

From your Council President – May 11, 2021

Happy Spring and best wishes to all who mother to others. I hope you had a wonderful weekend. Odds are if you are reading this you received a letter in the past ten days from our Pastor, Patricia Hughes. To quote from her writing;

“Folks, I have made the decision to retire effective August 1, 2021. I know this is probably a surprise to some, and not so much to others.”

While I can say I was “in the know” prior to her letters going out it is still a bit of a shock to see it in print. I thought that I was well past the stages of grief and in Stage 5 (Acceptance) but maybe I am bouncing back to Stage 1 (Denial).

Make no mistake, while losing our Pastor will be hard, we have done it before, and Holy Cross has survived. These past 7+ years of Pastor Patricia’s ministry has seen us become even more connected to those outside of our church and to lose those connections along with our own church family during the COVID pause (15 months and counting) has been doubly painful.

However, there is the bright shining light of Christ showing through and even now it is leading us down many collaborative paths. We have begun to slowly reopen our building to some of our tenants following the Safety & Health best practice protocols and later this month Manantial de Aguas Vivas will hold their first service in our building in over a year!

We will continue to move forward on the projects we have in front of us while beginning the search for our new Pastor and new identity. We have a group working with Family Promise on the sale of the Easter House and vacant lot. We have a draft of a Welcoming Statement and partner commitments that we will vote on later this Spring to become a part of the Reconciling In Christ (RIC) roster of churches.

Your newly installed church council will be talking with our Bishop to determine what steps we can start on and what needs to wait until after August 1st. If you have thoughts about our future and/or are interested in serving on a task force for the Ministry Site Profile or Call Committee please let me know prior to our next Council meeting on Tuesday, May 18th at 6:30 PM.

Pentecost is May 23rd in the Sanctuary! Please RSVP to Janet in the church office if you are planning on attending service and remember to wear RED.

Again, your thoughts are always welcome. Please call or email me directly with any questions or concerns you may have.

Blessing to you, your servant in Christ, Bryan Struve Council President

Events for the upcoming Week at Holy Cross – Mailing out on May 11th



Ascension is This week - Our bible study, "What is God Saying Today" will cover the upcoming Gospel and talk about Ascension!

Luke 24:48-53

⁴⁸You are witnesses of these things. ⁴⁹And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

⁵⁰Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. ⁵¹While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. ⁵²And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; ⁵³and they were continually in the temple blessing God.

We meet in person and on zoom on Thursday, May 13th (noon in person, and 5 pm on zoom) the Gospel for May 16th is John 17:6-19

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84055018008?pwd=SLJHN0lkcWhlUVF3aWE4MkEzV1BRdz09> Meeting ID: 840 5501 8008 Passcode: 569519

Sunday, May 16th Holy Cross is offering *Drive up Communion* at 12 noon.

Church Council will meet NEXT Tuesday (May 18th) at 6:30pm

The Last Big Church Festival of the Year is coming – Pentecost! We will enjoy in person worship **on May 23rd in the Sanctuary at 9:30am to commemorate Pentecost (WEAR RED!) This is the day we remember when The Holy Spirit filled the Disciples and they began to teach all nations!**

Every week, you can find our recorded worship elements on our website – www.holycrosslutheran-salem.org or on Facebook. Bless you all in these beautiful Spring Oregon Days! Please pray for our leadership here at Holy Cross! **Pastor Patricia+**

Chosen and Loved. You were chosen. Did you know that? God chose you. Chose to love you, to cherish you, to care about you. It might be hard to picture the creator of all things choosing you. To love. But God did just that. When you think about all of the creatures who love you, is that a hard thing to visualize? Well, for me, immediately, I think about dogs in my life. They loved me. You can tell, because, well, each in their own way. My dog Sassy is so independent she doesn't really act like any one is her boss, but she has a way of cuddling up to me in the morning, after she's been out. I'll be sitting reading the news, and she'll come up and bump into me, so she can snuggle very close. Children are like that too, at least for awhile, before they grow up into their own individuals. When it isn't as cool to show love like that. Your spouse? Can you picture their love for you as a choice? These aren't easy are they? It's a whole lot easier to think about the reverse – the family, the animals, the friends, who you chose to love. Even God. Do you remember a time when you 'decided' to love God? Some Christians can tell you a lot about that moment in their lives. But for me, it wasn't so much that I decided to love God, but rather to accept that God loved me. The gospel for today is part of a series of reading out of the gospel of John – intimate conversations between Jesus and his disciples. Well really they are more like monologues. Jesus just starts talking and doesn't stop. He has washed the feet of the disciples, saying, a new commandment I give you that you love one another, and then, after dinner, there's a moment where Judas leaves to betray him. Jesus is clearly sad. But then, Jesus and the disciples just keep talking. About love. What do you think about that? Judas is sending him to his death, and Jesus knows it. That love he has for Judas is not gone, I think, but in his grief, he turns to pour his love out and into the disciples which remain. Does that sound familiar? In grief situations, I have often been with families as they chat, and tell stories. The theme is always love, and sometimes laughter.

Love is a confusing thing in our world, all mixed up with infatuation, and desire, and even covetousness. But love itself is not confusing, I think. It's raw, its focused. Jesus' love for the disciples is evident in these passages we read, and you don't have to stretch your imagination to realize that his love for you and me is spoken in these words, too. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. He's talking to me. He's talking to you. You did not choose me but I chose you. Yep, that's for you and me, not just the disciples.

My colleague Brian Stoffregen in Yuma Arizona is someone whose blog I read often. This week, he told a story about kids at middle school. You know how it is when games happen in gym class – two people are picked, and then they pick their team for kickball or whatever the activity is. And usually, they pick the most athletic, the best at that sport so that their team has a chance of winning. But Brian talked about one time when one of the captains decided to change that script. He picked his friend, who wasn't very athletic. And his friend was happy. Then the friend said, pick so and so , he's a great athlete, but instead, the captain picked another guy, who wasn't very good at sports. And then again, until the whole team was full of people who don't get picked very often. And they played the game with all their heart, but they lost anyway. But it didn't matter. It had never been about winning, but about playing. Together. As friends. It sure feels to me like Jesus picked me for a team he knew I wasn't going to be so great at. He didn't pick me to make great baskets, or hit homeruns, or whatever was required. He picked me because he loved me. End of story. And I think it's that way with you too. All of you. Jesus picked you out of love. Because its better to play with people you love. We didn't pick Jesus, my friends, and his way of peace and caring. Jesus picked us. And Our only job is to bask in that love, and to pass it on. Thanks be to God. Amen. – Pastor Patricia Hughes



perfect

Hope for a New Day

Sunday, May 16, 2021

THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Refreshed by the resurrection life we share in Christ,
let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We thank you, risen Christ,
for these waters where you make us new,
leading us from death to life, from tears to joy.
We bless you, risen Christ, that your Spirit comes to us
in the grace-filled waters of rebirth,
like rains to our thirsting earth,
like streams that revive our souls,
like cups of cool water shared with strangers.
Breathe your peace on your church when we hide in fear.
Clothe us with your mercy and forgiveness.
Send us companions on our journey as we share your life.
Make us one, risen Christ.
Cleanse our hearts.
Shower us with life.
To you be given all praise,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God,
now and forever. **Amen.**

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
And also with you.

HYMN OF THE DAY ELW 744 “*Lord Be Glorified*” v. 1 & 2

1 In my life, Lord, be glorified, be glorified;
in my life, Lord, be glorified today.

2 In our song, Lord, be glorified, be glorified;
in our song, Lord, be glorified today.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray.

Gracious and glorious God, you have chosen us as your own, and by the powerful name of Christ you protect us from evil. By your Spirit transform us and your beloved world, that we may find our joy in your Son, 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

First reading: Acts 1:15-17, 21-26

Psalm: Psalm 1

Second Reading: 1 John 5:9-13

Gospel: John 17:6-19

NICENE CREED

With the whole church, let us confess our faith.

We believe in one God,

**the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

**the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,**

**begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation

**he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

**he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,*
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

OFFERING PRAYER

God of love,
You call us beloved children and welcome us to your table.
Receive our lives and the gifts we offer.
Abide with us and send us in service to a suffering world;
For the sake of your beloved Child, Jesus Christ.
Amen.

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

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

Let us pray.

Wellspring of joy,
Through this meal you have put gladness in our hearts.
Satisfy the hunger still around us,
And send us as joyful witnesses,
That your love may bring joy to the hearts of all people,

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name.
Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive them that trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, The power, and the glory, For ever and ever. Amen.

BLESSING

May our glorious God grant you a spirit of wisdom
To know and to love the risen Lord Jesus.
The God of life,
Father, † Son, and Holy Spirit,
bless you now and forever.
Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Be the light of Christ. **Thanks be to God.**

**Praying together at Holy Cross – May 16, 2021 – 7thth
Sunday of Easter**

Alive in the risen Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, we bring our prayers before God who promises to hear us and answer in steadfast love. Holy God, in Christ Jesus the joy of the church is made complete. Root the church in your Word and unify us as Christ's body. Send us into the world as your loving people, ready to testify to your Spirit at work.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Mighty God, the world is your handiwork, displaying your creative impulse. Seas teem with life, forests reach up to praise you, and the mystery of life lies deep in the soil. Guard and keep this world for the well-being of all your creatures.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Gracious Sovereign, those who follow your ways are like trees planted near streams of water. Establish the leaders of nations and all in authority in your grace and truth. Strengthen them, so that the people they serve will have abundant life.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Generous Savior, you befriend those who are sick, suffering, poor, lonely, outcast, rejected, or sick. Grant healing and love to all in need. Give them tangible signs of your steadfast love.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Creator God, here in this community we share the gift of praying, learning, and supporting one another. Give us thankful hearts as we claim the gifts that are unique to us and keep us from being envious of others with different gifts.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

Saving God, your wonderful promise is the gift of eternal life in Jesus. Through the witness of those who have died in you, strengthen us now in this gift of life. We cherish the memory of your saints.

Hear us, O God.

Your mercy is great.

In the hope of new life in Christ, we raise our prayers to you, trusting in your never-ending goodness and mercy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**



**Hope
for a
New
Day**