

Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church Crossnotes

2005



"If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you also."

John 15:20

The new best-selling book The War on Christmas by news anchor John Gibson recounts in disturbing detail how all across America, particularly by governmental entities, Christmas is being systematically eradicated in favor of a generic winter holiday.

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod strongly supports the separation of Church and State, and in fact the founders of the LCMS immigrated to the United States specifically because here they could enjoy freedom of worship without governmental interference. However, as The War on Christmas documents, we are moving beyond appropriate governmental neutrality in matters of religion to selective hostility, toward Christ and Christianity.

It is not uncommon for references to and even celebrations of non-Christian religions and holidays to be allowed, even encouraged, while Christ, Christianity and Christmas are singled out for censorship. One common example is that on some governmental calendars holidays of other religions can be listed by their proper names, but Christmas alone is singled out for

ensorship and is omitted or must be neutered to some generic phrase such as "Winter Festival"—*even though Christmas has been an official Federal holiday since 1870!*

The United States is actually just beginning to catch up with the rest of the world in its discrimination against Christianity. For, throughout the world, the most vehement and even violent religious intolerance is directed toward Christianity, as David Limbaugh documents in his book Persecution.

Why this selective discrimination and even persecution? It was actually prophesied by Jesus in a final warning to his disciples at the Last Supper: "If they persecuted Me, they will persecute you also" (John 15:20). Though this battle seems to be intensifying in our world today, it actually goes back to the very first Christmas, when King Herod literally launched the "war on Christmas" by attempting to kill the Babe of Bethlehem (Matthew 2:16).

Ironically, the world's intolerance toward Christ and Christianity is actually testimony to the truth of our faith. For, Scripture prophecies that the world will wage spiritual war, not against any false religions or false gods, but against Christ and Christianity, as Revelation 17:14 says: "They will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because He is the Lord of Lords and King of Kings."

Jesus concludes his discourse at the Last Supper with this assurance: "I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). While we may rightly be agitated by this discrimination against our faith, and we as Christian citizens certainly may exercise our rights to seek equal treatment and tolerance, ultimately we take our comfort and hope not from worldly recognition but from our Lord's

assurance of final victory and eternal peace.

As Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount: "Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for great is your reward in heaven" (Matthew 5:10-12).

Pastor Kevin Vogts



*Rob and Heidi Finkral
Dylan Sawyer, Levi, Vaughn*
By Transfer from
Our Savior Lutheran Church (LCMS),
Norfolk, Nebraska

*Welcome to the Holy Cross
Family of Faith!*



The Children's Christmas Program, for both the Sunday School and Preschool, will be held on Sunday, December 11 at 4:00pm. It will feature favorite songs and hymns by both the children and congregation and the Christmas story read by the older children.

Please come to show your support for our Sunday School and Preschool.



You Are Invited to a Christmas Open House
at the Home of Rev. Kevin and Terese Vogts
369 Partridge Circle, Dakota Dunes

Sunday, December 4
1:00pm–5:00pm
Bring the Whole Family – Children Welcome

All Invited – Everyone Welcome!



All youth from 5th-12th grades are invited to go Christmas Caroling with youth from Concordia Lutheran Church, Sioux City, on Saturday, December 10th from 2:00pm-6:00pm. We will meet at Holy Cross at 2:00pm, carol for some of our members, and then carol in Sioux City for some members of Concordia.

At 5:00pm we will enjoy a chili supper at Concordia. Pick up there

Crossnotes

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(2000 Military Road) at 6:00pm. For more information contact Pastor Vogts.

Digging Up the Bible



Israel Dig Reveals What May Be World's Oldest Church

*Adapted from
Associated Press Reports*

A mosaic and the remains of a building uncovered recently in Israel may belong to the earliest Christian church in the world, according to a preliminary examination by the Israel Antiquities Authority. The accidental discovery of the church by construction workers near the northern Israeli town of Megiddo was hailed by experts as an important find that could reveal details about the early growth and development of Christian church. Archaeologists said the structure dated from the third century, decades before Roman

Emperor Constantine legalized Christianity across the Roman Empire.

“What’s clear today is that it’s the oldest archaeological remains of a church in Israel. Whether in the entire world, it’s still too early to say,” said Yotam Tepper, the excavation’s head archaeologist.



A beautiful mosaic floor is among the remains recently uncovered in Israel of what may be the oldest Christian Church ever discovered.

Two mosaics inside the church include inscriptions which state that a Roman army officer and a woman named Ekeptos donated money to help build the church. The army officer donated money for the elaborate mosaic floor, and Ekeptos “donated this table to the God Jesus Christ for commemoration,” apparently a reference to a table used for celebrations of Holy Communion. The well-preserved mosaics also include geometric patterns and a medallion with a fish design. This ancient Christian symbol was used more predominately than the cross to represent Christ and Christianity during the time when Christianity was still an outlawed religion subject to persecution, the era from which this church apparently dates.

Christian rituals were prohibited in the Roman Empire prior to the year 313 AD, and Christians had to pray in secret in catacombs or private homes. The earliest churches, dating from around 330 AD, are the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, the Church of

the Nativity in Bethlehem, and Alonei Mamre near Hebron. However, they contain only scant remains of the original structures, which were built by Emperor Constantine I.

Most of the building was destroyed, perhaps deliberately according to Stephen Pfann, a biblical scholar and professor at the Holy Land University. He noted that iconography and inscriptions found in Nazareth and Caperneum-places where Jesus lived-show that people went there to worship in the second and third centuries, although most did so secretly. "This was a time of persecution and in this way it is quite surprising that there would be such a blatant expression of Christ in a mosaic, but it may be the very reason why the church was destroyed," Pfann said.

The dig will continue as archaeologists try to uncover the rest of the building and its surroundings, including what they believe could be a baptismal site.

White and Purple Paraments Donated

Our thanks to Don and Nancy Wiese for donating a new set of white altar paraments to our congregation, in memory of Don's son Nate. They should be delivered before Christmas, the next time white paraments are used, for dedication on Christmas Eve.

Our thanks also to Mabel Schibonski for donating a new set of purple altar paraments, in memory of her husband Elmer. These should be delivered in time for Lent.

Our current paraments were previously used by various congregations and donated at the time Holy Cross was founded. Some were quite old and in need of replacement. The white and purple sets have now been replaced, and we recently were given a black set in new condition by Concordia Lutheran Church, Sioux City. The green set we have is also in very good condition and does not need immediate replacement. However, the red set still need replacing. Also, we could use a light blue set, which is a new



What is Christmas really all about? Why are we celebrating? What does Christmas mean for you?

In Scripture hundreds of different names and titles are given to the Babe whose birth this holiday celebrates. Throughout the Advent and Christmas seasons this year we are exploring the "reason for the season" with a special sermon series on the meaning and significance for you of some of these names and titles of our Lord, under the theme, *And His Name Shall Be Called*.

Advent Services are on Wednesdays at 7:00pm, and Christmas Eve will be celebrated on December 24 at both 7:00pm and with a "Midnight Mass" at 11:30pm. All other services are on Sundays at 9:15am. Come and celebrate the real "reason for the season"!

November 27, 2005

First Sunday in Advent
"The Root and Branch of Jesse"
Isaiah 11:1-10

November 30, 2005

Advent Service I (7:00pm)
"Wonderful, Counselor"
Isaiah 9:6

December 4, 2005

Second Sunday in Advent
"Immanuel"
Isaiah 7:10-14

December 7, 2005

Advent Service II (7:00pm)
*"The Mighty God,
The Everlasting Father"*
Isaiah 9:6

December 11, 2005

Third Sunday in Advent
"The Lord Our Righteousness"
Jeremiah 33:14-16

December 14, 2005

Advent Service III (7:00pm)
"The Prince of Peace"
Isaiah 9:6

December 18, 2005

Fourth Sunday in Advent
"Jesus"
Matthew 1:21

December 24, 2005

Christmas Eve (7:00pm and 11:30pm)
"Savior, Christ, the Lord"
Luke 2:11

December 25, 2005

Christmas Day
"The Word Made Flesh"
John 1:1-14

January 1, 2005

First Sunday after Christmas
New Year's Day
"The Alpha and Omega"
Revelation 1:8



Christmas Eve Services

Bring Your Family and Guests to Celebrate the Real "Reason for the Season"

Christmas Eve, Friday, December 24
Family Service at 7:00pm
"Midnight Mass" at 11:30pm

Enjoy Your Favorite Christmas Carols Including "Silent Night" by Candlelight

All Invited — Everyone Welcome!

Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful!

color now used by many churches during Advent.

Sets of red and light blue paraments would cost approximately \$1500 each. The Board of Elders has created a parament fund, and designated the 10th Anniversary Service offering for this purpose. Paraments will be purchased as funds become available. To donate to this general fund, you may place donations marked "Parament Fund" in the offering plate. Or, if you would like to donate an entire set, perhaps as a memorial, please let Pastor Vogts know so you can discuss designs, etc.



Baptismal Items Donated

Our thanks to Don and Nancy Wiese for donating a silver Baptismal shell and a ewer, a pitcher used for Baptisms, to our congregation, in memory of Nancy's son Korey. They will be dedicated on Christmas Eve.



All women of the congregation are invited to a Women's Christmas Dinner on Monday, December 12 at 6:00pm Perkins on East Gordon Drive. Bring a wrapped Christmas ornament (\$5.00 or less) for a gift exchange. Come join together for fellowship and fun! For more information contact Betty Gunderson or Ginny Peterson.

The next meeting of our new Women's Fellowship will be Tuesday, January 3 at 7:00pm. All women of the congregation are invited!

Long Range Planning Committee Interviews Architects

The Long Range Planning Committee is interviewing three architects following our three Advent services.

After visiting a half-dozen churches in the area, the three architects and firms selected for initial interviews were Ed Storm, FEH Associates (November 30); Terry Glade, Cannon, Moss, Brygger & Associates (December 7); and Brad Mollet, Mollet Architecture (December 14).



Poinsettia Donations

We have arranged for poinsettias through Mosher Garden Center for \$11 each. Sign up on the bulletin board indicating that you wish to have these plants purchased for you, and put your payment in the offering marked "Poinsettias."

The deadline to sign up is Wednesday, December 7. The plants will be delivered to the church on December 9 for display beginning on Sunday, December 11.

You are also welcome to bring your own plants, if you wish to purchase them elsewhere or receive them as gifts. Please sign up on the bulletin board indicating that you will provide your own plants and drop them by the church anytime before Christmas.

After Christmas you may take home the plants you have donated or brought. When you sign up, please indicate whom your plants are in memory or honor of, the way you want it printed in the January newsletter.



Over a dozen confirmation age youth from Holy Cross and Concordia Lutheran Church, Sioux City enjoyed an overnight lock-in on November 4-5. The fun included swimming at the Dakota Dunes Country Club and hockey at Concordia, with Pastors Vogts and Schmidt chaperoning and serving up pancakes for breakfast.



November 30 (Advent Service)

Keegan Johnson

December 4

Kylie Martin

December 7 (Advent Service)

Justin Peterson

December 11

Trevor Vilhauer

December 14 (Advent Service)

Keegan Johnson

December 18

Sarah Vogts

December 24 (Christmas Eve)

Jacob Vogts

December 25

Quinton Bose



CRUCIFERS

November 30 (Advent Service)

Evan Steemken

December 4

Jacob Vogts

December 7 (Advent Service)

Dylan Sawyer

December 11

Zahn Bose

December 14 (Advent Service)

Evan Steemken

December 18
Zachary Selby

December 24 (Christmas Eve)
Kendall Martin

December 25
Kylie Martin



Elders



December 4
Ron Yockey

December 11
Greg Huibregtse

December 18
Joey Schroeder

December 25
Dennis Melstad

Advent, Christmas Eve and Alternate
Doug Jansen

Altar Flowers



Thank you for these flower donations to beautify our worship. A sign-up sheet to provide flowers for worship is on the bulletin board at the back of the church. Occasions to remember include anniversaries, birthdays, in memory of loved ones, etc. Flowers may be obtained anywhere and you may provide your own vase or use one of the assortment in the church kitchen.

There is a separate sign up sheet for poinsettias.

November 6
Jane Michels
In Memory of Jim Michels

November 13
Doug & Sue Jansen
Veteran's Day

November 20
Mabel Schibonski
Mabel's Birthday

December 4
Ron & Jeannette Yockey
Katelyn's Birthday



Why Do Lutherans Do That?

The first two Sundays in November we will conclude our study of the book of Psalms. On November 20 we will begin a new study "Why Do Lutherans Do That?" looking at our Lutheran worship customs.

Have you ever wonder why we have certain worship customs? Why our worship may differ from other denominations? Join in Adult Bible Class on Sundays at 10:30am beginning November 20 to learn, "Why Do Lutherans Do That?"

Preschool Treasurer Needed

Could you help operate our very successful Preschool and After School Care Programs by serving as Preschool Treasurer? Outgoing Preschool Treasurer Jason Bietz would help you learn the procedures over the next several months. For more information contact Board of Education Chair Terese Vogts (232-4013).



Each month we remember in prayer in our worship specific missionaries sponsored around the world by our congregation, through our Synod and related organizations. You are encouraged to remember them also in your personal and family prayers.



December 4
*Rev. David and Rachel Baker
Kazakhstan*



December 11
*Tom and Debi Going
Japan*

For the last two years Fumio Ando, his Christian wife, Motoko, and his family have been attending Sunday worship at Urawa Lutheran Church. Motoko is a member of another local church (all their kids were baptized there), but she has chosen to attend ours as a way to encourage Fumio, who feels very at home here.

This morning, Fumio asked Pastor Suzuki about being baptized, saying

that he no longer feels he has an excuse to resist the gift that God is offering him. He quietly told us about his decision after worship when we were all standing around chatting while drinking tea and eating snacks. We both teared up, overcome with emotion. Motoko was especially moved, seeing her prayers for her husband finally answered!

Please give thanks with us for the work of our Creator and Lord and the mighty power of the Holy Spirit who can change the most reluctant of hearts! Fumio has asked Pastor Suzuki to baptize him this Christmas. It will be a "Joy to the World!" Christmas here for sure!



December 18
Rev. Patrick and Jennifer O'Neal
Jamaica



December 25
Matt and Dee Dee Wasmund
Taiwan

Special Offer on Lutheran Confessions

Concordia Publishing House has issued a new gift edition of the Book of Concord, which contains the confessional writings of the Lutheran Church, such as the Augsburg Confessions, Large and Small Catechisms, and Formula of Concord.



The children of the Holy Cross Preschool Three Year-Old Class (top) and Four and Five Year-Old Class (bottom) enjoyed dressing up in October. There are limited openings in both classes. For more information contact Director Lynnea Mueller at 235-1688 or by email at holycrosspreschool@longlines.com.

This gift edition includes an updated text designed specifically for the lay reader, introductory notes, a Reformation timeline, period woodcuts illustrations, over 30 color plates reproducing paintings from the Reformation era, and a helpful index showing you were to find in this volume the teachings of the Lutheran Church on a wide range of topics.

Through the end of 2005 you can order this high-quality volume for the special price of only \$20. There is a sample copy beneath the bulletin board at the rear of the church. Order by signing up on the bulletin board and paying the church when they arrive. This is a unique opportunity for you to have this handy reference to the teachings of your church.



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Bring Your Family and Guests to Celebrate
the Real “Reason for the Season”

Christmas Eve, Saturday, December 24
Family Service at 7:00pm
“Midnight Mass” at 11:30pm

Enjoy Your Favorite Christmas Carols
Including “Silent Night” by Candlelight

All Invited — Everyone Welcome!

Oh, Come, All Ye Faithful!



Return Service Requested

Rev. Kevin Vogts, Pastor
149 Bison Trail
Dakota Dunes, SD 57049

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