

Crossings

Church of the Holy Cross ✠ Episcopal
875 Cotton Street, Shreveport, Louisiana
November 3, 2021

Services

(until further notice)

Please see calendar.

The Vestry

David Richard, Senior Warden
Ginger Paul, Junior Warden
Mike Wilkerson, Secretary
Donna Neal, Co-Secretary
Georgiana Gleason
Rick Hadwin
Marshall Middleton
Reid Raymond
Jackie Songy
Monty Walford, Treasurer
(non-vestry)

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Church of the Holy Cross
Shreveport

Contact the Editor

Please send material for articles,
along with ideas, suggestions,
or complaints to

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Revelation

“That’s great, it starts with an earthquake, birds and snakes and aeroplanes. . . “ begins the 90s classic by R.E.M., “It’s the End of the World as We Know It.” But the thing about the Apocalypse to St. John, or the Revelation to St. John, is that it’s less about the end of the world than it is about the hope for a world renewed and redeemed by God.



It’s easy to get sucked into doomsday predictions and other such things that springboard off of Revelation. But the prophetic vision of Revelation is not telling the future per se. John was not predicting that one day the events depicted would happen. No one is really expecting a literal beast to come out of the sea or sees the devil as a literal dragon.

Revelation belongs to a genre of ancient literature known as *apocalyptic*. The Greek word *apocalypse* means “revealing,” which is why the book is so often titled Revelation (not the plural Revelations, by the way). And apocalyptic literature was very popular in ancient times. The Book of Daniel in the Old Testament is also an apocalyptic text.

But while the material in Revelation certainly deals with last things, it is not, as some have imagined, a playbook for the end of the world. Additionally, prophecy, as a biblical category, is not about telling the future. A prophet is one who speaks for God. The prophets communicate God’s vision for the world to the people. They’re not fortune-tellers.

In Revelation we begin with St. John’s admonitions and blessings to the seven churches in Asia Minor. His purpose is to encourage and teach those churches and to dissuade them from popular heresies that had been springing up. He also wants to give them hope in the future coming of Christ, because many of their friends and family had been martyred. So John, later in Revelation, uses stirring imagery to talk about the martyrs who stand before the throne of God.

Revelation's symbolic use of numbers, a common trope in apocalyptic literature, can often get people into trouble. For example, he says that there will be 144,000 who are saved. But that's barely the size of Shreveport. If we were to take this number literally, I don't think very many of us could realistically count on getting through the front gates. Rather, that number, like most of the numbers mentioned in the book, is symbolic. It's 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. Put simply, he just meant a lot of people, a multitude.



In chapter 13, John describes a beast coming out of the earth with "two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon." Surely this is not a literal monster, but a fantastical rendering of one who is anti-Christ. He might look like the lamb, but the voice of the dragon discloses which side he is on. And while this description of a false prophet can certainly be applied to some today, it is not meant to apply to any one person in particular.

There is a timelessness, it seems, to oppression, empire, violence, heresy, and harassment. As Christians, we can look to Revelation's encouragement about life in the face of these things, just as we look to many things in the Bible for encouragement. But we should not fall for the idea that a particular verse was written against a particular person.

I think most of us might know of people who pointed to things in Revelation and made comparisons to the former President Obama. This is dangerous for many reasons. One reason is that if we think something applies only to one person in history, or in the future, then we can ignore the archetypal dangers of empire and violence that John was talking about. Or, put another way, if you believed that President Reagan was the beast of John's vision or that Pope John Paul II was the false prophet, then that danger has passed since they are both dead, and you will be blind to the inherent danger of empire worship, which is exactly what John was warning against.

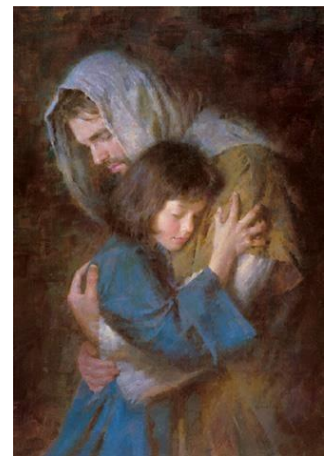


Don't let the complex imagery of Revelation distract you from the simplicity of its overall message, which I think can best be summarized by Jesus himself when he said, "In the world you will have many troubles, but take heart: I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

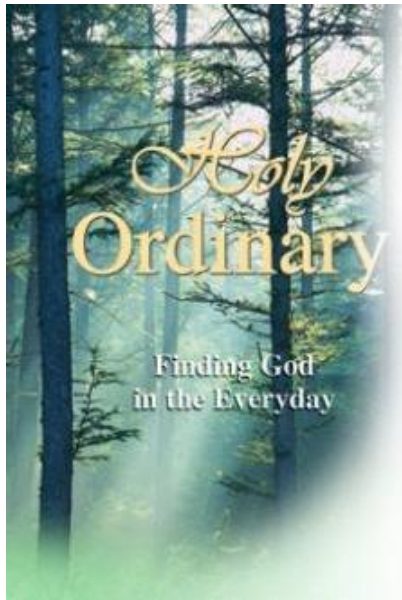
Revelation offers us a host of meaning and symbolism. Its rich language has given birth to many of our hymns, especially our Advent hymns. And while some of the imagery might seem scary, the book is ultimately about the good news of God's saving work in the world. No matter what beasts rise up out of the sea, the lamb who was slain stands victorious. The final parts of the book beautifully describe the Kingdom of God as a place where there is no scorching heat, neither sorrow nor crying, a place where God will wipe every tear from our eyes.

Can you imagine the consolation that image must have brought those early Christians suffering persecution and martyrdom? Of course you can, because these images bring us consolation today. A world where there is no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, and the hand of God wipes our eyes of every tear? Sign me up!

Our language fails to comprehend and communicate the glory and wonders that await us. Our language can also fail to demonstrate the severity and destruction of the world we live in today. But the language of Revelation provides us with recourse. Clinical descriptions of things like poverty, persecution, oppression, can often hide or obscure the scale of destruction. But Revelation's language of the four horsemen, that's an image that sticks with you. Likewise, academic descriptions of the "beatific vision" or "eschatological hope" can be helpful, but the image of God Almighty wiping away every tear? That's an image worth rejoicing over.



The Rev. Garrett Boyte



Holy Ordinary

Finding God in the Everyday

An open door!

***(Revelation 4:1-11)** After this I looked, and there in heaven a door stood open!*

Yesterday I had to hurry home to let in people working on the house. I wished that I had left the door unlocked, as I don't have a system that allows me to unlock doors remotely.

In the human world most doors have to remain locked. But a locked entrance—physical or emotional—should never deter a person from seeking God. That belief, that God is always accessible to all persons, explains my loving line from Revelation that says, “there in heaven a door stood open!” In translation, the punctuation makes it sound as if a human being does not often encounter an open door in, or to, heaven.

But the door to heaven stays open. We have to resist the belief, both within Christianity and around it, that heaven is only available after life on earth ends. If it is eternity we seek, we find it not as a characteristic of time but as a state of being which transcends time in this moment.

Our society conditions us to expect hostility, divisiveness, and criticism from fellow human beings. So we're surprised, as reflected in the Revelation translation, to encounter kindness, compassion, and forgiveness.

I refuse to participate in the meanness. I will work hard to carry the gracious presence of God. I will stop to notice when I see those gifts incarnate in other people.

And I will think, “there in heaven a door stands open!”

Carol Mead is priest-in-charge at St. Peter's-by-the-Lake Episcopal Church in Brandon, Mississippi. You can learn more about Carol and her journey to Holy Ordinary on her website: www.holyordinary.com.

Prayer List

Steve Abramson	Joe Bob Evanson	Robson Jenkins	Linda Sirman and family
Ellen Dunlop Belote	Ann Falter	Linda Jordan	Angela Smith
Mary Berth	Floyd "Buzzy" Farrar	Justin	Catherine Spaht
Margaret Boudreaux	Robin Foster	Peggy Kirkland and family	Paul Spaht
Martha Brotherton	Maggie Fowle	Maureen Locke	Robert Todd
Marci Brown	John August Gianforte	Mim McCoy	Cynthia Walker
Corinne Campbell	James Edward Griffith	Della McCranie	Louis Wallace
Robert Cangelose	Richard Hadwin	Elyane Mergey	David Walsh
Mikey Carlisle	Sandra Hadwin	Theresa Mormino	Connie Wiggins
Julie Coyle	Charles Hall	Patsy	Curtis Williams
Sarah Lou Coyle	Jerry Harper	Juanita Peterson	Bill Wright
Drew Dodson Family	Josh Harrel	Kelly Rutz	Mary Wright
Jean Dooley	Barbara Hughes	Brady Sessions	Sheryl Wright
Addylaide Evanson	Elizabeth Ingram	Mary Ann Shemwell	

We pray for those who serve and are served by Martin Luther King Health Center and Pharmacy.

In the diocesan cycle of prayer we pray for Christ Church, Bastrop, the Rev. Gregg Riley; for St. George's, Bossier City, the Rev. Terry Deokaran, the Venerable Lois Maberry (Ron); for Trinity, Cheneyville and Holy Comforter, Lecompte, the Rev. André Bordelon (Rose).

Calendar for November

Saturdays	Evening Prayer, Rite II	6:00 pm	Online
Sundays	Morning Prayer, Rite II	9:00 am	Chapel
	Coffee and Catechesis	10:00 am	Library
	Holy Eucharist, Rite II	11:00 am	Nave
Mondays, Tuesdays	Evening Prayer, Rite II	6:00 pm	Online
Wednesdays	Book Club	10:30 am	Library
	Holy Eucharist, Rite II	Noon	Chapel
	Evening Prayer, Rite II, followed by	6:00 pm	Nave and online
	Path Bible Study		
Thursdays, Fridays	Evening Prayer, Rite II	6:00 pm	Online
Saturday, November 6	Funeral service for Wanda Allen, followed by reception in the Undercroft	2:00 pm	Nave
Tuesday, November 9	Vestry meeting	5:30 pm	Library
Friday, November 12	LGBTQ+ Game Night	6:00 pm	Library

Lay Ministries

The Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost: November 7

Lectors: Carolyn Mahlen, Kirk Fontenot
Prayers of the People: Carolyn Mahlen
Eucharistic Minister: Ginger Paul
Acolyte: Aaron Horton
Usher: Bill Richard
Altar Guild: Laura Wilkerson, Mike Wilkerson

The Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost: November 14

Lectors: Becky Snodgrass, Steve Snodgrass
Prayers of the People: Becky Snodgrass
Eucharistic Minister: Sr. Cecilia Horton
Acolyte: Steve Snodgrass
Ushers: Laura Wilkerson, Mike Wilkerson
Altar Guild: Ginger Paul

Service Music

The Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost: November 7

Mass: Mathias and Hurd
Psalm 127: R. N. Kennedy
Anthem: Now thank we all our God—Cruger; arr. J. S. Bach (Cantata 79)
Hymns: 427 Laudes Domini; 656 Franconia; 339 Schmücke dich; 410 Lauda anima
Organ: Prelude and Fugue in G—Mendelssohn; Toccata—Gigout;
Now thank we all our God—G. F. Kauffmann

The Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost: November 14

Mass: Mathias and Hurd
Psalm 146: Plainsong and R. N. Kennedy
Anthem: Hail to the Lord's Anointed—arr. B. Power
Hymns: 632 Munich; 463 York; 324 Picardy; 598 Mit Freuden zart
Organ: Concerto in Dm—Vivaldi, RV 565; Bach, BWV 596;
Symphony V: Adagio; Symphony II: Finale--Widor

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

COVID Protocols

With the Governor's removal of the mask mandate, Bishop Owensby has also removed the mandate for churches as well as the prohibition against using the common communion cup. At Holy Cross, masks are no longer required for those who are vaccinated, but remain optional and will continue to be provided in the narthex. Those who are not vaccinated should plan to wear a mask. Those with underlying health issues are encouraged to wear their masks, and all are encouraged to do what they think is best for their health and well-being. Services will remain available online, and Father Garrett or a Eucharistic Visitor is more than happy to make house calls to deliver the sacrament. Just call the office to schedule a time.



Website

Reid Raymond has constructed a new website for the church that went live on November 1. The new web address is <https://churchholycross.org>. On the new website you will find updated pictures, information, calendars, service times, and much more about what's going on at Holy Cross. Reid has put in long hours and a ton of work into this project, and we are so grateful for the new and improved website design. There are also new email addresses for the Rector and staff, which you can find on the new website. The old addresses will continue to work as we transition to the new, so don't worry!



Wanda

As most of you know, longtime Holy Cross member Wanda Allen passed away in late October. Her funeral service will be held at Holy Cross on Saturday, November 6, at 2:00 pm. A reception will follow in the Undercroft, hosted by the Episcopal Church Women. All are invited to attend and pay their last respects to Wanda.



Rooftop Rescue

Hope House's annual Rooftop Rescue fundraiser was a resounding success, which saw us raise our goal for 2021, which was \$2,021 and some extra! This year we coordinated with longtime Holy Cross member Hazel Richards and her nonprofit organization, Advocates for Mental Health, which hosted a silent auction to benefit Hope House.



Daughters of the King

Father Garrett was recently installed as the diocesan chaplain to the Daughters of the King for the Diocese of Western Louisiana. He celebrated a Eucharist with the diocesan assembly on October 23 at St. Timothy's in Alexandria. Organist Bruce Power attended as well and provided musical accompaniment for the service. Father Garrett adds this role to the list of his wider diocesan duties, such as being a member of the Diocesan Disciplinary Board, and of course as Rector of Holy Cross.



Allies for Immigrants

The ministry of Allies for Immigrants, headed by Joy Owensby, assists immigrants temporarily housed in detention centers in the diocese to be united (or reunited) with their families, friends, or sponsors throughout the country. They are asking all who can to donate frequent flyer miles to the organization to help these people—our neighbors—to travel to their destination so they can get on with their lives. Please call the church office for more information.

ALLIES FOR IMMIGRANTS

LGBT+ Game Night

Holy Cross will host a game night on Friday, November 12, from 6:00 pm till . . . ? While this event was started by LGBT+ members of Holy Cross, all are welcome to join us in the library for an evening of snacks and games.



Christmas Services

Christmas services are slated at Holy Cross for December 24 at 5:00 and 11:00 pm, and Christmas morning at 9:00 am. We will also continue our tradition of serving breakfast to our neighbors in the community on Christmas morning. More information about the breakfast and the services will follow in future issues of *Crossings*.

CHRISTMAS BREAKFAST



Church of the Holy Cross
P.O. Box 1627
Shreveport, LA 71165-1627

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Website: <https://churchholycross.org>
Email: office@holycrossshreveport.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/holycrossdowntown

Return service requested

Mission Statement: *The Church of the Holy Cross, Shreveport, Louisiana, strives to be the presence of Jesus Christ in our community and beyond, through worship of Almighty God, open inquiry, sharing fellowship, valued diversity, genuine inclusiveness, and servant leadership—encouraging all to exercise God’s gifts and calling as we share the Gospel of Hope in programs, to serve without regard for religious affiliation, race, or economic status.*



Hope House: There is an ongoing need for coffee, sugar, creamer, laundry detergent **pods**, disposable razors, and personal-size hygiene products (soap, shampoo, deodorant, etc.) Please take your donations to 762 Austen Place or to the church office. Thank you for your continued support.

Forward Day by Day for **November** and **December**, in both standard and large-print editions, is available in the Narthex and the Undercroft.

The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, Ph.D., D. D.
The Rt. Rev. Jacob Owensby, Ph.D., D. D.
The Rev. J. Garrett Boyte, M.Div.
The Rev. Mary Richard
The Rev. Kenneth W. Paul
The Rev. Donald D. Heacock
Mr. Bruce Power
Mrs. Laurie Connell
Mr. Charles Alford
Mr. Brian Jackson

XXVII Presiding Bishop
IV Bishop of Western Louisiana
Rector
Rector Emerita
Rector Emeritus
Director, Holy Cross Child Placement Agency
Organist-Choirmaster
Office Administrator
Sexton
Assistant Sexton