

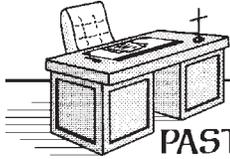
Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church

Crossnotes



2005

MARCH



FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

*On a hill far away
Stood an old rugged cross,
The emblem of suffering and shame;
And I love that old cross
Where the dearest and best
For a world of lost sinners was slain.*

In 1792, the French physician Dr. Joseph Guillotine performed what he considered to be a humanitarian gesture: he invented a new instrument of execution, which bears his name. The guillotine, electric chair, and gas chamber were all touted in their day as being less painful and traumatic, a more humane way to die! The most recent development along these lines is death by lethal injection. The idea has been to make executions less cruel.

But they had a different attitude in ancient times. Crucifixion was invented for the very purpose of being painful, traumatic, an inhumane way to die, a cruel form of death. In order to serve as an example and a deterrent, death by crucifixion was deliberately designed to be slow, brutal, and public. The Roman poet Cicero called crucifixion "the cruelest and most hideous punishment possible." The Jewish historian Josephus said that crucifixion was "the most wretched of deaths."

In our nation today it is a major news story when the government carries out an execution. But in the Roman Empire of 33 A.D. executions were common, and the most common form of execution was crucifixion. Jesus was one of many tens of thousands who were put to death by crucifixion. Jesus himself was

crucified along with two criminals. For a Roman soldier, crucifixion detail was just an ordinary part of his regular duties.

The Romans had a step-by-step crucifixion routine. The crucifixion detail usually consisted of four soldiers for each victim. Once they learned there would be crucifixions that day, the soldiers who were on crucifixion detail would gather the necessary items: whip, hammer, iron nails, and rations for them to stay at the cross until the victim had died.

The crucifixion routine began with the victim being stripped and whipped almost to the point of death. This torture was intended to weaken the victim and shorten his time on the cross, as was thus considered a humanitarian gesture! Matthew 27:26 says, "[Pilate] had Jesus flogged, and handed him over to be crucified."

The victim would then be forced to carry his own cross out to the place of execution. John 19:17 reports, "Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha)." But it seems Jesus was so weakened by the torture he had endured that he could not bear his cross the entire distance, and so Matthew, Mark and Luke tell us that the soldiers picked a man from the crowd named Simon of Cyrene and forced him to carry the cross.

Out at the place of crucifixion the soldiers gave the victim wine mixed with myrrh, a mild narcotic. Mark 15:23 tells us: "They offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it." Perhaps Jesus did not take it because for our sake he had to suffer the full, undiluted agony of the cross.

As a bonus for being on crucifixion detail, the soldiers were permitted to divide among themselves the victim's

clothes. Luke 23:34 says, "They divided up his clothes by casting lots."

The cross would be laid out on the ground and the victim nailed to it. Peter says in Acts 2:23, "They put him to death by nailing him to the cross." For many years critics said that the New Testament must be in error, that the Romans couldn't have nailed people to crosses, because it would be impossible for someone to be held onto a cross with nails, since the nails would pull through the flesh.

Then in 1968 the first skeleton of an actual crucifixion victim was discovered in a tomb near Jerusalem, the remains of a man in his mid-twenties who was crucified about the same time as Jesus. A seven inch iron spike was still lodged in his leg bone, very much like a railroad spike except tapered to a fine point.

Because iron was valuable, these spikes were normally extracted by the soldiers and used over and over again. But this particular spike had hit a knot in the cross and bent like a fishhook so that it could not be pulled from the body. Splinters of olive wood from the cross were still stuck to the end of the spike.

But the most interesting thing was at the other end of the spike, between the head of the spike and the bone: a square piece of acacia wood which functioned as a washer. That is how the Romans held a victim onto a cross with nails; they were better engineers than we are, and they knew how to use a washer to distribute the load!

After the victim was nailed to the cross the soldiers would raise it up and post a wooden plaque above the victim specifying his name and the crime for which he was being crucified. John says 19:19, "Pilate had a notice prepared and fastened to the cross. It read: JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS." Even though Pilate found Jesus innocent of treason, that was nevertheless the

official reason he was crucified, supposedly claiming to be "The King of the Jews" in competition with Caesar. (There was a specific Roman law, Lex Julia Majestatis, enacted by Augustus in 8 B.C., which made it an offense punishable by death for anyone to proclaim himself a king without prior permission of the Roman emperor.)

The notice posted on the cross was an important part of the deterrent effect of crucifixion, a warning to everyone else not to commit the same crime. That is also why something so ghastly as crucifixions were carried out in a prominent, public place, as John 19:20 adds, "Many of the Jews read this sign, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and the sign was written in Aramaic, Latin and Greek."

In order to utterly humiliate the crucifixion victim he was usually completely naked as he hung on the cross. The soldiers and the crowd would insult and taunt him. As Mark 15:29 reports, "Those who passed by hurled insults at him," and as Luke 23:36 says, "The soldiers also came up and mocked him."

There was very little crucifixion victims could do to fight back or retaliate. They would usually curse the soldiers or spit in their faces. If you were a soldier on crucifixion detail, you had to watch out that the victim did not make one last defiant gesture by relieving himself in your face. Contrast that with the attitude of Jesus. First Peter 2:23 says, "When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate." Jesus preached,

Crossnotes

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March, 2005

Volume 3

Number 3



Community Easter Sunrise Service

Easter Sunday, March 27

Sunrise Service—7:00am

Light Continental Breakfast—8:00am

Second Easter Service with Holy Communion—9:30am

All Events Held at Holy Cross Lutheran Church
Freewill Offering Taken to Defray Breakfast Expenses

All Invited—Everyone Welcome!

"Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you" (Luke 6:27-28). And on the cross he practiced what he preached: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

Crucifixion would cause dehydration and intense thirst. And so John 19:28 reports that Jesus said from the cross, "I thirst." The soldiers soaked a sponge in wine vinegar, which is what they themselves received for their daily ration, put the sponge on a stick and lifted it to Jesus' lips.

Victims of crucifixion often lasted three or four days on the cross. That is why Pontius Pilate was surprised to learn of Jesus' death. In order to hasten death it was customary to break the victim's legs so that he would slump down and be unable to breathe. As John 19:31-32 says, "Because the Jews did not want the bodies left on the crosses during the Sabbath, they asked Pilate to have the legs broken and the bodies taken down. The soldiers therefore came and broke the legs of the first man

who had been crucified with Jesus, and then those of the other." Once again archaeology confirms the New Testament: when that skeleton of a crucifixion victim was discovered, his legs had been broken.

Jesus was so weakened by the all the torture he endured before his crucifixion that he died after three hours on the cross. John 19:33-34 continues, "But when they came to Jesus and found that he was already dead, they did not break his legs. Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water." Modern medical doctors interpret this to mean that Jesus probably died as a result of congestive heart failure, a buildup of fluids around the heart.

Everything the Bible reports about Jesus' crucifixion agrees perfectly with the historical and archaeological evidence. But one thing history and archaeology can't tell us is the meaning for you personally of Jesus' death on the cross. Paul says in Colossians 1:19-20, "God was pleased to have all his fullness

dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross." Because Jesus died on the cross you are reconciled with God, you are forgiven all your sins, you are at peace with God through his blood, shed on the cross.

*In that old rugged cross,
 Stained with blood so divine,
 A wondrous beauty I see;
 For 'twas on that old cross
 Jesus suffered and died,
 To pardon and sanctify me.
 So I'll cherish the old rugged cross,
 Till my trophies at last I lay down,
 I will cling to the old rugged cross,
 And exchange it some day
 for a crown!*

Pastor Kevin Vogts



Stained Glass Installed for Easter

Our sermon series during Lent has been meditations on the symbolism of the new stained glass windows in our church.

These windows are being installed gradually, about one each week. Several windows still require the bottom panel, which is more difficult to install because those windows remain operable. They should all be completed by Easter Sunday. What a beautiful sight it will be as the sun streams through our new windows at our Sunrise Service!

Easter Lily Donations



Thank you to all those who donated so many beautiful lilies to beautify our church this Easter. It is still possible to sign up for a donation. Any additional donations will be included in the April newsletter.

<u>Given By</u>	<u>In Memory or Honor Of</u>
Doug & Sue Jansen (2)	Paul Jansen & Nate Schubert
Doug & Janet Martin	Grandparents
Jane Michels	Jim Michels
Jim & Lana Miller (2)	Lana's Sisters Lis & Lori
Mable Schibonski	Elmer Schibonski
Joey & Marcy Schroeder (2)	Kelly Schroeder & Grandparents
Lyle & Linda Schuknecht	Fathers, Eldred & Donald
Rev. Kevin & Terese Vogts (3)	Leroy Vogts, & Grandparents
Ron & Jeannette Yockey	Parents

Any Additional Donations Will Be Included in the April Newsletter

We have already received many compliments on the rich colors, and detailed symbolism of the scenes depicting the life and teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ. Especially in the morning and evening the effect is quite striking.

Our thanks to all those who gave so generously to make this project possible. A complete listing will be included in next month's newsletter. A memorial book is being prepared which will feature full-color photos of the windows.

These beautiful windows will give our temporary sanctuary a much more worshipful atmosphere, and will enhance worship at Holy Cross for generations to come when they are moved into our permanent sanctuary when it is constructed.

A Grand Dedication of our new stained glass windows, organ, and altar furnishings is tentatively planned for Sunday, May 15. These generous gifts have really changed the look of our sanctuary over the past year.

Concordia Lutheran Church Calls Pastoral Candidate

Pastor Vogts has been serving as vacancy pastor of Concordia Lutheran Church, 2000 Military Road, Sioux City, since last summer. They have now submitted a request to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to be assigned a pastoral candidate from the seminary classes which will graduate in May.

This request now goes to the Synod's Board of Assignments, which matches the available candidates with the congregational requests. In most years there are not enough candidates to meet all the requests. However, both Concordia Seminary, St. Louis and Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne have blessed in recent years with significant enrollment increases, and these record size classes are now beginning to graduate. In fact, The

Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is the only denomination in America that is reporting an *increase* in seminary enrollment.

As a result, according to the “grape vine” this year, for the first time in anyone’s memory, there are actually more than enough pastoral candidates to meet all the requests. So, Lord willing, it seems that Concordia Lutheran Church should be receiving a new pastor in several months, at which time Pastor Vogts’ vacancy pastor duties will end.

Call Day at the seminaries, when the candidates learn their first assignments, is the last week of April. They actually graduate several weeks later and are installed and begin serving some-time during the summer.



Donate Flowers for Worship

Thank you for these flower donations to beautify our worship. Any additional donations will be listed in future newsletters.

A sign-up sheet to provide flowers for worship in 2005 is on the bulletin board at the back of the church. Occasions to remember include anniversaries, birthdays, in memory of loved ones, etc. Flowers may be obtained anywhere and you may provide your own vase or use one of the assortment in the church kitchen.

February 6

Doug & Sue Jansen
In Memory of Nathan Schubert

March 6

Mabel Schibonski
Elmer’s Birthday

March 20

Joey, Marcy & Bryce Schroeder
Brady’s 3rd Birthday

April 17

Rev. Kevin & Terese Vogts
Kevin’s Birthday

Holy Week

SCHEDULE



Maundy Thursday

March 24, 7:00pm

“Sermons in Stained Glass:

Last Supper”

Luke 22:19-20



March 25, 7:00pm

“Sermons in Stained Glass:

Crucifixion

1 Peter 2:24

Jesus, I Will Ponder Now, On Your Holy Passion!

Easter Egg Hunt



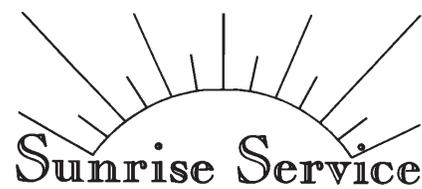
Holy Cross is again sponsoring a Community Easter Egg Hunt, on Saturday, March 26 (day before Easter) at 10:30am on the church grounds. This event is for the entire community, and all children up to age 10 are welcome.

Easter is unusually early this year, making bad weather more likely, and it is really not possible to hold an egg hunt inside our church. *But spread the word to please still come in case of bad weather!* Sacks of eggs and prizes will be distributed to the children. (Pray for good weather!)

Last year over 100 children attended and at least that many adults attended. This event is becoming a real community tradition. There will be plenty

of eggs, prizes, snacks and an Easter video. There are no charges or fees for this free community event.

We already have enough eggs and prize items but donations to help defray expenses would be appreciated. Place in offering plate marked “Easter Egg Hunt.”



Community Sunrise Service at Holy Cross

You are invited to a Community Sunrise Service on Easter Sunday, March 27 at 7:00am, held in the sanctuary at Holy Cross. This simple service will feature the Easter story and favorite Easter hymns. A second Easter Ser-

vice, with Holy Communion, will be held at 9:30am.

Along with Christmas Eve Candlelight Services, the Easter Sunrise Service is one of the most moving and meaningful worship opportunities of the year. It is especially memorable for children.

Bring your family and holiday guests to celebrate the real significance of Easter. This is a wonderful opportunity to invite family, friends, neighbors, etc.—everyone enjoys Easter Sunrise services!



Following the Easter Sunrise service, everyone is invited to stay for an Easter Breakfast, also at the church, sponsored by the Board of Evangelism. This will be a light continental breakfast of rolls, fruit, coffee and juice. A free-will offering will be taken to help defray expenses for the breakfast.



The church has now been wired for high-speed Internet access, which just became available when Long Lines began serving Dakota Dunes. Please note that Pastor Vogts' new email address is kvogts@longlines.com.

Our thanks to Jason Bietz and Daniell Bargstadt for developing a new web page for Holy Cross, which should be up soon.

Community Easter Egg Hunt



Saturday, March 26 • 10:30am

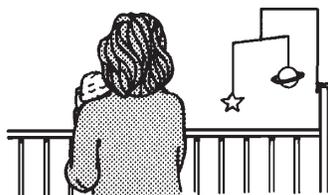
On Church Grounds at
Dakota Dunes Boulevard and Bison Trail

Up to Age 10 • Plenty of Eggs!

Prizes • Snacks • Easter Video

All Children Invited—Non-Members Welcome!

No Charges or Fees



Nursery

March 6
Diana Kaardal

March 13
Daniell Bargstadt

March 20
Janet Martin

March 27
Vogtses



Acolytes

March 2 (Lent Service)
Alex Kaardal

March 6
Sarah Vogts

March 9 (Lent Service)
Austin Munns

March 13
Casey Johnson

March 16 (Lent Service)
Kendall Martin

March 20
Morgan Kaardal

March 23 (Maundy Thursday)
Kylie Martin

March 27
Jacob Vogts



Elders

March 2 (Lent Service)
Joey Schroeder

March 6
Dennis Melstad

March 9 (Lent Service)
Dennis Melstad

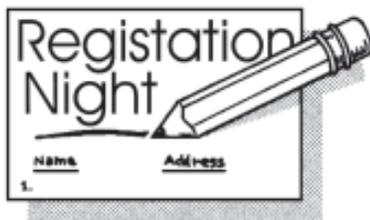
March 13
Greg Huibregtse
March 16 (Lent Service)
Greg Huibregtse

March 20
Joey Schroeder

March 23 (Maundy Thursday)
Doug Jansen

March 24 (Good Friday)
Doug Jansen

March 27
Mike Bargstadt



Preschool Registration Night April 7th

Registration Night for the Holy Cross Preschool will be Thursday, April 7th from 6:00pm-7:30pm. Come learn more about our high quality preschool program, and hold a spot for your child for next fall by paying a registration fee.

Classes this year were all full or nearly full, so you are encouraged to reserve a place for your child, or if you have friends, neighbors, relatives, etc. that may be interested please let them know to reserve a place, so that they will not be disappointed.

Classes include Mom's Day Out for two year-olds, and Preschool sessions for three, four and five year-olds. Holy Cross Preschool is blessed with a dedicated, professional staff, and an excellent facility. Most of all, education takes place in a loving, Christian atmosphere.

Holy Cross also offers After School Care. Children thru 6th grade enjoy a variety of supervised activities from 3:00pm-6:00pm. Bus service is provided directly to Holy Cross from both Dakota Valley and Sacred Heart.

For more information speak with Board of Education chair Terese Vogts or call 235-1688.

"We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD" (Psalm 78:4).

Sermon Themes for March



March 2 (Lent Service 7:00pm)
*"Sermons in Stained Glass:
Gethsemane"*
Matthew 26:36-39

March 6
*"Jesus Sets the
Disciples Straight"*
Matthew 20:17-19

March 9 (Lent Service 7:00pm)
*"Sermons in Stained Glass:
Resurrection and Ascension"*
Romans 4:25

March 13
"Our Present Sufferings"
Romans 8:18

March 16 (Lent Service 7:00pm)
*"Sermons in Stained Glass:
Good Shepherd"*
John 10:11-15

March 20 (Palm Sunday)
*"Spread Your Cloaks
Before Him!"*
Mark 11: 1-11

March 23 (Maundy Thursday)
*"Sermons in Stained Glass:
Last Supper"*
Luke 22:19-20

March 24 (Good Friday)
*"Sermons in Stained Glass:
Crucifixion"*
1 Peter 2:24

March 27 (Easter Sunday)
(7:00am Sunrise Service and
9:30am Service with Communion)
"God's Easter Triple Whammy"
1 Corinthians 15:1-4



Everyone is invited to a Sioux City Bandits Indoor Football Game on Friday, April 1. Kickoff is at 7:00pm, with dinner together before the game at 5:30pm at Carlos O'Kellys. Tickets will range from \$8-\$16 depending on number of people and location of seats.

Evangelism Committee providing child care at Holy Cross. Sign up on the bulletin board, and for more information contact Daniell Bargstadt (223-4330).



Donate Lilies for Easter

You can still sign up on the bulletin board to donate lilies to beautify our church at Easter. Note whom or what they are in memory or honor of. As we focus on the promise of the resurrection, Easter is a wonderful occasion to remember loved ones. Cost is only \$5 per plant. Put payment in offering marked "Easter Lilies."

You are also *welcome* to bring plants you purchase elsewhere or receive as gifts. Please still sign up, noting you will bring your own plants.



Our thanks to the dedicated members of our congregation who have been rehearsing on Tuesday evenings for our new handbell choir, with a goal of performing on Easter Sunday.

Concordia Lutheran Church, Sioux City agreed to loan their handbells to

Holy Cross, and Jill Ellickson agreed to begin directing a handbell choir! It is open to both adults and children who can read music.

Additional members are welcome. If you have an interest or for more information please contact Pastor Vogts.



Rev. Herb Hoefler, India

My visits in the Ambur area of India have been quite uplifting. I preached at three baptismal services, totaling 60 baptisms. We also have five vicars (seminary students serving pastoral internships) working as church planters in the Ambur Synod. I met with them for a couple of hours. It was inspiring to hear their stories, after even just 6 months into their three-year assignment to unchurched areas. This is the second set of vicars to enter into this program.

Let me just give you a little flavor of their reports. One vicar is just finishing his three-year term. He found that the social help that he provided people built up a relationship and trust that enabled him to be considered their pastor. In the three villages where he worked, most of the worshippers on Sunday morning are not baptized. In all these places, they await the purchase of a land and the construction of a chapel before they come forward for baptism. They need to know that the church is there to stay with them.

In the one village where they have started to build the chapel, there are now 30 families in the congregation. When the worship is held in individuals' homes, some other villagers won't come because of personal animosities and caste differences. They say they can only gather easily if it is in some common place, such as a chapel.

The vicars spoke of how long the Sunday morning worship times are. All of the worshippers want to come up

after the service for individual, hands-on-the-head prayers. It usually takes two to three hours.



Lutheran seminary students in India are commissioned for three year assignments as vicars (pastoral interns) planting churches in unchurched areas.

One vicar has a very unique congregation developing. He is in a cosmopolitan urban area. For his worship services, he prints the words to the hymns in four languages. Everyone sings the same tune but with different words. Similarly, they read the Sunday lessons in three languages. Thirty of the 35 families regularly attending worship are non-Christians. He's convinced that with the purchase of a land, he would have a self-supporting congregation at the end of his three years.



Rev. Ron and Lisa Mudge, Togo

How do the Togolese celebrate Christmas? They start with an all night service of praise, prayer, and dancing under a moonlit sky waiting for the glory of Christmas morning. How do you feel after celebrating all night long? Tired! But that didn't stop our worship service on Christmas morning from being a praise-filled event.

Our family headed for the village of Sissiak at 6:15 a.m. Christmas Day to meet with a gathering of Lutheran congregations. By the time we arrived at 7 a.m., people had already settled them-

selves on wood benches in the circle of a huge mango tree's shade, after having refreshed themselves with tchak pa (a locally made millet drink) and a meal with African peanut sauce. Drums were out and ready, and the sun was already getting high in the sky. Quietly the drums began, but as soon as the dancers formed their ring around the mango tree, the beats picked up and the real dancing began. And they danced, and danced, and danced.

We read the Christmas story, sang songs of praise, and heard the pastor's message as well, but nothing seemed to shout praises to God so loudly as the dancing. As is the custom here, the next day (Sunday) was spent celebrating baptisms, confirmations, and the burning of fetishes. Fetishes are items that are used as protection from evil spirits in the traditional religion. Burning these is truly a sign of seeking a right relationship with God. At the service Ron attended Sunday morning, 20 people (babies and adults) were brought into God's family through baptism. One of these brought his fetishes to the church for burning that same day.

Missionaries of the Month



Each month we remember in prayer in our worship specific missionaries sponsored around the world by our congregation, through our Synod and related organizations. You are encouraged to remember them also in your personal and family prayers.

March 6

*Jason Ball
Taiwan*

March 13

*Emily Martens
Hong Kong*

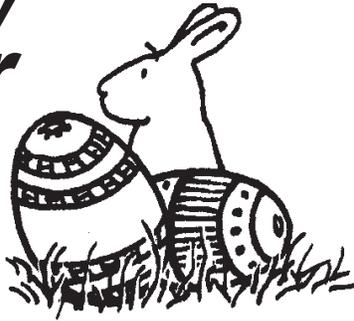
March 20

*Liz Kestner
Guatemala*

March 27

*Todd Roeske
Philippines*

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On Church Grounds at
Dakota Dunes Boulevard and Bison Trail

Up to Age 10 • Plenty of Eggs!

Prizes • Snacks • Easter Video

All Children Invited—Non-Members Welcome!

No Charges or Fees



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Second Easter Service—9:30am

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For More Information Call 232-9117



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149 Bison Trail
Dakota Dunes, SD 57049

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