



# The HOLY CROSS WORD

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

OCTOBER 2022

"Share the Hope"

VOL. LXV, NO. 11

## A Firm Foundation

Although it isn't until the very end of the month, October is when we celebrate the Reformation. On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther lit the fuse of one of the most influential movements within the church, and it is the reason we are Holy Cross "LUTHERAN" Church!

Let me, very briefly, summarize the reason the Reformation is so important. Martin Luther was a Roman Catholic priest and professor of theology in Wittenberg, Germany. One of the practices of the Roman church in that day was the selling of "indulgences." The idea is that you could purchase one and then rest assured that your sins were forgiven. Luther noticed that this was clearly not the message of Scripture. Forgiveness cannot be purchased with money, rather it is received as a gift from God through faith in Christ's payment for sins on the cross. This was one of several concerns that were brought to light during the Reformation.

I'm about to ask a very simple (and hopefully obvious) question. Where did Luther get the idea that forgiveness was God's gift to us? In fact, the answer to this question is the very thing Martin Luther and the other reformers would build their doctrine, and the same which we stand upon today. It is God's Word – the Bible. God reveals all that we need to know for salvation. God tells us in His Word how all things came to be, and what we are to do with this life He has given us. God's Word – the Law and the Gospel – are what we stand upon today. Jesus is the Word of God, and He is our solid rock; our firm foundation.

The Mission Statement of Holy Cross includes the following statement. "***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 preaching and teaching the Word of God...***"

It is God's Word that informs us, instructs us, guides us, shapes us, corrects us, and saves us. There is a prayer in our liturgy called "Grace to receive the Word." Pray it with me now...

*Blessed Lord, You have caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning. Grant that we may so hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them that, by patience and comfort of Your holy Word, we may embrace and ever hold fast the blessed hope of everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.*

Because the Word of God is of utmost importance, we should always be guided by it and know it. So...let's do that. Starting in October we will have a selection from Scripture to focus on each month. We will read it every Sunday, and commit it to memory. We will learn how to use it to inform our prayers and our action. And going forward, it will become a central focus that informs our worship, our music, our communication, our activity and our service.

That being said...our Verse of the Month for October is Matthew 4:4 – ***But Jesus answered, "It is written: Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God."***

Start learning it now!

*Pastor Nathan Erb*

Pastor Nathan Erb



"Man does not live  
on bread alone, but  
on every word that  
comes from the mouth  
of God." Matthew 4:4

Mark  
Your  
Calendar

*Sunday morning Bible Class begins every week at 9:00*

### **Saturday, October 1**

12:30 p.m. – Annual Golf Outing at Tashua Knolls in Trumbull

### **Sunday, October 2**

Annual Church Picnic and New Member Reception, immediately following the 10 a.m. worship service

### **Thursday, October 13**

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



## Like Holy Cross on Facebook!

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



### IT'S GOOD TO DAYDREAM

By L. Frank Baum, American author most famous for

“The Wonderful Wizard of Oz”

“I believe that dreams – daydreams, you know, with your eyes wide open and your brain machinery whizzing – are likely to lead to the betterment of the world.”

### **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](mailto:pastor@holycrosstrumbull.com)

Church Office: 203-268-4555; Church Office e-mail: [office@holycrosstrumbull.com](mailto:office@holycrosstrumbull.com)

Website: [www.holycrosstrumbull.org](http://www.holycrosstrumbull.org)

Christian Preschool: 203-268-6471 e-mail: [preschool@holycrosstrumbull.com](mailto:preschool@holycrosstrumbull.com)

**PASTOR:** Rev. Nathan Erb

**MUSIC DIRECTOR:** Elisabeth Erb

**NEWSLETTER MANAGING EDITOR:** Cliff Schrock

**NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION:** Mary Schrock

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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).

### **NEWSLETTER NOTES**

**Our next deadline is...**

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

Saturday,  
October 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](mailto:office@holycrosstrumbull.com)

## NEW DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

### **With the hiring of Elisabeth Erb, Holy Cross brings in an experienced ministry partner**

One of the many things Holy Cross members can be gratified about with the hiring of Elisabeth Erb as the church's new organist and choir director is that it is putting her in a position she was meant to be in.

Elisabeth was 5 years old when she started taking piano lessons and she continued taking lessons through her college years. She studied organ at Concordia University-Chicago and graduated in 2001 with degrees in Sacred Music and Music Performance, with her primary instrument being concert percussion. She had learned to play the flute in elementary school and played percussion in high school.

Elisabeth's hiring makes her the eighth full-time person to lead the Holy Cross choir and play as organist. Michael Murphy, a Trumbull High School faculty member, was our first, starting in 1957. Our first choir consisted of seven members. He held the position through Easter Sunday 1961. Murphy was followed on an interim basis by Brenda (Klofkorn) Smith through June 4, 1961, when she left for summer studies in Colorado. Kathy Gerstenberg was a fill-in pianist. By 1967, the choir was up to 13 singers and was under the direction of Ms. Smith. The director order continued with Edith Skoog (Easter Sunday 1969 to 1991; sub organist Lois Gerstenberg); JoAnne Meyer; Dr. Elina Christova; Michael Gilbertson, and Sally Finck. Mary Ann Schiller has been a guest/sub organist for many years and Audrey Paray played piano.

Elisabeth brings with her a good deal of experience. From 2002-2018 she was employed as Assistant Music Director at Lutheran Church of the Resurrection in Garden City, New York. In describing what she did she said, "I was hired to direct the music for a blended-style worship service, which was brand-new at the time. The job included accompanying the service on piano, leading the instrumentalists and vocalists, assisting the pastor with worship planning, and accompanying where needed in the traditional services as well. I also led several children's choirs and directed a variety of multi-age musicals there."

It was in 2018 that the Erbs moved to Illinois, settling in the Chicago area. Just a few months prior to the Covid pandemic, she began directing their church's hand-bell choir. When the virus shut everything down, she began creating videos of multi-part hand-bell pieces on her own from their dining-room table as a contribution to her church's online service programs. She also created a few musical videos that were used for her church's online programs during Advent.



We've already been able to hear little nuances Elisabeth does as organist but in actual fact she admits that she is more comfortable playing the piano, "only because I have had more experience leading music in worship with it. My organ playing over the years was limited to the occasional subbing and playing for weddings or funerals, as the various churches we were a part of already had organists in place. I do enjoy the complexity of the organ and the variety of sounds it can produce, and I can appreciate its place in being an integral part of Lutheran music for decades, but I often prefer the simple acoustic nature of a piano. I feel it can be nice to incorporate both instruments into worship to provide variety as some pieces lend themselves well to piano, and vice versa."

Holy Cross has had a reputation for being a robust singing congregation, and even with reduced worship numbers these days you can still hear evidence of that from time to time. When asked about how she assesses church music today and if there's an overall struggle to energize a music program within congregations, she responded, "There has been much discussion over the past few decades about different 'styles' of music in worship, especially within the Lutheran Church. Music is an integral part of worship. It is a powerful tool to both hear and proclaim the truths of the Gospel, and to unite the congregation into one voice."

"I feel that a church musician's role is to help usher the praise of God's people, and to lead the congregation to be participants, rather than spectators. I value both the 'traditional' styles of music as well as modern styles, but I feel the ultimate priority should be to provide music that is intentional, is sing-able, and communicates the Gospel through rich and appropriate texts regardless of what instruments are used or when the text or melody was written."

"Challenges arise when the focus shifts to what instruments are used, or when musicians lose sight of their role as leaders and become performers. As a church musician, there is a fine line between performance and service, and I strive to remember what a tremendous privilege it is to offer, as a congregation together, back to God the gift of music that He has given to us all."

*"Music Director," continues on page 4*



**“Music Director,” continues from page 3**

It's early in Elisabeth's tenure, of course, and being music director wasn't front and center when she and her family came to Holy Cross, so a strategy for her new position is still developing and will need time to percolate. She observed, "When Nathan and I joined Holy Cross a short year ago, I had no expectation of having a significant role in the music program, outside of helping here and there. To be honest, prior to moving here, I felt that my days serving in church music had come to a close. However, as things unfolded I began to sense that God had a different plan.



Welcome to our  
**MUSIC DIRECTOR**

"While helping out during the music director vacancy, I could gather that the music program had been substantial and vibrant throughout Holy Cross' history and I could see the potential of new and exciting things. I am looking forward to bringing some new things to the table musically, introducing new songs, incorporating a variety of instrumentation, trying new things, all while holding onto the rich history and traditions that have been important to the Holy Cross community over the years."

To that end, Elisabeth noted that she's already "hearing from people who are excited to get involved and use their gifts as well. There will be many opportunities for participation on various commitment levels, through festival choirs, church choir, children's groups, soloists, instrumentalists, and so on. I'd love to hear what the favorite hymn tunes and styles are, as well as who has been feeling a nudge to dust off that old guitar!"

After having Pastor Erb at Holy Cross for a year, members have been able to enjoy and benefit from the sermons and children's messages and Bible study insight he has brought to the front. It's exciting to consider what Elisabeth will do as well with her experience as a music leader and how she can energize Holy Cross, but she will need the vigor and involvement of all its members to accomplish her goals.

---CLIFF SCHROCK  
Holy Cross Word

## PRESIDENT'S JOURNAL

### **Service and serving got Holy Cross this far, new servers will take it well into the future**

Service. In the days following the passing of Queen Elizabeth II, numerous commentators lauded the Queen for her unfaltering service and dedication to the people of the United Kingdom. What was less reported, however, was the Queen's inspiration for her commitment to service – Jesus Christ.

Do a Google search on Christ as a servant or a servant leader and numerous Biblical references come up, including, and most importantly, when He died on the cross, giving His life to save us. While none of us is able to make this ultimate sacrifice, one of the lessons of Christ's service is that we have a responsibility to take this concept and move it from the third person (Christ) to the first and second persons (you and me). We are to be servants to others, including those in our own congregation.

I admit that I come to this topic with a bias. My Father was a PK (preacher's kid), and while that label didn't guarantee service to the church, in the case of my Father – and my Mother – it was a given. Much like the Queen, his service and dedication were unwavering and continued into his 90s. He was my model. As I think about our congregation's current leadership, I believe that others must have had similar models. Though we currently have a smaller Board, I'm guessing that our Board members represent well over a century of service to Holy Cross and the Board. As my Mother would say, "That's no small potatoes!"



In last month's newsletter, Pastor Erb observed that Holy Cross is turning a new page. We're tweaking, we're updating, we're changing. With a respect for, and understanding of, the past and our traditions, we look to the future. That change must also come to the Board. We are thankful for those who have dedicated years – even decades – of service. But it's time for new blood to enter the leadership stream. The generations that founded and built Holy Cross have done their duty. It's now time for the next generations to take up the mantle of service.

This doesn't mean that service must occur in the same ways that it has in the past; we're working on that. But service, in whatever form, requires you to raise your hand and say, "Here am I, send me." Not everyone must be a leader, but everyone can be a server. Including, and especially, you. Yes, you.

---KERRY GEFFERT  
President, Board of Directors



# WE APPRECIATE YOU!

## THANKS A BUNCH!

We know that our Lord Jesus Christ took the time to say “thanks” because he notably did so in prayer thanking His Father, and when He instituted the Eucharist it was done with thanks. St. Paul’s writings are a strong example of saying thanks, particularly being thankful to God for the Believers. Likewise, it is good practice to tell someone thank you because it tells the person they’ve been noticed and appreciated, which is the intent for this month’s list. This month we recognize:

**Jim and Lorraine Finch** for all the beautiful flowers they provided from their garden during this past summer’s difficult growing season for the Sunday altar arrangements. It was a real challenge for them to help the plants cope with the heat and drought this year. Thank them personally yourselves for their efforts.

**Gary Messerschmitt** and **Sherry Duff**, for recording Sunday services over the summer weeks when they were available and uploading the recording to our YouTube channel. Thanks also to **Gary** for preparing the Holy Cross website for the uploads and making the service links “live.” We typically get 15-30 views of the service videos, so having our services recorded is a great asset.

The group of people who answered the call to help with the clean-up in the church undercroft (basement): **Cindy Ciccia, Pat Deloge, Pastor Erb, Lorraine Finch, Kerry Geffert, Chad, Kyle and Nate Helminger, Kendra Norman, Dan, Julianne and Danny Nyitrai, Riley and Luke Riccio, Dan Senft, Edith Skoog, Laurie Vaitkus, Rick and Michele Van Wart, and Bill Weigle.**

If you have a note of thanks for our next “Thanks A Bunch” article, please e-mail it to the church office or jot it down and put it in the “newsletter” mailbox.



*Myrtle Anderson was so happy to attend Worship in person on Sunday, September 11. Her daughters Linda and Carol made arrangements to bring her to church a few days before her 93rd birthday celebration on September 14. Pictured above with Pastor Erb, Myrtle said she was so happy to be at church and appreciated the kind words and birthday wishes.*



## IN THE MAILBAG

### From Audrey Paray

Dear Friends of Holy Cross,

Many thanks for your concern since my fall in April. I appreciate the prayers, phone calls, cards, visits and food delivered to me. I am feeling better but still have to use a walker.

In Christian Love,  
---AUDREY PARAY



## EVANGELISM AND YOU

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

Summer is over, a new school year has begun but a constant in life for our Holy Cross members is that the church offers weekly worship. In order to be effective evangelists—which is what we Christians are—we need to be properly encouraged and stimulated and motivated to speak about the good news and what it's like to be a Christian. That's where attending church services and being in Adult Bible class become important allies to finding out our potential in sharing our faith.

There certainly has been a great deal of reminding our members that we have a worship service every Sunday morning at 10, led off by an hour of Christian fellowship in Pastor Erb's Bible Class at 9. Taken alone or together, the Bible study and worship service are a great way to be energized and prepared for the upcoming week ahead. There has been a core group of 12 to 15 people attending the Bible class, but there is a lot of room for more of you, a great deal more. The class is held in the fellowship hall so there's plenty of space for everyone. Give it a shot of spending two hours at church on Sunday morning. That used to be the norm for Holy Cross members, so think of it as a retro action on your part to help bring us back to everyone seeking spiritual nourishment. Coffee and treats are normally served, so don't worry about messing up your breakfast, you can get body nourishment, too.



As for the commission's key tasks, the commission had a meeting on September 6. Some of the key duties of the commission are doing well. The display case for the summer was done by myself using a 65th birthday theme. Kendra Norman from social ministry will do the next display in October, which will include a Reformation angle along with a charity project element. Greeters continue to serve an important role; we could use more, however, so

please see me if you would like to be on this team.

An area of concern is the tract ministry, which is the tract rack by the door that leads to the basement. There is not much activity going on this year and not many tracts used. We are strongly considering removing the rack and just making the tracts available in a storage cabinet in the library, right inside the door.

The original brick sign out front was cleaned up and our focus will be simple, quick statements so they're easier to read as people whiz along in their cars.

---CLIFF SCHROCK  
Director of Evangelism

## HOLY CROSS CHRISTIAN PRESCHOOL

### **Weekly Chapel Time, Bible stories and celebrating fall themes highlight October**

A new school year has begun! God has greatly blessed us with a nearly 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 are learning 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.

In October we will 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 are loving 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.



One of our favorite activities is participating in Chapel Time with Pastor Erb each week. During the month of September, Pastor showed us some very special things in our church! He read us the Creation story and 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  
preschool@holycrosstrumbull.com



## LEARN FROM & BE INSPIRED BY SCRIPTURE

### **The Holy Cross Word monthly “Bible study on paper”:** Acts, Chapter 17

**Acts, Chapter 17, 34 verses**—In this section of Acts in which the spread of the Christian church is shown expanding overseas and to “the ends of the earth,” we are also focused on Paul the Missionary and the fact the message he is preaching is universal and for everyone.



Please pause now to read the full Chapter 17 of Acts (use a home Bible or an aid such as BibleGateway.com if needed).

#### **Chapter 17 analysis—**

The chapter targets Paul and his helpers in three locations: Thessalonica, Berea, and Athens. In Thessalonica with Silas, Paul continued his pattern of preaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath. After a few weeks, both Jews and Greeks were being receptive to the message but the pattern of Jewish jealousy also continued. A mob was formed and they went to a local man, Jason’s, house to find Paul and Silas but did not see them. Instead, they took Jason and several other believers out to be seen by leaders of the city and accused them of harboring the missionaries and also saying there was another king besides Caesar, that being Jesus, of course. In its anger, the mob extorted money from the believers before letting them go.

That night, Paul and Silas [and Timothy] were sent by the believers out of Thessalonica to Berea (sometimes spelled Beroea) in northern Greece. Paul wasted no time in going to the synagogue to preach, and once again the initial reaction was positive. The Bereans were eager and open to the message and had done a lot of study of the scriptures themselves to understand if the message being preached to them was truthful. Thus, “many” became believers, including Greeks. But the Thessalonian Jews were still fomenting trouble; when they heard Paul had moved on to Berea and was preaching there, the unruly among them came there, too, and cast doubt on what had been done in the name of Christ. The missionaries could not continue preaching. So the Believers, who were also serving as protectors, took action and sent Paul away to the Greek coast; Silas and Timothy remained in Berea. Paul eventually came to Athens and from there he had a message sent back to Silas and Timothy for them to come to him there as soon as possible.



Paul was being more cautious in Athens, where he found the city was overrun with idols. He mainly associated with the Believers in the true God as well as visit with people in the marketplace. In Athens, Paul was seeing a substantial philosophical element, especially those people who thought pleasures of the mind should be a goal of life and those who thought life should be void of any sadness and happiness. These groups were confused about Paul’s preaching and ended up taking him to see a council of important leaders who were similar to judges. They wanted to know more about what Paul’s preaching meant.

At this point, Paul gave one of his many remarkable speeches, beginning with verse 22, in which he tells them that the inscription “To the God Who Is Not Known” on one of their altars is, in fact, the God Paul is telling them about. Paul expands his commentary about God through verse 32; it is best for you to read this yourself, you don’t need me to write an interpretation. This description of God needs no enhancement by me.

At the end of what we read in the speech, Paul discusses Christ rising from the dead, which caused some in the crowd to laugh and say they’d hear more about this at a later time. But we learn that some weren’t entirely dismissive and there were believers, who Luke includes by name.

Chapter 18 will continue with Paul in Corinth.

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

---CLIFF SCHROCK

## TECHNOLOGY

### **Still needed: Volunteers to record our Sunday worship services**

Do you have a modern smartphone? If yes, we could use your help in recording our worship service and posting it to our YouTube channel. (Super easy once you know the steps!)

Our recorded services have become an important outreach with anywhere from 15-30 or more views each week. It’s particularly important for our shut-ins and several of our elderly members.

We need additional volunteers so that we can offer as many services online as possible. Thank you in advance for considering to volunteer for this important ministry. If interested, please contact me.

---SHERRY DUFF

## 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



Birthday Blessings

Oct. 20: Joel Wilson  
 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: Marcia Wilson

“I’m so glad I live in a world where there are Octobers.”

— L.M. Montgomery, *Anne of Green Gables*

### CHURCH CHUCKLES



campbell

“Jackpot!”



### Find Time to Take an AWE BREAK

Many of us are juggling so many things that we are run by our lives rather than living them as gifts from God. What if we could learn to stop for a moment many times a day? What if in those moments we could decide to notice the sheer miracle of being alive? We would then be taking “awe breaks” instead of coffee breaks.

—Gunilla Norris, *Weavings*,  
July/August 2008