
The Glory Banner

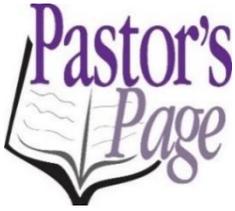
Cross of Glory Lutheran Church (ELCA), a Wildfire Congregation

December 2020



Those who walked in darkness have seen a great light

Isaiah 9:2



Advent is the season of hope. It's a time of living expectantly, preparing ourselves for the hope-in-flesh that will break forth into our world in just a few weeks.

And yet, there may be little that feels hopeful right now. Covid-19 continues to spread—especially among our most vulnerable neighbors living in nursing homes, in poverty, and in prisons. Many parents struggle to work from home while homeschooling, while students struggle to keep up with learning online. Elderly neighbors continue to be crushed by the loneliness of being isolated from community. Mental health concerns are soaring. Many essential workers are working overtime trying to make ends meet, while other workers find themselves newly unemployed. And for us as people of faith, nearing one of the most sacred days in our church year, we may already be grieving not being able to gather in the ways we always have. How are we to be hopeful right now?

Methodist pastor and author Jan Richardson writes that “hope may sometimes seem like a luxury—frivolous, groundless, insubstantial. But it is precisely the opposite. Hope is made of some of the strongest stuff in the universe. It endures. Hope does not depend on our mood, our disposition, our desire. It does not wait until we are ready for it, until we have prepared ourselves for its arrival. It does not hold itself apart from us until we have worked through the worst of our sorrow, our anger, our fear. This is precisely where hope seeks us out, standing with us in the midst of what most weighs us down.”

Hope—categorically different, then, from optimism or positivity—does not deny or dismiss our despair. It does not tell us to get over our grief. It does not say that our suffering is insignificant. It does tell us, however, that suffering is not the end of the story.

Christmas will undoubtedly look different this year. We won't be able to celebrate in the ways we so deeply long to, or in the ways that we hope for. I am already grieving this. But the pandemic will not change the fact that hope will come, not in the way we might expect or desire, but in the way that we most deeply need: born in a baby in the backwater town of Bethlehem. This, my friends, is just the *beginning* of the story.

This embodied hope invites us into a new way of living. As Richardson writes, “hope has work for us to do. It asks us to resist going numb when the world within us or beyond us is falling apart. In the height of despair, in the deepest darkness, hope calls us to open our hearts, our eyes, our hands, that we might

engage the world when it breaks our hearts. Hope goes with us, step by step, offering to us the manna it holds.”

I invite you to join me this year in claiming and proclaiming this hope. We will be sharing more information in the coming weeks about ways we will still be joining together as a community of faith to celebrate Christmas—to rejoice in the gift of hope, who comes to us in Jesus Christ.

Pastor Ali



These are difficult days – Cross of Glory is here to walk with you. To share a pastoral care concern or to add a prayer request to our church’s prayer list, please contact us (Pastor Ali: atranvik@crossofglory.us, Church Office: 763-533-8602). If you have thoughts or ideas about ways that we can support you during this time, please don’t hesitate to let us know.

Blessing of Hope

So may we know the hope that is not just for someday but for this day—
here, now, in this moment that opens to us:
hope not made of wishes but of substance,
hope made of sinew and muscle and bone,
hope that has breath and a beating heart,
hope that will not keep quiet and be polite,
hope that knows how to holler when it is called for,
hope that knows how to sing when there seems little cause,
hope that raises us from the dead—
not someday but this day, every day, again and again and again.

By Jan Richardson

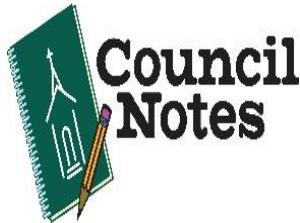


WORSHIP
SCHEDULE
FOR
Christmas

JOIN US FOR CHRISTMAS WORSHIP!

Look for more information in the coming days about ways you can take part in Christmas with Cross of Glory this year. For now, we wanted to let you know about three ways you can worship with us on Christmas Eve, December 24th:

- **Worship Together on Zoom** - Gather with the Cross of Glory community on Zoom at 4 pm. You can join us by dialing 312-626-6799 or visiting www.zoom.us and entering Meeting ID 802-502-5123 and Password 433131 when prompted.
- **View the Video Recording**– Visit www.crossofglory.us to find the recorded Christmas service that you can watch at home anytime!
- **Printed Bulletin** – As always, we will send out the full worship service for you to follow along at home.



Recap of November 2020 Council Meeting

This is Stewardship month and letters and pledge cards were mailed out.

We started Table Talks the last Sunday in October and will continue having them with different topics on the last Sunday of every month following the church service and fellowship time. This month will be Faith and Gratitude. Working on meaningful experiences for Thanksgiving and Christmas but it changes almost daily with Covid.

Brooklyn Blvd project - city looking for more information on our sign plans and also how it will affect our irrigation system. Looking into both of these.

Bus Company will no longer be contracting to use our back lot for training new drivers as of November 30, 2020. Will look to see if we can cut back on plowing needs for that back lot.

We adjourned and then had a meaningful Council retreat to discuss budget and vision planning for 2021.



ADVENT 2020: IMAGES OF GOD

Exploring the surprisingly ordinary ways God dwells among us

“Advent is not a season. Advent is a way of responding to a God who comes to us...not always according to our calculation, not always in the way we would desire, but in ways that are appropriate to God’s justice and grace.” -Fred Craddock

We have recently begun our Advent journey, exploring various images of God that are found in this year’s lectionary texts from Isaiah. While we prepare for God’s presence in the incarnation in just a few weeks, we are exploring the ways God is present among us already—in ways, as Craddock notes, that don’t always function according to our calculations.

This Advent, we are looking at just three of the dozens of metaphors for God that appear throughout Scripture. We began by looking at God the Shepherd on the first Sunday of Advent (Isa 40:11). Next, we turn to God the Potter (Isa 64:8). On the third Sunday of Advent, we’ll look at God the God who clothes us like a weaver, or a quilter, we might say (Isa 61:10). And finally, on the fourth Sunday, we’ll explore God incarnate, who is of course much more than just an image.

We invite you to view these worship service recordings by visiting www.crossofglory.us. We look forward to having you join us as we continue to look for the ways that God Emmanuel dwells among us.



One of the images of God we are exploring this Advent season is God the Potter (Isaiah 64:8). We are grateful to hear from Keith Williams, our choir director who is also a professional potter and art history teacher at Concordia University in St. Paul. Pictured here is a pottery piece Keith made in the Japanese style of “kintsugi” (meaning “golden repair”). If you are interested in learning more about how Keith’s Lutheran faith informs his work and vocation as a potter, check out this video: <https://tinyurl.com/y49hklju>.



Note: There will be no table talks this month due to Christmas. We'll resume with our Adult Ed series in January. Mark your calendars for our next Table Talks on Sunday, January 24 following Zoom church!

— STAYING — CONNECTED

The Cross of Glory community will continue to find ways to share life together during these difficult days of physical distance. If you're having trouble getting connected to worship videos or recordings by computer, tablet, or phone, please let Erik Haugland know (909-800-9094). We're here to help.

Zoom Worship + Virtual Coffee Hour: Sundays at 9:30 AM

Zoom Bible Study: Tuesdays at 9:30 AM

Zoom info: www.zoom.us, Meeting ID: 8025025123, Password: 433131

Online worship recordings: vimeo.com/cogtv

Worship Bulletins: www.crossofglory.us/sermonlibrary.html

THANKS TO THE QUILTING MINISTRY!



On Sunday, November 15, the sanctuary was filled with beautiful quilts and clothing, artfully crafted by the quilting ministry. The quilts pictured above have since been donated to CEAP, where they are now keeping neighbors in our community warm for the winter. Thanks to the quilters for their gorgeous work and their faithful ministry in our community!



“AND THE TABLE WILL BE WIDE”

A few weeks ago, you should have received a devotional booklet containing prayers, poems, and psalms of gratitude to use at your tables this holiday season. If you didn't receive one, or would like an additional copy, please reach out to Sue in the church office.

Cover Art: Those Who Walked in Darkness © Jan Richardson. janrichardson.com



THANK YOU FOR YOUR 2021 PLEDGE!

This year's stewardship theme was "Always Being Made New," reminding us that God is alive and at work doing a new thing among us (Isaiah 43:19). Thank you for taking part in it through your generous 2021 pledges. If you have not yet had the chance to return your pledge card, please do so (and remember to hand-write your name on the front or back of the card). *Thank you* for the many ways you so faithfully and generously give to Cross of Glory!

CHECK OUT OUR NEW ONLINE GIVING PAGE

Cross of Glory has a new giving page that makes online giving easy! At the bottom of our home page on our website (www.crossofglory.us), you'll find a blue button like the one below. There, you can safely make a one-time gift or set up recurring gifts, as well as make a contribution to our Raise the Roof Campaign as we work to pay off the new roof we've recently completed. Thank you for considering making an end-of-year gift!

CLICK HERE TO
GIVE

NewsLetter
DEADLINE

January Glory Banner Deadline

Want to include something in the next month's Glory Banner? Articles are due to Sue (svukelich@crossofglory.us) by December 21st.

WOMEN of the ELCA

DECEMBER 2020 BIBLE STUDY

Singing, writing, moving, connecting: Advent rituals for uncertain times.

The Advent devotional is written by the Rev. Jordan Miller-Stubbendick and focuses on Mary's journey as she follows God's call into motherhood. We explore Mary's story as she might have traveled spiritually and emotionally during her own uncertainty. This Advent we will explore four practices: gratitude, movement, song, and honest conversation.

Winter 2021

"Journeys with Angels," a four-part study written by Christa von Zychlin who has served Lutheran churches around the world through ELCA Global partnerships. She co-pastors St. Luke Lutheran Church in Albuquerque, New Mexico.



It most likely comes as no surprise to anyone that **W/ELCA has canceled the Christmas Luncheon** due to the coronavirus. At our luncheon we would normally reveal ourselves to our prayer partners and choose another for the coming year. We won't have an opportunity to do this. Let's keep our partner for another year.

It is doubtful we will have a Spring Luncheon. We have to make our reservations in March for our May luncheon. We will keep you posted with updates in the Glory Banner.



We are sorry to say Cookies Plates 2020 have been canceled

Something to think about . . .

Remember each day is a gift from God. *Jackie*

COVID-19 UPDATES

Dear Cross of Glory Friends,

COVID-19 case rates in Hennepin and surrounding counties have risen to very high levels, causing a drastic spike in hospitalizations and deaths. The CDC and our governor are urging people to be careful and to avoid gatherings. Due to these developments, we are now returning to Level I, as stipulated by our Covid-19 Response and Preparedness Plan that we previously shared about.

This means that for the safety of our Cross of Glory family, the building will be closed with the exception of essential personnel and building maintenance, as it was this past summer. Unfortunately, this also means no group meetings of any kind are permitted to gather indoors for the time being - all group meetings will need to be virtual.

Church staff and leaders are working hard to create new and meaningful ways to celebrate during this Advent and Christmas season.

Throughout this holy season, we place our hope in the coming of Jesus Christ, whose light breaks forth into the darkness of this world, and whose incarnate love meets us where we are.

Thanks for your continued understanding as we pray for one another, and care for one another and our community,

The COG COVID Task Force



We would like to thank everyone for the cards, letters, emails, and prayers for our mom and wife, Beverly Hoium. As you probably know, Cross of Glory meant a great deal to her, and it was a gift she always treasured. Your thoughtfulness is a gift we will always treasure. We are touched beyond words. *The Richard (Dick) Hoium Family*

THE RISK OF BIRTH

By Madeleine L'Engle

This is no time for a child to be born,
with the earth betrayed by war and hate.
and a comet slashing the sky to warn
that time runs out and the sun burns late.

That was no time for a child to be born,
in a land in the crushing grip of Rome;
Honor and truth were trampled to scorn—
Yet here did the Savior make his home.

When is the time for love to be born?
The inn is full on the planet earth,
and by a comet the sky is torn—
yet Love still takes the risk of birth.



Cross of Glory Lutheran Church
5929 Brooklyn Boulevard
Brooklyn Center, MN 55429-2583
Change Service Requested

Take Part in Cross of Glory's Life Together
Worship with us on Zoom on Sunday mornings at 9:30 am
(Meeting ID: 8025025123, Password: 433131)
Follow us on Facebook at facebook.com/crossofglorymn
Visit us at www.crossofglory.us

Cross of Glory Office Hours:
Monday through Wednesday, 9:00am ~ 3:00pm
Contact us at: Phone: (763) 533-8602

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