

# Fully Alive!

COMMUNICATING AND CELEBRATING THE MISSION AND MINISTRIES OF HOLY CROSS

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## THE ONE THING – PSALM 27

"I have asked one thing from the Lord; it is what I desire: to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, gazing on the beauty of the Lord and seeking him in his temple." (Psalm 27:4)

It is times like these when things are shaken in our world that it reveals what else we value in addition to the "one thing". As human beings we don't realize how much we value other things until we don't have them. It can be a good or purposeful removal, like with fasting, where you realize that you really like eating whatever you want to, whenever you want to. Or maybe it's a commitment to get up early to pray or read your Bible and you realize how much you value sleep.

If our economy is shaken, how much are you affected? If our health system is shaken, how much are you affected? If our country is shaken, how much are you affected? If Israel is shaken, how much are you affected? How anxious, afraid, or worried are you about your external circumstances? Are you satisfied with the "one thing"? If everything else is stripped away, where are you at?

I'm not saying it's pleasant, but are you still seeking God? How close are you to quitting or giving up? In our "Surrender" series we have been talking about surrendering to God everything and everyone regardless of the cost. He is worthy of it all. Are you willing to offer it all to Him?

If everything around you was shaken and the world that you live in seemed to be crumbling to the ground, would you surrender your faith? What if God didn't answer your prayers? What if all He had to say was, "Seek my face"? Would you respond by saying "Lord, I will seek your face."

Psalm 27 is a psalm of David. It is interesting to look at what David was facing and see how he responded. What if your father and mother abandoned you? (v.10) What if false witnesses started to smear your reputation or question your judgment? (v.12) What if it feels like God is ignoring you and you can't hear His voice? (v.9) What if somebody was trying to kill you? (v.2) What if there was a whole group of people that tried to come against you? (v.3) Would you be afraid? Would you give up? Would you still be following God?

David's final response is in verses 13 and 14: "I am certain that I will see the Lord's goodness in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart be courageous. Wait for the Lord."

As a church we will have an opportunity to seek His face and to wait for the Lord in January 2024. We are going to be engaging in a 30-day prayer emphasis where we can come before the Lord and gaze on the beauty of the Lord as our "one thing".

Make plans to join us for our 30 Days of Prayer as we will be gathering in our sanctuary to seek Him in His temple and dwell in the house of the Lord as we begin the New Year.

Remember the "one thing" this Christmas and holiday season.

~Pastor Jeff Niederstadt



## WORSHIP GOD “IN THE CONGREGATION”

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ at Holy Cross,

My husband Chris and I were blessed to worship God with you on hclc.tv one Sunday recently, because we were home sick. God works so powerfully through our team to help the “at-home worshiper” ALMOST feel like they are present at Holy Cross. I am deeply grateful to God that we have this option.

But I am stuck on the word, “ALMOST”. God’s plan for the Body of Christ, His beloved children, His family, is SO much greater than what can be experienced remotely. Our Heavenly Father longs for His children to gather together. In person. Consider what would be missing from a “Zoom” Thanksgiving gathering as compared to being together as a family. Multiply that exponentially for the Body of Christ.

God created us to love and be loved by others, to connect with each other, providing and receiving encouragement, comfort, and celebration as appropriate. Those things are much more difficult to do when we don’t come into contact with each other, when we can’t see who needs which facets of God’s love.

Even more than the interpersonal connections, it is a glorious blessing for God and His Church when we join our voices TOGETHER to praise Him! Life as the Body of Christ is just not the same when we worship God “remotely”.

My heart goes out to those who are truly not able to join the Body of Christ to worship God in person. But for those of us who are, let me encourage you, if I may, with love and no judgment: God has more for you AND for Holy Cross when we gather *together* as a congregation to worship Him.

As your Director of Worship, as your friend, as your Sister in Christ, I IMPORE you: “Give thanks to the Lord with your whole heart **in the congregation**” (from Psalm 111:1). And “**In the midst of the congregation**, praise God!” (from Psalm 22:22b)

Here are some upcoming dates to worship God **in the congregation**, along with each specific WORD of Christmas:

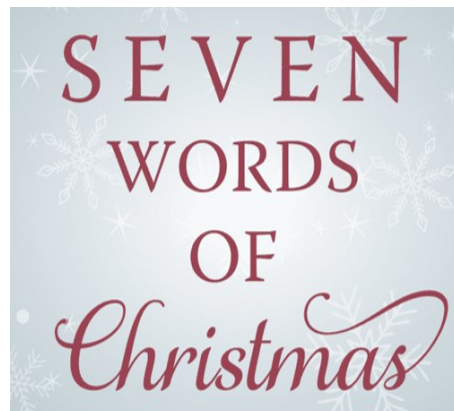
Wed., Nov. 29, 6:30 p.m.\* SALVATION

Sun., Dec. 3, 9:30 a.m. FAVOR  
MN Adult & Teen Challenge

Wed., Dec. 6, 6:30 p.m.\* BLESSED

Sun., Dec. 10, 9:30 a.m. GUIDANCE

Wed., Dec. 13, 6:30 p.m.\* JOY



Sun., Dec., 17, 9:30 a.m. REDEMPTION  
Kidz Alive & Youth Now Christmas:  
“Escape From Bethlehem”

Wed., Dec. 20, 6:30 p.m.\* PEACE

Sunday, Dec. 24, 4:30 and 6:30 p.m.\*\*

Sunday, Dec. 31, 9:30 a.m.

Thank you for loving God and His people,

~Cindy Wessel

*\*Wednesdays will be Kidz-friendly but will not be livestreamed.*

*\*\*No worship gathering the morning of Dec. 24.*

## ESCAPE FROM BETHLEHEM

Join KidzAlive and Youth Now on Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup> for their offering of "Escape from Bethlehem" during worship on Sunday morning at 9:30 a.m. Two toys are trapped inside their gift boxes and want out. We tell the story of Christmas with an emphasis on how Jesus came to help us escape from sin.

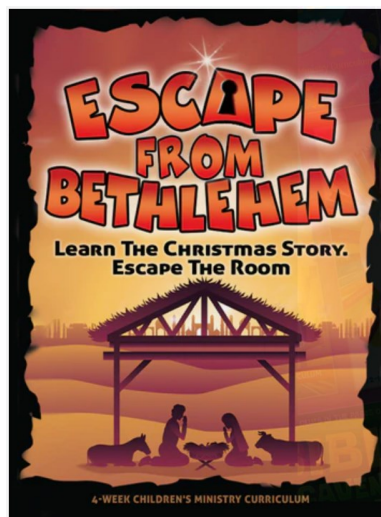
**Upcoming dates for Kidz Alive and Youth Now:**

**December 3 - Practice in Sanctuary**

**December 10 - Practice in Fellowship Hall**

**December 16 (Saturday) - 9:00 am practice**

**December 17 - All groups arrive by 9:00 am**



## RCLS UPDATE

The first quarter of the school year has officially ended and Thanksgiving break is right around the corner! The students have been hard at work with their studies and also having a little fun burning energy in physical education class and making beautiful music in band.



Basketball is gearing up to start a busy winter season. The first basketball game is Friday, December 1<sup>st</sup> at Wykoff. Save the date for the annual RCLS Invitational Basketball Tournament! This tournament was started in 1984 by Dr. Robert Meyer and is held over President's Day weekend

each year in February. Assistant basketball coaches are still being sought. If you are interested in helping coach the amazing RCLS youth please contact the athletics department at [athletics@rcls.net](mailto:athletics@rcls.net).

With the holiday season upon us, RCLS would also like to cordially invite all to the

RCLS Christmas programs and concert on Friday, December 8<sup>th</sup>. Preschool through Grade 1 will perform at 10:00 AM, Grades 2-4 at 1:00 PM and Grades 5-8 at 6:00 PM.

~Laura Rhee, Holy Cross Rep for RCLS



## DISCIPLESHIP CORNER: PERMISSION TO JOIN THE MISSION

Have you ever seen a false start to a race? The runners line up as the starting official begins his commands. The pistol is raised, and with rapid succession you hear \*bang, bang\*. A second shot indicates a runner began before the signal, dubbed a false start. Meanwhile, every other runner is so eager to go that they practically fall forward out of their stance. Their bodies were ready, but their minds told them to stop.

As disciples, sometimes we fear to run for worry of a false start. You've heard the message of God's Word; you've determined

an area of your life where you want to live out your faith; you come to the starting line, then second guess whether you can cross at this time. "Do I really have permission to share the gospel of Jesus with another person?"

When you find yourself on the starting line, unsure of whether to begin the race, look to your Savior. Jesus gave permission to those He sent out. In Luke 8, Jesus modeled proclaiming the good news of His kingdom, as He cured evil spirits and diseases. In Luke 9, Jesus authorized the

twelve disciples to preach, heal, and cast out on His authority. In Luke 10, Jesus appoints 72 to go, stating "the harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few." (Luke 10:2)

In the same way, by calling you to faith, the Spirit has permitted you to share Jesus as His disciple. So look to your Savior at the starting line.

"Disciples to your marks. Get set. GO and do as Jesus did!"

~Pastor Jordan Schut



## ILLUMINATION STATION: GETTING TO KNOW OUR FAMILY @ HOLY CROSS

## SPOTLIGHT ON TIM AND PATTY GERBER

Born in Ogilvie, MN, Tim was baptized at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, raised in Ogilvie, graduating at their High School. Patty was born in Grand Forks, ND, was baptized at Sharon Lutheran Church, and lived in Grand Forks /Thompson, ND. Patty and Tim met in Grand Forks while working together during college. Patty came to Rochester to finish her nursing degree at Winona State. She started working in Rochester as a registered nurse, then as a public health nurse, and currently is a nurse practitioner at Mayo in Hematology. In 1989, Tim took a job with IBM. He is an electrical engineer / computer engineer there. Tim and Patty joined Holy Cross when they moved to Rochester in 1989 because of the NW location, its affiliation with RCLS, and they liked the new pastor Steve. Tim and Patty have four children, Jenica, Joshua, Jackson -married to Kelsey - who have Nora (granddaughter), and Jace. Patty and Tim enjoy winter beach vacations and summer family vacations to the lake. Patty enjoys sewing. "I have been a seamstress and a tailor earlier



on in my life while I worked from home while the kids were growing up." Tim's hobbies include gardening, coaching, target shooting, and hunting. "I have been coaching Trap Shooting for the Rochester schools since 2015, this year will be the 10<sup>th</sup> year." Additionally, "When our kids were in RCLS, we helped in the classrooms, with fundraising, and coaching sports. We helped with the kids and youth programs as our kids grew up in Holy Cross, we volunteered on various Holy Cross Boards, and now we like to help with Ruby's Pantry." One of Tim's favorite Bible verses is John 20:29 because this passage speaks to us as a wonderful encouragement to be called blessed by Jesus: "Then Jesus told him, 'Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.'" Patty relishes Hebrews 12:1-3: "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart." "This was printed on the back of the medal from the first half-marathon that Tim and I ran. We worked hard to prepare for the run. The verse reminds me that we need to remain focused on our Christian life and run that life with endurance. It is easy to lose focus or be discouraged, but we are all called to run the race laid out for us. We are all given the spiritual gifts needed to run the race laid out before us. We want to reach the goal."

## WHO'S YOUR ONE? COMING IN JANUARY TO A CHURCH NEAR YOU!

Holy Cross will be participating in a 30-day prayer emphasis focused on evangelism from January 3—February 1, 2024. We will have daily prayer available in the sanctuary Monday through Friday 12:00-12:30 p.m.

Start thinking about who you know who needs to hear the plan of Jesus' salvation in their life. The program will be called, "Who's Your One?", and we will come together as a church to pray for the individuals that the Lord puts on our hearts to receive the Good News of Christ.

If you would like to sign up to be one of the prayer leaders for one or more days, please let someone in the church office know (a framework to follow will be provided for leaders).

Start the New Year right by entering into God's presence with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise!



## GROWING AS FAITHFUL FINANCIAL STEWARDS OF GOD'S KINGDOM

# FINANCIAL PEACE *University*



Was offered Sundays at 10:45 a.m.  
September–November 2023

Led by John Beise, with Ryan Ledebuhr  
and Tim Gerber

**Learning to live like no one else now  
so that we can  
Live AND GIVE like no one else later!**

**“Do not conform  
any longer to the  
pattern of this  
world, but be  
transformed by  
the renewal of  
your mind.**

**Then you will be  
able to test and  
approve what  
God’s will is —  
His good,  
pleasing and  
perfect will.”**

**Romans 12:2**

## FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP REPORT

THANK YOU for supporting the ministry of Holy Cross. We are reaching our community with the life-saving message of salvation through the Grace available through believing in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus for the forgiveness of our sins. That’s what Holy Cross is all about!

October receipts were \$15,470/week, which significantly reduced the 2023 YTD budget gap.

Cash Balance and savings are strong, with checking at \$105,810, and \$194,240 in savings. Certificates of Deposit with LCEF are \$83,165 (Regedahl). Additionally we are blessed to have \$108,070 in T-bill Investments.

Forecasting shows that we will need to run an average through year-end of about \$11,500/week as well as have a few special year-end gifts to break even for 2023.

Holy Cross would love a year-end gift from YOU to boost our ministry of Helping People Know, Live, and Share the Love of Christ!

*~Roger Lindahl, Treasurer*

	<u>October 2023</u>	<u>YTD 2023</u>	<u>Prior YTD</u>
General fund receipts	\$77,349	\$491,286	\$477,792
General fund expenses	\$51,217	\$500,120	\$467,335
Inflow/(outflow)	\$26,132	(\$8,835)	\$10,457

## SANCTUARY RENOVATION

Holy Cross is looking with forward thinking regarding the space where we worship God corporately. We have seen God do a powerful work in reconciliation and unity through the merger of Family of Christ and Holy Cross. God is working in and through us in outreach, discipleship, and stewardship as we are helping people know, live, and share the love of Christ.

We are also seeing God lead more people to us, and we anticipate even more growth for the glory of Jesus' name and the salvation of many more souls. We want to be ready for what God will do next.

This leads to our reason for the Sanctuary Renovation and the desire to excel in worshipping God. We want to keep our focus on Jesus in worship as we effectively utilize the resources He's blessed us with, welcoming the people God brings to Holy Cross.

Members of Holy Cross met on Saturday, November 4, for an informational meeting to discuss exciting possibilities that are being considered for Summer 2024. These possibilities include roof and ceiling repairs and shingle replacement, front screens and projectors, a larger confidence monitor at the rear of the sanctuary, improved plat-

form/sanctuary lighting, enlarged platform, and chairs throughout the sanctuary.

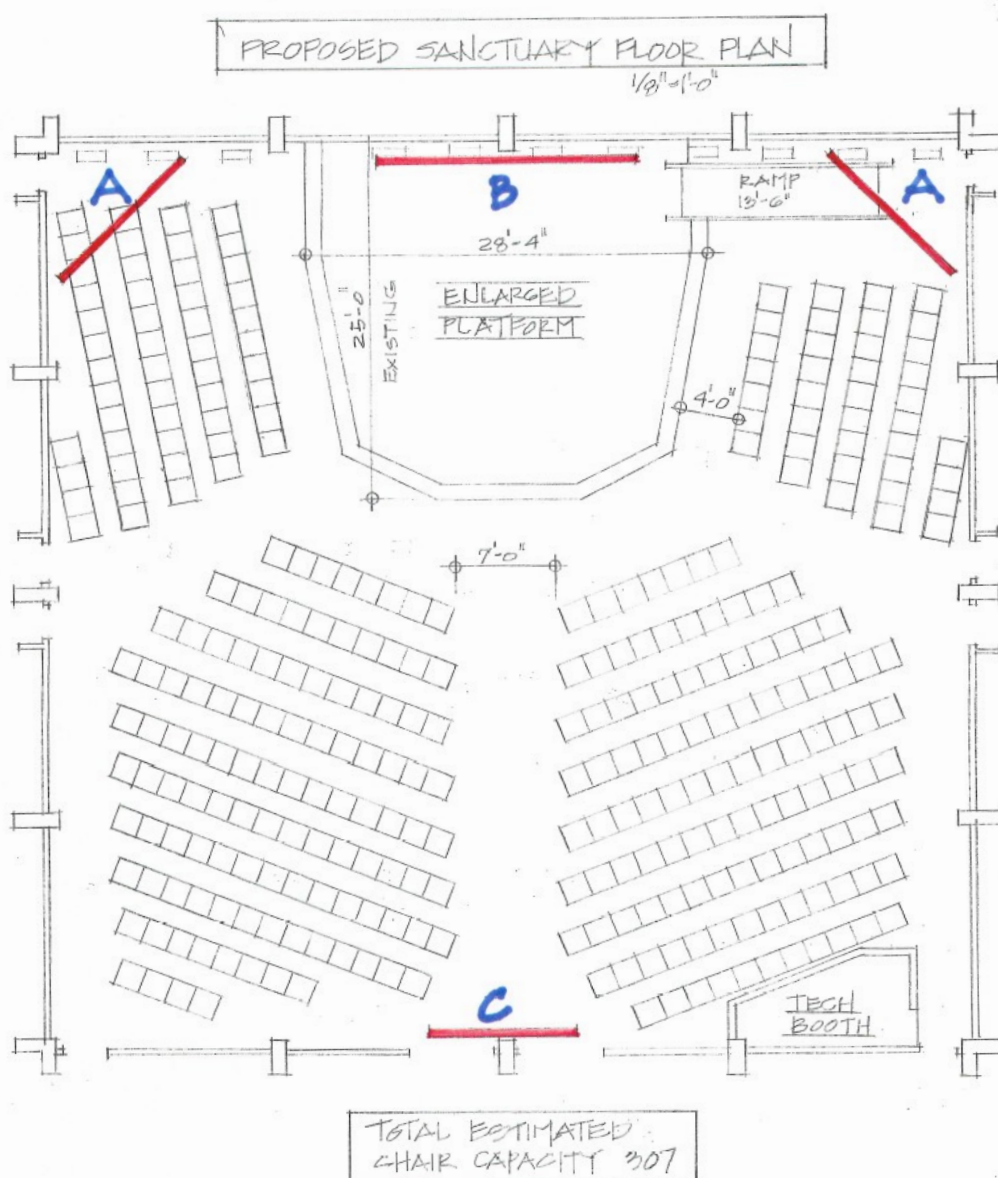
Holy Cross has contracted with the company, Churchfront, to receive coaching and training for our Worship Ministries, in addition to guidance throughout the proposed sanctuary renovation project (see *Council Corner* on p. 7).

The future of Holy Cross is an exciting adventure for God's glory! Please be praying for God to lead us in this project, and watch for future updates.

**"Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness; tremble before him, all the earth!"**

**Psalm 96:9**

- A** Corner Screen For Display of Service And Videos
- B** Front Display Screen for Visual Images and Video
- C** Rear Confidence Monitor





## WE DON'T CALL IT CONNECTING HOUR FOR NOTHING!



"Share the Dream" is the next topic for Holy Cross' Sunday Morning Adult Connecting Hour. Dr. Martin Luther King told his audience at the Washington Mall in 1963 that he "had a dream". He went on to define just what that dream would look like.

He dreamt of a time when the people of this land would value, understand, and promote love, a clean conscience, justice, freedom, perseverance, and hope. In this video-based Bible Study we will hear excerpts from Dr. King and discuss these principles.

Bill Hutton and Ernie Freudenburg are the facilitators for this Connecting Hour which is introduced on December 10<sup>th</sup> with the session on love. After this, there is a break from the regular Connecting Hour until January 7<sup>th</sup>. We will complete the remaining 5 sessions before Lent begins.

So, why do we call in Connecting Hour? This is our opportunity to participate in spiritual conversation. According to Dwayne McCrary, a team leader for adult ongoing Bible Study at Lifeway Resources, "No one person fully understands all the nuances of every passage, doctrine, or teaching approach. Multiple voices strengthens the final resource." This is our opportunity to join Jesus in conversation as He strengthens us from His Word.

~ Ernie Freudenburg

## COUNCIL CORNER: HIGHLIGHTS FROM YOUR EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Council met on Tue., November 21, 2023.

**Devotions and Prayer:** Continuing our focus on Stewardship for 2023, Pastor Jeff shared a devotion on the Gift of Jesus, from Isaiah 62:1. 'Because I love Zion, I will not keep still. Because my heart yearns for Jerusalem, I cannot remain silent. I will not stop praying for her until her righteousness shines like the dawn and her salvation blazes like a burning torch.' (NLT) Stewardship has been quiet too long; silent stewardship is less than faithful. We can't keep this quiet. Shine the Gospel message and point others to Jesus, giving joyful credit to the Lord. This is visible stewardship.

**Special Guest:** Our new Office Admin, Jessica Kuck, joined us for the beginning of our meeting. Council welcomed Jessica to this new role. Introductions were shared by all.

**Pastor Jeff's Report:** Pastor highlighted the 30 Days of Prayer (Jan. 3 – Feb. 1) in the Sanctuary from 12-12:30pm will focus on evangelism.

**Director of Worship Report:** Cindy Wessel reported that recently she and Brianna Earley joined Tim Heroff and Tim Block, representing CarePortal and Holy Cross at the 'Faith and Community Expo' at the Rochester Event Center.

**Pastor Jordan's Report:** Pastor highlighted he and Katie recently attended a PALS (Post-seminary Applied Learning and Support) retreat at Camp Omega.

**Treasurer's Report:** Roger Lindal reported general fund giving for October was \$77,349 and expenses were \$51,217. October receipts were \$15,470/week, which is well above the average of \$11,500/week forecast to cover 2023 expenses. This significantly reduced the YTD budget gap, now at (\$8,835). October was mainly benefited by gifts from members who donate quarterly.

**Elders:** Brandon Marsh reported that on October 1, twin sisters Jane and Nora Acton were baptized, and the Rev. Doctor Nathan Meader was a guest speaker at the Connecting Hour and led the Philippian's Conference. New members Bryce Wangen and his son Christian were welcomed on Oct. 22.

**Discipleship:** Sherri Emedo shared that the Greeter's Team is looking for one more substitute greeter couple who would fill in, if needed.

**Ruby's Pantry:** Adam McClung highlighted 396 shares and 18 blessing boxes were distributed on November 11. CarePortal: There are 5 open requests, and a record amount of donations on hand.

**Sanctuary Upgrade:** Council approved the Motion for Holy Cross to enter into a 12-month contract with Churchfront at their quote of \$12,000 to receive their expertise in the Sanctuary renovation project and the training for Holy Cross Worship Ministries teams.

**RCLS:** Dan Johnson reported a snow removal service has been procured; the 80T rooftop unit will be replaced in the summer; two interview teams are being formed (one for Principal, and one for Teacher openings); the RCLS sign on the building facing Elton Hills Drive has been painted.

**Council Discussions:** Topics included the Annual Meeting report; roof and Sanctuary projects; Financial Ministry plan for 2024; Holy Cross 5-year planning workshop (morning of January 27, 2024), and Executive Council openings for 2024 (Vice President, Elder Lead, Outreach Lead, Discipleship Assist Lead, Personnel Lead, and Volunteer Lead). Please prayerfully seek the Lord on these openings to learn if you are being led to serve in one of these roles.

~ Jo Dean, Holy Cross Council Secretary

## December Issue of Fully Alive!

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## Holy Cross Giving Tree 2023

Holy Cross' Giving Tree 2023 will bless  
**Rochester Adult and Teen Challenge** and  
the **Women's Shelter** with items from  
their NEEDs Lists.  
Use QR Code below for more information.

Use this QR code for  
complete instructions.

