



Holy Cross Lutheran Church

WARDA, TEXAS - LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

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PO Box 69, Warda TX 78960



THE RANSOMED
of the LORD
SHALL RETURN.

1873-2022

149 Years of God's Grace

Sharing with Everyone the Good News of Salvation Through Jesus Christ!

Divine Service
9:00 a.m.
Holy Communion
1st & 3rd Sundays

Bible Class &
Sunday School
10:15 a.m.

✠ **IN NOMINE JESU** ✠
(In the Name of Jesus)

Welcome to
Holy Cross Lutheran Church
WARDA, TEXAS - LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
PO Box 69 Warda TX 78960
979.242.3333 holycrosswarda.com

Sunday, December 11, 2022

Third Sunday in Advent

GUESTS & VISITORS: Welcome to Holy Cross and to today's worship service. We are glad you are here! Please register your attendance in the Fellowship Book in the pew (be sure to include the name of any children with you today). We invite you to come and worship with us again. If you have any questions, or have an interest in joining Holy Cross, please speak with Pastor or one of our Elders.

IN TODAY'S READINGS:

The Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ Brings True Rejoicing, Even Under the Cross

Sometimes life requires the astonishing patience of Job. Like him, we are to rejoice in the midst of affliction, be grounded in repentance under the cross of Christ, and hope relentlessly in His resurrection, that we might see "*the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful*" (James 5:11). In the promise of the Gospel, therefore, "*be patient*" and "*establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand*" (James 5:7, 8). Like St. John the Baptist, whatever your own kind of prison or suffering may be, call upon Jesus and receive the strength of His Word from those He sends to you. For as "*the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up,*" so is the Good News of Jesus preached to you also (Matt. 11:5). He comes and restores the fortunes of Zion, His Holy Church, so that "*sorrow and sighing shall flee away*" (Is. 35:10).

PRELUDE - *Selected*

THE RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELL

WORDS OF WELCOME

OPENING HYMN

"Hail to the Lord's Anointed"

Hymn 59

[Please stand]

INVOCATION

pg. 5ff

☩ In the name of the Father, and of the ✠ Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

☪ Amen.

Matthew 28:20

CONFESSION OF SINS AND ABSOLUTION

P Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God, our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to grant us forgiveness. *[Hebrews 10:22]*

P Our help is in the name of the Lord.

C **♪ Who made heaven and earth.**

Psalm 124:8

P I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord.

C **♪ And Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.** *Psalm 32:5*

P Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess unto Thee that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against Thee by thought, word, and deed. Wherefore we flee for refuge to Thine infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Thy grace for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C **O most merciful God, who hast given Thine only-begotten Son to die for us, have mercy upon us and for His sake grant us remission of all our sins; and by Thy Holy Spirit increase in us true knowledge of Thee and of Thy will and true obedience to Thy Word, to the end, that by Thy grace, we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

P Almighty God, our heavenly Father, hath had mercy upon us and hath given His only Son to die for us and for His sake forgiveth us all our sins. To them that believe on His name He giveth power to become the sons of God and hath promised them His Holy Spirit. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Grant this, Lord, unto us all.

C **♪ Amen.**

[John 20:19-23]

SERVICE OF THE WORD

INTROIT - Psalm 71:14–18; antiphon: Philippians 4:4

Cantor: Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.

Congregation: Refrain



Re - joice in the Lord al - ways; a - gain I will say, — Re-joice.

I will hope continually and will praise You yet more and more.

*My mouth will tell of Your righteous acts, of Your deeds of salvation all the day long,
for their number is past my knowledge.*

With the mighty deeds of the LORD God I will come; I will remind them of your righteousness, Yours alone.

O God, from my youth You have taught me, and I still proclaim Your wondrous deeds.

*So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to another generation, your power to all those to come.
Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen. Refrain*

KYRIE

C *♪* Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us. *Mark 10:47*

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

C *♪* Glory be to God on high: And on earth peace, good will toward men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we worship Thee, we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee for Thy great glory. O Lord God, heavenly King. God the Father Almighty. O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ; O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father, That takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us. Thou that takest away the sin of the world, receive our prayer. Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy upon us. For Thou only art holy; Thou only art the Lord. Thou only, O Christ, with the Holy Ghost, art most high in the glory of God the Father. Amen. *Luke 2:14; John 1:29*

SALUTATION AND COLLECT FOR THE DAY

P The Lord be with you. *2 Timothy 4:22*

C *♪* And with thy spirit.

P Lord Jesus Christ, we implore You to hear our prayers and to lighten the darkness of our hearts by Your gracious visitation; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C *♪* Amen.

[Please sit]

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Isaiah 35:1-10

¹The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus; ²it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. ³Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴Say to those who have an anxious heart, "Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you." ⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the

tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; ⁷the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. ⁸And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it. It shall belong to those who walk on the way; even if they are fools, they shall not go astray. ⁹No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL

Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:26, alt.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.

Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem.

Behold, your king is coming to you;

righteous and having salvation.

Blessèd is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

From the house of the Lord we bless you.

EPISTLE READING

James 5:7-11

⁷Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. ⁹Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. ¹⁰As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

P This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

[Please stand and face the pastor in the center of the nave, a sign of Christ's presence among His people]

VERSE

Matthew 11:10b

C **♪ Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!**

P Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.

C **♪ Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah!**

HOLY GOSPEL

Matthew 11:2-15

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the eleventh chapter.

C  **Glory be to Thee, O Lord.**

²When John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” ⁴And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. ⁶And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.”

⁷As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is he of whom it is written,

“Behold, I send my messenger before your face,
who will prepare your way before you.”

¹¹Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. ¹²From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. ¹³For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, ¹⁴and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. ¹⁵He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C  **Praise be to Thee, O Christ.**

APOSTLES’ CREED

pg. 12

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From thence He will come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

HYMN OF THE DAY*“Hark! A Thrilling Voice is Sounding”*

LSB Hymn 345



1 Hark! A thrill - ing voice is sound - ing! “Christ is
 2 Star - tled at the sol - emn warn - ing, Let the
 3 See, the Lamb, so long ex - pect - ed, Comes with
 4 So, when next He comes in glo - ry And the
 △ 5 Hon - or, glo - ry, might, do - min - ion To the



near,” we hear it say. “Cast a - way the
 earth - bound soul a - rise; Christ, its sun, all
 par - don down from heav’n. Let us haste, with
 world is wrapped in fear, He will shield us
 Fa - ther and the Son With the ev - er -



works of dark - ness, All you chil - dren of the day!”
 sloth dis - pel - ling, Shines up - on the morn - ing skies.
 tears of sor - row, One and all, to be for - giv’n;
 with His mer - cy And with words of love draw near.
 liv - ing Spir - it While e - ter - nal a - ges run!

SERMON*“The Ransomed of the Lord”**[Please stand]***OFFERTORY***pg. 12*

C  Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from Thy presence; and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation; and uphold me with Thy free spirit. Amen.

*Psalm 51:10-12**[Please sit]***RECEIPT OF OFFERINGS**

PAUSE TO PONDER: Isaiah 35:4 – “Say to those who have an anxious heart, **‘Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you.’**” The return of our Lord at the Last Day is a cause of joy and anticipation for us believers. We know our Lord and His love, and we look forward to His Second Advent. Indeed, how we live our lives here and now flows from our certain hope of resurrection and eternal life.

OFFERING HYMN *“Hark the Glad Sound! the Savior Comes”*

Hymn 66

[Please stand]

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

[1 Timothy 2:1-4]

Father of all mercies, the visitation of Your Son has enlightened the darkness of our hearts and every corner of creation. Hear us as we pray in His name and according to His will.

O God, You have sent messengers to prepare the way of Your Son’s coming. Grant us ears to hear and hearts to believe the words delivered by pastors and all who bear Your Word. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Gracious Lord, You have instituted the home to be a refuge for husbands and wives and a place of growth and safety for children. Look with favor upon the homes of our land, and grant that the faith might be delivered from one generation to the next. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Righteous Lord, You rule over all things in heaven and on earth. Until that day when Your Son comes in glory to usher in His kingdom, give wisdom and insight to all leaders, that we may live peaceable lives. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, the prophet Isaiah looked for the day when blind eyes would see, deaf ears would hear, lame legs would leap and mute tongues would sing. Until the final day of restoration, draw near to all who have requested our prayers, especially Linda, Elaine, Carol, Jane, Layne, Edward, Christine, Mark, and those we name in our hearts. Give them healing according to Your gracious will. Bind up those who grieve, that they may look for the resurrection of all flesh. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O God, Your love invites us to rejoice in Your goodness. In every circumstance of life, teach us the joy that comes from knowing Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, and eagerly expecting His gracious visitation; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in Your Kingdom, and teach us to pray:

C **Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

Matthew 6:9-13

COLLECT FOR THE WORD

pg. 14

P Blessed Lord, Who hast caused all Holy Scriptures to be written for our learning, grant that we may in such wise hear them, read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them, that by patience and comfort of Thy holy Word we may embrace, and ever hold fast, the blessed hope of everlasting life, which Thou hast given us in our Savior Jesus Christ, who liveth and reignth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end.

C **♪ Amen.**

BENEDICAMUS AND BENEDICTION

pg. 14

P The Lord be with you.

2 Timothy 4:22

C **♪ And with Thy spirit.**

P Bless we the Lord.

[Psalm 103:1]

C **♪ Thanks be to God.**

P The Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord make His face shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee † and give thee peace.

Numbers 6:24-26

C **♪ Amen. Amen. Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN

"Come, Thou Precious Ransom, Come"

Hymn 55

POSTLUDE

OUTREACH THOUGHT: Matthew 11:2-15: John the Baptist was put in prison for confronting the political leaders of his day with divine truth. While in prison, he was put to death by King Herod for his straightforward witness to the coming of the Lord, the true and righteous Judge. John, like our Lord's disciples, was happy to suffer for the name of Jesus. John's example encourages us also to be bold witnesses for Jesus as the One who came to bring light and salvation to a darkened world. You may be the only Scripture some people hear. Give them the light of the Gospel in your words and actions and shed some light with the truth of Jesus.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bible Class - Join us for this morning as we continue our discussion on WHAT IS WORSHIP? It's the quintessential activity of Christians throughout history. It's a lens through which the entire Bible can be explored and understood. It's been the backdrop for some of the most beautiful music ever composed, and for some of the fiercest arguments ever fought...Join us as we delve into the **Scriptural basis** for worship; as we walk through the **history and tradition** that led to the views of worship espoused in the Lutheran Confessions; and as we study the ins and outs of our own liturgy **so that Sunday mornings will make more sense!** If anything about worship has ever made you scratch your head, join us! Answers (as well as coffee and snacks) are always free!

Next Sunday, we'll need a little help putting away decorations in the Fellowship Hall. With the high school on Christmas Break, we'll be having the floors deep cleaned throughout the education wing of the church. Thank you in advance for helping us with this task!

150th Anniversary shirts will be available in the narthex this morning and again next Sunday. Cost is \$15 each. Treat yourself, or a family member, to one for Christmas!

Advent Midweek Vespers at Holy Cross will help to *prepare the way of the Lord* by focusing on the early chapters of Sts. Luke and Matthew. Dive deep with us in meaningful reflections of the events surrounding the incarnation and birth of Jesus from the perspectives of **Zechariah, Elizabeth, Joseph, and Mary**. These services will provide a new view into the lives and significance of these individuals. Come and see how God faithfully brings about His salvation through ordinary lives as He sends forth an extraordinary Savior—Jesus Christ. **Advent Midweek Vespers at 7pm:** December 14 - Joseph; December 21 - Mary

Poinsettias - If you would like to give a Poinsettia in memory or honor of a loved one, please pick-up an order form from the bulletin board in the Narthex, fill it out and return it to the church office by Tuesday. The cost is \$10.00 each and payment should accompany your form. Checks should be payable to Holy Cross Ladies Aid. If you have any questions, please call Cyndy at 966-3166 or the church office. You may take your plant home after the Christmas Day worship service.

Bible Study - The Wednesday night Bible Study will begin a new study starting January 4, 2023. This 11-week will take you through the entire Old Testament book of Judges. Come learn more about the faithfulness of God, despite the forgetfulness of His people. You'll read about and learn from some of the more well-known judges, like Deborah, Gideon, and Samson, as well as some you may not be familiar with - Othniel, Ehud, and Jephthah. There is no cost to join this study and all are welcome! Note that during Lent we will adjust the hours of the class so that it does not interfere with the regular Lenten services on Wednesday nights. For more information or to register, please contact Cyndy Zoch at cyndy.zoch@gmail.com or 979-966-3166.

Philips and Luckey funeral home in Giddings will have an open house on Tuesday, December 13th. St. Paul Lutheran School choir will perform at 10:30 a.m. followed by the funeral home yearly Service of Comfort and Remembrance at noon and the Immanuel Lutheran School choir at 1:00 p.m. Everyone is invited to stop by!

Our remaining Advent/Christmas schedule of services is as follows:

Wednesday, Dec. 14 - midweek worship at 10:30 and 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 18 - 3rd Sunday in Advent, worship w/communion

Wednesday, December 21 - midweek worship at 10:30 and 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 24 - Children's Christmas Program at 6:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 25 - Christmas Day worship at 9:00 a.m.

(No Bible Class or Sunday School today.)

Saturday, December 31 - New Year's Eve Worship w/Communion at 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, January 1, 2023 - Worship w/Communion at 9:00a.m.

with installation of 2023 Church officers *(No Bible Class or Sunday School today.)*

We pray you will take time each week to come and worship with us as we once again prepare to celebrate the birth of our Savior. Invite a friend or neighbor to join you!

FAITH LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL NEWS

Shadow Days

Shadow days are a great opportunity for prospective students to follow us for a day and experience what FLHS is all about. 8th Grade parents, call us today at (979) 242-2889 to set up a shadow day for your child.

“Faith at Christmas” Program

FLHS students will present a Christmas concert, “Faith at Christmas,” on Tuesday, December 13th at 7:00 pm at FLHS. Program will include a collection of choir pieces, handbell pieces, hymns, scripture readings and more. Refreshments will be served following the program. Please join us!!!

*This event will also be live streamed on Facebook, for those who would prefer to view the sounds of Christmas from home.

Raffle Items

The Spring Raffle is just around the corner. The Board of Directors is currently looking for valuable items or monetary donations to be used in the raffle. Please contact Nikki Kueck if you have something to donate! Thank you!

End of Year Giving

In Proverbs 2:6, God’s Word promises: "The LORD gives wisdom; from his mouth comes knowledge and understanding." Faith Lutheran High School exists to instill Christ’s wisdom in His Word to prepare faithful leaders for tomorrow. Thank you for being a part of this mission through your prayers and financial support. Please prayerfully consider how you can give to further Lutheran education in our area.

Matching funds are currently available to us from some gracious private donors, so please help us take full advantage of this opportunity. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Mrs. Nikki Kueck at (979) 242-2889.

Thank you!

Everyone at FLHS is blessed by each gift that we receive from our supporters. It's not about the size of the gift, but the cheerful attitude that gives thanks to God (2 Corinthians 9:7). Whether your gift seems big or small, it is greatly appreciated and makes a bigger impact than you know!

Altar Flowers



Altar Flowers are given to the glory of God by Larry and Brenda Woelfel in honor of their 50th wedding anniversary on December 9th.

PRAYER REQUESTS



Linda Hobratchk, diagnosed with multiple myeloma

Elaine Kieschnick, recovering from surgery on Wednesday for a broken elbow

Carol Jurk, recovering from a broken leg following a fall

Jane Chapman, recovering from shoulder surgery

Layne Schramm, recovering from a procedure on Nov. 16

Edward & Christine Buscha, various health issues

Mark Landry, son-in-law of Calvin & Gale Mersiovsky, dealing with circulation issues in his legs

Curtis Schube, who lost his wife, Gabrille, to cancer this past weekend. Curtis was a former student in La Grange who now lives with his two little girls in Pennsylvania. His parents are friends of David and Linda Lehmann.

The sanctuary Christmas Tree is given to the glory of God by Jerrell and Oranell Dunk in loving memory of Joyce Bise, Annie Beasley, Alfred Boriack, and all those members of Holy Cros that went to their heavenly home during 2022.

Our sympathy to Nancy I. Pietsch on the passing of Clarence “June” Pietsch, Jr. on Dec. 5th. His funeral was here at Holy Cross on Thursday with burial in the church cemetery.

Attendance Last Sunday

Divine Service: 135 Bible Class: 38

Sunday School: 18

Those who serve today: December 11, 2022

Rev. Dustin Beck	Pastor
Mrs. Ann Bamsch	Organist
Mrs. Diann Pietsch	Greeter
Mr. Jonathan Kueck	Lector
Mr. Mike Tabbert	Audio/Video System
Lillian Carey	Acolyte

Elders on Duty
Mr. Jonathan Kueck
Mr. Dennis Pietsch
Mr. J.C. Schramm

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

TODAY	9:00 a.m.	Divine Service w/Holy Communion
	10:15 a.m.	Bible Class & Christmas Program Practice
	11:00 a.m.	Youth Group leave for College Station
TUESDAY	9:00 a.m.	Pastor's Circuit Meeting Here
	7:00 p.m.	FLHS Faith at Christmas Program
WEDNESDAY	10:30 a.m.	Advent Worship
	5:30 p.m.	Jr. Confirmation
	7:00 p.m.	Advent Worship
FRIDAY & SATURDAY		Picnic Hall Rented
Next Sunday	9:00 a.m.	Divine Service
	10:15 a.m.	Bible Class & Christmas Program Practice
		PICNIC HALL RENTED

Soli Deo Gloria
(To God alone be Glory)