

*Our mission statement:
Celebrating God's love
by worshipping God,
caring for each other,
and serving in community.*

Crossties

*"Sharing the
Ointment
for Jesus' Feet,
Giving God
our Very Best"
Cf. John 12:3*

December
2010

Holy Cross Lutheran Church

Vol. 16 No. 12



BERGY'S BABBLE: WAKE AWAKE

A back issue of *Brain/Mind Bulletin*, reports that there is negative correlation between suspiciousness and longevity. Those who scored high on suspiciousness, cynicism, and hostility died sooner than all others. High mortality among those with Loser Scripts remained constant when compared by age, sex, previous health, diet, and "bad habits." Those who scored highest on hostility had a death rate more than six times higher than others. Better not say, "Bah, humbug!"

In a related study, those who scored high on 'mental health' generally had a number of 'illusory' beliefs. Among the common illusions of the mentally healthy were: overly positive views of themselves, convenient forgetting of negative facts and experiences, illusory beliefs about having more control than is apparent, unrealistic optimism about self and the future in general, and abnormal cheerfulness. One is tempted to pose the question: Would you want to wallow in those kinds of illusions or would you rather stick to hard realism and die sooner than those deluded fools? Would you rather live in Advent watchfulness with joy and hope for the future, or would you rather hunker down in defense against a harsh cruel world? Both options can be true. It is up to the individual to decide which reality to embrace.

Each of us has our own individual point of view. For the sake of visualization, let's call it a reality tunnel. We also share a larger overlapping reality tunnel with our peers. The elaboration of reality tunnels can reach extremes of creativity, in which a person 'invents' a totally new and individualized gloss on the whole of existence. Such great creators will usually either get ostracized and maybe thrown into mental hospitals, or win Nobel Prizes.

It depends on how much skill they have at selling their new vision to others. Some have been persecuted and incarcerated, and then later recognized as great scientific pioneers like Semmelweiss, the first physician to suggest and insist that surgeons wash their hands before operating.

Whenever the Divine Child within us makes itself known, attack from the Herods, within and without, is not far behind. New life, including new psychological life, is always fragile. When we feel this new energy manifesting within us we need to move to protect it, because it will be attacked.

Much of our perception of reality is shaped by the verbal and visual media that surround us. The printing press helped to shape a new and unique cultural reality that became the United States of America. In the 1700's, America boasted the highest ever, (in the world, and in known history) literacy rate. Literacy is estimated at 90% in the mid to late 1700's. The American Revolution was fought as much with pen as with musket. Thomas Paine's, *Common Sense* sold 400,000 copies in a population of 3 million. The only communication event in today's America that produces that much collective attention is the Superbowl. Our pervasive reality tunnel today is shaped primarily by the television and other ubiquitous screens.

Don't get me wrong. I enjoy television. It is fun to study the consensus world that is portrayed for us, the universe of manufactured reality to which we are compelled to subscribe and aspire. News obsessions are always fun. English royalty is always a good topic. After the first 24 hours had you yet heard enough about the engagement of Wills and Kate? Well, we have an undisclosed amount of months before the wedding so buckle your seat belts. Will there also be a coronation? How will this all fit in with the 2012 Olympics? So much to worry about. In the meantime, forget about real news of peaceful empires being toppled by totalitarian regimes. The Kardashian family better come up with some new stuff pretty soon, or we might have to face the grim reality of finally becoming aware of the very real worldwide persecution of Jews and Christians, and that's not pretty..

What if you discovered that the style of news programming that is dominant today is based on the style and program ratings of the successful afternoon soap operas?

Discrete-unrelated-events-occasionally-returned-to-if-the-“story”-still sells, sell! (I apologize for that last sentence. There’s a noun in there but I can’t find it. I’ll never gripe about St. Paul’s grammar again!)

“And now a word from our sponsor.” “Buy more now.”

“And now this item...” “POSSESSED BURMESE TRIPLET YETIS CRANIALY CONJOINED CRUSHED BY SPEEDING GLACIER IN K-2 ATTEMPT.” “More at ten.”

Internal meaning and coherency is not the object. Getting us to watch tomorrow is. Don’t you want to find out more about those yetis? Similarly, you can watch on Friday and Monday and pretty much get the whole week in a capsule, the assumption being that real news doesn’t happen much on the weekend.

I love the commercials best. They are a glimpse into an amazing world. Today, a twenty-second commercial is about average in length, a brash and startling structure of communication that promises instant therapy. The commercial asks us to believe that all problems are solvable, that they are solvable fast, and that they are solvable fast through the beneficent interventions of technology, techniques, and chemistry. What’s more, their literary device is the parable. The parables of “The Ring Around the Collar,” “The Lost Traveler’s Checks,” and “The Phone Call From Faraway Family Member” have tremendous emotional power, and like the Biblical parables are unambiguously meant to teach us something. The commercial parables are not really about products. No more than the story of Jonah is about whale anatomy. The products are shells for the true message which is along the lines of “You Can Fix Yourself,” “It’s Almost Free,” and “Who Needs God?”

It is said that one surefire test to determine whether or not one has a substance abuse problem is simply to try to abstain from the substance in question for 90 days. If you can without discomfort or horrendous cravings, you’re probably not addicted. Consider the screen.

No drug in history has so quickly or completely isolated the entire culture of its users from contact with reality, and no drug in history has so completely succeeded in remaking in its own image the values of the culture that it has infected. The sad truth is that our collective concept of reality can become so fragile that it will collapse in a matter of days if we do not have continual spot announcements reminding us of who we are, and what is true. That's why "brainwashing" with simple isolation is so easy.

We are an ADVENT(urous) community that proclaims that the reality of God is the true one. We gather together to embody that tribal reassurance we need which affirms our relationship to God and to one another. Missing regular worship could be hazardous to your reality!! "Wake, awake, for night is flying, the watchmen on the heights are crying; awake, Jerusalem at last."

See you in worship!

Rev. Jim Berggren



Reminder



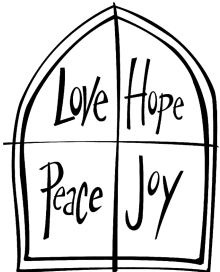
CHURCH CHRISTMAS PARTY

DECEMBER 5th

Please mark **December 5th** on your calendars. On that date there will be a **Congregational Meeting** to approve the budget for 2011 and to decide if an amendment should be added to the constitution regarding the election of a secretary to the Holy Cross Council. This meeting will begin at 10:15 a.m. following the morning service.

Following the meeting there will be a Christmas pot-luck luncheon in the Family Life Center with various entertainments and the singing of Christmas songs. I do hope that you will make plans to attend. A very good way to prepare for the celebration of the birth of our Savior.

Worship Schedule



Advent



A d v e n t



And he will
be called...
Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6

ADVENT SERVICES

Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.

December 1, 8 and 15

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

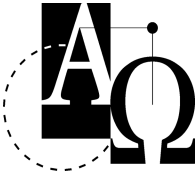
6:00 pm English

7:45 pm Spanish

11:00 pm English



December 2010



The Alpha & Omega Neighborhood Circle will hold their Annual Christmas Party for members and their guests on Sunday, **December 12**, 2010 at 5:00 P.M. at Holy Cross Lutheran Church in the Family Life Center. Don't forget gift for game!! Lucy Candler 713-460-2023



BRUNCH BUNCH

Brunch Bunch is meeting on the 3rd Sunday of the month at 11:45am. Our next meeting is Sunday, **December 19**, at Shade @ 19th and Yale in the Heights.

Call Judy Hungerford by Fri., Dec. 17 for reservations 713.880.5854

Please also mark these dates and places:

Jan. 16...Piattos on Westheimer, a few blocks west of Cantina Laredo

Feb. 20...Brennans...a belated valentine's gift to us!

Mar. 20...Brio Tuscan Grill in City Center @ Town & Country

Thanks and Hugs,

Judy Hungerford

Rejoice in the Glory OF CHRISTMAS

MUGS FOR CHRISTMAS

Once again, it is “fill the mugs” time for the Adult Protection Service. We will be meeting in the Family Life Center after church (10—11:30 am) on Sunday, **December 12**. Everyone is invited to help. All necessary items will be provided: mugs, candy, ribbons and paper. If you have questions, call Barbara Sledge (713) 465-4554. Thank you!



ORDER YOUR POINSETTIA

We will be taking orders for Poinsettias in the Atrium before and after Worship.

The Poinsettias are used to decorate the Sanctuary and Narthex area for Christmas.

They may be purchased
To the Glory of God,
In Honor of a Loved One or
In Memory of a Loved One.

You may pick up your Poinsettia after the last Christmas Eve Service.

The cost is \$8.00.

Your participation in preparing our church for the Christmas Season is greatly appreciated.

Thank You! — Sharon Wagner

THE STEPHEN MINISTRY CONNECTION
CHRIST CARING THROUGH PEOPLE

*A Joyous and
Peaceful Season*

It's December already, and our thoughts, of course, immediately fly to that most precious of our Christian traditions – Christmas. A time of joy and celebration. But also a time of poignant memories and a renewed sense of loss for those of us who will be experiencing “the holidays” for the first time without a loved one.

Remember these friends in your prayers. While Stephen Ministers are ready and available to walk with these grieving souls through a difficult time, we're not the only ones who can afford solace and comfort. Include them in your prayers, share moments of remembrance, make phone calls of comfort. Love and remember not only those who are gone, but those who remain.

As always, we at Stephen Ministry stand ready to anyone who feels the need of such comfort and assurance. Let us help.

Please contact Pastor Jim, AIM Davidson, or me and we'll be with you.

God's blessing,

Marge Carroll
Stephen Ministry Coordinator





December 2010

Holy Cross members celebrating birthdays this month:

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| 01 Abraham Samano | 19 Susan Cook |
| 03 Gerardo Rivera | Barbara Hopkins |
| 04 Donna Green | 22 Hallie Schaper |
| Rolando Morales | Ingrid Alvarado |
| 06 Chris Seveney | Emily Ammons |
| Arturo Alemon | 23 Noel Giesecke |
| 07 Russell Schulze | 24 Elvira Landaverde |
| 08 Mario Velázquez | 26 Jodi Byerly |
| 11 Lisa Aronoff | Horacio Gómez |
| 13 Doris Wahlberg | 27 Suzanne Doler |
| 14 Laura Byerly | Jeremiah Martinez |
| 16 Ted Flick | 31 Virginia Stuart |
| 18 Alexa Abad | Scott Green |
| Emerson Aronoff | |

*If your name is not listed or if this is incorrect information
please let me know so that the list can be corrected.*

Bettye Raschke

Jesus is the Reason for the Season

Just A Reminder



News from

THE BEREAVEMENT COMMITTEE

Effective immediately, for each Funeral or Memorial Service, we will be offering as refreshments, coffee, cake, punch, and cookies. We will also be responsible for set-up, serving and clean-up. Should the families of the bereaved wish a meal served, it will be catered at their own expense and they will need to take responsibility for those arrangements. In this case, we will still be available for set-up and clean-up if needed.

**Have a
Blessed
Christmas
Season**




From the staff



November

Altar Flowers

- 07
- 14 Calvin & Tillie Remert
Dottie Taylor
Gloria Guilfoyle
- 21 WELCA
- 28 Betty Nichols

SUNSHINE SAINTS		REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS							
Remember in prayer the homebound, disabled, long-term ill, and prolonged recovering.		Men and women who serve our country in the military and law enforcement.							
Ella Brezina Ora Dell Dittmar Betty Dodson Doris Anne Drosche Sig Ellerman Harold Finstad	Nancy Mendel Doris Pannell Doris Polker Dorothy Storenski Sue Vogt Roselain Larson	Ed Cooper Carol Kirsch María Samano Harold Finstad Roberta Hall Emilie Oevermann Bettye Raschke	Russell Schulze Lucy Candler Ruby Schaper Jim Peterson 						
<p align="center">Prayer Chain <u>Telephone and E-mail</u></p> <p>Prayer chain requests and anyone who would like to be added to the telephone or e-mail Prayer Chain can notify: Alma Laubenberg 713-996-7479 or <i>email</i>: albob1948@yahoo.com</p> <p align="center"><i>In Our Thoughts & Prayers</i> </p>		<p align="center">Treasurer's Report</p>  <p align="center">If you have any questions call Wayne Schaper, Sr. at (713) 465-5206.</p> <p align="center"><u>OCTOBER 2010</u></p> <table> <tr> <td>Receipts</td> <td>\$ 39,892.⁰⁸</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Expenses</td> <td><u>34,556.⁶⁰</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Balance</td> <td><u>\$ 5,335.⁴⁸</u></td> </tr> </table> <p>Operational receipts year to date received \$ 347,448.³³ Expenditures year to date <u>349,511.⁹⁹</u> Balance < <u>\$ 2,063.⁶⁶></u></p>		Receipts	\$ 39,892. ⁰⁸	Expenses	<u>34,556.⁶⁰</u>	Balance	<u>\$ 5,335.⁴⁸</u>
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Expenses	<u>34,556.⁶⁰</u>								
Balance	<u>\$ 5,335.⁴⁸</u>								
<p align="center">CHURCH OFFICE HOURS</p> <p><u>Monday - Thursday</u> 8:30 am - 4:30 pm <u>Friday</u> 8:30 am - 2:30 pm</p>	<p align="center">Holy Cross Lutheran Church's E-MAIL address is: hclc@holycross.us</p>	<p align="center">AVERAGE ATTENDANCE</p> <p align="center">SERVICES - OCTOBER 2010</p> <p align="center">English: 151 — Spanish: 164</p>							
<p>You may sign up for Altar Flowers in the Narthex. Suggested donation is \$40.⁰⁰ and \$8.⁰⁰ for a rose.</p>									

Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Spring Branch

A Congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

7901 Westview Dr. — Houston, Texas 77055

Tel. (713) 686-8253 Fax (713) 686-9095

E-mail : hclc@holycross.us

Web Site: www.holycross.us

“Holy Cross Lutheran Church is a community of Christians gathered by God’s grace and reaching out through God’s love.”

TELEPHONE EXTENSIONS

100	Church Office
101	Sussy Basurto Office Manager & Events Coordinator
103	Rev. Jim Berggren Senior Pastor
104	Rev. Jhon J. Arroyave Hispanic Pastor
105	Karen Davidson Associate In Ministry
107	Financial Office
108	Stephen Ministry Office
109	Family Life Center
110	Nursery
111	Volunteer Office

SATURDAY INFORMAL SERVICE

6:00 p.m. — Narthex

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICES

English Service : 9:00 a.m.

Sunday School : 10:30—11:15 a.m.

Spanish Service: 10:30 a.m.

Estudio Bíblico y Escuela Dominical

11:30 a.m.—12:15 p.m.

YOUR CHURCH STAFF

- † Rev. Jim Berggren — Senior Pastor
email : jberggren@holycross.us
- † Jhon Jairo Arroyave — Hispanic Pastor
email : jojave38@hotmail.com
- † Karen Davidson — Associate In Ministry
email : kdavidson@holycross.us
- † Sussy Basurto — Office Manager
email : hclc@holycross.us
- † Christian Clark — Choir Director
email : cctenor@pdq.net

WORSHIP MUSICIANS

Jana Hodgson Organist
Jo Ann Meeker Pianist
Ann Crick Pianist

EARLY LEARNING CENTER (713) 461-5535

OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION

Bettye Raschke President