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# HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH

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Rockport, Texas



# *Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church*

*Rockport, Texas*

*1992 thru September 30, 2018*




In 1988 there was a division in Lutheran churches and the Evangelical Lutheran of America (ELCA) was formed.

In 1992 there was only one Lutheran Church in Rockport, Texas. It was Peace Lutheran Church at 1302 W. Market Street. It was part of the Missouri Synod Lutheran Churches.



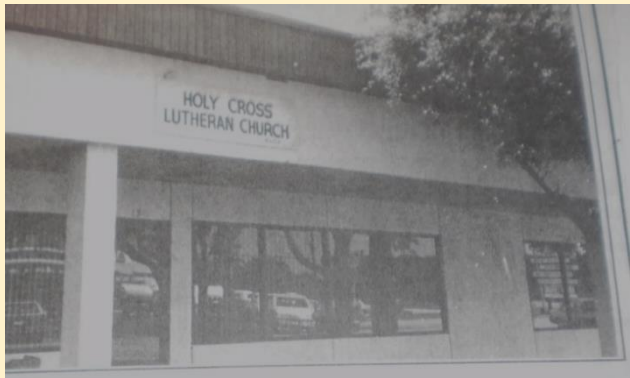
In 1992 Evangelical Lutheran Pastor, Retired Navy Captain, Rev. Louis C. Smith, moved to Rockport, Texas.

Individuals who were interested in forming an  ELCA Lutheran church started meeting in his home to worship.



On **October 6, 1994**, Rev. Smith formed a steering committee and on **October 9, 1994**, the first church service was announced. It was held at Pacific Southwest Community Center, 1501 Hwy. 35 N. (Pacific Southwest Bank acquired First Interstate Bank.) 8 people formed this worshipping community.

Some of the founding members consisted of 11 families. They were Patti and Gerald Ashbrook; John, Judy and Jacqueline L. Gove; Mr. Gunderson; Esther Hoag; Kim and Scott Krueger; Paul Probst; Rev. Louis C. Smith and Lew; Russel and Virginia Smith; Mardell and Herman Solle; Martha and Bill Williams and Rachel Weaver.



As the group continued to grow, in **1995** they rented a storefront space in Live Oak Plaza Shopping Center, Suite #13. This space later was occupied by a liquor store. **May 28, 1995**, the first congregational meeting was held and the first council elected Russel Smith, president; Mardell Solle, vice-president/secretary; Patti Ashbrook, treasurer and Kim Krueger, member-at-large.

The first baptism was Kyle Wayne Otto on **July 2, 1995**. Sherri and Richard Ott are his parents.

Holy Cross Lutheran Church held their 1<sup>st</sup> anniversary on **October 18, 1995**.

On **May 19, 1996**, Rev. Paul Lechner was the first called pastor for Holy Cross.

Pastor Peder Sandager was the first full time pastor starting on **June 8, 1997**. During that year Pastors Dave Barcert and John Bade also served.

Pastor Peder Sandager

Pastor John Bade



These pastors served Holy Cross Worshiping Community at the storefront space in Live Oak Plaza Shopping Center, Suite #13 and in the funeral home at 1001 FM 3036. It previously had been the Aransas Memorial Funeral Home and the Maxwell P. Dunn Funeral Home.



By **January 4, 1998**, Holy Cross started having a second service to accommodate the increasing number of Winter Texans.

In **2001** they purchased the building at 1001 FM 3036.



On **April 15, 2001**, Pastor George F. Haynes, retired as Director of Stewardship for the Texas-LA Synod and became pastor at Holy Cross.



Pastor George F. Haynes



On **January 20, 2002**, Holy Cross held the formal dedication of the church and worship furnishings.

In 2004 at the annual meeting, the congregation voted to appoint a special task force to secure construction drawings and firm costs needed to proceed with building a new sanctuary.

In the Fall of 2005, they started a fundraising campaign for the new church building. An 11-acre tract of land at the junction of FM 3036 and FM 1781 was purchased.



On February 12, 2006, they saw the completion of the capital fund venture for the new church building. The goal was \$100,000 and \$216,000 was raised.



On **March 19, 2006**, they broke ground for a new sanctuary and opened the charter for signatures of members and associate members.



The Constitution of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America defines an Associate member as a person holding membership in another Lutheran (Christian) congregation who wish to retain such membership, but desire to participate in the life and mission of this congregation. This allows greater participation of the Winter Texans that double the church's attendance during their visit in Rockport.







A dedication for the new sanctuary was held on **February 25, 2007**.

At first, all the windows were clear glass. Then the members were given the opportunity to create lovely stained-glass windows with the help of some very skilled members. So now all the windows are member-made stained glass. This was quite a large project.

The congregation continued to grow and share their talents. In the parish hall they created a prayer wall that was covered with crosses individuals had contributed from all around the world.

On **June 24, 2012**, the congregation had a “burning of the mortgage”.

In **2012** a Prayer Garden was created and opened for public use. Stained glass inlaid stepping stones were created for the Garden using leftovers from the window project. Even the children had an opportunity to create some of the stones. There are lovely plants, a tree-carved angel, a cross and benches for meditation.

Then, a columbarium was added to the Prayer Garden.

On **August 25, 2017**, Hurricane Harvey, a Category 4 storm, hit Rockport, Texas with winds topping 130 miles per hour. A mandatory evacuation was declared. People boarded up as much as they could. Massive damage occurred at Holy Cross.





The Congregation was able to continue to worship at other locations in Rockport.



September 17, 2017, with help from Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Holy Cross Lutheran Church started temporary services in one of their buildings at the intersection of Wharf and Church Street

May 5, 2018, services were moved to Rockport Yacht Club located at the Rockport Harbor.



On **August 1, 2018**, the Rockport Yacht Club was not available for worship service so Peace Lutheran Church at 1302 W. Market Street allowed Holy Cross Lutheran to rent their sanctuary for one service.



Then Holy Cross continued services at the Rockport Yacht Club until they were able to resume services on **September 24, 2018**, in the renovated Holy Cross Church building.



Rededication of the refurbished building was held on **September 30, 2018**.

On October 24, 2021 Holy Cross Lutheran Church joined the LCMC, Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ.

*Holy Cross Evangelical Lutheran Church*

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