



Holy Cross—St. Mark Newsletter April 2025



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Upcoming Events

- Apr. 7: HC Ladies' Aid - 1pm
- Apr. 14: SM Voters' Meeting - 6pm
- Apr. 17: Holy Thursday Worship at SM - 6:30pm
- Apr. 18: Good Friday Worship at HC - 6:30pm
- Apr. 20: Easter Sunday (See Calendar)
- Apr. 24: HC Voters' Meeting - 6:30pm

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Devotional Thoughts

By Pastor Crass

Our parable to focus on this month is from Luke 12:13-21. Jesus was teaching, and someone in the crowd came forward with the complaint that was front and center in his mind: “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.” It seems he was unhappy with the allotment of his father’s inheritance he had received. His brother had gotten more, and he had gotten less. This was an injustice, one he thought important enough to take to the great teacher. This Jesus would solve the problem. He would make sure the money was divided equally.

But Jesus refuses to entertain this argument. Why? Because he had not come to be a redistributor of earthly wealth. Instead, he tells the man demanding what he thinks should be his share if the inheritance from his brother, “Watch out and be on guard against all greed, because a man’s life is not measured by how many possessions he has.” You see, Jesus knows the man’s heart. He knows that he’s demanding money from his brother, not just to set things right, but because greed has taken hold of him.

But is Jesus right when he says that a man’s life is not measured by possessions? We all know who Jeff Bezos and Elon Musk are, mainly because of everything they own. The people here in our town who are most well-known sometimes are people with a lot of wealth. Jesus says life is not measured by a person’s stuff, but it seems like we do a lot of stuff-measuring in our world.

Of course, Jesus’ parables are meant to show how the kingdom of heaven works in many ways opposite the kingdoms of the world. In this parable, Jesus tells of a rich man whose fields were especially fertile. Because crop production was so high, he tore down his barns for bigger ones, barns that could hold years of food.

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WELS News

God's plan flourishes in Vietnam

It has been 14 years since Hmong church leaders in Vietnam invited WELS to train their pastors in the truth of the gospel. It has been seven years since the communist government in Vietnam invited WELS to build a theological education center in the capital city of Hanoi. From the very beginning, we knew that the Lord had opened a door to reach the more than two million Hmong people who live in Vietnam and the surrounding countries. We also knew that this door could close at any time. Our WELS World Missions team worked quickly to ensure WELS took full advantage of the time the Lord had provided. And God's work moved forward in ways we could have never predicted.

With the generosity of faithful donors, we built a sturdy building—complete with classrooms, sleeping quarters, and a kitchen—meant to house 60 students at a time and train pastors for Christ's service. Almost two years ago at the dedication, it stood ready, a beacon of hope. But government regulations have kept us from using it for now. The paperwork continues, and the delay has a story of its own. A local church body that once supported us began demanding practices contrary to Scripture—insisting we stop baptizing babies and allow non-Lutheran teachers to train our pastors. In a Martin Luther-esque stand, our partner church broke away, choosing faithfulness over compromise. Since then, they've lost government recognition, which has slowed the process for gaining occupancy of the theological education center. Yet we trust that access could come any day, because God's timing is not ours.

Some might see this as a delay, a plan stalled. But God has provided paths we never expected. Since we began, our sister church has grown to over 160,000 souls, hungry for the Word. Fifty-five pastors have been trained—not in that building but in rented spaces and internet classrooms where God gathered them to learn. Another 120 seminary-level students are studying now, their hearts set on preaching the gospel. Catechism classes, led by trained leaders, echo through every congregation in the rural training program that was developed by WELS missionaries and is now being supported by 12 fully trained Hmong pastors. This flock proudly calls themselves Lutheran, not because of a building but because of the truth they've learned through WELS training.

Take a pastoral student and his brother, for example. When they feared funding had faltered, they sold their family's water buffalo—a sacrifice that cut deep in their rural life—so one could join the biblical training they feared might pass them by. Today, that student is a pastor, shepherding souls, his brother's faith beside him. What earthly hurdles could stop God's Spirit at work?

These twists and turns and extra red tape have given us more time—time to train, time to grow, and time to stand firm without interference. We thought we needed that building. God knew we needed him—and him alone. In his hands, this work triumphs, brimming with hope for tomorrow.

In Christ,
Rev. Larry Schlomer
Administrator, WELS World Missions

Dual Parish Update

- Pastor Crass has retuned his call to Valrico, FL and will remain at Holy Cross and St. Mark.
- There are Easter postcards in your boxes to be used as invites to our upcoming Easter services. If you need more, look for the stack in the back of church.

St. Mark Council Update

- The church constitution is nearing completion. After a review from the district constitution committee, there are a few minor suggestions to improve wording. Prayerfully, this will be finalized and officially adopted at the April or July voters' meetings.

Holy Cross Council Update

- Two new ovens have been purchased and installed in the church kitchen.

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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Of course, then came retirement. You can only imagine the admiration of his neighbors. This man was one of the good ones. He had done everything right. He was wise beyond his years. But Jesus does not call the man wise. In the story, God comes to say to him, “You fool, this night your soul will be demanded from you. Now who will get what you have prepared?” This man had spent little time thinking about eternity. Instead, he had dedicated his life to being a winner, a person who could live the high life while his barns continued to pay the bills. But now eternity had come, and what good were all his goods? Who would get all his possessions after he died?

Jesus concludes: “That is how it will be for anyone who stores up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.” I think the phrase “you can’t take it with you” comes to mind. The man who asked Jesus to force his brother to share was focused on this life. He measured the world through wealth, so he was obsessed with gaining wealth. And so, the Master’s teachings so far had gone over his head. All this talk of heaven, but what this man really wanted was more of earth. It would cost him. If he continued down this path, someday his soul would be demanded from him, and all his possessions would be left behind. How would he be measured? No longer by the riches of life, but by the liability of death.

I hear too much talk about riches, even from Christians. I turn on the news, and I hear Christian pastors demanding that the wealth of the rich be taken from them and given to the poor. I see rich Christians treat those in need with disdain, as if their riches are proof that they have lived life the right way and the poor have lived the wrong way. And I even see poor Christians filled with jealousy toward the rich, demanding that they get a share of their brother’s inheritance. Our sinful nature measures status by wealth, so no wonder we too get wrapped up in this game of real life monopoly, erecting as many houses and hotels as we can. As Jesus’ parable shows, greed will lead us to spiritual destitution, a poverty with eternal consequences.

What will be your focus in life? How about the cross of Christ? How about the many opportunities you have to serve God with everything he’s made you and everything he’s given you? Because I promise you, a life focused on what the Savior has done for you will lead to a much fuller life in eternity, but it will also lead to a much fuller life on planet Earth. You’ll be out of the rat race. You won’t be a slave to greed. Instead, you’ll be one made richer than could be imagined on Mount Calvary, and no matter how much or how little the Lord entrusts to you here, it won’t matter, because your eyes will be on heaven. Amen.

Member Announcements

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

April 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 8am Bible Class at St. Mark 8:45am Worship at St. Mark 10:30am Worship at Holy Cross 11:30am Bible Class at Holy Cross	31 1pm Holy Cross Ladies' Aid	1 5:30pm Lenten Supper at St. Mark 6:30pm Lenten Worship at St. Mark	2 5:30pm Lenten Supper at St. Mark 6:30pm Lenten Worship at St. Mark	3 3:30pm Catechism Class	4	5
6 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	7 6pm St. Mark Voters' Meeting	8	9 5:30pm Lenten Supper at St. Mark 6:30pm Lenten Worship at St. Mark	10 3:30pm Catechism Class	11	12
13 8am Bible Class at Holy Cross 8:45am Worship at Holy Cross 9:45am Sunday School at Holy Cross 10:30am Worship at St. Mark 11:30am Bible Class at St. Mark	14	15	16 3:30pm Catechism Class	17 6:30pm Holy Thursday Worship at St. Mark w/Communion	18 6:30pm Good Friday Worship at Holy Cross	19
20 8:45am Easter Worship at Holy Cross 9:45 am Easter Brunch at Holy Cross 10:30am Easter Worship at St. Mark	21	22 1pm Midweek Bible Class at St. Mark 6:30pm Midweek Bible Class at Holy Cross	23 3:30pm Catechism Class	24 6:30pm Holy Cross Voters' Meeting	25	26
27 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	28	29 1pm Midweek Bible Class at St. Mark 6:30pm Midweek Bible Class at Holy Cross	30 3:30pm Catechism Class	1	2	3

St. Mark
 Altar: Kathy Ludwig & Kay Keefe
 Hostess: Kathy Ludwig

Holy Cross	
Date	Ushers
4/6	Team 6: Catechism Students
4/13	Team 1: Trout/Karry
4/20	Team 2: Kuntze
4/27	Team 3: Kedsch

Holy Cross	
Date	Counters
4/6	Team 1: Jerry Karry & Kristin Sivula
4/13	Team 2: Ken Hacker & Terri Sivula
4/20	Team 3: Sean Trout & Jeff Hacker
4/27	Team 4: Marie Anderson & Mary Sivula