

December, 2022

Holy Cross...Together, Into the Wilderness

A voice is calling, "Clear the way for the Lord in the wilderness;
Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God.
Let every valley be lifted up,
And every mountain and hill be made low;
And let the rough ground become a plain,
And the rugged terrain a broad valley;
Then the glory of the Lord will be revealed,
And all flesh will see it together;
For the mouth of the Lord has spoken." - Isaiah 40: 3-5

Led by Faith

During this time of transition, we have been asked to consider various options for a path forward for our church. Without a clear path ahead, we find ourselves in the wilderness. At first thought, the wilderness may seem daunting, as the paths are not cut, there is the feeling at times of danger to our livelihood, and there is uncertainty about how long we must sustain in these conditions. However, as Isaiah 40: 3-5 reminds us, being in the wilderness is a wonderfully spiritual opportunity for us to open our hearts to the Holy Spirit and have tremendous faith that in doing so, the path we ultimately chart for ourselves will reveal the glory of the Lord!

Since 1964, faith has brought Holy Cross through the wilderness many times. Already this year when we found ourselves striving to find a transitional pastor, our prayers and faith brought us a faith-filled leader in Pastor Dorothy, who has provided immense spiritual counsel. In light of recent developments she will now be available to be our 3/4 time transitional pastor who is willing to continue to guide us forward.

With Thy Light Guiding Us

As we venture into the wilderness, we look to the light of Christ that shines brightly among us and will surely guide us. That light is ever present and we are reminded of it through our welcoming of all as a Reconciling in Christ congregation and providing a Safe Place for those who have been marginalized; serving those in need through Bread for All, Meals on Wheels, Oak Hill Community Alliance, and Lutheran World Relief; embracing the faith education of our youth with Godly Play, Confirmation, and VBS offerings and our adults through Tuesday Bible Study; and celebrating together the Word of God in Sunday worship!

With Hearts Open to that which the Lord Reveals

As we approach a new calendar year, we ask you to consider this time in the wilderness, not as a time of despair, anxiety, or doubt in our future, but instead as a time of hope, unity, and spiritual awakening! While we've heard messages that the larger Church is changing, we believe that Holy Cross remains strong and steadfast to be a part of this change. Holy Cross has always been a faith-filled group willing to come together to support each other and the church when we've found ourselves in uncertain times, and today is no different. As church leadership has explored with other congregations also in the wilderness, we have come to see clearly that Holy Cross is alive and still full of passion to do the work of Christ and to SEE, KNOW, and LOVE ALL PEOPLE in this place!

As we enter the 2023 Generosity Campaign, we remember that the ability to choose our path through the wilderness includes an important financial component to ensure continuation and growth of our ministries, especially as we prepare for the welcoming of a new pastor and expanded missional work. We ask you to prayerfully open your heart to the Holy Spirit and with faith, make a pledged offering to enable Holy Cross to be able to take whatever path the Lord reveals to us.

With deepest gratitude,
Holy Cross Lutheran Stewardship Team

Tom & Sue Munns, Financial Secretaries
financialsecretary@holycrossatx.org

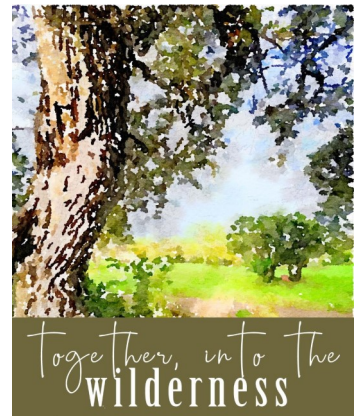
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a congregation
of the
Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America
and a Reconciling in Christ
community

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www.HolyCrossATX.org





**Generosity is rooted in our foundation,
as your pledged giving is our most reliable form of income!**
As we look to 2023 and
Our Pathway Ahead,
may you prayerfully consider how you might
share your blessings with Holy Cross
to further our Mission & Ministry

How can *you* help to get our pledging moving forward?

	2020	2021	2022
Baptized Membership	98	101	96
# Pledging Units Possible (# households)	49	45	44
# Pledging Units (% of households)	26 (53.1%)	26 (57.8%)	26 (59.1%)
Total Pledged Amount (Year pledges made)	\$86,229 (2019)	\$71,395 (2020)	\$83,799 (2021)

Consider becoming a new pledging unit? Increase your annual pledge by 10%, 20%, or more?

Seen, Known, Loved in this Place

	2020	2021	2022
Primary Mortgage Balance (End of year) (matures 5/1/2029)	\$262,284.48	\$244,935.76 (as of 10/7/21)	\$220,381.69 (as of 10/7/22)
Ministry Bldg Mortgage Balance (End of year) (matures 2/1/2026)	\$80,638.89	\$70,392.20 (as of 10/7/21)	\$54,834.29 (as of 10/7/22)

Think of all the good that happens at Holy Cross...

Your Generosity helps keep this wonderful place going!

Mission & Ministry Moving Forward

	2020	2021	2022	2023
Mission & Ministry Spending at Holy Cross	\$17,046	\$11,214*	\$16,249 (budgeted)	???
3/4 Time Pastoral Compensation Package (Budgeted, Including Supply/Transitional Pastor Compensation)	\$63,320	\$62,355	\$64,335	\$71,697^

*This decrease reflects the direct financial impact of the pandemic aftermath

^ Estimated cost based on updated Rostered Minister Compensation Guidelines

**If, together, we increased our 2022 pledges by 10%, we could budget Mission & Ministry
above pre-pandemic levels and clear a path for a 3/4 time Pastor!**

**As we venture
Together, Into the Wilderness with Faith,
your Generosity is a light that shines to make paths available to us!
As you reflect on paths forward, what is the light that Holy Cross
brings to the wilderness in your eyes?**



“My generosity to Holy Cross is inspired by the light of welcoming that is felt and known here. There are very few places that truly anyone, from any walk of life, can come and feel at peace and accepted in a non-judgmental and supportive place. I love that Holy Cross genuinely represents the open arms of Christ who welcomed all, including the most marginalized. My hope is that an increase in my generosity will help to move Holy Cross forward so that our welcoming, accepting, and sharing of Christ’s love will not only be found within our beautiful 4.5 acres, but also transcend into the community!”

“Our small church has such a huge impact on Austin and the world. Supporting a congregation that helps feed our neighbors who cannot feed themselves, wraps quilts of love and hope around those in need across the globe and sustains everyone who walks into worship with the body and blood of Christ will always feel right to me.”



“We see it as an honor to give in support of the missions of our church. It takes faith in a loving God to reach out with services to those who we will never meet or even see, knowing that, through Him, what we are doing is merciful and good.”

Your thoughts? (We’d love for you to turn this in with your pledge!)

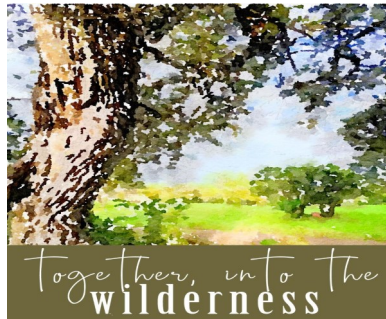


How do I make a Pledge to Holy Cross for 2023?

For 2023, in an effort to be efficient and save on resources, we hope you will find these options for pledging to be helpful:

- 1) You are welcome to e-mail us your pledge at Financialsecretary@holycrossATX.org .
Please provide:
 - A. Your name in the subject line (will help Sue and Tom keep track of pledges)
 - B. In the body, please state your annual (total annual giving) pledge gift.
 - C. Also, please share how you plan to give toward this pledge
 - i. One lump sum gift ii. Monthly iii. Bi Weekly iv. Weekly v. Other _____(This information helps the Church understand the expected giving profile)
 - D. The address where you would like giving statements mailed
- 2) If you prefer to send in your pledge (the old fashioned way), just print out and complete the Pledge Card below, and mail it back to the church or preferably, join us on Sunday and drop it into the Sunday morning offering plate
- 3) If you would prefer to visit with Sue and verbally share your 2023 Pledge detail, please call (512) 636-9423

Please communicate your pledge or return your pledge card as soon as you are able, but no later than December 19, 2022, as this will help with the 2023 budgeting process.



Pledge Card—Plan for Giving 2023

Count me in to support the operations, mission, and ministry of Holy Cross!

I pledge to give \$ _____ to the general fund in 2023

I plan to give (circle one): One lump sum Monthly Bi-Weekly Weekly Other _____

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

☐ Please contact me at _____ about automatic debit options from my checking or other bank account

Please return to Holy Cross Lutheran Church, 4622 S. Lamar Blvd., Austin, TX 78745 no later than December 19, 2022.