



The HOLY CROSS WORD

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

JANUARY 2020

"Share the Hope"

VOL. LXIII, NO. 2

FROM OUR INTERIM PASTOR

Dear Members and Friends of Holy Cross,

Greetings in our Lord, Jesus Christ!

I invite you to think this month about darkness and light, and its effect upon our lives. I served a tremendous congregation in Rochester, New York, for eighteen and a half years. Rochester was a wonderful place for Christine and me to live, and we truly loved our time there, but...and there is a BUT...one of the challenging things about that part of western New York State is that it tends to be cold, damp and grey most days between late October and the middle of May. I know what you may be thinking (he's becoming like one of those caricatured old-timers who had to walk uphill to school not only in going, but also uphill in coming home, and he's going to say that there was a lot more snow in those days). Western New York, though, is one of those places where purveyors of sunlamps can make a fortune, for such lamps are among the arsenal of weapons used to combat Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD), a condition that's brought on by too little natural light. Add the climate to the shortened hours of daylight in the winter season, and there's an effect, minor or acute, on much of the population.

It's not for nothing that our sacred scriptures should speak much of darkness and light, with darkness often serving as a metaphor for sin and evil, while light is a metaphor for the promise of dawn and, especially, the light that entered the world in the person of Jesus Christ. That light is referenced no few times in the first chapter of John's gospel where we read of Jesus, "The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world" (John 1:9).

I should add that western New York usually has magnificent summers, and residents of that region embrace the light enthusiastically and often give expression to how different they feel in the summer as opposed to the bleak midwinter.

We are on the cusp of Epiphany. Songs of Christmas, and especially Epiphany, move us from darkness to light:

"All out of darkness, we have light, Which made the angels sing this night: 'Glory to God and peace to men. Now and forevermore. Amen.'" (Hymn # 377)

"O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright! You shine with God's own truth and light." (Hymn # 395)

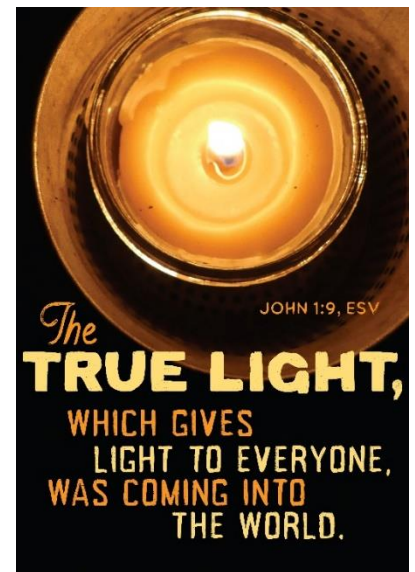
"Arise and shine in splendor; Let night to day surrender. Your light is drawing near." (Hymn # 396)

"Brightest and best of the stars of the morning, Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid." (Hymn # 400)

And there are more! The point is, the light of Christ is here, it illuminates, and it not only warms, but also guides us. The light is present. Look for it. This world, and these times, in which there is so much darkness, longs for the light. And you, Christian, know where to point!

Serving with you,

William H. Flammann
Interim Pastor





Wednesday, January 1 – New Year's Day...Happy New Year!

Monday, January 6 – The Epiphany of Our Lord

Thursday, January 9

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

Saturdays, January 11 and 25

5:00 p.m. – Vespers Worship Service

Sunday, January 12

11:45 a.m. – Undecorate the sanctuary after the late service

Sunday, January 26

10:30 a.m. – Holy Cross Lutheran Annual Voters' Meeting
Inclement weather date is Sunday, February 2, at 10:30 a.m.

Saturdays, February 8 and 22

5:00 p.m. – Vespers Worship Service

Sunday, February 23

10:30 a.m. – Pancake Day



HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH—LCMS

Sunday Worship Service – 9:00 a.m.

5995 Main Street, Trumbull, CT 06611

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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

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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).



For Our Readers:
The Holy Cross Word is best viewed in its full-color format on the church website, holycrosstrumbull.org



Like Holy Cross on Facebook!

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



A USEFUL LIFE

Meaningful words from author Charles Dickens

"No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another."

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NEWSLETTER NOTES

Our next deadline is...

The next issue of The Holy Cross Word is the February edition. The deadline for articles is Wednesday, January 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

Reflect

A blessed Christmas season and a happy new year to you, your family, and your friends! I hope you found a place of faith-based celebration, renewal and refreshment. Has anyone made new year's resolutions? The decision is split with my family and friends as to whether or not resolutions are meaningful or useful. I find resolutions a helpful way to shake myself out of my comfort zone and put something new into motion. I respect others' opinions that resolutions are not helpful but a means to set ourselves up for disappointment, but caveat that there are well-made resolutions and prescriptions for failure. Resolutions do not have to be big to have meaning. Here are a few of mine from past years:

1. Reduce paper by setting up and referencing my documents online.
2. Set up college funds for my young nieces and granddaughter.
3. Schedule wellness exams and screenings.
4. Read daily Bible meditations and reflections.
5. Practice compassion and patience when frustrated.

I included my resolutions in my prayers and had various degrees of success with each; some are still in progress. Regardless of the outcome, I appreciated the discipline of active reflection on what I was doing and how I was doing it. I looked at where my time, attention and resources were being spent, and found that much was being wasted or neglected. The awareness was the essential first step in making a positive change. My resolutions for 2020 include detaching with love from my old church leadership roles and stepping into new church volunteer roles. I resolve to let go of what was and to let what does not serve a better purpose fall to the ground. Resolution out of reflection, ultimately to reflect God's abundant love as imperfect as I am.



During the Christmas bustle and celebrations, I strove to make time for reflection on the many gifts bestowed at Christmas: The incredible miracle of God made flesh in the human form of Baby Jesus, the preciousness of His birth, our renewal of spirit, hope and love, the ultimate act of never-failing love and humility, and the peace which passes our human understanding. I meditated on the dual meaning of reflect: To personally and internally reflect in a meditative and quiet manner, and to communally and externally reflect the light and love of God. Our Advent service from December 11 focused on reflected light, specifically how we reflect the light of Jesus as light of the world in our daily lives. What would our lives look like if we lived every moment in every situation as a reflection of God's love and light? Could we, as an instrument of God, point the way out of darkness to everyone around us? How would we be changed by living as God's love reflection? Even if you do not make resolutions, I wish you the gift of reflection.

God's peace and blessings in the coming year.

In Christ's service,
 ---MICHELE VAN WART, President
 Board of Directors
 Holy Cross Lutheran Church

Mark your calendar and plan to be in attendance...

HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN ANNUAL VOTERS' MEETING

**Sunday, January 26, immediately following
 the Worship service (approx. 10:30 a.m.)**

(Inclement weather date: Sunday, February 2, at 10:30 a.m.)

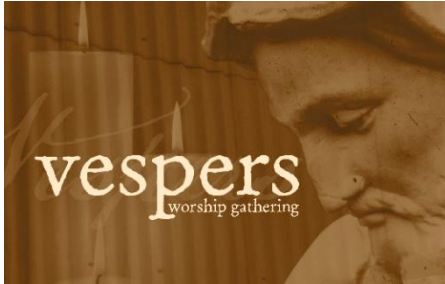


HOLY CROSS WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Alternate service on Saturday coming soon!

Worshipping at Holy Cross benefits from more than one option; so I'm very pleased to announce an alternate service time to 9 a.m. Sunday.

To answer our member responses needing an alternate worship time to Sunday morning, a Vespers Worship Service will begin in January 2020.



The service will be at 5 p.m., on two Saturdays each in January and February. The dates are January 11 and 25, and February 8 and 22, weather permitting. Because these services will be led by lay leaders, Holy Communion will not be offered; the service will last about 30 to 40 minutes. Our Sunday service at 9 a.m. with Interim Pastor William Flammann will always have communion.

Future dates will be announced later; for now, these four dates take us to the end of the six-month trial period of a one-service Sunday schedule.

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.

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

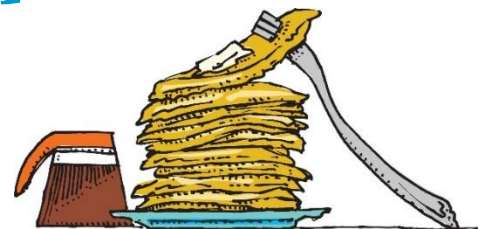


SAVE THE DATE!

Pancake Day

Sunday, February 23

Join us for a variety of pancakes
sausage, fruit, Danish, doughnuts,
and more!!!



Come and enjoy this wonderful way
to welcome our Lenten season!
Families and friends are welcome!
Sign-up will begin in February.

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:

All those who brought the many food items to our Thanksgiving Eve service, and to **Nancy and Jerry Sabol** who delivered these generous donations to the Trumbull Food Bank.

Lorraine Finch and **Mary Schrock** for creating the “Arise and Shine” Advent display case to match our midweek Advent service theme. And we include a thank you to **Donna DiLalla** for her assistance in making the transition in this display case from Advent to Christmas.

Carol Burns who coordinated the poinsettia flower orders for Holy Cross.

Our custodian, **Roger Burke**. While keeping our church clean is his job, Roger always goes above and beyond to make sure our sanctuary, hallways and bathrooms are extra clean. If you are at the church while Roger is working, be sure to give him an extra thank you.

Donna DiLalla and **Lorraine Finch** for being so dependable and helpful in assisting the church office with various tasks one morning a week. And special thanks for the extra help the week of December 16.

The group of Holy Cross members who stayed after the service on December 8 to decorate the sanctuary and narthex, putting up and hanging ornaments on the Christmas tree, and hanging the wreaths and setting up the nativity sets.

Donna Rodriguez, Marissa Rodriguez and **Alexis Rodriguez** for spending their Saturday morning, Dec. 14, helping Mary Schrock wrap all the gifts for the Covenant to Care children.

Dave and Mary Ann Schiller, Edith Skoog, Laurie Vaitkus and **Donna Bogen** for doing the set-up for the midweek Advent soup suppers. Thanks to **all those who helped with clean-up**. And a special thanks goes out to **all those who brought pots of soup and desserts**.

Kerry Geffert for serving as the music leader during the Holden Evening Prayer liturgy at the midweek Advent services. Special thanks also to Kerry for leading the entire Dec. 4 service while Pastor Flammann was away.



SCENES FROM DECEMBER

It's a Charlie Brown Christmas tree right on our church property!



Those of you familiar with the television Christmas special, “A Charlie Brown Christmas,” will recognize that this little tree just to the left of the north-side entrance needed a bit of extra love during December. Thanks to Edith Skoog’s son Richard for the idea, Holy Cross’ very own “Charlie Brown Christmas tree” was wrapped in a purple “hug” and topped with a red ball ornament. Why two photos? The one on the right depicts how the ice storm on Dec. 17 made those branches just a bit droopier, but it sure was glistening when the sun shined on it. Who can’t help but smile when looking at this little tree!



WORLD MISSION WORK ON A LOCAL LEVEL

Seafarers International House given some head warmth and sweet treats from Holy Cross members

Thank you for the recent donation of knitted hats and leftover Halloween candy by Edith Skoog and Mary Ann and David Schiller.

Local Port Chaplain Ruth Setaro from the Seafarers International House was given these donations to distribute to our Seafarers in the local ports of New Haven, New London and New York. Many of our seafarers are from warmer climates and a warm hat is a much needed gift when they arrive during our cold winters. The candy is distributed during visits where the Chaplain spends time to lend an ear, offer counsel and meet spiritual needs.

Did you Know?

- ⚓ The International Shipping industry is responsible for the carriage of around 90 percent of world trade?
- ⚓ There are 1,600,000 seafarers worldwide from 150 nationalities?

---CINDY and JOE CICCIA



COVENANT TO CARE FOR CHILDREN

Thanks to all those who supported the “Giving Tree” project for children in need

There are 19 children who fall under the watchful care of DCF who must have felt some extra joy on Christmas, as they were each given two gifts to unwrap from members and friends at Holy Cross. Each child not only received a special gift – something that they particularly wished for – but also got a gift bag with a winter hat and mittens/gloves. On December 16, our social worker’s van was loaded up and the gifts were delivered to the children that week.

I know that every gift was given with love and picked out with care, and I thank the following people who participated in our Christmas “Giving Tree” project by shopping for and donating a gift: the Anantharaj Family, Jim and Kim Atkinson, Sabine and Mike Bonnar, Joe and Cindy Ciccina, John and Pat Deloge, Diane Dietman, Donna and Gary DiLalla, Jim and Lorraine Finch, Pastor and Christine Flammann, Karen and Kerry Geffert, Gary and Donna Jackson, Jane Kluspes, Bob and Jesse Kravecs, Dieter and Ingrid Leibold, Kendra Norman, John Rosen, Nancy Sabol, Mary and Cliff Schrock and Donna and Dan Senft. Thank you also to all those “anonymous people” who donated winter hat and mitten/glove sets during the fall season leading up to mid-November. I am also very grateful to the Rodriguez ladies – Donna and daughters Marissa and Alexis – for joining me to wrap the gifts on December 14. The accompanying photo shows the four of us with the wrapped gifts in front of the sanctuary Christmas tree. And I also want to give a shout out to so many folks who offered to help with gift-wrapping.

As the CCC church liaison, I am so grateful for your donations, as approximately \$1,100 worth of “gifts” were donated by our church family for this Christmas project to children being serviced by this outreach ministry. You are a blessing to these children who have unstable homes and are in crisis and need.

Yours in Christ,

---MARY SCHROCK

Covenant to Care for Children Liaison



VBS 2020 PLANNING MEETING

All interested in serving to reorganize our VBS program—please attend meeting

Wanted: Committee members and a chairperson to lead the revamping of our Holy Cross Vacation Bible School program. A brainstorming meeting will take place after the worship service on Sunday, February 2. Questions can be directed to Kimberly Atkinson.

---KIMBERLY ATKINSON

203-494-9410

atkinson.james@sbcglobal.net



WORSHIP COMMISSION

Your feedback will be needed!

We are nearing the end of our six-month trial with one, 9 a.m. Sunday service. A short follow-up survey on this trial period will be emailed out in January, and about 15 to 20 print copies made available in the narthex. Please fill 1 (one) out on paper OR online – thank you!

---SALLY FINCK, Director

Worship Commission

HOLY CROSS CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL

It's no surprise that our curriculum this month is winter, focusing on animal survival in cold weather

Happy New Year! After a week off for the holidays we are getting back into the school routine. In January we will be exploring the season of winter. We will have an in-depth study of animals in the winter and how they survive. We will learn which ones migrate, hibernate or if they stay around as usual. We are also looking forward to teacher and parent conferences at the end of the month.

Registration for the 2020-2021 school year will begin on January 13. Please recommend us to your family and friends! To schedule a visit or find out more information about our school, please contact me at 203-268-6471 or preschool@holycrosstrumbull.com.

In Jesus' Name,

---MICHELE GLENNON



IN THE MAILBAG

From Sterling House Community Center after receiving donations in late October

Dear Holy Cross Lutheran Church,

A heartfelt thank you for the generous donation to the Sterling House Community Center Food Pantry. This act of kindness will enable us to provide 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



THE WINTER SEASON IS HERE, 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);
- www.wicc600.com (under “Public Organizations”); or
- WTNH-TV or WSFB-TV.



CELEBRATING JANUARY BIRTHDAYS



JAN. 2: LUCY KRAVECS

JAN. 4: WILLA GEORGE

JAN. 6: CHERYL CONTE
JOANNE MEYER

JAN. 7: KIMBERLY ATKINSON

JAN. 12: CAROLINE HRON WEIGLE

CHARLIE HRON WEIGLE

WILLIAM MALMSTEDT

JAN. 15: CAROL HUGHES

JAN. 16: SUSAN ANTONIOU

LAUREN GAGLIARDI

JAN. 17: EMILY STRUZIK

JAN. 18: KATHY BOIVIE

JAN. 23: SYDNEY FITZMORRIS

JOHN ROSEN

JAN. 25: BRANDON MATTHEWS

JAN. 27: RON SJOBLUM

JAN. 29: EMILY HRON WEIGLE

JAN. 30: KAREN GEFFERT

LESSONS IN BEHAVIOR

The power of love is transformative

Martin Luther King Jr., whose life and legacy we honor this month, spoke often about the power of love. In fact, he equated the practice of nonviolence with “absolute commitment to the way of love.”

Love, declared the minister and activist, “is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend.” And, he said, anyone who’s “devoid of the power to love” is “devoid of the power to forgive.”

King distinguished between true love and “empty sentimentalism,” however. He taught — and showed — that love is “the active outpouring of one’s whole being into the being of another.”

Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross is the ultimate “active outpouring” of love, and we can choose to follow his example daily.

“Because of Calvary I’m free to choose,” writes Max Lucado in *When God Whispers Your Name*. “No occasion justifies hatred; no injustice warrants bitterness. I choose love. Today I will love God and what God loves.”

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CHURCH CHUCKLES

