



Our Mission... to seek, share, and serve our Savior

# Holy Crossings

September 2020

## “Trying to Figure Out How Best to Lead Through the Current Pandemic and Social Unrest”

I would like to share an article I read just last week of an interview by Jock Friken of Pastoral Leadership Institute with the TX. District President, Rev. Michael Newman, about “How Best to Lead Through the Current Pandemic.” I hope that this article will help us as we ministry at Holy Cross to extrapolate from Pastor Newman and others in our Synod what will help strengthening our members in reaching the lost in our daily work, exercise time, and getting to know our neighbors – developing friendships – being blessings to those who do not yet believe in Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Here is the interview: “A few weeks ago I (Jock Friken) sat down with Michael Newman. Mike currently serves as president of the LCMS Texas District. He’s the author of the excellent book [Gospel DNA: Five Markers of a Flourishing Church](#). We each served wonderful Chicago-land congregations an hour apart some years ago.

**Mike, church leaders are trying to gain some perspective leading through COVID-19. You’ve written on what happened in the church with the 1918 Flu Pandemic. Give us some history.**

675,000 people died in the United States from the flu pandemic. It’s estimated 50-200 million people died worldwide. When you look back at statistics in our church body, in 1918 funerals increased by 25% and weddings decreased by 30%. Couple that with World War I, the first mechanized war. Our churches sent 4000 young men to war who never returned. Anti-German sentiment was prevalent in the U.S. German-speaking people were criticized. Speaking German was outlawed. And, we were the German Evangelical Lutheran Church. Immigration laws changed in the 1920s. German immigrants were outlawed. But reaching German immigrants had been a fundamental mission strategy for our churches at that time. It was a tough time.

**Every church leader you and I know today is trying to figure out how best to lead through the current pandemic; what did they do back then?**

It created the first pause since our early beginnings in this amazing missionary movement known as the LCMS. There was plenty of worry. Anxiety. Hopelessness. Despair. “Is the church at an end?” “We can’t do what we did before.” Our forefathers chose to lean into the mission—even in the barren, bleak field that was given them. They chose mission and focused on the treasure in the field. They didn’t give in to the devil’s temptation.

*cont. on pg. 5*

## Sunday School & Bible Class Theme: The Word of God- the Word was, is, and always will be...

Part of our focus will be on the Old Testament with the Enduring Faith curriculum from CPH. We will also be offering a new type of course which will be 8 weeks only and is an online Zoom class called the [Sanctuary Course](#). Look for more information with regards to this course on page 6 of the newsletter. We plan to meet in person, starting Sunday, September 27<sup>th</sup>. SS and Bible class will follow Sunday morning worship with our health and safety at the forefront of what we do together in person. The classes will be structured to last approximately 45 minutes. We will all need to be flexible, respectful, and understanding of each other’s needs and remember that the format (for example: location on-site and seating arrangements) may need to change including possibly moving everything back to online. I heard a wise man say awhile back, “change is a given, growth is a choice”. We want to move forward with providing SS and Adult Sunday morning Bible class in person, plus an in person (if interest numbers call for it) and/or online format for the Sanctuary Course, with the understanding that this may need to change or look different than in the past. Please pray for God’s guidance and the Holy Spirit, our Comforter and Counselor, to invade our church family and community to let God’s will be done! *“...do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 4:6-7)*

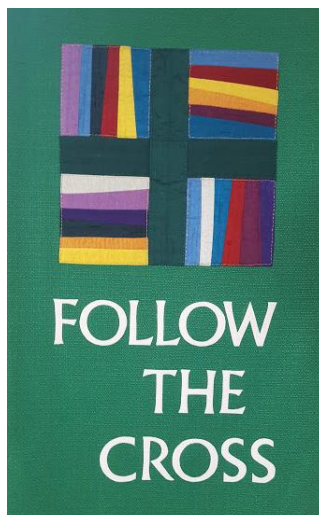
### Parking Lot Fellowship

The last opportunity Holy Cross met for fellowship was the Lenten service pre-service potluck in March before members went into quarantine. Covid-19 regulations have made getting together difficult. With loosening restrictions, members are invited to a parking lot fellowship, Saturday, Sept. 12, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Members are invited to enjoy Danish pastries from Edelweiss Bakery. Members are asked to bring their own beverages. Social distancing will be practiced. Thrivent Financial is helping to sponsor this event; there is no charge for this get-together.



### Mums for Haiti

Our brothers and sisters in Haiti are starving. Pastor Thomas Bernard, pastor of Good Shepherd Lutheran in Port-au-Prince, said more people are dying from starvation than Covid 19. In order to raise money for food, Holy Cross will be selling mums from Sailer's Greenhouse. Mums will be for sale at \$16 each. They will be available at the church parking lot Saturday, September 19, from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. If you are interested in purchasing a mum, contact Bonnie Nowak in person at church or e-mail her at [bonnienowak007@gmail.com](mailto:bonnienowak007@gmail.com). Make checks payable to Holy Cross Lutheran and designate flower sale on the memo line. Flower colors available will be red, yellow or orange. Come early to get the color you want. Thrivent Financial is helping to sponsor this event.



## SEPTEMBER SERMONS

**Sept. 6, 2020**

### Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

**Theme:** Love is the fulfilling of the law. "Rather Clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and Do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature."

*Romans 13:14*

**Text:** Romans 13:1-14

**Sept. 13, 2020**

### Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Guest Pastor: Pastor James Fuchs

**Sept. 20, 2020**

### Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost & Rally Day

**Theme:** Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord.

**Text:** Romans 14:1-12

**Sept. 27, 2020**

### Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

**Theme:** And everything that does not come from faith is sin.

**Text:** Romans 14:13-16:27



### Sunday School Rally Day

**Sunday, September 20 following 10:15 Worship Parking Lot Picnic, Ice Cream Social and Outdoor Games**

Hey Church Family, Bring your picnic basket, favorite picnic foods and beverages for your own family, lawn chairs and/or a table or your tailgate for a picnic in the parking lot to kick off the SS year here at Holy Cross. Church will provide the ice cream and you are welcome to eat it plain or bring your favorite toppings or treats to enjoy with it! Yummy! Pray for favorable weather! We will also enjoy 'yard games' so bring a frisbee to toss or your cornhole game to share. There will be badminton, too! All ages and families are welcome and are encouraged to invite a new friend or family to join us!

## The Lutheran Hour

**The Lutheran Hour** can be heard each Sunday on WCCO (830 AM) at 6:05 am. And it can be streamed online too, [www.lhm.org](http://www.lhm.org). Check-out LHM's daily devotions too.



September 6

### "Jesus in the House"

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

Messy prayers, loud tables, open doors—three signs of a spiritually vibrant household.

(Luke 19:1-10)

September 13

### "Fireplace Spirituality"

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

Our relationship with God is not something to "set and forget" like a thermostat.

(Acts 2:37-47)

September 20

### "I Stand at the Door"

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler

New Series "Households of Faith"

(Luke 24:13-35)



September 27

### "Room at the Table"

Speaker: Rev. Dr. Jason Broge

New Series "Households of Faith"

(1 Peter 4)

### WITNESS WEBSITE GETS UPDATE

For almost 140 years, The Lutheran Witness (LW) has served the church and proclaimed the Gospel by publishing theological essays and reflections that interpret "the contemporary world from a Lutheran perspective." Now, LW seeks to continue this mission by refreshing and expanding its web presence. In July, LW Managing Editor Rev. Roy Askins announced an updated LW website: [witness.lcms.org](http://witness.lcms.org). "Updating the old Lutheran Witness site to give it its own domain name is an opportunity to get the word out there about what The Lutheran Witness is and what it does. The Lutheran Witness has been teaching Lutherans for 140 years. Now we are expanding the opportunities to teach online as well," said Askins. The updated site will continue to provide all the same content that was housed under the old domain name. "The Lutheran Witness has been around since 1882. It is one of the longest-published magazines in the history of the U.S. And a lot of this content continues to be relevant today," said Askins. To read this entire article click on the website below <https://blogs.lcms.org/2020/lutheran-witness-introduces-new-website-podcast/>



### Spoken Praise

In the Word

*Through Jesus ... let us continually offer to God a sacrifice of praise — the fruit of lips that confess his name* (Hebrews 13:15).

### Of the Word

Jesus' first disciples had mouths on them. Nathanael used his mouth to mock the Lord's background: "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" ([John 1:46a](#)). James and John used theirs to elevate themselves in Jesus' kingdom: "Let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left in your glory" ([Mark 10:37b](#)). And Peter, the big mouth, used his to overestimate his abilities, redirect Jesus' earthly mission, boast of his loyalty, and deny he ever knew His Lord!

Jesus' present-day disciples are no different. Bickering, boasting, and backbiting come from the mouth, as do lies, gossip, and ridicule. So what about Jesus' mouth? To Nathanael, He spoke words of acceptance. To James and John, He shared the truth of godly service. To Peter, He offered forgiveness, instruction, and a fresh start (several times).

If you have a mouth on you, take comfort in what comes out of your Lord's mouth. He welcomes, admonishes, teaches, forgives, and offers you a new beginning in the righteousness that belongs to you in Him.

### Walking with my Lord

Lord, with clear, exalted voice I gladly make the choice To use my lips to praise and glorify Your name.

In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

## Stewardship Ministry - LCMS Stewardship Ministry - September 2020 Newsletter

“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might” (Eccl 9:10).

God bids us to be faithful in the tasks He calls us to do. He calls us to be members of a family (husbands and wives; fathers and mothers; sons and daughters). He calls us to be members of society (those who govern and those who are governed). And He calls us to be members of His family, the Church (those who preach and teach and those who hear and learn). Each of these callings from God places a duty on us.

As members of a family, husbands are given the duty to die for their wives as Christ gave His life for His bride, the Church; while wives are given the duty to respect their husbands and submit themselves to them as the Church does to Christ. Fathers and mothers are to raise their children in the fear and admonition of the Lord, teaching them the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, and the Scriptures concerning Baptism, Confession, the Office of the Keys, and the Lord’s Supper. Children are to honor their parents throughout their lives, and even when their parents are no longer alive, serving and obeying them, loving and cherishing them, and speaking well of them.

As members of society, God calls those who govern to bear the sword, that is, to punish those who do evil (those who live contrary to God’s will) and to reward those who do good (those whose lives are lived in conformity with God’s will). Those who are governed are to obey their leaders as to the Lord Himself, for their leaders bear the sword of God’s temporal justice for a purpose.

As members of God’s own family, the Church, He calls those who preach and teach to do so in faithfulness to His holy Word. To preach and teach the Law of God to convict the hearts of hearers of their sin and to encourage, admonish, and exhort them to do good works in accordance with God’s will. They are to preach and teach the Gospel, the full forgiveness of their sins accomplished by Christ and received through faith, not by works. They are to administer the means of grace in accordance with the Gospel and the Word of God. They do all this for the young and old alike, for those who are near and far off. Those who hear and learn are to submit themselves to their preachers and teachers. They are support them by their prayers and their gifts.

Each of these callings from God place a duty on us. They make a claim on our presence; on our prayers; and our time, talents, and treasures. So, “Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might” (Eccl 9:10). Pray for your family, your government, and your church. Give of yourself by means of your time, your talents, and your treasures to your family, your government, and your Church. That is what it means to be faithful in the tasks that God has given us. That is what it means to do it with all your might.



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Children's confirmation classes switched from German to English. It was a big deal. We dropped German from the German Evangelical Lutheran Church. The amount of change—the cultural change—was staggering. But, like Jesus said, they focused on the treasure in the field. They had the same temptations to shrink away and hide just like we do today.

**Mike, say more about “the pause.” There was great mission growth leading up to World War I and the Pandemic and after “the pause” there was tremendous growth again.**

There's power in the Gospel, right? We're tempted to forget that the Gospel has power. We're founded on a pause. When Jesus was on the cross there was darkness. The whole world paused. For three days, Jesus was sealed in the tomb. One big pause before Jesus rose from the dead. We are new creations who walk by faith. The Gospel motivates. We walk in Christ's steps. When Peter became proud and boastful, Jesus said: “Peter, get behind me. Let me take the lead.” **We don't need to operate in fear.**

**What contributed to this amazing mission movement before the pause?**

I think people assume that Germans just streamed into churches when they arrived, but when you read the history it was difficult, and filled with sacrifices. They were not a unified German people. They came from different city states and were fleeing old structures. Former Roman Catholics. Atheists. Missionary pastor and 2nd president of our church body Fredrich Wyneken said the soil for the Gospel is hard. There's an incident where Wyneken visited a rancher and the rancher chased Wyneken off of his property with a shotgun. Some were open. Many were not!

**And after the pause?**

Like I mentioned, people pushed away the devil's temptation to hide. Not only were there great changes but also a willingness to risk and innovate. John Fritz chaired the Mission Board in 1918. He emphasized that by virtue of our Baptism every Christian is a missionary. Walter A. Maier embraced radio technology to preach the Gospel. It was wildly successful as The Lutheran Hour. Most members today have no idea that our roots are a tremendous mission movement. It's who we are.

**What would you like to say to church leaders today struggling with COVID-19?**

Ministry is hard in normal times. You know that. You can be a great student or a great athlete. As a result you can receive many accolades; but when you start leading congregational ministry, it's hard. It's people. It's battling the forces of evil coming against it. We have really strong, resilient leaders in our churches. I'm impressed with them. I see incredible innovation. I'm proud of what I've seen. I also see the burden of living with constant change and flux. I see tired leaders. They're not able to hang with friends. Maybe they spend less time in prayer and God's Word. They need to take a vacation if they haven't. They need to lean into relationships. They need to take a Sabbath. Before, we had a culture that at best was apathetic toward the Gospel. Now, we have an opportunity to check in on neighbors. People are feeling anxiety. There's fear. We can show hope and love. People are feeling real, deep needs not being met.

**The Economist predicts that 1 in 3 mainline churches will close in the next 18 months as a result of COVID-19**

It's difficult. We may see dramatic change. Whatever was or wasn't happening before COVID-19 is being accelerated in the crisis. Entire church bodies are hanging by a thread. We need to remember that institutions were put in place for good reason. They're being deconstructed today. We have what's important: Grace alone. Faith alone. We don't have to worry about the deconstructing of institutions. I'm part of the structure. I ask: **“How does the movement of the Gospel prevail even if the church structure falls apart?” Out of the ashes comes something new. We need to pull together. Refocus. Fix our eyes on Jesus and where He is leading us.**

The training that PLI is doing is huge. Look at the 1,000 Young Leader initiative! It's organic training for people to start missional communities. New leaders are being equipped. The initiatives that PLI is involved in are perfect for this season. It's time to rise up. There are so many humble, anonymous people. They might be stressed out. Anxiety-filled. Seeing the landscape falling apart. Remember: ***“Lift up your heads.” “Never will I leave you or forsake you.”*** God is using you.

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See your weakness and hopelessness as conditions that God uses to create a beautiful movement." (Thank you, Pastor Michael Newman. You're a blessing to the PLI family. By Jock Ficken | August 19, 2020.)

In having you read this article/interview, it is my hope in the coming months, we will continue to look at new ideas of how to be followers of Christ and reach out to those who do not yet know His grace. I believe Prayer & Fellowship Ministry as I shared last summer during the National Youth Gathering to over 200 youth, would be a great ministry to be strengthened in the Living Word and intentional prayer, looking for "Divine Appointments," God is preparing for us in advance to do. I pray our congregation can become stronger as we learn from our weaknesses. We so many times rely on ourselves than we rely forever and fully on the Lord of our salvation. The Lord bless you this coming Fall as we together plan to carry out Christ's great commission as He lifts up our of our weaknesses. **"18 Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me 19 Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.' "** Matthew 28:18-20 (by Pastor Jim Jobst)



**THE SANCTUARY COURSE** –will be offered online by Zoom and facilitated by Pastor Jim.

See SanctuaryMentalHealth.org to learn more.

#### Who should participate in this course?

People with questions about mental health...

Mental health professionals with a wealth of knowledge to share...

Leaders who want to engage their community in mental health conversations...

People supporting loved ones with mental health problems...

People living with mental health problems...

The Sanctuary Course is for anyone who wants to learn about faith and mental health. It requires no previous training or expertise—just a willingness to engage in dialogue with other believers.

#### How does it work?

*The Sanctuary Course* is an eight-week study guide for small groups. Each week participants will gather together, read through the content out loud or listen to it on audiobook, watch a film, and engage in conversation, reflection, and prayer. The course is designed to be run by small-group leaders in your church or organization.

#### What does it cover?

Over the course of the eight weeks, participants will explore topics such as:

- Understanding mental health and illness
- Challenging stigma
- The recovery journey
- Companionship
- Self-care
- The role of community in mental health recovery

Each topic is explored from a psychological, social, and theological perspective. Additionally, each session is accompanied by a compelling film featuring the story of an individual who has journeyed through mental health challenges as a person of faith.

**We will need to know if you would like to attend this course for planning purposes. Please let Pastor Jim or Vivian know by email or phone call/text if you would be interested in attending. Thank you!**