damage to walls and floor in the narthex from a leak in the roof at the wall that joins the new building to old entry and our "crew" has addressed what they can and have had it looked at to find the leak but can't find it or put the right "stop" on it so when heavy rain comes there is a puddle in the corner by the little kitchen. I could go on and on about just that. Then there is the fact that we are minimally ADA compliant for all the areas in our building. We don't have elevators to go up to the rooms above the gym nor down to the basement.

During the last transition the synod and our transition Pastor suggested that we share a pastor with another congregation, which at the time was Trinity in Silverton. We decided not to do so. We felt we could afford a full-time pastor. We sustained that for about 3 years but eventually Pastor P suggested that she go down to $\frac{3}{4}$ time and we agreed. We have less people attending service (it was dwindling before Covid, so Covid is not the only thing that made it happen), we have less money coming in to the offering and the people who are able to attend are rapidly feeling their age and not able to do as much as in the past.

During the time Pastor Patricia was here some staggering numbers may help to illustrate the impact of crux of the article we will discuss on Sunday April 24, 2022:

52 Funerals / 20 baptisms / 9 Confirmands / 7 Weddings

Some visiting families that never joined -----

These are not numbers reflecting growth, nor increased numbers to share all the workloads that support our mission(s) of the past or even the present load.

This may sound like I am driving toward we need to jump out and get rid of our building. This is not my point, but it may be an option. This entire writing is to bring to light that we need to look at things differently.

Let's talk about the article "They May Not Return", that we asked you to read. It presents a picture of how society rose to a high of joining things from about 1700 to 1950. As I reflect on the stories my grandparents told – joining an organization or a church was a way to have socialization with large groups that had a common interest. I imagine at times how it must have felt to my grandma, who came from Norway in 1906, a young woman on the prairies of Montana having babies and the nearest family member was a day away. Now days a young woman having a baby will likely have Mom, friends, etc. Right there. Today families find themselves drawn in so many different directions and social interaction happens at almost every one of them that the "gathering" doesn't fulfill the same need it did in the past.

s/ Karen

Karen Halvorson, Chair of the Transition Team

Worship Information from Holy Cross – April 20, 2022

Last Sunday, April 17, 2022, we celebrated the Resurrection of our Lord with an Easter Sunday Service of the Word and Sacrament led by our Interim Pastor Curtis Zieske. We had special music from both our Voice and Bell Choirs amid a sanctuary filled with flowers and resurrection messages. The highlight of the day was hearing our organ playing joyous easter hymns by guest organist Dr. Solveig Holmquist. It was the first time in nearly two years that we heard notes from the organ pipes. If you were unable to attend, you may watch a video recording of this and many previous services on the Holy Cross YouTube channel at;

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCiHbmFBDWLG1W-jcI8jRhOQ>

This coming **Sunday, April 24, 2022, at 10:00 AM**, we will hold a Service of the Word led by your Transition Team. There will be a message from Margo Jensen and time for discussion and input on the future of our church. We invite you to come worship with us and give us your opinion. We continue to sit socially distant, and while wearing masks is now optional throughout the service. Please come if you are able.

Worship at Home - Holy Cross Lutheran Church

April 24, 2022 – Second Sunday of Easter

You are invited to worship alone or with family using this bulletin.

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism.

Alleluia! Christ is risen. **Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**

In the waters of baptism, we have passed over from death to life with Jesus Christ, and we are a new creation. For this saving mystery, and for this water, let us bless God, who was, who is, and who is to come.

We thank you, God, for your river of life, flowing freely from your throne: through the earth, through the city, through every living thing.

You rescued Noah and his family from the flood;

You opened wide the sea for the Israelites.

Now in these waters you flood us with mercy, and our sin is drowned forever. You open the gate of righteousness and we pass safely through.

In Jesus Christ, you calm and trouble the waters.

You nourish us and enclose us in safety. You call us forth and send us out.

In lush and barren places, you are with us. You have become our salvation. Now breathe upon this water and awaken your church once more. Claim us again as your beloved and holy people.

Quench our thirst; cleanse our hearts; wipe away every tear.

To you, our Beginning and our End, our Shepherd and Lamb, be honor, glory, praise, and thanksgiving, now and forever. **Amen.**

PRAYER OF THE DAY

O God of life, you reach out to us amid our fears with the wounded hands of your risen Son. By your Spirit's breath revive our faith in your mercy, and strengthen us to be the body of 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 *God speaks to us in scripture reading and song.*

Acts 5:27-32

The God of our ancestors raised up Jesus

Psalm 118:14-29

You are my God, and I will exalt you. (Ps. 118:28)

Revelation 1:4-8

Jesus Christ, the firstborn of the dead, is coming

John 20:19-31

Beholding the wounds of the risen Christ

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Alleluia. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe. *Alleluia.* (John 20:29)

HYMN OF THE DAY ELW 390 “The Risen Christ”

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

Set free from captivity to sin and death, we pray to the God of resurrection for the church, people in need, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

Holy One who acts righteously, equip your church as witnesses of your goodness to go and tell others of your abundant love, that they may believe that Jesus is our salvation and life. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Renew your people’s commitment to use resources responsibly and to live well with your creation. Invite us to recognize and nurture signs of resurrection life in the natural world. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Direct those who are given human authority to lead with humility and compassion. By your Holy Spirit channel their attention toward serving those who are most in need. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Uphold your children who cry out to you (*especially*). Wherever people are overcome by the fear of death, breathe into them your life and peace. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Inspire those who lead your people in worship and praise (*especially the art and music ministries of this congregation*). With joyful motion and sound,

send us forth with praise that we cannot keep to ourselves. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Give us the words of your saints who, like Thomas, boldly confessed your Son as Lord and God. With Jesus our leader, empower us to live according to his ways. God, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

In your mercy, O God, respond to these prayers, and renew us by your life-giving Spirit; through Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**

OFFERING PRAYER

Living God, you gather the wolf and the lamb to feed together in your peaceable reign, and you welcome us all at your table.

Reach out to us through this meal, and show us your wounded and risen body, that we may be nourished and believe in Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **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.**

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.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We give you thanks, generous God,
for in this bread and cup
we have tasted the new heaven and earth
where hunger and thirst are no more.
Send us from this table as witnesses to the resurrection,
that through our lives, all may know life in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

BLESSING

God, the Author of life, Christ, the living Cornerstone, and the life-giving
Spirit of adoption, † bless you now and forever. **Amen.**

DISMISSAL

Alleluia! Christ is risen. **Christ is risen indeed. Alleluia!**
Go in peace. Tell what God has done. **Thanks be to God.**