

My Church – My Community – Mailout for March 9th, 2021

One of the few things I remember from confirmation classes is sitting around a fire while the leader asked each of us “what is church?” I gave the obvious answer—where two or three are gathered in my [Christ’s] name from Matthew 18:20.

I have pondered this memory over this last year as we have been sequestered in our homes and not able to gather as we could before. Yes, we have made adjustments. We have had church on the sofa in our pajamas watching and listening to a service. We have communed with God during extended nature walks. We have read the Bible through or worked individually to learn more about Christ. But none of these replace the community of the church.

Community is what binds us together. When we share a meal, when we share prayers in sorrow, and when we praise in times of joy, we are experiencing life together, and in doing so we share in God’s love.

My community have changed many times over my life. I don’t remember the church where my parents were married and I was baptized, but I do remember the church that I grew up in. I knew that building inside and out. The people there were my family. In the church, I learned about God and was confirmed. I also learned how to hotwire a car, but that’s a different story. To the point though, the people I saw on Sunday I also saw during the week. We camped and picnicked together, we celebrated life events together, and we came together to chase cattle or become an emergency babysitter. We were there for each other. That community became an integral part of my life that continues today.

But life goes on, and I moved. After college, I searched for a new church community. I drifted until I found a church in Portland. I was only there for a year—and I only attended regularly to avoid an annoying guy in my apartment complex— but that church welcomed me and reminded me that I was a part of “the Church,” even if I hadn’t found “my” church. When I returned to Salem, I attended a few churches until I found Holy Cross. It was a comfortable fit.

I once again had the community of my church. In this church, I have formed many friendships. I met my husband through this church. I have slept on church floors during youth trips, shared meals, and watched the children of the congregation grow. I raised my children here. And as before, this community spilled into my whole life. Much of my social life revolves around people I met in and through Holy Cross. I have gone to movies, played games, attended sporting events, and shared many meals. This church family has also

fed me when I was ill, picked me up from train stations, and boxed up my house for moving several times. It is my community.

When Doug and I were looking for a new house, we considered other towns, but realized that we were not ready to leave Salem. Our lives revolve around our church and this town. This is our community. However, at some point even this will change. We may retire to Arizona, or need more long-term care than we can give each other in our home. Our friend's lives will also change. Life has a way of moving on. Like the people in the church of my youth, many friendships will endure and some will fade. Even when we don't see or feel the change, it is happening. Our children are growing and leaving the nest. Our mentors and role models are no longer as active, or are no longer with us. Change comes even though we are in the same church. I have lost many friends, but also gained new ones. My community and my church will continue to change. God is the only constant.

Our future will be bright in God's love. -Lorraine Odell

Events for the upcoming Week at Holy Cross – March 9th

Most importantly – please RSVP for **March 14th 9:30 am Worship with Holy Communion, and 10:30 am Annual Meeting!** We need to know our numbers for safety's sake. Wear masks, be socially distanced and don't come if you don't feel well. Thanks. Daylight Savings Time begins today! Spring your clock forward!

Tuesday, March 9th is Property Committee at 10 am, and Finance is at 6:30pm. Wednesday, March 10th at 6 pm We will enjoy Created for Community – a devotional prayer service for Lent. **Here's your link for the Wednesday Lenten Worship (same link every week)**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89578947810?pwd=ZWZWT2NXcjZlNk9rMXRwdm9GTHlzZz09> Meeting ID: 895 7894 7810 Passcode: 611757

Thursday, March 11th we have Bible study - **What is God Saying Today?** We will cover John 3:14-21. Join us at noon in person (socially distanced, masks required) or at 5 pm on Zoom. Topic: What is God Saying today? **05:00 PM**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84055018008?pwd=SlJHN0lkcWhlUVF3aWE4MkEzV1BRdz09> Meeting ID: 840 5501 8008 Passcode: 569519

Every week, you can find our 5 recorded worship elements on our website – www.holycrosslutheran-salem.org or on Facebook. Bless you all in your Lenten journey! Palm Sunday is coming soon – March 28th – and we will worship in the sanctuary at Holy Cross at 9:30 am. Put it on your calendar! – Pastor Patricia+

WORSHIPPING AT HOME WITH HOLY CROSS

Fourth Sunday in Lent

March 14, 2021

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God,
whose voice is upon the waters,
whose mercy is poured out upon all people,
whose goodness cascades over all creation.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin, trusting in the abundant grace of God.
Holy God,

you search us and know us.

You are acquainted with all our ways.

**We confess that our hearts are burdened by sin—
our own sins and the broken systems that bind us.**

**We turn inward, failing to follow
your outward way of love.**

We distrust those who are not like us.

**We exploit the earth and its resources
and fail to consider generations to come.**

Forgive us, gracious God,

for all we have done and left undone.

**Even before the words are on our tongues,
you know them;**

receive them in your divine mercy.

Amen.

How vast is God's grace!

Through the power and promise of † Christ Jesus,
our sins are washed away

and we are claimed as God's own beloved.

Indeed, we are forgiven.

In the wake of God's forgiveness,

we are called to be the beloved community
living out Christ's justice

and the Spirit's reconciling peace.

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN – ELW 715 “Christ Be Our Light”

1 Longing for light, we wait in darkness.
Longing for truth, we turn to you.
Make us your own, your holy people,
light for the world to see.

Refrain

Christ, be our light!
Shine in our hearts.
Shine through the darkness.
Christ, be our light!
Shine in your church gathered today.

2 Longing for peace, our world is troubled.
Longing for hope, many despair.
Your word alone has pow'r to save us.
Make us your living voice. *Refrain*

5 Many the gifts, many the people,
many the hearts that yearn to belong.
Let us be servants to one another,
signs of your kingdom come. *Refrain*

PRAYER OF THE DAY:

O God, rich in mercy, by the humiliation of your Son you lifted up this fallen world and rescued us from the hopelessness of death. Lead us into your light, that all our deeds may reflect your love, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

READINGS AND PSALM

Numbers 21:4-9

The lifting up of the serpent

Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22

You deliver your people from their distress. (*Ps. 107:19*)

Ephesians 2:1-10

Saved by grace through faith for good works

John 3:14-21

The lifting up of the Son of Man

APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. **Amen**

THE PRAYERS of Intercession (see attached prayers)

OFFERING PRAYER

O God, receive these gifts as you receive us:
like a mother receives her child, with arms open wide.
Nourish us anew in your tender care,
and empower us in faithful service
to tend to others with this same love,
through Jesus Christ, our saving grace. **Amen.**

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

When our congregation gathered for the celebration of Holy Communion, we heard again the story of God's mighty acts and of the love shown us in the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. With thanksgiving we remembered that "in the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me. Again, after supper, he took the cup gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me."

The people of our congregation were given assurance of our Lord's presence through the gift of his Holy Spirit. Now we bring to you this same bread of life and this same cup of blessing, that you may be strengthened through your participation in the body of Christ. Jesus said, "I am the bread of life, whoever comes to me shall never hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."

At this time, you may remember the gift of holy communion with your own bread and cup.

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in His grace. **Amen**

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Christ Jesus,
at this table we have feasted on your very life
and are strengthened for our journey.
Send us forth from this banquet
nourished in body and in spirit
to proclaim your good news
and serve others in your name.

Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Lord remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your name, your kingdom come,

your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,

now and forever. Amen.

BLESSING

God the creator strengthen you;

Jesus the beloved fill you;

and the Holy Spirit the comforter † keep you in peace.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Be the light of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

Church and Marketplace - Here in Salem one of the big rites of spring is when Saturday market opens up. In this Covid year, they are opening early, this week actually. I love Saturday market, although there's also a smaller one in Silverton year round that I rarely miss. What's good about a market place? Lots of people selling, different things, often fresh things - Buying and selling, people all around - that's got it's own energy doesn't it? But why is there a marketplace in John chapter 2? This reading from the Gospel is called the Cleansing of the Temple, and its in all 4 gospels, but in John, only John, ¹⁶He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!" Mark's gospel says, "You are making my father's house a den of robbers. That's different. In John Jesus isn't saying, you're cheating people, taking a cut-making them spend too much money on these sacrifices. No, in John Jesus is saying that the very business of the temple - the sacrifices offered - are not of God. In Bible Study this week we talked about this- imagining the temple that amazing edifice newly restored by Herod - Gold on the pillars, the whole thing twice as big as before, so huge retaining walls and more - it was fabulous. the court of the gentiles, where the buying and selling of items suitable for sacrifice, the changing of roman money into temple money appropriate for the purchase of said sacrifice animals. That all happened in the court of the gentiles - and the main workers there - were priests - in their official priestly garb. Yes, I think you might be a little disgusted with that visual, too. Stop making my father's house a marketplace. Then he goes further, when the powerful people in the temple complain, and says, tear down this temple and in 3 days I will rebuild it. What? It took 46 years to build this temple? But John the gospel writer explains that he was speaking of his body as the temple. What are you and I to do with this radical gospel reading smack in the middle of Lent during a Pandemic? This year, when we have fasted from so much of our church life - little or no inperson worship, no singing together, no fellowship time with coffee and cookies as the organ plays the postlude. And we read Jesus telling these priests selling doves for sacrificial use - stop making my father's house a marketplace. Stop doing it this way. Worshipping God was never supposed to be like this. You see, I think john the gospel writer is saying more than don't make a profit off of religion -I think he is saying the way you are practicing your religion is not how God wants you to practice it now. Jesus' point - my body, the scourging, torture and death that my body will go through is the only point. The fact that God will raise that beaten and tortured body from the dead in 3 days is the point. Being a Lutheran is important to me. I've always been kind of proud to be part of a group who, 500 years ago said, the way we're doing church wasn't right. We had drifted from the main point - faith in God, not earning salvation through good works. That's why Jesus died, and his father God raised him, to free us to change the world through following God's Son. Do you think there's a chance that this pandemic has given us another reset point? Do we need church the way we had it before Covid19 threw a monkey wrench into our lives? Have we spent our time enjoying the togetherness of worshipping with like minded people, and failed to address the deep poverty and need of our neighbors? Christianity is practiced in so many ways in our neighborhoods - but we tend to circle the wagons and worship just with people who think like us, or sadly, are the same ethnicity as us. The Exodus passage for this week is the ten commandments. And the 3rd commandment is clear - remember the sabbath day and keep it holy, in remembrance that we serve the creator of the world, who took 6 days to make the heavens and the earth and rested, and saw that it was good on the 7th. What will it look like, after the pandemic, to keep the sabbath day holy? My friends, we have a little time as we get closer every day to the ability to have church worship in the way we did before the Pandemic changed our lives beginning on March 15, 2020. Be in prayer, won't you, and in conversation with other people of faith, and imagine what's next for the church of God, for Holy Cross church in Salem, Oregon? As we follow this man of God, who gave all for our salvation. Amen. - **Pastor Patricia Hughes+**

**Praying together at Holy Cross – March 14, 2021 –
Fourth Sunday of Lent**

Relying on the promises of God, we pray boldly for the church, the world, and all in need. You sent your Son that the world might be saved through him. Inspire the witness of the church throughout the world. Empower missionaries, Bible translators, and ministries of service in your name. Bless our partners in ministry, our ELCA global partner churches, and Young Adults in Global Mission.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

From east to west your steadfast love is shown. Nourish seas and deserts, wilderness areas and cities. Give water to thirsty lands; nurture spring growth that feeds hungry creatures; bless farmers as they prepare for the growing season.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

You sustained your people in the wilderness. Give courage to all who lead in times of crisis and scarce resources. Prosper the work of those who aid victims of famine and drought. Bring peace in places where scarce resources cause violence.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Your mercy endures forever. Deliver all who cry to you, especially those who are hungry or without homes. Give life in places where death seems triumphant; give healing to those who are sick and comfort to those who mourn.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

By grace we have been saved. Fill this congregation to overflowing with that grace, that we show mercy to others. Nourish any in our midst who are hungry, especially children, and bless our ministries of feeding and shelter. Give us patience and courage when the way seems long.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Your Son was lifted up that whoever believes might have eternal life. We praise you for all who have died in Christ. Bring us with all the saints into the fullness of your promises.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

We entrust ourselves and all our prayers to you, O faithful God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.



EASTER DINNER

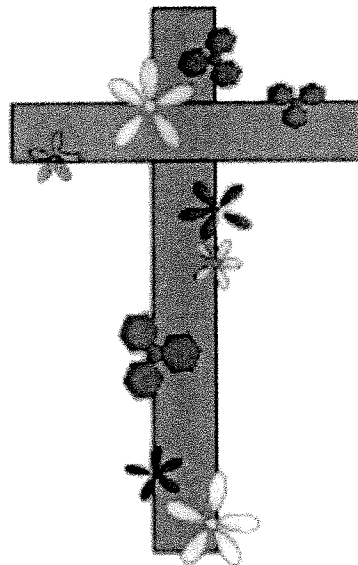
at Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 1998 Lansing

Ave NE, Salem, OR 97301

Dan and Sheila Clausen will be cooking and preparing Easter dinner for the community. The dinner will include ham, potatoes, rolls, green beans, and a dessert

No Indoor Dining! Just Take-Out!

TAKEOUT DINNERS WILL BE AVAILABLE FROM 1 PM TO 2:30 PM ON EASTER DAY (APRIL 4TH)



Please Try to Call and Reserve a Meal By Noon on April 2nd Because We Need To Know How Many Dinners to Prepare To Reserve a Meal, Call the Church at 503 364 6041 and Leave the Following Information:
Name, Number of Meals Needed, Phone Number, And
Address If You Need Your Meal Delivered
We Will Deliver Your Meal To Your Home if You Call the Church And Let Us Know

WONDER WORKER

in this
YEAR

WHEN everything CHANGED,
when we felt
WORRIED AND WEARY

when we wailed and wondered,

YOU GAVE US A PROMISE.

— NOTHING —

can separate us from

YOUR LOVE.

And nothing will be wasted.

WITH YOU AT WORK,

LIGHT, LIFE, LOVE, & LIBERATION

ALWAYS WIN.

amen.