



Holy Cross—St. Mark

Newsletter

December 2024



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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

- Dec 1: Advent by Candlelight - Trinity, Marinette - 2pm
- Dec. 8: HC Christmas Gift Breakfast - 9am
- Dec 8: Advent by Candlelight - St. Mark - 2pm
- Dec. 9: SM Council Meeting - 6pm
- Dec 11: Christmas Caroling - 6pm
- Dec. 19: HC Council Meeting - 6pm
- Dec. 24: Christmas Eve Worship:
SM - 4:30 pm
HC - 6:30 pm
- Dec. 25: Christmas Day joint worship at HC - 9:30am

Devotional Thoughts

By Pastor Crass

As we enter into the Advent season of the new church year, we come to a time of preparation. Our Sunday worship services in Advent focus on the coming of the Savior. We're called by Isaiah, John the Baptist, and the angels to ready ourselves for the Lord Jesus. This time of preparation doesn't just happen inside the four walls of our church though. The weeks leading up to Christmas are also spent in preparation. Traffic picks up around malls, beautiful and tidy kitchens descend into chaos and busyness, and people get ready to visit family or host family in their own homes.

It is good that we recognize something important is coming. It's important that we prepare our hearts and minds for the excitement of Christmas. It's wonderful that we express love and thankfulness to each other through gifts, baked goods, and hospitality. But might our preparations to make Christmas special steal the true joy of Christmas? Might they hide what is really so important about this holiday at times?

There is an old prayer we used to pray around Christmas time you might remember. It included the line, "Spare us from the frenzy of commercialism." It sounds clunky and strange, but the older I get, the more I understand it. The commercialization of Christmas seems to grow larger every year. The sound of Mariah Carey's voice serves as the starter pistol for the Christmas season. People fill up Walmart and Amazon carts with everything under the sun. Dad hangs more lights on the house than the local airport. Grandma sews the grandkids matching pajamas and bakes what feels like a million tins of cookies. Christmas songs blare over the radio, only interrupted by commercials offering huge sales from businesses. Videos arise of people running each other over for a Black Friday door buster sale. And by the time we get to Christmas, we're just glad we're done with all the busyness.

(continued on page 3)

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WELS News

2024 graduation at Asia Lutheran Seminary

In October, Asia Lutheran Seminary, Hong Kong, celebrated the graduation of 13 students. Nine of the students received certificates in either Greek or Hebrew, two received an associate of arts degree in theology, and two were awarded a diploma of Christian Studies. We praise and thank God for the opportunity to teach his Word to brothers and sisters around the world. Learn more about mission work in Asia at wels.net/asia.

WELS seniors gather to celebrate past blessings and reimagine future

WELS seniors gathered in Omaha, Neb., Oct. 14-17, for the annual Lutheran Convention for Seniors, sponsored by the Organization for WELS Lutheran Seniors (OWLS). Under the theme “40 Years of Service,” this special gathering celebrated four decades of conventions and seniors serving in God’s kingdom.

One of the highlights of the convention was a Zoom presentation and Q&A with Rev. Robert Weiss, the WELS European civilian chaplain, who is stationed in Spiesheim, Germany. Weiss serves WELS military members and citizens living abroad in Europe. Each year, OWLS provides substantial financial support to the European chaplaincy.

The 2025 Lutheran Convention for Seniors will be Oct. 14-17 at the Oshkosh Waterfront Hotel & Convention Center, Oshkosh, Wis. The convention is open to all seniors 55 and older in WELS and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Learn more about OWLS at wels.net/owls.

Dual Parish Update

- We will be Christmas caroling to our shut-ins on December 11th.
- For Christmas 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

- A request has been made for St. Mark to serve as an alternate polling location for Ingallston Township. The council is exploring what this would entail.
- The new St. Mark constitution and bylaws has been sent to the Northern Wisconsin District Nominating Committee for review and feedback. When this review is complete, it will be brought to the congregation at the next voters’ meeting for approval.

Holy Cross Council Update

- The council discussed the upcoming election of church council president. We have one candidate who is willing to serve.
- A discussion was had about expanding the usher teams. Please consider helping in this way if you are not already doing so.

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)
- 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)

This Advent season, don't get to the manger all worn out and joyless from "the frenzy of commercialism." Don't view the Savior's coming as the finish line, overworked by the laundry list of traditions that are meant to point us to the joy of Christ's coming, but instead sap away that joy with stress and worry. Your gifts are not Christmas. Your family gatherings are not Christmas. Jesus is Christmas. And when we forget that, we make all these other trappings of Christmas into idols, deceived into believing that these are what make Christmas special.

But why is it that Jesus makes Christmas so special? Why is it we say that he's "the reason for the season?" Why is Jesus coming so important? What did he come to do? Why is it so important to you, important enough to celebrate year after year?

May the Spirit of God bless you as you set your hearts on Christ this Advent season. May he bless you with time to celebrate with the people in your life but also give you time for quiet contemplation. May you, like Mary, treasure up all these things and ponder them in your heart, because what happened in Bethlehem some two thousand years ago has the biggest effect on your spiritual well-being.

Merry Christmas!

Member Announcements

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

December 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1</p> <p>8am Bible Class at St. Mark 8:45am Worship at St. Mark w/Communion 10:30am Worship at Holy Cross w/Communion 11:30am Bible Class at Holy Cross</p>	<p>2</p> <p>6pm St. Mark Council Meeting</p>	<p>3</p> <p>1pm Midweek Bible Class at St. Mark 6:30pm Midweek Bible Class at Holy Cross</p>	<p>4</p> <p>3:30pm Catechism Class</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>7</p>
<p>8</p> <p>8am Bible Class at St. Mark 8:45am Worship at St. Mark 9am Christmas Gift Breakfast at Holy Cross 9:30am Sunday School at Holy Cross 10:30am Worship at Holy Cross 11:30am Bible Class at Holy Cross 2:00 pm Advent by Candlelight at St. Mark</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>10</p> <p>1pm Midweek Bible Class at St. Mark 6:30pm Midweek Bible Class at Holy Cross</p>	<p>11</p> <p>3:30pm Catechism Class 6pm Christmas Caroling</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>15</p> <p>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>16</p>	<p>17</p> <p>1pm Midweek Bible Class at St. Mark 6:30pm Midweek Bible Class at Holy Cross</p>	<p>18</p> <p>3:30pm Catechism Class</p>	<p>19</p> <p>6pm Holy Cross Council Meeting</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p>
<p>22</p> <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 Bible Class at Holy Cross</p>	<p>23</p>	<p>24</p> <p>4:30pm Christmas Eve Worship at St. Mark 6:30pm Christmas Eve Worship at Holy Cross</p>	<p>25</p> <p>9:30am Joint Christmas Day Worship at Holy Cross</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29</p> <p>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</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>31</p> <p>1pm Midweek Bible Class at St. Mark 6:30pm Midweek Bible Class at Holy Cross</p>	<p>1</p> <p>3:30pm Catechism Class</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4</p>

St. Mark

Altar: 12/1 – Sally Theuerkauf, 12/8 – Lois Pfizer, 12/15 – Peggy Grille, 12/22 – Kay Keefer
Hostess: None

Date	Ushers	Counters
12/1	Team 2: Kuntze	Team 1: Jerry Karry & Kristin Sivula
12/8	Team 3: Kedsch	Team 2: Ken Hacker & Terri Sivula
12/15	Team 4: Sivula	Team 3: Sean Troutt & Jeff Hacker
12/22	Team 1: Troutt/Karry	Team 1: Jerry Karry & Kristin Sivula
12/29	Team 2: Kuntze	Team 2: Ken Hacker & Terri Sivula