
CRISS+CROSS



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August 2016

Working together to connect people to Jesus

In Christ alone we find our true identity.

“Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For His sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ.” – Philippians 3:8

At the National Youth Gathering of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod July 16-20, our Bible study focused on St. Paul’s short letter to the Philippians. We were encouraged to read through the 4 short chapters each day.

One morning, our Bible study leader asked us to complete the following statement: “I am....” I listed “...a Christian, a husband, a father, a son, a pastor, a Lutheran, an American.” A few minutes later, he asked us to take a more personal look at ourselves and add to the list of things “I am....” I listed some neutral things, some things I’m trying to accomplish, and some challenges I’m working on. Again, a third time, he asked us to add to the list of things “I am...” some things that occur only in our minds – private things known only to God.

Have you ever made such a list? We tend to describe ourselves by outward things that the world sees. We describe ourselves internally by our goals and desires – the things we take pride or shame in. And if we’re honest, we confess to God things known only by Him.

In Philippians 3 Paul shares his list. He lists things about himself that are positive, neutral and negative – all things that were part of Paul’s identity *without Christ*. All these identity markers – positive, neutral and negative – Paul counted as rubbish compared with knowing Christ. Everything *apart* from Christ is nothing, and will pass away. Paul knew that his righteousness (and our righteousness) comes through faith in Jesus Christ alone.

Our true identity is in Christ. Our struggles in this world can be very tough, but the struggles of our earthly circumstances no longer define us. Instead, our identity all depends on faith in Him – *“that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and may share His sufferings, becoming like Him in His death, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.” (Philippians 3:10-11)*

The power of Jesus’ resurrection changes us, now and into eternity. Through Holy Baptism, His resurrection is our resurrection. Through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, we poor, miserable sinners have been declared “saints” by grace alone in baptism. This is now our indelible identity forever. So with Paul we are bold to say, *“For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” (Philippians 1:21)*

I encourage you to read Paul’s letter to the Philippians. Read it as Jesus’ letter to you. As you do, the Lord will work in your life, transforming your mind to be like Christ’s. Pray that you may receive the fullness of His joy in all circumstances and live a life worthy of the Gospel, for your righteousness is through faith in Christ alone. You will discover that, in Christ, you are *“more you, not less you.”*

-Pastor Nickel

Holy Cross Outreach Ideas

We are looking for prayerfully inspired ideas to share with the world OUTSIDE our front door of what is offered INSIDE our front door. As members of the Holy Cross family we are blessed each day by being part of God's community and the strength it provides us to resist what satan is peddling. Now imagine being just OUTSIDE our front door in need of Love, Salvation, Refuge & Strength and having no idea all that is available just INSIDE that building on Sheridan Drive. We believe to get anyone to step INSIDE the front door and take advantage of what is being offered; we will first have to go OUTSIDE (like removing the basket covering the candle). If you would like to be part of going OUTSIDE the front door to share the light of God's Holy Cross community story we will be holding an informational lunch meeting in the near future. Please contact Sam Harrison 515-5679

He-Brews

He-Brews meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month, usually at 7:30 pm; at a member home or at a local restaurant. Watch the weekly announcements for the location. We do not stay out late as most have to work in the morning. A typical gathering starts with fellowship followed by a Christian video presentation (often from Right-Now Media) and discussion. You do not need to drink beer to join us, other beverages both with and without alcohol are often enjoyed. All are welcome – including neighbors and friends, to come and see serious support given to fellow members and a willingness to help others and our church. He-Brews is open to all men, young and old.



Summer Hours

Summer Worship at Holy Cross
9:00 am Divine Worship
10:15 am Coffee Fellowship
11:00 am Divine Worship

NEW WORSHIP HOURS

Now that we have your attention, and we know we are playing with dynamite here, but for NEXT summer, the church leadership is considering modifying the Sunday morning worship hours. To that end we are soliciting feedback. So without doing a formal survey or a congregational vote, the Elders and Council Members would like to know what people think about changing summer worship times from "9:00 Am and 11:00AM" to "8:00 AM and 10:00AM". Please consider this request for your input while we have a lot of time to think about it. Please be assured that no decision has been made and we know that there must be overwhelming support to make a change like this, but we figured if we didn't at least start asking, we will never know what people think. Please feel free to bend the ear of any Council Member or Elder and we will keep you posted as to what we are hearing Thanks!



AV Team Seeking Volunteers

Anyone in 7th grade or older is welcome to help record Pastor Nickel's messages, praise band and choir songs and help create and/or run the presentations we use for Praise Band services. It's easy and training will be provided, and it's a fun way to participate in our church service. The recordings are offered to shut ins too when they cannot attend church service, how cool is that? Please see Scott Brooks for more information.

Why We Do What We Do: CONFESSION and ABSOLUTION (or “coming clean” with God)

Confession has two parts. First, that we confess our sins, and second, that we receive absolution, that is, forgiveness, from the pastor as from God Himself, not doubting, but firmly believing that by it our sins are forgiven before God in heaven. – Luther’s Small Catechism

In the Confession of the Divine Service we publicly confess or acknowledge all our sins, even those of which we are unaware (Psalms 19:12; 32:3,5; 51:1-4; Proverbs 28:13; 1 John 1:8-9). As Lutherans, we believe that private confession to the pastor of those sins which particularly trouble our hearts (2 Samuel 12:13; Matthew 9:12; James 5:16), although a wholesome practice, is a matter of Christian liberty, free from coercion.

In the Absolution, our pastor, who has been called by the Holy Spirit to act in this time and place by this congregation and has been ordained for this purpose, announces God’s grace and forgiveness as from God Himself, by Christ’s command (Matthew 18:18; Luke 10:16; John 20:19-23; see also Isaiah 1:18). When a called and ordained minister is not present, the leader simply declares that God forgives us through Jesus Christ (John 1:12; Philippians 1:6).

At Holy Cross, after the congregation invokes the name of the Triune God, our pastor leads the congregation in preparing to come before our holy God. When the Confession is placed at this point in the service, it reminds us of God’s instruction to Moses to remove his sandals before drawing near to God (Exodus 3:4-6). Likewise, if able, we stand in reverence to God’s holiness as we “come clean” before Him. To emphasize its preparatory nature, our pastor leads the Confession and Absolution from a place outside and lower than the altar area; only after the announcement of God’s forgiveness of our sins does the pastor (and congregation) “enter” God’s holy presence.

Occasionally the Confession is placed after the Sermon in a service with Holy Communion. It then accents our public, general confession with the Fifth Petition of the Lord’s Prayer (“Forgive us our trespasses...”) as we examine ourselves in preparation for the Lord’s Supper and as we remember our Lord as He commanded in the Sacrament.

Although it is not strictly necessary to precede Holy Communion with Confession and Absolution, it is important to receive the Sacrament worthily. The Apostle Paul writes: Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and the blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment upon himself. – 1 Corinthians 11:27-29 Therefore, Confession helps us examine ourselves before the Lord’s Supper to see if: A) we are sorry for our sins (Psalm 38:18; 2 Corinthians 7:10-11); B) we believe in our Savior Jesus Christ and His words in the Sacrament (Luke 22:19-20; 2 Corinthians 13:5), C) we are united in what we believe (Acts 2:42; 1 Corinthians 10:17 and 11:26; Romans 16:17), and D) we intend, with the Holy Spirit’s help, to change our sinful lives (Ephesians 4:22-24).

Although the pastor has the greatest responsibility as to who should be admitted to the Sacrament (1 Corinthians 4:1-2), the congregation and each communicant also bear some responsibility. Public confession aids us in this.

Adapted from Luther’s Small Catechism, Luther’s Large Catechism, and Precht, F., ed., Lutheran Worship: History and Practice (St. Louis: CPH, 1993), p. 367-371, 403-405, by Rev. Jeff Nickel, July 1, 2016.



Sunday School Register your child today for the 2016/2017 Sunday School year @ **holycrossclare.com** ! We are excited to share with you our new curriculum, "Growing in Christ". Throughout the year your child will learn about their Savior, Jesus Christ as we get to the heart of the Bible and engage them to learn with age-appropriate discussions. Through crafts, games, and worship music your child will experience a hands-on way to learn and internalize Bible stories!



Praise Band News
The Praise Band meets on Wednesdays at 6:00pm.



LWML News

Pioneer Camp & Retreat Center will hold our annual Summerfest on Saturday August 13, 2016. Rain or Shine at Camp Pioneer, Angola, NY. Pioneer Camp will also present their first Red, White, & Blue Bash from 7-10pm also on August 13th. This will benefit the children & military family camps and is for ages 21 and over. For tickets contact Camp



A Gathering for Holy Cross Youth: A fun night to hang out before going back to school or work for Holy Cross high school graduates to 20 somethings and their friends! Friday August 12th at 6:30 around the campfire. At the Holy Cross Christian Center and surrounding grass area. Join us for a time of music, food, and fellowship. Sodas, snacks, s'mores and more.



Choir News

The Choir does not meet during the summer. If you are interested in joining this fall please contact William Cook, our choir director, at 741-0040.

Update From Council

We continue to prepare for the arrival of Samantha Brown, our Director of Christian Education Intern. We have formed an ad hoc committee called the Board of Discipleship. This team wants to help Samantha get acquainted and integrated with Holy Cross, and will also help implement programs Samantha will initiate. Please look for ways to help Samantha and our Discipleship team so we can gain as much value as possible during Samantha's short time with us. A review of the preliminary criteria that will be used to evaluate benevolences in 2017 was conducted. All interested members are directed to see any Council member for more details members are encouraged to bring questions or concerns to Elders or Council members.

Our next meeting is August 25th.

-Tom Marzano Council President



Heritage Home

Heritage Home will be visiting on August 21st at 10:15 (between the worship services), our Bible study will be based on Genesis 1 and 2- the two part story of creation. Part one is "God Creates Land, Water, and Plants" and part two "God Creates Living Creatures". This is a wonderful summer time effort to celebrate God's acts of creation then and continuing now. We visit, pray, sing, and enjoy a time of fellowship and a simple craft during our visit which is about 45 minutes long.



Radio Ministry Update

Holy Cross has received a grant from the Lutheran Church Extension Society of Buffalo to help fund a radio ministry on WXRL AM1300. We will be participating with other local congregations to produce a program called "Lutheran 3-0" which will be broadcast on Sundays at 9:00am. If you are interested in assisting (selecting, playing, recording music, or reading), please contact Pastor Nickel.

2017 BENEVOLENCE UPDATE:

As many of you already know, the Council has been working on a procedure (or policy) for our church's tithe. In the June Voters Meeting, we went over the rough draft of our Guidelines. Since then, the Council has approved the attached Policy for evaluating the recipients of our giving.

The full policy is in the attached /pdf file, but the "meat" of the matter is below. We tried to include our "rationale" on the front end of each rule, but our overarching guidance was that since you all are donating money to our Lutheran Church, the expectation would be that the donation would go do the work of, and to the Glory of, our Lord and Savior.

So we will be using these guidelines to "vet" our current recipients, and in at the December's Voters Meeting we expect to be presenting a modified list of benevolences; but it's not too late. So if someone sees a flaw in our logic, or has questions or concerns, please feel free to see any Elder our Council member. Thanks for your consideration and we look forward to healthy discussions.

General Guidelines

1. We believe that money donated to our church is intended for use in "Christian missions", e.g. missions commanded by Jesus, (works of corporal mercy and works of spiritual mercy).
2. We believe that whenever possible, benevolences should be done with all glory going to God, not to the recipient organization, or man. (e.g. Organization that do their work in the name of Jesus Christ.)
 - a. Further, whenever possible organizations within the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod should be supported in preference to other Christian based organizations.
3. In order to make our benevolences significant, we should avoid redundancy with overlapping missions/ organizations.
4. We believe that we have a responsibility to support our Synod (as it supplies the resources to maintain our denomination from generation to generation).
5. We believe that there should be consideration to direct our benevolences locally, nationally, and internationally.
6. We believe that when all else is equal, the efficiency of the recipient organization should be used as a discriminating factor.
7. In order to make our benevolence impactful, we believe that we should keep the number of Holy Cross benevolences at 10 or less.
8. There are other ways to support organizations besides tithing from the regular offering; so these should be brought to the Church Council on a case by case basis, and are not subject to the limitations of these guidelines.
 - b. The ancillary support of other organizations should not be counted against these organizations in determination of benevolence eligibility





Care-Ring Circle

To all the Care-Ringers who provide meals for those in need, Thank you! Until you have experienced the love and generosity from our Holy Cross family, you couldn't know how much it is appreciated. If you are interested in volunteering to make a meal for those in need please contact Doreen Borschel at 688-8096. I will add you to the list of volunteers in our email group.



Visitation Care

If you are or will be hospitalized or homebound and desire Christian care from the Holy Cross staff, please phone the church office at 634-2332 and/or email holycrossclarence@gmail.com to let us know. Please do not assume that we know your situation because for many reasons we often don't. We will do our best to visit you, and if homebound, see that you receive communion.

August 2016 WORSHIP CALENDAR

Sunday, August 7

9:00 am Divine Service with Holy Communion
10:15 am Coffee Fellowship
11:00 am Divine Service with Holy Communion

Sunday, August 14

Guest Preacher- Dr. Chris Wicher
9:00 am Divine Service with Holy Communion
10:15 am Coffee Fellowship
11:00 am Divine Service with Holy Communion

Sunday, August 21

9:00 am Divine Service with Holy Communion
10:15 am Coffee Fellowship
11:00 am Divine Service with Holy Communion

Sunday August 28

Church in the Park!
Clarence Town Park
10:00 am Divine Service with Praise Band
Lunch to follow service

HCLC Fall Worship Hours Will Begin on Sunday September 4th

8:00 am and 11am Services

**Sunday School starts on Rally Day Sunday
September 11th!**

September Criss Cross

Deadline

Please submit any items for the August Criss Cross **no later than August 22nd**. Items may be left on the desk in the HCCC or in the secretary mailbox or may be emailed to holycrossclarenc@gmail.com
Thank you!

Guest Speaker at Holy Cross August 14

Dr. Chris Wicher will be preaching at Holy Cross on August 14th. Pastor Nickel will be on vacation.



Women's Bible Study Group

The Women's Bible Study Group is doing a service project for the summer months. We are sorting, repairing and cleaning the banners of Holy Cross that hang in the sanctuary. Each Tuesday morning at 10am we will meet in Krampitz Hall to do this and also to have fellowship. Please feel free to join anytime you are able! We will resume our regular Bible study in early September.

Our August Servants

Communion Assistants:

Jo Corneck & Dave Chalmers

Francis Cote' & Gary Andrees

Ushers:

Robert Corneck & Robert Hamp

Robert Diem & Sam Gugliuzza

Lay Readers:

August 7	9:00	Kurt Wozniak
	11:00	Marilyn Cook
August 14	9:00	Jo Corneck
	11:00	Brian Humphreys
August 21	9:00	Ken Handley
	11:00	Sue Tichy
August 28	9:00	Jill Carl
	11:00	Sue Fay Allen

Acolytes:

August 7	9:00	Lindsey Chalmers
	11:00	Emma Scarantine
August 14	9:00	Christie Wood
	11:00	Emily Hare
August 21	9:00	Morgan Chalmers
	11:00	Madelyn Standish
August 28	9:00	Mason Kelkenberg
	11:00	Helene Olsen

AV Team:

August 7	Oscar Handley
August 14	Matthew Wiefert
August 21	Kenny Handley
August 28	Christopher Diem

Coffee Fellowship:

**Thank you to all who volunteer.
Please see Nancy Cote' for
volunteer opportunities**

August Birthdays

Samantha Dunford 8/1

William Cook Jr. 8/2

Rudolph Tichy 8/2

Joan Spilman 8/3

Margaret Talboys 8/5

Roberta Cook 8/10

Jason Flores 8/10

James Roland 8/10

Katie Randall 8/11

Lisa Wellsby 8/11

Jenny Grek 8/12

Lindsey Leipold 8/14

Tommy DiCostanzo 8/16

Julia Scarantine 8/17

William Dannebrock 8/19

Jack DiCostanzo 8/19

Marissa Diem 8/21

Kelli Kelkenberg 8/23

Laura Nickel 8/23

Ruth Marzano 8/24

Oscar Handley 8/26

Brian Ropach 8/26

Ted Fisk 8/27

Sam Gugliuzza 8/29

*"The LORD BLESS you and KEEP you;
the LORD make his face SHINE on you
and be GRACIOUS to you;
the LORD turn his face toward you
and give you PEACE."
NUMBERS 6:24-26*



August Anniversaries

Samuel & Carol Harrison Aug 8th

Jack & Ellie Hare Aug 15th

Mike & Diana Zubrzycki Aug 25th

