



# HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH

Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin

## WORSHIP SERVICE FOR JULY 10, 2022



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Sermon by Pr. Jess Short

The Reading: Colossians 1:1-14

Today is a day about thanksgiving. In the midst of whatever you are facing, be it a good day, a challenging day, or a day filled with a little bit of everything... today is a day about thanksgiving.

I want you take just a moment and think about what it is that you are thankful about today? Maybe it's that you have had the opportunity to enjoy a great vacation this summer with friends or family. Or maybe you are thankful because you are about to GO on vacation. Maybe you are thankful that you are finding some balance in your life. Maybe you are thankful in your life because you have made the choice to get sober. Or that you have come out to someone who you were afraid might reject you, and they didn't. Maybe you are thankful today because your kids have been at camp all week and you got a little bit of peace and quiet? Or maybe you are thankful that you got out of bed today to see the sun shining. Whatever it is, think about what you are thankful for today... at this moment and in this time.

Our second lesson for today is about thanksgiving. The author of this letter is thankful for the people of Colossians. The author is thankful for the way this community is faithful and for the hope that they embody those around them. This is a joyful letter and one of thanksgiving.

I'll tell you what I am thankful for today. I am thankful for you. I am thankful for Holy Cross. You may not know how I started so quickly after Pastor Sara and Pastor Drew left for North Carolina. But the truth is, Pr. Meredith called me up and invited me to work here in a moment in my life when I was in a dark place. In a place where I could not find much thanksgiving in life. Pr. Meredith promised that this call would be a time for me to heal. Because, you see, I have never been fired from a job.

And in a job that I loved and brought so many gifts, I lamented deeply when I was let go by the board of Lutheran Campus Ministry. If you wonder if Holy Cross is doing anything good or making a difference, hear it from me: you have helped me heal from the wounds that I received in my last call.

I'm also thankful for the gift of baptism, and all that means for us as disciples of Jesus. This weekend, we have the baptism of twins: Link and Luna. Their mom, Sonya, was one of my students at Lutheran Campus Ministry at Marquette. It is always a joy to baptize anyone, but it is an absolute privilege to be able to baptize the children of one of my students.

Our world today is incredibly chaotic. We are plagued with violence. The line in the sand between us and them is getting drawn everyday based on our opinions, understandings, beliefs, and values. It would be all too easy to give into the chaos of the world and succumb to the darkness of it all into the pits of despair. But this letter to the Colossians offers us a different reality.

May you be made strong with all the strength that comes from God's glorious power, and may you be prepared to endure everything with patience, while joyfully giving thanks to the Father, who has enabled you to share in the inheritance of the saints in the light.

As followers of Jesus, you are empowered to bring the kingdom of God into this world of chaos. Just as Link and Luna, who will be baptized this weekend, you too are marked with the cross of Christ to remind you that you are loved. With thanksgiving, go and offer light to this world that so needs moments of joy, gratitude, peace and hope.

Thank you Holy Cross for all that you do and for who you are. Amen.