



# The HOLY CROSS WORD

Words of news, information, humor and inspiration from Holy Cross

APRIL 2017

"Share the Hope"

VOL. LX, NO. 5

## WISMAR'S WISDOM

Dear Members and Friends of Holy Cross,

March "comes in like a lion, and goes out like a lamb" – so the old proverb goes. Well, the "lion" part certainly has been ringing true this year. As I write this column, we are only midway through March and we just went through a sizable winter storm. Hopefully the "and goes out like a lamb" part will ring true as well – by the time you read this we will know.

The beloved proverb for the month that now lies ahead for us is "April showers bring May flowers," which offers up a warmer and cheerful outlook. It is very true that God blesses His creation with rain, which causes seeds to sprout and grow upon the earth. This blessing of rain is something good that God lavishes upon all people, regardless of whether or not they are believers in Jesus as their Savior. And, because of the blessing of rain, seedtime and harvest will prevail and the earth will yield its increase and provide food for all God's creatures. Not only does rain bring forth flowers but also the fruits and grains from gardens, vineyards, orchards and fields. God is good and His mercy endures forever. His rain will come not only in April but throughout the growing season.

We rejoice and are glad that God takes such bountiful care of **our physical needs**. That is important, but in April we will celebrate a special day that reminds us God also takes care of all **our spiritual needs**. That day is **Easter**, a day set aside to celebrate the victory of Jesus over sin, death and the devil. As the Bible teaches, because He lives we shall also live. What great, good news that is to celebrate and share with others who also need to hear some good news.

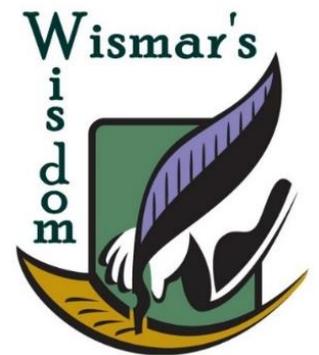
Why does God lavish such rich **physical blessings** upon us? Dr. Martin Luther explains it so well when in the Small Catechism he wrote: "All this He does only out of fatherly, divine goodness and mercy without any merit or worthiness in me. For all this it is my duty to thank and praise, serve and obey Him. This is most certainly true!"

Why does God lavish upon us such rich **spiritual blessings** because of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus? Again, in the Small Catechism Luther wrote: "that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness, just as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true!"

**God lavishes His rich blessings upon us to manage and use in ways that honor Him and bless others as well as ourselves.** This is what we mean when we talk about Christian stewardship. God's stewards freely and joyfully manage all of life and life's resources for His purposes. This management includes taking care of God's creation so that the physical needs of all God's creatures are satisfied. It also includes sharing the Good News of hope and salvation through Jesus who died for us and rose again. **A blessed Easter to you all!**

See you in worship!

Pastor Wismar





### Sunday, April 2

10:30 a.m. – At the late service this day our 8th-grade students will receive the Rite of Confirmation

### Tuesday, April 4

5:00 p.m. – Holy Cross serves Community Supper at St. John's Epis.-Bridgeport

### Wednesday, April 5

6:15 p.m. – Lenten Soup Supper  
7:30 p.m. – Lenten Midweek Service with the theme, "At the Crossroads"

### Saturday, April 8

8:30 a.m. – Altar Guild leads the semi-annual chancel cleaning

### Sunday, April 9 – Sunday of the Passion/Palm Sunday

9:30 a.m. – Town Hall Meeting  
10:30 a.m. – Sunday School participates in the service with Palm Sunday Parade

### Wednesday, April 12

7:00 p.m. – Board of Directors' meeting

### Thursday, April 13 – Maundy Thursday

7:30 p.m. – Worship Service with Holy Communion and Stripping of the Altar  
First Communion for our 7th-grade students

### Friday, April 14 – Good Friday (*Office closed; no Preschool*)

Noon – Midday Service  
7:30 p.m. – Tenebrae Service

### Sunday, April 16 – The Resurrection of Our Lord: EASTER

7:00 a.m. – Worship Service  
8:30 a.m. – Easter Breakfast (immediately following the early service)  
10:30 a.m. – Worship Service

### Saturday, April 29

9:00 a.m. – Preschool Open House

### Sunday, April 30

3:00 p.m. – Holy Cross hosts Concordia-Bronxville Choir Concert



## HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH—LCMS

5995 Main Street, Trumbull, CT 06611

Pastor's Study Phone: 203-268-7555; Pastor's E-mail: [pastor@holycrosstrumbull.com](mailto:pastor@holycrosstrumbull.com)

Office Phone: 203-268-4555; Church Office E-mail: [office@holycrosstrumbull.com](mailto:office@holycrosstrumbull.com)

Website: [www.holycrosstrumbull.org](http://www.holycrosstrumbull.org)

Christian Preschool Phone: 203-268-6471 E-mail: [preschool@holycrosstrumbull.com](mailto:preschool@holycrosstrumbull.com)

Worship Services – Sundays: 8 and 10:30 a.m.

PASTOR: Eric A. Wismar

MUSIC DIRECTOR: Sally Finck

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' PRESIDENT: Kerry Geffert

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' VICE-PRESIDENT: Michele Van Wart

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' SECRETARY: Cliff Schrock

BOARD OF DIRECTORS' TREASURER: Greg Dowling

NEWSLETTER MANAGING EDITOR: Cliff Schrock

NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION: Mary Schrock



### MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Holy Cross congregation is to carry out the Great Commission of our Lord (Matthew 28:18-20). We will share the love and forgiveness of Our Lord Jesus Christ with one another, our community and the whole world so that we can take part in the joyous privilege of "making disciples of all nations" through the power of the preaching and teaching the Word of God, administering His Sacraments, and joining together in service fellowship according to the confessional standard of the Lutheran Church (Article III).



**For Our Readers:**  
**The Holy Cross Word**  
**is best viewed in its**  
**full-color format**  
**on the church website,**  
**[holycrosstrumbull.org](http://holycrosstrumbull.org)**



## Like Holy Cross on Facebook!

*After you "Like" us, you'll see postings of upcoming events, pictures from events and other notices.*



### WE CELEBRATE EASTER!

**Words written by**

**Richard John Neuhaus,**  
**Prominent Christian cleric**

"We have not the reason to despair, quite simply because Christ has risen."

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The Newsletter Newsletter, © 2017*

### NEWSLETTER NOTES

**Our next deadline is...**

The next issue of The Holy Cross Word is the May edition. The deadline for all

articles is

Saturday,

April 15.

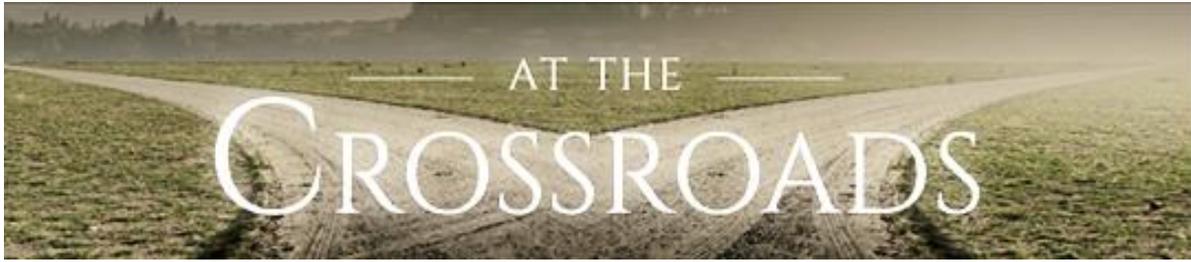
Please take

note of this

deadline and plan ahead to publicize any events and/or share news with your fellow Holy Cross members. You can submit articles to the newsletter mailbox, located outside the church office, or send them via e-mail to:

[office@holycrosstrumbull.com](mailto:office@holycrosstrumbull.com).





## Our Final Lenten Midweek Service

*Our liturgy will be Holden Evening Prayer*

### Wednesday, April 5: "Obedience"

Matthew 26:36-46 – *When Jesus nears the time when He must die for our sins, He asks His Father if the cup might pass from Him. But when the time comes, He obeys His Father's will. When we are called upon to follow God's will, we must obey.*

## PRESIDENT'S JOURNAL

### **Come to the Town Hall meeting in April for pew dialogue**

I have had the opportunity to provide training for newer and aspiring managers. One of our topics is balancing the day-to-day requirements with the long-range vision. The same topic holds true for your Board of Directors. Current matters keep us busy; however, that does not mean we shelve our future planning as contained in our Vision 20/20 strategic plan. We continue to make progress on these goals and objectives, though not always as quickly as we would like.

Keeping to one of our goals, we will have our next quarterly Town Hall on Sunday, April 9, between services. Town Halls are an opportunity for you to provide the Board feedback on select topics, as well as raise topics for the Board's consideration.

This upcoming Town Hall provides a timely opportunity for your reaction to the proposed refurbishment of our sanctuary pews and other select woodwork. This project provides us the opportunity to maintain our beautiful, but aging sanctuary. But it must be noted that it is our intention to proceed with the project – if approved – *only* when the necessary funds have been either raised or pledged.

Another topic for our Town Hall is Holy Cross' 60th anniversary. How shall we mark this milestone in our congregation's history? Come share your opinion and ideas.

Please mark your calendar and plan to attend on Sunday, April 9, at 9:30 a.m. Don't squander your opportunity.

In His Service,

---KERRY GEFFERT

Holy Cross President



*And lo,  
I am with you  
ALWAYS...*

--Matthew 28:20

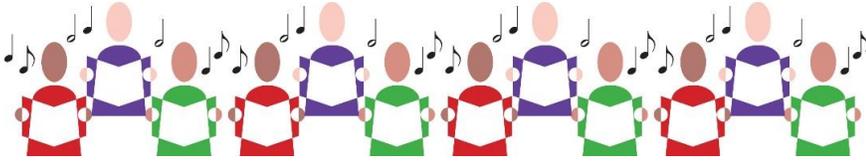
## **Calling Volunteers!**

### **DEEP-CLEANING of the CHANCEL and COMMUNION WARE**

**DAY & TIME:** Saturday, April 8, at 8:30 a.m.

**We'll be cleaning the woodwork such as the pulpit, lectern and communion rails as well as polishing the silverware and brassware.**





## PLAN TO ATTEND THIS SPECIAL EVENT!

### HOLY CROSS HOSTS THE CONCORDIA COLLEGE-BRONXVILLE TOUR CONCERT CHOIR!

DATE and TIME: Sunday, April 30, at 3 p.m.

PLACE: In our sanctuary

This Concert Choir will present a special "Hymn Festival" highlighting the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. Concertgoers will be treated to an afternoon of festival selections performed by this very talented and professional group of Concordia College students.

A free-will offering will be taken to help defray expenses.



### CROP WALK

**Ready...set...WALK! Join others in the annual walk to fight hunger on May 7**

Save the Date—Sunday, May 7, is the 43rd Annual CROP Hunger Walk. We will meet at Seaside Park again this year and the Walk begins at 1:30 p.m. There is parking permitted in the park the day of the walk. Please consider walking or supporting one of the walkers. You can walk a little or as far as you like. Sign up to be a walker or to sponsor a walker in the narthex later this month, on Sundays, April 9, 23 and 30.

---CAROL BURNS

### CLOTHING DONATIONS

**Abundant donations greatly appreciated by the staff at Summerfield**

Thank YOU! In March at least 10 (ten) 33-gallon bags were delivered to the Summerfield Light on the Hill Clothes Closet! WOW! Also, diapers and wipes were donated.

Please continue to support this Clothes Closet with gently-used "spring" clothing. The collection box is in the narthex.

---SOCIAL MINISTRY COMMISSION



## *HOLY WEEK WORSHIP*

April 9: Palm Sunday  
**At the Crossroads:**  
**"Suffering"**

Worship at 8 and 10:30 a.m.

*At the late service the Sunday School students will enter with palms and offer a musical selection.*



April 13: Maundy Thursday  
**At the Crossroads:**  
**"Forgiveness"**

Worship at 7:30 p.m.

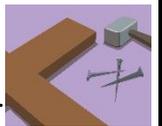
*Service with Holy Communion and Stripping of the Altar*



April 14: Good Friday  
**At the Crossroads:**  
**"Death"**

Worship at Noon  
*Midday Service*

Worship at 7:30 p.m.  
*Tenebrae Service*



April 16: Easter Sunday  
**At the Crossroads:**  
**"Life"**

Celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord!

Worship with us at 7:00\* a.m. or 10:30 a.m.



8:30 a.m. *Easter Breakfast*  
\* Please note early time

## MEMORIAL GIFTS

### **Guidelines for receiving and processing memorial contributions have been updated**

An ad hoc committee consisting of Donna Bogen, Audrey Paray, Gail Rice and I developed and formalized guidelines for memorial contributions to Holy Cross Lutheran Church. The guidelines are available in a folder labeled "Memorial Guidelines" in the library, left bottom section, for your reference. Since we currently do not have a standing committee, this is an opportune time for you to consider stepping forward.



**Thank you** to Donna, Audrey and Gail for their input and continuous review of edits over several months, and to Mary Schrock who provided clarification on processes and who proofread our drafts. **Thank you** also to the Board of Directors for providing input on the processes and finally for their consensus to move forward with the final version.

Please contact me if you are interested in heading up or joining the committee or have questions.

Yours in Christ's Service,  
---MICHELE VAN WART  
Chair, Memorial Committee

## TECH TALK

### **Big plans made for key projects will require your assistance**

My first month as director has gone by way too fast. The congregation has provided many suggestions on how to improve the technology in the church. While we can do the little things fairly quickly, the bigger items will obviously take longer. The speed that we will be able to get to each will depend on resources (funding and volunteers) so if you can help in any way please let me know.

We have had several people suggest taking video of the worship services and posting them online and/or making the recordings available to shut-ins via DVD. While I think this is an excellent idea, we do not have the resources to accomplish it at this time. This will be a really long-term goal that may take many years to complete. We may be able to do a podcast of the services every week for relatively no cost. This would be our first step in spreading the Word from our congregation.

Unfortunately, I know very little about creating a podcast so I will need to put some time into researching it. I would like to interface with the church's sound system to get the audio for the podcast. If there is anyone who knows about it or has experience, please contact me.



Another current long-term project is to improve the wireless network coverage within the church. This is the cornerstone to several other projects that have been suggested so we will need this to be completed before the others are considered. While we currently have two hot spots (one in the church office and one in the preschool office) we want to improve the wireless connection in other areas of the church. The basement is of particular interest since there are a number of teaching resources that are only available online and currently there is only connectivity in a very small section. I am learning as much as I can on the best way to accomplish this task for very low cost. If you, or someone you know, can help me with guidance or advice I would really appreciate it.

Questions, comments, suggestions, please e-mail me at [TechnologyDirector@holycrosstrumbull.com](mailto:TechnologyDirector@holycrosstrumbull.com).

Questions, comments, suggestions, please e-mail me at [TechnologyDirector@holycrosstrumbull.com](mailto:TechnologyDirector@holycrosstrumbull.com).

Tech Tip for the month: Check the actual e-mail of the sender of any e-mail you receive that you think is questionable. If the name that is displayed (e.g. "CITI-Bank customer service") does not match the e-mail address (e.g. [citibank.service@gmail.com](mailto:citibank.service@gmail.com)) it is not a valid e-mail. You can usually see the actual e-mail address by hovering over the name with your cursor.

---GARY MESSERSCHMITT

## THE NEWNESS OF EASTER

### **Thoughts about "Easter's dawn," from English writer, G.K. Chesterton – lay theologian, philosopher, journalist, orator and biographer**

On the third day, the friends of Christ coming at daybreak...found the grave empty and the stone rolled away. In varying ways they realized the new wonder; but even they hardly realized that the world had died in the night. What they were looking at was the first day of a new creation, with a new heaven and a new earth; and in a semblance of the gardener, God walked again in the garden, in the cool not of the evening but of the dawn.

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## COMMUNITY SUPPER

### **Serve the Lord by serving the needy a welcome meal at our monthly commitment in Bridgeport**

Volunteers of all ages are welcome at St. John's Episcopal Community Supper. On Tuesday, March 7, Anna Schaaf from Grace Lutheran-Stratford (back from celebrating her 90th birthday in Florida) assisted these cooks:



Cindy Ciccio and Grace-Stratford members Helen Harper, Hank Saunders, Diane Hintz Schyhol and Saviden Semon. Jim and Lorraine Finch had graciously offered to shop for the groceries that morning, and then cooked and stayed at the kitchen with the ham and macaroni & cheese through the afternoon until college students Alexis and Marissa Rodriguez arrived to do last-

minute activities. They were joined by their mom, Donna, Joey Ciccio, Kerry Geffert, and Jim Leslie, along with Grace-Stratford members Saviden and Gus Semon and their son Brendon, Ralph Brunks, Hank Saunders, Diane Hintz Schyhol. These committed volunteers served 101 meals at this March supper.

Preparing and serving the meal on the first Tuesday of the month at St. John's Episcopal is a mission that falls under Holy Cross' Social Ministry commission. Our next community supper is on Tuesday, April 4. Cooks are needed beginning at 1:15 and servers at 4:45. If you can volunteer your time, please put your name on the sheet found on the narthex table.

---DAVID and MARY ANN SCHILLER

## COVENANT TO CARE FOR CHILDREN

### **Thanks to all those who supported the Easter Basket project**

As this article is written, the deadline for the Easter Baskets is still a couple weeks away, but the baskets that have already been turned in are bountiful and beautiful. It's fun to see the creativity that our members have when putting together the Easter baskets. The baskets already turned in are filled with candy and healthy snacks, coloring books, small toys and hygiene items...and with love! Your generosity and love of the children who are supported by Covenant to Care for Children is heart-warming! By the April 2 basket deadline, Holy Cross will have 26 baskets to deliver to our "adopted" DCF social worker, Mimose Ulysse Laurenard.



Special thanks to the following families/individuals who took a bunny or egg tag, agreeing to put together a basket: the Anantharaj family, Tina and Brad Batoh, Doris Bernt, the Bogen family, Cindy and Joe Ciccio, Pat and John Deloge, Diane Dietman, Karen and Amy Geffert, the Helming family, George Hermes, Valerie and Richard Huydic, Donna and Gary Jackson, Jesse and Bob Kravecs, Ingrid and Dieter Leibold, Deb and Jim Leslie, Andrea Meyer, Jeannie and Craig Mones, Kendra Norman, Gail Rice, the Rodriguez family, Mary and Cliff Schrock, DJ Senft, Donna and Dan Senft, Michele Van Wart, and one of our preschool teachers, Gretchen Maynard.

Yours in Christ,

---MARY SCHROCK

Covenant to Care for Children Liaison



## **E A S T E R BREAKFAST**

**Sunday, April 16  
at 8:30 a.m.**

**in the  
Froehlich  
Fellowship Hall**

Please join your Holy Cross family and friends for this annual fellowship tradition.

Worship with us at the 7:00 service and stay for breakfast

**or**

Come for breakfast at 8:30 and worship with us at the 10:30 service

***If you plan to attend,  
please sign up  
in the narthex.***

Breakfast casseroles, muffins, bagels, baked goods and fruit salad are needed.

If you can provide any of these items, please indicate this on the sign-up sheet.

## OUR FLOCK

### **Christian caring and praying at Holy Cross; our list of those in need of prayer**

This is the Shepherds' Commission's "FYI" column letting our members know for whom we have prayed during our recent worship services. Please continue to remember these people in your prayers.

#### We remember our members:

**Carlos Calvao**, as he deals with a recurrence of a brain tumor; **Ron Dietman**; **Cole Dowling**; **Gary Jackson**; **Edna Karacsony**, suffering with dementia; **Jesse Kravecs**, as she recuperates from knee-replacement surgery; **JoAnne Meyer**; **Barbara Schneider**; **David Schiller**, recovering from triple-bypass surgery; **Monika Seyal**; **Michael Weldon**, suffering with lower-back pain; **Barbara White**, dealing with health issues; the homebound – **Bernice Erickson**.

#### During the past month, we also prayed for family and friends:

**Robert Butler**, Laura Dowling's father, recovering from the insertion of a pacemaker; **Rhonda Deloge**, Tom's wife, recovering from neck surgery; **Linda Desabella**, friend of Patty Peterson, battling cancer; **Marti Fischer**, cousin of Carol Burns, who is blind and paralyzed; **Kathy Gardner**, Jim Leslie's sister, recovering from cancer surgery; **Walter Geffert**, brother of Nancy Sabol, recovering from colon surgery; seven-year-old, **Caroline Herrington**, undergoing aggressive chemotherapy for kidney cancer; **Colin Hoben**, 12-year-old friend of the Nyitrai family, undergoing a stem-cell transplant for a recurrence of lymphoma; **Ramona Kondracki**, wife of a co-worker of Jim Leslie, who has begun chemotherapy for cancer in her sinus cavity; **Joan Meyer**, friend of the Dietmans, dealing with memory issues; **Gertrude Moran**, friend of Anita Schoch, going through treatments for lymphoma; **Patrick Murphy**, Pat Peterson's brother, diagnosed with liver cancer and recovering from surgery; **Chris O'Brien**, friend of Mary and Otto Atkinson, paralyzed as a result of an accident; **Joseph Parker**, Julianne Nyitrai's father, who underwent triple bypass surgery; **Melissa Prater**, Lisa Bailey's daughter, undergoing medical testing; **Dolores Reisman**, sister-in-law of Barbara White, who is beginning an aggressive chemotherapy treatment for breast cancer; **Luis Rivera**, friend of Doris Bernt, who had a lung transplant; **Sharon Robinson**, daughter of Anita Beer, recovering from surgery; **Rev. Richard Schuller**, a missionary pastor in Puerto Rico, healing from injuries he sustained when hit by a car; **Kerry Scott**, friend of Paul Hagberg, recovering from throat cancer surgery; **Joey Senft**, cousin of the Senft family, with ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease); **David Sochacki**, friend of Nancy and Jerry Sabol, following brain surgery; **Mike Stachura**, friend of the Schrocks, with a relapse of kidney cancer, for effective radiation treatment to eliminate tumors and cancer cells; **Lorraine Tamas**, neighbor of the Leslies, who suffered a stroke; **Mike Tavares**, friend of John and Pat Deloge, who is battling Valley Fever and recovering from surgery to place a shunt in his head; **Craig Wilson**, son of a friend of John and Pat Deloge, recovering from tongue cancer surgery; **Jim Wixson**, diagnosed with bladder cancer and undergoing chemotherapy.



#### Other prayer petitions were for:

Protection for all those serving in the military, including **Timothy Benson Jr.**, **Michael Collins**, **Ben Milositz**, **Jake Novak**, **Steve Novak**, **Ryan Rubega**, **Michael Schweitzer**, **Daniel Struzik** and **Eugene Struzik**.

Thanksgiving upon the births of: **Nolan Michael Fitzmorris**, son of Patrick and Amanda (Leslie) Fitzmorris; **Luke Vincent Riccio**, son of Vinny and Debbie (Deloge) Riccio; **Zoe Jackson**, granddaughter of Gary and Donna Jackson, and the **new granddaughter** of Paul Hagberg.

If your friend or family member is on this list, keep us updated on his or her progress. When you have requests for prayers to be included in our worship services, you can e-mail the church office at [office@holycrosstrumbull.com](mailto:office@holycrosstrumbull.com) or call 203-268-4555 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. weekdays. The Shepherds' Commission will also include the prayer requests in this monthly report. If you would like to be included in our e-mail Prayer Circle, please provide your name and e-mail address to the church office.

---DONNA SENFT  
Shepherd's Commission



## TRAVEL OPPORTUNITY

### **Destination: Scandinavia**

A "Travel Evening" with Pastor Greg Wismar will be held at the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd (2 Colonial Road at Route 37, in New Fairfield) at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, May 5. At this meeting I will introduce the 2018 Pastor's Pilgrims Journey to Scandinavia. Copies of the trip brochure are on the narthex table.

---REV. GREG WISMAR

## LOOKING DEEPER INTO THE BIBLE

### Lesson 6: Understanding 1st Peter, Chapter 1

A monthly Bible study involving Scripture reading and explanation



**We begin with The Reading:** 1st Peter, Chapter 1 (RSV)

#### Greeting

<sup>1</sup>Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappado'cia, Asia, and Bithyn'ia, <sup>2</sup> chosen and destined by God the Father and sanctified by the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ and for sprinkling with his blood: May grace and peace be multiplied to you.

#### The blessings of the Redeemed: The risen Christ

<sup>3</sup>Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup>and to an inheritance which is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup>who by God's power are guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. <sup>6</sup>In this you rejoice, though now for a little while you may have to suffer various trials, <sup>7</sup>so that the genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold, which, though perishable, is tested by fire, may redound to praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. <sup>8</sup>Without having seen him you love him; though you do not now see him you believe in him and rejoice with unutterable and exalted joy. <sup>9</sup>As the outcome of your faith you obtain the salvation of your souls.

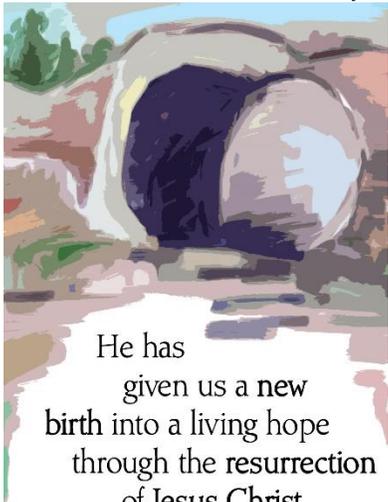
#### The blessings of the Redeemed: The witness of the Prophets

<sup>10</sup>The prophets who prophesied of the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired about this salvation; <sup>11</sup>they inquired what person or time was indicated by the Spirit of Christ within them when predicting the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glory. <sup>12</sup>It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you, in the things which have now been announced to you by those who preached the good news to you through the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, things into which angels long to look.

#### The blessings of the Redeemed: Exhortation to a holy life

<sup>13</sup>Therefore gird up your minds, be sober, set your hope fully upon the grace that is coming to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. <sup>14</sup>As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, <sup>15</sup>but as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; <sup>16</sup>since it is written, "You shall be holy, for I am holy." <sup>17</sup>And if you invoke as Father him who judges each one impartially according to his deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile. <sup>18</sup> You know that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your fathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, <sup>19</sup>but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot. <sup>20</sup>He was destined before the foundation of the world but was made manifest at the end of the times for your sake. <sup>21</sup>Through him you have confidence in God, who raised him from the dead and gave him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. <sup>22</sup>Having purified your souls by your obedience to the truth for a sincere love of the brethren, love one another earnestly from the heart. <sup>23</sup>You have been born anew, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; <sup>24</sup>for "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, <sup>25</sup>but the word of the Lord abides for ever." That word is the good news, which was preached to you.

**We move into The Analysis:** Regarding the Apostle Peter's first letter, this is directed toward suffering Christians. The letter was written around 64 A.D., following Emperor Nero's decision to wipe out Christianity, beginning in Rome. The Christians of this letter—many from Jerusalem but now living in northern Asia Minor (mainly present-day Turkey)—were



He has  
given us a new  
birth into a living hope  
through the resurrection  
of Jesus Christ  
from the dead.

1 Peter 1:3, NRSV

fearful of persecution and death. Peter wrote to encourage them, not necessarily that they would be free of hardship, but to inspire them to endure, for Jesus' sake, what was to come. So the takeaway for us today from his encouragement to endure rough times and live holy lives is that we are God's chosen people. We trust in God in a hostile world toward Christians, looking forward to Jesus' second coming and our union with Him in heaven.

In the first verses of Chapter 1, Peter sets the tone by stating his name and his direct tie to Christ, who he is addressing in name, and who they are—the chosen of God who are living as Jesus' servants—and then gives a blessing. Very neatly, Peter refers to the Triune God right off the bat.

Probably knowing that he would need to compose a forceful letter of encouragement, Peter reminds the readers right at the start of "blessings of the redeemed," as if by reminding them of this early on their frame of mind will be much improved. Verses 3 through 9 are blessings through the risen Christ, namely that the exiled are born anew to a living hope...to an inheritance of incredible quality waiting for us in heaven. This is all due to Christ's resurrection. Can you imagine how reading that would have helped the mood of those in fear! And Peter notes how our faith is a safeguard to receive this inheritance. When we are faithful, God's power protects our route to salvation.

**"Looking Deeper," continues on page 9**

***“Looking Deeper,” continued from page 8***

This, Peter says, must be the reason to feel uplifted. Even though there are difficult times ahead, he hints this will prove how genuine their faith is when they're tested by fire. Peter reminds them they have great faith and are joyful even though they didn't see Jesus.

In Verses 10 to 12, Peter goes way back in time and refers to the witness of the prophets who searched and studied and prophesied about who would suffer as the Savior, and when, for the salvation of mankind. And Peter explains that what the prophets revealed was in service to others, not for their own benefit.

For Verses 13 to 25, the rest of Chapter 1, Peter goes from reminding the Christians that their faith in Christ's resurrection has given them eternal life, to writing one bit of encouragement after another all with the goal of living a holy life. Among the advice is to: gird up your minds; be sober; don't conform or revert back to your pre-Christian ways; be holy in your conduct (for God is holy); conduct yourself in fear of the Father who judges you, and remember that you were saved from the sinfulness of your father by Christ's precious blood, shed blameless like a lamb without blemish. Jesus was destined for this from the "foundation of the world." This sacrifice gives Christians confidence, hope and faith in God, and a desire to love one another from the heart.

**Next month:** 1 Peter Chapter 2

---CLIFF SCHROCK



### CHURCH ANNIVERSARY NOTIFICATION

#### **Join the celebration of Zion's 125 years in Bridgeport**

Zion Lutheran Church-Bridgeport will celebrate its 125th anniversary on Sunday, May 7, with a special 10 a.m. worship service led by New England District President, Rev. Timothy Yeadon. The service will be followed by a dinner at noon at the Blue Goose Restaurant, on Ferry Boulevard in Stratford. The cost of the dinner is \$25, with a choice of four complete dinners. For further information or to make reservations, please contact Dorothy Weise at [Zionbpt@gmail.com](mailto:Zionbpt@gmail.com) or phone (203) 367-4521 before April 7.

### HOLY CROSS CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL

**A busy April! We celebrate Easter, discuss animals, welcome the Rock of Agers and our Comfort Dog HE IS RISEN!** With great joy we will be celebrating Easter this month! We will journey with Jesus beginning with His joyful entrance into Jerusalem. We will be humbled at the foot of the cross realizing what He has done for us. We will rejoice when He overcomes death and grants us the promise of new life through His death and resurrection!

Our other focus for the month of April is animals. We are learning about farm animals, zoo animals and the animals of the rain forest. We will compare the different habitats of each.

Due to March's blizzard the Rock of Agers visit has been rescheduled for April 19. Our theme for that day is "rainbows." We will make rainbow necklaces, a rainbow craft and rainbow muffins!

Our Comfort Dog visit is on Monday, April 10.

We are planning an Open House for those in the community and church who are interested in learning more about our school. This will take place from 9 a.m. to noon on Saturday, April 29. Please spread the word to family and friends!

In Jesus' Name,

---MICHELE GLENNON



### BULLETINS FROM ABROAD

If you are away from your Holy Cross family and worship at another church, be sure to drop off the service bulletin in the newsletter box. Over the past few weeks we received a bulletin from:

**Ingrid and Dieter Leibold**, who shared a bulletin from First Lutheran Church of the Reformation in New Britain; the service they attended included a one-year memorial remembrance of Ingrid's sister, Rev. Dagmar Rosenberg.



## COMFORT DOG MINISTRY

### **The local team joins in a “passing of the leash”**

On March 5 we attended a “Passing of the Leash” service at Christ Church in Scituate, Mass. We welcomed Obadiah! Also in attendance were Comfort Dogs Addie and Leah from Immanuel-Danbury, Maggie from Christ the King-Newtown, Lydia from South Boston, and service-dogs-in training Jude and Nicodemus.

After the first hymn, we were asked to enter and sit on the altar. I (Cindy) had the honor to handle Jude during the hour and a half service. I was nervous and excited at the same time as that is a long time to sit and behave (not me!), and Jude did not disappoint!

The lead service trainers from Lutheran Church Charities in Northbrook, Ill., were in attendance and they “Passed the Leash.” New England District President Tim Yeadon was also in attendance.



A community welcome and lunch was served after the service. We invite you to like Obadiah on his Facebook page! Jude and Nicodemus too!

We will be bringing Club Comfort once a month to New Prospects. After quite a bit of planning the New Prospects Director felt that we should add this to our program. We will have a dedicated space and time during mandatory Group Therapy. Thank you to Kerry Geffert who secured a Thrivent Action Team donation for us to start this project. We were, and continue to be, a bit nervous about this project. Our coordinator is in support, and when she heard that Thrivent approved the Action Team project in just one day, she responded with, “Go God.” We will assist people hurting from substance abuse, concurrent mental illness, grief, isolation, neglect, loneliness, anxiety and depression with our program, along with our love and time. We will continue to provide twice-a-month casual visits.

By the time you are reading this newsletter edition, we will have made our monthly visit to Holy Cross Christian Preschool, on March 27. We just love these visits with the preschool children!

Walking Together, SERVING AS ONE,  
---CINDY CICCIA and KATHRYN STRUZIJK

## THANKS A BUNCH!

This column recognizes the gifts of time and talent our church members provide to do God’s work in our church and community. If you have an item to include in this monthly “thank you” column, please jot it down and put it in the “newsletter” mailbox.

To **Paul Hagberg** who donated more than 100 logoed tee shirts and sweatshirts from his business to the Summerfield Clothes Closet.



To **Lorraine Finch** for designing the narthex display case with our “At the Crossroads” Lenten theme for the month of March.

To the Holy Cross members who helped with either shopping, cooking or serving at the March 7 Community Supper at St. John’s Episcopal-Bridgeport: **Cindy and Joe Ciccica, Jim and Lorraine Finch, Kerry Geffert, Jim Leslie, Alexis Rodriguez, Donna Rodriguez, and Marissa Rodriguez.**

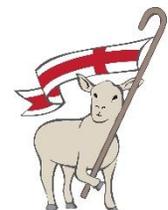
To **Linda Suhr** who consistently serves as our church-office volunteer, helping out one morning a week.

To **Kerry Geffert** for serving as the music leader during the new Holden Evening Prayer liturgy at the first four midweek Lenten services.

## CHRISTIAN SYMBOLISM

### **The Agnus Dei: The Lamb of God that inspires us**

The image on the right is known as the Agnus Dei, Latin for “Lamb of God.” When pictured standing and with a banner, it represents the risen Christ, victorious over death. John the Baptist, seeing Jesus approach, famously declared, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! (John 1:29, NIV). In Revelation, too, Jesus is portrayed as a lamb who was slain but now reigns triumphant.



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## CELEBRATING APRIL BIRTHDAYS

<b>APRIL 1:</b> NICOLE HACKNEY	<b>APRIL 13:</b> BRIAN CAMINITI
<b>APRIL 2:</b> KARA HEREDIA	<b>APRIL 14:</b> GARY DiLALLA
<b>APRIL 3:</b> ROBERT KILLIAN	<b>APRIL 19:</b> MARION DALE
<b>APRIL 5:</b> KAELEEN BOIVIE	<b>APRIL 20:</b> CLARA BATOH
<b>APRIL 7:</b> JOHN ANANTHARAJ	<b>APRIL 21:</b> HUGH HUGHES
<b>APRIL 8:</b> MICHAEL SCHWEITZER	<b>APRIL 23:</b> JORGE WISMAR
<b>APRIL 9:</b> JOHN ANANTHARAJ	<b>APRIL 24:</b> ANITA SCHOCH
<b>APRIL 10:</b> PAUL HAGBERG	<b>APRIL 25:</b> RICHARD VAN WART
<b>APRIL 11:</b> BOBBY KRAVECS	<b>APRIL 26:</b> SHERYL JOHN
<b>APRIL 12:</b> SCOTT PARAY	<b>APRIL 28:</b> JENZY HALLS
<b>APRIL 13:</b> DONNA BOGEN	<b>APRIL 29:</b> GEORGE STROMP
<b>APRIL 14:</b> DONALD ERICKSON	<b>APRIL 30:</b> STEPHANIE DOMANICK
<b>APRIL 15:</b> GORDON JOHNSON	<b>APRIL 31:</b> JENNIFER RENTZ
<b>APRIL 16:</b> KELLEY GEFFERT	<b>APRIL 32:</b> ALEX SELK
<b>APRIL 17:</b> TOM DOMANICK	<b>APRIL 33:</b> DAN SENFT
<b>APRIL 18:</b> STEPHANIE HELMINGER	<b>APRIL 34:</b> AMANDA WELDON



### WORDS FOR YOUR CHRISTIAN JOURNEY

#### **Jesus and the suffering caused by the world's assaults**

Church reformer Martin Luther considered Jesus' cry from the cross, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46) as "the greatest words in all of Scripture," writes Timothy Keller. In *Walking With God Through Pain and Suffering* (Penguin Books), Keller notes, "Luther knew personally about what he called *Anfechtungen*, a word that means the 'assaults' that the world, the flesh and the devil make on human beings through the evils and suffering of life."

Jesus suffered *Anfechtungen* "in infinite degrees, beyond anything any other human being will ever experience," Keller writes. And he did it all for us. As Luther said, "In Christ, the God-forsaken sinner has a Savior who has taken on himself the full depths of human estrangement from God – and overcome it."

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### LOCAL FOOD PANTRY

#### **See the list below for current needs of the Trumbull Food Pantry**

In March, we delivered a full shopping cart that included nine packages of diapers and nine containers of baby wipes, as well as detergents.

The Trumbull Food Pantry continues to need:

- ✓ Deodorant (male or female)
- ✓ Toilet Paper
- ✓ Paper Towels
- ✓ Laundry Soap



New items that are also needed:

- ✓ Juice boxes
- ✓ Feminine Hygiene Products

---SOCIAL MINISTRY COMMISSION

### CHURCH CHUCKLES

