



# Holy Cross—St. Mark

## Newsletter

### May 2025



Facebook:

Holy Cross & St. Mark Lutheran Churches



Website:

[holycrossandstmark.org](http://holycrossandstmark.org)

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#### Upcoming Events

- May 3: HC Church cleanup - 9am
- May 5: HC Ladies' Aid - 1pm
- May 5: VBS Planning Meeting - 6:30pm
- May 12: SM Council Meeting - 6pm
- May 15: HC Council Meeting - 6:30pm

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#### Devotional Thoughts

*By Pastor Crass*

I met a woman a couple years ago who had been beaten up by life. She was largely estranged from her family. Her romantic life was filled with failed relationships after failed relationships, and she had turned to substances to numb her pain. And when I talked to her about God's love for her, I got a response that I don't expect. Most of the time, when people don't want to hear what I have to say about Jesus, it's because they feel they are above it. Their bad experiences with church, the headlines in the news media, and their resentment toward God and his word usually cause a mini-lecture: "Don't you know all the pain and death Christians have brought upon the earth?" But this woman was different. She wasn't avoiding church because she saw its members as a bunch of hypocrites. She was avoiding it because she felt she was unworthy.

We do a disservice to our ministry and the people of our community when we treat our church like a country club. A country club is exclusive. It means to keep the many out so the few can feel elite. It places financial or volunteer obligations upon its members to keep the "undesirables" out.

Keeping company with the right kind of people was the concern of the Pharisees when they saw Jesus with the tax collectors and sinners. How could he surround himself with such people? Didn't he know what it did to his image? Like a high school cafeteria, they were angry that Jesus was sitting with the burnouts and serial-liars.

So, Jesus responded with the parable we see in Luke 15:4-7. A shepherd had a large flock of one hundred sheep. That sounds like quite the responsibility. But then he loses one. And you'd think, "No big deal. He's got ninety-nine more. Losing that one is just the price of doing business."

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## WELS News

### Home Missions approves new mission starts and enhancements

On April 3 and 4, WELS Board for Home Missions approved 11 new missions and enhancements for the synodwide 100 Missions in 10 Years initiative.

“Each of the five new starts is backed by a mature, mission-minded core group that has been actively sharing the gospel in their communities—even before seeking formal support,” says Rev. Mark Gabb, Home Missions administrator. “That kind of groundwork helps lay a strong foundation for long-term gospel ministry.” Thanks to the generous gifts received over the past year, WELS Home Missions is also in a financial position to approve up to five additional new missions this fall. Gabb notes, “Giving core groups additional time to prepare their requests will strengthen their proposals for fall.” In the end, Home Missions approved five new starts and six enhancements. The five new mission starts include:

**Arlington, Tenn.:** Arlington is on the brink of rapid growth with Ford Motor Company set to build a new plant for electric truck production. Since 2022, the South Atlantic District Mission Board has been working with a dedicated group of 60 members and Pastor Jim Turriff from Gloria Dei, Memphis, who plan to relocate and establish a fresh start in Arlington under a new name.

**Erie, Colo.:** Erie has experienced a 55 percent population increase from 2010 to 2020, with continued growth expected. A core group of ten adults has been gathering for fellowship and Bible study while attending local festivals to share its plans for a new church.

**Jarrell, Texas:** Jarrell is a rapidly growing town north of Austin. For the past three years, Pastor Don Patterson has been working with a core group of 11, which began holding weekly worship in October 2024. The group has identified 90 prospects, many of whom they connected with by volunteering at the local food pantry.

**Madison, Wis.:** A core group of 14 adults, familiar with the area, has been working together since 2022—meeting regularly for Bible study and ministry planning—and has also secured a rental space for worship and community activities. A new mission plant in the center of rapidly growing urban Madison would allow WELS to reach an entirely new demographic.

**San Tan Valley, Ariz.:** Since 2022, the Arizona-California District Mission Board has been working with Heritage in Gilbert, Ariz., to plant a new mission in rapidly growing San Tan Valley. A core group of 26 adults has been gathering regularly for Bible study and community events. In October 2024, they began holding regular worship services and have already identified 127 prospects interested in learning more about the new church.

Looking ahead, Gabb shares, “We have limitless opportunities with a limited amount of resources. The Board for Home Missions is actively looking at ways to reduce costs, even in the current economic climate, so that more people can be reached with the gospel.” Gabb continues, “It’s all about being faithful stewards of the resources God has given us. We will continue working diligently to aggressively reach the lost with the gospel while also being faithful stewards. We trust God will bless our efforts.”

## Dual Parish Update

- Both churches are looking for any interest in large-print hymnals. Please talk to pastor if this would benefit you or a family member.

### St. Mark Council Update

- The council is looking for input on whether to rebuild or remove the planter box in front of church. If you have an opinion on the planter box, please share it with a council member.
- A new bookshelf was purchased for the cry room. This will be used for members to share Christian books with others.

### Holy Cross Council Update

- *Because the voters' meeting for April had not been held at the publishing of this month's newsletter, there are not council notes.*

## 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 - W3124 Cty Rd 366, Daggett, MI 49821 (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

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

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But that one percent loss is not acceptable to the shepherd. Because these sheep are not just numbers on a spreadsheet for his business. They are his sheep. They each have names and unique personalities. So, when one runs off, the shepherd leaves the ninety-nine in safety to go out and find the one in danger. And he searches and searches and searches, until he finally finds his precious sheep. And as he brings his lost sheep home on his shoulders, he calls out to his friends to come and celebrate with him. He has not just recovered one percent of his wealth. He has been reunited with one of his lost sheep.

Of course, this parable is all about the love of our Good Shepherd toward us, lost sinners who wander away into the dangers of sin. As displayed by the people he often dined with, his heart was for the lost. But you can look further than the dinner table to find the lost sheep. Your shepherd went looking for you, a journey that took him all the way to the cross and grave.

I never got to reconnect with the woman who thought she was too messed up for Jesus. I hope that she was able to connect with God's word at a church somewhere, and I hope they showed her that the Good Shepherd wants the lost. God's love and belonging in his Church belongs to sinners. Our church is not a country club, nor should it ever aspire to become that. It should be seen as the sinner's hospital, the shelter for those whose lives are broken.

I've often wondered how many people in our community, and even in our own families, fit into that group that feels unworthy of coming before God and finding comfort in his word. How can we show them the love of the Good Shepherd? How can we welcome them into our church to show them that this is where they need to be? There's no singular answer for that question, but I think any good answer comes from us treating the lost as Christ treated us when we were lost. With the same intensity and love, let's seek out and bring home the one. Amen.

## Member Announcements

*If you have any announcements you would like shared with our church family, please reach out to Pastor Crass.*

# May 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p><b>27</b></p> <p>8am Bible Class at Holy Cross 8:45am Worship at Holy Cross w/Communion 9:45am Sunday School at Holy Cross 10:30am Worship at St. Mark w/Communion 11:30am Fellowship at St. Mark</p>	<p><b>28</b></p>	<p><b>29</b></p> <p>1pm Midweek Bible Class at St. Mark 6:30pm Midweek Bible Class at Holy Cross</p>	<p><b>30</b></p> <p>3:30pm Catechism Class</p>	<p><b>1</b></p>	<p><b>2</b></p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p>9am Holy Cross Spring Cleanup</p>
<p><b>4</b></p> <p>8am Bible Class at Holy Cross 8:45am Worship at Holy Cross w/Communion 9:45am Sunday School at Holy Cross 10:30am Worship at St. Mark w/Communion 11:30am Bible Class at St. Mark</p>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>1pm Holy Cross Ladies' Aid 6:30pm VBS Planning Meeting</p>	<p><b>6</b></p> <p>Pastor Gone for Conference</p>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p>Pastor Gone for Conference 3:30pm Catechism Class</p>	<p><b>8</b></p>	<p><b>9</b></p>	<p><b>10</b></p>
<p><b>11</b></p> <p>8am Bible Class at Holy Cross 8:45am Worship at Holy Cross 10:30am Worship at St. Mark 11:30am Bible Class at St. Mark</p>	<p><b>12</b></p> <p>6pm St. Mark Council Meeting</p>	<p><b>13</b></p> <p>1pm Midweek Bible Class at St. Mark 6:30pm Midweek Bible Class at Holy Cross</p>	<p><b>14</b></p> <p>3:30pm Catechism Class</p>	<p><b>15</b></p> <p>6:30pm Holy Cross Council Meeting</p>	<p><b>16</b></p>	<p><b>17</b></p>
<p><b>18</b></p> <p>8am Bible Class at Holy Cross 8:45am Worship at Holy Cross w/Communion 9:45am Sunday School at Holy Cross 10:30am Worship at St. Mark w/Communion 11:30am Bible Class at St. Mark</p>	<p><b>19</b></p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p>1pm Midweek Bible Class at St. Mark 6:30pm Midweek Bible Class at Holy Cross</p>	<p><b>21</b></p> <p>3:30pm Catechism Class</p>	<p><b>22</b></p>	<p><b>23</b></p>	<p><b>24</b></p>
<p><b>25</b></p> <p>8am Bible Class at Holy Cross 8:45am Worship at Holy Cross 10:30am Worship at St. Mark 11:30am Fellowship at St. Mark</p>	<p><b>26</b></p>	<p><b>27</b></p> <p>1pm Midweek Bible Class at St. Mark 6:30pm Midweek Bible Class at Holy Cross</p>	<p><b>28</b></p>	<p><b>29</b></p>	<p><b>30</b></p>	<p><b>31</b></p>

**St. Mark**  
Altar: Mary Walcher & Christa Crass  
Hostess: Peggy Grille

Holy Cross	
Date	Ushers
5/4	Team 4: Sivula
5/11	Team 5: Anderson, Walcher, Lynch
5/18	Team 1: Trout/Karry
5/25	Team 2: Kuntze

**Counters**

Team 1: Jerry Kary & Kristin Sivula
Team 2: Ken Hacker & Terri Sivula
Team 3: Sean Trout & Jeff Hacker
Team 4: Marie Anderson & Mary Sivula