

November and December 2026



Thoughts in print…..



As I write to all of you this month, I am amazed that the holiday season is right around the corner. The Thanksgiving holiday is ever present in my thoughts. While the last couple of months have been filled with their own challenges and loss, there is so much more to consider that have and continue to be blessings in the midst of all the rest. Like many of you, I sometimes struggle in the midst of the holiday craziness to actually give myself time for self-care; to truly process life as it happens. When we fail to do that, we delay addressing both the difficult things and may even miss the joyful things.

In the midst of real life, Jesus enters in and calls us to both the comfort and joy that can be found in trusting in him through all things. Afterall, he experienced this life and all its challenges and joys as well. He knows us, he wants to be there with and for us. May we all let him be the savior, comforter, and guide he desires to be for us, not only at Thanksgiving, but as we enter in the season of Advent, celebrate Christmas, and enter into a new year. May this holiday season be a launching pad for a renewal of heart and mind and spirit in all of us. May we all allow ourselves to let Jesus in.

Be blessed today and every day...

Peace ~ Pastor Sue



Community Thanksgiving Celebration

Sunday, Nov. 22nd at 4:00
in the Holy Cross Parish Center. (Sponsored by the Interfaith Clergy of Greater Toms River.)



We welcome the newly baptized –

Vienna Margit Ferris

October 11

daughter of Jessica and Michael Ferris

We rejoice with you in the life of baptism. Together we give thanks and praise to God and proclaim the good new to all the world.



Tuesday Morning Study –

Did you know we now have a Tuesday morning study group? We meet at 11:00 in the Dittmer Room and are currently working with study related to hymns, the stories behind their writing, and scripture passages that support the themes. Join us any time.



Sunday Adult Study - This group meets at 8:45 on Sunday mornings in the Dittmer Room. For the next couple of weeks we will be working with material chosen by Vicar Sydney and Pastor Sue. On Sunday Nov. 28 we will begin a 4 week study related to Advent. A new study based on the book, The Great House of God by Max Lucado, will begin after the New Year. More info in the next newsletter.

Long term prayer list…

Arline Chapman, Cindy Williams, Leah Morgan, Valerie Horlacher, Maie Currie, Frank Lukasavage, Barbara Carlson, Dee Barbara, Lyn Fenwick, Marge Herr, Kristine Schley, Susan and Sean Buglio, Jim Goubeaud, Carole and Jerry, Jim Hardesty, Lynn and Paul Owens, Carol Sims, Jackson, Deborah Gerstler, Carol Brink, Diane Corbett, Kathy Jacobsen, Linda Cecchini, Beverly Gabriel, Josh Deligny, Win Brandt, Kenn & Yvonne Kerr, Cathy Knapp



Do you like to sing but can't commit full-time to the Sanctuary Choir? Come join the "augmented" choir for Advent and Christmas. Rehearsals are on Thursdays at 7:30. See Jean Heidorn for more information.

ITEMS NEEDED FOR OUR ANNUAL THANKSGIVING DINNER

Canned corn and beans
Canned yams and cranberry sauce
Instant potatoes / stuffing / gravy
Bottled water

Please note – We are NOT accepting turkeys OR hams.
All items should be brought in by
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 22nd.
VISA gift cards are preferred, but monetary donations and other gift cards are also appreciated.
Thank you for your help and donations!!!





ANNUAL THANKSGIVING DINNER
Thanksgiving Day, November 26th
EAT IN OR TAKE OUT
Holy Cross Parish Center

We are collecting food (see list above) and
VISA gift cards/donations.

Volunteer shifts are as follows on Thanksgiving Day:
8:30 – 11:30 (set-up, food prep, serving line, hospitality, take-out orders prep and kitchen help)

11:30 – 2:30 (serving, hospitality, take-out orders prep, kitchen help and clean-up)

Preparation of food is needed.
We will have "take and bake" items for you to prepare at home.
Sign-up sheets are on the table in the narthex.
THANK YOU!!





IMPORTANT NOTICE

This is the LAST month that you will receive the newsletter through the mail. Beginning in the new year, newsletters will be sent electronically (e-newsletter). Please inform the office of your email address so that you can continue to receive the newsletter.

Confirmation Ministry 2026-2027



Learning Sessions are on the first and third Wednesdays of the month. Dates to the end of the year are as follows: November 18th, December2nd and 16th. If you have a young person in 6th grade or higher and would like to join the group, please check in with Pastor Sue. We currently have 5 young people participating in this important ministry.



Advent Devotional Materials

Advent devotional materials will be available for adults and families for pickup at church beginning the weekend of Nov. 21 and 22 or via links provided on our Facebook page.



Inclement Weather

In case of bad weather, church services will NOT be cancelled unless a state of emergency is declared by the governor. As always, use your best judgement and keep safe!



Blue Christmas (or the "Longest Night") service is specially designed for folks dealing with grief, loss, and sadness in the midst of the holidays. The service will be held on Sunday, December 13th at 1:00PM in the Parish Center. A potluck luncheon will be held between the 10AM service and the Blue Christmas service for those interested. Bring a favorite dish related to the person you want to honor and remember. Drinks provided.



Poinsettia Order Form

Deadline for listing in Christmas Eve bulletin
is Sunday, December 20th.
Poinsettias are $9.00 each.

Your name_____

Please print clearly.

# of plants ordered: _____ Amount due: $_____

PLANT(S) DEDICATION: (please print clearly.)

_____ To the Glory of God

_____ In memory of loved ones_____

_____ Special dedication_____

_____

Please place this form, with payment, in the offering plate, or send it to the office. Thank you.



Altar Flowers/Sanctuary Candles

Sign-up charts for 2027 are on the bulletin board.
Altar flowers are $25 per arrangement.
Sanctuary candle dedications are
$12 for 2 weeks or $24 for the entire month.





SAVE THE DATE

Annual Meeting
Sunday, January 31st
immediately following
the 10 AM worship
service

Plentiful Plates Volunteers - Our ministry partners are here each week, usually on Wednesdays from 12:30 - 4:00PM to make meals for those in need in our community. If you are interested in helping out, please contact Chef Toni at 201-394-9175 and let her know Pastor Sue "sent" you!

Christmas Worship Services

Christmas Eve Services



4:00 PM *Family Service*
with Holy Communion
(this is a "kid-friendly" service)



7:00 PM *Traditional Candlelight Service*
with Holy Communion
(both choirs at the 7:00 service)

(both services will be broadcast on Facebook)



Christmas Day

Friday, December 25th
10:00 AM (in person only)

(There is no worship service on Saturday, December 26th.)



Sunday, December 27th
Service of Lessons and Carols, 10:00 am.



Service of Healing and Hope
Saturday, Jan. 2, 5:00 pm
Sunday, Jan. 3, 10:00 am

2026 Who's Who on Council

Pastor Susan Jones 732/349-5108 (h)
sjones@holycrosstr.com

President, Janis Provost 732/267-1428
janis1455@aol.com

VP, Janice Hutchison 732/690-8091
jjhutchison47@gmail.com

VP, John Burgdorfer 732/597-3310
Johnburgdorfer.ra@gmail.com

Secretary, Karen Brandt 732/691-1692
kaybea@comcast.net

Secretary, Nikki Schley 732/232-0138
schley33@aol.com

Treasurer Vacant

Karen Brandt 732/691-1692
kaybea@comcast.net

Al DelaTorre 917/498-0218
DAlbertdeli@aol.com Property

Peter Riemschneider 732/779-9566
riemschneiderrecylcing@gmail.com

Nikki Schley 732/232-0138
schley33@aol.com

Paul Stenzel, Jr. (732)330-3856
stenzinak219@verizon.net



Have a Merry and Blessed Christmas and a VERY happy and healthy New Year.

The office will be closed Thursday and Friday, December 24th and 25th and December 31st and January 1st.

dates to Remember

Tuesdays, 11:00 am
Weekday Bible Study

Confirmation Classes
November 18th
December 2nd & 16th

Sunday Nov. 22nd 4:00 pm
Community Thanksgiving Service at
Holy Cross Parish Center

Thursday, November 26th
Thanksgiving Dinner, 11-2

December 13th 1:00
Blue Christmas Service
Parish Center

Christmas Eve Services
4:00 and 7:00 pm

To make an electronic donation using your phone, just scan the QR code.

Church Office: (732) 255-4455
Christian Preschool & Day Care:
(732) 255-3112
info@holycrosstr.com
www.HolyCrossLutheranNJ.com
www.facebook.com/holycrosstr
Worship Services:
Saturday, 5:00 pm
Sunday, 10:00 am *(and Facebook Live)*
Office hours:
Monday - Friday, 9:00 - 2:00