



Holy Cross Lutheran Church

Warda, Texas | Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

(979) 242-3333 | holycrosswarda.com | holycross@cvctx.com

600 FM 1482, Giddings TX 78942

PO Box 69, Warda TX 78960

BUT YOU,
O BETHLEHEM...
FROM YOU SHALL COME
ONE.

1873-2024

151 Years of God's Grace

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

Divine Service with
Holy Communion
9:00am

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

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 22, 2024

Fourth Sunday of Advent

✠ IN NOMINE JESU ✠

(In the Name of Jesus)

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.

OUR COMMUNION POLICY: Communicant members of LC-MS congregations are welcome to join us for Communion. Please mark the Fellowship Book, providing us with your address and the name of your home congregation. In keeping with our confessional heritage, we practice "close communion." If you are not a member of an LC-MS congregation and wish to commune, we ask that you please visit with Pastor or one of our Elder's before partaking of Holy Communion. Thank you.

IN TODAY'S READINGS: *The Lord Comes to Visit Us in Peace*

The Fourth Sunday in Advent turns our attention toward the nativity of our Lord. With Mary, we await the coming of the Christ, her Son, conceived in her womb by the Spirit of God. As the Lord dealt graciously with her and did great things for her (Luke 1:48–49), so also He manifests Himself and His glory to us in mercy and gentleness. He comes to rule His people in peace, to "*shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD.*" He comes forth not from the great capital city of Rome or Jerusalem, but from lowly little Bethlehem (Micah 5:2, 4). He comes to sacrifice Himself, in fulfillment of His Father's will, for the salvation and sanctification of His people (Heb. 10:10). He who once visited Elizabeth while hidden in the womb of Mary (Luke 1:39–45) now comes to visit us today, hidden in the lowliness of simple water, bread and wine.

PRELUDE - *Selected*

THE RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELL

WORDS OF WELCOME

OPENING HYMN

Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel

Hymn 62

[Please stand]

OPENING SENTENCES

pg. 32ff.

P O Lord, open Thou my lips.

C **♪ And my mouth shall show forth Thy praise.**

Psalm 51:15

P Make haste, O God, to deliver me.

C **♪ Make haste to help me, O Lord.**

Psalm 70:1

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen. Hallelujah!**

INVITATORY AND VENITE

P Oh, come, let us worship the Lord:

[Hebrews 10:22]

C **♪ For He is our Maker.**

**Oh come, let us sing unto the Lord:
let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation.
Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving:
and make a joyful noise unto Him with psalms.
For the Lord is a great God:
and a great King above all gods.
In His hand are the deep places of the earth:
the strength of the hills is His also.
The sea is His, and He made it:
and His hands formed the dry land.
Oh, come, let us worship and bow down:
let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker.**

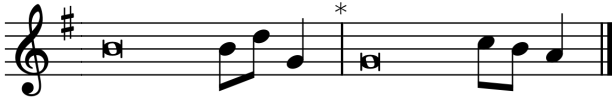
**For He is our God:
and we are the people of His pasture,
and the sheep of His hand.**

Psalm 95:1-7

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son:
and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

PSALMODY

PSALM OF THE DAY - 1 Samuel 2:1b, 2, 5b-7; antiphon: Luke 1:46b-47



My soul magni- | fies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my | Savior.*

**My mouth derides my | enemies,*
because I rejoice in your sal- | vation.**

There is none holy | like the LORD,
there is none besides You; there is no rock | like our God.*

**The barren has borne | seven,*
but she who has many children | is forlorn.**

The LORD kills and | brings to life,
He brings down to Sheol and | raises up.*

**The LORD makes poor and | makes rich;*
He brings low and | He exalts.**

**Glory be to the Father and | to the Son*
and to the Holy | Spirit;**

**as it was in the be- | ginning,*
is now, and will be forever. | Amen.**

My soul magni- | fies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my | Savior.*

[Please sit]

OFFICE HYMN

My Soul doth Magnify the Lord

Hymn 275

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Micah 5:2-5a

² But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose origin is from of old,
from ancient days.

³ Therefore he shall give them up until the time
when she who is in labor has given birth;

then the rest of his brothers shall return
to the people of Israel.

⁴And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord,
in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God.
And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth.

⁵And he shall be their peace.

P But Thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us.

C *♪*Thanks be to Thee, O Lord!

GRADUAL

Zechariah 9:9; Psalm 118:26 alt.



*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of | Zi - on.**

Shout aloud, O daughter of Je- | ru - sa - lem.

**Behold, your king is com- | ing to you;*
righteous and having sal- | va - tion.**

EPISTLE READING

Hebrews 10:5-10

⁵When Christ came into the world, he said,
“Sacrifices and offerings you have not desired,
but a body have you prepared for me;

⁶in burnt offerings and sin offerings
you have taken no pleasure.

⁷Then I said, ‘Behold, I have come to do your will, O God,
as it is written of me in the scroll of the book.’”

⁸When he said above, “You have neither desired nor taken pleasure in sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and sin offerings” (these are offered according to the law), ⁹then he added, “Behold, I have come to do your will.” He abolishes the first in order to establish the second. ¹⁰And by that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

P But Thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us.

C *♪*Thanks be to Thee, O Lord!

[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

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Behold the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel.



HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 1:39-56

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the first chapter.

³⁹In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, ⁴⁰and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, ⁴²and she exclaimed with a loud cry, “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! ⁴³And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.”

⁴⁶And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.

For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed;

⁴⁹for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.

⁵⁰And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation.

⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;

⁵²he has brought down the mighty from their thrones
and exalted those of humble estate;


⁵³he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent empty away.

⁵⁴He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,

⁵⁵as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.”

⁵⁶And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.

P But Thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us.

C  Thanks be to Thee, O Lord!

CHILDREN’S MESSAGE

HYMN OF THE DAY

“O Little Town of Bethlehem

Hymn 647

SERMON

“Jesus, Our Peace”

[Please stand]

OFFERTORY

pg. 12

☐ **♪ 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: Luke 1:45 – “And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.” The Lord always fulfills what He promises. We can be certain of that, and He has proven it over and over again. This faith in the Lord’s own faithfulness is what gives us the courage to follow the Lord’s commands in the face of the world’s anger and resistance, just as it gave Mary the courage to carry on in her seemingly embarrassed circumstances.

[Please stand]

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

[1 Timothy 2:1-4]

O Lord, there is none like You in holiness, constancy and might; yet, You exercise Your power for the salvation of sinners. As we draw near to the celebration of Jesus’ birth, fill our hearts with gratitude that Your Son humbled Himself and became flesh to bear our sin and be our Savior. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Mighty God, You have done great things for us, looking upon our humble estate and exalting us to be Your children for Jesus’ sake. Preserve us by Your Holy Word, that we would properly fear Your name and rejoice in it all our days. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, Your Son from of old was born of Mary in time to be our peace. Grant us repentant hearts, that for His sake we would be at peace with You. Grant also that, forgiven of our sins, we may forgive and be at peace with those around us. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, our God, Bethlehem was too small to be among the clans of Judah, yet from it came forth the King of kings. Remember the congregations of Your people

where numbers are small and resources are scarce. Provide for their needs, and remind them that the Lord of lords dwells among them in His Means of Grace. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Almighty God, You are the Creator of all life. Have mercy on those women who are unable to conceive or who suffer the heartbreak of miscarriage. Be their rock against despair, provide them consolation and purpose in Your Son, and restore them to exult in Your salvation. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Holy God, You sent Your Son to shepherd His flock in strength and to be great to the ends of the earth. Grant wisdom to our leaders and peace among the nations, that we may dwell secure. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, our God, uphold [and] all who suffer in mind or body. Give them the knowledge of Christ, their Immanuel, who is with them in their trials. Grant them health and healing in accord with Your perfect will. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Almighty God, we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ on the cross. Prepare the hearts of all who commune this day with penitence and trust in Your promises, and so make us holy with Your Son's body and blood. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Lord God, heavenly Father, we give You thanks for Your Son, Jesus Christ, who is truly the King of the nations and their desire. He who formed us of clay took on our human nature that He might save us. He came to His own and was rejected by them, yet You established Him as the true cornerstone, tested and precious, that whoever believes in Him will not be put to shame. Grant that, as we recall with thanksgiving His advent in the flesh, we may always confess Him and remain watchful for His advent in glory at the Last Day; for You live and reign, ever one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

THE SERVICE OF HOLY COMMUNION

Page 24ff.

PREFACE AND PROPER PREFACE

- P** The Lord be with you. *2 Timothy 4:22*
- C** **♪ And with thy spirit.**
- P** Lift up your hearts. *[Colossians 3:1]*
- C** **♪ We lift them up unto the Lord.**
- P** Let us give thanks unto the Lord, our God. *[Psalm 136]*
- C** **♪ It is meet and right so to do.**
- P** It is truly meet, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places

give thanks unto Thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God: Through Jesus Christ, our Lord, whose way John the Baptist prepared, proclaiming Him the Messiah, the very Lamb of God, and calling sinners to repentance, that they might escape from the wrath to be revealed when He cometh again in glory. Therefore, with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Thy glorious name, evermore praising Thee and saying:

SANCTUS

- C** **♪ Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth; Heav'n and earth are full of Thy glory; Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is He, Blessed is He, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord. Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest.**

Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 21:9

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

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

*Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24
Luke 22:19-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25*

PAX DOMINI AND AGNUS DEI

- P** The peace of the Lord be with you always! *John 20:19*
- C** **♪ Amen.**

If you are unable to climb the chancel steps without assistance, please come forward at this time.

- C** **♪ O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy upon us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, grant us Thy peace. Amen.** *John 1:29*

Silent Prayer before Communing:

Dear Savior, at Your gracious invitation I come to Your table to eat and drink Your holy body and blood. Let me find favor in Your eyes to receive this holy Sacrament in faith for the salvation of my soul at the glory of Your holy name; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

DISTRIBUTION

DISTRIBUTION HYMNS

<i>Comfort, Comfort, Ye My People</i>	Hymn 61
<i>Watchmen, Tell Us of the Night</i>	Hymn 71
<i>Once He Came in Blessing</i>	Hymn 74
<i>Praise the Almighty, My Soul Adore Him</i>	Hymn 26
<i>My Soul, Now Bless Thy Maker</i>	Hymn 34
<i>Soul, Adorn Thyself with Gladness</i>	Hymn 305

Silent Prayer after Communing:

Almighty and everlasting God, I thank and praise You for feeding me the life-giving body and blood of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Send Your Holy Spirit that, having with my mouth received the holy Sacrament, I may by faith obtain and eternally enjoy Your divine grace, the forgiveness of sins, unity with Christ, and life eternal; through Jesus Christ, my Lord. Amen.

[Please stand]

NUNC DIMITTIS

pg. 29ff

- C** **♪ Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace according to Thy word, For mine eyes have seen Thy Salvation: which Thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a Light to lighten the Gentiles and the Glory of Thy people Israel. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.**

Luke 2:29-32

THANKSGIVING AND POST-COMMUNION COLLECT

- P** Oh, give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good,
- C** **♪ And His mercy endures forever.**
- P** We give thanks to Thee, Almighty God, that Thou hast refreshed us through this salutary gift; and we beseech Thee that of Thy mercy Thou wouldst strengthen us through the same in faith toward Thee and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Ghost, ever one God, world without end.
- C** **♪ Amen.**

BENEDICAMUS AND BENEDICTION

pg. 31

- 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

Lord, Dismiss Us with Thy Blessing

Hymn 50

POSTLUDE

OUTREACH THOUGHT: Luke 1:39-45 (46-56): At the news of the prophecy's fulfillment, Mary burst out singing a song of joy. Today we have seen the prophecy of the Savior come to fulfillment through Jesus. May we also burst forth with great joy and enthusiasm in sharing the saving message of Jesus that this world so desperately needs to hear.

LOOKING AHEAD: We've got a busy week ahead of us! Christmas is nearly here! In our readings next Sunday, we'll see a common theme that occurs on Sundays that occur in the twelve days of the Christmas season—Jesus' life before His ministry. Of course, this is most clearly shown in the Epiphany (January 6) and the visit of the Magi, but our focus this coming Sunday will be on Jesus' Presentation in the Temple as an infant, according to the Law of Moses. Join us to see how Jesus came to fulfill the entire law for us! Readings are: 1 Kings 3:4-15; Ephesians 1:3-14; Luke 2:40-52.

NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

BIBLE CLASS - If you've ever looked closely at the engraved stone on the outside wall of our church, you may have noticed the letters "U.A.C." carved just below the congregation's name. U.A.C. refers to the "Unaltered Augsburg Confession." What does this mean? I'm glad you asked! We are studying the Augsburg Confession, one of the Lutheran Church's foundational documents. First presented on June 24, 1530, this confession demonstrated the Reformers' adherence to the faith once delivered to the saints and also called into question those teachings of Medieval Roman Catholicism that were contrary to the Word of God. Join us as we dig into history, doctrine, and of course, Scripture!

Children's program dress rehearsal will be Monday evening at ?????

The Church Pictorial Directories are now available! A BIG thank you to Lee Heselmeyer for all his time and work on this project! Lee and Cindy will have them available for pick up in the narthex this morning after the service. Limit one per member household.

The Amanda Knox Memorial Scholarship Fund will hold a BBQ Pulled Pork Taco meal on Monday, January 20th. Tickets are \$15 and can be purchased in the church office or by calling or texting Cyndy Zoch at 979-966-3166. In addition, we will be selling tickets after church Sundays in December and January until sold out. Only 250 tickets will be sold so don't wait! All proceeds will be used to award another scholarship to an 8th grade student attending Faith Lutheran High School.

CHRISTMAS WEEK SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Tuesday, December 24: Children's Christmas Eve Program at 6:00 p.m.

(Offerings for St. Paul, Serbin and Immanuel, Giddings, schools.)

Wednesday, December 25: Christmas Day worship w/Communion at 9:00 a.m.

(Offerings for Faith Lutheran High School)

Tuesday, December 31: New Year's Eve Worship w/Communion at 6:30 p.m.

(Offerings for Holy Cross General Fund)

Sunday, January 5, 2025: Sunday morning worship w/Communion at 9:00 a.m. with installation of 2025 Church officers and board members.

*Additionally, the church office will be closed Dec. 24-26 and Jan. 1.

We pray you join us at our Christmas services as we celebrate the birth of our Savior. Invite a friend or neighbor to join you!

FAITH LUTHERAN HIGH SCHOOL NEWS

Merry Christmas!!

Faith Lutheran High School wishes you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a happy New Year! We pray God would shower blessings upon you this holiday season and in the year ahead! Thank you for being a blessing to FLHS!

Seeking a German Teacher

FLHS rejoices with the Obersat family as they have accepted a new call to serve in Wyoming, however, this leaves Faith without a German teacher following Christmas break. Faith Lutheran High School is actively seeking a part-time German teacher for the spring semester of 2025. All interested candidates are encouraged to call to learn more about this position. Please reach out to Mrs. Kueck at (979) 242-2889. If you have the time and talents, please consider sharing your gifts with our students. Thank you!

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. 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!

PRAYER REQUESTS

Layne Schramm, recovering from surgery

David Lehmann, undergoing tests for back and leg pain

Courtney Wagner, undergoing treatments for cancer

Lawrince Heinrich, recovering from infection

Clayton Wolf, son of Allen & Dolores Wolf and brother of Melissa Alford, undergoing additional treatments

Cheryl Jurk, friend of Sunny Woelfel, diagnosed with Thyroid Cancer

Those who serve today: December 22, 2024

Rev. Dustin Beck	Pastor
Mrs. Carol Schramm	Organist
Mrs. Brenda Woelfel	Greeter
Mr. Jonathan Kueck	Lector
Mr. Shea Kasper	Audio/Video System
Rayli Woelfel	Acolyte

Elders on Duty
Mr. Cory Knox
Mr. David Weishuhn

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

TODAY	9:00 a.m.	Divine Service w/Holy Communion
	10:15 a.m.	Bible Class & Sunday School
	10:15 a.m.	Christmas Program Practice
MONDAY	6:00 p.m.	Christmas Program Dress Rehearsal
TUESDAY	6:00 p.m.	Children's Christmas Eve Program
WEDNESDAY	9:00 a.m.	Christmas Day Worship w/Communion
Next Sunday	9:00 a.m.	Divine Service w/Holy Communion
TUESDAY, 12/31	6:30 p.m.	New Year's Eve Worship w/Communion
	8:00 p.m.	Couple's Club Christmas Party

Soli Deo Gloria

(To God alone be Glory)