

Abundant News

I came that they might have life, and have it abundantly ~ Jesus

DECEMBER 2023/JANUARY 2024

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The Church Office
will be **CLOSED**
December 20-January 1.
Normal office hours
will resume
January 2.



God So Loved the World...

It may seem redundant to say it, but Jesus is for everybody. I know not everyone will receive Him as He presents Himself to us, but He was given by the Father because God loves everyone, even those who may reject Him and thus be ultimately lost.

That is God whose coming we celebrate in Christ during the seasons of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany. It is because of love God reveals Himself to have for all humanity that Christians seek to evangelize non-Christians; we do not seek to fix them; we seek to share with them something they do not have yet but with which we have been blessed.

This is the reason we began holding a Christmas concert jointly with the Nazareth Mormon Ward a few years ago; they are our neighbors, and while they believe in Jesus, they do not believe the truth about Him recorded in the Bible, the truth that we sing at Christmas when we sing "veiled in flesh the godhead see; hail the incarnate deity!" Doing a concert with them gives us the chance to get to know them and kindly share with them the truth we have as historically orthodox Christians.

Of course, they get to share their beliefs with us too, but that is not something we should be nervous about; "contrast is the conduit to clarity," as one of my favorite Bible exegetes frequently says. That is why following the concert this year I will be holding a class during the G.I.F.T. hour to lay out the differences between us and them, but there is something even bigger we are doing with this annual concert; we are working to expand it to include people of even more faiths so that we can show a world that is increasingly

(Continued on page 2)

NOVEMBER 8 COUNCIL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS...



- Three Council seats available. Seeking individuals interested in serving their Lord and Our Church.
- Thank you to the Scouts for work done to the outdoor Sanctuary, construction of the platform, assembly of new picnic tables under the pavilion, and the new flagpole.
- Christmas Eve Service times are 9:30am (Sunday Worship); 3:00, 7:00 and 9:00pm.

See Council minutes on page 8

suspicious of religious people that people of sincere, old-fashioned religious convictions can not only get along, but be a positive force for civic unity in what we used to refer to as “the great American melting pot.”

This year in addition to members of the Mormon Ward, folks from St. Nicholas Orthodox Church will be joining us to share with us the beauties of Byzantine chant and a different way of being Christian. In future years, the hope is to include Jewish and possibly Hindu, Sikh, and even Muslim musical ensembles if we can find communities of those faiths who would share the concert's explicit aims of civic propriety married to sincere doctrinal conviction. We also hope to move the concert to a religiously-neutral venue like the high school auditorium.

Why go to all this effort in an already busy season? Because God so loved the WORLD that He gave His only Son! So join us on December 17th at 7pm at Holy Cross to welcome our visitors and share with them the good news of who that Son is!

Ph. Brett

December Altar Flower Sponsorships



December 3

*Linda Rissmiller in honor of Jacob Harris' Birthday.
The Taby Family in honor of Karen Odenwelder.*

December 10

*Gloria Longley in memory of William and Kristopher Longley.
Randy & Debbie Letterhouse in honor of
our Wedding Anniversary.*

December 17

*Cindy Denker in memory Emma Werner.
Dave & Diane Breinig in memory of Joseph Breinig (Dave's Dad)
and Benton Breinig, Sr. (Dave's Grandfather).*

December 24

*Julie Millheim, DJ, MaryAnn, Bobby & Emily Drosnock
in honor of Mary J. Drosnock's 16th Birthday.
Mary Anne Vorholy in honor of my whole family.*

December 31

*Terry, Deb & Josh Johnson in memory of Loved Ones.
Carol Ann & Lou Coxe in honor of our 56th Wedding Anniversary.*

The binder to sign up for altar flower sponsorships for 2024 is now available in the Narthex. **Please note, effective 1/1/24, Altar Flower sponsorships have increased to \$25 per sponsorship.** Dates are available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Two sponsors are sought for each Sunday of the year. Please consider sponsoring Altar flowers in memory of someone, or in honor of a special occasion.

Payment should be submitted in a completed Designated Gift Envelope by the date of sponsorship.

Sponsors can pick up their flowers by the Monday after their sponsorship date. Any flowers left after Monday will be used for visitations.

December & January Lessons

December 3

1st Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7
1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37

December 10

2nd Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalm 85
2 Peter 3:8-14; Mark 1:1-8

December 17

3rd Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11; Psalm 126
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

December 24

4th Sunday of Advent

2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16
Psalm 89:1-5 [19-29]
Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38

December 24

Nativity of Our Lord (Christmas Eve)

Isaiah 7:10-14; Psalm 110:1-4
1 John 4:7-16; Matthew 1:18-25

December 25

Nativity of Our Lord (Christmas Day)

Isaiah 52:7-10; Psalm 2
Hebrews 1:1-12; John 1:1-18

December 31

1st Sunday after Christmas

Isaiah 61:10-62:3; Psalm 111
Galatians 4:4-7; Luke 2:22-40

January 7

Baptism of Our Lord

Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 29
Romans 6:1-11; Mark 1:4-11

January 14

2nd Sunday after the Epiphany

1 Samuel 3:1-10 [11-20]
Psalm 139:1-10
1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51

January 21

3rd Sunday after the Epiphany

Jonah 3:1-5, 10; Psalm 62.
1 Corinthians 7:29-31 [32-35]
Mark 1:14-20

January 28

4th Sunday after the Epiphany

Deuteronomy 18:15-20; Psalm 111
1 Corinthians 8:1-13; Mark 1:21-28

Pastor's Answers

Resolute Preparation



Since this is a double issue of the newsletter, I thought to myself, "What is a topic equally applicable to both December and January?" The answer? *Resolution*. Advent is a season of preparation for Christ's coming, and true preparation requires resolution. Nobody ever prepared for a marathon at the last minute, and none of us wants a surgeon who was cramming the night before over the procedure we are about to undergo. Equally, January is famous for New Year's resolutions, so the two tie together nicely.

Why resolve to do anything if we are saved by grace and resolution requires *intensity* and *work*? The answer is that the work we do in cooperation with the Holy Spirit not only shows our faith, but transforms us into the people we were originally designed to be but for sin, people capable of not just being forgiven by God, but communing and experiencing oneness with God.

Each of us has fewer days left today to do this than we had yesterday, which is why I wanted to share this poem I received from a retired colleague, Fr. Lawrence (Larry) Recla, STS, with you all.

May it bless you as you prepare for the coming of Christ this season and throughout the year ahead:

"I counted my years
and found that I have less time to live
from here on than I have lived up to now.
I feel like that child who won a packet of sweets:
he ate the first with pleasure,
but when he realized that there were few left,
he began to enjoy them intensely.
I no longer have time for endless meetings
where statutes, rules,
procedures and internal regulations are discussed,
knowing that nothing will be achieved.
I no longer have time to support the absurd people who,
despite their chronological age, haven't grown up.
My time is too short:
I want the essence,
my soul is in a hurry.
I don't have many sweets in the package anymore.
I want to live next to human people,
very human,
who know how to laugh at their mistakes
and who are not inflated by their triumphs
and who take on their responsibilities.
Thus human dignity is defended and we move towards truth and honesty
It is the essential that makes life worth living.
I want to surround myself with people who know how to touch hearts,
people who have been taught by the hard blows of life
to grow with gentle touches of the soul.
Yes, I'm in a hurry, I'm in a hurry to live with the intensity that only maturity can give.
I don't intend to waste any of the leftover sweets.
I am sure they will be delicious,
much more than what I have eaten so far.
My goal is to reach the end satisfied
and at peace with my loved ones
and my conscience.
**We have two lives
and the second begins when you realize you only have one. "**

***I'm in a hurry
to live with the
intensity that
only maturity
can give.***

- Mario de Andrade

Don't forget to submit your questions at church or at
www.FaithConservationist.org

Family News

Sunday Social Hour is when we get to know each other and become family to one another. *Stop by after services and join us for Christian friendship with your Church family! Each week a different committee or group hosts Social Hour.*



Our Hosts for December and January are...

December 3 ~ Women of Abundance

December 10 ~ NO SOCIAL HOUR
(due to Potluck Luncheon)

December 17 ~ Hospitality/Funeral Servers

December 24 ~ NO SOCIAL HOUR

December 31 ~ NO SOCIAL HOUR

January 7 ~ (8:00) 8:00 Ladies
(9:30) 1st & 2nd year Confirmation Families

January 14 ~ NO SOCIAL HOUR
(due to Potluck Luncheon)

January 21 ~ Emergency Response Team

January 28 ~ NO SOCIAL HOUR
(due to Annual Meeting)

Potluck Luncheons will continue to be held the 2nd Sunday of every month after the 9:30am service. Bring your favorite dish to share and enjoy time with your Church family.



Robert Lewis

December 12, 1936 ~ November 2, 2023

SEND CARDS ~ Anyone can send cards to church members for various occasions. A current list of those who would appreciate receiving a card, especially during the holiday season, is available in the Narthex, or contact the Church office.



December & January Birthdays...



Lyra Way; Nicole Gaugler; Peter Korpan; Ryan Auger; Tina Huth; Gary Kratzer; Virginia Soffera; Adam Grube; Carol Josephs; Terry DeGroot; Jarryd Hudock; Judy Ortutay; Rusty Wallace; Constance Huth; Christian Rowohlt; Jacob Harris; Nicholas Nolder; Angelo Arfanella; Melissa Misiti; Nancy Jo Stevenson; Shawn Fernsler; Bob Beckowski; Cameron Peterson; Karen Odenwelder; Mary Anne Vorholy; Diane Dickison; Jennifer Rissmiller; Dale Trach; Donald Jackson; Sean Brady; Michael Grube; Fernando Pinguelo; Joseph DiBiase; Joshua Misiti; Thomas Amy; Mary Drosnack; Terry Koehler; Queenie Kratzer; Walter Rupp; Elizabeth Misiti; Ricky Hahn; Ronald Sibbach; Ryan Blosser; Carole Craig; Christiana Vandegrift; Beverly Wisser; Jacob Auger; Clare Seibert; Jessica Bunting; Eileen Rohn; Michael Cleffi; Keegan McMullen; Doris Young; Randall Huth; Nathan Greene; Patrice Beck; Joseph Mazzie, Jr.; Thomas Barnowski; Jean Cole; Chad Harris; Ronald Shook; Paul Grube, Jr.; Kaitlyn Barnowski; Madison Amy; Morgan Amy; Gerald Lewis; Scarlet Cohen; Joyce MacDonald; Ruth Ann Siegfried; Gabriella Benotto; Mary Drosnack; Morgan Grube; Jessica Hendricks; Damon Withstandley; Leonard Filchner; Alexander Newell; Nathan Grube; Nicole Skurjunis; Kelly Briody; Timothy Kryman; Mark Losagio; Michael Gaugler; Katharine Grube; Caitlin Cleffi; Mackenzie Cleffi.

December and January Anniversaries:



Randy & Debbie Letterhouse; Dennis & Diana Diefenderfer; Carlos & Aida Rios; Nancy Jo & Duane Stevenson, Jr.; Michael & Kate Grube.



William Daniel Perez,
son of Stephanie Strow &
Juan-Daniel Perez,
was baptized at Holy Cross
on Sunday, November 19th
Welcome into the Kingdom of God!



Copies of the printed **Prayer List** are available in the Narthex. Please keep all who are ill or hospitalized in your prayers and remember them with your cards or phone calls. Your caring is deeply appreciated!

Get involved this Holiday season!



Social Ministry news...

COOKIE BAKERS NEEDED!

Donations of Christmas cookies and/or wrapped candies for our sick and shut-in members can be brought to the church by 9:30 am Saturday December 16. Sign up in the Narthex to donate cookies/treats.



On December 16, Social Ministry will bag donated cookies/treats and prepare poinsettias, and cards for church members to deliver to our sick and shut-ins.

Family and friends of our Sick and Shut-ins, we will need your assistance to deliver cookies and Poinsettias. They will be ready for pick up on Sunday, December 17. Any not picked up, will be delivered the week of December 17th.

Thank you for your support!

**There are still a few
SEASONAL SPONSORSHIP
opportunities available....**



4 Christmas Eve Candle Sponsors
1 Christmas Eve Bulletin Sponsor
Sponsorships are \$15 each

Sign up in the Narthex.



O Come Let Us Adore Him

You and your family and friends are invited to join us as we welcome the long-awaited Savior—Christ the Lord.

December 24 ~ Christmas Eve

There will be no 8:00am service.

9:30am ~ Advent 4 Morning Worship

3:00, 7:00 & 9:00 p.m. ~

Christmas Eve Candlelight
Service with Holy Communion

December 25 ~ Christmas Day

9:30 a.m. ~ Worship with Holy Communion

December 31 ~ 9:30 am

There will be no 8:00am service.

9:30 a.m. ~ Festival of Lessons & Carols

*Services will be available to watch online,
but there is nothing like attending in person!*

Interfaith Concert

at Holy Cross

December 17th

Concert at 7:00pm followed by
Social Hour with refreshments.



Christmas Blessing Boxes

Please wrap the box and lid separately, preferably with Christmas paper. Fill it with the non-perishable items that are listed below.

Return the filled box to Holy Cross before noon on December 16, 2023.

A drive through will take place from noon until 1:00 PM. Each car in line can receive 1 box. Boxes are limited. When they're gone, they are gone. The items they will receive in the box are:

a box of stuffing mix
instant mashed potatoes

2 pkgs of turkey gravy

canned yams

cranberry sauce

green beans and canned corn

cake or brownie mix

can of frosting

can of chicken broth

mac & cheese in a box

canned meat (ham, chicken, etc.)

a treat or sweet (candy, snack, nuts, cookies)

Church News

Blue Christmas Service

For those experiencing loneliness, depression, or mourning, the unrelenting cheer of the holiday season can feel like a burden. But the good news of Immanuel, "God with us," is that in Christ God came to rescue us from our isolation, giving us hope beyond the boundary of death and the narrow confines of our grief. If you need a time to remember this meaning of Christmas, please join us for a very special service on

**7pm Wednesday
December 20th**



A few Cookbooks are still available for purchase! Pick up yours on Sundays before and after services, or during church office hours. Cost is \$22 each. Makes a great Christmas gift! Proceeds will go towards the cost of the new roof.

Elementary school Children (grades K-6) and their Parents are invited to join us any **Sunday evening 6:30-8:30pm** (when there is Youth Group) for



Christ Kids Club

Parents must attend with their children.

There will be a scripture lesson, and activities to enjoy.

Contact Amanda Bombico with questions



The men's group, **Man Alive**, will be meeting every **1st and 3rd Monday of the month at 6:00pm** at the church to read together a chapter of the book also called **Man Alive** by Patrick Morley and discuss the questions at the end of the chapter.

Thank you!...



To all who participated in the Annual Turkey Drive. A total of \$2,005 was donated to the Bath Area Food Bank, representing funds donated from the Turkey Drive and Harvest Home. As always, your generosity to our neighbors in need, is greatly appreciated!

To everyone who ordered poinsettias for our sick and shut-ins, and/or for yourself to adorn the altar on Christmas Eve.

If you ordered Poinsettias for yourself, please remember to take yours from the altar after any of the Christmas Eve services.



Stewardship...

Offerings received during the month of October totaled \$19,461.62

Thank you for your generous support of Holy Cross!



Capital Campaign Update...

As of November 30th, we have received donations totaling **\$73,067.20** toward our goal of \$500,000.00.

Thank you for your generosity!

REMINDER: When making donations to the church, a **separate check is needed for the Capital Campaign**, made out to Holy Cross Lutheran Church.

Thank you!



PRAYER TEAM

Submitted by Lois Iasiello

Currently the Prayer Team is comprised of 4 women and myself. We have received 11 prayer requests to date. We are humbled to have had the opportunity to add these requests to our daily prayer time presenting them to the Lord. We look forward to the coming year anticipating a growth in the number of requests. A Special Thank You to those individuals who entrusted us with your prayer requests.

Fill out a prayer request form (located on the side of the box), drop it into the box and the Prayer Team will pray daily confidentially for the given request.

Coming up in 2024..



*The Sacrament of Confirmation
will be celebrated at the 9:30
service on Sunday January 7.
Join us for refreshments
after the service
to congratulate our Confirmands.*



The church will provide copies of your 2023 annual contribution statements **by request only**. If you would like a 2023 annual contribution statement, please sign up in the Narthex beginning December 17 or contact the church office. Statements will be mailed to you by the end of January.

Proposed Agenda for the 2024 Holy Cross Annual Meeting January 28, 2024



- Call to Order
- Adoption of Agenda
- Election of secretary for meeting
- Pastor's Report
 - Clarification of Committee versus Team nomenclature
- President/Vice President's Report
- Committee/Ministry Team Reports
- New Business
 - Proposed Revisions to Constitution
 - Ratifying Bylaw revisions adopted by Council in 2023
- Regular Business
 - Election of Council members for 2024
 - Election of council nominating committee for 2024
 - 1 outgoing Council member, 2 members-at-large & pastor
 - Election of Congregationally-Elected Elder
 - Elect delegates for the AMR convocation in October 2024
- Proposal and Adoption of 2024 Budget



**Mark your
Calendar...**
**The Annual
Congregational
Meeting**
will be held on Sunday
January 28, 2024,
after the 9:30am service.
Lunch will be catered, but
we ask the congregation
to bring your favorite des-
sert to share.

Don't Miss the

DEADLINE!

Would you like to place an article in the monthly newsletter?
Highlight your ministry? Post a Thank You? Make an announcement?

**Deadline for the February Newsletter is January 15.
EARLY SUBMISSIONS ARE APPRECIATED!**

You may email your submissions to secretary@holycrossnazareth.org

Church Council

November 8, 2023

COMPLETE Church Council Minutes are posted on the board in the Narthex. Attachments are filed in the church office with the originals.

The meeting minutes summarized here are pending Council approval at next month's meeting.

All Members were present.

GUESTS: Pastor Brett, Tom Kneisly, Andy & Anita Zaso. Tom gave an update on the operational aspects of the Co-op. Conducted a fire drill as part of emergency planning. Will be locking doors during the day as a safety measure. Currently 25 families, with approximately 55-60 students, K-12. Outreach activities included cards for Vets, clothing for foster care, crafts for nursing home. Next meeting 1/3/24 at 6pm.

10/11/23 minutes approved.

Treasurer's Report: approved by Council.

Office Secretary Notes: Council approved sexton fee be waived for Eagle Scout Court of Honor ceremonies for church members, or if the scout did his Eagle Scout project for the church. December and January newsletter will be combined.

The Pastor's report: Email malfunctioning. Since our website was moved to a new server, our email has been malfunctioning. Suggests that we begin using a dedicated email server with encryption. Council discussed and recommended more investigation. New Sound and video system installed-we continue to improve its use as we work with it. I am looking to moving our podcast service host. Megan S. will be reworking our website-Pastor asked for Council input into what would make our church different from the churches around us and why should that make people come here.

A reminder to the heads of all Ministries/Committees....

You are asked to turn in a year-end report by December 31, 2023, in order to allow enough time to prepare packets for the Annual Meeting on January 28.
Thank you!

New Business: Pork & Sauerkraut profit was added to capital campaign fund. Permission requested to host a Blood Drive at the church sometime in January—approved by Council. Snow plowing and leaf cleaning discussed. Ceiling tiles were ordered.

Committee Reports:

Cemetery: Cemetery Board did not meet.

Emergency Planning: Hard copy of 10/18/23 meeting minutes included in Council packets.

Finance: Committee did not meet. Waiting for updated ChurchTrac reports.

Mutual Ministry: Did not meet. No issues.

Personnel Committee: Working on finding a replacement for our Treasurer.

Social Ministry: A craft meeting was held on 9/20/23, making crafts for the women at Gracedale NW1—items were delivered on October 2nd. Social Ministry met on October 23 to plan for the next several months. Next Gracedale visit is November 1st.

Spiritual Care: 5 visits were done. We continue to send greeting cards as the need arises.

Men's Group: Meeting the 1st & 3rd Monday of the month. Met October 23 to study book "Man Alive". Hosting a bowling fellowship on December 2nd at Blue Valley Lanes.

Old Business: A committee needs to be established to coordinate the 50th anniversary celebration of our building next year. Discussion ensued regarding Active vs. Inactive members—recommended review and revise By-laws section 8.05.

Three seats will be vacant on Council—seeking individuals interested in serving their Lord and the Church. Christmas Eve service times 9:30am, 3:00, 7:00 & 9:00pm. A thanks you was sent to the Boy Scouts for work done to the outdoor Sanctuary. Construction of the platform, assembly of new picnic tables under the pavilion and the flagpole.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00pm.

The next regular meeting is scheduled for WEDNESDAY, December 13, 2023 at 7:00pm.

All Church members are welcome to attend.

The following items are posted on the Bulletin Board...

- November 2023 Church Council Minutes
- October 2023 Treasurer's Report
- December 2023 Church Calendar
- GSTL for December.

Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church (NALC)

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church (NALC) is to respond to the Love of God shown most fully to us in the great gift of his Son Jesus Christ. We engage in five ministry areas – **WORSHIP, WITNESS, LEARNING, SERVICE,** and **SUPPORT** – to boldly confess Christ as our Lord and Savior.

Our Staff

Pastor: Rev. Brett Jenkins, STS
Pastor@holycrossnazareth.org
Office Hours by appointment

Deacon Michael Grube

Director of Worship Arts: Karl DeBoeser

Traditional Music Worship Leader: Ben Watson

Church Secretary: Kris Sterner
Secretary@holycrossnazareth.org
Office Hours: M/T/F ~ 9 a.m.-1 p.m; Th ~ 1-6 p.m.
OFFICE IS CLOSED ON WEDNESDAYS

Sexton: Kerry Livermore

Our Church

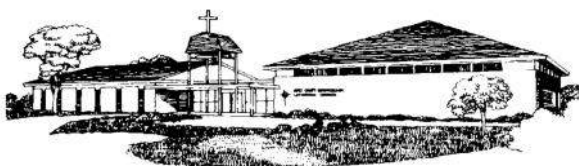
Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church
696 Johnson Road
Nazareth, PA 18064-8828

Phone ~ 610-759-7363

Fax ~ 610-759-3431

Website ~ holycrossnazareth.org

NALC website ~ the nalc.org



2023 Church Council

John Abbott	610-868-5812
A.J. Arfanella	717-903-0521
Lynne Auger	484-634-1347
Diane Dickison	570-977-3638
Kate Grube	610-972-2219
Paul Grube, Jr.	610-570-2474
Lois Iasiello	484-239-2698
Gerald Lewis	610-657-3961
Richard Siegfried	610-360-5949
Michele Verdi	570-807-6393

2023 Congregational Officers

President ~ Richard Siegfried

Vice President ~ Gerald Lewis

Secretary ~ Lois Iasiello

Treasurers ~ Darren Landro and Cindy Denker

Financial Secretary ~ Jaime Roth

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday:

8:00 am ~ Traditional Liturgy

9:30 am ~ Informal Worship

(Holy Communion 1st & 3rd Sunday);

Tuesdays at 12:15pm

Lunchtime Prayer with Holy Communion

Wednesdays at 7:00 pm

Prayer Service with Holy Communion