



Cross Lutheran Church & School
New Braunfels, Texas
The Lutheran Church Missouri-Synod

Cross Ties

December 2023

They shall bring
GOLD and
FRANKINCENSE,
and shall bring
GOOD NEWS,
the praises
of the LORD.

ISAIAH 60:6, ESV



FROM THE PASTOR

THOUGHTS from Pastor Joeckel

It is Advent, the start of a beautiful season of growing light, anticipation, and repentance as we get ready for Christmas. Our world has inverted the seasons. For many, including people sitting in the pews, this is the season of Christmas. Ask the checker the next time you shop at HEB or any other, "When are the 12 days of Christmas?" They will likely assume that they are the days leading up to Christmas, when in fact they are the days after Christmas. On Dec. 26 most of the trees will be on the curb. That is probably good, they have been in the house since Nov 25 and are a fire hazard unless you go for the fake trees. What is equally odd is that we have made the days after Christmas quite penitential, the time when the liturgical calendar really tells us to celebrate. New Year resolutions and the belt tightening of diets and credit card bills in the mail are far more penitential in nature and probably belong more to the season of Advent. We are out of step with our culture in this sense, or perhaps they are out of step with us.

The Season of Advent is a time for the Christian to spend time reflecting on the coming of the Christ not only at Christmas but also and especially on his second coming. Advent is a very important season that is unfortunately swallowed up in the commercial spending frenzy that the world calls Christmas.

Advent is intended to be a time of penitential reflection when we stand with the people of the Old Testament days, waiting for the revealing of God's great salvation in his Son. We have seen a glimpse in his first coming, but we long for the day when Jesus will be shown to our very own eyes, and we will no longer pine for the perfection that God has written into our hearts and failed at miserably, because of our rebellion and sin. We want to see Jesus! We long for him in person! And it will happen someday but until then we once again light the candles and set up the Advent wreaths and longingly await for his visible return.

FROM THE PASTOR

Advent Services schedule under the theme “What Child is this?”
Worship services will take place on Wednesdays at 10AM and 7PM

DEC. 6, 2023

“THE CHILD WHO IS ZECHARIAH’S HOPE.”

DEC. 13, 2023

“THE CHILD WHO IS THE VIRGIN’S GREAT SON.”

DEC. 20, 2023

“THE CHILD WHO IS JOHN’S GREAT JOY.”

SUNDAY, DEC. 24, 2023

CHRISTMAS EVE—10 A.M. & 5 P.M.

MONDAY, DEC. 25, 2023

CHRISTMAS DAY COMMUNION—10 A.M.

I WILL BE OUT OF THE OFFICE FROM DECEMBER 19, 2023
TO JANUARY 2, 2024 ENJOYING CHRISTMAS
WITH FAMILY IN YAKIMA WA.

PLEASE CONTACT PASTOR CHUCK FOR ANY EMERGENCY
OR JAMES SMITH, HEAD ELDER.

“**Holy,**
holy, holy
is the **Lord** God
Almighty,
who was,
and is, and is
to come.”

Revelation 4:8



FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Connected! Our theme for the 2023-2024 school year is appropriate for the Advent and Christmas season. In John 15:5, Jesus says, “I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.” (ESV) Jesus reminded the disciples and He reminds us today that we were created to be Connected. Connected to Jesus. And, in turn, Connected to one another. Christmas is a time to remember our Connected-ness. It’s a reminder of that first Christmas when God re-Connected His people to Himself through His Son, Jesus Christ. As His dearly loved children, we have also been grafted into the vine of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit in baptism and through God’s Word.

As we see the importance of Connection to Christ, we rejoice that He has sent over 250 student and their families into our midst to share with them kingdom! These are students from all over our community that get to hear about how much God loves them each and every day. As our student body continues to grow and change, their needs change as well. Many of our families struggle and sacrifice to ensure that their child(ren) receive a high-quality, Christ-centered Lutheran education here at Cross. Sometimes the struggle is too much, and families are forced to choose between the many strains on their hard-earned dollars. As a community, we do our best to reach out to these families to let them know that we have assistance available to them. As they share their circumstances with me and our financial aid committee, we work to match their need with available funds.

The Tuition Assistance Fund of Cross Lutheran Church and School is one of the most important resources we have available to families in need of tuition help. By supporting the Tuition Assistance fund above and beyond your regular tithe, you are actively blessing a family whose life will be touched for eternity by the loving gesture of support you pour out to them through your gifts. Every day that a student can spend at Cross Lutheran Church and School is another day that they are hearing about the love of Jesus. Every week that a student can spend at

Cross Lutheran Church and School is another week that they are learning how to share the Gospel with a world in desperate need. Every month that a student can spend at Cross Lutheran Church and School is another month that allows them to see teachers and classmates connecting Jesus to their daily learning! As kids grow and learn in an environment in which the Holy Spirit is active and evident, they are given an incredible opportunity to recognize that they are learning and growing next to no mere mortals, but eternal—children of God that have an eternity to put into practice the love of Jesus they are learning in our ministries.

Thank you for your continued support of our ministries at Cross Lutheran Church and School. As you consider how you can share your treasures during this holiday season, please consider making a donation to our Tuition Assistance program. Every gift, no matter the size will make a huge difference! Your act of kindness will allow students to Connect with Jesus right here in New Braunfels!

Rejoicing in Jesus,
Dr. Corey Brandenburger,
Principal

Upcoming School Ministry Events:

Chapel (Join us online!) Wednesdays (3:00pm)
PK-3rd Grade Christmas Program Thursday, December 14 (6:00pm)
4th-8th Grade Christmas Program Thursday, December 14 (7:30pm)
Christmas Break December 18-January 2 (School Office Closed)

“The Lutheran Hour”

“The Lutheran Hour” is heard locally on WOAI 1200AM, San Antonio on Sunday mornings at 6:00 a.m.; KLBK 590AM, Austin on Sunday mornings at 7:06 a.m.; KWCB 89.7FM, 1580 AM, Seguin on Sunday mornings at 8:00 a.m., and Floresville on Wednesday mornings at 9:30 a.m. It is also broadcast live via the internet on: www.lhm.org. Download the Lutheran Hour App, or listen on your favorite app.

December 3

(Isaiah 61:1-2)

"Before They Call"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev.
Dr. Michael Zeigler

December 24

"TBD"

SOS and Mayday are distress signals that cry out for rescue. So is “Lord, have mercy!”

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev.
Dr. Michael Zeigler

(Isaiah 64:4)

December 31

"TBD"

December 10

Guest Speaker: Rev. Dr. John
Nunes

"A-T Walker"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev.
Dr. Michael Zeigler

(Isaiah 40:3)

Not all information was ready at time of publication. Check for updates at lutheranhour.org/programguide

December 17

"Life After Landing"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev.
Dr. Michael Zeigler

We need help keeping the PowerPoints and the Livestream going during our Sunday Services!

Let us train you in the A/V booth, or on Livestream all you need are basic computer skills, we will show you everything. Contact Steph in the church office: 830-625-3969 or sfulker-son@crossnbtx.org if you are willing to help out and serve in this way.

Attention Cross Congregation Men

If you are a male member of Cross Lutheran Church and eighteen or older, the Men's Club wants you. The Men's Club is recruiting new members. A former Cross Lutheran Men's Club member has provided funds to help recruit additional Men's Club members. The Men's Club will pay the 2024 dues (all or a prorate share of the funds provided) to all men joining now and through January 2024. The Men's Club will forgo the prorated 2023 dues if joining before December 31, 2023. The Men's Club is a member of Lutheran Hour Ministries/ Lutheran Laymen's League and provides funds annually to support their programs and do numerous good works for Cross Lutheran church. If you have any questions or desire to join the Men's Club, please contact Glen Hendricks at 210-287-2498 or email: ghendricks001@att.net.

MEMBERSHIP TRANSACTIONS

Death: Phyllis Munyon died October 25; funeral service held in Illinois.

Membership IN by:

Affirmation of Faith:

Roman & Roseanne Gabriel
Cooper & Lauren Gorham c. Aspen
Kelly & Jean Hays
Jourdan & Jillian Simmang c. Aurelia
Trevor & Heather Richter
c. Clyde, Clint, Clayton, Clement
Pat Temple

Membership OUT by:

Resignation:

Gea Clausier
Tom & Crystal Kuzmanich
c. Hannah & Makenzie

The Monday Lutheran World Relief Quilters would like to thank Kari Lettow, Cory Brandenburger and the 8th Grade students for helping with the Lutheran World Relief ingathering. They worked hard, from 8:30 to 2:00, at whatever task was given them, either unloading boxes from various vehicles, to loading boxes onto the large semi-trailer. All of the adults appreciated the students help and enthusiasm.



First Mite Collection – Thank you to the children who brought back their mite offerings on Reformation Sunday. The total mites collected came to **\$8.20**. Way to go! We will be having our next mite collection on Sunday, December 31st, at both services. The large mite box will again be in the Narthex. We are also making that Sunday, **Loose Change Sunday**, for adults to empty their pockets to help with Mission Projects of the LWML. Each month, starting in January of 2024, we will be listing Mission Projects that have been funded through mite offerings. If you ever have any questions, please contact Carolyn Culbertson at 210-389-7720.

For the past several years, our Cross Lutheran Health Ministry volunteers have been calling members of our church who have recently been hospitalized or are recovering from an illness. Our goal is to have one volunteer call from one to six people one week out of every six weeks. Unfortunately, the number of volunteers have been dwindling down. We would LOVE to have some new volunteers who are willing to make weekly phone calls. Tammy or Jennifer will provide the list of names to call at the beginning of the week and you can make the calls at your convenience. Not only does this show Christian concern to our fellow members, but also helps the Pastor and church staff keep up to date on the welfare of our members.

We also have numerous shut-in members who would love to receive a phone call or a personal visit each month. If you are unable to visit, but would be willing to contact a shut-in with monthly phone calls, please let us know!

There are plenty of opportunities for YOU to serve, just let us know what you would like to do! We would be happy to talk to you at church, or you can call Tammy in the evenings. Thanks for your support of this important ministry. Tammy Krueger-home-830-627-8197 tkrueger6@satx.rr.com Jennifer Kimmett – usafrn.jk@gmail.com



Thank you to this congregation for the laughs, hugs, tears, and memories. This past two and half years working for and with the congregation at Cross Lutheran have been amazing. You will all be in my heart as my family moves on. Keep looking forward, and keep remembering the reason we are here, for Him! Blessings and love to all of you! Steph

DECEMBER 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
3—SOS Food Drive 8:30am Worship Service 10am Sunday School Christmas Program 11am Communion Serv. 2pm Stephen Ministry Peer Support 3pm Advent Vespers	4 9am World Relief Quilters	5 4:30pm Kinderchor 6:30pm Board of Elders	6 10am La 3pm Sch See Mu See Ad
10 8:30am Communion Serv. 10am SS/Bible Class 11am Worship Service 12pm Evangelism Meeting	11 9am World Relief Quilters	12 1pm SOS Food Bank 7pm Stewardship Board	13 10am La 3pm Sch See Mu See Ad
17 8:30am Worship Service 10am SS/Bible Class 11am Communion Serv. 3pm German Advent Service 4pm German Advent reception	18—No School 9am World Relief Quilt. 1pm Braille Team	19—No School 7pm Men's Club Meeting	20—No 10am La See Mu See Ad
24—Christmas Eve 10am Worship Service 5:30pm Christmas Eve Service	25—Christmas Day Office Closed 11am Christmas Day Communion Service	26—No School 1pm SOS Food Bank	27—No 10am La No Bells 7pm Ch
31—New Year's Eve 8:30am Worship Service 10am Sunday School/Bible Class 11am Communion Service			

Church & School Website: crossnbtx.org
 830-625-3969 / church@crossnbtx.org / school@crossnbtx.org
Rev. Toby Joeckel, Interim Pastor ✠ **Dr. Corey Brandenburger, Principal**

For Pastoral Care, call Pastor Toby Joeckel at 702-523-6210

	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 6:30am MBBC 9am Bulletin Crew	2 8:30am Christmas Program Practice
adies Bible Study ool Chapel usic Notes vent Notes	7 9am Hand Quilters	8 6:30am Men's Breakfast Bible Class 9am Bulletin Crew	9 1:30pm Christmas Caroling to Shut Ins
adies Bible Study ool Chapel usic Notes vent Notes	14 9am Hand Quilters 6pm Pre-K—3rd Christmas Program 7:30pm 4th-8th Christmas Program	15 6:30am Men's Breakfast Bible Class 9am Bulletin Crew 12pm School Early Release	16
School adies Bible Study usic Notes vent Notes	21—No School 9am Hand Quilters 10am Dorcas Executive Board 7pm Church Council	22—No School 6:30am Men's Breakfast Bible Class 9am Bulletin Crew	23
School adies Bible Study Practice oir Practice	28—No School 9am Hand Quilters	29—No School 9am Bulletin Crew	30 Campus closed for wedding

Music Notes

5:15pm **Glory Notes**
6:00pm **Grace Notes**
7:00pm **Choir Practice**

Advent Notes

10:00am **Midweek Worship**
5:30pm **Fellowship Supper**
7:00pm **Midweek Worship**

GERMAN LANGUAGE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Our annual Christmas Service conducted in the German language will be held on Sunday, December 17 at 3:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary.



SPIRITUAL CARE DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

How are you doing? (How are you doing... really?)
As you ponder the answer you could share, hear this truth: Our good and gracious God can see your heart. He cares about you and is present with you always.

One of the ways Jesus reminds us of His never-failing support is through the presence of a brother or sister in our church family. The Stephen Ministers of Cross are an active and faithful part of the Lord's wonderful care for His people in this place. Please let us know if we can be a source of encouragement or support for you as an expression of God's love.

Church Office: 830-625-3969

stephenministry@crossnbtx.org

Stewardship Board

The Measure of Our Generosity

If you open up the Small Catechism, you'll find a shortened version of the Third Commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy." But if you look up the list of the Ten Commandments in Exodus, you'll find the full version:

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. (Ex. 20:8-11)

Why did Luther shorten this commandment for the Small Catechism? Was it so that the kids wouldn't have so much to memorize? No, it was because Luther knew that all the details of the Third Commandment were part of the "shadow" of the Old Testament (Col. 2:16). Or as St. Paul puts it, there is "letter" in the Old Testament law and "spirit" (2 Cor. 3:6). The details of not working on Saturday were fulfilled by Christ. That part of the Sabbath regulation no longer applies. But the spirit of the law does remain: We need to dedicate sufficient time each week to hearing God's Word and giving it honor and respect. Or as Luther sums it up in the Small Catechism's explanation to the Third Commandment: "We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it."

The same sort of analysis applies to our giving. In the Old Testament, God commanded the Israelites to give a tenth of their income to the Levites so that those men could dedicate their lives to serving in God's house, teaching the people, conducting worship, etc. In the New Testament, there is a rigid requirement listed about handing in your tax forms to church to make sure you've given enough. But the mandate to have a full-time ministry, which is the spirit of that law concerning tithing to the Levites, is right there in 1 Corinthians 9:14: "The Lord has ordained that those who preach the Gospel should make their living from the Gospel."

The New Testament church's job is significantly larger than the job of Old Testament Israel. We are commanded to preach the Gospel to all nations. There was only the temple to maintain in the Old Testament, but we have churches, schools, universities and seminaries, plus missionaries everywhere. So you tell me: Can we really undertake the work of the ministry if our giving doesn't even measure up to Old Testament levels of generosity?

– *LCMS Stewardship Ministry: [lcms.org/stewardship](https://www.lcms.org/stewardship)*

**SOS FOOD BANK –
A Community Service supported by Cross Lutheran**

The first Sunday of each month is food ingathering day at Cross for our support for the Spirit of Sharing (SOS) Foodbank, one of the food banks in the New Braunfels community. We also hold a Thanksgiving collection during November, in partnership with our Lutheran School children and families. Thank you for your ongoing and generous support for this ministry to those in need! The Foodbank is open Monday through Friday from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., and Saturday mornings from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. Do you know someone who is hungry? Please have them call the Foodbank: 830-629-3663. Volunteers from Cross work on the second and fourth Tuesday of every month. Do you have questions or want more information about joining the Cross Team of volunteers? You are invited to call Verlea Potter at 830-625-3720.

December A/V Schedule

	8:30 a.m.	11:00 a.m.
12/03	Open for Volunteers	Lee Roberts
12/06	Steph Fulkerson (10am)	Lee Roberts (7pm)
12/10	Dane Lundquist	Andy Chantos
12/12	Steph Fulkerson (10am)	Lee Roberts (7pm)
12/17	Dane Lundquist	Jerry Miller
12/20	Open for Volunteers (10am)	Lee Roberts (7pm)
12/24	Open for Volunteers (10am)	Open for Volunteers (5:30)
12/25	Open for Volunteers (11am)	(no second service)
12/31	Open for Volunteers	Open for Volunteers

December Greeter Schedule

	8:30 a.m.	11:00 a.m.
12/03	Ethan & Tasha Evans	Marvin & Barbara Pinson
12/10	Darrell & Tammy Krueger	Gary & Sue Wittenborn
12/17	David & Amanda Vasek	Alexis Slaby/Dorothy Brucks
12/24	Jerry & Lois Horton	Alissa Elley
12/31	Dale & Carolyn Culbertson	Chuck & Kathy Paulson

December Elder Schedule

	8:30 a.m.	11:00 a.m. (7:00 p.m.)
12/03	Todd Wood	Charles Woodall Greg Douglas
12/06		Jeff Fink
12/10	Richard Gabriel, Mark Hampton	David Luckemeyer
12/13		Dave McCabe
12/17	Jeff Langemeier	Ernie Simon, Roy Price
12/20		Jeff Langemeier
12/24	(10 a.m.) Mike Weiss, Todd Wood, Charles Woodall	(5:30 p.m.) Greg Douglas, Jeff Fink
12/25	(11 a.m.) Richard Gabriel, Mark Hampton	
12/31	Pete Stocking	David Luckemeyer, Dave McCabe

December Altar Guild Schedule

12/03	Vicki Haeck and Lori Roberts
12/10	Patsy Carpenter, Jan Simon, and Mary Kay Wilkie
12/17	Vicki Haeck, Lori Miller, and Christine Haeussler
12/24	Jo Anne Goebel and Sue Wittenborn
12/31	Susan Daley and Debbie Weiss

**WORSHIP SERVICE
RECORDED AND
BROADCAST**

Each Sunday morning, under normal circumstances, the 8:30 a.m. Worship Service is recorded as well as broadcast live on the internet. You may find the livestream on either Facebook or YouTube by searching “CrossNBTX” to find our page.

Newsletter Deadline!

If you would like to include an article in the January newsletter, please submit it to the office no later than the 15th of December. You may leave it in the box outside of the church office door
Thanks!

December CPH Schedule

12/03	Cross Fifth Graders!!!
12/10	Mary Kay Wilkie and Melanie Douglas
12/17	LeAnne Fraker and Hillary Cadra
12/24	Mary Sue Cheatham and Barbara Arnold
12/31	Tammy Ullman

November Acolyte Schedule

	8:30 a.m.	11:00 a.m.
11/05	Lillia Vasek & Lauren Whitson	Tristan Melcher & Juliann Lanphere
11/12	Kade Lundquist & Wade Krause	Kateleigh Crandall
11/19	John Henry Bostick & Callum Haley	Cash Backus
11/26	Nathan Bostick, Jr. & Claire Volkmann	



Cross Lutheran Church and School
2171 Common St.
New Braunfels, Texas 78130
830-625-3969 (*Church & School*)
830-625-5019 (*Fax*)

Worship: Sunday @ 8:30 a.m. & 11:00 a.m.
Sunday School/Bible Classes: 10:00 a.m.

Interim. Pastor – Rev. Toby Joeckel
702-523-6210
tjoeckel@crossnbtx.org

Principal— Dr. Corey Brandenburger
cbrandenburger@crossnbtx.org

Corinne Swientek, School Admin. Assistant
cswientek@crossnbtx.org

Church & School Website: www.crossnbtx.org



ONE IN CHRIST WE GATHER. ONE IN MINISTRY WE GROW. ONE IN MISSION WE GO.