

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 15 2024

Third Sunday of Avent

+ IN NOMINE JESU +

(In the Name of Jesus)

<u>GUESTS & VISITORS</u>: 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.

<u>Our Communion Policy</u>: 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 Coming of Jesus Enables Us to Rejoice

The Third Sunday in Advent has traditionally been called by the Latin word *Gaudete*, meaning "Rejoice!" For as you are called to repentance, so also are you urged to rejoice in the coming of the Lord, Jesus Christ. By His own cross, He has accomplished salvation for you; "he has cleared away your enemies," "taken away the judgments against you" and come to reign in your midst. Indeed, He rejoices over you with gladness and song (Zeph. 3:15–17)! Therefore, even from prison St. Paul encourages us to "rejoice in the Lord always," knowing that the peace of God will guard and keep us in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:4, 7). We find an example and encouragement in the case of John the Baptist. As he languishes in prison, he calls upon Jesus and is strengthened by the Word of the Gospel that he receives. The same good news is preached to you, by which all things are made new and even "the dead are raised up" (Luke 7:22). Do not be offended by the cross, therefore, but let your life be one of prayer and thanksgiving (Luke 7:23; Phil. 4:6).

PRELUDE - Selected

THE RINGING OF THE CHURCH BELL

WORDS OF WELCOME

OPENING HYMN

The Advent of Our King

Hymn 68

[Please stand]

INVOCATION pg. 15ff

P 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 I** Who made heaven and earth.

Psalm 124:8

- P I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord.
- \square And Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.

Psalm 32:5

- O almighty God, merciful Father, I a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto Thee all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended Thee and justly deserved Thy temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them, and sincerely repent of them, and I pray Thee of Thy boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Thy beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor sinful being.
- P Upon this your confession, I by virtue of my office, as a called an ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the

 → Son, and of the Holy Ghost.
- [John 20:19-23]

SERVICE OF THE WORD

INTROIT - Psalm 146:5-8; Philippians 4:4



Rejoice in the Lord | al - ways;*
again I will say, | Re - joice.

Blessèd is he whose help is the God of | Ja - cob,* whose hope is in the | LORD his God,

Who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is | in them,*
Who keeps faith for - | ev - er;

Who executes justice for | the op - pressed,*
Who gives food to the | hun - gry.

The LORD sets the pris - | 'ners free;*
the LORD opens the eyes | of the blind.

The LORD lifts up those who are | bowed down;* the LORD loves the | righ - teous.

Glory be to the Father and | to the Son* and to the Holy | Spi - rit; as it was in the be - | ginning,*

is now, and will be forever. | A - men.

Rejoice in the Lord | al - ways;*
again I will say, | Re - joice.

KYRIE

☐ Lord, have mercy upon us. Christ, have mercy upon us. Lord, have mercy upon us.

Mark 10:47

HYMN OF PRAISE

Oh, Come, Oh, Come, Emmanuel

Hymn 62, v. 1, 4

SALUTATION AND COLLECT FOR THE DAY

P The Lord be with you.

2 Timothy 4:22

- ☐ And with thy spirit.
- 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.

OLD TESTAMENT READING

¹⁴Sing aloud, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel!

Rejoice and exult with all your heart,

O daughter of Jerusalem!

¹⁵The LORD has taken away the judgments against you; he has cleared away your enemies.

The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall never again fear evil.

¹⁶On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem:

"Fear not, O Zion;

let not your hands grow weak.

¹⁷The LORD your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save;

he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love;

he will exult over you with loud singing.

¹⁸I will gather those of you who mourn for the festival, so that you will no longer suffer reproach.

¹⁹Behold, at that time I will deal with all your oppressors.

And I will save the lame and gather the outcast,

and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth.

²⁰At that time I will bring you in, at the time when I gather you together;

for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth,

when I restore your fortunes before your eyes," says the LORD.

- **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 | 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

Philippians 4:4-7

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; ⁶do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

- **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

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, who will prepare Your way before You.



HOLY GOSPEL Luke 7:18-28

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

¹⁸The disciples of John reported all these things to him. And John, ¹⁹calling two of his disciples to him, sent them to the Lord, saying, "Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" ²⁰And when the men had come to him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, 'Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?" ²¹In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight. ²²And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised

up, the poor have good news preached to them. ²³And blessed is the one who is not offended by me."

²⁴When John's messengers had gone, 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? ²⁵What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who are dressed in splendid clothing and live in luxury are in kings' courts. ²⁶What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷This is he of whom it is written,

"Behold, I send my messenger before your face,

who will prepare your way before you.'

²⁸I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he."

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

☐ ☐ Praise be to Thee, O Christ.

NICENE CREED pg. 22

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the onlybegotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds. God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made; Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary And was made man; And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures; And ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of the Father; And He will come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end. And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life; Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and Apostolic Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life + of the world to come. Amen.

HYMN OF THE DAY

Hark, A Thrilling Voice is Sounding

Hymn 60

SERMON

"Jesus, Bringer of Joy"

|Please stand|

OFFERTORY pg. 22

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 - Offering plates are available before and after service in the narthex

<u>PAUSE TO PONDER</u>: Philippians 4:5–6 – "The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." Wouldn't you like to be free from worry and anxiety? Isn't it worry and anxiety that often keep us from living the generous life God has called us to? St. Paul contrasts anxiety with prayer, supplication and thanksgiving in making our requests known to God. In other words, when you are tempted to anxiety and worry, pray to the Lord with a thankful heart and pour out your supplications before Him.

[Please stand]

PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

[1 Timothy 2:1-4]

Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Almighty God, as You once sent messengers before the face of Jesus to prepare His way, so strengthen and encourage pastors and church workers as they make known His saving name. Open the ears of all who hear to rejoice, repent and firmly believe in Christ. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer**.

Heavenly Father, You rescue the daughter of Zion from her enemies and take away the judgments against her. Look with compassion upon Your people wherever they suffer for the name of Jesus. Give them wisdom when they are pressured to compromise, provide for them when they suffer loss, give courage when they are afraid, and strengthen them in the midst of persecution until You deliver them. Preserve us in the joyful hope that You will restore all that is lost with what cannot be taken away. Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

O God, Giver of all good gifts, look upon the households of Your people. Provide companionship for those who are alone. Strengthen the bonds of marriage. Equip parents to raise their children in love and faith. Grant that our homes may be places of joy, reasonableness, peace and prayer. Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

Lord, You command us not to be anxious, but in everything by prayer and thanks-giving to make our requests known to You. Give wisdom, health and success to the authorities who govern us and those newly elected. Give earthly peace in our time, even as Your Gospel gives eternally the peace that passes all understanding. Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

God of all joy, You bid us to be anxious about nothing, but by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving to make our requests known to You. Forgive our anxieties, and strengthen us to examine ourselves for whatever causes us to doubt Your mercy. Guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, and hear the prayers that we offer today. Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

Look with kindness on all people, especially those for whom we pray: Layne, David, Courtney, Clayton, Cheryl, and all those on our hearts and minds today. Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

Heavenly Father, the Son of Man came eating and drinking with sinners, that He might proclaim the kingdom and welcome them in by the forgiveness of sins. As He hosts His Supper this day for His repentant people, grant those who partake of His body and blood to be worthy and well-prepared, firmly believing the words, "Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins." Lord, in Your mercy, hear our prayer.

Hear us, heavenly Father, for the sake of Christ Jesus, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, 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]

- **© A** We lift them up unto the Lord.
- **P** Let us give thanks unto the Lord, our God.

[Psalm 136]

- \square It is meet and right so to do.
- 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

☐ ☐ Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabaoth; Heavn'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 in the highest.

Isaiah 6:3; Matthew 21:9

LORD'S PRAYER

- P Lord, remember us in Your Kingdom, and teach us to pray:
- 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 A Amen.

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

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

O Bride of Christ, Rejoice	Hymn 57
When Sinners See Their Lost Condition	Hymn 65
Ye Sons of Men, Oh, Hearken	Hymn 75
Dear Christians, One and All, Rejoice	Hymn 387

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

■ 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,
- ☐ ☐ And His mercy endures forever.

Psalm 107:1

- 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 A**men.

BENEDICAMUS AND BENEDICTION

pg. 31 2 Timothy 4:22

- **P** The Lord be with you.
- ☐ And with Thy spirit.
- P Bless we the Lord.

[Psalm 103:1]

- **□ □** Thanks be to God.
- 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
- Amen. Amen. Amen.

POSTLUDE

<u>OUTREACH THOUGHT</u>: Luke 7:18-28 (29-35): Sometimes, when we look at the humble way in which Jesus entered our world, we are filled with doubts. We ask along with John's messengers, "Are You the One to come or shall we look for another?" Jesus' answer to John's messengers serves as a mission statement for our outreach: "Go and tell what you have seen and heard." May we boldly share what we have seen and heard about our coming Savior, Jesus Christ.

LOOKING AHEAD: Looking Ahead: Next Sunday is already the Fourth Sunday in Advent! The theme of the day is "reversal." Mary's song, often called the Magnificat, talks about God humbling the proud and exalting the lowly; Micah names the "little town" of Bethlehem as the place from which a ruler will come to stand and shepherd His flock in the strength of the LORD. As it turns out, God is in the business of reversing things...giving blessing where a curse is deserved...forgiving where punishment is due...Readings are Micah 5:2-5; Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-45.

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!

Game Day will be this Thursday, December 19th, from 12PM-2PM in the fellow-ship hall with lunch provided. Come join us for a fun afternoon of games and visiting! Rumor has it that old Wendish/German tradition of a visit by Rumplich is alive and well and may pay us a visit!!! Everyone is invited and there will be a chance for photos as well.....IF you've been a good boy or girl all year. Come out and enjoy some time with friends, and help spread the word. Everyone is invited!

EXTENDED! If you would like to give a Poinsettia in memory or honor of a loved one, please pick-up a blue order form from the bulletin board in the Narthex, fill it out and return it to the church office by Tuesday at 2PM. The cost is \$10.00 each and payment should accompany your form. Checks should be payable to Holy Cross Ladies Aid.

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 WORSHIP SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Wednesday, Dec. 18: Last Wednesday Advent Services at 10:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. (Offerings for Missions)

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.

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!

Attendance Last Sunday

Divine Service: 133 Bible Class: No Report Sunday School: 25



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!



Altar Flowers are given to the glory of God by Jonathan and Nikki Kueck in honor of their 15th wedding anniversary on December 19th.



Layne Schramm, recovering from surgery
David Lehmann, undergoing tests for back and leg pain
Courtney Wagner, undergoing treatments for cancer
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

Our sympathy to Wayne and Jane Chapman and family on the passing of Wayne's nephew, Phillip Chapman, on December 9th following a battle with cancer.

Those who serve today: December 15, 2024

Rev. Dustin Beck Pastor
Mrs. Ann Bamsch Organist
Mrs. Cindy Heselmeyer Greeter
Mr. Curtis Wedgeworth Lector
Mr. Shea Kasper Audio/Video System
Scarlett Landry 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.	Adult & Youth Bible Class & Sunday
		School
	10:15 a.m.	Christmas Program Practice
TUESDAY	5:30 p.m.	Pastor Beck/Organists
WEDNESDAY	10:30 a.m.	Advent Worship
	11:30 a.m.	Bible Study
	6:00 p.m.	Jr. Confirmation (Both classes)
	7:00 p.m.	Advent Worship
THURSDAY	12:00 p.m.	Game Day
Next Sunday	9:00 a.m.	Divine Service w/Holy Communion
	10:15 a.m.	Adult & Youth Bible Class & Sunday
		School
	10:15 a.m.	Christmas Program Practice

Soli Deo Gloria

(To God alone be Glory)