

*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*

January
2012

Holy Cross Lutheran Church

Vol. 18 No. 1



BERGY'S BABBLE: NEW GOTTLAND CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

It was the night of the annual Christmas pageant at New Gottland. New Gottland was the one-room country school three-quarters of a mile from home. Yes, I walked there and it wasn't even a mile, and it wasn't uphill either way, because that part of Kansas is flatter than an EEG at the coroner's office, but occasionally it did snow both ways.

Deep thoughts about Christmas were opening a whole new world for me. Having recently discovered the fitted perfections of the rational world of weights and measures, sizes and proportions, I was deeply immersed in the demythologization of Santa Claus and the resacralization of St. Nicholas. I had this much figured out.....The distance from the North Pole to every kid's house in America and back was way too much to travel in the time allotted.....Nobody the size of Dad could fit down any chimney smaller than the Titanic's stacks.....What about sled-runner roof and hoof damage from reindeer that weighed close to half a ton each.....And there are no good antigravity devices for livestock yet, though I could have used one for my milking nemesis, the old gray cow.

Most of the other kids' parents were not too thrilled with this train of thought and the religious righteousness and fanatical ferocity with which I propounded it. "There is no Santa Claus. Your Mom n' Dad give you presents like St. Nicholas. He was the saint for kids and sailors and pond breakers and 'prossitudes'. I think those are people with wooden legs, and he's got camels not reindeer and he's from Turkey, not the North Pole." This is all in one breath the entrance into the information age. One of the attendant problems with this line of thought was that none of the Mission Covenant or Lutheran parents recognized saints.

Also, none of us were real sure where Turkey was but we figured it was close since Schmidt's Turkey Farm was just a few miles away and they provided food for the holidays. We were warned not to hunt rabbits or pheasants near the farm because the rifle reports might cause a turkey stampede, and we always worried about rain, 'cause we heard that all the turkeys were so dumb that they would look up at the sky when it rained and drown. So anyway, this Christmas I was pushing St. Nicholas instead of Santa Claus.

I was a shepherd in the school cantata, having long since passed the cute point for angel. The next and final promotion was to be a wise man, 'cause nobody wanted to be Joseph and have to pretend to be married to a girl.

So Jerry and I got to be shepherds. Immediately, we started agitating to carry our skunks on stage to see Jesus. Jerry had caught them at the start of the school year. Only my skunk, Thumper, was de-scented, having lost her musk glands to the vet the day after a fight with Lady, my dog, over a chicken bone that I slipped under the Sunday dinner table. "Shepherds should have animals," we proclaimed.

The powers and principalities finally consented to letting us bring our dogs since shepherds did have sheep dogs. Of course, leashes would be required. Lady had never seen a leash, so I had to bring Grandpa's dog, which, being registered, had seen a rope at least once.

Herr Sigmund Von Schnapps was a pedigreed badger-hunting standard-sized dachshund with a sullen mean streak toward strangers. He delighted in taking Lady on rat hunts through his tunnels under the out buildings. There Lady would get stuck and begin to scream more like a human than a dog and Dad and I would have to get up in the middle of the night with shovels and dig the dog out or no one in 4 square miles would get any sleep.

The play came off perfectly. Our dogs sat reverently at the manger and the Christ child was adored in everyone's heart and sight.

The final act of the evening was assembling all the children on the stage while Santa Claus came to visit and pass out fruit and candy. I started arguing in a loud whisper, "He's not St. Nicholas so he's not real."

The adults are cheerleading, “Santa Claus is coming. Santa Claus is coming.” The kids are whispering, “He is too, Santa Claus.” I countered, “Santa scares little kids and he doesn’t forgive. St. Nicholas is closer to Jesus!” (Because of regular sinning and my search for loopholes, I was well aware of sources of forgiveness.)

I said, “Will you go along with this? If he’s really Santa, he’ll like animals, right?” That was unanimously agreed upon, “Right!”

About then we hear the sound of sleigh bells and the shout, “Here’s Santa.”

Some guy in a Santa suit bursts in the door shouting “HO, HO, HO.” Everyone is wide-eyed startled, and with gaping mouth I dropped the leash.

It was Herr Sigmund Von Schnapp’s moment of glory, protecting a whole crowd from a white bearded maniac. He streaked across that school room faster than Donner or Blitzen and latched onto Santa’s leg with that deep archetypal genetic certainty that he had bagged the biggest badger in the known universe. Santa’s second set of Ho, Ho, Ho’s collapsed into a great Yeeauuggghh!!!

My case proven, I beamed. The little kids are awestruck. “That really isn’t Santa after all.” The old kids are amused by the chaos but bored. “You mean you are just figuring this out?” I glanced at Mom and Dad. They were painfully struggling not to laugh, and keep a proper death-penalty glare in their eyes. It was a memorable Christmas. Santa cursed that uncontrollable Berggren kid and his Grandpa’s insane dog. Death threats were uttered, but along with Jesus, St. Nicholas, Bishop of Myra, got his day in the icy New Gottland winter night.

Nicholas was there at the First Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D. He had a strong influence in the development of the Nicene Creed.

Nicholas was known as an ultimate gift-giver who expected nothing in return.

Three young women were so poor that they could never get married. Starving, their father was going to sell them into prostitution. Nicholas covered the dowry by throwing 3 bags of gold in the window to redeem the women. This symbol of three bags or balls of gold still marks the outside of pawn shops.

Nicholas begged grain to feed his starving parish and when the sailors with the grain ships got home, none was missing.

Nicholas loved children and made them ginger bread molded in his likeness. To this day some cookie cutters feature the pointed miter of the Bishop's cap on the head of the cookie.

Nicholas was concerned about the welfare of criminals. In "Henry the Eighth," Shakespeare refers to thieves as clerks of St. Nicholas.

Representing Father God, Nicholas was the special patron of barren women. An old way of saying that a woman was pregnant was to say, "She has been to see Nicholas." There are stories of him calming storms at sea and saving shipwrecked sailors.

Bankers, pawnbrokers, girls hoping to marry, wives hoping to have children, prostitutes, boat makers, sailors, vat makers, thieves, prisoners, and children all claim the special patronage of St. Nicholas. The inventory of the people that Jesus and Nicholas loved is the same: Discredited, discounted, evil, lost, helpless, lonely, desperate, dirty, mourning, low class, sick.....in any credible social listing, The Least of These.

Santa Claus is Madison Avenue, a minor figure in the history of commercialism and sainthood both. St. Nicholas is real. He represents to us in human terms, God the Creator and Giver of the Ultimate Gift, Jesus the Christ.

The ancient ritual of gift giving at Christmas time is the reenactment on a personal level of the Gift given by the Father in his Son. Nicholas through his great deeds, teaches us how to give, with no thought of return and out of unquenchable love for all people.

Yes, Virginia, there is a St. Nicholas and he lives in giving through you. Share a wonderful Christmas. It is a truly holy day!

See you in worship.....Bergy



COUNCIL HIGHLIGHTS

DECEMBER 11, 2011



Present were: President Mike Appling, Treasurer Wayne Schaper, Pastor Jim Berggren, AIM Karen Davidson, Pastor Jhon Arroyave, Raymond Aronoff, Alma Laubenberg, Carol Prokofieff, John Stokes, Sharon Wagner, Sandra Williams, Guests - Pat Curran, Chairperson of the Nominating Committee, and Lucy Candler

PASTOR JIM reported that he will begin Confirmation Classes after the first of the year. He will also conduct some Adult Forum Classes. The Wednesday Bible Study Group is growing and is now meeting in the Annex. The Westside Homeless Christmas Party was a tremendous success.

AIM KAREN reported that the Adult Forum is going well. She continues home visits and is pleased that so many lay members are visiting as well.

PASTOR JHON reported he is getting volunteers together to serve coffee and sandwiches in the early morning at 2 locations in Spring Branch.

Pat Curran gave an update from the Nominating Committee. Sandra Williams gave an update on the December 18th Bell Concert.

Wayne reported dead trees have been removed from our property. Carol Prokofieff expressed thanks on behalf of the Food Pantry for HCLC's participation in the Thanksgiving Food Drive.

Council gave approval for Spring Branch Independent School District to use a room in the Annex for Early Voting.

Sharon Wagner

A **WORKDAY** is scheduled on Saturday, **January 21, 2012**, starting at 9:00 a.m. Please see the task list posted on the Building & Grounds Bulletin Board in the FLC. Please look them over and, if you can help, come prepared to work. Thanks!

Stan Crick



ALPHA & OMEGA

Neighborhood Circle will meet at Logans Roadhouse Restaurant, 12950 N. W. Freeway (290) at 4:30 p.m. on **January 8, 2012**. For information call Lucy Candler (713) 460-2023 or Madelyn Price (713) 462-3682.



QUILT DRAWING

We wish to announce that the winner of the 2011 Quilt and pillows is **Julie Kilkenny**. Congratulations Julie! The quilting group thanks you all for your support. Thanks also to the Heavenly Quilters for a job well done.

Ruby Schaper



HCLC DIRECTORIES

We have been advised by Olan-Mills that the final proofs/corrections have been received. HCLC Directories are scheduled for shipment about 30 December 2011 – and should be available for distribution in early 2012.

Those members who ordered additional photos – plus shut-ins and members of the military - will receive complimentary copies. A limited number of directories will also be available to those making a free-will contribution to Holy Cross.

Thanks for your participation – and your patience.

Calvin



FRIENDSHIP CLUB

Our purpose is to get to know one another better through fellowship, and to bond as the senior group that we are. This group was organized in the mid-to-late 50's as the "Couple's Club," soon after the organization of HCLC ... Has continued through the years with a few changes, one being the changing of the name to the "Friendship Club" so that single seniors would feel welcome as well as more comfortable.

We meet in our Family Life Center (Gym) the third Saturday of each month at 4:00 p.m. for games, with a Pot Luck meal being served at 6:30 p.m.

We play table games (generally dominoes or cards), fix and eat good foods, take occasional trips (have to be 50+ to ride the county bus), eat out occasionally, and at times have special entertainment. We welcome new members at any time! For more information, you are invited to call, or feel free to speak with anyone in our group. Would be great to see some new faces among us —so give it some thought.

Hosts for **January 21, 2012**

Bettie Baring	713-895-9961
Alma Laubenberg	713-996-7479
Gloria McGarvey	713-686-3252
Stan Weiss	281-497-1791

Betty Mooney & Sheldon Urwitz 713-465-3235

THE STEPHEN MINISTRY CONNECTION
CHRIST CARING THROUGH PEOPLE

HAPPY NEW YEAR!!

Once again we've turned the calendar page from one year to the next. And once again we look with hope to the New Year, that it will bring better times, fewer problems, more encouragement and success than we have just left in the past. But are we being realistic? It seems we do need the incentive of a clean page to effect changes in our lives. New Year's resolutions are in the wind, and we confidently expect to abide by at least a couple of things we've resolved to improve.

For myself, I resolve, as I admit I have in the past, to be less of a procrastinator, more of a "just do it" kind of person. And I realize that perhaps my failure to fulfill this resolution may well have been that I've relied on my own will to accomplish this. I need to trust in the fact that the Lord is right there with me, if I'll only turn to Him. His strength is my strength.

Consider this in your decision making, as well. Have you decided to work out your problems yourself, or would you be better to turn to Him, to turn to those who are equipped - through Him - to walk with you, to hear your choices or your dilemmas, to open the pathway to His grace? That grace exists for us here and now as well as in our promised eternal life. Your Stephen Ministers are here to help.

Please contact either Pastor Berggren, AIM Karen Davidson, or me to set up an interview to determine if you think we can be of service to you.

We wish you a peaceful and blessed New Year.

God's blessing,

Marge Carroll
Stephen Ministry Coordinator




*Birthdays
of the Month*

January 2012

Holy Cross members celebrating birthdays this month:

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------|----|--------------------------|
| 05 | Elsie Schulze | 23 | Jean Baxter |
| 07 | Helen Jacob | | Kris Drosche |
| | Debra Moore | | William Allcorn |
| 08 | Maureen Fredrickson | 24 | Charles Pustejovsky, Sr. |
| | Chris Abrego | | Clarice Gross |
| 09 | Hiroko Lamont | | Megan Schomburg |
| | Francisco Araiza | 26 | Ernesto Moreno, Jr. |
| 13 | Brenda Duarte | 27 | Betty Nichols |
| 14 | Jan Walker | | Blanca Duarte |
| 16 | Brent Baumann | 28 | Dorothy Byerly |
| | Edwin Pineda | 29 | Jadher Abad |
| 17 | Hartman Caicedo | 30 | Wayne Schaper, Sr. |
| 18 | Frankie Bentancur | | Juan Araiza |
| 19 | Melvin Morales | | |
| 20 | Julia Linn | | |

Altar Flowers



December Altar Flowers

- 04 HCLC —to the Glory of God
- 11 Bill & Bernice Rogge
- 18 Rose Marie Stork
Norma Berg
- 25 Poinsettias decoration



THANK YOU!!!!

Thank you to all who purchased Poinsettias for Christmas.
It was a beautiful celebration of our Lord's Birth.

Sharon Wagner

*I was
hungry
and you
gave me
FOOD*



Thank you for being so generous in participating in the Thanksgiving bags! Holy Cross provided 113 bags for this worthy cause. The Pantry served 593 families (some received 2 bags, depending on the size of the family) over two days with the help of Holy Cross Lutheran Church, St. Mark Lutheran Church, Christ the King Presbyterian Church, Memorial Drive Christian Church, St. Cecilia Catholic Community, and Memorial Drive Presbyterian Church. Many thanks go out to the Holy Cross volunteers, who helped with interviewing, providing coffee for the volunteers, and helped with the distribution.

We couldn't have done it without you!



Carol Prokofieff

Happy New Year!!

READINGS, PSALMS & GOSPEL

JANUARY 2012

DATE	1st READING	PSALM	2nd READING	GOSPEL
01/01/2012	Isaiah 61:10—62:3	148	Galatians 4:4-7	Luke 2:22-40
01/08/2012	Genesis 1:1-5	29	Acts 19:1-7	Mark 1:4-11
01/15/2012	1 Samuel 3:1-10	139:1-6, 13-18	1 Corin. 6:12-20	John 1:43-51
01/22/2012	Jonah 3:1-5, 10	62:5-12	1 Corin. 7:29-31	Mark 1:14-20

SUNSHINE SAINTS		REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS															
Remember in prayer the homebound, disabled, long-term ill, and prolonged recovering.																	
Ella Brezina Ora Dell Dittmar Betty Dodson Doris Anne Drosche Sig Ellerman Nancy Mendel	Doris Pannell Doris Polker Dorothy Storenski Sue Vogt Roselain Larson	Ed Cooper Carol Kirsch Guadalupe Villarreal Vanna Teschner Ben Baring Betty Nichols	Betty Griffin Laura Ruthstrom Gary De Reese Jane Powers Nell Teschner Glen Schwartz Donna Pharries														
<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>: <u>albob1948@yahoo.com</u></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>NOVEMBER 2011</u></p> <table> <tr> <td>Receipts</td> <td>\$ 61,658.²⁷</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Expenses</td> <td><u>41,225.¹⁷</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Balance</td> <td><u>\$ 20,433.¹⁰</u></td> </tr> </table> <table> <tr> <td>Operational receipts</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>year to date received</td> <td>..... \$ 416,869.⁸²</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Expenditures year to date</td> <td>..... <u>410,462.¹⁹</u></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Balance</td> <td>..... <u>\$ 6,407.⁶³</u></td> </tr> </table>		Receipts	\$ 61,658. ²⁷	Expenses	<u>41,225.¹⁷</u>	Balance	<u>\$ 20,433.¹⁰</u>	Operational receipts		year to date received \$ 416,869. ⁸²	Expenditures year to date <u>410,462.¹⁹</u>	Balance <u>\$ 6,407.⁶³</u>
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<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: <u>hclc@holycross.us</u></p>	<p align="center">AVERAGE ATTENDANCE</p> <p align="center">NOVEMBER 2011</p> <p align="center">English Service: 136 Thanksgiving Eve: 14 I Advent service 7:00 p.m.: 14</p> <hr/> <p align="center">Spanish Service: 126</p>															
You may sign up for Altar Flowers in the Narthex. Suggested donation is \$40. ⁰⁰ and \$10. ⁰⁰ for a rose.																	

Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Spring Branch

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

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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		<u>YOUR CHURCH STAFF</u>									
100	Church Office	†	Rev. Jim Berggren — Senior Pastor email : jberggren@holycross.us								
101	Sussy Basurto Office Manager & Events Coordinator		†	Jhon Jairo Arroyave — Hispanic Pastor email : jojave38@hotmail.com							
103	Rev. Jim Berggren		Senior Pastor								
104	Rev. Jhon J. Arroyave		Hispanic Pastor								
105	Karen Davidson		Associate In Ministry email : aimked@gmail.com								
107	Financial Office	†	Sussy Basurto — Office Manager email : hclc@holycross.us								
108	Stephen Ministry Office										
109	Family Life Center										
110	Nursery										
111	Volunteer Office										
SATURDAY INFORMAL SERVICE 6:00 p.m. — Narthex		<u>WORSHIP MUSICIANS</u>									
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.		<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td>Matthew Coffey</td> <td style="text-align: right;">Choir Director</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jana Hodgson</td> <td style="text-align: right;">Organist</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Jo Ann Meeker</td> <td style="text-align: right;">Pianist</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Ann Crick</td> <td style="text-align: right;">Pianist</td> </tr> </table>		Matthew Coffey	Choir Director	Jana Hodgson	Organist	Jo Ann Meeker	Pianist	Ann Crick	Pianist
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		<u>EARLY LEARNING CENTER</u> (713) 461-5535									
		<u>OFFICERS OF THE CONGREGATION</u>									
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