



The **HOLY CROSS WORD**

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

JANUARY 2022

"Share the Hope"

VOL. LXV, NO. 2

HEAD TO THE HEART

Let's Start Over – Again

How many new years have you begun? How many times have you vowed to make a change or do something differently...only to find you're making the same promise to yourself again the next year?

We all love the idea of a do-over. If something didn't go right the first time it's easy enough to say "let me just start over." But if you thought a do-over was good, how about a double do-over?! Or why not make it a triple? And so we say, "Let me start over...again!"

Granted, there are some things for which a do-over isn't possible. They say "you only get one chance to make a first impression" – which is true – but it's also true that if your first impression wasn't great, you can make a good second, third and fourth impression – and can change a negative impression with consistency and persistence.

And so, it's a brand new year on our timeline, and a brand new year at Holy Cross. The flip of a page on the calendar affords us the opportunity to look at the past year, learn from it, adjust where necessary, and make the changes necessary to keep going and keep growing. That is the goal of any new year resolution made – and it's also the goal of the church.

One thing I'd like to see in the new year is for everyone to be connected to God's Word in Bible Study. We have a steady group on Sunday Morning (9 a.m. with coffee and treats!) and always have an empty seat for you! This class takes a deeper dive into the scripture lessons we will read during worship.



Beginning on Wednesday, January 12, we are beginning an evening Bible Study at 7:15 p.m. The class will be hosted at Holy Cross, but will also be streaming via Zoom, so you can join us from home or on the road. For six weeks we will be "Looking at Jesus" and how He is presented to us in the scriptures.

Whether you are a regular attendee, have been away for a while, or have never attended a Bible study in your life, this year is a great opportunity to start (or start over...again) in the Word of God – and the Good News of God's love for you.

I pray God's blessings on you in this new year and look forward to starting over again in the Word.

Pastor Nathan Erb

Pastor Nathan Erb



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

Thursday, January 6 – The Epiphany of Our Lord

Wednesdays—January 12 through February 16

7:15 p.m. – “Looking at Jesus” six-week Bible Study
In person at Holy Cross or virtual via Zoom

Thursday, January 13

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

Sunday, January 30

11:30 a.m. – Holy Cross Lutheran Annual Voters' Meeting
In the event of inclement weather,
the meeting will be virtual.



HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH—LCMS

Sunday Worship Service: 10:00 a.m.

Adult Bible Class precedes Sunday Worship at 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).



Like Holy Cross on Facebook!

After you “Like” us, you’ll see postings of upcoming events, pictures from events and other notices.



WORDS FOR A NEW YEAR

Written by C.S. Lewis

“There are far, far better things ahead than any we leave behind.”

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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 Saturday, January 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.

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

HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN ANNUAL VOTERS' MEETING

Sunday, January 30, immediately
following the Worship service
(approx. 11:30 a.m.)



*(In the event of inclement weather,
the meeting will take place virtually, same date/same time)*

WE ARE FAMILY

Do you have family news to share with your church family? If so, please e-mail this news to the church office: office@holycrosstrumbull.com.



December 5 was a special day for **Logan Deloge, Abigail Erb, Alex Riccio, Ella Romano, Reese Romano** and **Lia Veteri** as they were welcomed to the Lord's Table to celebrate Holy Communion for the first time. We pray that these young people will remain faithful to Christ and to His Church, finding joy and strength in His body and blood, the signs of His love for the world.

We were blessed with two Baptisms in December! God's blessings to these families:

Jeffrey and Zuleika Smith upon the Baptism of their daughter, **Camila Frances Smith** on December 5. Camila's sponsors are her uncle, Jonathan Moran, and a family friend, Mary Voightmann.

John and Lauren (Schneider) Gagliardi upon the Baptism of their son, **Ethan Robert Gagliardi** on December 19. Ethan's sponsors are his uncle, Timothy Gagliardi, and his aunt, Jennifer Schneider.



We welcome **Camila Frances** and **Ethan Robert** into the Family of God, through the life-giving waters of Holy Baptism, and look forward to the new relationship we will have with them.



Share the Hope Fund

In memory of Otto Atkinson

Rick and Kathy Boivie

In memory of Sally Ciccia, Joe's Mother

Gary and Donna DiLalla
Jim and Lorraine Finch

In memory of George A. Stromp

Gary and Donna DiLalla

In memory of Dave and Sandy Thompson

Gary and Donna DiLalla



EVANGELISM AND YOU

Monthly director's report on things to know and even things to do

I didn't want to use the familiar "new year's new start" theme this month but it's just so appropriate at this time in the life of Holy Cross as the year 2022 begins. Hopefully many of you have been like me and been affected in recent months by seeing new faces at church, new approaches, new opportunities, new life and sparkle in worship. If you haven't, take a closer look around you. What you'll see is our new pastor doing what we'd hoped he'd do: come to Holy Cross and reinvigorate our process, our worship, and yes, our spirit as best he can, with the help of the Holy Spirit. Pastor Erb has talked about taking baby steps to accomplish his goals and he is reminding me of how Holy Cross' pastors going back to our founding Rev. Froehlich have been given a little freedom and leeway to put their unique stamp on their ministry. Pastor Froehlich had even independently named the church Holy Cross when he started it in 1957 instead of gathering opinions. He came up with the name and he went with it. Pastor Erb has certainly demonstrated that he is a thinker and doer as he tries to bring Holy Cross into modern ministry.

But he needs help: from you. The Evangelism Commission is tasked with helping church members not only evangelize to the unchurched but to also encourage them to look at themselves on a personal level and bring out a more spiritual nature. By doing so it will increase the desire to worship more, give more of time and talents, and "raise their Christian game" as an example of someone reflecting the love of God.

Holy Cross needs more of everything from its overall membership, particularly with new faces in leadership and in attendance at worship and Bible class. From that increased participation in things spiritual, everything else that Holy Cross is all about will naturally improve as well.

One of the biggest things that happened in the last few months was the switch to a 10 a.m. worship time on Sundays preceded by 9 a.m. Bible class. This was a substantial change, especially for devoted 8 a.m. attendees. But I know many 8 o'clockers are making the best of it and remain committed to worship now at 10. What we need to see are more people devoted to adding an extra hour to their Sunday spiritual needs and coming to the Bible class. Pastor Erb leads it, focusing on the lessons for the day, but what has been interesting is that he quite often lets the class morph into discussions of wherever the conversation leads. And during those times we get stimulating and thought-provoking dialogues on the Christian walk. You really owe it to yourself to attend class ahead of worship and have the meaning of Scripture opened up to you even further.



So as the new church year transforms into Epiphany, and January begins 2022, and Pastor Erb continues to enhance his new role with us, look deep inside yourself and see if your life priorities are right and whether you're ready to let yourself be more spiritual and more embedded in your Christian faith. Worship more, attend Bible class, and get involved. It's painless, and you'll feel better!

My public thanks to commission member Elisabeth Erb for doing the beautiful Advent display case theme, with teammate Mary Schrock. A reminder that the Greeter program and narthex display case fall under the Evangelism Commission. If you are interested in engaging in either activity, please let me know.

Lastly, this **month's featured tracts** in the narthex are: Look for tracts that help you understand what the church year is all about.

---CLIFF SCHROCK
Director of Evangelism

HOLY CROSS CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL

Animals in winter and learning to write letters included in January curriculum

Happy New Year! After more than 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. The children will learn what makes snow as well as the process of freezing and melting. We are also teaching the children the correct way of writing all the letters. We use the Foundation writing program that makes it fun and simple.



Our Bible stories will include the story of Jesus as a young boy and then move on to how Jesus helps and heals us. We will learn how Jesus heals a blind man and feeds the 5000 as well as the parables of the Lost Son and the Good Samaritan. These stories help to show the children the love and mercy of our amazing Savior!

Registration for the 2022-2023 school year will begin on January 10. 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 pre-school@holycrosstrumbull.com.

In Jesus' Name,
---MICHELE GLENNON
Preschool Director

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:

Elisabeth Erb and **Mary Schrock**, for putting an Advent theme in the narthex display case.

Carol Burns, for coordinating the poinsettia flower orders for Holy Cross.

Pastor and **Elisabeth Erb**, for scrub-brush cleaning the name and service time sign on Holy Cross’ front lawn.

Kerry Geffert, for serving as the music leader at our three midweek Advent services.

Edith Skoog, for picking up the weekly flowers and arranging them into beautiful displays for the altar.

Sherry Duff and **Greg Dowling**, for continuing to record the Sunday Worship services and uploading the recording to our youtube channel. Thanks also to **Gary Messerschmitt** for preparing the Holy Cross website for the uploads and making the service links “live.”

This handful of Holy Cross members who volunteered to do some cleaning and tidying of the church building while our custodian was away at the end of December: **John and Pat Deloge**, **Sherry Duff**, **Kerry Geffert** and **Dan Senft**.



COVENANT TO CARE FOR CHILDREN

Thank you for supporting the Giving Tree; 64 wrapped gifts were delivered between Dec. 15-22

Here are a few numbers: 32 children; 2 gifts per child; 64 total gifts given by Holy Cross members and friends to the children in the caseload of Holy Cross’ DCF social worker, Mimose Laurenard. As you know, we support Mimose through the Covenant to Care for Children (CCC) Adopt-A-Social Worker program. Those numbers translate to so much extra joy and love that this group of children surely felt on Christmas. 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 15, Mimose arrived at Holy Cross to load up her car with the gifts, with plans to begin delivery that afternoon and finish by the twenty-second.

The annual “Giving Tree” project began on Sunday, November 21, with our members taking turns selecting an ornament tag(s) and agreeing to purchase the gift listed on the tag. There were also a handful of members who contacted me ahead of that Sunday in November to make sure they were matched with a child. By December 12 all 64 gifts had arrived and were wrapped and ready for pickup by the 15th. I thank the following people who participated in our Christmas “Giving Tree” project by taking such great care and love to shop for and donate a gift: Sue Antoniou, Tim and Daisy Benson, Nicole Benson -Ayisi, Doris Bernt and her friend Gail Rivera, Donna and Dave Bogen, Sabine and Mike Bonnar, Dee Bruggemann, Joe and Cindy Ciccica, Pat and John Deloge, Diane Dietman, Donna and Gary DiLalla, Nancy Dolan, Sherry Duff, Elisabeth and Pastor Erb, Jim and Lorraine Finch, Kerry and Karen Geffert, Stephanie and Chad Helminger, Donna and Gary Jackson, Ingrid and Dieter Leibold, Cheryl Mayeran, Gretchen Maynard (one of our preschool teachers), Kristen and Gary Messerschmitt, Kendra Norman, Julianne and Dan Nyitrai, Vinny and Debbie Riccio, Alexis Rodriguez, Donna Rodriguez, Marissa Rodriguez, Kim and Chris Romano, Nancy and Gerry Sabol, Cliff and Mary Schrock, Donna and Dan Senft, Maura and Charlie Senft, Andrew and Lydia Struzik, and Rick and Michele Van Wart. Thank you also to all those “anonymous people” who donated winter hat and mitten/glove sets in the weeks leading up to mid-November. And I also want to give a shout-out to so many folks who provided gift bags and tissue paper.



Mimose was so grateful for the love shown to the children in her caseload through the giving of gifts. And as the CCC liaison, I am so grateful for your donations, as approximately \$1,900 worth of “gifts” were given 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

LEARN FROM & BE INSPIRED BY SCRIPTURE

The Holy Cross Word monthly “Bible study on paper”: Acts, Chapter 9



Acts, Chapter 9, 43 verses— This chapter continues to look at how persecution of the church caused it to scatter and spread. The biggest event is the conversion of Saul and how he became the great missionary for God after having led a life of persecution of those who believed. Please pause now to read the full Chapter 9 of Acts (use an aid such as BibleGateway.com if needed).

Chapter 9 analysis—

Chapter 8 had highlighted in the aftermath of Stephen’s death how persecution was forcing believers to spread outward from Jerusalem. A beautiful encounter between Philip and the eunuch ended the chapter, with Philip baptizing the eunuch.

In Chapter 9, having endured the stoning of the earnest Stephen, which caused a scattering of the church to begin, the early Christian church was next to experience a critical moment that meant the spread of Christianity was off and running and would have a leader that was dogged, committed and undeterred in his focus on spreading Christ’s name to all peoples.

The big event, of course, was the conversion of Saul, who has witnessed and led the horrific persecution of Christians. As the chapter starts, Saul has sought permission to go to Damascus and seek out followers of The Way; his intent is to see how many followers he can find and bind them for returning back to Jerusalem.

But on Saul’s famous road to Damascus trip, he saw the light and the world brightened because of it. As he traveled, a bright light from heaven shone on him. In his startled condition, he collapsed to the ground, and heard the voice of Jesus asking, “Why do you persecute me?”

A few things here: Saul is confronted on his way to Damascus so that he is intercepted before more persecution can take place. Also, the believers were part of “The Way,” which ties in with Christ saying He was “the Way.” Also, we don’t know the weather this day, but if it was sunny, the light must have been terrific to be so startling to catch Saul’s attention.

Now, after the exchange with Jesus, who instructs Saul to continue to the city and await his instructions, it requires Saul’s assistants to take him to the city because he has been blinded by the light. In the city, Ananias, a disciple, is told in a vision to assist Saul. Ananias has his doubts, because he knows Saul’s reputation, but he ministers to Saul, laying his hands on him and baptizing him, thereby stirring the Holy Spirit within him. Saul regains his sight and strength. After several days of living with the people who only a little while earlier he was trying to destroy, Saul went into the local synagogues and witnessed about Jesus, amazing those who only knew Saul as a persecutor. Saul’s conversion was so stunning and powerful that he quickly gained power as a leader of The Way and the Jews were incensed enough to want to kill him. His disciples helped him escape Damascus and he left for Jerusalem.



The believers there were understandably leery of Saul, thinking he was trying to trick them. But Barnabas calmed them and helped the believers to take Saul in. Saul preached in the city, and quickly made enemies of the Jews there, but the numbers of believers were growing as Saul proved to be a persuasive witness to Christ. Saul was eventually sent to spend time in Tarsus.

Chapter 9 concludes with anecdotes about how Peter had healed Aeneas, who had been bedridden for eight years, and how the woman Tabitha (Dorcas, who the Dorcas Guild is modeled after), a good deed-doer, had died but Peter was requested to come and when he arrived, he knelt down beside Tabitha, prayed and called for her to get up. After she did, Peter’s deed became well known and served to help spread the name of Jesus and many believed because of it.

In Chapter 10 we will turn our focus onto Peter and his travels and miracles.

Sources: Harper Study Bible; The Everyday Bible: New Testament; Egermeier’s Bible Story Book; The Acts of the Apostles, Neal M. Flanagan.

Next month: Acts, Chapter 10.

---CLIFF SCHROCK

CELEBRATING JANUARY BIRTHDAYS



Jan. 2:	Lucy Kravecs	Jan. 17:	Emily Struzik
Jan. 6:	Cheryl Conte	Jan. 18:	Kathy Boivie
	JoAnne Meyer	Jan. 23:	Sydney Fitzmorris
Jan. 12:	Caroline Hron Weigle		John Rosen
	Charlie Hron Weigle	Jan. 25:	Brandon Matthews
	William Malmstedt	Jan. 27:	Ron Sjoblom
Jan. 16	Susan Antoniou	Jan. 29:	Emily Hron Weigle
	Lauren Gagliardi	Jan. 30:	Karen Geffert

COMPANIONS TO ALL

The gift of animals...how we learn from this unique aspect of God's creation

When God made the animals and gave them to the first human being in the Garden of Eden, though they weren't *precisely* the companion Adam needed, not all was lost. According to Genesis 2, God gave Adam the privilege of naming them all, and when you name something or someone, you bond with that being in a special way. Ever since creation, humans and animals have been connected — often for good purposes, though sometimes not; as the saying goes, "It's complicated."



nect us back to who we are and to the purpose of why we're here."

I would say animals also show us how to love other people, nonhuman beings and the earth more completely and unconditionally. And they call our attention to God's creativity.

Praise God for the gift of the vast variety of animals with whom we share this planet!

---HEIDI HYLAND MANN

Christian author and contributing writer
to The Newsletter Newsletter

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But on the positive side, Trisha McCagh, a renowned animal communicator, writes: "Animals are the bridge between us and the beauty of all that is natural.

They show us what's missing in our lives, and how to love ourselves more completely and unconditionally. They con-

CHURCH CHUCKLES

