



Holy Cross—St. Mark Newsletter November 2024



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Upcoming Events

- Nov. 4: HC Ladies' Aid - 1pm
- Nov. 11: SM Council Meeting - 6pm
- Nov. 21: HC Council Meeting - 6pm
- Nov. 27: Joint Thanksgiving Service at HC - 6:30pm

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Devotional Thoughts

By Pastor Crass

By the time you read this devotion, you are probably gearing up to go to the polls for the November 5th election. Maybe you've already early voted or sent in your mail-in ballot. My words here are not to tell you who you should vote for or even that you ought to vote. Our church is a-political. We do not put signs out in front of the church, hand out pamphlets comparing candidates, or participate in "souls to the polls"-type programs. What we do is preach Christ. And preaching Christ means taking to heart what God says about the different questions of life, and leaving matters up to Christian freedom when God is silent in his word. So, let's address some of the questions a person might wrestle with every election season and see what God tells us in his word:

1) *Is voting a duty or a right?*

Jesus is clear that citizens owe their government what is due them (Matthew 22:21, Mark 12:17). It is God-pleasing for a Christian to pay his or her tax bill or for men to register for selective service in compliance with the law. There are many other instances where citizens do what their government requires to honor God by honoring his gift of worldly authority. But voting is not one of these instances. Unlike some other countries, the United States does not place a legal requirement on voting. An American Christian is free to vote or not vote. And the exercise of that right does not make them any more or less of a Christian. At the same time, a Christian should recognize the special blessing God has given them to be able to participate in their own government. As they prepare for any election, they should not be flippant about their vote, understanding that they people they choose have a God-given role, one we'll hear more about in the next section.

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WELS News

Hurricane Milton and Hurricane Helene updates

This weekend, Oct. 12 and 13, the WELS Christian Aid and Relief assessment team traveled to Florida and spent two intensive days viewing damage and talking to pastors, members, and church leaders. The team visited WELS congregations in Sarasota, Tampa, and Seminole. Northdale Lutheran in Tampa had a large tree on its school that needed to be removed as well as water damage to its sound system. Ascension in Sarasota had soffit damage. Thankfully damage to church buildings is light and should be repaired quickly.

The team also visited several members of WELS churches with varying levels of damage to their personal properties. Some have extensive damage from storm surge entering their homes. There is also quite a bit of tree damage and debris that needs to be cleaned up in the area of impact. Christian Aid and Relief is thankful to report that all members of our churches are safe with no reports of injury or loss of life.

Currently, Christian Aid and Relief is working to set up a deployment to help with the work that needs to be done. Local volunteers will be utilized as much as possible, but volunteers with special skills will be brought in as needed. To sign up as a disaster relief volunteer, please visit welsdisasterrelief.org. Christian Aid and Relief will keep you updated on its deployment plans.

In addition to the work in Florida, Christian Aid and Relief is in touch with WELS pastors in North Carolina and is working to help several families in need.

We couldn't do any of this without your support. We are grateful for God's people in WELS who have offered many prayers and abundant financial gifts to help those in need. Thank you so much!

Rev. Dan Sims, director, WELS Christian Aid and Relief

Visit wels.net/relief to learn more about the work of WELS Christian Aid and Relief.

Dual Parish Update

- A joint Thanksgiving service will be held on November 27 at Holy Cross at 6:30pm.
- For Christmas Eve services this year, we will have postcards for members to share with friends who do not have a church to worship at this Christmas.

St. Mark Council Update

- The final draft of the updated church Constitution and Bylaws has been sent to our WELS Northern Wisconsin District Constitution Committee for review. When we have their notes, we will make adjustments and present it for final passage at the January 2025 voters' meeting.
- Many outdated items have been disposed of from the storage room. The council will work with the Ladies' Aid members to continue keeping the storage room organized and free from items that are no longer needed.

Holy Cross Council Update

- We are currently looking for men who are willing to put themselves forward to be nominated for church president. A term is 3 years and non-consecutive. Please talk to a council member or Pastor Crass if you have any questions.
- There was a discussion at the October voters' meeting about ways we can make our building more visitor-friendly with signage and how we can best serve our many growing young families. If you have any suggestions, please share them with Pastor or a council member.
- We are hoping to add a few more usher teams to the five we currently have. If you would be willing to help with this, please contact Pastor Crass.

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).

- Luella Dahlberg - (906)788-4228 - W4642 County Rd. 346, Wallace, MI 49893
- 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)
- George and 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.

(continued from page 1)

2) How do I separate my Christian beliefs from my political opinions in the voting booth?

Let me ask you to look at it from a different perspective. The truth is, there is not a Christian you and a secular you. In everything you do, you are going to be influenced by the truth of God's word. But God does not speak directly about every topic of life. When it comes to matters such as murder, theft, and sexual immorality, God speaks clearly (Exodus 20:13-15). These things are sins that have a destructive effect on society. But how the government should punish these behaviors might be a source of disagreement among Christians. So, let me put it simply: when you go to cast your ballot, you will inevitably be shaped in part by the black and white truths of God's word. But you will also have to make judgements on what issues you think are most important and how the government carries out its duty of keeping peace, promoting good, and hindering evil (Philippians 1:9-10, 1 Peter 2:13-14). That will lead our family of believers to fill out their ballots differently, and that's ok.

3) Is there one candidate that God prefers over the other?

The answer to this question is "yes," but probably not in the way you think. It is true that God places rulers into their places of authority (Romans 13:1-4). God is not hands-off when it comes to the goings-on of the world. And, yes, that means that God even installs tyrants and despots into their roles of authority. But he works through those leaders (and sometimes in spite of them) to accomplish his purposes in the world. Look at the many examples of bad rulers used for God's good purposes throughout Bible history. God has already chosen who will represent our country in the various offices we elect men and women to serve in. But here's the thing: God has not revealed the "who" to us. And this should give us peace, whether we cast a ballot or not and whether the candidates we support win or don't. Ultimately, God is on his throne, and though we use our Christian wisdom and Christian freedom to participate in our government and further our thoughts and ideas, he is the one in control.

As the noise around this election reaches a fever pitch, remember that your salvation won't be found in the ballot box. As it always is, it's found at the cross. Pray for the candidates who win the upcoming elections and are tasked with the important task of governance. Whether you gave them your vote or not, they are your elected leaders and God's representatives in your life. And for the peace and security they provide, give thanks to God that he has provided these securities through our government for generations. Pray that they continue still for generations.

Member Announcements

Do you have any announcements you would like shared with the congregation in next month's newsletter? Please talk to Pastor Crass.

November 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday															
<p>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 11:30am Fellowship Meal at Holy Cross</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>Pastor Gone for Conference</p>	<p>Pastor Gone for Conference 3:30pm Catechism Class</p>	<p>31</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>2</p>															
<p>3 8am Bible Class at St. Mark 8:45am Worship at St. Mark w/Communion 9:30am Sunday School at Holy Cross 10:30am Worship at Holy Cross w/Communion 11:30am Bible Class at Holy Cross</p>	<p>4 1pm Holy Cross Ladies' Aid</p>	<p>5 1pm Midweek Bible Class at St. Mark 6:30pm Midweek Bible Class at Holy Cross</p>	<p>6 3:30pm Catechism Class</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>9</p>															
<p>10 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 11:30am Bible Class at Holy Cross</p>	<p>11 6pm St. Mark Council Meeting</p>	<p>12 1pm Midweek Bible Class at St. Mark 6:30pm Midweek Bible Class at Holy Cross</p>	<p>13 3:30pm Catechism Class</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p>															
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<p>24 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 11:30am Bible Class at Holy Cross</p>	<p>25</p>	<p>26 1pm Midweek Bible Class at St. Mark 6:30pm Midweek Bible Class at Holy Cross</p>	<p>27 3:30pm Catechism Class 6:30pm Thanksgiving Worship at Holy Cross</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>															
<p>St. Mark Altar: Tammy Eichhorn & Christa Crass Hostess: Kathy Ludwig</p>		<p>Holy Cross</p>																			
		<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date</th> <th>Ushers</th> <th>Counters</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>11/3</td> <td>Team 3: Kedsch</td> <td>Team 3: Sean Trout & Jeff Hacker</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11/10</td> <td>Team 4: Tauscher</td> <td>Team 1: John Tauscher & Kristin Sivula</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11/17</td> <td>Team 5: Sivula</td> <td>Team 2: Heather Tauscher & Terri Sivula</td> </tr> <tr> <td>11/24</td> <td>Team 1: Trout/Karry</td> <td>Team 3: Sean Trout & Jeff Hacker</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>					Date	Ushers	Counters	11/3	Team 3: Kedsch	Team 3: Sean Trout & Jeff Hacker	11/10	Team 4: Tauscher	Team 1: John Tauscher & Kristin Sivula	11/17	Team 5: Sivula	Team 2: Heather Tauscher & Terri Sivula	11/24	Team 1: Trout/Karry	Team 3: Sean Trout & Jeff Hacker
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