



The Way of the Cross

Empowering people in Christ to share His love while serving our neighbor.

Holy Cross Lutheran Church (LCMS)

Special Issue 2020

Church Office

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Staff

Pastor: *Rev. Dr. Stephen H. Mentz*
Assistant Minister: *Rev. Suah S. Deddeh*
Organist: *Roberto Vela, Esq.*
Custodian: *Angelo Alvarado*

Executive Steering Committee

Jeff Burt, *President of the Congregation*
Greg Clem, *Vice-President*
Ebenezer Emmanuel, *Treasurer*

Mission & Ministry Committee

Cindy Clem and Nikki Clem – *Co-Chairs*
Dawn Felix
Pat Carriere

Church Office Hours

Monday – Friday
9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.



Worship Schedule

Sundays

8:30 a.m.
Christian Education
9:30 a.m.
Worship Service

Inside the Secret Bunker of a Pastor's Office!



How many more days of Paradise can you take?

*The kids screaming, phone ringing
Dog barking at the mailman bringing
That stack of bills, overdue... it's just another day in paradise!*

These are the opening lines of a country song by Phil Vassan entitled, "Just Another Day in Paradise."

Is that how you feel every morning when you wake up - "just another day in paradise"?

- How can it be paradise when we face a national health crisis of which the world has not seen before except for the 1918 Spanish Flu?
- How can we say each day is "like another day in paradise" when over 26 million Americans have lost their jobs,

- when my own job is on the line,
 - when bills are mounting, and
 - I'm too scared to go buy groceries even if I did have the money to buy them.
- How can this be another day in paradise when, I'm sorry to say, I'm getting tired of being with my family 24/7?

Many of us are beginning to feel like we are reliving the movie *Groundhog Day*. In that movie, Phil Connors, a weatherman, finds himself inexplicably living the same day over and over again. For Phil Connors, every day is not just another day in paradise.

Whether each day seems to be the same or different, life in this world is never what I would call paradise. Not even the best day of your life! The best we can hope as the writer of the book of Ecclesiastes wrote ²⁴ "There is nothing better for a person than that he should eat and drink and find enjoyment in his toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God" (Ecclesiastes 2:23, 24).

It doesn't matter if the day is good or bad, the life we live now is not our final destination. For Christians, we look forward to the life our Lord has prepared for us in heaven.

There, with our Lord in heaven, every day will be another day in paradise, only better! "What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him" (1 Corinthians 2:9).

Pastor Mentz

President's Corner



An open letter to the members of Holy Cross Lutheran Church regarding the impact of the Governor's "Stay at Home" on Holy Cross Lutheran Church

First and foremost, I'd like to wish you all a very Happy and Belated Easter – HE IS RISEN.

I'd like to thank Pastor Mentz for providing the services to all of us to listen and watch on our own time and in the safety of our own homes. I know most of us would be traveling, or having family travel to visit us this time of the year, but in the interest of all our health most of us are staying home.

I'd also like to thank the other members of the Executive Steering Committee – Greg, and Ebenezer. Also a special thanks to Warren and Bob for their help during these times of the unknown.

I know many of you are either working from home, are furloughed or laid off, or are fortunate enough to be covered by the CARES Payroll Protection Plan (PPP for short).

Unfortunately since we aren't having "in person" services, our offerings have plummeted but expenses have remained the same. We have fixed costs that must be paid regardless. We have been able to cut costs, but we won't see that savings until May:

1. We set all of our thermostats on permanent hold at 62 degrees
2. We had to furlough our part time staff members effective 16 April
3. We contacted the Lutheran Church Extension Fund (LCEF) and were able to have our Roof Loan payments reduced from \$920 monthly to interest-only payments of \$130 for the next 90 days
4. We applied for the \$10,000 short term SBA disaster loan on 10 April (and are waiting to hear back)
5. We applied for a PPP loan to cover the salaries of our staff members on 24 April (and are waiting to hear back from CapitalOne and the additional funding that recently passed)

However, we still need your help. Please continue to make your contributions to the church to keep our doors "open". We can't do this without all of your helping out.

We currently have a combined balance of \$28,684. 58 in our checking and savings accounts. Our current financial situation is best summarized in the table below – but the bottom line is that expenses have exceeded income by \$20,000 so far this year!

Month	Income	Expense	Delta
January	\$17,815.02	\$32,201.98	\$14,386.96 (deficit)
February	\$22,812.23	\$20,614.89	\$ 2,197.34 (surplus)
March	\$18,290.98	\$19,065.00	\$ 774.00 (deficit)
April (through 4/22)	\$ 7,585.94	\$13,560.72	\$59,74.81 (deficit)
Year to Date (through 4/22)	\$66,504.17	\$85,442.59	\$27,579.83 (deficit)

Please try to mail your offerings to the church or donate on-line at <https://tinyurl.com/DonateToHolyCross>. Pastor is at the church several times a week, and the Pichel's have been gracious to count the offerings and deposit them as they come in. We are in difficult times and need everyone's help to make it through.

We'd like to end on a more positive note. Thank you all for your support with the building proposal. We signed a preliminary lease agreement with Ingerman on 13 April and we are waiting on an update from our attorneys. Their offices and processes are hindered by the virus, but don't fret.

This means that the process to develop the property is just beginning. There will be Council meetings with the City of Greenbelt and Prince Georges County, public hearings, zoning changes, permitting, environmental studies and surveys, and more. We don't expect construction to begin for at least 12 months – maybe longer.

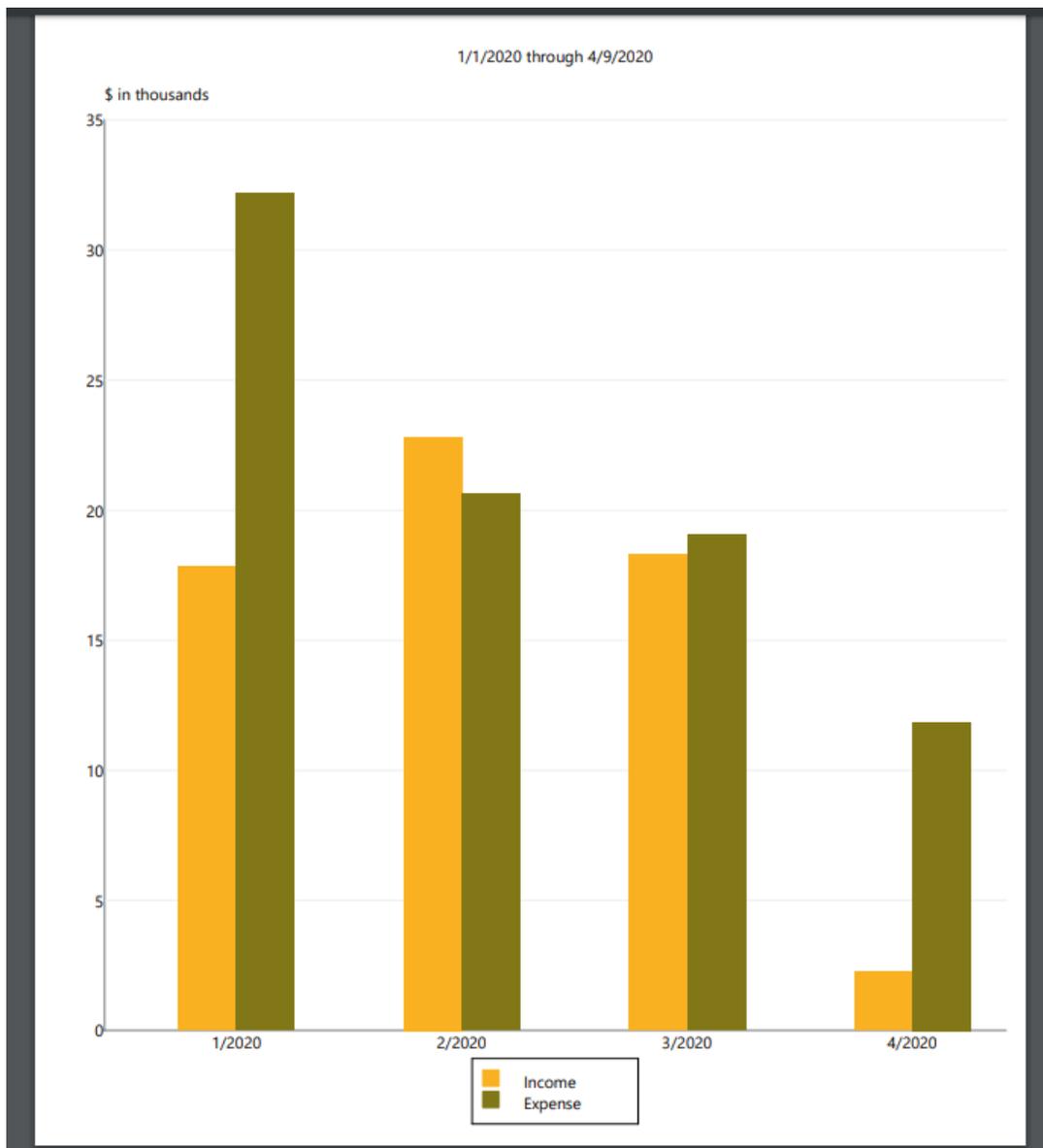
If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact any member of the Executive Steering Committee or Pastor. We are here to serve you.

Jeff Burt

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President, Holy Cross Lutheran Church



When Will Holy Cross Church Open?



"Don't stop meeting together with other believers, which some people have gotten into the habit of doing. Instead, encourage each other, especially as you see the day drawing near" (*Common English Bible*, Hebrews 10:25).

"When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you'"(John 20:19-20).

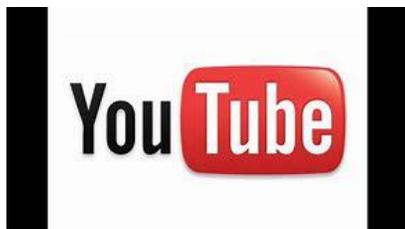
It does seem that we Christians are living every day as those disciples did that first Easter week, locked in our own private rooms, afraid of what is out there, coronavirus!

While parts of the country are experimenting with reopening, here in Maryland, and particularly in Prince Georges' County, our numbers are still increasing.

As communities begin to make plans for re-opening, I'm beginning to hear too of churches making plans for what is now being called a "Soft Re-Opening!"

Soft Re-Opening means that churches will gradually begin to re-open when it is declared to be safe. Recently Governor Larry Hogan of Maryland signified that churches will be part of the second phase of public openings.

How that will look is too early to describe. Safe distancing will definitely be practiced and observed. Our main concern will be for the safety and well-being of all who are at service. Until then, I encourage you to continue watching the recorded services on our youtube station, Holy Cross Greenbelt.



Holy Cross Church on youtube!

During this time, I have been recording the weekly worship service and sermon and posting them on our youtube site. I hope you have been following the services.

Just go to youtube and then type in Holy Cross Greenbelt. There you will find our services. A copy of the order of worship can be found on our webpage: www.myholycross.org.

Besides watching our services on youtube, you are invited to join us each Sunday morning at 10:00 a.m. for Bible study and for our midweek Devotions on Wednesdays at 5:00 p.m.

Both of these studies are on zoom. Zoom is an online conferencing program that allows people to join by computer so that one can watch and talk with the presenter and with each other. Before each class, a link is sent by email, which allows you to join the study.



Holy Cross Church Playmobile Bible Theater!

I hope you have been enjoying the Playmobile Bible Theater stories that Virginia has been producing.

All of these stories are being posted on Instagram. If you have an instagram account, our page is **playmobiletheater**.



Updates

Pam Brown has returned to Larken Chase Rehab center, Bowie.

Ruth Embry Arbor Ridge which is the rehab center at Riderwood.

April Tanter is at home recovering from attack of pancreatitis.

Alex Flanigan, husband of Lauren is recovering from a stroke which took place April 12.

David Shepherd (home)

Hank Stuen (hospice)

Robin Beam, (sister of Susan Lucero)

Birthdays & Anniversaries in May

Kristi Keller	May 1	Robert Krueger	May 21
Manuela Fortenberry	May 1	Bill Pichel	May 21
Mary Lucy Winker	May 5	Bianka Onwumbiko	May 23
Sunny Francis	May 9	Deogratius Kimolo	May 24
Stephen Mentz	May 12	Diana Cindy Clem	May 25
Robert Day	May 17	Dawn Felix	May 25
Gregory Clem	May 20	Marilyn Benson	May 26
Adereme (Victoria) Findlay	May 21	Theresa Deddeh	May 27

Lorrie & Richard Lauer	May 1	John and Emily Francis	May 26
Ebenezer & Silva Emmanuel	May 8	Paul & Rochelle Commins	May 27
Robert & Priscilla Krueger	May 24	Warren and Mary Lucy Winker	May 30

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Dated Material

Address Service Requested