



HOLY CROSS
LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Quest

*Transforming the world & ourselves,
together in community,
fellowship and faith.*



October 2023

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JUST A LITTLE *Reminder*

The deadline for inclusion in the November 2023 edition of the Holy Cross Newsletter, Quest, is Friday, October 20th.

Articles can be emailed to the Church Administrator at:
admin@holycrosslutheranchurch.net.

The deadline for inclusion in the Weekly Update
is COB on Tuesdays.

Thank you,
Virginia Muller and Sarah Schultmeier
Church Administrators

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Herndon, VA 20170
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HolyCrossELCA



Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Herndon VA

STAFF



Grace, Gratitude and Generosity

²³ 'For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him;²⁵ and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made.²⁶ So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything."²⁷ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow-slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, "Pay what you owe."²⁹ Then his fellow-slave fell down and pleaded with him, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you."³⁰ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he should pay the debt. ³¹When his fellow-slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³²Then his lord summoned him and said to him, "You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³Should you not have had mercy on your fellow-slave, as I had mercy on you?" ³⁴And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he should pay his entire debt.³⁵ So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.'

Matthew 18:21-35

In this passage, Jesus tells a story that has come to be known as the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant. In the story, a Ruler forgives one servant the modern equivalent of roughly \$10,000,000. The newly

liberated servant, however, in turn throws a fellow servant in jail for the personal debt a few thousand dollars. The real tragedy of this story is that the first servant never understood the grace that was already his, but is still trapped in the system of profit and loss, earning and losing.

This month, we will hear a lot about stewardship and we will invite us all to make a pledge to financially support the mission and the ministry of Holy Cross. The word stewardship can churn up a lot of anxious feelings in many of us--feelings of duty, obligation, and even guilt. Perhaps we have been told in the past that it's time for each of us to "do our part" and give back to God. However, the problem with that line of so-called motivation is that it never gets past the same trap the poor servant was in. It's all about what we owe, and not about what we have already been given.

Stewardship is taking care of what is already God's. Grace is about God's gifts to us. All that we are, all that we have, all the acceptance and love--that belongs to God and we are asked to care for it.

Gratitude is a response to this liberation. We don't own it, we didn't create it, we can't earn it, so we lift up our hands and give thanks.



Generosity is living out this gracious gratitude—in sharing, and service with, and for others. Imagine if the first servant, fresh from the throne room of grace, had come to his fellow servant and said, "Can you believe it? Our master just forgave me a debt that would have taken 1,000 life times to pay back! Oh, and those few bucks you owe me? Forget about it!" That's the sort of liberation Jesus holds up as part of God's Kingdom. Grace leads to gratitude that leads to generosity.

God's abundance frees us and calls us to a new life where we can share, not motivated by guilt or duty, but with joy. This isn't just an October thing, but a new life in Jesus that loves and leads us each day.

With you in **Grace, Gratitude, and Generosity**,
Pastor Martin

Director of Music and Liturgy



During the month of October HCLC will be focusing on stewardship. Church leaders are working on the 2024 budget, church members are being asked to fill out pledge cards, there will be temple talks in worship on the subject; many aspects of church life will be focused on stewardship. I thought it would be appropriate to write about a stewardship hymn for this month's Quest. The words of Fred Pratt Green's hymn text, *For the Fruit of All Creation*, serve as a wonderful focus to why and how we are called to be stewards of creation.

Green's concern for justice and spreading a social gospel is almost always evident in his hymns. These themes are especially prominent in *For the Fruit of All Creation*. Green's hymn text combines our gratitude to God for the bounties of the earth with our responsibility to care for our neighbor through "the harvests we are sharing." Our gratitude to God is found in stanzas one and three with "thanks be to God" repeated after every phrase. Our responsibility to care for our neighbor can be found in stanza two with "God's will is done" repeated after every phrase. Green's use of repeating responses with these phrases certainly drives home the aspects of stewardship that we should be focusing on--we should give thanks to God for everything we have because it all came from God, and we should share these gifts with those in need because that is what God calls us to do.

This hymn text also emphasizes our responsibility to care for everyone, not just those we like or those closest to us. Stanza one cites God's "good gifts to every nation." Stanza two mentions "our worldwide task of caring for the hungry and despairing." Stanza three acknowledges "the good we all inherit."

Green uses the trinity to shape the stewardship theme in this harvest hymn. Stanza one clearly references the God of harvest. Stanza two alludes to Christ's earthly ministry of loving thy neighbor. Stanza three references the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the mystery that surrounds its presence. I particularly love the poetry that ends Stanza three, "For the

wonders that astound us, for the truths that still confound us, most of all, that love has found us, thanks be to God.” Rhyming each phrase with “astound/confound/found” and “us” builds tension as we sing about the Spirit’s mysterious power.

I hope you take a moment and read Green’s hymn text as you pray over how you can best support Holy Cross financially. The ministries of HCLC are a prime example of how Green portrays a Christ-like stewardship in *For the Fruit of All Creation*. Offerings from all who worship in our church home are how we are able to live out this calling.

Soli Deo Gloria!

Jeremy Shoop, Director of Music and Liturgy

For the Fruit of All Creation

*For the fruit of all creation,
thanks be to God.*

*For these gifts to ev'ry nation,
thanks be to God.*

*For the plowing, sowing, reaping,
silent growth while we are sleeping,
future needs in earth's safekeeping,
thanks be to God.*

*In the just reward of labor,
God's will is done.*

*In the help we give our neighbor,
God's will is done.*

*In our worldwide task of caring
for the hungry and despairing,
in the harvests we are sharing,
God's will is done.*

*For the harvests of the Spirit,
thanks be to God.*

*For the good we all inherit,
thanks be to God.*

*For the wonders that astound us,
for the truths that still confound us,
most of all, that love has found us,
thanks be to God.*

COUNCIL



Do We Take it for Granted That Holy Cross Will Always Be Here?

Holy Cross Family –

This is not a pleasant article to write as I like for these missives to be generally upbeat. A little background for that statement is in order. Ordinarily we would have presented the first draft of our budget for the new year at the September Council Meeting. However, several extraordinary property-related expenditures have combined with a persistent slump in contributions to place us in a challenging financial position this year. We have not seen the usual recovery from the summer, and the Finance Team felt that we needed another month's worth of data to determine the full significance of the financial challenges facing us.

First of all, we are current on all financial obligations, and we are in the process of obtaining bids for the restroom project (for which we feel we have sufficient designated capital funds). However, we cannot ignore the revenue and cost mismatches on the operational side.

Our facilities and professional staff enable us to serve as a kind of spiritual filling station. Holy Cross is a place where community outreach can be based, where we can have fellowship, be sustained by comfort within a caring partnership, and continue to develop our

faith. Our two largest areas of ongoing operational expenses are the maintenance of our facilities and the costs of personnel.

We have been blessed with skilled and dedicated volunteers who have kept the costs down by performing maintenance activities far beyond what would normally be expected.

Church leadership exercises prudent financial management and maintains budgetary oversight.

The problem is that contributions have not kept up with expenses. Over the last few years, several members who were large contributors have either moved away or are otherwise no longer with us. A number of people got out of the habit of attending during the pandemic and have not returned. For those who remain, many are on fixed incomes and not in a position to increase their contributions. Others appear to be giving the same round number they've been giving for years. Whatever the reasons, the reality is that we are seeing a persistent trend of operating income falling behind our operational costs. We are hopeful giving will pick up as folks get back into 'the swing of things' this fall, but I felt that we needed to share with you the reality of our situation.



During October, we will be emphasizing stewardship and will have Pledge Sunday on Reformation Sunday, October 29, 2023. In the meanwhile, if you are in a position to make a one-time gift of any amount to help address the shortfall, we all could really use it!

Thank you ALL for the countless thing you do to make Holy Cross a special, welcoming, and sustaining community of the faithful!

Yours in Christ,
Sam

A NOTE FROM THE TREASURER



Endowment Contributions

One may not see how modest donations can make a significant difference, but they can. I would like to share an example with you of how that has been accomplished here at Holy Cross. The Gouldman Fund started in 1977 with a bequest of \$1,000 from Mr. Henry Gouldman and a donation of \$300 from his widow, Mrs. May Gouldman. In the ensuing years, she and others made additional contributions. By the time of her death in 1990, the value had risen to \$31,000. At the time of the writing of this note for the Quest, the Fund has a value of \$47,500. That number is only part of the story. This has not been an idle investment fund, but has been drawn on repeatedly in support of initiatives and projects to fulfill the mission of Holy Cross, including sending our young people to the ELCA Youth Gathering for several years. Last year \$5,000 from the Fund was used toward upgrading the lighting systems outside and inside the Church. The Gouldman Fund has been in existence for forty-six years and will be around for many more in the future. If you are looking for a way to make a lasting impact, please consider the model of the Gouldman Fund.

Very respectfully,
Joe Baggett, Treasurer

WORSHIP & MUSIC



Altar Guild Rally Day Bake Sale

The **Altar Guild Rally Day Bake Sale** was a success! The money raised from all the sugary, delicious goodies will be used toward flowers to adorn our Sanctuary! A **BIG THANK YOU** to all who baked and all who bought! The best part was enjoying seeing you!

Holy Cross Cookbook 2023

Sales for our Holy Cross Cookbook also raised money for flowers in the Sanctuary! A **BIG THANK YOU** to all who contributed their expertise with tried and true recipes! (A **VERY** special thanks to the author and producer!) The feedback from many of you who have made these recipes has been **TASTY!**

***Cookbooks are still
available in the church
office for \$10!***



FELLOWSHIP

Inspiro Choir Concert featuring our own Jeremy Shoop!

Date? Saturday, October 7, 2023
Where? Community Lutheran Church
21014 Whitfield Place, Sterling
When? 7:00 pm

Inspiro Choir presents ***Music of the Spheres***, a multimedia experience about space which features images from the Webb Telescope with Aleksandra Hamanowicz, from the Space Telescope Science Institute! This concert is a beautiful collaboration at the intersection of science and art. Buy your tickets at www.inspiroChoir.com. I have mine!

Inspiro Choir

**2023 BEST OF LOUDOUN WINNER
FOR BEST PERFORMING ARTS GROUP!!**



**See the full article in the Sept. 8, 2023 edition
of the Loudoun Times Mirror!!
Congrats to Inspiro Choir!**

BLOCK PARTIES CONTINUE

Holy Cross would like to have **monthly social events called Block Parties!** The idea is to have different members of the congregation sign-up to coordinate an event.

We kicked off the year on September 24th with a cookout and outdoor game day--thank you **Shelly Eldred** and **Deb Reilly** for taking lead on that event!

October's Block Party will be a concert with Pastor Martin Eldred and Jeremy Shoop on Saturday, October 21st at 7pm. There will be a reception afterwards.

November is open! Will YOU sign up to lead an event? Here are some of the ideas to get you thinking, but we'd love to hear YOUR ideas as well:

- Pizza & Board Games night
- Hike & visit a brewery/vineyard with live music
- Movie Night
- Bonfire & S'mores with hot chocolate
- Nature Walk
- Attend a soccer, baseball, rugby, or cricket game
- Progressive Garden / Dinner Party
- Chili Cook-Off

In honor of Trunk or Treat on Sunday, 10/29 at 3pm, The Joke of the Month is:

A photographer goes to a haunted castle determined to get a picture of a ghost on Halloween. The ghost he encounters turns out to be friendly and poses for several snapshots. The happy photographer later downloads his camera and finds that the photos are underexposed and completely blank.

Moral of the story: The spirit is willing, but the flash is weak!



On that note...as always on Sunday, you are invited and encouraged to stop by the Fellowship Hall for some coffee, tea, juice, or water, and good food (there is always fruit and a LWR quilt to tie!). It's a terrific way to meet up with Holy Cross members and visitors.



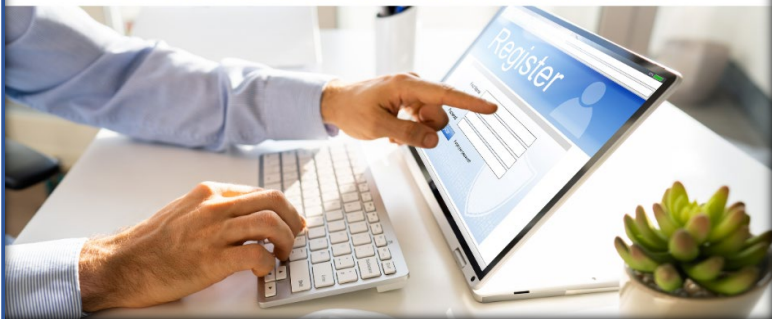
Anne Geiger
Fellowship Chair

fellowshipchair@holycrosslutheranchurch.net

***Check out our
NEW Holy Cross Website!***

HolyCrossHerndon.org

Please be patient, as some pages are still under construction as we make information more available and easily accessible...but we are excited about the new look! Check it out!





HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH

60th Anniversary Celebration! November 5, 2023

Holy Cross is 60 years old this year!! Led by Deb Reilly, the 60th Anniversary Planning Committee has set the date for the main celebration for All Saints Sunday, November 5, 2023.

We will have *one combined worship service at 10 am* that day! Former HCLC Pastor Ed Harper will be the Preacher, and Bishop Leila Ortiz the Presiding Minister. Seminarian Katy Moran and Pastor Martin will serve as Assisting Ministers. There will be a catered luncheon after the church service. **Make sure you send in your reservation for the luncheon as space is limited!**

If you would like to help with the set-up, serving and clean-up for the catered luncheon after the service, please let Anne Geiger know at fellowship@holycrosslutheranchurch.net. It will be a busy day!

EVANGELISM

SterlingFest & Herndon High School's Homecoming Parade!

These two events are just around the corner!! Come out and join in the fun as we let people in the community know who we are and what we do! We'd love for you to join us!

- SterlingFest – Saturday October 7th from 11am to 5 pm at the Sterling Community Center.
- Herndon Homecoming Parade – Saturday October 14th, from 8:30 am to 11:30 am. Our hospitality table will be located across from Herndon Middle School.

New Members!

If you know of anyone who's interested in joining Holy Cross or just learning more about "What Holy Cross is All About," we will be



hosting a New Member Luncheon on Sunday, November 19 after the late service. For more information, contact Pastor Martin at pastormartin@holycrosslutheranchurch.net or the church office at admin@holycrosslutheranchurch.net

HCLC Card Brigade!

HCLC Card Brigade is looking for a faithful volunteer to help during the month of December. Do you have a couple free hours to send out cards and greetings to our members? For more information, please contact kfaulkner464@aol.com.



It's Time for Trunk or Treat!



WHEN: Sunday, October 29th
3:00 pm - 5:00 pm

WHERE: Holy Cross Parking Lot

Be sure to start thinking about your costume or how you want to decorate your trunk!

It's a Fun Time for All!

Respectfully Submitted,
Karen Faulkner, Evangelism Chair

PROPERTY



THANK YOU!

Thanks to everyone who helped out during the summer monthly work days! It was **HOT, HARD WORK!**

Mark your calendars! We are planning our **Fall Workday** for **November 18th from 8 am to 12 pm!** This will include lots of activities from yard work to inside clean-up!

For the 60th anniversary we are planning to clean the carpet, add new ceiling tiles that were damaged by the roof leakage, and one protective window replacement for the stained glass window. These items were not budgeted so we are asking for any donation that you are willing to make to make Holy Cross spruced up for our 60th Celebration!



Respectfully Submitted,
Gary Wolfe, Property Chair



English Language LEARNERS

Our 2023 fall semester started September 14th and will continue until December 6th. Our ELL Christmas party with students and their families is planned for December 6th.



After two ELL classes, we currently teach 30 students from 7 countries: Peru, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Honduras, Mexico, Iran and Egypt. We expect more students in the coming weeks!

We said goodbye to our beginner's teacher, Alejandra. We hope to have her again. Alejandra is working on her master's degree and has a full class schedule. We are fortunate Kurt Birson has volunteered to teach our beginners. We also had Cynthia volunteer with us and she is assisting Chip in our basic class. We still need someone to volunteer for the ELL coordinator job. This is very rewarding position!



Thank you for your continued support of our ELL program and our immigrant communities!

The ELL Team

ELL Coordinator Needed!

After many years, Ellen Atwell is stepping down as the coordinator of the HCLC ELL program. We are grateful for her leadership and dedication to helping immigrants improve their English skills.



If you have an interest in helping others and you enjoy organizing logistics, please consider taking on this role. Ellen is happy to train whoever will replace her!

DUTIES of the ELL Coordinator:

- ❖ Oversee ELL program
- ❖ Assist teachers
- ❖ Register students
- ❖ Coordinate and conduct assessment tests
- ❖ Keep attendance records
- ❖ Create English/Spanish flyers for each semester
- ❖ Take the flyers to different stores, also McDonalds and email the flyers to the Herndon Resource Center, which is now part of Cornerstone
- ❖ Support teachers, students and their families.



Contact Ellen Atwell for more information:

ellen.atwell@verizon.net



RALLY DAY RECAP!

The Stephen Ministry was represented at a table during Rally Day and I spoke with many from our congregation who were excited to learn about the Stephen Ministry implementation.

Here are a few things **YOU** may want to know:

- **Stephen Ministers** meet one-on-one with a congregational member who has care concerns. They only meet with one person, one hour per week, over a period of time.
- **Stephen Ministers** receive 20 hours of biblical/scriptural training with monthly Continuing Education.
- A “care receiver” might include someone who is ill, terminally ill, going through a divorce, lonely, depressed, experiencing the death of a loved one, loss of job/home, etc.
- The Stephen Ministry supports **Holy Cross’s Mission Statement** of **“We are a united family dedicated to reaching out and providing opportunity through worship, witness, education and service.”**
- The name “Stephen Ministry” is derived from Acts 6 when the disciples were overwhelmed with the needs of the new church of believers and commissioned “Apostles” to care for their needs in order to continue their focus on spreading the gospel of Jesus Christ. The first Apostle commissioned was Stephen.
- Their website is: www.stephenministries.org for more information.



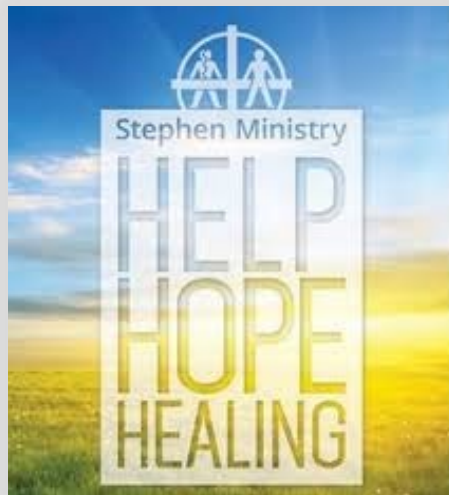
This Stephen Ministry “Caregivers Compass” expresses some of the essentials for “Christ caring for people through people”, with Christ at the center.

We now have 4 people who have made a commitment to become Stephen Ministers. We hope for their training to begin in early 2024.

As Program Coordinator, I began training for this role on Mondays, beginning 9/11/23 and will continue until 11/13/23.

For additional information on how to become a Stephen Minister or a receiver of Stephen Ministry caregiving, please contact: Sarah Schulmeyer at tallulah925@gmail.com or the church office at: admin@holycrosslutheranchurch.net

Sarah Schulmeyer, Program Coordinator



3 WAYS TO GIVE

We aspire to keep Holy Cross Lutheran Church a thriving, serving community of God's people. We each need to make a determined effort to ensure that our offerings sustain us. Your generosity makes all things possible.

Bring your offering with you to worship service at 8:30 or 11:00 am or to drive-thru communion on the 1st and 3rd Sundays at 12:30 pm. You can also mail a check donation to the church (Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 1090 Sterling Road, Herndon, VA 20170)

There are three ways to give when you're not in the sanctuary:

1. To give online, simply go to our secure website and click **"Donate"** to set up an automatic donation plan.
2. Download the free **Vanco Mobile** app. Once it's downloaded, you can use our Invite code, **24A7NT** to ensure you are linked to the correct church, and login with your current Vanco credentials (whether from the GivePlus app or our website's Donation page. If you do not have an account, you will be prompted to set one up. An even easier method of sending a single or recurring check donation to the church is by using Bill Pay with your bank or credit union online account or mobile app. Those payments are guaranteed and are shown in your bank or credit union records. Also, there is no fee to you or to the church.
3. Lastly, you can scan the QR code:





1090 Sterling Road
Herndon, VA 20170

Stewardship talent
planning
commitment vision
of blessing
LOVE
PLEDGE
faith
Treasure
calling
community