



Our Mission... to seek, share, and serve our Savior

# Holy Crossings

DECEMBER 2023

## FROM THE PASTOR

***And this will be a sign unto you, you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger. - Luke 2:12***

Dear friends in Christ,

"Just follow the signs, you can't miss it." I've heard these famous words many times in our family travels throughout the midwest. The directions seemed so simple when they were first heard, but as we set out to find the signs which were to lead us to our destination, it soon would become obvious that these signs weren't as easy to interpret as we had supposed.

An example of this is the set of directions we were given on one of our trips: "Turn left at the tractor and turn right at the red barn" Now this may have been easy for someone familiar with these landmarks but not for someone new to the surroundings. As we progressed on, we passed tractors and red barns at almost every farm. But at which one were we supposed to turn?!? Only after stopping to inquire about these signs did we learn that the tractor was a tractor on a yellow warning sign which cautioned traffic to beware of slow tractor traffic on that part of the highway. And the barn...it wasn't a red barn on a farm but was a restaurant called "The Red Barn!" Now, when we travel these roads we can chuckle about our experience but we also know that if someone had not enlightened us about what these signs were, we would probably have driven right past the real signs without even giving them a second thought.

This Advent season, we also will travel on the road towards our destination in Bethlehem. God has graciously given directions to us in preparation and signs have been provided for us to follow during our journey. The journey won't always be pleasant because the Advent trek will call us to get in touch with the coldness and darkness of the sin in our lives - the things we do and should not, the things we do not and should. Advent will cause us to journey into the experience of our world's darkness - not only the longer nights but also the spiritual darkness, the


evil, the corruption and the injustice that surrounds us. While acknowledging our darkness, our hearts will be turned in preparation for the coming of our Lord. We will come to recognize the signs which our Lord has placed along this road for our behalf. Their significance and purpose will be revealed through the Word during the four Advent Sunday services.

Our signs this year will be the signs found in the Old Testament prophecies. I pray that the meaning of these signs will touch your lives in ways that will comfort the anxieties and fears which arise when we think we're on this road of life alone. For these are the signs which will direct us to the hill country of Bethlehem where "the hopes and fears of all the years" have been met. Our journey will lead us to the manger of our Lord but it will also lead us to Jerusalem, six miles to the north, to the hill of Calvary, and to the empty tomb near the foot of this hill. It will lead us to the Mount of Olives where our Lord ascended into heaven.

During the Advent and Christmas seasons, we will journey seeking the signs which our Lord has placed along the road which give us the assurance of His guiding presence in our lives. In this we have a special incentive for being appreciative of God's love and for giving thanks. For our Heavenly Father has given us the gift which the signs reveal. The gift of His one and only Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who the Father sent into this world, born of the virgin Mary and born under the law "to redeem those under the law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. Come, journey with us to Bethlehem and see this thing which has come to pass.

Give "Thanks to God for His indescribable gift."

Sincerely in Christ!



Dinah Gilberts .....	December 4
Ben Huston .....	December 7
Mui Cheng .....	December 9
Earl Drangstveit .....	December 9
Karly Oak .....	December 19
Jason Kruse .....	December 20
Lois Helms .....	December 25
Carol Albrecht .....	December 26
Bo Brunner .....	December 28
Nivedita Fulbert .....	December 30

### PRAYER REQUESTS



If you have a prayer request on Sunday, please fill out the form in the pew and put it in the offering plate. Pastor will include them in Prayer of the Church during the service. You can also email weekly prayer requests, and any prayers that should go out to the whole congregation, to [megan@holycross-pl.org](mailto:megan@holycross-pl.org).

### CHURCH COUNCIL

The next Church Council meeting will be **Monday night, December 11th, at 7:00 pm.** All members of the boards are invited and encouraged to attend these meetings.



### NEWSLETTER REMINDER!

Reminder to get you newsletter additions in to Megan by the 15th of each month. **We'd love to have some new ideas, articles, anything you find relevant to add to the Newsletter!**

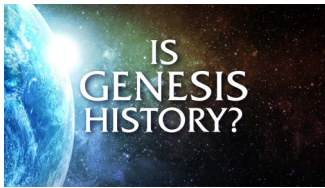


### ELECTION JUDGES NEEDED

This holiday season, consider signing up to be an election judge. The paid position requires no experience, simply a desire to help your community during the 2024 Election. Students 16 and 17 years-old can be election judge trainees too. Voting starts early so judges are needed today. For more information visit <https://www.priorlakemn.gov/government/elections/election-judges>



### ADULT BIBLE STUDY



"Is Genesis History" attempts to deal with that one simple question: Is the biblical account of creation and flood meant to be understood as history? And does the world give evidence of recent creation and catastrophic flood? Host Del Tackett tackles these questions head-on and does so in a compelling way."

## THE HEART OF STEWARDSHIP

***"And it came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus..."*** is the way Luke's account of the Christmas story begins in chapter two (KJV). That decree caused Mary and Joseph to travel to Bethlehem, the city of David, where Jesus was born according to ancient prophecy. God's timing is perfect as He carries out His will. Galatians 4:4-5 reads, ***"But when the time had fully come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons."*** (NIV)

God's promises are true and find their "amen" in Jesus. Throughout the Old Testament God inspired His prophets to write down many promises of a Savior. The faithful people of God believed His promises and were saved by that faith even though they had not seen the Savior with their own eyes. They lived before Christmas and we live after Christmas. We also have not seen Jesus with our own eyes and yet, by the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit, we believe that on that first Christmas Christ took on Himself our human form, kept the law perfectly for us, preached the good news of salvation, performed countless miracles and then offered Himself up as the precious Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world, ours included!

Christmas is a very joyous occasion as we celebrate our Lord's first coming into the world but we also know that the shadow of the cross already hovered over the manger where the baby Jesus was laid. He was born to die in our place so that the door to heaven will be open to us and all who believe in Him as our only true Lord and Savior.

As Christian stewards we live in the light of the Gospel and freely and joyfully manage all of life and life's resources for God's purposes. God offered up His best for us and in response we strive to offer our best to Him. During this joyful Christmas season we have many opportunities to show our love for God by showing love to all the neighbors He has placed around us, especially those who have special needs of body, soul and spirit. May God help us to use our gifts of time, talents, skills and financial resources to His glory and the welfare of those around us. May He especially help us to be like the shepherds and spread the good news of salvation in Christ alone!

## HAPPENINGS

Please submit all articles for the Happenings by **Wednesdays at 10 am!** We also need some new and fresh content for the Happenings, so if you have any great ideas, please send them over to [megan@holycross-pl.org](mailto:megan@holycross-pl.org).

## CHRISTMAS BAKE SALE



Text There will be a bake sale during the fellowship hour **Sunday, December 10** hosted by the Women's Ministry group. If you love

baking, please make extra and donate a dozen or two of cookies or other Christmas treats for the sale. The bake sale offers a chance to load up on Christmas goodies and helps support missions! Contact Joy Anderson at 612-423-1204 if you have questions. Bakers and buyers wanted.



Join us **Sunday, December 10th**, during our worship service, for our Christmas Program, "The Organ is Kaput"! Not to be confused with our organ, the storyline is set in 1818. Written by Bonnie Nowak, we meet an adorable "family" that provides drama to the question, what really happened to the organ? **Practice will take place at church on Saturday, December 2 and 9, 10:00 am - noon.** Sheri Brunner will be directing the play.

# 2 MINUTE MULTIPLIER

FIVE TWO

A WEEKDAY 2-MINUTE DEVOTION THAT HELPS YOU SEE JESUS AT WORK IN YOUR WORLD

## Carry

The hike around the property was on the books for weeks. Saturday's sunshine allowed us to leave rain gear in the house. The property consists of just over 4 acres. Plenty of deer trails. Us involved me and two grandsons. 6 & 3. 70 years between the three of us.

Prep included explaining cacti and how to avoid them. Why you shouldn't pick up big rocks or move limbs (snakes). What to do when I say, "Stop!"

The speech so motivating that as we stepped off the walkway into the high grass, the 3-year-old announced, "I'd rather stay home." Visions of prickly pear that attack you and snakes that bite you as you push through grasses taller than you created more fear than excitement.

We overcame the concern by conducting a hybrid hike: part carry, part walking. A combo of "Hold me" and "I want to go first." Caution isn't meant to erode confidence. Or destroy courage.

Not all fear is bad. Fearing God provides a cornerstone for wisdom. Grasping your place in relation to The Creator's simply makes good sense.

Grasses higher than our heads covering trails previously unhiked cause us to hang back. Never leave home. Fail to experience new situations and beautiful scenery.

When I knelt down to encourage the youngest to not turn back, I realized just how high the grasses were. Just how scary the view appeared.

God sending Jesus to hike the world with us means God gets our perspective. He's seen the world through our eyes. He knows how to walk sideways through cactus paths. How to use a long stick to move a log that's in the way.

How tall grasses can't hurt you. They just appear scary when you're short. Nothing we face is foreign to Jesus. Nothing we face is beyond His rule.

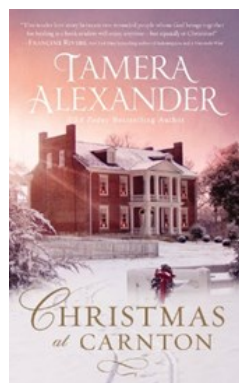
And when you're really not sure about the journey you're on? About if you can go forward or not? He'll carry you until you're ready to walk on your own.

*Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you. - Isaiah 46.4*

**Rev. Bill Woolsey**  
President and Founder  
FiveTwo Network

Sign up to receive the *2 Minute Multiplier* emailed to you! [www.fivetwo.com/2mm](http://www.fivetwo.com/2mm)

## BIBLE BOOKENDERS



Our next Bible Bookenders meeting will be **Tuesday, January 23, at 7:00 pm**. Our selection is *Christmas at Carnton* by Tamera Alexander

Invite your friends to join us, all are welcome, men, women and teenagers. Questions? Ask Bonnie Nowak, Patricia Harvey or Michele Lein.

## CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Gather your friends and family for a festive evening of music and celebration with the



Steven C. Anderson Christmas Concert at the Cathedral of Saint Paul! Multi-platinum recording artist and composer, Steven C, will perform his 7th annual Christmas Together concert. Shows take place at 7:00 pm **December 7 and 8th**. Anyone wanting to carpool can contact Dave and Carol Albrecht. To purchase tickets, visit <https://bit.ly/47o4h6p>

## WINDJAMMERS CONCERT

The local adult band (Windjammers) has a Christmas concert scheduled for **Sunday, December 10th at 2:30 pm**. It will be held at the Prior Lake High School auditorium. They hold 2 concerts a year, around Christmas time and gain around the 4th of July. Our Cory Einarson is in the tuba section, "providing the glue that holds it all together." They are very good! Don't forget to mark your calendar!



## TIME OF GRACE



Straight talk about God's Word and real hope for this life. A strong gospel message delivered in an informal Bible study style.

Subscribe to **Time of Grace**

([www.timeofgrace.org](http://www.timeofgrace.org)) resources to be delivered to your email inbox daily. You will receive daily devotion emails with "Grace Moments" written devotions and "Grace Talks" video devotions.

**Pastor Mike Novotny** • The Core, Appleton, WI • KARE (NBC 11) 10:30 am

## MASTER GREETER

### TIP #6 — A MASTER GREETER LOVES PEOPLE



There is a love to meet people and make them feel important. It is the desire to put a smile on their face; the desire to help them have a good

experience they will remember and want to return to. It is the desire to answer their questions, to make them feel comfortable and at home. It comes from a desire to share the love that Jesus has put in their heart.

## MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY

### MEMBER DIRECTORY



The membership directory has been updated! You can pick up a new copy in the back of the church. If your contact information is incorrect or needs updating, please let Megan know.

## MAIN STREET LIVING



Main Street Living airs each Sunday at 9 am on WFTC Channel 29/9-2 with an episode of This Is the Life. Visit [www.mainstreetliving.com/twincities](http://www.mainstreetliving.com/twincities) for more information.

## WORSHIP FOR SHUT-INS



**Worship For Shut-Ins** is a 30 min television service that is distinctly Lutheran. It is a traditional weekly service that includes the assigned readings for the day, the Apostles' Creed, Lord's Prayer, sermon, and traditional hymns sung by choirs. The messages, shared by Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod pastors, are designed for individuals who do not go to church because they are not able or choose not. You can view this program on DIRECTV channel 377 at 10:30 am, or you can go to their website at [www.worshipforshutins.org](http://www.worshipforshutins.org).

## LCMS STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY - DECEMBER 2023

### The Measure of Our Generosity

If you open up the Small Catechism, you'll find a shortened version of the Third Commandment: "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy." But if you look up the list of the Ten Commandments in Exodus, you'll find the full version:

Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. (Ex. 20:8-11)

Why did Luther shorten this commandment for the Small Catechism? Was it so that the kids wouldn't have so much to memorize? No, it was because Luther knew that all the details of the Third Commandment were part of the "shadow" of the Old Testament (Col. 2:16). Or as St. Paul puts it, there is "letter" in the Old Testament law and "spirit" (2 Cor. 3:6). The details of not working on Saturday were fulfilled by Christ. That part of the Sabbath regulation no longer applies. But the spirit of the law does remain: We need to dedicate sufficient time each week to hearing God's Word and giving it honor and respect. Or as Luther sums it up in

the Small Catechism's explanation to the Third Commandment: "We should fear and love God so that we do not despise preaching and His Word but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it."

The same sort of analysis applies to our giving. In the Old Testament, God commanded the Israelites to give a tenth of their income to the Levites so that those men could dedicate their lives to serving in God's house, teaching the people, conducting worship, etc. In the New Testament, there is a rigid requirement listed about handing in your tax forms to church to make sure you've given enough. But the mandate to have a full-time ministry, which is the spirit of that law concerning tithing to the Levites, is right there in 1 Corinthians 9:14: "The Lord has ordained that those who preach the Gospel should make their living from the Gospel."

The New Testament church's job is significantly larger than the job of Old Testament Israel. We are commanded to preach the Gospel to all nations. There was only the temple to maintain in the Old Testament, but we have churches, schools, universities and seminaries, plus missionaries everywhere. So you tell me: Can we really undertake the work of the ministry if our giving doesn't even measure up to Old Testament levels of generosity?

**LCMS Stewardship Ministry**  
[lcms.org/stewardship](https://lcms.org/stewardship)

### DECEMBER COFFEE SERVERS



**December 3** – Randy & Nancy Baldwin  
**December 10** – Steve & Dorene Oak  
**December 17** – Doug & Shari Schulze  
**December 24** – Charlie & Donna Vig  
**December 31** – Chris & Karen Weber

If you are not able to serve on your assigned day, please find an alternate to fill in, and make the notation on the serving list on the bulletin board. Thanks!

### TUESDAY ADULT BIBLE STUDY

**Join us every Tuesday**  
**(Women are welcome!)**  
**from 8-9:00 am** for  
 Community Light Hope  
 Revealed – Revelation  
 Part I (Chapters 1-10).  
 Community Light School



of Discipleship is an online Bible study designed to help each of us to grow as disciples to make disciples. These free series equip participants with the resources to go and make disciples wherever God has planted them. Community Light School of Discipleship is a ministry of Cross View Lutheran Church, Edina, MN, in partnership with Concordia University, St. Paul and the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod - Minnesota South District.

## DECEMBER

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

In Advent we wait in expectation for the coming of our Lord as we are reminded that our Christian life is actively in a tension between living in what some theologians call the time of the "Now" and the "Not Yet" where Christ's resurrection victory is already realized **NOW** and the time of its cosmic fulfillment in the coming of the promised Kingdom is yet to be. May you actively ponder the meaning of it all for your life as we journey slowly yet confidently toward Bethlehem and our heavenly home.

**DECEMBER 3 – Advent 1** "Now! – Expectation"  
"Actively Waiting" **Mark 13:33-37**

**DECEMBER 6 – Advent Midweek 1**  
"Look Up! The Star Of Peace Draws Near"  
**Matthew 2:1–2, 9-10**

**DECEMBER 10 – Advent 2** "Now! – Preparation"  
"Actively Watching" **Mark 1:1-8**

**DECEMBER 13 – Advent Midweek 2**  
"Peace to All, Near and Far" **Ephesians 2:12-18**

**DECEMBER 17 – Advent 3** "Now! – Declaring"  
"Actively Witnessing" **John 1:6-8,19-28**

**DECEMBER 20 – Advent Midweek 3**  
"Our Peace Rests on Him Alone" **Isaiah 9:6**

**DECEMBER 24 – Advent 4** "Now! – Revelation"  
"Actively Wondering" **Luke 1:26-38**

**DECEMBER 24 – Christmas Eve** "Now! – Adoring"  
"Actively Worshipping" **Luke 2:1-20**

**DECEMBER 25 – Christmas Day** "Now! – Celebrating"  
"Actively Wassailing" **John 1:1-14**

**DECEMBER 31 – Christmas 1** "Now! – Living"  
"Actively Walking" **Luke 2:22-40**

## THE LUTHERAN HOUR



**The Lutheran Hour** can be heard each Sunday on WCCO (830 AM) at 6:05 am. And it can be streamed online too, [www.lhm.org](http://www.lhm.org). Check-out LHM's daily devotions too.

**December 3**  
"Before They Call"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler  
SOS and Mayday are distress signals that cry out for rescue. So is "Lord, have mercy!" (Isaiah 64:4)

**December 10**  
"A-T Walker"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler  
A wilderness can be scary, but if someone is with you who knows the way out, you're not really lost. (Isaiah 40:3)

**December 17**  
"Life After Landing"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler  
What happens when a passenger suddenly has to be the pilot? Dr. Michael Zeigler talks about the power of words to save. (Isaiah 61:1-2)

**December 24**  
"Community and Conversation"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Dr. Michael Zeigler  
(John 1:1)

**December 31**  
"Of Entrances and Exits"

Guest Speaker: Rev. Dr. John Nunes (Luke 2:27-28)

## FUNERAL PLANNING

Did you know Holy Cross has a form to help you with your funeral planning or that of a loved one? It is available to you to fill out and it will be kept on file at Holy Cross. Alleviate the stress of an already stressful time and plan your service in advance. See Megan for a form.



## The Prophecy

- Day 1: Isaiah 9:2-7
- Day 2: Isaiah 11:1-5
- Day 3: Isaiah 7:10-14
- Day 4: Micah 5:1-5
- Day 5: 2 Samuel 7:12-16

## The Messiah is Born

- Day 6: Luke 1:26-33
- Day 7: Luke 1:34-38
- Day 8: Luke 1:46-55
- Day 9: Matthew 1:18-25
- Day 10: Luke 2:1-7
- Day 11: Luke 2:8-12
- Day 12: Luke 2:13-20
- Day 13: Matthew 1:1-17

## The Gift of Salvation

- Day 14: Romans 6:20-23
- Day 15: Galatians 4:1-7
- Day 16: 1 Timothy 1:15-17
- Day 17: Titus 3:3-7
- Day 18: Philippians 2:6-8

## The Messiah Will Return

- Day 19: John 14:1-6
- Day 20: Daniel 7:13-14
- Day 21: Revelation 1:4-7
- Day 22: Revelation 3:20-22
- Day 23: Revelation 22:12-13
- Day 24: Revelation 22:16-17
- Day 25: Revelation 22:20

# A Season of Advent Reading Plan



Bible Study Printables



# December 2023



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
<b>1st Sunday in Advent</b> 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Bible Study 10:15 am Sunday School	4 Church Council Meeting 7:00 pm	5 Adult Bible Study Confirmation Elder's Meeting 8:00 am 4:00 pm 7:00 pm	6 Happenings Articles Due Advent Worship 10:00 am 7:00 pm	7 Choir Practice 7:00 pm	1 10:00 am Christmas Program 2	2 10:00 am Christmas Program Practice
<b>2nd Sunday in Advent</b> 9:00 am Worship & Christmas Program 10:15 am Bible Study 10:15 am Sunday School <b>Christmas Bake Sale</b>	11 Church Council Meeting 7:00 pm	12 Adult Bible Study Confirmation 8:00 am 4:00 pm	13 Happenings Articles Due Advent Worship 10:00 am 7:00 pm	14 Choir Practice 7:00 pm	15 10:00 am Christmas Program Practice	16 10:00 am Christmas Program Practice
<b>3rd Sunday in Advent</b> 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Bible Study 10:15 am Sunday School	18 Christmas Worship 9:00 am 	19 Adult Bible Study Confirmation 8:00 am 4:00 pm	20 Happenings Articles Due Advent Worship 10:00 am 7:00 pm	21 Choir Practice 7:00 pm	22 10:00 am Christmas Program Practice	23 10:00 am Christmas Program Practice
<b>4th Sunday in Advent</b> 9:00 am Worship 5:00 pm Worship	24 Christmas Worship 9:00 am 5:00 pm 	26 Adult Bible Study Confirmation 8:00 am 4:00 pm	27 Happenings Articles Due 10:00 am	28 Choir Practice 7:00 pm	29 10:00 am Christmas Program Practice	30 10:00 am Christmas Program Practice
<b>1st Sunday after Christmas</b> 9:00 am Worship 10:15 am Bible Study	31 Christmas 9:00 am 10:15 am					