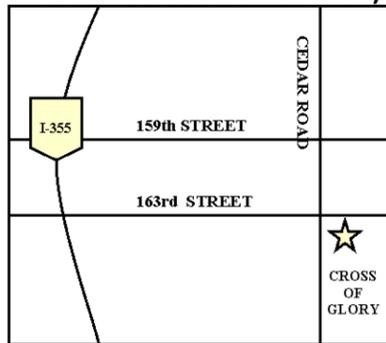




14719 W 163rd Street Homer Glen, IL 60491



Join Us
Sundays 9:30 am
We have a place for you!



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www.CrossofGlory.com

Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, ELCA



DECEMBER 2017



Dana O'Brien,
Pastor

In case I haven't already told you - Christmas is by far my favorite time of year. But while I love everything about Christmas, as I get older, I find that I do less and less shopping - at least less shopping to buy stuff. So, since we've been talking about celebrating Christmas a bit differently this year, here are a couple of suggestions for gifts I've bought that benefit not only the recipient but some other good cause as well.

First, giving to a charity in honor of someone. For the last couple of years, my adult children's Christmas gifts are contributions to charities they choose. I give in their honor and they get a thank you letter to remind them they made a difference.

Or you can check out the ELCA Good Gift ornaments that will appear on our angel tree in a couple weeks. They are another great way to help people in need in more than 80 countries in which the ELCA has a presence. And the ornament makes a great stocking stuffer.

And if you need something a bit bigger for under the tree, what about virtually adopting a wild animal. If you pay a bit more, you can get a stuffed animal just like the one you adopted. Recently, I got my daughter a slow loris through gifts.worldwildlife.org (click on "adoptions").

And then there are all the fair trade gifts that you can find both online and in stores. But my favorite is the gift that keeps on giving - making microloans to people around the world through Kiva (<https://www.kiva.org/>). A few years ago, the congregation I was serving did a special Christmas offering, \$400 of which went to a loan through Kiva to a woman in Africa to help her start a business. She repaid the loan, and over the years I've been "reloaning" that money (supplemented by additional periodic gifts) to other Kiva borrowers around the world. So far, I've made 28 loans totaling almost \$3000 to people in 18 different countries.

There are certainly a lot of other creative ways to give this season in ways that help others. I'd love to hear your suggestions.

CHRISTMAS EVE & CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICES

This year we have two Barn Services on Christmas Eve, as well as our regular 9:30 am Sunday service and a late evening service at 11:00 pm

Regular 9:30 am service - we transition from Advent to Christmas Eve

4:00 and 6:00 Barn Services: Special music, candle-lighting, and Holy Communion -- a wonderful service for families and guests. The barn is heated but please dress warmly. Konow Barn: 16803 S Cedar Rd, Homer Glen

11:00 pm Service: Welcome Christmas with memorable special music, candle-lighting and Holy Communion. A very reflective service.

Monday, December 25th ~ Christmas Morning,

9:30 am: Come as you are, anything from pajamas to your newest outfit!

Sunday, December 31: Journey with Mary and Joseph through the Christmas Story in video, songs, and readings.

**JOIN US FOR
WORSHIP ON
SUNDAYS 9:30 AM**

Holy Communion at all services. Nursery available every Sunday. You are welcome here!

Dana O'Brien
Pastor
Dana@CrossofGlory.com

Laura Uzzardo
Parish Administrator
Laura@CrossofGlory.com

Todd Mizera
Worship Leader
Todd@CrossofGlory.com

Jamie Knutson
Director of The Welcome Place Preschool
Jamie@TheWelcomePlace.org

Please email or call Laura if you prefer to receive your newsletter via email or mail, or to be taken off our mailing list: laura@crossofglory.com



CrossofGlory.com



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

9:30 am REGULAR SERVICE
4:00 & 6:00 pm BARN SERVICE AT THE
KONOW FARM
11:00 PM CANDLELIGHT SERVICE



CHRISTMAS DAY ~ DECEMBER 25th 9:30 AM

MERRY CHRISTMAS & A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR!
See details of these services on the front page



Welcome Statement

We recognize the importance of worshipping with a diverse group of people of any color, age, creed, ethnicity, physical and mental abilities, addictions, legal record, economic status, station in life, life circumstances, marital/family status, heterosexuals, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender people, their partners and their families. We welcome all into full participation in the church life, ministry of the congregation, sacraments, and rites of the church. We are all one in God's eyes, and everyone has a place in the family of God. It is with love and in celebration that we affirm this position.

"There is no longer Jew nor Greek, there is no longer slave nor free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." Galatians 3:28

Our Guiding Principles

- Jesus is Lord
- Everyone Is Welcome
- The World Needs What We Have
- Everyone Has Something To Offer
- Love Changes Everything

Our Mission Statement

To be a community of faith in which everyone lives life in the LOOP of God's saving grace by: reaching and serving, welcoming and nurturing, worshipping and teaching, and giving and sending.

Council Members:

Reach out to a council member with any questions or concerns.
Bill Nabors, Finances/President
Mary Beth Randle, Outreach/Secretary
Maria Dziubczynski, Fellowship
Bill Bavirsha, Facilities/Vice President
Barb Taskay, Worship
Christine Quemeneur, Discipleship

Make an online donation on the church website
www.crossofglory.com/giving

Cross of Glory Lutheran Church is a Reconciling in Christ Church

www.ReconcilingWorks.org

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Contact Cross of Glory Lutheran Church's office for more details on any of the upcoming program and events
(708) 301-6998

Support Cross Of Glory With Your Holiday Shopping

This shopping season, there are two ways you can support Cross of Glory while buying your gifts.

First, whenever you plan to buy something on Amazon, go to Smile.Amazon.com (instead of just the regular Amazon.com) and set your Smile profile to support CoG. All the same products at the same prices, just with a portion going to Cross of Glory!

Second, if you're planning to buy a gift card, buy it through Cross of Glory's Manna program and COG receives a percentage of the price at no extra cost to you. There are lots of cards to choose from. Order forms are in the Welcome Room.

Advent Devotionals Available

This year there are three Advent devotionals available in the Welcome Room. We encourage every family to take one! We have *Welcome Baby Jesus* (intended for families with kids). For individuals and adult families we have *In the Manger* (by Max Lucado) and *God Bless Us Every One!* (based on Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*). Pick one up while they last! These are wonderful ways to celebrate the coming of Christmas each day.

Advent Calendars

Family Advent calendars from ELCA World Hunger are available in the Welcome Room. Through bible passages, songs and suggested actions, they contain daily reminders of how we can follow Jesus and change the world.

Invite Your Friends

This is a terrific time of the year to introduce your friends to some of the wonderful Christmas traditions we have here at Cross of Glory. So consider bringing a neighbor or co-worker along to the movies or caroling or any of the

Wednesday meals or Sunday services. And don't forget to invite everyone you know to Visit with Santa on Saturday, December 9.

Poinsettia Orders

Place your order by Dec 17th. Help to decorate the church for the Christmas services. 

Kids' Christmas Play on Dec 17

Our worship service on Sunday, Dec 17 will feature the kids' Christmas play. It's something a little different this year, as the story of Jesus' birth is told while decorating a Christmas tree. We need lots of kids - the little kids will be the actors and decorate the tree, and the big kids will be the readers. (Feel free to invite your kids' friends to participate as well.) We also need parents to help out on Sundays and Wednesday nights as the kids practice. This is an easy play to do (no memorization), and it's a really creative way to hear the story of our Savior's birth and learn about the meanings behind our Christmas tree decorations.

FREE Christmas Visit With Santa

Our next big community event is **Sat., Dec. 9 from 10 am to 1 pm**, as Santa comes to Cross of Glory. We'll have treats, crafts, games, and of course **FREE** pictures with Santa. Invite all your friends. (And we'll need lots of help with this one - sign up in the Welcome Room to volunteer.)

Christmas Caroling

Wednesday, December 20. We will gather at Barb Taskay's house at 6:30, then head out into the neighborhood to sing Christmas carols. After we've delighted the neighbors, we'll return for some treats. Everyone is welcome - no singing talent necessary!

Monday Christmas Movies

Watch classic Christmas movies at Pastor Dana's home during December. Each movie starts at 7pm, and we'll have snacks and beverages as well. Bring a friend!

- *Dec 4 -- Bell's of St. Mary
- *Dec 11 -- The Bishop's Wife
- *Dec 18 -- It's a Wonderful Life

Advent Worship

Advent Sundays are Coming Up on Dec 3, 10, 17 and 24. And on Wed., Nov 29 and Dec 6, & 13 we will come together to worship as a community of faith. Each night the meal will have a theme. If you wish to bring a dish to share, you can sign up in the Welcome Room.

- Nov 29 -- Mexican Night
- Dec 6 -- Italian Night
- Dec 13 - Southern Home Cooking

Wednesday Advent Night Schedule:

- 6:00: Dinner-bring a dish to share
 - 6:30: Children go to Kids Klub to practice the Christmas Program
 - 6:30: Short worship for everyone else
- We'll end by 7:15

Blue Christmas Worship

Thursday, December 21st at 7:00pm

On the longest night of the year, we are holding a contemplative community service for everyone who may be struggling during the holidays due to grief, loneliness or any kind of loss. This is a difficult time for many, so please tell your friends about this service.

Christmas Giving through Barnyard Animal Ornaments

After all the names on our angel tree are taken (and they are going fast!), we'll put up barnyard animal ornaments from the ELCA Good Gifts Program. These cute ornaments are great stocking stuffers. You just take one (or two, or three . . .) and then send the specified amount to the ELCA directly on behalf of the person for whom you're buying the ornament. (If you'd prefer, you can give the money to COG and we'll forward it.)

Dashboard Saints Christmas Gathering

Saturday, December 16th, 7pm-10pm

A fun night to gather together with friends. Enjoy live music. Sing along with some Christmas Carols. You are welcome to bring a small appetizer and/or dessert to share. Bring your friends, family, and neighbors.



The Story in 2018

Starting in January, we'll all be reading the Bible. We'll do it by reading *The Story*, an abridged, chronological Bible that reads like a novel. (The teens and kids will have their own versions of *The Story*, so the entire congregation can do this together.) As *The Story* brings the Bible to life, we'll all explore the story of God's love and God's plan for our lives. Copies of *The Story* will be available after Christmas so you can get a head start on your reading.

2018 Commitment Cards

Sunday, December 3, is the day we're all invited to return our commitment cards during the worship service. These cards reflect our commitment to God through Cross of Glory during 2018, and are a wonderful opportunity to be involved in what God is doing here. If you haven't received a commitment card, but want to participate, please contact the office. If you have any questions about how God is working here at COG and how we can all be a part of that, Pastor Dana would love to chat with you.



*Bring in new or very gently used coats to
Cross of Glory Lutheran Church by
December 10th.*

*All the coats will be donated to
Lockport Fish Food Pantry*

THE WELCOME PLACE PRESCHOOL

Jamie Knutson, Director (708) 301-3883



Merry Christmas! The children are practicing for their program called Christmas Hide and Seek. The program's will be on Dec 20th for the 4's and Dec 21st for the 3's.

The families are very welcome to bring sweets or juice boxes to share after the Christmas program. This will be their last day at preschool until their return the week of Jan. 8th. Class parties are on Dec 14 & 15.

We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!