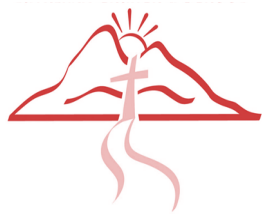


The Greatest Gift



Christmas Day



Cross of Glory Lutheran Church & School

623-224-8839

www.crossofglory.org

Rev. John Ehlers, Pastor

Rev. Benjamin Foxen, Pastor

Blessed to be a member of



Cross of Glory was planted by the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) in March 1998 so that with the Gospel of Jesus she can strengthen the faith of her members and reach out into the community with the free gift of salvation.

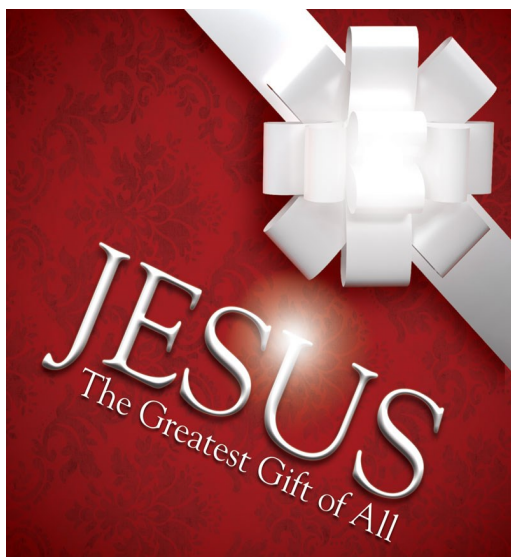
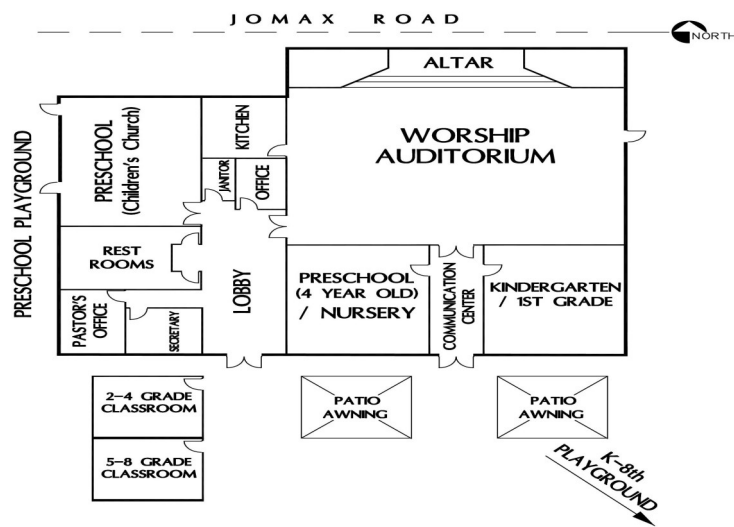
Welcome to our Worship Center! God defines a church as people gathering around Word and Sacrament. As you join us in this gathering, we pray that Jesus' peace and power will fill you.

Families with children:

- Restrooms with changing tables located in lobby.
- Nursery for toddlers 2 years and younger accompanied by adult guardian.

Special needs:

- Large print bulletin available from usher
- Seats with armrests available



Giving and receiving gifts at Christmas is special. There is no doubt about it. Children, especially, enjoy the excitement of asking for, and then waiting for, and then opening their gifts. But even we adults find a special joy in exchanging gifts at Christmas.

On this Christmas morning, we are going to hear about the greatest gift that has ever been given. I realize that is a rather bold claim. But it just happens to be true. And, you will want to pay close attention because this gift is given to YOU. As we read about this gift in the Bible this morning, we will discover more and more about it and it will become clear why this gift is the greatest ever given.

CHRISTMAS DAY

A festival service

OPENING HYMN

Oh, Come All You Faithful | CW55 3 Vs.

Oh, come, all ye faithful, Joyful and triumphant,
Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold him, Born the King of angels.

Refrain:

Oh, come, let us adore him, Oh, come, let us adore him,
Oh, come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord.

Sing, choirs of angels, Sing in exultation;

Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above.

Glory to God, All glory in the highest. *[Refrain]*

Yea, Lord, we greet thee, Born this happy morning;

Jesus, to thee be all glory giv'n,

Word of the Father, Now in flesh appearing. *[Refrain]*

GREETING

(Spoken Responsively)

M: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.

C: And also with you.

DIALOGUE OF PRAISE

(Spoken Responsively)

M: Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord, let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.

**C: O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth. You have set your
glory above the heavens.**

M: Give thanks to the Lord of lords, to him who alone does great wonders, who by his
understanding made the heavens, who spread out the earth upon the waters, who made the
great lights – the sun, to govern the day, the moon and stars to govern the night.

C: Great is the Lord and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit.

M: But our iniquities have separated us from our God; our sins have hidden his face from us,
so that he will not hear. We look for light, but all is darkness; for brightness, but we walk in
deep shadows. We look for deliverance, but it is far away.

**C: For our offenses are many in his sight, and our sins testify against us. Our offenses
are ever with us, and we acknowledge our sins.**

M: The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever; he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.

C: From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets, the name of the Lord is to be praised.

M: “The days are coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will raise up to David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which he will be called: The Lord our Righteousness.”

C: Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.

M: Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

C: Let the name of the Lord be praised forever and ever. Alleluia!

HYMN OF PRAISE

Angels We Have Heard on High | CW63 3 Vs.

Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o’er the plains,
And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains.

Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be Which inspire your heav’nly song?
Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

Come to Bethlehem and see Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee Christ, the Lord, the newborn King.
Gloria in excelsis Deo; Gloria in excelsis Deo.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

(Spoken by Minister)

M: Almighty God, grant that the birth of your one and only Son in the flesh may set us free from our old bondage under the yoke of sin; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

FIRST LESSON

Isaiah 52:7-10

How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, “Your God reigns!”

⁸Listen! Your watchmen lift up their voices; together they shout for joy. When the LORD

returns to Zion, they will see it with their own eyes. ⁹Burst into songs of joy together, you ruins of Jerusalem, for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem. ¹⁰The LORD will lay bare his holy arm in the sight of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth will see the salvation of our God.

HYMN OF RESPONSE

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing | CW61 2 Vs.

**Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;
Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all you nations rise, Join the triumph of the skies;
With th' angelic host proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"**

Refrain:

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"

**Hail, the heav'nly Prince of Peace! Hail, the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings, Ris'n with healing in his wings.
Mild he lays his glory by, Born that we no more may die,
Born to raise us from the earth, Born to give us second birth. [Refrain]**

CHILDREN'S SERMON

GOSPEL LESSON

Luke 2:1-20

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ²(This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³And everyone went to their own town to register. ⁴So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them. ⁸And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. ¹¹Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. ¹²This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." ¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us

about.” ¹⁶ So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷ When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸ and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹ But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

SERMON HYMN

Joy Has Dawned | 4 Vs.
Soloist sings Vs. 1-2 and Congregation Joins for Vs. 3-4

Joy has dawned upon the world, Promised from creation:

God's salvation now unfurled, Hope for every nation.

Not with fanfares from above, Not with scenes of glory.

But a humble gift of love: Jesus born of Mary.

Sounds of wonder fill the sky With the songs of angels,

As the mighty Prince of Life Shelters in a stable.

Hands that set each star in place, Shaped the earth in darkness,

Cling now to a mother's breast, Vulnerable and helpless.

Shepherds bow before the Lamb, Gazing at the glory;

Gifts of men from distant lands Prophecy the story.

Gold, a King is born today, Incense, God is with us,

Myrrh, His death will make a way, And by His blood He'll win us.

Son of Adam, Son of heaven, Given as a ransom,

Reconciling God and man, Christ our mighty Champion.

What a Savior, what a Friend, What a glorious mystery:

Once a babe in Bethlehem, Now the Lord of history.

The Greatest Gift *Romans 8:32*

He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—
how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

CD recordings of sermons freely supplied for study or sharing. Please request on the Friendship Card

CONFESSION OF FAITH—The Apostles' Creed

(Spoken in Unison)

C: I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended
into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there
he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

THE OFFERING and OFFERING PRAYER

(Prayed by Minister)

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

(Spoken Responsively)

M: On this holy day, dear Father, we rejoice to hear the good news of great joy that a Savior
has been born for us. For fulfilling your prophecies and in the fullness of time sending
your Son to be our Savior, we give you our heartfelt thanks and praise.

C: Unto us a child is born! Unto us a Son is given!

M: What a great mystery of our faith this is: that God has become fully human for our
salvation! Even though he is the all-powerful Lord of all, he is wrapped in strips of cloth
and lying in a manger.

**C: Help us always believe that this precious child was born as our substitute to be our
Savior.**

M: In the midst of our joy, we grieve for the many people in our world who do not know that
Jesus has come to bring them forgiveness and healing. As the shepherds spread abroad the
good news of the birth of the Savior born for all the world, may we also make use of the
unique opportunities this holiday presents to tell others of what we have seen and heard
concerning the child.

C: Grant that the true peace between God and fallen mankind may comfort all people.

~Special prayers and intercessions may follow~

M: Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

~Silent prayer~

M: As the angels sang out their praise, move us also to sing out our praise to you, today and

every day, as the joy of Christmas remains in our hearts.

C: Glory to God in the highest! Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

(Sung to the Tune of "Away in a Manger")

Our Father in heaven, all praise to your name!
Your kingdom among us, your will done the same
By mortals and angels. Come, Lord, reign alone;
Oh, hear us and bless us from heaven's high throne.

The bread that we yearn for provide us each day;
As we forgive others, our sins take away;
In times of temptation, to lead us be near;
From evil deliver your children most dear.

For yours is the kingdom; o'er all things you reign.
And yours is the power; all things you maintain.
To you be the glory, resounding again
From all of creation, forever! Amen.

BLESSING

(Spoken by Minister)

M: The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN

Joy to the World | CW62 3 Vs.

Joy to the world, the Lord is come! Let earth receive her King;
Let ev'ry heart prepare him room And heav'n and nature sing,
And heav'n and nature sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth, the Savior reigns! Let all their songs employ,
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy, Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

He rules the world with truth and grace And makes the nations prove
The glories of his righteousness And wonders of his love,
And wonders of his love, And wonders, wonders of his love.

Call News

On Sunday, December 20, the congregation met to issue a call for the third- and fourth-grade teacher position that will be vacated by Rachel Severeid when she leaves after this school year. It was decided to call Stacey Aguilar, wife of our soon-to-be principal, Drew Aguilar. Stacey is currently teaching K-4 at Concord Lutheran Academy in Temecula, CA. Please keep her in your prayers as she considers this call, as well as the whole Aguilar family as they make preparations to move to the Phoenix area this summer.

Please also continue to pray for the Severeids as Rachel finishes out the school year with us and prepares to transition to Emmanuel Lutheran School in Tempe this summer.

Strategic Planning Workshop

On November 20 and 21, the leadership team of Cross of Glory spent a total of 11 hours in meetings with two representatives of Grace in Action (GIA), Dan Sutton and Steve Granberg. Their goal was to train and support the COG team in the following areas:

Identifying CliftonStrengths in individual and team coaching

Developing a new Vision/Traction Organizer (VTO)

Investigating how to grow congregational involvement and buy-in

Also, six-year goals were set in the areas of property and facilities, church growth and member engagement, financial health, outreach, and preschool/LES/high school/youth. You will be hearing more about the new VTO in the future.

Drum Lessons

Are you interested in playing the drums? Jay Collins is offering Drum Lessons for \$20 a half-hour for adults, children 5 and up. If interested please contact Jay. (623)312-5347



Cross of Glory Offering Envelopes

Offering envelopes for 2021 are now available. They may be picked up at the Jomax facility from your mailbox in the hallway entrance to the sanctuary of the church. This year, for those who have been consistently using the on-line VANCO system for their giving, a box of envelopes has not been issued since it is assumed that you will continue to use the VANCO system. If at any time, you would like to go back to the use of envelopes for your offering, please let our Financial Secretary know (john.kull@cox.net or 858 395 5666) and a box of envelopes will be placed in your mailbox. Thank you for your continued support of our mission at Cross of Glory!

Thrivent T-Shirts

Please contact Liz with your size if you desire a Thrivent T-shirt, and she will put one in your box in the communication entryway. Contact her at cog.secretary@crossofglory.org

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We have a custom Cross of Glory link that will make donating your tax dollars a little easier this year! For more information on how to donate or how the tax credit works, get in touch with Becky Foxen at 623-340-8354 or donate at <https://pages.acsto.org/school/cross-of-glory>

Amazon Smiles

Want to do some good while you shop for your holiday gifts on Amazon? With [Amazon Smile](https://smile.amazon.com), you can support charity easily and automatically.

Just point your browser (or modify your Amazon bookmark) to smile.amazon.com, then choose Cross of Glory Lutheran Church to support.

Then just shop like normal. So long as you're doing it via that web address, Amazon will donate 0.5% of all eligible purchases. All prices and products are the same as they would be if you bought them without using Smile.



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You Shop. Amazon Gives.



THIS WEEK AT CROSS OF GLORY

December 26th 6:00 pm	Worship Service (Jomax)
December 26th 6:00 pm	Worship Service (Facebook Live)
December 27th 9:00 am	Worship Service (Jomax)
December 27th 9:00 am	Worship Service Online
December 28th 6:30 pm	New River Growth Group
December 31st 6:00 pm	New Years Eve Service (Online 26th at 10:00 am)
January 1st	New Years Day
January 2nd 6:00 pm	Worship Service (Jomax)
January 2nd 6:00 pm	Worship Service (Facebook Live)
January 3rd 9:00 am	Worship Service (Jomax)
January 3rd 9:00 am	Worship Service Online

LOOKING AHEAD

January 4th	Classes Resume
January 5th 6:00 pm	Evangelism Meeting
January 5th 7:00 pm	Elders Meeting
January 6th 10:00 am	Mom's Growth Group
January 7th 4:00 pm	Catechism Study Hall
January 7th 5:00 pm	Catechism
January 9th 6:00 pm	Worship Service (Jomax)
January 9th 6:00 pm	Worship Service Facebook Live
January 10th 9:00 am	Worship Service (Jomax)
January 10th 9:00 am	Worship Service Online
January 10th 10:30 am	Sunday Bible Study
January 10th 7:00 pm	Vistancia Zoom Devotion

Jomax Worship Vol- unteers	December 25th	December 27th	December 31st	January 3rd	January 10th
Counters	-	Wempner	-	Wempner/ Schirripa	Wempner/ Cornell
Cleaners	-	Plitzuweit/ Alcoba/Peterson	-	Ebel/Koutia	Patterson
Communion Set-up	-	-	-	Lynn Wempner	-
Ushers	10:00 am Bill Brooks Brian Ehinger Jake Ehinger Trey Ehinger	Gary Jeffers John Wempner	6:00 pm Chris Patterson Caleb Patterson Isaac Patterson Titus Patterson	Cody Hall Levi Foxen Tanner Plitzuweit	John Kull Bill Grams Paul Pappenfuss

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS

For members and friends with noteworthy blessings, difficulties or health issues. Today we especially remember in our prayers and ask God to give strength, comfort and courage to them and their families.

Marilyn Bagwell, sister of Sharon Kull, was recently diagnosed with cancer. May the Holy Spirit continue working in her heart and protect and care for her and perhaps cure her if that is his will.

Juanita Word, who is recovering at home after a fall.

Gerry Ehlers, the brother of Pastor Ehlers, diagnosed with stage 4 cancer and undergoes treatments.

MILITARY

E4 Specialist Alice Henderson, granddaughter of Larry and Faye Kennedy, at San Antonio, TX Ft. Sam Houston Army base in Medical Institute of Surgery Research: Burn Unit.

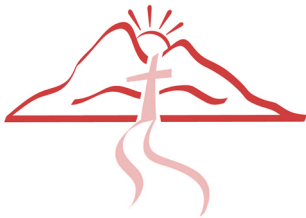
E6 Specialist Staff Sgt. Austin Seignious, grandson-to-be of Larry and Faye Kennedy, at El Paso, TX Ft. Bliss Army Base.

Major JD Larson, son of John & Chi Larson, based at Kirkland AFB in New Mexico.

Sara (Dan) McArdle, daughter of Martha (Scott) Wofford, Air Force Pilot, based in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Sgt. Blake Andrew Nelsen, son of Rick & Karyn Nelsen and brother of Seri & Lilli, USMC.

Ben Weyer, serving in the military, Currently deployed to the Persian Gulf. Please pray that our Heavenly Father keeps him safe in his journey.



Cross of Glory was planted by the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) in March 1998 so that with the Gospel of Jesus she can strengthen the faith of her members and reach out into the community with the free gift of salvation. First worship services began at Easter 1999; the dedication of our Ministry Center at Easter, 2005. On Easter of 2017, we began services at our second site in the Vistancia community. Our synod's name reflects that her founders began in the state of Wisconsin. As a WELS church we still hold to the teachings of the Bible restored in the Reformation era. We are...

- a Christ-preaching church. We preach that Jesus is true God, the Son of God who became man, so that through his perfect life and innocent death, He is the prophesied "Lamb of God" who has taken away the sin of the world.
- a Bible-believing church. We teach that the Bible is the verbally inspired, inerrant Word of God, the only authority for Christian faith and life. We aim to teach God's Word in all its truth and simplicity.
- an evangelical church. We trust the Bible's claim that God saves people through the power of the Gospel in the Word and Sacraments. The Gospel is the Good News (the Evangel) about Jesus' saving work. The WELS has congregations throughout the USA and around the world to share the Evangel, the Bible's primary message, with all people.
- a people-caring church. That we're all sinners equally saved by Jesus' substitutionary work strips away human judgments and egos. This truth also empowers us to live Jesus' love for all people by offering friendship, support, and Biblical counseling. Our church family cares about other people-- including you.

Our Preschool & Elementary School exists to help parents in their God-given duty of teaching the Faith to their children: an important aspect of our Church's plan to grow a comprehensive womb-to tomb ministry that serves souls for eternity.