

The background of the newsletter header features a photograph of a church interior. On the left and right sides, there are tall, narrow stained glass windows with abstract designs in shades of blue, white, and pink. In the center, a wooden altar is visible, covered with a white cloth and a green front cloth. On the altar, there is an open book, a lit candle in a glass holder, and a small yellow cup. The lighting is warm and focused on the altar.

Official Newsletter of the Holy Cross Lutheran Church

## **CROSSROADS**

**January 2024**

Dear Friends,

As I sit here reflecting back on our Advent and Christmas celebration, I feel so thankful for all of you and all the ways that you all helped to bring the love and joy of this season to life. As we started Advent, we blessed quilts and crocheted octopuses for the NICU, we sang Christmas carols for our neighbors, we welcomed over 200 people at our Live Nativity (which added some extra fun this year with live animals), we heard the Christmas story as presented by our youth and children, we had a great time doing a Book Club and having a movie night, and then the highlight of it all was all of the worship we did together, culminating at our four o'clock Christmas Eve service with such amazing music. Thank you to Brittney and Becky for putting all of that together for us! And a huge thank you to Lanai, our office administrator for putting together all the bulletins and the power points and generally keeping me on track!

It has indeed been a very busy season, and while I know we've got some activities planned in January, it's my hope that we don't pack our church calendar too tightly, because I know that while it's good to be busy, it's also good to find rest, and I encourage you all to take some time this month for some very deep breaths, for some rest and renewal because six weeks from now, we will begin the season of Lent... Consider yourselves warned... Easter is early this year!

On a personal note, I want to thank you all for the generous gifts that you gave to me and to my family for Christmas. Your kindness is such a blessing and I very much appreciate you all.

I am looking forward to the new year as we find more ways to share the love and grace of Christ with one another and with our neighbors and friends!

May you all have a blessed and happy New Year!

Love in Christ, Pastor Kathy Morris



## Sierra Pacific Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

*Office of the Bishop*

December 3, 2023

Dear Pastor Kathy and the people of Holy Cross:

Grace to you and peace.

I'm so very pleased to be able to send this written greeting along with my friend and colleague Simon Wong, our synod Vice President. Thank you for receiving Simon with joy and thanksgiving! Together with Interim Bishop Claire Burkat, Simon has worked so hard for so long throughout this period of transition, holding things together. We are in a better and more affirming place as a synod because of him. I hope you join me in expressing to him our gratitude for this work and for his essential ministry among us. Thanks be to God for our brother, Simon!

I am a bit jealous that he is able to be with you in person. Please know that I am also with you in spirit! I would like for the synod's passion to be as clear as yours: "to share the love of Jesus with all people,... to help people be transformed by the love of Christ, grow in their faith, and equip them for ministry in the world." I also hope that all synodical rostered leaders might share Pastor Kathy's "passion for helping people of all ages to see how God is working in their lives and sharing God's abundant love and grace with others." Amen! Thank you for the partnership you share together in ministry.

This weekend, I am with our siblings in faith at *Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church* in Merced where they are voting to call a new pastor. This will be my first opportunity to be with a congregation for this kind of decision. Rather exciting, don't you think? I invite you to keep these siblings in prayer as they discern the spirit together and choose a new shepherd. As a synod, we don't do our work alone. We are connected to one another, in difficult times and in moments like this one when we can celebrate with one another new relationships, new directions, and new ministry opportunities. I'm hopeful that the months and years ahead of us will bring stronger, more resilient bonds between us, strengthening our common witness and, as you demonstrate so well, "sharing God's abundant love and grace with others." I look forward to visiting you many times while I am bishop.

Thank you for allowing Pastor Kathy to serve as a member of the Synod Council. My only regret is that I have not been able to work with her yet as I have only just started this call. I am grateful to her for all of the work she is doing among you and within the community of Reno. Thank you for supporting her and her family and for being in ministry with them as you find your way forward together.

I hope you have a great time this weekend with Simon! I look forward to scheduling a visit sometime in the not too distant future!

Blessings to you,

+Jeff

The Rev. Jeff R. Johnson

Bishop, Sierra Pacific Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

## Service Committee News

by Linda Schlosser

The Service Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank our congregation for your generous support throughout the year. Through your generosity, we were able to help many people and nonprofit organizations in our community.

A big thank you to everyone who purchased gifts for the Angel Tree. Gifts were delivered the week before Christmas break. The staff at Smithridge Stem Academy were appreciative of the gifts given to their students.

During January and February, we will be collecting hygiene kits, underwear and socks for the Eddy House. Look for the Giving Tree in the Narthex.

ELCA GOOD GIFTS - Barnyard friends – More information coming soon.

## Fellowship Committee News

by Linda Schlosser

We had a wonderful time at our ninth annual Advent Tea as we journeyed through the Five Senses of Christmas. Thank you so much to the committee that worked hard to put the program together, our hostesses, bakers and to Brittney, Becky, Lani, Leslie, and Abigail for the beautiful music they provided.

## Altar News

by Linda Schlosser

Our church was adorned with beautiful poinsettias for Christmas! Thank you to those who purchased flowers for our church.







## Wednesday Bible Study

By Becky Bradley

Wednesday Bible Study is back in full swing again. We have started studying Numbers as the Israelites leave Mt. Sinai and wander through the desert for the additional 39 years. Lots of good stories coming up as we continue our Survey of the Bible.

When we meet, it's Wednesday afternoon from 1:30pm-2:40pm in a "hybrid" class: we meet in person in the Fellowship Hall, but you can also join in by Zoom.

Contact Becky at 775-360-0553 or [beckyb485@gmail.com](mailto:beckyb485@gmail.com) for more information.

Here is the Zoom information in case you need to join remotely:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89633009098?pwd=dUVaYVZaQ2hwUExQRVY5eIBXbHJ4dz09>

Meeting ID: 896 3300 9098

Passcode: 050344

## Large Print Bibles Needed

By Becky Bradley

The Wednesday Bible study is in need of large print Bibles for our members to use during class. If you have any laying around the house that you would like to donate to this ministry, please bring them to the office or give them to Becky Bradley. Thanks!

## Monday Zoom Study

**ZOOM Bible Study resumes on January 22! We'll meet at 6:30 and talk about the lessons for the upcoming Sunday.**

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84911569919?pwd=VUM1SUdoeWdnSnM1WUZva0dQdzBidz09>

Meeting ID: 849 1156 9919, Passcode: 113211

One tap mobile:

+16699006833,,84911569919#,,,\*,113211#  
US (San Jose)





# Children's Christmas Program 2023



LIVE  
NATIVITY  
DECEMBER 2023





## Close Knit Friends

By Peggy Whitney

**Close Knit Friends** will start the New Year on Monday, January 8, 2024 at 1pm and we hope you will join us on Monday, January 22 too! We knit and crochet simple hats, scarves, blankets, and other items of warmth and comfort for local organizations. In 2023, we were able to donate over **1500** items to babies, children, and adults facing life challenges such as hospitalization, poverty, sexual exploitation, addiction, and domestic violence. We are happy to teach you the skills to get you started on a project on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month from 1-2:30 pm. OR you are welcome to donate washable acrylic or cotton yarn or funds to purchase the yarn we use for these projects. We also accept clean, gently used items too! A special workshop has been set up on Monday, January 29 at 1pm with Becky to crochet *Octopus for Preemies*. These light, bright, colorful, soft cotton toys are donated to the *Renown Hospital NeoNatal Unit* along with the *Holy Cross Quilters* baby quilts each year. The 8" long Octopus with its curled up tentacles distracts the babies from pulling on the tubes and cords attached to them. We will be using 100% cotton and size G/6 (4.25) crochet hooks. NO red (resembles blood) or black! Contact Peggy Whitney 775-622-0128 for more information or pick up one of our **Close Knit Friends** brochures at the church.

## Youth News

By Pastor Kathy Morris

**Confirmation Classes** this month are on January 10 and 24. On January 10, we'll be doing some catch up and review, so students should be sure that they've read chapters 6-10 in their Manna and Mercy Books!

Middle School and High School Youth, save the date for January 21 as we are going to head to the snow for some sledding and playing in the snow after church, so bring your sleds and your gear. Parents, if you can come along to chaperone, please let me know.

Save the date for February 11 as we'll be doing the Souper Bowl of Caring again this year and collecting spare change for the Food Bank of Northern Nevada.

# January Birthdays

**1/04 Lance Combs**  
**1/07 Owen Schenk**  
**1/09 Peggy Ince**  
**1/10 Charlie Gevert**  
**1/12 Nellie Namestka**  
**1/14 Martin Theiss**  
**1/18 Trish Riley**  
**1/19 Orlyn Schenk**  
**1/22 Laura Grady**  
**1/23 Jolene Jaillet**  
**1/23 Anthony Sottolano**  
**1/29 J.L. Christman**  
**1/29 Cheryl Eckert**



## Music Program News

By Becky Bradley

Wow! The Christmas Eve Gala at 4 pm was super! So great to have all our HCLC musicians participating, supported by guest singers and an orchestra from UNR. Many thanks to the choir members who put in extra hours rehearsing music to make the afternoon so special for everyone: Abigail Morris, Cheryl Eckert, Eric Gieseke, Lani Moss, Laurel Lindstrom, Leslie Jaillet, Linda Schlosser, Noelle Lentz, Orlyn Schenk, Sue Volinkaty. Also, a special thanks to Natalie Tegio and Diane Torry for hosting a lovely mini-buffet that filled our tummies before and after the service, as well as adding festivity to our night of celebration.

Many thanks to the HCLC congregation who has faithfully supported our music program, especially these last years re-emerging from covid. We appreciate your contributions and purchase in the cookie exchange, the purchase of the two baskets raffled off during our Artown concert and quilt show, and to a generous private donation to the music program. This financial support helped expand the number of musicians participating in the Christmas Eve Gala, as well as purchase new music and supplies for the music program. We are so blessed.

# Financial Secretary News

By Laurel Lindstrom

Hi everyone. I wanted to give you an update on our gratitude based stewardship drive this year. We received 32 pledges for a total of \$145,240. Thank you!! I also want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for your generosity, time and talents, prayers and support of Holy Cross that you have so freely given to further our mission of loving one another. We could not do the things we do without your help.

Also, a big thank you to those of you with Thrivent who have directed your Thrivent Choice Dollars to Holy Cross and who have sponsored Thrivent Action Teams. What a blessing this has been. We have been able to reach out to our neighbors with events funded by the Action Teams and the Choice Dollars help with our day to day expenses. If you are a Thrivent member check your account and see if you are eligible.

Another way you can support Holy Cross is by signing up for iGive, a rebate program where iGive members have the opportunity to donate their rebate to their chosen cause. RaiseRight - also known as scrip fundraising - is a program where you raise money by using gift cards instead of cash or credit to pay for everyday purchases like groceries, gas, dining out, that morning coffee addiction, even your family's summer vacation. If you have questions about either of these programs there is a brochure in the Narthex or ask me!

Laurel Lindstrom,

Financial Coordinator



## SHARED HARVEST

**This month we are collecting  
the following:**

**(28) Peanut Butter**

**(42) Powdered Milk**

**Soup & Canned Fruit**

**Thank you all for being so supportive  
of Shared Harvest.**





## Choice Dollars® details

Eligible clients with membership can recommend where Thrivent distributes some of its charitable grant funds. These recommendations are shared by directing Choice Dollars to enrolled nonprofit organizations, including churches.

### Eligibility requirements

To be eligible to direct Choice Dollars as part of Thrivent Choice®, you must be a client with benefit membership.\* Individual eligibility is also based on at least one of the following:

- Having \$750 or more in annual billed premiums of qualifying life and health insurance products.
- Having \$20,000 or more in contract value of qualifying life insurance and annuity products.

Eligibility is determined monthly and reevaluated on an annual basis.

### Minimum and maximum Choice Dollars designations

Eligible clients will be designated a minimum of 25 Choice Dollars and a maximum of 5,000 Choice Dollars per eligibility period (Jan. 1 to Dec. 31).

### Choice Dollars expiration date

Choice Dollars designated during the calendar year can be directed until March 31 of the following year.



\*A client with benefit membership is someone 16 years or older who meets membership eligibility, has been admitted for membership, and has a qualified connection to a Thrivent financial insurance or annuity product or received a settlement agreement from such insurance.

The Thrivent Choice® charitable grant program engages Thrivent clients with membership and Thrivent Member Networks in providing grants that support charitable activities, furthering Thrivent's mission and its purposes under state law. All grant decisions, including grant recipients and amounts, are made at the sole discretion of Thrivent. Directing Choice Dollars® is subject to the program's Terms and Conditions available at [thrivent.com/thriventchoice](http://thrivent.com/thriventchoice).

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## Would you serve as a member of the Church Council?

By Noelle Lentz

New members of our Church Council will be elected at the Annual Meeting February 4<sup>th</sup>.

Our Church Council consists of not more than ten members of the congregation and the Pastor. Council members are elected for a two-year term, and may serve two terms. The Council meets once a month.

The council has general oversight of the life and activities of the congregation, engages in planning, setting goals and priorities, evaluates our activities in light of our mission and goals and seeks to involve all in worship, learning, witness, service and support.

If you are interested in serving on the Council, and standing for election at the Annual Congregation Meeting, contact a member of the nominating committee: Noelle Lentz, Pastor Kathy.

Thank you for considering this opportunity for service at Holy Cross.

# New Study Beginning January 16th (based on “The Chosen”)

By Pastor Kathy Morris

We’ve been hearing lots of buzz about a series called The Chosen, which is “a groundbreaking historical drama based on the life of Jesus Christ, seen through the eyes of those who knew him. Set against the backdrop of Roman oppression in first-century Israel, the seven-season show shares an authentic and intimate look at Jesus’ revolutionary life and teachings.” While there is some creative interpretation with some dialogue and backstories, it is based on Scripture.

Starting on January 16, on Tuesday nights, at 6, we’ll be showing the episode and then have some time for discussion afterward. All are invited to come and join us. The series is available widely on multiple streaming services, and if it is problematic for you to come and watch together, let me know, for it may be something you can watch at home, and we can look for an additional time for discussion. Also, if you’re planning to join us on Tuesday nights, please be aware that we will NOT meet the second Tuesday of the month as it is our church council meeting night.

## ANNUAL REPORT DEADLINE JANUARY 28, 2024



**The Annual Meeting is scheduled for February 4, 2023, following the 9 am service, with only one worship service on that day. To facilitate the preparation, the deadline for all annual reports has been set for January 28th.**

## Prayer List

LINN BLEGGI & MEREDITH FRAZIER

CJ AND JANELL BROWN

BOB BALDWIN & FAMILY

ROBERT

DEB DISBRO - PASTOR'S NEPHEW

JOSHUA DOUGAN - LANAI'S SON

JOLENE JAILLET & THE BYE FAMILY

PASTOR KATHY

CORA LANDES

LIZZIE - KAREN FORD'S RELATIVE

RYAN BONNET

EARLINE - PEGGY WHITNEY'S SISTER-IN-LAW



## Thank You Carolers

By Lani Moss

Thank you carolers! Thank you Eric for accompanying on guitar!

A big THANK YOU to the joyful carolers that joined us in December. We enjoyed singing at Summit Estates, Marvel Way apartments, and Silver Sage. We finished the evening with cookies, bundt cakes, and hot chocolate at Silver Sage. I know that I was definitely in the Christmas spirit after this festive event. Please join us next year!

Lani Moss



## Quilt Tying Party!!

By Diane Torry

You've always wanted to learn to quilt—or see what quilting is all about—here is a great opportunity to check out quilting.

In addition to our regularly scheduled quilt days we are having a Special Quilt Tying "Party" on Saturday February 3 at 9 am to 12 noon. We have close to 15 quilt tops to tie! The Thursday quilt days and Blue Basket quilters have been "very productive" in completing creative, beautiful and useful tops. Please come help—no experience required—quilters will be there to teach all how to "sandwich" and "tie" quilts—we look forward to another fun, creative and productive day—working together to make quilts for people in need in our community and around the world. The coffee pot will be on—so just come by to see what we are doing and visit with us!

A flyer for the Silver Sage Thanksgiving Team. The background is yellow with autumn leaves and a turkey. The text reads: "JOIN THE SILVER SAGE THANKSGIVING TEAM", "We invite you to become a part of a dedicated team that will carry on this important ministry starting in 2024. We are hoping to put together a 3-5 person team.", "See Peggy Ince for more information", and "Do you want to ensure that the beloved tradition continues to thrive and grow in the years to come?".

**JOIN THE  
SILVER SAGE THANKSGIVING TEAM**

We invite you to become a part of a dedicated team that will carry on this important ministry starting in 2024. We are hoping to put together a 3-5 person team.

See Peggy Ince  
for more information

Do you want to ensure that the beloved tradition  
continues to thrive and grow in the years to come?





Advent Tea



Christmas Caroling



Christmas Caroling



Advent Tea



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Merry  
Christmas!  
2023



Quilt & Octopi Blessing



Visit from Synod Vice President  
Simon Wong



# Reflections on the Live Nativity 2023 at Holy Cross

By Diane Torry

During the Christmas Season something magical has been happening at Holy Cross for over 40 years—The Live Nativity. The first Live Nativity was performed on our land before the construction of the Church building.

Luke 2: “I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people; to you is born this day in the City of David a Savior, who is Christ, the Lord. Glory to God in the highest heaven and on earth, peace among men...”

What a joyful celebration of our Savior's Birth—the “reason for the season.” Over 200 people participated in the two evening event—members, family, friends, neighbors, our community!

The stable structure was up all year, and this year we had animals—two sheep and an alpaca thanks to Andelin Family Farm in Sparks and Olde LYFE Alpacas in Washoe Valley!! The animals added so much to the Nativity Celebration.

The Nativity story was enacted many times both Friday and Saturday night. “Old” members and “new” members of Holy Cross played their part in the Nativity. Then we invited our guests to play a part in the Nativity—families brought their children and together many performed in the Nativity. Comments included: “I came as a teenager and now I am bringing my children to see and participate in the Live Nativity,” “We have come every year to see and take part in this Christmas Celebration,” “this is my favorite event of the Christmas Season,” “I remember when we first built the stable and collecting the wood from a construction site I was working on” “remember before the Church was built, when we used the “Winnebago” to warm up in between performances,” “remember the camels,” “my children and grandchildren all have participated in this Live Nativity,” “thank you for performing the Live Nativity every year!”

What a joy to hear the Christmas Story, participate in the Nativity performance, enjoy making crafts, eating the delicious food, taking a photo at the photo booth, see the actors dressing and then performing the Nativity, being with congregation members, family, friends, and neighbors from our community—celebrating the birth of Jesus. Thank you to all who make this wonderful event happen.

**“Believe in One”**

**“Affect Many”**

**“Welcome all”**



 **Senior Lunch**

**January 17, 2024**

**12 noon**

 

Thank you all for your support this past year in keeping our Sr. Lunch going. Our Christmas party was super and a great big thank you in making my birthday a really fun day. Eldora



Do you have a background in construction or a keen interest in building maintenance?

We are searching for volunteers to serve on the Buildings & Grounds Committee

**See Peggy Ince for more information**

## Quilt Group News

By Diane Torry

The Quilt Group completed and gave away 210 Quilts during the 2023 Quilt Year! We are a busy, fun, productive group—Working Together in God's Vineyard. Since our beginning in 2007 we have given away nearly 2,000 quilts.

We deliver quilts to Lutheran World Relief, to our brothers and sisters in need around the world; local social service agencies: Children's Cabinet, Veterans in Transition, Women's and Children's Center of the Sierra, Children in Transition (WCSD); Hosanna Home, Ronald McDonald House, the Empowerment Center, Summit Estates, Renown, Neo Natal Intensive Care Unit and members and friends of Holy Cross; delivering Christ's love to our friends and neighbors struggling with homelessness, health issues, addiction, family separation, poverty, and natural disasters. Each quilt is made with love and faith and brings hope and emotional warmth to those that receive them—furthering the Mission of Holy Cross—to Worship God and be Christ's disciples in our community and world.

The Quilt Group meets every Thursday 9:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall.

Everyone is welcome to join the quilt group. No quilting or sewing experience is required. Although experienced quilters and seamstresses are also treasured. During our quilt meetings we do a variety of things, cutting fabrics, designing quilt tops, sewing quilt tops, pressing the material, coordinating tops and backs and tying the quilts—something for everyone!

Please come join us for creative work, fun and fellowship!



# Council News

By Katie Torry

Happy New Year!!

It is hard to believe 2023 is wrapping up and 2024 is waiting on our doorstep, but here we are.

December at Holy Cross was filled with many outreach activities.

Our Advent Tea was a great success. It was well attended and great way to begin the Advent Season.

Christmas Caroling, lead by Lani Moss, was well received at the Empowerment Center, Summit Estates and Silver Sage behind the church. Thirteen church members had a great time singing and enjoying hot coco and cookies with the residents of Silver Sage.

The Live Nativity was another success! We saw many families from prior years, but a lot of new families as well. It was fun to get people to dress up as the characters and share the story with so many people.

Finally, our Christmas Celebration, led by Brittney May and Becky Bradley, was well attended. Having a chorus with instruments helped to add to the specialness of the evening. Again, we saw many new faces this year. What a blessing!

In other news, we will be having our Annual Congregational Meeting will be held Sunday, February 4<sup>th</sup> at 10:15 am. We will only have the 9 am service on that day. I look forward to seeing all of you there. In preparation for this meeting, all year end reports need to be emailed to Lanai in the church office by January 15.

I am looking forward to the new year and working with the church community in 2024.

Blessings to all!

Katie Torry



# January 2024

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

31

1

2

3

1:30 pm Bible Study  
2:30 pm Community Fellowship

4

9:30 am Quilting  
1 pm Quilting

5

6

7

9 am Worship  
10:30 am worship  
1 pm Tongan Service  
5:30 pm Casa del Alfarero

8

1 pm Close Knit Friends

9

5:45 pm Council Meeting

10

1:30 pm Bible Study  
5:30 pm Confirmation Class

11

9:30 am Quilting  
1 pm Quilting  
6-7:30 pm Girl Scouts

12

13

10 am-3 pm Beit Yeshua  
Congregation in Fellowship Hall

14

9 am Worship  
10:30 am Worship/Godly Play  
1 pm Tongan Service  
5:30 pm Casa del Alfarero

15

16

6:00 pm "The Chosen" Study

17

12 pm Senior Lunch  
1:30 pm Bible Study

18

9:30 am Quilting  
1 pm Quilting

19

20

21

9 am Worship  
10:30 am Worship/Godly Play  
Youth Snow Outing  
1 pm Tongan Service  
5:30 pm Casa del Alfarero

22

1 pm Close Knit Friends  
6:30 pm Zoom Study

23

6:00 pm "The Chosen" Study

24

1:30 pm Bible Study  
5:30 pm Confirmation Class

25

9:30 am Quilting  
1 pm Quilting  
6-7:30 pm Girl Scouts

26

NEWSLETTER  
DEADLINE

27

10 am-3 pm Beit Yeshua  
Congregation in Fellowship Hall

28 ANNUAL REPORTS DUE

9 am Worship  
10:30 am Worship/Godly Play  
1 pm Tongan Service  
5:30 pm Casa del Alfarero

29

1-2:30 pm Crochet Workshop  
6:30 pm Zoom Study

30

6:00 pm "The Chosen" Study

31

1:30 pm Bible Study

1

2

3