



The **HOLY CROSS WORD**

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

FEBRUARY 2021

"Share the Hope"

VOL. LXIV, NO. 3

FROM OUR VACANCY PASTOR

Let's celebrate life's journey together with a special Valentine's Day ceremony

February is usually a dreary month for me. With the Super Bowl on February 7, football will be over for another season. Baseball hasn't started yet and I don't follow professional basketball or hockey. And the weather is usually less than great.

One bright spot is Valentine's Day! For husbands, this usually means the obligatory cards, candy, and flowers. And if possible (considering limitations of Covid) dining at one's favorite restaurant. It also affords the opportunity to reaffirm wedding vows that may have been made years ago.

One of the traditions in my previous parish was to enable couples to affirm their wedding vows during a church service. Couples whose wedding anniversary years fell on a multiple of "5" were first invited to loan an original wedding photo, which was put on display in the narthex. Then, on the Sunday closest to February 14, those couples would be invited during the worship service to come forward and stand before the altar and reaffirm their wedding vows.

It was always a meaningful and emotional experience. There were couples celebrating more than 50 years joined by couples that had been married recently. Facing each other and holding hands, they would hear the question,

Do you take this man/woman to be your husband/wife? Do you promise to be true to him/her in good times and bad, in sickness and health, to love and honor him/her all the days of your life, answer – I do?

Some answers were loud and clear; others were soft and muffled. There were often tears – by both men and women. Frequently, their children would be paying rapt attention, never having heard their parents vocally declare their love and devotion to each other. When the rite was over, the couples would face the congregation that always erupted with thunderous applause.

I would like to do this at Holy Cross this year as Valentine's Day falls on a Sunday.

Couples are invited to bring a wedding photo to church on either January 24 or 31. They may also bring them to the church office on Tuesdays or Thursdays between 8 a.m. and 1:30 p.m., no later than February 4. These photos will be displayed in the narthex on February 7 and 14.

At the appropriate time during the service on February 14, couples will be asked to stand in their pew and participate in this brief ceremony. Those remaining at home could participate as well. And yes, gentlemen, when finished, you may kiss the bride!

In addition to the church service ceremony, it would be an opportunity for all Holy Cross couples to reflect on their life's journey together – thanking God for the many blessings received down through the years – and rededicating themselves to remain in loving service to each other and their families.

---BILL MEYER
Vacancy Pastor

*May
God
Bless
our
Marriage*



Thursday, February 11

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

Sunday, February 14 – Valentine's Day

Monday, February 15 – President's Day

Wednesday, February 17 – Ash Wednesday

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

Wednesdays, February 24 and March 3, 10, 17 and 24

6:30 p.m. – Weekly Midweek Lent "Virtual" Get-together:
Soup Supper and Lenten Bible Study/Devotion



HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH—LCMS

Sunday Worship Service: 10:00 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

VACANCY PASTOR: Rev. William Meyer

MUSIC DIRECTOR: Sally Finck

NEWSLETTER MANAGING EDITOR: Cliff Schrock

NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION: Mary Schrock

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PRESIDENT: Sherry D. Duff

VICE-PRESIDENT: Vacant

SECRETARY: Michele Van Wart

TREASURER: Greg Dowling

FINANCIAL SECRETARY: Chad Helming

DISCIPLESHIP COMMISSION CO-DIRECTORS: Kathy Boivie and Adela Buck

EDUCATION COMMISSION DIRECTOR: Kristen Messerschmitt

EVANGELISM COMMISSION DIRECTOR: Vacant

PROPERTY COMMISSION DIRECTOR: Dan Sentf

SHEPHERDS' COMMISSION DIRECTOR: Pat Deloge

SOCIAL MINISTRY COMMISSION CO-DIRECTORS: Kendra Norman

TECHNOLOGY COMMISSION DIRECTOR: Gary Messerschmitt

WORSHIP COMMISSION DIRECTOR: Vacant



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.



WORDS ABOUT LOVE

Written by Thomas Merton, writer, theologian, religious scholar, from his collection of essays, "Love and Living"
"Love is our true destiny. We do not find the meaning of life by ourselves alone; we find it with another."

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NEWSLETTER NOTES

Our next deadline is...

The next issue of The Holy Cross Word is the March edition. The deadline for articles is Monday, February 15.

Please plan ahead to publicize events or share news

with your fellow Holy Cross members. You can submit articles to the newsletter mailbox, (outside the church office), or send them via e-mail to:

office@holycrosstrumbull.com.



MIDWEEK LENT GET-TOGETHERS...ONLINE!

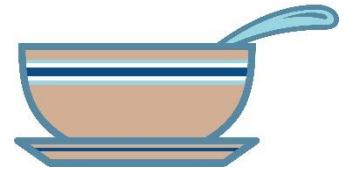
Please join your Holy Cross family for “virtual” soup suppers and a devotion/study on Wednesday evenings in Lent.

Join us from the comfort and safety of your kitchen table, dining-room table or couch!

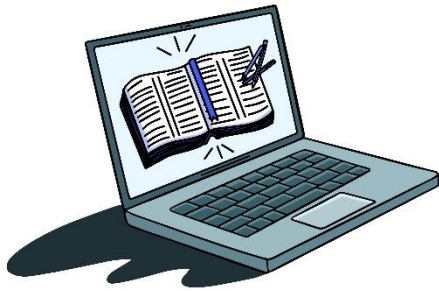
Dates: February 24, March 3, 10, 17 and 24

Time: Dinner Fellowship at 6:30 p.m.;

Devotion/Study to begin at 7:00 p.m.



Our devotional study will focus on a series entitled, “Places of the Passion.”



Some of the places we will learn about are Bethany, the Mount of Olives and the Garden of Gethsemane. As we focus on a new place each week, we will be reminded that Jesus walked this earth...and His footsteps were no sightseeing trip! There was a very

important reason that Jesus came to be at particular places at specific times to suffer and die and rise again. Jesus was fulfilling his Father’s will. His desire is that we receive forgiveness from our sins and be given a place in heaven with Him forever.

Please set aside these Wednesday evenings to meet online with your Holy Cross family. No masks required!!

The virtual format and log-in details will be announced through an e-mail blast and the weekly bulletin announcements.

(Weekly announcements are listed on the Holy Cross website & Holy Cross Facebook page.)

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

Our spirituality is felt and supported collectively

“Christ distributes courage through community; he dissipates doubts through fellowship. He never deposits all knowledge in one person but distributes pieces of the jigsaw puzzle to many. When you interlock your understanding with mine, and we share our discoveries, when we mix, mingle, confess and pray, Christ speaks.”

---Words by MAX LUCADO, from his book, *Fearless*

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ASH WEDNESDAY WORSHIP



Holy Cross will offer an in-person Worship Service at 7:30 p.m., on February 17, with Holy Communion and imposition of ashes. Our Vacancy Pastor, Rev. William Meyer, will lead this service. If you plan to attend this service, be sure to sign up via the "Welcome" page of the Holy Cross website—holycrosstrumbull.org. The sign-up link will be available at the beginning of the week of Feb. 14. We intend to record our Ash Wednesday service and post it on the Holy Cross website.

FOOD AND TOILETRY COLLECTION

Service project by one of our young members yields generous donation to Bridgeport Rescue Mission

I would like to say a big "thank you" to members of our congregation that graciously brought food and/or toiletry items to the Christmas Eve/Day church services for my school project. I was able to collect more than 100 items with your generosity. I was able to deliver these items to the Bridgeport Rescue Mission on December 29 and they were very thankful for our donations. Thank you again for assisting me with this service project and for helping families in need in our community.

Sincerely,

---NATE HELMINGER (8th grader at Hillcrest Middle School)



HOLY CROSS CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL

Readin', writing and 'rithmetic mix with hearts in February

February will find us exploring good nutrition and healthy habits. 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 this month will focus on Nursery Rhymes and rhyming activities. We will sing silly songs that help us learn what it means to rhyme. The four-year-old class will also begin a special writing program that mirrors that of the Trumbull Public Schools. This class is also exploring the concept of addition and subtraction. This is done through hands-on experiences with manipulatives, felt boards, songs and poems. The children will also practice their graphing skills using candy "conversation" hearts.



We are now accepting registration for the 2021-2022 school year. We have both full-time and part-time options. Class sizes are limited so register early! Please contact me at preschool@holycrosstrumbull.com or 203-268-6471 for a registration form or to set up a tour.

In Jesus' Name,

---MICHELE GLENNON, Preschool Director

2021 ANNUAL MEETING REVIEW

Holy Cross members tackle their urgent affairs, including pastoral call, officers and finances

The annual meeting of Holy Cross Lutheran Church had the usual business as well as one topic of high interest when it was held for the first time in “virtual” fashion in President Sherry Duff’s debut in leading it. Due to Covid-related, social-distance restrictions, the meeting was held in Zoom online style. Of prime importance were an update on the pastoral-call process to fill the church’s almost year-and-a-half vacancy, 2021 budgets, and election of officers. There was also the rare involvement of a vacancy pastor, the Rev. William Meyer, who has faithfully and beautifully led HCLC since the fall.

President Duff called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. on January 23 with attendees present on screen, which sadly prevented them from feasting on the fattening brunch food normally spread out in the Froehlich Fellowship Hall courtesy of the Board of Directors. Following an opening prayer by the President, she gave some welcoming and opening remarks and reviewed the agenda. Kerry Geffert was announced as Parliamentarian. A quorum was present with 55 linked in.

The agenda continued with the approval of the meeting minutes from the 2020 Annual Meeting and the December 5, 2020, Congregational Call meeting. That was followed by reports from the individual commission directors, who spoke about what their commissions had done during the challenging health crisis in 2020. In order they were: Worship/Sally Finck; Shepherds/Pat Deloge; Social Ministry/Stephanie Helminger & Kendra Norman; Discipleship/Kathy Boivie & Adela Buck; Education/Kristen Messerschmitt; Evangelism/Dave Bogen; Property/Dan Senft, and Technology/Gary Messerschmitt.

Next up was the election of seven officer positions: Treasurer, Greg Dowling*; Secretary, Michele Van Wart (the former president making a return to the Board); Social Ministry, Kendra Norman* and one Open codirector; Property, Dan Senft*; Technology, Gary Messerschmitt*. The Evangelism and Third-Year Shepherd positions are Open (for YOU perhaps!); Ms. Deloge is staying on as Lead Shepherd. With Ms. Finck departing the Worship Director position in mid-term, the Worship and Vice President positions are open with one year remaining before they are up for election. There were no nominations from the floor, whereupon it was moved that the entire slate be approved as presented and the motion carried. Coming off the Board were Ms. Helminger (Social Ministry), Dave Bogen (Evangelism) and Cliff Schrock (Secretary). *denotes incumbent.



The next order of business was the “joy” of any annual meeting—the financials. Financial Secretary Mr. Helminger presented income numbers for 2020. The total member giving, including envelopes, flowers, memorials, and dedicated accounts, was \$292,264 with Share the Hope income of \$30,000 plus. He said two-thirds of giving was done online. Treasurer Greg Dowling then reviewed the income and expense comparison. Church actual total income for 2020 was \$326,656.23, including PPP loan, and expenses \$290,495.75 for a surplus of \$36,160.48. Preschool actual expenses were \$212,687.66 versus actual income of \$190,205.34 for a deficit of \$22,482.32, the first year since 2017

the Preschool did not have a surplus. Mr. Dowling then went over the 2020 budgets for church and Preschool. Proposed church income was \$329,072.51 versus expenses of \$329,072.51 for a balanced budget. Budgeting for a new pastor was included for after the first quarter. For the Preschool, proposed income was \$216,662.00 versus expenses of \$215,178.48 for a surplus of \$1,483.52. The budget proposals called for flat totals for the most part, plus a 1.5 percent increase in salaries; this reflects the District’s recommendation for church staff. A motion to pass the budgets as presented carried.

The topic of great interest was under Old Business. President Duff went over the most recent Call process that was made to Pastor Kevin Leidich of Kentucky. He was issued the call on December 5 and the President spent 20 minutes going over a timeline step by step on how the subsequent seven weeks played out in which Rev. Leidich chose not to respond to the call. This occurred with the involvement of not only District President Yeadon but with Circuit Counselor Morris as well as multiple meetings with the Holy Cross Board of Directors. The President said a new Call Committee will be refreshed and it was her goal to have two candidates to be voted upon when there is a next Call congregational meeting. (See page 9 for commentary on the Call portion.)

Under New Business, the next topic was tied in with the Missouri Synod 2019-2022 triennium. The members voted “yes” on a LC-MS proposal to add an extra year to the triennium due to the Covid-19 virus. This would allow districts to hold their conventions in either 2021 or 2022 and move the upcoming national Synod Convention from 2022 to 2023. ... During an open discussion, it was explained that an in-person Ash Wednesday service would be held on February 17. Midweek Lenten services would not be held in person but a virtual soup supper and evening devotion/Bible study would go forward on five Wednesdays thereafter leading to Holy Week. ... Appreciation was also expressed to Pastors Meyer and Flammann and to Circuit Counselor Morris for their help in Holy Cross’ functioning and Call process. ... Pastor Meyer gave remarks in which he fully endorsed what had been said by President Duff about the Call process outcome and said she and Holy Cross had “dealt with a delicate situation with distinction.” As he continues with his association with Holy Cross as Vacancy Pastor, he said he looks forward to the months ahead in ministry.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:59 a.m.

---CLIFF SCHROCK

Holy Cross Word Managing Editor



A NOTE FROM THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY

Giving statements prepared, distributed electronically and in paper form

Year-end statements for 2020 giving have been distributed. For those members with an e-mail address on file, your statement was sent via e-mail to save on postage. For those with no e-mail on file, your statement was mailed the week of January 11. If you did not receive your statement and/or have questions about your statement, please contact me at financialsecretary@holycrosstrumbull.com.

---CHAD HELMINGER
Financial Secretary

COVENANT TO CARE FOR CHILDREN

Easter Basket project for 2021 is a "GO" with details to be announced later this month

After a successful "Giving Tree" project in December, our "adopted" DCF social worker Mimose Laurenard has been told that we may proceed with our annual Easter basket project. Many of you may recall that this project had to be canceled last spring due to the onset of COVID.

An updated caseload list from Mimose will not be available until later this month, so please watch for announcements via the bulletin, Facebook and e-mail blast for when the Easter basket poster will be in the narthex.



I realize that not all Holy Cross members are comfortable attending Worship in-person and may not have the opportunity to be at the church when this "Easter Basket" poster is presented. **Please—if you would like to participate by having a child's name, contact me via my personal email address: schrocknroll@optonline.net. When I get the updated caseload list, I will match up a child to you and send you the information needed for you to put together an Easter basket.**

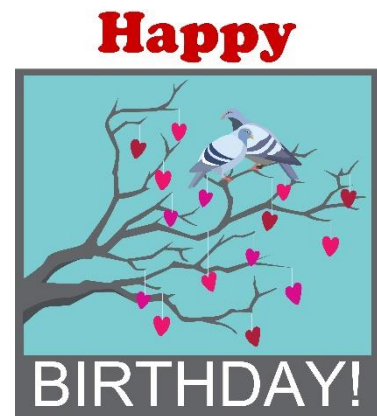
Yours in Christ,

---MARY SCHROCK

Covenant to Care for Children Liaison

CELEBRATING FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Feb. 2: Joe Ciccia | Feb. 14: Julianne Nyitrai |
| Feb. 3: David Škoog | Feb. 15: Thomas Ferik |
| Feb. 4: Thomasina Petrahai | Pastor Meyer |
| Feb. 5: Jennifer Deloge | Feb. 22: Ann Brueggemann |
| Feb. 9: Alexander Carola | Calli Šederquest |
| Feb. 11: Peter Antoniou | Casey Šederquest |
| Kevin Halls | Feb. 24: Luke Riccio |
| Feb. 12: William Šchipul | Feb. 27: Jack Messerschmitt |
| Feb. 13: Alyssa Cerone | Feb. 28: Chad Helminger |
| Mary Ann Šchiller | Emily Rentz |
| | Feb. 29: Jesse Kravecs |



SPECIAL THANKS FOR CHRISTMAS GIFT

Thank you notes are posted on the hallway bulletin board

For those who are not attending in-person worship during this period of the COVID pandemic, we reprint below the notes of thanks that some of the Holy Cross staff posted on the bulletin board at the church upon receiving the monetary Christmas gift given to them by the Holy Cross congregation and preschool families.



“A very special thank you...with sincere appreciation.” —From Roger Burke

“Thank you so very much for your generous Christmas gift! The support of the congregation means so much to all of us...especially during this difficult year. It is a privilege to serve our Lord and Savior at the preschool. I look forward to a new year working together to bring the gospel to our community. I pray that the new year brings an abundance of God’s joy and peace. In Jesus Name.” —From Michele Glennon

“Merry Christmas to all of you! This year sure has been full of challenges for all of us, but one thing that remained constant was my joy of working in the church office. I thank you all for the generous Christmas gift. It means a lot to be remembered like this; and it is my pleasure to serve God and Holy Cross as the office admin. Blessings to you all in 2021 – especially for good health for us all!” —From Mary Schrock



General Memorial Fund

*In memory of Robert Hanson,
Audrey Paray’s brother*
The Struzik Family

*In memory of William Hynd,
Mary Schrock’s father*
Joe and Cindy Ciccia
John and Pat Deloge
The Struzik Family

In memory of Matilda Jacobs
Joe and Cindy Ciccia
John and Pat Deloge
John Sabol
Ralph and Gretchen Sather
The Struzik Family

*In memory of Ananda Sellavaran,
Buella John’s father*
Joe and Cindy Ciccia
John and Pat Deloge
The Struzik Family

General Operating Fund

*In memory of William Hynd,
Mary Schrock’s father*
Jim and Lorraine Finch

In memory of Matilda Jacobs
Jim and Lorraine Finch

Share the Hope Fund

*In memory of William Hynd,
Mary Schrock’s father*
David and Donna Bogen
The Rodriguez Family
Edith Skoog

In memory of Matilda Jacobs
Edith Skoog

*In memory of Ananda Sellavaran,
Buella John’s father*
The Rodriguez Family

IN THE MAILBAG**From The Schrock Family**

To our Holy Cross Family,

We are overwhelmed by the love, support, care and prayers upon the death of William Hynd, Mary's dear father. Many families will say this about their loved ones, but Bill was certainly a one-of-a-kind father, father-in-law and grandfather. He was a kind and gentle man who instilled upon his six daughters and their families love of family, faith in God and a strong work ethic – in that order. Upon finding out that Bill contracted Covid in early-to-mid December we felt the prayers of all of you. And then when he was called home to his Lord just past midnight on Christmas morning, we knew God's plan was to relieve Bill of both his physical ailments and early-onset dementia, and bring him into His arms to celebrate Christmas in eternal glory. We thank you so much for, and truly feel, your prayers of comfort. Mary feels very blessed that she had a wonderful FaceTime video chat with her father four days before he passed; he knew who Mary was, called her by her first and middle names, and told her to always be kind to others and help other people. Those words will forever be in Mary's heart.



In Christian love and gratitude,

---MARY and CLIFF SCHROCK

---JOELLE and JOSH CYR

**From Sterling House Community Center**

Dear Holy Cross Lutheran Church,

A heartfelt thank you for your generous donation of various items such as food, diapers, toiletries and paper towels to Sterling House Community Center Food Pantry. This act of kindness will enable us to provide emergency assistance to many families and individuals. We truly appreciate your thoughtfulness. Your support will enable Sterling House to nurture the body, mind and spirit of youth and adults in the heart of Stratford. Again, thank you so much,

Sincerely,

---AMANDA MEESON

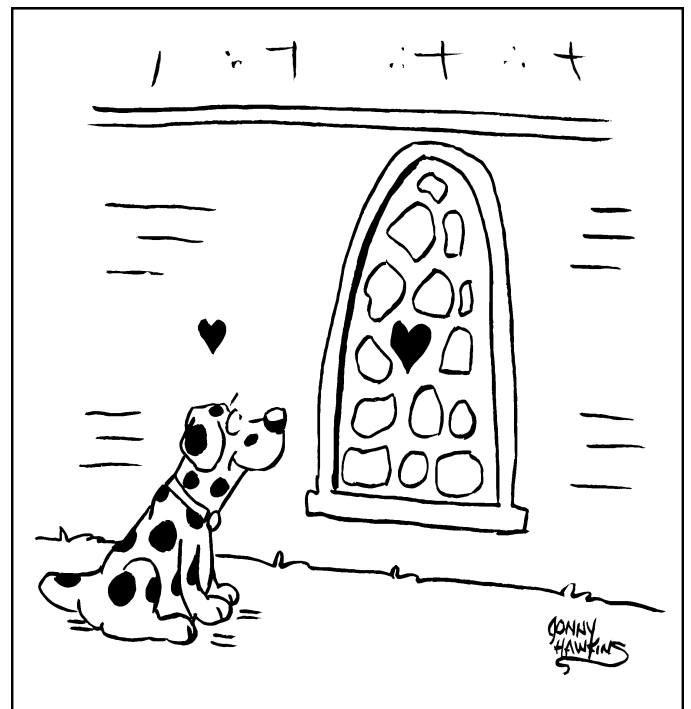
Executive Director – Sterling House Community Center

AS THE WINTER SEASON CONTINUES, WE REMIND YOU THAT OCCASIONALLY OUR SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE MAY BE 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);
- www.wicc600.com (under "Public Organizations"); or
- WTNH-TV or WSFB-TV.

CHURCH CHUCKLES

FROM THE MANAGING EDITOR

The Annual Meeting's most electric moment wasn't about a success but here's what it can teach us

It wasn't like the business of the first 80 minutes of the Holy Cross Annual Meeting wasn't important or critical for the Year 2021. Officer elections and budgets are certainly necessary. But at 11:20 a.m. when President Sherry Duff reached Old Business on the agenda, there was a sense that this was the topic the nearly 60 people on the Zoom meeting were really waiting for. Old Business was to focus on a Call Process Update.

For the next 20 minutes, President Duff gave an engrossing and fervent report as has likely ever been presented at a HCLC Annual Meeting as she updated the attendees on the Call made from Holy Cross to Rev. Kevin Leidich. To be sure, this Call was unlike any most of us had been involved with before. As a member of the Board of Directors at the time, I was aware of the narrative Ms. Duff was going to announce, which was that after first hearing of our Call on December 5, Pastor Leidich had ultimately chosen not to respond to it after we had dialogued with him about concerns Holy Cross members and staff had after his visit to Trumbull. In spite of our best efforts and with counsel from District leaders, we concluded that this Call did not bring the desired result.

I'm sure if we had all been in the Fellowship Hall as we normally would no one would have moved a muscle as Ms. Duff explained the timeline with heartfelt passion that was enthralling even though it would conclude with the news the Call was not being fulfilled with a Pastor coming to Holy Cross.

Ms. Duff had been resolute in a full explanation of the process details and when she finished at 11:40 and asked for reaction I imagine everyone had to do what I did and that was to sort of snap out of being in a suspended state of mind over what I had just heard. Perhaps some members suspected something wasn't right with the Call and felt relief. The President is someone who puts her heart and soul into her mission and it had been an emotional retelling that this Call had led to this downer of an ending. Again, if we could have been in the same room, some members might have gone forward to give her a hug. But slowly messages came in through "chat" and some verbal replies of love and support and comfort were said. They were meant for her but at that moment Holy Cross itself needed a collective hug—the many Call Committee members, in particular, needed to know they were being held close in everyone's hearts for their work and dedication to the task they had performed.

**“Trust in the Lord with
all your heart and lean
not on your own
understanding; in all
your ways
submit to him,
and he will make
your paths straight.”
—Proverbs 3:5-6**

**“Wait for the Lord;
be strong, and let
your heart
take courage;
wait for the Lord!”
—Psalm 27:14**

We've now had two call committees do due diligence for a Call and neither one has resulted in a new Shepherd. I believe the most common take on what the meaning of this Call meant for Holy Cross going forward is that these were not failures but were heavily influenced by the Covid crisis, which reduced the field of candidates who are willing to move at this time. Also, as we know, our time isn't always God's time. Perhaps that is why we have been blessed by God with such wonderful interim/vacancy leaders in Pastors Flammann and Meyer. We have been beautifully led by these two men as we work through the tedious Call process—twice! God has given us stability while we wait. We can do nothing but use this as a learning time to be inspired to work for the church and be diligent. Stay focused on the task of seeking His will.

At the conclusion of the President's report on the Call we made to Pastor Leidich, the pause that took place before responses spoke loud and clear to me. Our members were in tune with what took place, took it in, and were ready to move forward with the next step. We are keeping our heads above water. Holy Cross will not be dismayed or held back by this but will keep the faith that its next Shepherd is still waiting to be discovered.

---CLIFF SCHROCK

Holy Cross Word Managing Editor