



The HOLY CROSS WORD

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

MAY 2020

"Share the Hope"

VOL. LXIII, NO. 6

FROM OUR INTERIM PASTOR

Dear Members & Friends of Holy Cross,

Christ is Risen! *He is Risen Indeed, Alleluia!*

I spent my last 11 years of pastoral ministry before "retirement" serving a congregation in northern Virginia, just outside the nation's capital, Washington, D.C. It was a fairly large congregation, but in terms of size it paled in comparison to the "big box mega-church" a few miles down the road, McLean Bible Church. Their pastor of many years, Lon Solomon, no longer serves there, but he was extremely well known in the greater Washington area for two things. First, he was heard on many a local radio station during drive time for a one-minute ad called "Not a Sermon – Just a Thought." Second, their worship service was aired on Sunday mornings, and about two-thirds of the way through a sermon, after expounding on a biblical text, he'd stop and say to the congregation, "Okay, are you ready? Good. Now, on the count of three, I want you to ask the most important question. One-two-three..." and the people would shout out, "SO WHAT?" If the response wasn't sufficiently loud and enthusiastic, he'd ask them to shout it again, "SO WHAT?"

Now, let's you and I switch seats. You be the preacher. I'll be the hearer. Tell me what Easter is all about. I'll listen politely, but I'll also ask, "So what?" What's your answer?

I'll bet many of you have good answers, but if your response is hard to come by, let me see if I can help. Do the following words sound at all familiar?

"...that I may be His own and live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness."

They're from Martin Luther's Small Catechism, where he provides an explanation to the second article of the Apostles' Creed, the one that deals with the person and work of Jesus Christ and God's gifts through Jesus. The "so what" has to do with how we see ourselves and how we shall live our lives in response.

First, it's recognizing that we belong to Jesus, the Risen One who has freed us from sin, death, and the power of the devil. We live under His lordship. Then, because we belong to Him, it's no longer a matter of what we "gotta do;" rather, it becomes all about what we "get to do." We get to live and serve [our God, His world, and our neighbor] because we belong to Him.

Because of Easter, we get to serve! During this ever-so-disruptive pandemic season, how will you serve? How will you maintain relationships of loving and caring? How will your personal outreach have an effect upon others? How will your personal stewardship and life management demonstrate that the Risen One is Lord of your life? So many questions, but I invite you to live into the "so what" of Easter and, as we anticipate elusive "normalcy," give thought to how life shall be as we "get to" live our lives in the light of Jesus' resurrection.

Bill Flammann
Interim Pastor





Wednesdays, May 6, 13 and 20

4:00 p.m. – Confirmation Class via ZOOM

Thursday, May 14

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

Thursday, May 21 – The Ascension of Our Lord

Monday, May 25 – Memorial Day

(OFFICE CLOSED; NO PRESCHOOL)

Sunday, May 31 – The Day of Pentecost



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

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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.



SPRING AND HOPE

Words spoken by
Lady Bird Johnson

"When I go into the poorest neighborhoods, I look for the flash of color – geranium in a coffee can, a window box set against the scaling side of a tenement, a border of roses struggling in a tiny patch of open ground. Where flowers bloom, so does hope – and hope is the precious, indispensable ingredient without which the war on poverty can never be won."

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NEWSLETTER NOTES

Our next deadline is...

The next issue of The Holy Cross Word is the June edition. The deadline for articles is

Friday,
May 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.

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 e-mail it to the church office or jot it down and put it in the “newsletter” mailbox. This month we recognize:

Sally Finck and **Pat Deloge** for laundering the acolyte and deacon robes.

Danny and **Donna Senft** for going to the church to get the Social Ministry disposable gloves from the storage room and packing them into sealed bags in groups of 20 to make them available to our membership.



The “**anonymous sewing angels**” who have been using their craft skills to make both head coverings and face masks for those in our local medical community.

The **special efforts being made to continue our worship experience** at Holy Cross. In addition to the extra worship preparations done by our staff – **Pastor Flammann**, **Sally Finck** and **Mary Schrock** – the following people have given of their volunteer time: **Greg Dowling**, for doing the “recording” of the services, securing sound-enhancing microphones for recording, and preparing the recording for upload; **Kerry Geffert**, serving as the lector and hymn leader for the services, changing the seasonal banners, and sending out the Mail Chimp e-mail blast; **Gary Messerschmitt**, for preparing the website for the uploads and making the service links “live;” and **Laurie**

Vaitkus, lead altar guild person for April, who made sure the paraments were correct for the services. Laurie also went to City Line Florist to purchase lilies that decorated the chancel for the Easter Sunday service. Thus, we extend a special thank you to **all these people** involved in preparing and sending the Sunday, midweek and Holy Week services via the internet. This has been a collective effort to provide a very welcome and supportive addition to our worship experience. Pastor Flammann’s online messages have been a true source of inspiration and support as he spoke directly to “us” on our computer and iPad screens.

AN EGG-CELLENT DISCOVERY!

A sign of rebirth seen under the bushes near our front entrance

On April 4 palm branches were made available to our membership with a drive-by pick-up and short walk up to the patio. And by Palm Sunday morning, most of the palm branches had been taken. One of our members, Diane Dietman, took note of a sign of spring as she walked to the patio to get her palm branch: a whitish/grey speckled egg that was about two inches long. There were no signs of the “mother” or a nest, just a lone egg nestled under a bush. Could it have been a goose, duck or wild turkey egg? Only God knows. Let’s just hope that whatever type of fowl hatched, that it made it out safely under the care of its mother! Thanks, Diane, for sharing your Palm Sunday discovery!



KEEP THE FAITH

BUILDING OUR CONGREGATIONAL COMMUNITY DURING SOCIAL DISTANCING

Consider this proposal for how you can enhance our Christian ties

It can be challenging to retain our equilibrium, even our spiritual equilibrium, when so much of what makes us a Christian community has been rendered impossible for a season. We are accustomed to gathering for prayer and worship, but now we need to do these things in a different way.

Here's a proposal and suggestion. Please prayerfully consider doing this, and as you're led to do so, do it! Together let's make the most of our current challenge and build up our congregational community through prayer and love.

1. Identify three Holy Cross individuals or households, at least one of which you may not know very well, and begin to pray for them intentionally and daily.
 - a. Pray for their wellness: physical, spiritual, emotional, and relational.
 - b. Pray that they not lose heart during the Covid-19 challenge.
 - c. Pray for those who love them, that each may know the support of others.
 - d. Pray that, over time, you come to know them or to know them better.
2. After a few days, contact them by telephone or email to let them know you are praying for them. Ask whether there is anything in particular for which you might offer prayer.
3. After a week or two, send them a card or note of encouragement.
4. See if you can commit to having a visit together – coffee or something else – once the crisis is behind us.
5. Continue, over time, to be connected in some way. And continue to pray for the life of our entire congregation!



---BILL FLAMMANN
Interim Pastor

HOLY CROSS CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL

Despite challenges, teachers create and post videos to engage children with learning activities

HE IS RISEN! ALLELUIA! With great joy we celebrated Easter last month, albeit in a very different way! We rejoice that Jesus overcame death and grants us the promise of new life through His death and resurrection!

As of March 13, our preschool has been closed, along with our church and the Trumbull Public Schools, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Like the public schools we are now distance learning. Distance learning in early childhood presents its own unique challenges...preschool children learn through hands-on exploration while being active participants with their environment and with other children. So much of our instruction focuses on not only learning activities but socialization and peer relationships. How do we do this online? We all stepped out of our comfort zone to meet the needs of the children we serve. Our dedicated teachers have risen to the challenge and are, in turn, learning along with the children! Our school has its own YouTube channel where we post daily videos from the teachers. We record ourselves reading stories, singing songs and conducting "Circle Time" learning activities. We are also providing daily detailed lesson plans with activities that the children and parents can do together with things they already have at home. Preschool children cannot and should not spend a lot of time in front of a computer so our goal is to provide meaningful learning experiences that will engage them. In turn, the children and families are sharing videos and pictures with us! We are using an app called Brightwheel to send lesson plans and information. We will soon begin to have Zoom sessions with our classes.



We miss the children and their families so very much and eagerly look forward to the time we can get back to our classrooms! I pray that our Heavenly Father will bless and keep you all safe and healthy during this difficult time.

In Jesus' Name,
---MICHELE GLENNON

WORDS FOR THE SPRING PLANTING SEASON

Of patience and pruning, trust in the promise of new growth

In many parts of America, Mother's Day is the recommended date for planting flowers outdoors. Subjecting blooms to the elements any sooner is risky, though sunny spring days sure make waiting tough. Perhaps that's why poet May Sarton calls gardening "an instrument of grace," for it "slows us down and forces patience." Courage is also required. Gardeners "must be brave enough to cut back the old and sit with bare branches, awaiting new growth," writes Cheryl Richardson (*Waking Up in Winter*). "And we must trust that it will come." When God prunes us, we too must trust that new growth and new life are in store...and then patiently wait.

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FINANCIAL NOTES

Offering update provided for the first three months of 2020

As part of our ongoing communication efforts, we are pleased to provide you with this quarterly financial update for the first quarter (through March 2020).

The weekly envelope giving has totaled \$59,901 through the end of the first quarter. This is less than the budget amount of \$67,000. Even though we are unable to meet in person, your ongoing support via mailed offerings and/or online giving has been fantastic. Even in these difficult times, we have much to be thankful for as the church continues to do God's Work. Thank you for your generosity!

A few other items to highlight:

- We have a net deficit through the first quarter of the year of \$(7,892).
 - We had negative investment income in the quarter due to a decrease in the fair value of investments that were given to the church in prior years. We do expect the investment value to increase as the overall market improves.
 - The Board and our staff continue to be diligent in managing expenses wherever possible given the current situation.
- Remember that Vanco e-giving can be a very convenient option. There are two ways to give: via the website or via the "GivePlus" app that can be downloaded from the app store. Both are very straightforward and additional fund options have been added for your convenience.

The Board hopes you find this update valuable, and we thank you for your continued support. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Monthly Giving – January to March 2020

Month	Offering Actual	Offering Budget
January	\$21,346	\$21,000
February	19,261	21,000
March	19,294	25,000
Total	\$59,901	\$67,000

Income Statement – January to March 2020

	Actual	Budget
Total Income*	\$56,080	\$72,770
Total Expenses	<u>(63,972)</u>	<u>(70,783)</u>
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$(7,892)	\$1,987

* Total income includes weekly giving/offering, plate, building use, special services and investment income

---CHAD HELMINGER
Financial Secretary



“And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.”

SOCIAL MINISTRY NEWS

The latest includes updates on charity projects and Rock of Agers

500 in 50 – Many thanks to our congregation for generously donating items of need for our 500 in 50 food drive that began on the February 23 Pancake Day. Due to the current social distancing guidelines and an urgent need at the Bridgeport Rescue Mission, we transported to them all gifts to date. Kerry Geffert delivered 404 collected items to the Bridgeport Rescue Mission on March 21. They were very appreciative for the donation. Thanks again for your generosity, everyone!



Covenant to Care for Children – The Easter Basket project is completely on hold until the COVID-19 social distancing restrictions are lifted. (Holy Cross' "adopted" social worker, Mimose, is well aware of this.) Many people in our congregation have completed their baskets, but Mary Schrock asks that everyone hold them at their own homes for now. Six of the 23 requested baskets had been delivered to church prior to the March 18 "closing."

Rock of Agers – Please note that all Rock of Agers gatherings have been completely halted due to COVID-19 social distancing restrictions. Since several members of this group do not have Internet access, members have been calling each other on the telephone regularly to check in on one another.

---STEPHANIE HELMINGER and KENDRA NORMAN

Social Ministry Commission Co-Directors

LUTHERAN WINNI WEEK

Annual gathering to be held in early July

For those interested, grab your Bibles, pack your bags, and come have a week of fun and spiritual renewal at Lutheran Winni Week ("Where Lutherans Have Gathered since 1931") at beautiful Geneva Point Center on the shore of Lake Winnepesaukee, July 5-11, Moultonboro, N.H. Contact Kathy or Rick Boivie for details at 203-261-6695 and leave a message if we're not there.



<https://www.lutheranwinniweek.org>

❖ <https://www.lutheranwinniweek.org/about/2020-brochure>

---KATHY BOIVIE

CALLING ALL GRADUATES

Details about your graduation and future plans needed by June 12

Graduation 2020 looks to be different this year, due to the COVID-19 health crisis and social distancing. But we know all our graduates will celebrate in their own unique way. We want to share your good news, so if you are graduating from high school, college or a Master's program this spring, we encourage you to share the details about this exciting milestone with your church family. We plan to recognize all of our graduates in the July/August newsletter. Graduate Information forms can be obtained either in paper or electronic form by contacting Mary in the church office: office@holycrosstrumbull.com. Once we are able to worship again in person, forms will be on the narthex table. We ask that all information is given to the church office by Friday, June 12. Please let us know who you are – you are important to us!



CELEBRATING MAY BIRTHDAYS

May 1: Daniel Schipul

May 5: Mary Atkinson

Nancy Dolan

May 6: Carol Burns

May 9: Jim Leslie

Ursula Naumann

May 10: Donna Jackson

Lia Veteri

May 12: Edna Karacsony

May 13: Nicole Ciccio



May 20: Diane Dietman

Josh Wilson

May 23: Dieter Leibold

May 24: Lisa Bailey

Cliff Schrock

May 26: Kerry Geffert

May 28: Buela John

May 29: Maura Senft

May 31: Blake Deloge