

# Fully Alive!

COMMUNICATING AND CELEBRATING THE MISSION AND MINISTRIES OF HOLY CROSS

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“It’s not what you know that will change your neighborhood, but what you do with what you know.”

## A SIMPLE PLAN FOR JOINING JESUS

A Simple Plan for Joining Jesus on His Mission—this was the title of the Discovery Training Seminar that we had at Holy Cross on Saturday, April 20. In that seminar, Rev. Greg and Susan Finke shared about the mission of God and how the process described through the Joining Jesus resources is about making disciples as a lifestyle instead of a program. “The mission of God is not part of what the Church does, it’s the point of what the Church does,” Rev. Finke shared. The Finkes talked about how Jesus’ command to go and make disciples was the last and most notable command that He gave about continuing His ministry on earth. Jesus said *He* would build His church, but He told *us* to make disciples.

As individuals, we were tasked to identify a simple plan of how we would join Jesus on His mission in the lives of the people around us. We were encouraged to pick different ways to connect with our neighbors through activities or intentional interactions and create realistic deadlines for taking action. What encouraged me was that the emphasis was put on God’s activity through us and not on our activity to try and save others. We were asked to do our part and let God do His.

As a congregation, we were encouraged to provide ongoing support and accountability for people as they pursue the Joining Jesus lifestyle. We will do so in three primary ways. First, we are encouraging people to review the five questions that were taught from the Dwelling 114 resources. This means that you may hear about these questions during worship, in LifeGroups, in meetings, etc. Second, we are establishing Missional Community LifeGroups which are launching in place of our Chosen Small Groups. If you would like to lead or attend one of these groups, please look online for more information. Finally, we will be providing a monthly Zoom call for people to connect to receive encouragement, swap stories about their neighboring experiences, and see how God is at work.

Pastor Greg indicated that the number one way to predict the success of implementing the Joining Jesus discipleship lifestyle is the regular and prolonged use of the five questions. Therefore, we are intending on implementing them throughout the life of the church. Are you ready to start internalizing these questions and following up with their accompanying actions? The five questions are:

- 1) Seeking the Kingdom – Look for the “good” the Father has prepared in advance for me to do for people. Where can a little grace be applied?
- 2) Hearing from Jesus – Read the Gospels so I know what Jesus is giving me to believe and do for the good of others. While reading, ask: Know what? So what? Now what?
- 3) Talking with People – What’s the person’s name? What’s their story? What’s Jesus up to in their life?
- 4) Doing Good – How can I be a way something good happens in the life of a person today?
- 5) Ministering through Prayer – Pray for people daily. Pray with people as God gives opportunity.

We are just beginning our Joining Jesus journey, and you will be hearing much more about the 5 questions, blessing every family, our prayer map, and other Joining Jesus resources. Lord willing the Finkes will return for another conference in February of 2025 and we will get the chance to evaluate our progress.

May the Lord bless you as you look for ways to connect with and bless others.

~Pastor Jeff Niederstadt

**DISCIPLESHIP CORNER: I AM A CHILD OF GOD**

“Who are you? Where are you going? Why are you here?” These are the three questions asked of every freshman class by a former college professor at Concordia University, NE, Rev. Dr. Dirk Reek. Dr. Reek vocalized ponderings which ping-ponged inside the head of most every young adult venturing onto campus. Who are you as a new student in a new place? Where are you going tomorrow, next week, in five years? Why are you here now when you want to be there then?

In answer to those questions, Dr. Reek directed young students to their identity in Christ, as we hear in 1 John 3:1. You are a child of the heavenly king. You are going into His world. He is equipping you now for the work that will happen there. At our Joining Jesus seminar last month, Pastor Greg Finke asked nearly identical questions of our church community. Every meeting, gathering, and conversation

stemmed from that foundational reminder, “You are a beloved child of God.”

The conversation doesn’t stop there. Yes, you are a loved child of your heavenly Father. So what? Now what? That’s what our Joining Jesus weekend focused upon. You have the love which Christ has poured out in abundance. The next step for the disciple is to overflow with that love toward all around you.

As children of the Father, we take each day as an opportunity to share a little of what we have in abundance. Yes, He cares deeply for you, and at the same time our Father consistently provides for the sparrows and robins flitting around us. He nurtures and grows new life in gardens and lawns. If He cares for the most ordinary parts of His creation, He cares even more for His beloved people.

The love of our Father is a catalyst leading us to love those around us. As you wake up

today, tomorrow, next week, in five years... ask God, “With whom can I share a little of my abundance?” Then, when those people cross our paths, join Jesus on His mission by sharing a little of His love with them. One person at a time, we will create disciples who believe, “I am a child of God.”

~Pastor Jordan Schut

**“See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are.”**

**1 John 3:1**

**WORSHIP NOTES**



A Choir of All Ages will help make God's praise glorious on Sunday, May 12. Children are practicing on Sunday mornings at Kidz Alive, and Youth and Adults are practicing Thursday evenings at 6:30 pm. It's not too late for YOU to join us. RSVP to Cindy Wessel, [clwessel@holycross-church.org](mailto:clwessel@holycross-church.org).

It's almost time for the beginning of Worship in the Courtyard! Sunday, May 26, is the first date we move outdoors, and the TIME changes to TEN O'CLOCK AM.!

Worship in the Courtyard is a friendly, non-threatening opportunity to invite one or more guests to join you at Holy Cross. Pack up your lawn chair(s), come dressed for the weather\*, and BRING YOUR BIBLE! We'll be studying the Book of Revelation this summer, focusing on The Revelation of Jesus.

Contact Ryan Dean, [ryan@hclc.tv](mailto:ryan@hclc.tv), to learn more about serving on the Worship Technology team. Opportunities include camera operator, sound engineer, and video tech.

Contact Jeanne Block, [womensrace@gmail.com](mailto:womensrace@gmail.com), if you are able to help with the Set-up and Take-down some Sundays this summer.

\*If the weather is questionable, watch [holycross-church.org](http://holycross-church.org), your email, or the "Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Rochester" Facebook page to see if we'll worship indoors or out.



### CHOSEN LIFEGRUUPS RESCHEDULED FOR FALL OF 2024

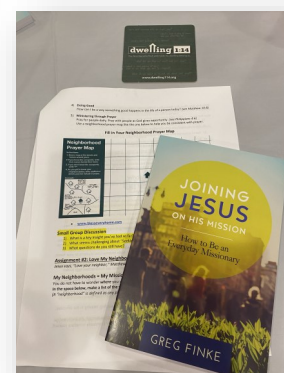
Our Chosen LifeGroups had a tough decision to make this last month. Since the Chosen episodes for Season 4 are not yet available on their app, there is not a good way to show these episodes in the homes of our LifeGroup hosts. The decision was made to reschedule these LifeGroups in the Fall of 2024 starting the week after Labor Day. Not all our LifeGroup hosts who were scheduled for this spring are available to host a group in the Fall. This gives more of us an opportunity to consider serv-

ing as a host site for a Chosen LifeGroup. What do you need? 1. A willingness to open your home to 4 or 6 others to share in the viewing and discussion of these 8 episodes. 2. A smart TV that you can stream these episodes to. 3. An evening in the Fall that is open on your calendar to host a 2 hour LifeGroup for 8 sessions. 4. Allowing the Holy Spirit to provide the rest for the building of His Kingdom.

~ Ernie Freudenburg  
Volunteer Connecting Coordinator



### JOINING JESUS CONFERENCE IN PICTURE



### KIDS, KIDS, AND MORE KIDS!

It's a jungle out there!

So, we've got a bundle of swingin' good times in store for our kids this summer.

Announcing: The Kids 4 Truth end-of-year celebration and coming Great Jungle Journey!

Kids 4 Truth will wrap up for the year on Wednesday, May 29, with a night of fun, games, and friends. Whether you've been with us all year, or you've only heard of Kids 4 Truth through the grapevine, we welcome you to come on out and celebrate the conclusion of a year teaching God's truths to His children. Stay tuned for more

info about how you can be involved next month and in the future.

As one thing wraps up, more opportunities open. Kids 4 Truth and Kidz Alive are near their summer recess, but we are gearing up for the Great Jungle Journey VBS at Holy Cross, evenings of July 22-25! Kids will travel through a jungle safari as they unpack God's true answers to our questions. At this time, we are calling all adults to consider how you could be a part of the adventure, from station leaders to group guides. To find out more, contact Pastor Jordan or Sherri Emedo.



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

**HIGHLIGHTING CONNIE SAWATZKY!**

Connie was baptized in Bird Island, MN, which is near New Ulm. Her parents and her five siblings (Connie is the second youngest) moved to Waterville, MN, where she was confirmed at Trinity Lutheran Church in Waterville. After graduation, Connie worked at Faribault State Schools in a 2-year training for special patient care of the mentally impaired. Connie met her husband, Gerhart Jr., in Faribault and they married a year later. In 1965 while planning for their wedding Connie shared, "I was told that I had 6 months to live due to a lung condition. I kept moving forward, praying to God hoping to get to know what it would be like to be a wife and mother. God did bless me and granted me more than I could have expected!" Gerhart was a sheetmetal contractor. They chose Faribault to raise their son and daughter, Chris and Debra. The family attended Trinity Lutheran in Faribault and their children attended the parochial school through 8th grade. Some fun activities included snowmobiling, fishing, and hunting. Connie's adventurous side has found her in a hot air balloon, and parasailing in Mexico. Life happens. Connie moved to Kentucky and worked as a secretary for Western KY University, managed a clothing store, and later learned real estate. She was licensed in Kentucky and Ohio working with her sister.



Connie chose to relocate to Rochester to be nearer her grown children. Connie is blessed with 10 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren! Connie's favorite restaurants are Twigs and Victoria's. They both offer delicious gluten-free meals.

Why Holy Cross? Connie shared, "Because I had never felt so welcome ... the greetings, the hugs, the unconditional acceptance." She continued that she felt alone when visiting other churches. Psalm 23 resonates strongly for Connie because "It makes me feel strong and brave knowing that He walks beside me. That no matter what the outcome is, He is there with me and this simply brings me to tears." What incredible love the Lord has for us! While in Faribault, Connie organized a huge community benefit to raise funds for a friend who had blood cancer. In Rochester, she has volunteered at Holy Cross VBS, Dorothy Day House, and helps prepare the Fully Alive newsletters to be mailed.

Reflecting that life presents drama and chaos at times, Connie has seen God working His good throughout. One example was the time God protected her while driving; Connie's check-engine light went on so she pulled off the highway into a small town and pulled over. The light went off so she drove through this small town and re-entered onto the highway at the other end of town, where she noticed a very recent car accident. Connie is sure God used this detour to spare her; it could have been her. Connie has seen the Lord's love throughout her life and is so grateful.

**SUMMER FAMILY KICKOFF**

**What:**  
Food and games for the entire family

**When:**  
Sunday, May 19, 2024, immediately after Connecting Hour

**Where:**  
The Courtyard and outdoor areas around Holy Cross

as corn hole, Mohlke, giant Connect Four, and more. Lunch will be served by our youth at Holy Cross, with a free will offering to support them in the upcoming servant event trip. Bring your family, invite your friends, and plan to enjoy the outdoors with us on May 19.



Get ready to kick off the coming summer season with an outdoor extravaganza at Holy Cross. Join us after Connecting Hour for lunch and games around our church building. We will have outdoor games such

In case of rain, we will move inside to the Parish Hall. Feel free to bring your favorite board game(s) in the event of inclement weather.



**POTENTIAL SANCTUARY UPGRADE UPDATE**

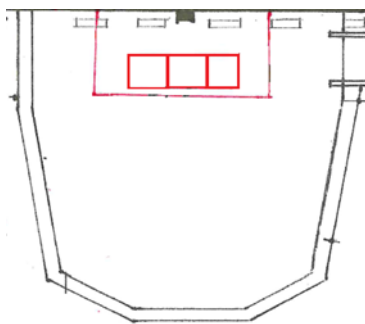
The following is a quote from 1971, made by the architectural designers of Holy Cross' current sanctuary:

"The architectural treatment of the nave is simple and honest and planned to give flexibility for use. Chancel furniture, for instance, is designed to be portable so that it can be removed and the chancel platform be free for Christian drama, concerts, etc. Materials and colors were selected to create an atmosphere of honesty, warmth, and friendliness. It should be remembered that the building alone certainly doesn't

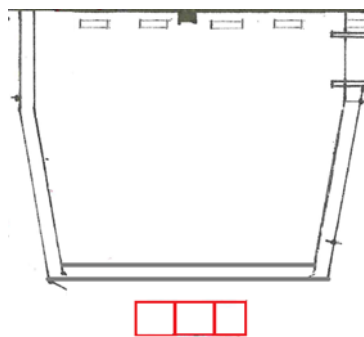
make a church. It does, however, provide the physical setting in which believers can gather and be inspired to worship, fellowship, and be renewed to go out and serve. That makes a church."

Keeping in mind the original intention for flexibility, the following are some possibilities for the placement of the altar pieces on the enlarged platform:

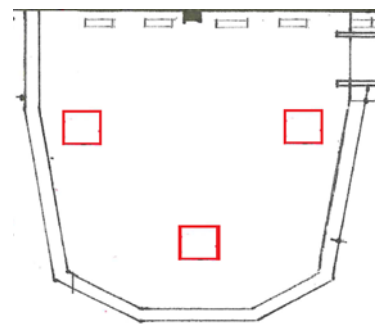
**"Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ."  
1 Peter 1:13**



North – Pieces Together



South – Pieces Together



Pieces Separated

Square footage considerations:

Current Platform	Current Space for PraiseHym	Proposed Platform
400 ft <sup>2</sup>	375 ft <sup>2</sup>	Entire platform: 700 ft <sup>2</sup> Minus raised portion: 600 ft <sup>2</sup> Front portion only: 500 ft <sup>2</sup>

**PRAYING WITH PERSISTENCE**

There are many places in the Bible where God encourages us to pray for what we want or need. It says in 1 John 5:14, "And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us." Mark 11:24 tells us, "Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours." And 1 Thessalonians 5:17, "pray without ceasing."

God answers our prayers with "Yes", "No" ("My way is better"), or "Wait". Even when we don't see the answer, God desires

for us to always keep on praying. The story of Elijah in I Kings 17 (and in James 5:17-18) gives us a great example of how to persist in prayer even over many years. So we persist in our prayers and do not give up, even if it looks like nothing is happening.

Sometimes we need to keep praying until we see what we are praying for, realizing that the answer may not be what we expected it to look like. We pray with a sense of expectation. We pray again, again, again, again, and again. This is our remind-

er that God is at work. God wants us to keep moving forward in faith even when we see nothing is happening.

Can your faith pass the invisibility test? When you pray for something and you see nothing happen, what is your next move?

To learn more of the role of persistence in prayer, study Luke 18:1, Luke 22: 41-44, Romans 12:12, Ephesians 6:18, and James 5:1-9. To have others join with you in prayer, please submit your prayers to [prayers@holycross-church.org](mailto:prayers@holycross-church.org).

**MARCH TREASURER REPORT**

	March 2024	YTD March 2024	YTD March 2023
General fund receipts	\$62,516	\$139,031	\$143,678
General fund expenses	\$59,726	\$168,937	\$158,323
Inflow/(outflow)	\$2,790	(\$29,906)	\$(14,645)

We made progress at closing the receipts gap in March. March receipts were \$12,503/week, very near the average \$12,750/week forecast needed to cover 2024 budgeted expenses. March expenses were near budget and reflect notable items of \$2,400 for snowplowing and \$2,380 for annual OneChurch software license.

Designated receipts were \$14,969, \$780 for Suresh and \$13,446 for the "Raise the Roof" campaign. Designated expenses

were minimal at \$155.

Care Portal was \$2,225 in and \$1,833 out. Ruby's Pantry was \$9,886 in and \$8,986 out.

Cash Balance and savings are strong with checking at \$91,664 in checking and \$194,063 in savings. We LCEF funds in Certificates of Deposit with LCEF are \$85,418 (Regedahl). Additionally we have \$110,390 investments at Stifel, consisting of \$71,587 in T-Bills and \$38,803 in money market.

**Raise the Roof**

Praise the Lord we exceeded \$50,000 of pledges on Sunday, April 14! Total is \$50,092.

If you haven't given or pledged, note the \$50,000 was a target set assuming using \$100,000 of existing savings. If gifts exceeded \$50,000, Holy Cross would have additional funds for a variety of projects including sealcoating the parking lot, installing air conditioning in the library/office area, re-grading and paving the rear parking area, and funds for the sanctuary remodel. So don't hesitate to continue to add to Raise the Roof, as the needs are many.

**MISSIONS: HUTTONS IN COSTA RICA**

The Hutton family is still hard at work with their ministry in Costa Rica, but lately their days have been quite different. Their family has entered a new season of ministry. They are still in relationship with local people, but their direct involvement with the high school and teenagers is no longer their main focus. Ethan has been working hard to train up the LightHouse team in the mission and vision of LightHouse in order to maximize ministry growth and Gospel proclamation. While many of these adjustments have been bittersweet and involved some pretty intense grieving, they rejoice in our unchanging God!

Amanda has transitioned her focus primarily to homeschooling and homemaking, prioritizing their family's health and well-being to sustain their ministry. Additionally, she is actively involved in the Parrita community, supporting local leaders and initiating programs like Vidas Jovenes, aimed at assisting teen moms. Amanda is studying Trauma and Resiliency with Concordia University, seeking to enhance her ability to support the Parrita communities and main-

tain her teaching license. This new journey presents challenges, but Amanda's presence continues to positively impact the lives of many, reflecting God's enduring love through her actions.

The LightHouse team is growing. Ethan visits to provide the team with training, evaluation, and feedback and for the occasional meeting with the administration. The LightHouse team provides English language practice sessions for 9th and 10th-grade students every other week, fostering language skills. Additionally, during lunch breaks, they organize engaging activities centered on instilling essential values, promoting social development, and fostering resilience among students. These initiatives not only address significant social needs but also initiate meaningful connections with both students and staff. Through these relationships, the groundwork for impactful Gospel proclamation is laid.

However, challenges persist, as gang violence plagues the Parrita community. The Huttons offer support and prayers, seeking

to spread hope amidst tragedy. Please pray that their team can learn what it means to boldly proclaim the Gospel into the lives of those in the Parrita community and to walk with students, staff, and their families during these times.

Your financial gifts enable the life transforming impact of the Gospel message being shared through the Hutton Family and LightHouse.



**SAINTS ALIVE SENIOR MINISTRY PLANS FOR MAY**

Saints Alive is the title given to our senior ministry which was relaunched just 2 months ago. At our 2nd Thursday 10 am gathering in April we focused on grandparenting. We will be given a tour of 125 Live at Elton Hills and Broadway on May 9 at 11 am. The senior population in Rochester is served by this facility with social and fitness programs. Please plan to meet at 125 Live for this special Holy Cross tour by entering the upper level. This tour will take about an hour, and then those who want lunch together can decide where to go.



For all in the congregation! Another Saints Alive sponsored activity for May is a Chester Woods hike to the dam. Mark your calendar for the evening of Thursday, May 23 at 5:30 pm. The meeting spot will be the Holy Cross parking lot where carpooling will be arranged. An alternate meeting spot is the boat ramp parking lot at Chester Woods County Park located on Highway 14, 6 miles east of Rochester Community and Technical College. Come prepared with a sack supper, your favorite hiking stick, and hiking shoes to enjoy overlooking Chester Lake Reservoir. The hike is 2 miles round trip and is mostly level along maintained walking paths. Park transportation to the dam overlook will be

provided only for those with limited mobility. At the dam overlook we will enjoy our sack supper and have a faith discussion about God’s handiwork in nature. In case the weather does not cooperate, the event will be rescheduled for May 30. Watch your email and worship folder announcements for further details.

~ Ernie Freudenburg



**COUNCIL CORNER: HIGHLIGHTS FROM YOUR EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Council met on Tuesday, April 16, 2024

**Devotions and Prayer:** Our focus for Holy Cross in 2024 is evangelism. Pastor Jeff shared the devotion ‘Hide & Seek’, based on Luke 15:1-7 and Genesis 3:9. God called out “Where are you?” to Adam and Eve after they’d hidden with shame. The consequence of sin is an alienation from God. In Luke, Jesus shared that the shepherd would leave the 99 to search for that one lost sheep. The spiritually lost may try to hide, but God sees all. We are encouraged to join Jesus on His mission for the lost.

- Attendance figures reported for worship services in March: An average of 148 in person, a week, which includes two services on Easter Sunday. Online units worshipping via hclc.tv averaged 28. The two Holy Week evening services averaged 61 each.

- Outreach Ministry: HC April 13 **Ruby’s Pop-up Pantry** distributed 399 shares; 257 vehicles drove through. **Care-Portal** met 20 requests in March, serving 59 children. CarePortal Community Gathering: May 7 at 7 pm at HC. Next Chapter Ministries Gala: May 10 at 6 pm at the Rochester International Event Center.
- Trustees (aka Facilities Team): The Courtyard area is being prepared for the beginning of Worship in the Courtyard (May 26). Conduit (electrical) and hosing (irrigation) are being installed; the ground will then be leveled, and sodding will be laid. The North parking lot needs repair. It was determined to postpone the replacement of the heating and addition of a mini-split AC for the Conference/Office Room. Parking lot signage project has been completed at the entrance and exit.
- RCLS: Two teachers have accepted a call to RCLS! There are two more teacher openings. A call has been extended to a Principal candidate. The RCLS Blue and White night was a great success, noting a higher attendance and many new families participating. The gym floor was repaired over spring break.
- HC Planning Workshop Follow-up: the Team shared their work and progress on the ‘Big Heavenly Audacious Goal’ (BHAG). Patty Clancy and Bryant Fry attended the Council meeting as guests. More to come soon on Holy Cross’ exciting BHAG; may God be glorified!

~ Jo Dean, Holy Cross Council Secretary

**May Issue of Fully Alive!**

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**HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH**

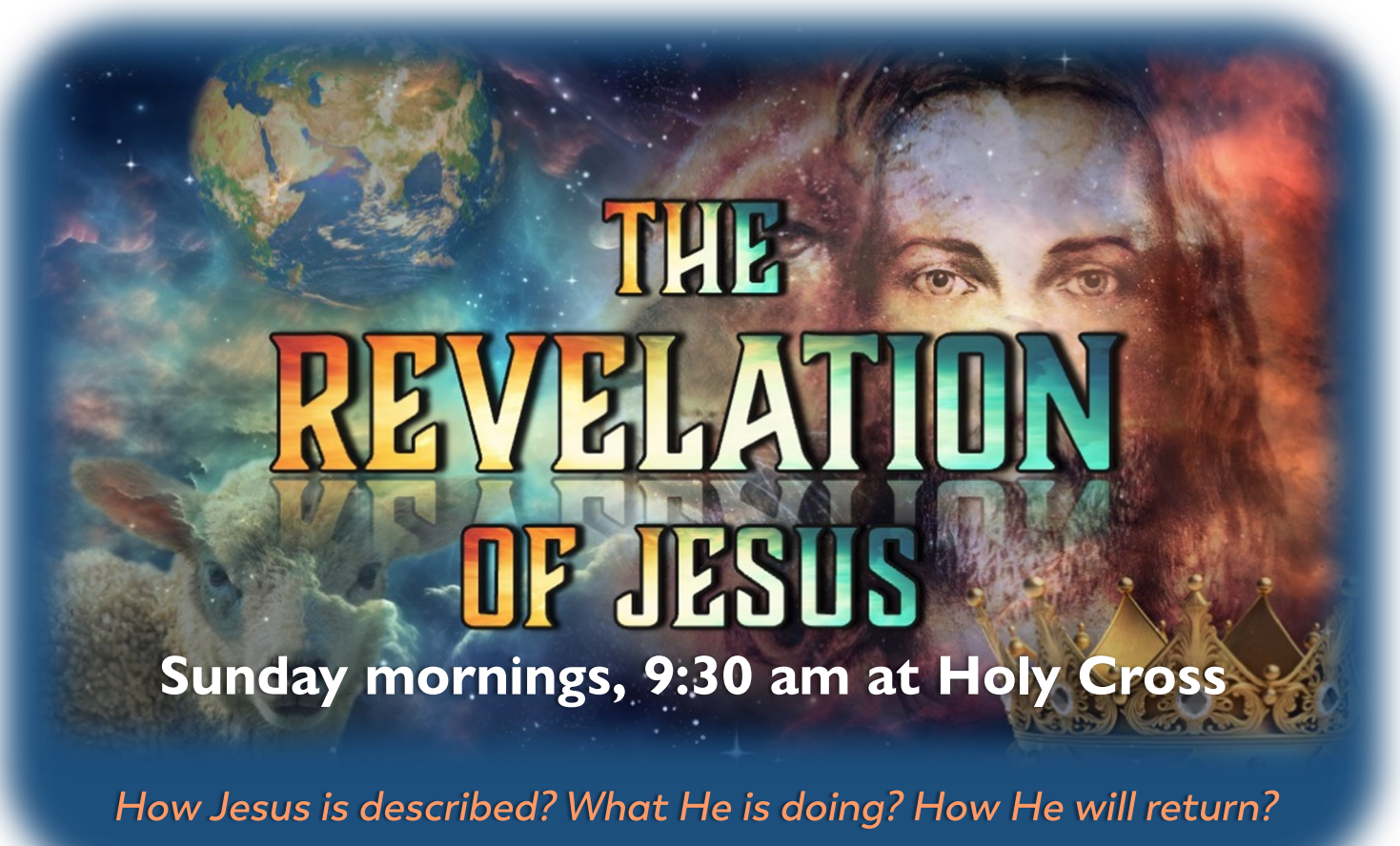
2703 9th Avenue NW  
Rochester MN 55901

Phone: 507.289.1354

Fax: 507.289.4815

Email: [info@holycross-church.org](mailto:info@holycross-church.org)

Website: [www.holycross-church.org](http://www.holycross-church.org)



**THE  
REVELATION  
OF JESUS**

**Sunday mornings, 9:30 am at Holy Cross**

*How Jesus is described? What He is doing? How He will return?*