HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH

December 2026 Newsletter



Special points of interest:

- Pastor's Ponderings
- 11/1 Congregational meeting minutes
- Pictoral Directory Update
- New Member Sunday December 13th.
- Council Members wanted
- Grace Place
- WOW event
- HS Youth Cookie Bake

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Pastor's Ponderings By Pastor Carl Billings



My last Newsletter article was about the emotions we feel when we face an end, whether that is a death in the family, the loss of a job, or a pastor leaving a church. It describes my own emotions as I prepare to conclude my time as your Intentional Interim. If you haven't read it or want a reminder, I encourage you to read the November Newsletter.

As we come to the end of our partnership, I will be making some specific recommendations to the Church council. In my final newsletter, I would like to make a couple of general recommendations to the church as a whole.

My first recommendation focuses on that word partnership. The relationship between a pastor and a congregation is just that — a partnership. The congregation does not work for the pastor, nor is the Pastor just an employee of the congregation. Rather, the pastor and congregation are in a ministry partnership, each with specific responsibilities. The pastor's primary responsibilities are to preach the gospel, administer the Sacraments, and teach the word. Many things are both the Pastor's and the congregation's joint responsibilities, including supporting parents in teaching their children the faith, visitation, stewardship of resources (another word for stewardship is management), and outreach to the community. Finally, the Pastor is the representative of the larger Church. I would encourage each of you to consider yourself as a partner in ministry with Pastor Main and the church as a whole

Speaking of the larger church, my second recommendation has to do with the Christian Church as a whole. One of the values of LCMC is that we are free in Christ. That means, for Holy Cross, you are free to manage your resources as you see fit. We do not have synodical or National Church offices which the congregation is required to support. We are not forced to support programs or advocacy groups that we might disagree with.

At the same time, mission and outreach becomes the congregation's responsibility. Again, you are not forced into any specific mission or ministry. You are free to choose.

I want to encourage Holy Cross to provide financial support to one or two mission organizations that help to spread the gospel. Some examples include Casa Por Christo, Feed My Starving Children, New Hope Mission Society, Global Christian Relief, and many others. Active support of missions and ministry outside the walls of the congregation leads to overall congregational health.

Finally, thank you for our time together. Holy Cross is a vibrant and dynamic congregation, and you have a bright future ahead of you.

Be Hope-filled, Stay Strong and God Bless,
Pastor Carl

Sunday School Melanie Hill

Sunday School: Growing Together

We are blessed to have good participation from our children in Sunday School! To help our teachers and families stay organized and connected, Leah Bartz has volunteered to serve as our **Sunday School coordinator**. She will be a consistent point person for lesson materials, teacher communication, and substitutions.

We are also working to make lesson information easier for teachers to access ahead of each Sunday. A new teaching and assistant sign-up covering January through the remainder of the year is expected to be available by the end of November.

And Christmas is already on the horizon! The children have begun practicing Christmas songs during Sunday School time as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ together. They will be part of Music Sunday December 20th during worship.

Thank you to everyone who teaches, assists, substitutes, and helps make Sunday School possible.

SS Teachers - December	
12/6	Leah Bartz
12/13	Jeannie J & Missy K
12/20	April Goodwin
12/27	NO SUNDAY SCHOOL

Confirmation Corner

Faith & Life: Supporting Our Confirmation Youth

Our confirmation program is off to a great start with **10 students, eight of whom are attending regularly**. Students are using Bible Project's *How to Read the Bible* materials, participating in Wednesday worship, completing sermon notes, and serving as acolytes on Communion Sundays.

One of our greatest needs right now is **confirmation mentors**. We are still looking for mentors for 3 students. Being a mentor is a wonderful opportunity to get to know one of our young people and support them as they grow in faith.

We are also exploring more ways to involve confirmation and older youth in activities throughout the year, including service opportunities, Christmas activities, and possible Bible study and discipleship opportunities.

Would you consider walking alongside one of our confirmation students this year?

Please contact the church office.

Congratulations Confirmation Class 2026
Sunday, October 25th, 2026



L-R: Connor Ohman, Carson Thayer, Asher Hoffman, Pastor Carl Billings, Xavier MosingGeorge Lorenz, Reeyce Jeske, Charlie Hoffman

Upcoming

Confirmation Night

12/2	Classroom Assistant Needed
12/9	Classroom Assistant Needed
12/16	Classroom Assistant Needed
12/23	No Confirmation Class
12/30	No Confirmation Class

Acolyte:

12/6	Charlotte Ploszay
12/20	Kennedy Ploszay
12/24	Noah Staiger
12/25	Deelia Hoffman



Front Row L-R: Roger Brathal, Dave Schroeder, Don Hogenson, Tom Berends, Alfie Schrank, Back Row L-R: Dan Brathal, Chuck Nelson, Duane Schreiber, Tom Aebly, Ned Hahn, Steve Booth, Doug Hill, Dan Groves, Gary Evenson

Veterans Appreciation Dinner

On Sunday, November 8, local veterans and their families enjoyed meal and our "Super Seniors" and confirmands led a meaningful program honoring our veterans. Steve Booth and his son, Steven Booth, demonstrated flag folding.

Thank you to Carol Teigen, Angela Jeske, and Mary Ann Ross for preparing the delicious meal. To all our Veterans, thank you for your service and sacrifice. We were grateful for the opportunity to honor you!

Council Meeting Minutes November 9th, 2026

Pastor Carl Billings - Chair April Goodwin.
Present at the meeting April, Joan, Anna, Barb, Melanie, Angela Via Zoom- Pastor Billings.

The Mission of Holy Cross is:
"Called by the Holy Spirit to come, to grow, to live as disciples of Jesus Christ."

Prepared from the council agenda and the transcribed meeting record.

Call to Order and Opening

The meeting was called to order. Pastor Carl Billings opened with a devotion from Philippians 2 focused on humility, unity, listening to one another, and keeping the good of the whole church in view, followed by prayer.
The agenda was amended to include Christmas Dream/Silent Messengers, Wanda's hours, the church directory, building rental, and painting the pastor's office. A motion was made and seconded to approve the amended agenda; the motion carried.
The October secretary's report was presented. A motion was made and seconded to approve the report; approval was indicated in the meeting discussion.

Pastor's Report

Pastor Carl reported several recent baptisms and another baptism planned for the coming Sunday.
He noted that his December report will include final recommendations as part of his intentional interim work.

Call Committee

- The congregation's vote regarding Pastor Myke was reported as approved, and Pastor Myke had been notified that the church would follow up regarding next steps.
- The background-check process must be completed before final action. The council discussed using the same provider used by area schools and potentially extending the service to volunteers who work with children.
- The pastoral contract remains under development and was reviewed later under New Business.

Faith and FUN Team Report

- Confirmation enrollment is 10 students, with 8 attending regularly. Additional mentors are still needed
- A Christmas cookie activity is planned for December
- Congregational care discussion included checking in with members who have not been present recently and coordinating poinsettia visits to shut-ins. The group may also combine poinsettia delivery with caroling at Glenhaven.
- The Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service is scheduled for November 24 at 6:30 p.m. at Holy Cross. Joan's Circle will handle fellowship afterward. Ushers are still needed.
- Christmas decorating, the Advent wreath, poinsettias, and the Christmas tree are being coordinated.
- The children's Christmas music will likely include one or two songs, along with bell choir selections on Dec 20th.
- Advent meal planning:
  - Council will cover December 2;
  - WOW is scheduled for December 9;
  - youth/families are being considered for December 16;
  - and the men's group was suggested for December 23.
- Advent worship is expected at 6:45 p.m., with meals beginning around 5:30 p.m.
- Advent candle lighting will continue with families participating.
- Leah Bartz will serve as the Sunday School Coordinator. She will help coordinate lesson plans and will support teachers as needed.
- Worship technology: working on continuing improvements and learning the system
- A future technology committee or review group was suggested to evaluate what is working and what needs adjustment after several weeks of use.

Property and Management

- The two sanctuary furnaces need replacement soon. Will need to obtain more than one estimate
- The group discussed obtaining professional guidance and estimates regarding the roof, including the possibility of consulting an engineer.
- Additional building needs include repair/cleanup of tile in the main entry and future sidewalk work due to uneven areas and potential liability concerns.
- Jim McCarthy is expected to check out the AV loft table/work area and build a riser and cabinet to stabilize the work surface, secure equipment and conceal wiring.

Resources / Financial Report

The month showed a deficit of approximately $4,095, attributed in part to lower giving.
Year-to-date finances were reported as essentially on budget after considering approximately $8,000 associated with the rental house/parsonage and roughly $15,000 for AV equipment.
A brief stewardship update is planned during worship, including information on where church funds are used and how members can use electronic giving, Simply Giving, and the QR code. A larger stewardship emphasis is planned for January.

Council Meeting Minutes continued on page 4

Council Meeting Minutes continued from page 3

New Business

- Budget meeting: The council agreed to use December 2 after the service as a working budget meeting date.
- Wanda's hours: discussed adding extra hours for upcoming responsibilities for a short time
- Pastor's office: The council discussed painting the office during the transition period before the new pastor begins
- Silent Messengers / Christmas Dream: Rather than adding another event to Holy Cross's already busy Advent schedule, the council favored encouraging members to attend an existing presentation, including the December 13 performance at Peace in Baldwin at 10:30am. They are considering hosting the group in a future year.

Pastoral Contract Revision

The contract will be presented to Pastor Myke for review and feedback before final signature. The agreement will be contingent on satisfactory findings from the background check. Notarization was also discussed.

Old Business

- Council leadership retreat: Jon Holtz is scheduled for January 16, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., for leadership training on serving as a church leader. Current and outgoing council members may attend.
- New council members: Three council positions need to be filled.

Council Business

- Serving coffee hour on December 6-full council will serve together.
- Christmas worship schedule discussed: one Christmas Eve service time TBD and one Christmas Day service at 9:00am.
- Pastor Carl's final Sunday is planned for December 20
- The next regular council meeting is Monday, December 14th 2026



Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully by Barb

"These minutes have not been approved by the council so not yet official minutes"

Please see page 5 for minutes of Special Congregational Meeting on 11/1/2026

Resources Financial Update

By Joan Bartz

As we find ourselves in November already our thoughts turn to end of year giving, The Resource Team at Holy Cross is reintroducing our QR code to encourage our members to give electronically. It helps the church council budget knowing we have consistency in our giving, and it is convenient and easy for our members to set up a one-time gift or ongoing weekly or monthly giving. There are less eyes on your gift too since it comes in directly and does not need to be part of the counting process which gives more anonymity to the giver. We hope you will consider this. Talk to Wanda or any Resource Team member for more info.

GIVING with VANCO

Our giving was down this month, but when we look at our budgeted amount and add in the $8,000 for the parsonage rental and the $15,000 for the sound system, we are within $10 of our adjusted budget. Thanks be to God for all of you. We ask you to prayerfully consider what God is asking you to give as we look to a new year ahead.

We wish you a blessed Thanksgiving season.



HOLY CROSS FINANCIAL UPDATE

As of October 31st, 2026

	Monthly	2026 YTD Actual	2025 YTD Actual	2026 YTD Budget
Regular Giving	$ 6,664	$ 94,969	$ 86,526	$ 95,830
Simply Giving	$ 1,898	$ 19,653	$ 20,154	$ 16,670
Misc Giving/Income	$ 147	$ 37,587	$ 32,090	$ 16,710
Total Income	$ 8,709	$ 152,209	$ 138,770	$ 129,210
Total Expenses	$ 12,804	$ 147,155	$ 96,328	$ 128,150
Net Income	$ (4,095)	$ 5,054	$ 42,442	

Unrestricted Checking	$ 45,703.34
Restricted Checking	$ 21,089.97
TOTAL CHECKING BALANCE	$ 66,793.31

Special Congregational Meeting Minutes

Date: November 1, 2026

Meeting Called to Order: 10:34 a.m.

Opening Prayer - The special congregational meeting began with an opening prayer at 10:34 a.m.

- Discussion Regarding Pastoral Call

Discussion was held regarding the congregational survey conducted following the worship service and the proposed call to Pastor Michael Main.

The congregation was informed that the annual salary offered to Pastor Main would be $80,000. Pastor Main expressed his intention to tithe 10% of his salary back to the church, which would amount to $8,000 annually if fulfilled.

Congregational members were given an opportunity to ask questions and express concerns before proceeding to a vote.

- Motion

"Holy Cross Lutheran Church extends a call to Pastor Michael Main to serve as the pastor at an annual salary of $80,000, effective January 1, 2027, subject to the pastor's acceptance of the call."

- Motion made by: Scott Teigen

  Seconded by: Dave Bartz

- Voting Results

A ballot vote was conducted with the following results:

Yes: 44 No: 7

Total ballots cast: 51

The motion carried with 44 votes in favor and 7 votes opposed. The call is subject to Pastor Main's acceptance.

Respectfully submitted,

Barb Eliason



Thank you – Thank you to Douglas Olson for your generous donation in honor of your grandparents Edward & Freida Busch, your gift is greatly appreciated.

Wanted: New Council Members for 2027



Holy Cross is looking for **three new Council members** to begin serving in 2027.

- Term: 2 years
- Maximum service: Up to 3 consecutive terms
- Experience: None required!

As we look ahead, we would especially welcome at least two men to consider serving, as our remaining Council members will all be women. However, we encourage anyone whom God is calling to prayerfully consider this opportunity.

We know everyone has busy lives, but we also know we choose what we make time for. Serving on the Church Council is a meaningful way to use your gifts to strengthen the ministry of Holy Cross. Council members are asked to maintain reasonably regular worship attendance during their term of service.

Why consider serving on the Church Council?

1. God is calling you to serve.
2. You want to grow in your faith and spiritual life.
3. You would like to know more about what is happening at Holy Cross.
4. You have ideas that could help our church grow and thrive.
5. You're looking for a new way to use your gifts in the coming year.
6. Serving on the Council will encourage you to be more involved in the life of the church.
7. You have concerns about the direction of the church and would like to be part of finding solutions rather than simply watching from the sidelines.

Please prayerfully consider whether God may be calling you to serve. If you have questions or would like to learn more about what serving on the Council involves, please speak with any current Council member.



December 20 will be an especially meaningful Sunday.

Plans are being developed for Christmas music and activities, including bells, children's music, and congregational singing.

It will also be Pastor Carl's final Sunday, and we hope to make the day a special celebration and farewell.



Church Directory Update

Sadly, we were not able to get enough photos taken for our last directory attempt.
We are planning on making our own Directory.

Over the next couple of months we will be collecting photos.
Please submit your photo along with an informaiton sheet to the church office by January 31, 2027.

Information sheets will be available at the church and emailed in the weekly update emails.



Sunday December 13, 2026
we will welcome new members during morning worship.
If anyone is interested in becoming a member of Holy Cross Lutheran Church, please reach out to Pastor Carl or contact the church office.

The Mitten Tree is Back!
Hand-made or purchased mittens, gloves, hats and scarves. all items will be donted to West Cap December 14th



S.A.C.K.™

Soap S.A.C.K.s
We are looking to donate soap SACKS to Joan's Guatemalla Trip in January.
If you would like to dontete supplies or would like to help make them please contact Nancy Wold

Grace Place: Small Donations Can Make a Difference

We're renewing our efforts to support Grace Place throughout the year. A donation collection area is planned at church for useful personal items and other needed supplies. Leftovers from church meals may also be shared with Grace Place when appropriate.

The congregation has supported Grace Place in the past, and those donations have been greatly appreciated. There was also discussion about having the confirmation students help serve a meal during an upcoming Grace Place opportunity, potentially in January.
Watch for information about specific items that are needed.



WOW Meeting Minutes
November 12, 2026 1:00 pm

Members Present: Jeannie Jeske, Nancy Stack, Nancy Wold, Joan Bartz, Karen Marlette, and April Goodwin.

- The group agreed to reimburse Cindy for the pork purchased for the Fall Supper.
- Donation from Fall Supper to WestCap in the amount of $350.00
- The Cookie Exchange and Christmas Stocking Stuffing event will be held on Saturday, December 6, at 2:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend.

1. Please bring three dozen Christmas cookies to exchange. (no bars please)
2. The filled Christmas stockings will be donated to West CAP.

- Small potted poinsettias were selected for members over the age of 80, as they are easier to deliver and display.
- Pastor Carl shared the idea of developing a Care Team to help with member visitations. The group discussed this possibility and its potential role in caring for our congregation.
- Treasurer's Report: The current bank balance is $3,146.00.

Meeting adjourned.

Sharing Christmas Joy Beyond Our Church Walls

Christmas gives us a wonderful opportunity not only to celebrate together, but also to remember members of our congregation and community who may not be able to join us regularly.

Faith & Life is exploring ways to combine **youth involvement, caroling, visits, and poinsettia deliveries** this Christmas season. Ideas include visiting shut-ins as well as residents in the Glenhaven/Grand Oaks area and involving confirmation students, recently confirmed youth, and other congregation members.

The details are still being worked out, but the goal is simple: **bring some Christmas joy and connection to people in our congregation and community.**

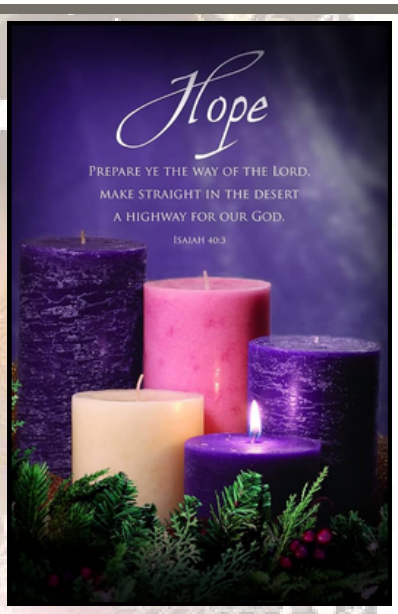
Watch for more information about how you and your family can participate.

Advent Season

Sundays in Advent

November 29th Worship at 9:00 am
December 6th Worship at 9:00 am
December 14th Worship at 9:00 am
December 20th Worship at 9:00 am
Muisic Sunday







Midweek Advent Meals and Worship

with Holden Evening Prayer

Wednesday December 2nd 5:30 pm
Meal provided by Church Council
4:30-6 Card Making
6:45 pm Worship

Wednesday, December 9th 5:30 pm
Meal provided by WOW - Hotdish Supper
5-6 Cookie decorating for kids 5th grade and under
6:45 pm Worship

Wednesday December 16th 5:30 pm
Meal provided by Youth and Families
6:45 pm Worship

Wednesday December 23th 5:30 pm
Meal provided by Men's Group
6:45 pm Worship

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

December 24th at 4:30 pm we will gather as a whole congregation by candlelight on the holiest night of the year. We will celebrate our dear Savior's birth with the singing of plenty of the most beloved Christmas Carols, with Holy Communion, and the lighting of individual candles for the singing of Silent Night.

December 25th at 9:00 am we will again be celebrating our Savior Jesus' birth as we sing Christmas Carols and gather to receive the gift of Holy Communion.



December Birthdays

12/1 Jordan Logghe
12/5 Darlene Peterson
Scott Teigen
12/6 Amara Booth
12/7 Brandon Brahmer
12/9 Nicole Goosen
12/10 Hanna Ludtke
Leslie Ludtke
Connor Tews
12/11 Jenna McCarthy
Jim Luepke
Dustin Rassbach
12/12 Barbara Hagen
Cindy Thompson
12/13 Sadie Bartz
12/14 Brayden Hill
Mary Moe
Joann Berends
Elizabeth Erickson
Eric Hoffman
12/18 Geraldine Luepke
12/19 Sylvia Proudlock
Deelia Hoffman
12/22 Abigail Mewis
Elek Anderson
12/23 Linda Klinger
Elsja Meiher
12/24 Julie Anderson
Aaron Brigham
12/26 Dan Groves
12/27 Cheryl Hoffman
David Schroeder
Jonathan Bartz
Jackson Logghe
Emily Tews
Joshua Wildenberg
12/29 Jacob Thompson
Corey Klatt
12/30 Lyla Drinkman
Trevor Larson
Anna Drinkman
12/31 Emma Goosen



Assisting with Worship

Month	Altar Guild	Ushers	3rd Sunday Fellowship	Sundays
December	Nancy, Jill, Vicki, Denise	Logghe's	John & Jill Logghe	4 Sundays
January	Jeanne, Angela & Lynn Jeske	Needed	Needed	5 Sundays

December 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2 4:30-6 Card Making 5:30-Advent Meal - Church Council Serving 5:55-Confimation Class 6:45 Mid-week Worship	3	4 9:30 am Friday Morning Coffee	5 7:30-4:30 Building Rental Marigold Quilt Class
6 * 9am – Worship Sunday School 10:10 – Fellowship 11:00 am HS Youth Cookie Bake 2:00 pm WOW Event Cookie Exchange & Stocking Stuffing	7 11:00am Bible Study at Havenwood 6:00pm Fath & Life/FUN	8 6:00 pm Threads of God's Love	9 * 5:00-6 Cookie Decorating 5:30-Advent Meal - WOW Serving Hotdish 5:55-Confimation Class 6:45 Mid-week Worship	10 8:00 am Quilting 10:30 am Glenhaven Worship 12:00 pm Potluck	11 9:30 am Friday Morning Coffee	12
13 9am – Worship Sunday School New Member Sunday 10:10 – Fellowship	14 11:00am Bible Study at Havenwood 6:00 pm Resources Meeting 7:00 pm Council Meeting	15	16 10:00 am WOW Bingo at Glenhaven 5:30-Advent Meal - Youth & Families Serving 5:55-Confimation Class 6:45 Mid-week Worship	17 11-12 Mobile food pantry truck in back parking lot NEWSLETTER ARTICLE DEADLINE	18 9:30 am Friday Morning Coffee	19
20 * 9am – Worship Sunday School Music Sunday 10:10 – Fellowship 4:00 pm 4H Sunny Side Shamrocks	21 11:00am Bible Study at Havenwood	22	23 * 5:30-Advent Meal - Men's Group Serving 5:55-Confimation Class 6:45 Mid-week Worship	24 * 4:30 pm Chirstmas Eve Worship	25 * 9:00 am Chirstmas Day Worship	26
27 9am – Worship No Sunday School 10:10 – Fellowship	28 11:00am Bible Study at Havenwood	29	30 No Midweek activities	31		* *Holy Communion*

Holy Cross Lutheran Church

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Click on QR Code above
for Holy Cross Facebook Page

December 2026 NEWSLETTER

NON PROFIT
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GLENWOOD CITY, WI 54013





HS Youth



Welcome
Abby and Joe Krizan
HS Youth Leaders

We are Abby and Joe Kirzan, we have 4 amazing kids and a small farm just outside of Downing. We are a pretty active sports, farming and hunting family. We are very excited to be a part of the Holy Cross Youth Group! We hope to have a monthly youth group nights, bible study, and fun events! If you ever have any questions, comments or ideas you would like to share feel free to reach out.

email - stoneabby20@gmail.com

Abby Cell # 715-931-9044

Joe Cell # 715-931-9945



First event:

HS Youth Christmas Cookie Baking
Sunday December 6th at 11:00 am
& Cookie Decorating
Wednesday December 9th 5-6:00 pm