

# Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church Crossnotes

MARCH  
2006



*"Unless the Lord builds the house,  
its builders labor in vain."*

Psalm 127:1

At the time of the Reformation in the 16th century, some felt that Martin Luther had supposedly not gone "far enough" in cleansing the Church from abuses and excesses of the Middle Ages. The movement this criticism sparked is called by historians the "Radical Reformation," because they went to extremes in throwing out much of the heritage of the Church, not only with regard to doctrine, but in worship and church buildings and their decorations.

In many churches carvings were smashed, stained-glass windows broken out, altars torn down, and church interiors painted with whitewash to obliterate any ornamentation. Many modern-day "mega-churches" have this same appearance: plain auditoriums with vast expanses of white or beige walls and little or no decoration or even color.

While such a stark appearance may simply be a decorative choice—perhaps reflecting a modern architectural theme—it may also have a philosophical basis going back to the Radical

Reformation. In an interview in 1995, Rev. Bill Hybels, pastor of Willow Creek Community Church near Chicago, one of the largest churches in America and the leading model emulated by other churches seeking to become mega-churches themselves, was asked by Peter Jennings, "Couldn't you have just one cross in your church?" He actually replied, "No, that would be a dangerous thing." He went on to explain that the cross is a turn-off to some people, and therefore displaying it might hinder the growth of their church (ABC News, "In the Name of God," March 16, 1995).

One of Willow Creek's and Hybels' competitors in the race to be the largest church in America is Rev. Joel Osteen and his Lakewood Church in Houston. Osteen has stated that his church didn't really start growing until they stopped using the cross and removed it completely from their building.

Compare the antagonism of these modern mega-churches toward the cross of Christ with the Apostle Paul's declarations in such passages as 1 Corinthians 1:23: "We preach Christ crucified"; Galatians 6:14: "May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ"; and Philippians 3:18: "For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ."

One of the architects recently interviewed—but not selected—by our Building Committee reflected the view of the Radical Reformation when he presented examples only of stark, bare auditoriums, and commented, "Most pastors think that decoration in a church just distracts people from worship."

In contrast to the Radical Reformation, the attitude of Luther and Lutheran Church is described by historians as the "Conservative Reformation." That does not refer to today's political meaning of

"conservative" vs. "liberal," but rather to the underlying meaning of the word "conservative," which means to "conserve," to keep and preserve what has been handed down to us from the past.

This "conservative" attitude is based on Scriptural principles: "Test everything; hold fast to what is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:21); "Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith" (Hebrews 13:7).

Luther stated this "conservative" principle in the first worship order he published, *An Order of Mass and Communion* (1523): "It is not now nor ever has been our intention to abolish the liturgical service of God completely, but rather to purify the one that is now in use . . ."

The criteria for such changes to "purify" the ancient rites and practices of the Church is stated in the *Apology of the Augsburg Confession*, one of the official statements of faith adopted by the Lutheran Church: "We gladly keep the old traditions set up in the church . . . Our enemies falsely accuse us of abolishing good ordinances . . . Nothing should be changed in the accustomed rites without good reason, and to foster harmony those ancient customs should be kept which can be kept without sin or without great disadvantage" (Article XV).

So, Luther and the Lutheran Church generally "conserved" what had been handed down to them, except those customs and practices which could not be kept "without sin or without great disadvantage." An example of a worship practice which could not be kept "without sin," meaning something that is actually contrary to Scripture, was praying to the saints, since Scripture clearly teaches, "There is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Timothy 2:5). So,

the Lutheran Church rejected and discontinued this practice. An example of a worship practice which could not be kept "without great disadvantage" was conducting the service in Latin. While this practice was not inherently sinful, it was a "great disadvantage" to have the service in a language which the people did not understand. So, the Lutheran Church in every land translated the worship service into the language of the common people.

Part of this "conservative" heritage of the Lutheran Church includes keeping the traditional accouterments of Christian worship. Unlike the followers of the Radical Reformation, the Lutherans did not systematically smash carvings, break out stained-glass windows, tear down altars, or obliterate with whitewash artistic ornamentation. Quite to the contrary, the Lutheran Reformation inspired many artistic masterworks by such famous artists as Lucas Cranach and Albrecht Dürer, both of whom were close friends of Luther and deeply committed Lutherans.

This is why Lutheran churches and worship services feature such ancient customs and accouterments as crosses, crucifixes, candles, vestments, paraments, the church year and its festivals, stained-glass windows, etc. The purpose of all these items and customs is to mark the distinctive function of the church building as a place dedicated to worshipping the Triune God. In particular, the Church focuses on the life and teachings, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth,

the Son of God. The purpose of all these trappings is to assist worship by making the church building into a multi-sensory experience, a teaching tool, devoted to Jesus' life and memory, worship and adoration.

As I write these words the afternoon sun is streaming through our recently installed stained-glass windows, which so beautifully portray the story of Jesus' life. We have made many such improvements recently in our present sanctuary, and it is possible we may soon be considering the erection of a new sanctuary.

Of course, Jesus himself said, "Wherever two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am among them" (Matthew 18:20). A properly designed and outfitted church building can be an aid to worship, but no building or other outward accouterment is essential for true Christian worship pleasing to God.

The most important thing to remember about church buildings is Psalm 127:1: "Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain." That means even the most impressive worship edifice is meaningless if it is not used to worship the Triune God "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24). But, even the most humble gathering place is truly a blessed temple in which the Lord himself abides, when Christians worship there.

Pastor Kevin Vogts

story of Jesus' suffering and death, and beloved Lenten hymns.

Bring your family to meditate on our Savior's sacrifice for our salvation.



## ***New Member Sunday and "Fat Tuesday" Potluck February 26***

On Sunday, February 26 we will rejoice to welcome about a dozen more new members, who have joined our congregation since our last New Member Sunday in September. There will be a welcoming ceremony during the worship service at 9:15am with a potluck dinner, following the Sunday School hour, at 11:30am.

This is the last Sunday before the beginning of Lent. You may have heard that the Tuesday just before Ash Wednesday is called "Fat Tuesday." In Medieval times, Lent was a season of strict fasting with very austere foods. Therefore, the last day before Lent began became a time of celebration to consume rich foods and use up your remaining cooking fats, and thus became known as "Fat Tuesday." ("Mardi Gras" is actually French for "Fat Tuesday.")

Everyone is invited to come and welcome our new members, bring a dish, and enjoy (a few days early) a pre-Lenten "Fat Tuesday" feast!

New members to be welcomed include: Ryan and Angela Dial and their children Nichole and Caden; Rob and Heidi Finkral and their children Dylan Sawyer, Vaughn and Levi; Kevin and Helen Hamilton and their daughter Michele; Gina Hanke; John and Sherry Isley; and Todd Peters.

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## **Crossnotes**

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Lent begins with our Ash Wednesday Service on Wednesday, March 1 at 7:00pm. Lent services will continue at 7:00pm each Wednesday evening during Lent.

For our Lent services this year we will be meditating on "Symbols of Our Savior" (see page 3). The brief services will also feature reading the Passion

# Symbols of Our Savior

## 2006 Lent Services on Symbols of Christ

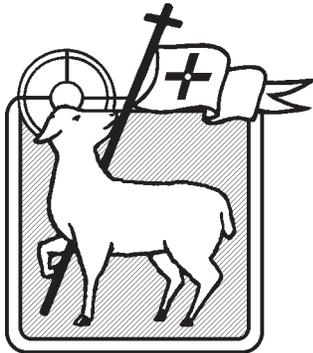
Wednesday Evenings, 7:00pm  
Beginning Ash Wednesday, March 1st

The Christian Church has a rich tradition of symbolism to represent important aspects of our faith. Some of these "Symbols of Our Savior" may be very familiar to you—and yet you may not know what they really mean. Others may be unfamiliar to you, but they have a rich significance and you will be blessed by learning the meaning and story behind them.

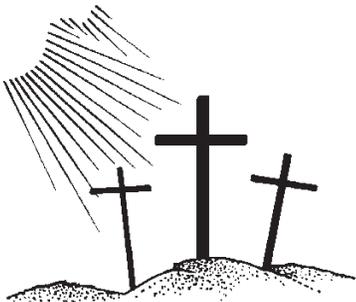
Come to Lent services on Wednesday evenings at 7:00pm beginning on Ash Wednesday, March 1st to learn the history and meaning of these "Symbols of Our Savior."



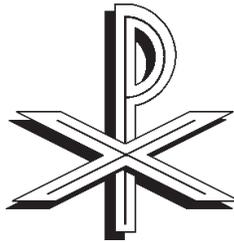
March 1 (Ash Wednesday)  
"Ichthus"



March 8  
"Lamb of God"



March 15  
"Cross"



March 22  
"IHS, Chi Rho, and Nike"



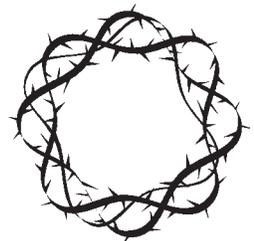
March 29  
"INRI"



April 5  
"Butterfly, Peacock,  
Phoenix, and Pomegranate"



April 13 (Maundy Thursday)  
"Pelican in Her Piety"



April 14 (Good Friday)  
"Crown of Thorns"



## Lent Services Begin, Confirmation Time Adjustment

Lent services will begin on Ash Wednesday, Wednesday, March 1 at 7:00pm and continue each Wednesday at 7:00pm during Lent. For our Lent services this year we will be meditating on "Symbols of Our Savior" (see page 3).

Throughout Lent Confirmation classes will begin at 6:15pm. As part of the class the students are expected to remain for—and parents are invited and urged to attend—the Lent service at 7:00pm.

The 5th-6th Grades students will have their class at Holy Cross with Pastor Vogts, and the 7th-8th Grades students will have their class with Pastor Kenneth Schmidt at Concordia Lutheran Church, 2000 Military Road, Sioux City. We might later switch teachers and locations of the classes about halfway through Lent.

Thank you to the Confirmation students and parents for your faithful attendance and support of our Confirmation program.



## Who Really Wrote the Bible?

Our next Adult Bible Class will begin Sunday, February 26. Using a documentary *Who Wrote the Bible?* from

# Community Easter Egg Hunt



Saturday, April 15 • 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

The History Channel, we will look at the question *Who Really Wrote the Bible?*

While it has some great footage and good features, The History Channel documentary ultimately gave an un-Scriptural perspective that is very commonly assumed in the media, college classes, etc. and even by many liberal churches.

Join in Sundays at 10:30am for the study *Who Really Wrote the Bible?*



In the back of the church is a sign up sheet to bring snacks for after worship. You are welcome to bring whatever snacks you wish.

Those bringing snacks are also asked to please prepare the coffee. Simple instructions are posted near the

coffee maker. Coffee, cups, napkins, plates, etc. are all provided and in the kitchen.

Thank you to those who have faithfully provided snacks over the years.

February 5  
Heidi Finkral

February 12  
Mabel Schibonski

February 19  
Janet Martin

February 26  
Heidi Finkral

March 5  
Jeanette Yockey

March 12 & 19 — *Need Volunteer*

March 26  
Terry Vogts

April 2  
Jeanette Yockey

April 9 — *Need Volunteer*

April 16  
Terry Vogts

April 23 & 30 — *Need Volunteer*



## **Donate Lilies for Easter**

Sign up on the bulletin board to donate lilies to beautify our church at Easter, which falls this year on April 16. 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.

Lilies will be obtained this year from Mosher's Garden Center. Cost is \$10 per plant and the deadline for signing up to order is Palm Sunday, April 9. 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.



## **Preschool Registration Night April 4th**

Registration Night for the Holy Cross Preschool for the 2006-2007 school year will be Tuesday, April 4th from 6:00pm-7:30pm. Come learn more about our high quality preschool program, and hold a place for your child for next Fall by paying the registration fee.

Early registrations will be accepted through April 4th for members of Holy Cross and current students and

# *Community Easter Sunrise Service*



## **Easter Sunday, April 16**

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!***

their siblings. Contact Preschool Director Lynnea Mueller at 235-1688, mailbox #2 or by email at [holycrosspreschool@longlines.com](mailto:holycrosspreschool@longlines.com). After April 4th enrollment will be open to the public.

Class sizes are limited, so you are encouraged to reserve a place for your child as soon as possible, and 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.

This service of our congregation has blessed hundreds of children over the years from our congregation and community, helping them to grow and develop not only mentally, socially, etc. but also to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18).



## **Record Contributions and Mission Giving**

Holy Cross was again blessed in 2005 with a record level of contributions, which allowed us to avoid a projected deficit and instead end the year in the black. Our Preschool and After School Care programs also had a positive year.

In addition to regular contributions, there were many substantial special

gifts, for paraments, a new stained-glass window to be installed over the entrance, Baptismal ewer and shell, etc.

Because we have set our giving to missions at 10% of general offerings, the higher level of offerings also meant a substantial increase over our commitment in congregational giving to missions.

Praise the Lord for this continued healthy trend in our finances. Our thanks to Dennis Melstad and Jason Bietz for doing an excellent job as the church and preschool treasurers in 2005, and Dennis and Jeri Melstad for filling these roles in 2006. It makes their jobs a lot easier when the funds are readily available—so let's all help make their jobs easier again in 2006!



Thank you for these flower donations to beautify our worship. The new sign-up sheet to provide flowers for worship in 2006 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 5

Mike & Daniell Bargstadt  
In Honor of Oliva's Baptism

February 12

Doug & Janet Martin

February 26

Don & Nancy Wiese  
In Memory of Nathan's Birthday

March 5

Mabel Schibonski  
In Memory of Husband Elmer

March 19

Joey & Marcy Schroeder  
Brady's Birthday

April 16

Rev. Kevin & Terese Vogts  
Pastor's Birthday



We are beginning to list in the newsletter each month and have prayers in worship each week for those having birthdays and wedding anniversaries. This information was recently requested from all members.

If your information is missing or inaccurate, please notify church secretary Nancy Wiese, 232-9117 mailbox #4 or email nancywiese@longlines.com.

Madeline Smith, March 14

Doug Martin, March 15

Brady Schroeder, March 19

Mark Krause, March 25

Melanie Melstad, March 27

Isaac Lee, March 31



March 1 (Ash Wednesday)

Dylan Sawyer

March 5

Quinton Bose

March 8 (Lent Service)

Trevor Vilhauer

March 12

Evan Steemken

March 15 (Lent Service)

Justin Peterson

March 19

Kendall Martin

March 22 (Lent Service)

Keegan Johnson

March 26

Zahn Bose

**Page 6**

March 29 (Lent Service)

Zachary Selby



March 5

Dennis Melstad

March 12

Greg Huibregtse

March 19

Mike Bargstadt

March 26

Ron Yockey

Lent Services

Doug Jansen

Alternate

Joey Schroeder



## **Vacation Bible School June 5th-9th**

Mark your calendars now for our annual Vacation Bible School, which will be held the week of June 5th-9th. We are again planning to have morning classes for preschool age and other younger children, and separate afternoon sessions for older children. Our attendance has been growing every year and last year we had nearly 90 students, most of them visitors from the community.

This year's theme is "Treasure Cove: Discovering the Riches of Christ." Once again we plan to give all the younger classes the five Arch books which coordinate with the lessons. This is a

wonderful opportunity to share Christ with the children of our community. Help will be needed from the congregation for all aspects of this outreach event.

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## **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 5

*Ted Krey  
Venezuela*

March 12

*Rev. David and Ernestine Londenberg  
Sierra Leone*

March 19

*Carol Colbeck  
Papua New Guinea*

March 26

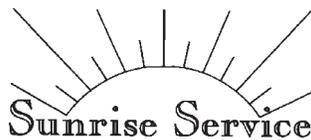
*Rev. David Baker  
Kazakhstan*



Holy Cross is again sponsoring a Community Easter Egg Hunt, on Saturday, April 15 (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.

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.

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, April 16 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 Service, with Holy Communion, will be held at 9:30am.

Easter Sunrise Service is one of the most moving and meaningful worship opportunities of the year. 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!

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## **Holy Cross Summer Day Camp 2006**

Holy Cross Preschool and Afterschool Care is again planning a Summer Day Camp for 2006 for children three thru six years old. Classes will be held on Wednesdays, May 24 thru August 9, from 9:00am to 3:00pm. (There will be no class June 5 due to Vacation Bible School.)

For more information about the program, fees, and to register call 235-1688.

In addition to this summer program, we are considering the possibility of Before School Care in the Fall, in response to community interest. We would like to speak with any individuals who might be interested in working in either of these programs. If you are interested please contact Daniell

Bargstadt (235-0700) or Janet Martin (232-9657) or leave a message at the church office (235-1688).

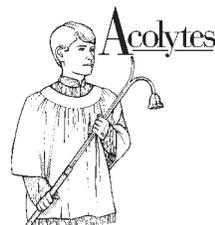
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## **Women's Fellowship**

The Holy Cross Women's Fellowship will meet on Tuesday, March 7 at 6:30pm instead of our regular meeting time of 7:00pm.

We will have two guest speakers from South Dakota LWML (Lutheran Women's Mission League) about LWML. Pastor Vogts will then present information on the Altar Guild. Mabel Schibonski will be leading us in a devotion and Sue Jansen is providing snacks for the meeting.

If you have not yet been to any of the Women's Fellowship activities please consider joining this evening of fun and fellowship. All women are welcome!



March 1 (Ash Wednesday)

Jacob Vogts

March 5

Zachary Selby

March 8 (Lent Service)

Sarah Vogts

March 12

Keegan Johnson

March 15 (Lent Service)

Dylan Sawyer

March 19

Trevor Vilhauer

March 22 (Lent Service)

Evan Steemken

March 26

Kylie Martin

March 29 (Lent Service)

Justin Peterson



## New Member Sunday and Potluck Dinner

*This Sunday, February 26*  
12:00pm

Come Enjoy Food and Fellowship and  
Help Welcome Our Newest Members

*All Invited — Everyone Welcome!*



*Next Wednesday, March 1*  
7:00pm

Services Each Wednesday During Lent  
at 7:00pm

Meditations on "Symbols of Our Savior"  
(See Page 3)

**Jesus, I Will Ponder Now  
on Your Holy Passion**



Return Service Requested

Rev. Kevin Vogts, Pastor  
149 Bison Trail  
Dakota Dunes, SD 57049

**Crossnotes**  
Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church