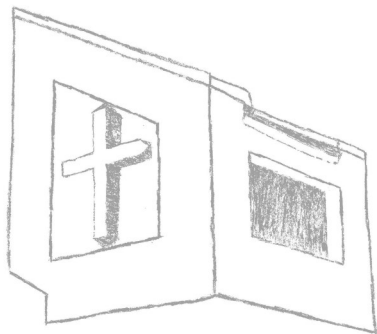




Holy Cross—St. Mark

Newsletter

November 2025



Facebook:

Holy Cross & St. Mark Lutheran
Churches



Website:

holycrossandstmark.org

In this Issue:

Devotional Thoughts—p. 1, 3
Synod News—p. 2
Dual Parish Update —p. 2
St. Mark Council Update—p. 2
Holy Cross Council Update—p. 2
Who Can I Pray For? —p. 3
Calendar —p. 4

Upcoming Events

Nov. 3: HC Ladies' Aid - 1pm
Nov. 5: 20's & 30's Group @HC - 5:30pm
Nov. 10: Little Lambs @HC - 6pm
Nov. 10: SM Council Meeting - 6pm
Nov. 20: HC Council Meeting - 6:30pm
Nov. 26: Thanksgiving Worship @SM - 6:30pm

Pastor Crass Contact Info:
(309)798-0610 - text or call
pastorcrass@gmail.com

Devotional Thoughts

By Pastor Crass

Imagine what it must have looked like to see hundreds of thousands of people traveling as one up Mount Zion to celebrate one of the great Israelite festivals. The joy in their hearts as they climbed step-by-step. The quickening pace as the temple came into view. The Psalms being sung by every man, woman, and child, no matter how tired they were from their travels. But the journey wasn't about what they would obtain at the temple. The journey was all about what they would bring: their praise, their sacrifices, the joy of their hearts. "I rejoiced with those who said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the Lord.'" Their joy was not found in what they would take in from this occasion of public worship, but because God had already given them everything they needed and more.

There is no long march to our church on Sunday. Nobody travels days to get here and risks life and limb, but I will say, there are many smiling faces on Sunday morning as God's people walk through the church doors, even if they aren't signing the psalms of ascent that the Israelites sang up the mountain. There is a sense of joy as friends shake hands and catch up about what's been going on since they spoke last. Sometimes, as the bell rings to begin the service, there's still the rustling of voices, trying to get in a few last excited comments before we begin with worship. People get excited about coming to church.

But I would also say that our worship mindset can become consumer-driven. We ask ourselves if we got anything out of worship today? When we choose not to go, we make excuses that God wouldn't have wanted us there with that attitude anyway. The music's not what we want it to be. The pastor's sermons are too long. The pews are too tough to sit in. On and on and on.

(continued on page 3)

WELS News

Our synod has set a strategic plan for the next ten years of our shared ministry. This is the second installation of that four-part plan. You can read ahead and find more resources at christthroughus.net.

Congregations

Our goals in strengthening WELS' backbone

Congregations are the backbone of our synod as they support the broader work of our church body. While we live in a world full of secularism and skepticism, our congregations continue to embody the love of Christ to strengthen and expand ministry efforts. Looking ahead to the next ten years, we pray that God blesses our congregations, drawing the lost into fellowship and equipping the faithful to stand firm in his Word.

Engage members in mission

God grants spiritual gifts to all his people to build up and strengthen his church. We want all God's people—men and women, young and old—to see that their ideas, insights, and talents are gifts that God has given for use in zealous ministry efforts. By providing training and resources, we will empower congregations to foster an environment where all believers joyfully and confidently serve as Christ's ambassadors according to their gifts and callings.

Support ministry enhancement efforts

Every congregation experiences challenges, blessings, and opportunities. Through this strategic plan, we will support congregations in their ministry enhancement efforts to further Christ's mission. We stand ready to help congregations assess their strategies, providing encouragement, advice, and resources to plan and implement efforts that enhance their outreach and discipleship ministries.

Expand WELS' reach through strategic church planting

We are called to share the gospel with all people. Yet America's shifting landscape—marked by growing population drift—leaves millions beyond the reach of WELS' gospel witness with only two percent of the population living near our congregations. Our goal is to strategically plant congregations in underserved areas, bringing the hope of reconciliation to lost souls.

Elevate the home as the first mission field

Christian families play a vital role in our congregations and God's church overall. By prioritizing our homes as the first mission field, we help ensure the gospel thrives among future generations. We strive to equip parents to embrace their roles as spiritual leaders in passing down the faith, with congregations ready to support them.

Provide sound Lutheran resources

Called workers and lay leaders need resources that remain faithful to God's Word. Having these resources readily available allows leaders to focus more time on relational gospel work to reach more souls. Throughout this strategic plan, we will empower congregations with sound Lutheran resources in areas such as discipleship, worship, outreach, planning, and leadership to amplify impact.

Dual Parish Update

- Both councils approved the printing of Christmas postcards for members to share with invites to services.

St. Mark Council Update

- The cross that hangs on the front of the church building will be removed either this fall or next spring to be repaired and remounted.
- Council is still working through future plans for the treasurer position, as Doug Toupalik will be looking to hand over the work in the near future.

Holy Cross Council Update

- Considerations for installing air conditioning in church were tabled for future consideration due to cost and how infrequently it would be used.
- Ken Hacker's term as church treasurer is coming to a close in January. Under the new constitution, he is unable to be reelected. Council is currently looking for a spiritually mature man to serve.

Who Can I Pray For?

Below are some of our shut-ins that you can pray for, call, and even visit (please call ahead before any visits).

- Carol Heydn - (906)788-4445 - W5744 14 Lane, Wallace, MI 49893
- Kristin Bates - (906)280-8276 - W6450 Cty. Rd. 358, Daggett, MI 49821
- Harold and Virginia Schlenvogt - (906)753-4326 - W5209 Cty Rd 348, Stephenson, MI 49887
- Evelyn Smith - (920)370-2361 - 1191 Pawn Dr, Green Bay WI 54313 (currently living at Menominee Health Services in Menominee)
- Elizabeth Grille - (906)792-6060 - W4728 County Rd. 338, Wallace, MI 49893 (currently living at Menominee Health Services in Menominee)
- Cheryl Bussler - (906)290-0881 - N222 Willow St, Stephenson, MI 49887
- Jim and Carlyn Lynch - (906)241-1488 - N10438 M-35, Cedar River, MI 49887
- Judy Hamblen - (715)923-5661 - 2006 Lake Park Dr, Room 203, Marinette, WI 54143 (The Cottages in Marinette)
- Shirley Wetthuhn - (906)639-2236 - 2006 Lake Park Dr, Room 114, Marinette, WI 54143 (The Cottages)

Would you like to be included on this list? Please reach out to Pastor Crass.

(continued from page 1)

But notice. Those are all complaints about what we get out of worship, as if going to church is supposed to be like a trip to the movie theater or sporting event. Do we sometimes think the main purpose of church is for God to entertain us? How far we might drift from those joyful Israelites climbing up to the temple! This is disordered worship, worship turned inward instead of to our God. Selfishness! Utter selfishness!

Spend a few minutes looking at Romans 12:1, Hebrews 13:15, and Psalm 96:8. Each speaks about worship, but not one sees the focus of worship being what God gives to man. Rather, worship is a believer's response to God. Like children delighting their parents, we speak our Father's words back to him, joyfully thanking and praising him for what he has done for us. Worship, therefore is not a service for us. It is our service for God, where we bring the offerings of our hearts and hands and voices.

But here's the coolest thing: God does not take our praise and store it up in his heavenly vaults. He does not need anything we give to him, partially because it already belongs to him. But he takes our praise and worship that we lift to him, then sprinkles the blessings of it down on us. Do you know why the 8-year-old girl knows Jesus loves her no matter what? Because she sings about it in church every Sunday, and God takes her worship and brands it on her heart. And do you know why the husband and wife's sinking marriage has been able to keep its head above water? Because God uses their time worshipping him at the communion rail to remind them of what they are: forgiven. When we confess our faith to God, we impress our faith on each other. When we repeat his words in worship, he instills those words so deeply in our hearts and minds.

Just as Israel gathered on Zion with joy, we gather each week not to get, but to give. To give our hearts, our praise, and our thanks. And yet, our God will never be outgiven. Whether we notice it or not, we always leave richer than we came. Amen.

Member Announcements

Thank you all for the kind and generous gift basket. I am overwhelmed by your love and support as I navigate this process. "Since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us." - Heather Tauscher

November 2025

Unless otherwise noted, the Lord's Supper will be celebrated on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday												
26	27	28	29	30	31	1												
8am Bible Class at St. Mark 8:45am Worship at St. Mark 9:30am Sunday School at Holy Cross 10:30am Worship at Holy Cross 11:45am Bible Class at Holy Cross	3 1pm Holy Cross Ladies' Aid	4 6:30pm Compline Worship Service at Holy Cross	5 3:30pm Catechism Class 5:30pm 20's & 30's Group	6	7	8												
9 8am Bible Class at St. Mark 8:45am Worship at St. Mark 9:30am Sunday School at Holy Cross 10:30am Worship at Holy Cross 11:45am Bible Class at Holy Cross	10 6pm Little Lambs 6pm St. Mark Council Meeting	11 1pm Midweek Bible Class at St. Mark 6:30pm Midweek Bible Class at Holy Cross	12 3:30pm Catechism Class	13	14	15												
16 8am Bible Class at St. Mark 8:45am Worship at St. Mark 9:30am Sunday School at Holy Cross 10:30am Worship at Holy Cross 11:45am Bible Class at Holy Cross	17	18 1pm Midweek Bible Class at St. Mark 6:30pm Midweek Bible Class at Holy Cross	19 3:30pm Catechism Class	20 6:30pm Holy Cross Council Meeting	21	22												
23 8am Bible Class at St. Mark 8:45am Worship at St. Mark 9:30am Sunday School at Holy Cross 9:45am Fellowship at St. Mark 10:30am Worship at Holy Cross 11:45am Bible Class at Holy Cross	24	25 1pm Midweek Bible Class at St. Mark 6:30pm Midweek Bible Class at Holy Cross	26 6:30pm Thanksgiving Worship at St. Mark	27	28	29												
30 8am Bible Class at St. Mark 8:45am Worship at St. Mark 9:30am Sunday School at Holy Cross 10:30am Worship at Holy Cross 11:45am Bible Class at Holy Cross	1	2	3	4	5	6												
St. Mark Altar: Tammy Eichhorn & Christa Crass Hostess: Kathy Ludwig Holy Cross <table><tr><th>Date</th><th>Ushers</th><th>Counters</th></tr><tr><td>12/2</td><td>Team 5: Anderson, Walcher, Lynch</td><td>Team 3: Sean Troutt & Jeff Hacker</td></tr><tr><td>11/9</td><td>Team 1: Troutt/Karry</td><td>Team 4: Marie Anderson & Mary Sivula</td></tr><tr><td>11/16</td><td>Team 2: Kuntze</td><td>Team 1: Jerry Karry & Kristin Sivula</td></tr></table>							Date	Ushers	Counters	12/2	Team 5: Anderson, Walcher, Lynch	Team 3: Sean Troutt & Jeff Hacker	11/9	Team 1: Troutt/Karry	Team 4: Marie Anderson & Mary Sivula	11/16	Team 2: Kuntze	Team 1: Jerry Karry & Kristin Sivula
Date	Ushers	Counters																
12/2	Team 5: Anderson, Walcher, Lynch	Team 3: Sean Troutt & Jeff Hacker																
11/9	Team 1: Troutt/Karry	Team 4: Marie Anderson & Mary Sivula																
11/16	Team 2: Kuntze	Team 1: Jerry Karry & Kristin Sivula																