



The HOLY CROSS WORD

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

OCTOBER 2021

"Share the Hope"

VOL. LXIV, NO. 11

HEAD TO THE HEART

Preparing to Fall Asleep

I was walking through Stop & Shop the other day and there was a trivia question up on the board: "Which is the best region of the U.S. for Fall Foliage?" C'mon...really...is this really a question!? They even gave options – the Northwest, Northeast, Southwest or Southeast. Two of these regions don't even have four seasons, and the other is so wet you wouldn't want to go outside to view the foliage anyway.

We all know there is nothing quite like a New England Fall! Once monotone hills turn to a kaleidoscope of colors. *(By the way, if you have a favorite place, or driving route, to take in all that beauty, I'd love to know.)* However, as beautiful as the changing leaves are, they also remind us that, well, that something is changing. Green to yellow, yellow to orange, orange to red, red to brown – and then they all fall down. Some might look at the tree, and think – it's died! But that's not the case at all. The trees have grown tired and are preparing to fall asleep. The leaves change, then fall to the ground, and the branches take a rest from their labor.

Last month I was contacted by a local funeral home. They asked if I would perform the burial service for a man who belonged to a Lutheran church that, sadly, doesn't exist anymore. I was glad to take this opportunity to bring comfort to the grieving family, but, more importantly, proclaim to those present that in Christ we have life!

Have you ever noticed Jesus speaks about death differently than we do? When a grief-stricken Jairus, after seeking help for his sickly daughter, hears from his servants that the girl has died, Jesus assures them, "**She is not dead, only SLEEPING.**"

When word came to Jesus and the disciples that their friend Lazarus had died, Jesus replies, "**Our friend has FALLEN ASLEEP, and I am going there to wake him up.**"

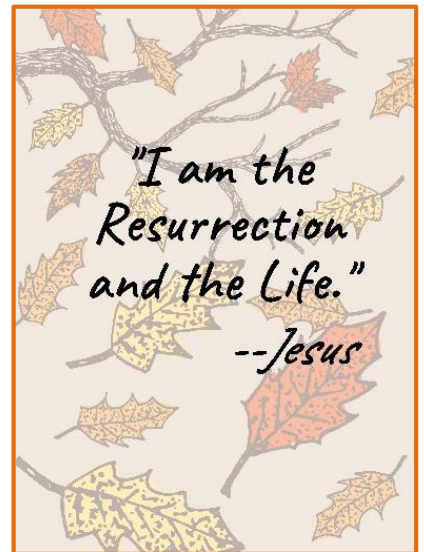
This is how we who are in Christ are to think about death. These are the words I shared at the burial. "**We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who have fallen asleep, so that you do not grieve in the same way as the others, who have no hope. Indeed, if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, then in the same way we also believe that God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep through Jesus.**" *1 Thessalonians 4:13-14*

I am comforted by this thought. When I lay down to sleep and close my eyes, I know full well that they will open again to a brand new day. In the same way, one day, my eyes will close, and they will open to see Jesus – and all the saints who have fallen asleep before me.

This month, as the leaves change and the trees prepare to sleep, give thanks for the Life we have in Christ, which prepares us to fall asleep as well. And as you see the leaves fall to the ground, humbly consider the truth Jesus offers when he proclaims "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me will live, even if he dies. And whoever lives and believes in me will never perish."

Sleep tight!

Pastor Nathan Erb
Pastor Nathan Erb





Sunday, October 3

Note the new Sunday morning Bible Class/Worship Schedule

- 9:00 a.m. – Adult Bible Class
10:00 a.m. – Worship Service with Holy Communion

Monday, October 4

- 7:30 p.m. – Choir Rehearsal resumes

Monday, October 11 – Columbus Day (CHURCH OFFICE/PRESCHOOL CLOSED)

Thursday, October 14

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

Sunday, October 17

- 1:30 p.m. – Greater Bridgeport CROP Walk for World Hunger Begins and ends at United Congregational Church: 2200 North Avenue, Bridgeport



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

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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.



BALANCED THINKING

Words by Mark Twain

"It's better to be an optimist who is sometimes wrong than a pessimist who is always right."

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NEWSLETTER NOTES

Our next deadline is...

The next issue of The Holy Cross Word is the November edition. The deadline for articles is Friday, October 15. Please take note of this deadline and plan ahead to publicize events or 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.

WORSHIP AND EDUCATION

Take note of the new Sunday morning schedule

Beginning Sunday, October 3, our worship service will be at 10 a.m.

You're also invited to join us for Adult Bible Class at 9 a.m. Coffee and light refreshments will be available! Generally, we will be taking a deeper dive into the scheduled readings for the day, but other topics or books of the Bible will be presented periodically.

If you are a parent of young children and might be interested in participating in Bible Class, please let me know. We are considering childcare during the 9 o'clock hour. Then again, if your kids want to join us for class, we won't stop them!

--PASTOR ERB



SERVING YOUR CHURCH AND GOD

Have I got an opportunity for YOU! 😊

Per the Holy Cross bylaws, the officers on our Board are elected to serve two-year terms (with the exception of our shepherds, who serve three years). The following positions will be open and up for election at our Annual Meeting in January:

- President
- Vice President
- Financial Secretary
- Director of Discipleship
- Director of Education
- Director of Worship
- One Shepherd



Thank you to those who have served in these roles over this past term. The current Board has done an amazing job managing through the call process(es) and COVID. I can't thank this talented and committed group enough! And, I thank you all too for the privilege to serve as your President over these past two years.

Now, I ask that all of us prayerfully consider how we might serve our church during the coming term, which will be here before you know it! I will assemble a Nominating Committee and seek candidates for each of the positions shown above. Please contact me if you feel the desire to serve. And, in the meantime, we will be reaching out with invitations to serve. Please thoughtfully and prayerfully consider the invitation.

As always, I'm just a phone call away and always welcome your ideas, input, suggestions.

Blessings in Christ,

---SHERRY D. DUFF

Board of Directors' President



CROP WALK

Mark your calendar for the annual walk to fight world hunger

The 47th Annual Greater Bridgeport CROP Hunger Walk *in-person* event takes place this year on Sunday, October 17. Please save this date and plan to sign up to walk.

The walk starts and ends at United Congregational Church, 2200 North Avenue, Bridgeport, beginning at 1:30 p.m. Sign up and get your donation/sponsor envelope from Social Ministry volunteers after church services on October 3, 10 or 17.

---CAROL BURNS and KENDRA NORMAN

EVANGELISM AND YOU

Monthly director's report on things to know

As I work into the Evangelism Commission directorship, now a month in, I can write for sure that I plan on providing a monthly report since communication will be a major factor in the commission's success as it is for any of Holy Cross' programs. Sometimes the report won't have any tangible details on things accomplished, as I did last month with reporting that the White Plains Road sign was reattached and our narthex tract rack restocked. Sometimes my report will just be thoughts about how to accomplish commission duties, which is what this month is mainly about.



The Evangelism Commission areas of responsibility include many items that deal with public relations and publicity, such as the outdoor sign, advertising and three road signs. We want to utilize every avenue we can to get Holy Cross' name out there as a beacon of Gospel light. But Evangelism also touches on how to equip you, our members, to evangelize in our community. This is a gift that comes naturally to some but is very foreign to others. It is hoped we will be able to help all HC members discover this talent within themselves and make use of it. So that is an area that we expect to develop and it's something Pastor Erb was hoping to explore as well, as he relayed in a conversation with me.

Also in terms of future planning, two things. First, the Greeter program falls under Evangelism and right now we have a nucleus group of six diligent greeters who have been carrying on during the pandemic. If you are interested in being added into this group, please speak with me. The greeter role has been adjusted to go forward in the pandemic environment, so it's a fluid area that morphs from time to time as the situation changes.

The second area to mention is the narthex display case. Those of you who have taken a few moments to look at the display featuring the Erb family can attest how useful the case can be to present a theme. Over the years some of the display case themes have included Lent/Easter, Advent/Christmas, Thanksgiving, Operation Christmas Child, Covenant to Care, HC anniversaries/history, Preschool, VBS, Sunday School, HC staff, and many others. A core group of display "artists" have used their creative and visual skills to do the displays. If you feel this is a talent you possess and want to try your hand at it, please contact me and we'll discuss.

Lastly, this **month's featured tracts** in the narthex are: Look for three or four tracts on children and how to help them grow through peer pressure and stress and growing pains.

---CLIFF SCHROCK
Director of Evangelism

HOLY CROSS CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL

Weekly chapel time with Pastor, exploring the Fall season highlight this month's activities

A new school year has begun! God has greatly blessed us with full enrollment this year! The children are curious, engaged, energetic and ready to experience all our school has to offer!

We have been busy getting to know all the children and their families. During the month of September, we learned what it means to be a good friend and how God made each of us so very special. One of our favorite themes is our study of apples. Apples provide many opportunities for incorporating important math and science concepts such as sorting, comparing, cooking and learning about life cycles.

During October we will help the children explore the season of Fall and Pumpkins. We will measure pumpkins, weigh them and cut them open to see what is inside.

One of the things that makes our school unique is the Christian component. The children love our Bible story times together and are learning of God's great love for them. In September the children learned how God made this beautiful world. They learned about the first sin and how God took care of sin by providing us a savior—Jesus! October's Bible stories will find us exploring the Old Testament to see how God blesses families as shown in the stories of Abraham, Jacob, Joseph and Moses.

We are all so excited to have Pastor Erb at our preschool. Pastor leads us in chapel every week. During the month of September Pastor showed us some very special things in our church! He also taught us sign language to the chorus of "Jesus Loves Me"! Every week we will have a special lesson, song and acknowledgement of birthdays. This is a very special time for both the children and the teachers!



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

LEARN FROM & BE INSPIRED BY SCRIPTURE

The Holy Cross Word monthly “Bible study on paper”: Acts, Chapter 6

Editor’s note: *To do this study, you will need to open your own Bible in front of you, of whatever version you prefer, or you can go to a website such as BibleGateway.com, and enter the Bible version you prefer and this Bible passage Acts 6 in the appropriate search fields.*



Acts, Chapter 6, 15 verses—This chapter continues to show the excitement of the church’s early growth, but with the extra element of how growth is achieved through Christian leaders and followers being tested, sometimes in a starkly challenging way. Please pause now to read the full Chapter 6 of Acts.

Chapter analysis—

Taking a closer look at Chapter 6: Chapter 5 had shown a stark example of how God is gracious to us in that though we are sinful and deserve the judgment that was shown to Ananias and Sapphira, who had been deceitful, God defers judgment and our imperfectness is forgiven. Up until then, the believers had shown unity in selling their possessions and putting the proceeds into a collection for the common good. Chapter 5 ended with the disciples once again being subjected to harsh treatment at the hands of the high priest and his council, but they were aided by angels and they remained relentless in going into the temple and continuing to preach about Jesus. They answered to God, not man.

As Chapter 6 begins, while the number of believers was growing, so were the issues that had to be dealt with. The Greek-speaking Jews (the Hellenists) said that the widows in their group were not getting the daily ration of food they should have gotten, perhaps by prejudice or simple mistake, we don’t know. No matter the reason, the disciples went into action and called the entire company of believers together and said, look, we don’t want to stop preaching God’s Good News just so we can monitor the food serving and make sure things run smoothly. Their solution was for the group to choose seven “good” men who were wise and filled with the Holy Spirit and of good standing. (Random thought: By contrast, we can assume that not everyone who was a believer had those traits, why else would these seven be singled out?) They would take on the food issue so the disciples could continue being effective teachers.

The proposal was accepted and the seven men were picked, thereby starting what we think of today as deacons in the church. They are listed in Verse 5, including Stephen, and all seven have Greek names. We continue to read about Stephen and Philip in Scripture but none of the other five. The men stood before the disciples, who blessed them by laying their hands upon them, which signified they had been blessed and chosen by God to do special work. Such simple decision making and solutions were a sign of stability in the church and in Verse 7 there is evidence of how the number of believers kept growing, including from the ranks of Jewish priests.



Let’s go back to Stephen, since he becomes the focus of the rest of Chapter 6. Luke writes specifically about how faithful Stephen was and how he was full of the Spirit and blessed by God to “do great miracles.” Naturally, such a figure was going to draw great attention and Stephen became the focus of hostile attention from Jews from all over who belonged to a group of Free Men. These were Jews who had been slaves, or their fathers had, but were now free; they chose to use their time to argue with Stephen.

Stephen’s wisdom and power of speech and faith worked against him with this group, who were driven to bring Stephen down. When it was obvious they had no chance against a highly faithful Stephen, they resorted to their only option: falsehoods. The Jews hired people to spread false gossip that Stephen had said things against God and Moses.

But these jealous Jews didn’t stop there. They wanted to bring Stephen to total disgrace and with all the lies still swirling Stephen was brought before a group of Jewish leaders. The accusations were ramped up to a fever pitch, with lies and twisted words flying through the crowd. Through it all, Stephen was such a focus that people were transfixed by him and couldn’t take their eyes off of him. Luke writes that Stephen was thought to have the face of an angel as the lies were spoken.

The chapter ends with that scene; in Chapter 7 we the readers will be transfixed by Stephen’s powerful reply.

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 7.

---CLIFF SCHROCK

CELEBRATING OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Oct. 1: Jennifer Van Wart

Oct. 2: Linda Torok

Oct. 3: Kristen Messerschmitt

Oct. 4: Doris Dietman

Oct. 5: Bill Flammann
Deb Leslie

Oct. 7: Dave Bogen

Oct. 8: Chris Deloge

Oct. 9: Lori Thompson

Oct. 11: Greg Dowling

Oct. 12: Sophie Martinelli

Oct. 16: Audrey Gomes
Kaiden Gomes

Oct. 18: Abigail Erb

Oct. 20: Joel Wilson



Oct. 22: Sally Finck

Oct. 25: Barbara Schneider

Oct. 26: Heather Fanning
Kendra Norman

Oct. 27: Maxwell Carola
Ethan Festi

Oct. 28: Mathew Benson
Rick Boivie

John Deloge

Elisabeth Erb

Ingrid Leibold

Oct. 29: Barbara White

Oct. 30: Michael Weldon

Oct. 31: Martha Schipul
Marcia Wilson

GOD'S CREATION

Love of animals is a divine characteristic

St. Francis of Assisi, known for his affection for animals, is honored on October 4. Some churches observe this day by blessing pets, remembering that God pronounced animals – along with all creation –

All God's Creatures



good. God saved not only Noah's family but animals of all kinds from the Flood. And despite Jonah's protests, God had compassion on Nineveh — "and [its] many animals" (Jonah 4:11). How intriguing that the prophet adds this point!

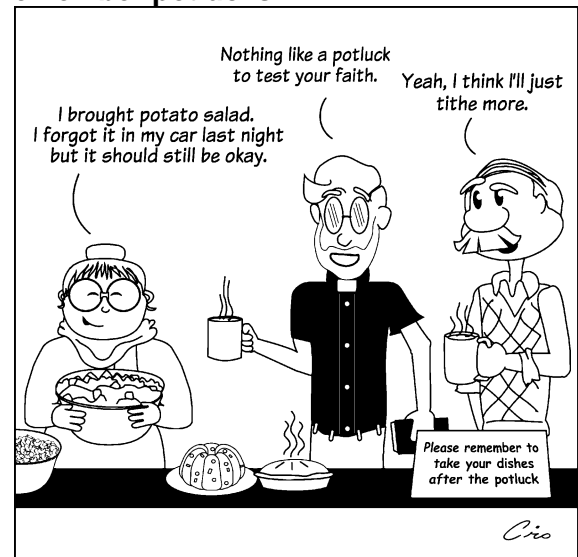
Care for all living creatures is clearly part of the divine character. Animals don't do anything to earn God's favor except be themselves. From this, we can learn that God pours out love unconditionally.

As Psalm 36:6 (CEV) declares, "All people and animals are under your care."

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CHURCH CHUCKLES...TIMES 2!!

Remember potlucks?



Mixed signals

A newcomer approached the pastor after worship and said, "I'd like you to pray for my hearing." Placing hands on the man's ears, the pastor said a very passionate, earnest prayer and then asked the visitor, "How's your hearing now?" With a confused look, the man said, "Well, it's scheduled for tomorrow!"

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