

The HOLY CROSS WORD

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

FEBRUARY 2020

"Share the Hope"

VOL. LXIII, NO. 3

FROM OUR INTERIM PASTOR Dear Members and Friends of Holy Cross,

Greetings in our Lord, Jesus Christ!

If there's anything that our observations of Christmas and Epiphany "bring home" for us, it is that we have been immensely gifted by God. We're reminded of the gifts not only in the secular sense of seasonal gift-giving, but especially in the divine sense that the gift of the Incarnate Lord Jesus is the greatest of God's gifts. It is in Jesus alone that we find the gifts of forgiveness, reconciliation to God, peace, and the promise of eternity.

The gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh that were brought to the Christ Child by visitors from afar were their response when they recognized who Jesus was and what His life would mean for the world.

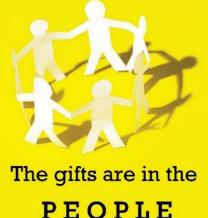
What about us?

We often make of it an *abstract theological thought* when we cite the familiar words from the third chapter of John's gospel:

"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life." (John 3:16)

It is, however, no mere abstraction. The world for which God gave His Son is nothing other than the world we know – family members, friends, co-workers, neighbors, strangers, ones we see as "normal" and the ones we see as "quirky;" in a word, it's everyone. The gift is for them, for they are "the world." God has shown His grace to all as He gifted us all with His very best.

So what about us? What shall we do about it?



One of my most valued colleagues in the work of the church is a Director of Christian Education with whom I worked in Rochester, N.Y., for several years. Daryl Pichan remains a close friend, and often reminds any and all who would hear that "the gifts are in the people." That is to say that God has gifted His church through the gifts and talents that He showers among the church's people. As the people of God come together to be the church and to deploy their gifts as congregations, His will is done and His mission advanced. People are served. The gospel is shared. His church's ministry expands.

So consider your gifts (you have them!) and consider your world (it's as near as your neighbor). Be bold to become a gift to others as you offer yourself in God's service in church and world. The point at which your gifts and the world's needs meet becomes holy ground.

My friend is right: "The gifts are in the people." The gifts are in you!

Serving with you,

William H. Flammann Interim Pastor



Saturdays, February 8 and 22

- **Vespers Worship Service** 5:00 p.m. –
- Thursday, February 13
- Board of Directors' meeting 7:00 p.m. -
- Friday, February 14 Valentine's Day
- Monday, February 17 President's Day

Sunday, February 23

10:30 a.m. - Pancake Day!

Wednesday, February 26 - Ash Wednesday

7:30 p.m. – Worship Service with imposition of ashes and Holy Communion

Wednesdays, March 4, 11, 18, 25 and April 1

- Lenten Soup Suppers 6:15 p.m. – Lenten Midweek Service with the theme, 7:30 p.m. -
 - "By His Wounds We Are Healed"



HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH—LCMS Sunday Worship Service - 9:00 a.m.

5995 Main Street, Trumbull, CT 06611 Pastor's Study Phone: 203-268-7555; Pastor's e-mail: pastor@holycrosstrumbull.com Church Office: 203-268-4555; Church Office e-mail: office@holycrosstrumbull.com Website: www.holycrosstrumbull.org Christian Preschool: 203-268-6471 e-mail: preschool@holycrosstrumbull.com

INTERIM PASTOR: Rev. Dr. William H. Flammann MUSIC DIRECTOR: Sally Finck NEWSLETTER MANAGING EDITOR: Cliff Schrock NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION: Mary Schrock



MISSION STATEMENT

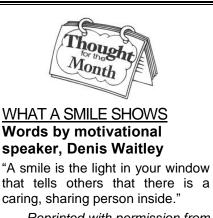
The mission of Holy Cross congregation is to carry out the Great Commission of our Lord (Matt. 28:18-20). We will share the love and forgiveness of Our Lord Jesus Christ with one another, our community and the whole world so that we can take part in the joyous privilege of "making disciples of all nations" 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).





Like Holy Cross on Facebook!

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



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NEWSLETTER NOTES Our next deadline is...

The next issue of The Holv Cross Word is the March edition. The deadline for

articles is Saturday, February 15. Please take note of this



deadline, and plan ahead to publicize any events and 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.

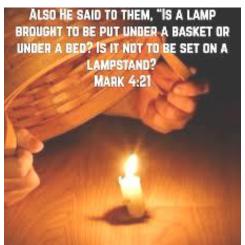
PRESIDENT'S JOURNAL

Renew

Christmas decorations have been stored away, schedules are reverting back to a semi-regular flow and routines fall to a different, less hectic cadence. Some of us are looking to travel to warm climates, settling in for winter in Connecticut, or picking up projects and to-dos dropped last fall before the holiday season kicked into full flow. My departure from the Board is now a done deal; and the plans I have for moving on to other areas of church and community are upon me. I remain committed to supporting our Board and helping in any way I can to ensure a smooth transition. During this transition time, I am working to cultivate and tap into a sense of renewal, that refreshing newness when the possibilities sparkle and steps forward are determined and hopeful.

I have been very fortunate to work alongside dedicated and faithful leaders – special thanks to each and every one of our Board members, especially those who have re-upped their terms. Julianne Nyitrai's term as Director of Discipleship has ended, and she has left the Board; however, her thumbprint on all things discipleship-related remains in place. We thank Julianne for her service through the monthly fellowship events she organized; her determination was inspiring. Gary Jackson has served on Shepherds for the last three years, and has departed the Board as his term as Head Shepherd ends. Gary has been an advisor to the Board with his wealth of experience and a champion of our members, especially new members, looking to assimilate with our congregation. We thank Gary for his dedicated service.

Our congregation has been through a lot of challenges and changes, especially in the last six years; and I hope you remain as dedicated as I am to keeping our church and preschool viable, Christian organizations serving our members and our greater community. The devil looks for opportunities and cracks to insert



conflict, hopelessness and frustration – all disruptions to our mission, to our relationship with Jesus Christ and to our fellowship with each other. We are most vulnerable when we are divided and resentful. Please take time to renew your commitment and faith, think about how we can change the things that need changing – young family space, Sunday School and youth engagement, regular and alternate church services – and what you are willing to contribute to the collective effort. Start fresh, shake off the past grumblings, discomforts and disagreements, and move into the new vision for our church family.

Finally, I thank you for the opportunity of serving you, my fellow Christian brothers and sisters, and wish you peace, love and renewal. Let your light shine. God's blessings.

In Christ's service,

---MICHELE VAN WART, Outgoing President Board of Directors

HOLY CROSS WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Alternate service on Saturday continues this month

Our Vespers Services continue on two Saturdays in February at 5 p.m. – the 8th and 22nd. Because these services are led by lay leaders, Holy Communion is not offered; the service lasts about 40 minutes. Our Sunday service <u>at 9 a.m.</u> with Interim Pastor William Flammann will always have communion.

The March to May dates for the Saturday 5 p.m. Vespers Services will be announced soon.



We pray the Saturday Vespers will serve those needing an alternative to the Sunday 9 a.m. service, and, when a new pastor is installed at Holy Cross, this alternate service will be expanded to include communion.

If you have additional questions, please speak with me or send me an e-mail.

In Christ,

---SALLY FINCK Worship Director worship@holycrosstrumbull.com

Learn

Grow

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

Class on Luther's Small Catechism begins on March 1

(These sessions will serve also as a New Adult Member Class)

Beginning on Sunday, March 1, please join us beginning at 10:15 a.m. for a class that will focus on the teachings of Dr. Martin Luther's **Small Catechism**. This little booklet has been at the core of instruction for Christians in the Reformation tradition ever since the sixteenth century. It's not just for junior confirmation classes!

Come to learn or review, and see how this little classic still informs faith as the simple brilliance of Luther's insights are shared among us.

Sessions will be held:

- March 1, 15, 22 and 29
- April 5
 - May 3, 10 and 17

Pastor Flammann will be the facilitator and instructor.



"ALMOST EVERYTHING WILL WORK AGAIN IF YOU UNPLUG IT FOR A FEW MINUTES, INCLUDING YOU." -Anne Lamott, American Novelist and Essayist Reprinted with permission from The Newsletter Newsletter © 2019



Pancake Day

Sunday, February 23 Immediately following the Worship Service

Join us in fellowship, as we indulge in a menu that includes American pancakes–plain and chocolate chip, Swedish with lingonberries, Aebleskiver filled with applesauce, gluten-free pancakes, sausage links, fruit, Danish, doughnuts, and more!!!



Come and enjoy this wonderful way to welcome our Lenten season! Family and friends are welcome! Sign-up sheets are on the narthex table.

<u>Did You Know?</u> Fasting was required during Lent and eggs, milk, fat, cream and sugar were among the forbidden items during this 40-day period. PANCAKES used all of these ingredients and were a good way to clear the pantry.

2020 ANNUAL MEETING REVIEW

Holy Cross conducts its church business, appoints new officers and approves budgets for 2020

The annual meeting of Holy Cross Lutheran had more critical business to discuss than members had been used to in recent meetings. Not only was there the traditional, familiar election of officers and approval of budgets but also discussion on the key topic of scheduling worship service and Sunday School plus an update on the call process for a new pastor. There was also the return of individual commission reports after a four-year absence, and for the first time in Holy Cross history, an Interim Pastor, Rev. Dr. William Flammann, was present as spiritual leader.

Outgoing President Michele Vichiola-Van Wart called the meeting to order at 10:39 a.m. on January 26 in the Froehlich Fellowship Hall, where meeting attendees had been treated to brunch food supplied by the Board of Directors and organized by Kendra Norman. Following the singing of the hymn, "Thee Will I Love, My Strength, My Tower" (LSB #694) piano accompaniment by Sally Finck, there was an opening prayer by Pastor, who prayed for God's guidance. He urged the members to think about a vision for the church in the next five to 10 years and what small steps could be done now to accomplish it. The President welcomed the assembly of 62 people who signed the attendance sheet, which was enough for a quorum. Kerry Geffert was announced as Parliamentarian, Gary Messerschmitt as time manager.

The President reviewed the agenda and thanked several people, among them Pastor Flammann and Christine, Mary Schrock, Roger Burke, Michele Glennon and the preschool staff and the church's many volunteers.

The agenda continued with the approval of the meeting minutes from the 2019 Annual Meeting, and with reports from the individual commission directors, who stood before the group and talked about what the commissions had done. In order they were: Shepherds/Gary Jackson; Social Ministry/Stephanie Helminger and Kendra Norman; Worship/Ms. Finck; Discipleship/Julianne Nyitrai; Education/Kristen Messerschmitt; Evangelism/Dave Bogen; Technology/Gary Messerschmitt. Property Director Dan Senft was absent.



The next order of business was tied in with the 2019 Missouri Synod Convention. Voting congregations of the LCMS were asked to vote on adopted Resolution 9-05, "To Amend the Constitution to Address Individual Membership and Advisory Representation." The five effects of the resolution were made available to attendees, who voted on and passed the resolution. The Holy Cross vote ballot will be sent to the office of the Secretary of the Synod in St. Louis by the deadline of March 16.

Next up was the election of six officers: President, Sherry Duff; Financial Secretary, Chad Helminger (incumbent); Discipleship, Adela Buck and Kathy Boivie; Education, Kristen Messerschmitt (incumbent); Worship, Ms. Finck (incumbent); Shepherd, Pat and John Deloge. The Vice President position is open; there were no nominations from the floor. The slate was approved en masse by voice vote. In addition to the President, coming off the Board were Mr. Jackson and Ms. Nyitrai. The VP position had already been vacant.

The "delight" of any annual meeting—the financials—was up next. Financial Secretary Mr. Helminger presented income numbers for 2019. Actual income was \$303,792.76 against budget of \$308,218.62. The total member giving, including envelopes, flowers, memorials and dedicated accounts, was \$314,025. Treasurer Greg Dowling then reviewed the income and expense comparison. Church expenses for 2019 were \$296,703.61, for a surplus of \$7,089.15. Preschool actual expenses were \$231,174.39 versus actual income of \$244,124.02 for a surplus of \$12,949.63. Mr. Dowling then went over the 2020 budgets for church and preschool. Proposed church income was \$295,930.34 versus expenses of \$273,930.34 for a surplus of \$22,000. If that comes to fruition, it is believed the funds will need to be used for expenses related to the pastoral vacancy. For the preschool, proposed income was \$246,462.00 versus expenses of \$244,364.92 for a surplus of \$2,097.08. The budget proposals called for flat increases, except for a 2.3 percent increase in salaries; this reflects the District's recommendation for church staff. After discussion, a motion to pass the budgets as presented carried.

Under New Business, the primary topic was when to schedule the church's worship services and Sunday School/Adult Ed time. In the fall the church had gone to a 9 a.m. worship, 10:30 education (later changed to 10:15) start. It was a six-month trial that would end at the end of February. The meeting attendees were asked to discuss how to proceed, especially since the trial period did not produce positive results. The Board of Directors, and Pastor Flammann, favored the approach of keeping the 9 a.m. service through May when the 9 a.m. service would normally begin for the summer and then reverting to two services and 9:15 Sunday School in September. It was feared going to two services now, then to one for the summer, and then back to two in September might be confusing and not bring the desired results either. Waiting until September would allow for a "rally" back to the traditional schedule. Kerry Geffert moved "based on the Board's recommendation, that we continue the 9 a.m. service schedule to the end of May (with the exception of two services on Easter)* and that an ad hoc committee be formed immediately to determine the starting time to be in effect for the remainder of the school year, the decision to be made in two weeks and recommended to the Board. *Friendly amendment by Mary Schrock. The motion appeared to pass by voice vote, but in a show of hands, the motion carried, 31-14.

Rev. Flammann made remarks during a Pastor's Comments agenda item, urging the members to be hopeful, specifically for a pastor. He said, God knows who our pastor will be and when. He is a God of hope. Pastor concluded his remarks and the final agenda item with a traditional blessing. The meeting was adjourned at 12:44 p.m.

---CLIFF SCHROCK

Holy Cross Word Staff Writer

A NOTE FROM THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Giving statements prepared, distributed electronically and in paper form

"Give generously to him and do so without a grudging heart; then because of this the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in everything you put your hand to."—Deuteronomy 15:10



The 2019 Annual Giving Statements have been distributed. Consistent with prior years, anyone who has provided his or her e-mail address to HCLC has received their statement electronically. For those that prefer a written statement, they have been placed in your mailbox in the narthex. If you have any questions regarding your statement, please e-mail me at <u>financialsecretary@holycrosstrumbull.com</u>. Thank you very much for your continued generosity and support of Holy Cross.

---CHAD HELMINGER Financial Secretary

CLOTHING DONATIONS

---LORRAINE FINCH for the Social Ministry Commission

Support the "Light on the Hill Clothes Closet" at Summerfield Methodist in Bridgeport

Be a "light!" Gently-used, clean WINTER items, such as coats, sweaters and boots, for men, women and children in all sizes are needed. Thank you for your continuing generosity in giving to those in need, especially during these colder months. The collection box is located in our narthex.



WE ARE FAMILY



This column is devoted to family news about Holy Cross members and friends. Please turn in items to the newsletter box.

God's blessings to **Michelter** and **Hydriz Martineli** upon the Baptism of their infant daughter, **Sophie Victoria Eler Martineli** on December 22. Sophie had three sets of sponsors, all being her uncles and aunts: Luiz and Luciana Eler, Igor and Keillane Martineli and Jamyle Dutra Eler and Mara Neves. We welcome Sophie Victoria Eler into the Family of God, through the life-giving waters of Holy Baptism, and look forward to the new relationship we will have with her.

MEET THE GIVING CHALLENGE

It's that time again to show your concern for others: 500 in 50

500 items in 50 days – it's time for the annual challenge to Holy Cross. Collect at least 500 items to be donated to the Bridgeport Rescue Mission. In each of the past two years, our Holy Cross family has donated around 1,000 items: that's hundreds of pounds of food and personal care items for people in need.

Lent is a period of reflection, and what better period to reflect on the acute needs of our local brothers and sisters who are fighting poverty on a daily basis. As part of your Lenten journey, please show your caring and love through donations to this worthy mission. As part of your donation plan, perhaps you skip a meal and donate the non-perishable items that would have gone into that meal. Or when shopping, duplicate a meal's non-perishable items so that others can share in that same meal. Take advantage of sales, and use those coupons (e.g., diapers!) that would otherwise go unused.



Kicking off at the Pancake Breakfast on February 23, and continuing through Lent to Easter Sunday, bring in your donations and watch the tally increase toward our goal. We will begin accepting free-will offerings and donations at the Pancake Breakfast and plan to have amassed at least 500 items by the Easter Breakfast on April 12. A list of needed items will be available in mid-February.

500 items in 50 days; 10 items per day. Is Holy Cross up to this challenge again? Absolutely! Thank you for your generosity! ---KERRY GEFFERT

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

From Pastor Flammann

Dear People of Holy Cross,

Christine joins me in thanking you for the generous Christmas gift that was given to me as part of the ingathering of funds staff Christmas gifts. Your kindness and generosity are gratefully received with warm thoughts of all of you. Thank you!

Editor's Note: Be sure to look on the hallway bulletin board for thank-you notes from other staff members.

HOLY CROSS CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL

The children will have fun this month with Valentines, healthy cooking and singing silly songs

February will find us exploring good nutrition and healthy habits. This is a fun topic as we will get to do a lot of cooking...and eating! The children will also be busy making Valentines for all their friends. We will celebrate Valentine's Day with a special ice cream sundae party!



Our language and literacy activities will focus on nursery rhymes and rhyming activities. We will sing silly sings that help us learn what it means to rhyme. The 4-year-old class will also begin a special writing program that mirrors that of the Trumbull Public Schools.

We are now accepting registrations for the 2020-2021 school year. We have both full-time and part-time options. Class sizes are limited so register early! Please contact Michele Glennon for a registration form or to set up a tour at preschool@holycrosstrumbull.com or 203-268-6471.

In Jesus' Name, ---MICHELE GLENNON



IN THE MAILBAG From the Atkinson and Collins families

To our Holy Cross family,

We would like to thank all of you for all of the love and caring you have shown us. We have been blessed by your outpouring of support, and for all of your prayers, cards, gifts, phone calls, visits in the hospital and your hugs. It truly helped make this difficult time easier to handle. As we continue to heal it helps to know we will continue to have your love and support.

Thank you with love, ---THE ATKINSON AND COLLINS FAMILIES

General Memorial Fund

In memory of Otto Atkinson Georgia V. Braulick Bob and Carol Burns Joe and Cindy Ciccia John and Pat Deloge Sherry D. Duff Jim and Lorraine Finch Feldman Orthodontics Kerry and Karen Geffert Bill Weigle and Charlene Hron Gary and Carolyn Klahr Dieter and Ingrid Leibold Kendra Norman Frank and Julie Nyitrai The Rodriguez Family John Rosen Nancy Sabol Anita Schlaich Schoch Cliff and Mary Schrock Dan and Donna Senft Lee and Regina Steeneck Richard and Michele Van Wart



<u>General Memorial Fund</u> In memory of Billie Skoog Robert and Carol Burns Kendra Norman

Share the Hope Fund

In memory of Otto Atkinson The Bogen Family Ron and Doris Dietman Edith Skoog



THANKS A BUNCH!

Do you know of someone who did something special as a volunteer here at Holy Cross? This column is the spot to identify him or her! If you have an item to include in this monthly "thank you" column – to recognize the gifts of time and talent that someone provided to do God's work in our church and community – please jot it down and put it in the "newsletter" mailbox. This month we say "thank you" to:



Donna DiLalla and **Lorraine Finch** for their consistent help in volunteering to help with tasks in the church office one morning a week.

To **Cliff Schrock** and **Kerry Geffert** for serving as the lay leaders of our Saturday 5 p.m. Vespers service on January 11 and January 25, respectively.

FINANCIAL NOTES

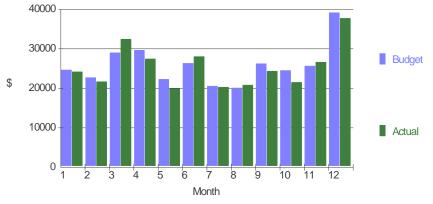
Annual giving summary provided for the calendar year 2019

First, thank you for all of your support! Overall, giving was slightly higher than prior year. However, it was less than the estimated needs to fund our mission at Holy Cross. Below is a summary of annual giving for daily operations:



	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>	2019 Budget
Ongoing Budget	\$265,034	\$258,462	\$276,000
Plate	\$6,857	\$8,995	\$9,609
Special Services	\$15,305	\$12,842	\$16,300

A monthly summary of income by month is below:



A few other items of interest:

- Total member giving, including envelopes, flowers, memorials, dedicated accounts, etc. was \$314,025 (2018 \$307,041).
- Within member giving, Share the Hope gifts of \$20,442 were received for special projects to enhance the church.
- There were 102 unique envelopes/givers during the year (2018–104).

Characteristics of a Biblical Giver*

Intentional	First
Regular	Proportional
Generous	Cheerful

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." –Luke 12:34

from "Ask, Thank, Tell" by Charles R. Lane

---CHAD HELMINGER Financial Secretary

CELEBRATING FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

Feb . 1:	Kate Gentry
Feb. 2 :	Joe Ciccia
Feb. 3 :	David Skoog
Feb . 4:	Thomasina Petrahai
Feb. 5:	Jennifer Deloge
	Trajan Keane
Feb. 6:	Annie Hughes
Feb. 9:	Alexander Carola
Feb. 11:	Peter Antoniou
	Kevin Halls
Feb. 1 2 :	William Schipul

Feb. 13 :	Alyssa Cerone
	Mary Ann Schiller
Feb. 14 :	JULIANNE NYITRAI
Feb. 15 :	Thomas Ferik
Feb. 22:	Ann Brueggemann
	Calli Sederquest
	Casey Sederquest
Feb. 24:	Luke Riccio
Feb. 27:	Jack Messerschmitt
Feb. 28:	Chad Helminger
	Emily Rentz
Feb. 29 :	Jesse Kravecs

CHURCH CHUCKLES



were a nice touch for Valentine's Day."

OUR LENTEN FOCUS

Lent begins on February 26

Lent, the church-year season that begins on Ash Wednesday, is a time of penitence and spiritual renewal. Some people give up a luxury or vice during Lent as a form of self-denial; others undertake a project that benefits others.

The point isn't to denigrate ourselves or to see how much we can do without. Instead, Lent helps us reflect on Jesus' death. As Timothy Keller writes in *The Reason for God:* "The



Christian Gospel is that I am so flawed that Jesus had to die for me, yet I am so loved and valued that Jesus was glad to die for me. This leads to deep humility and deep confidence at the same time. It undermines both swaggering and sniveling. I cannot feel superior to anyone, and yet I have nothing to prove to anyone. I do not think more of myself nor less of myself. Instead, I think of myself less."

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THE WINTER SEASON CONTINUES, AND WE REMIND YOU THAT OCCASIONALLY WORSHIP SERVICE OR ACTIVITIES ARE CANCELED DUE TO SNOWY AND/OR ICY CONDITIONS.

Before you venture out, look/listen for a possible cancellation via:

- If you signed up for the "e-mail blast" system, check your e-mail;
- If you are on Facebook, look for a posting;
- WICC radio (AM 600);
- <u>www.wicc600.com</u> (under "Public Organizations"); or
- WTNH-TV or WSFB-TV.

