

ANNUAL REPORT 2025



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America



A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP YEHIEL CURRY

Dear friends in Christ,

As Lutherans, we are set free to love our neighbors and seek justice. In Colossians 2, we read: "As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving" (6-7).

I am abounding in thankfulness for you, church. You are an integral part of this mission as we envision a world experiencing the difference God's grace and love in Christ make for all people and creation. The ministries of congregations including yours, our synods and the ELCA churchwide organization are all working together today and every day so more people may know the way of Jesus and discover community, justice and love. From providing food to people experiencing hunger, to helping train the next generation of leaders that will lead this church, your support is at work here at home and around the world.

Your generosity to each of the three expressions of the church — your congregation, your synod and the churchwide organization — has made it possible for us to do this work

together. Your financial resources, your time volunteering and accompanying others, and your voices are so valued.

As we look ahead to the coming year, I encourage you to continue to walk in Christ, remembering you are rooted and established in faith, and free to love and serve your neighbors. Thank you, church, for the ways you connect with and support our siblings across the ELCA and in our communities.

In Christ,



The Rev. Yehiel Curry
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America

“As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, continue to walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.”

—Colossians 2:6-7

AGENDA
ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING
HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH
February 1, 2026

Call to Order

Opening Devotion

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Ballots Distributed for Voting (<i>See Candidates, pages 28-29</i>)	
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Elections (Nominating Committee Report)	28-29
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- Council Members (2 to be elected)
- Mission Endowment Fund Team Members
(2 to be elected)

Election Results Announced

Closing Prayer and Adjournment

HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Staff, Officers, Council, and Chairs of Committees and Teams

STAFF		
Pastor		Matthew Helfrich (since August)
Office Manager		Carrie Curnutte
Social Media & AV Technical Director		Open
Traditional Worship Music Director		John J. Hamill III
Contemporary Worship Music Director		Dave Reinking
OFFICERS		
President		Bob Morin
Vice-President		Philip Paul
Financial Secretary		Clarence Jentes
Treasurer		Mary Bailey
Recording Secretary		Penny Rudolph
EXECUTIVE TEAM		
Bob Morin	Philip Paul	Donovan Lucas
CHURCH COUNCIL		
Kevin Aleshire	Courtney Andrews	Donovan Lucas
Moira McCracken	Bob Morin	Philip Paul
David Winkler		
COMMITTEES and TEAMS		
Care and Prayer		Bud Niebling
Church Property		Steve Kuhlman
Finance		David Ristau
Garden		Darlene Kuhlman
Social Activities		Kelly Caligiuri
Vision Team		Madde Hanson
Youth		Open

Minutes of the Annual Congregational Meeting
Holy Cross Lutheran Church
February 2, 2025

CALL TO ORDER – Council President David Winkler called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m. Members completed signing in the attendance forms.

OPENING DEVOTION – Pastor Kraus opened the meeting by encouraging all present to join in reading the published liturgy from the ELCA. Pastor shared a prayer from St. Francis of Assisi.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA – Dave asked if any changes were needed to the agenda printed in the annual report. None were suggested. It was moved, seconded and all agreed to adopt the agenda.

VOTING FOR COUNCIL AND MEF CANDIDATES

Dave directed members to vote for no more than two candidates in each category. Ballots were distributed. Pat Goertzen and Kari Brangan collected and counted ballots.

STAFF, COUNCIL and TEAM and COMMITTEE CHAIRS

The following Council members are completing their terms: Kari Brangan and Kelly Caligiuri. Kelly is running for re-election. Dave thanked Kari for her valuable service for the past six years. Dave also thanked Pat Goertzen for his willingness to complete Dennis Hawley's term on the Mission Endowment Fund team.

Mary Bailey was thanked for her service as our new treasurer. Dave thanked Clarence Jentes for his long-term service as our financial secretary.

Dave thanked Penny Rudolph for serving as recording secretary for the past 7 years.

He expressed appreciation to all heads of teams and committees and to all Council members.

Dave also thanked Pastor, Carrie, Court, Dave, and Jack for all they do at Holy Cross each week.

MINUTES OF THE 2024 ANNUAL MEETING – Dave asked that all present review the minutes from the 2024 Annual Meeting (pages 5-10) and voice any corrections needed. No corrections were requested. Dave then asked for a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was made and seconded. All present approved the minutes as included in the annual report. No nays were expressed.

REPORT OF THE PASTOR/PASTORAL ACTS

Pastor referred us to his annual report which included his thoughts about the first few months he has shared with us at Holy Cross. Pastor believes we are an amazing congregation. Attendance at this annual meeting far surpasses the number of members who attend annual meetings in most churches.

He doesn't think we will have problems finding good pastoral candidates.

Our worship services are superb, largely owing to the musical direction provided by Dave and Jack.

Pastor commended our online presence, crediting Court's talents and her tenacity in sharing news of our services and engagement with the community.

The transition team did an excellent job crafting the Ministry Site Profile that the Bishop's office will review before making it available to pastoral candidates searching for a new church position. Lots of work went into this report. The transition team did an amazing job. The search will run well.

Pastor Kraus appreciates our care, love and support. This has been a good place for him to have returned following his retirement from full-time ministry in late March. He is happy to be among us and is thankful for us. Dave echoed our appreciation for Pastor's service here.

HOLY CROSS ATTENDANCE TRENDS

Next, Dave referred to page 14 of the annual report to highlight several points on the attendance chart. Our online attendance is strong. More people worship in person during specific times of the year. (Please refer to Court Templeton's report on pages 18 to 20 for specific details.)

RECOMMENDED 2025 BUDGET – Referring to page 15 of the 2024 Annual Report, Treasurer Mary Bailey began discussion of the 2025 budget. She also referenced page 17 for the Balance Sheet Summary.

Mary commended Greg for his past many years of service and his tireless help with her training.

Mary thanked Clarence and Dave Ristau for their dedication too.

Mary mentioned today's Post Dispatch article about churches facing lots of building needs/expenses. At Holy Cross we have 10 air conditioners, 10 furnaces, two large roofs, and multiple bathrooms that all need attention. One trend is for churches to combine to lessen expenses related to building maintenance.

The total budget for 2025 has been cut by \$3,000. The budget may appear like we have cut staff salaries, but that is not the case. Staff members will receive pay increases. The lower figure shown for staff salaries reflects the fact that we currently employ an interim pastor who works $\frac{3}{4}$ time; we are not paying an established pastor a full-time salary.

This year we are increasing the property budget by \$6,000 because last year we exceeded our projected expenditures. This overrun occurred because of several large, unexpected repairs. Additionally, the cost of utilities and insurance have increased, factors that are out of our control. We are here to serve others so we sure hope not to spend all of our money on building repairs this year.

INCOME

Income for the new year is projected as \$324,275. When creating the budget, income is estimated from pledge cards and historical information.

We hope to receive additional income to avoid a potential net loss of \$21,000 this year.

The IRS still owes us money from the retention income credit we received since we didn't let go of employees during the Covid pandemic. We did have to pay Paychex \$6,300 to go after that money. We are still anticipating receiving an additional \$9,400.

\$8,000 for building use is built into the budget; it's lower than previous years because NewSong no longer uses our building and we have lost their donation.

GENERAL FUND (our checking account)

\$6,400 has been received already for the new building fund we have established and promoted.

Key Points in the Proposed 2025 Budget:

YEAR-END GENERAL FUND HISTORY

2024 Actual and 2025 Proposed Income, Expenses, and Operating Fund Balances

Greg worked with the Finance Committee to create the 2025 budget (see page 16 of the report).

- Total budgeted expenses: \$363,044
- Total budgeted income: \$341,275
- Budget gap: \$ 21,769

Dave Winkler called for approval of the budget that Council has recommended. A motion was made, it was seconded and all present approved. No opposition was expressed.

REPORTS OF THE STAFF, COUNCIL, TEAMS, AND COMMITTEES

Dave asked for a motion to approve all committee reports and Pastor's report. It was moved, it was seconded, and all in attendance approved all reports as published.

Philip, on behalf of the vision team, invited all to join them. They are a mighty, but small group. Dave said they were wonderful to help push us to be out in the community – to be who we are.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Dave Winkler highlighted his executive team report. The most notable item in the report was Pastor Janice's retirement. Dave thanked her for the years she gave us and he thanked Pastor Kraus for stepping in. We made waves with the community. Scouts helped with some projects. One annual special initiative, Feed the Need, as well as charitable activities related to the Parkway schools are strong. He thanked everyone for the time we spent helping the community.

Dave also acknowledged the support he received from fellow executive team members, Bob and Kevin.

ROLL WAS TAKEN. Penny verified that the number of persons attending the meeting matched the number of ballots submitted (57 persons attended and 57 persons voted).

ELECTION OF CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS AND MISSION ENDOWMENT FUND TEAM

Nominating Committee Report:

Church Council Members (2 to be elected) Dave introduced the three candidates for Council whose bios are shown on pages 35-36: Courtney Andrews, Kelly Caligiuri, and Moira McCracken. We were instructed to vote for *a maximum of two candidates*.

Mission Endowment Fund Members (2 to be elected)

Dave introduced the three candidates for MEF whose bios are shown on page 36: Julie Aleshire, Jill Gehner, and Rocky Stone. We were instructed to vote for *a maximum of two candidates*.

Dave thanked all candidates for their willingness to run for office. He asked if there were any questions for any candidate; no questions were raised.

Dave requested nominations from the floor; no nominations were heard. Members were asked to vote. Ballots were counted and results were announced.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE ELECTION RESULTS

ELECTED MEMBERS

Mission Endowment Fund:

Julie Aleshire was elected. There was a tie between Jill Gehner and Rocky Stone. We were set to take a tie-breaking vote when Jill conceded to Rocky.

Julie Aleshire and Rocky Stone will each serve on the Mission Endowment Fund team for 3 years.

Council:

Courtney Andrews and Moira McCracken were elected and each will serve a 3-year term.

OLD BUSINESS

Youth continued to sell gift cards at Chili Bingo in 2024. Gift cards are still for sale. Interested members should contact Carrie in the office to purchase them.

NEW BUSINESS

Presentation of the Transition Team

Greg Miller: *BY THE NUMBERS*

Greg thanked us all for participating in the call process. He highlighted the transition team's progress:

7 transition team members

6 cottage meetings

66 folks participated

50 responses to the online survey

Last time it took 15 months to complete the process. The team hopes to shorten the process this time! Moira McCracken was part of the team last time so she will be very helpful in this new transition.

OUR CONGREGATION CHARACTERISTICS

WORSHIP STYLE

88% attend in person

6% attend online

6% attend both online and in person

AGES

56% over 65

24% 50 to 65

10% 35 – 49

6% 19 and under

4% ages 20-34

Mainline churches throughout the US share the same stats.

SURVEY RESULTS

The transition team shared the results of the survey taken by our congregation members.

As a community:

We are informal and spontaneous

We have clearly defined goals and plans for our future

We are demographically homogeneous (because of our location)

OUR LEADERSHIP STYLE

We welcome ideas that are provoking and challenging

We rely on group decision making

We have learned how to use conflict constructively

(Example: How we handled coming back after Covid)

OUR PROGRAMMING

Our facilities are often used by community groups

We train people to minister outside our walls

We focus on ideas and beliefs

OUR THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

We are obviously Lutheran in identity and practice *(Example: We still recite both creeds)*

We participate in synod and ELCA activities

We focus on contemporary issues and topics (from time to time)

THE MOST CRITICAL MINISTRY TASKS YOU BELIEVE A NEW PASTOR SHOULD ADDRESS

- Youth and family ministry 70%
- Preaching/worship 70%
- Pastoral care and visitation 62%
- Christian education 44% (several Bible studies, confirmation, Sunday School)
- Building a sense of community 36%

TOP 5 GIFTS AND PRIORITIES FOR THE PASTOR

- Help members engage in spiritual life 63.3%
- Be effective in working with youth 61.2%
- Be effective communicator 51%
- Be active in visiting members and nonmembers 51%
- Be able to share leadership and work in a team 32.1%

VERY HELPFUL CHARACTERISTICS

- Provide care and nurture 41.7%
- Bring joy and good humor to relationships 29.2%
- Be effective in working with children 27.1%
- Help others develop leadership abilities and skills for ministry 27.1%
- Be skilled in planning and leading programs 25%

AREAS OF FOCUS IN THE FIRST YEAR

- Get to know our congregation
- Help us grow our membership
- Focus on worship services and sermons in your first year
- Holy Cross members love to serve others. Help us give of our time and talent to connect more with our community.
- Our members value all ages. We must request that our new pastor treat all with respect. Focus on youth but don't forget the other members.

GENERAL THEMES OF OUR MINISTRY SITE PROFILE

- Spirit-led, community-driven
- Welcoming to all
- Friendly, helpful, talented congregation
- Excellent music
- Clear vision for service
- Thriving partnerships with community organizations
- Debt-free
- Worship streamed online
- Updated A/V in sanctuary
- Commitment to reaching people through social media

CHALLENGES/OPPORTUNITIES

- Want to bring people back to worship in person
- Need to rebuild children and youth programs
- As our congregation ages we are looking to bring in more families. We need to make ourselves more attractive to those folks
- We are always looking for more ways to serve others

- Growth
- Desire a pastor who will connect with congregants through engaging and enlightening sermons
(The call committee will want to hear a sermon from prospects: Either online or through video.)

NEXT STEPS

The transition team met on Tuesday with the Call committee in the library to review the MSP in detail, ensuring consensus. The MSP is our resume of who we are – it will be used to guide our call process.

The call committee will take candidates through the points in the MSP and discuss their answers.

The transition team is done now. Once they learn the name of the call committee chairperson they will submit the MSP to the synod.

The call committee needs to feel comfortable conducting interviews because they could begin receiving candidate resumes soon.

Two rounds of three candidates on each round were received from the synod last time.

The transition team needs to educate call committee members on the compensation package.

Some factors that influence the pastor's salary are years as pastor and outside employment.

The salary used to be low but now starts at \$56,000 for someone just out of seminary. Salary scales up with more years of experience.

Thanks to the whole transition team, the MSP will now be available to print or read online.

Announcement of the Call Committee members:

Morgan Andrews	Deidre Jost	Joan Paul
Frank Barnhart	Kyle Koblas	Andrew Tyahla
Donna Jackson	Cindy Lacks	

Renate Hawn asked why we did not choose an odd number of committee members in case there was a tie when voting to approve a candidate.

Dave said they wanted to represent all demographics on the committee, but they didn't honestly consider the possibility of a tie vote on a candidate.

No other new business was heard.

ADJOURNMENT AND CLOSING PRAYER

Dave closed the meeting in prayer.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 12:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Penny Rudolph, Recording Secretary

PASTOR'S REPORT

Greetings in Christ Jesus!

With every bit of my being, I give thanks to God for Holy Cross Lutheran Church! Thank you for calling me as pastor and receiving me and my family into your congregation! These past few months have truly given us reason to celebrate and purpose to serve. With Jesus Christ as our Lord, the Holy Spirit working in our lives, and the greatness of God in all things, this congregation is moving into another pivotal season of life.

As we review our past year in ministry, we see that God is at work in this place. We can also observe that God's Holy Spirit is not done working in and through Holy Cross to reach into our community and connect (or reconnect) people to Christ in this place. The last year has been a season to slow down, reflect, worship, listen, and dream about God's work here. Heading into 2026, it is time to be inspired and inspirational – to repair and strengthen – to explore and discover – to learn and to adapt. We call upon God in prayer, open to what the Holy Spirit might put upon our hearts and our lips, and courageously step into the wild and unpredictable world that is yearning to be loved by God. *Amen!*

Transitional Ministry

- Pastor Gerhard Kraus served as interim pastor during the first part of 2025. After taking leave for health reasons, pulpit supply was provided by several area pastors. When arrangements were agreed upon, pastoral duties were assumed by Pastor BJ Arnold.
- Pastor Matthew Helfrich was called to serve as resident pastor and began serving in August. Installation occurred in regular worship service on August 24th with Bishop Candeia and Pastor David Whetter.
- Pastor Kraus was called to his heavenly home on September 3, 2025. Arrangements for a memorial service are pending but will most likely take place in the spring of 2026.

Word and Sacrament – Worship

- Worship services have continued at designated times.
- We have continued streaming full-length worship services every week (with a couple technical hiccups).
- The order of service for both Traditional and Contemporary venues have continued as usual, with some changes to continuous communion distribution in the contemporary venue.
- Advent services were held in the smaller chapel following "Holden Evening Prayer" at 7 p.m. The choir was greatly appreciated for their participation.
- The larger baptismal font with flowing water was filled, moved forward, and turned on again. The smaller font was relocated to the rear entry for people to remember their baptism upon entering the worship space.
- The video connection was lost in the rear of the nave and resolved with the installation of a new cable.
- A new microphone and cable were installed in the rear as well to assist with better streaming sound.

Equipping the Saints – Education/Bible Study

- Tuesday Morning Bible Study has continued to review the Lutheran Handbook. This has led to many conversations about our faith and life as followers of Jesus.
- Men's Bible Study has been meeting twice a month on Monday evenings, studying the Book of Exodus.
- Children's Sunday School has been offered between services.

Pastoral Care

- When new pastors begin, it is common for congregations to get off to a slower start in requesting pastoral care. This has been my experience at Holy Cross. Please be encouraged to contact the pastor directly with any pastoral care hopes, prayer requests, and any other needs.
- People who are homebound or not able to attend worship services have been visited regularly with communion. Four individuals have been visited in the most recent months.

- Visits in hospitals/rehab facilities have occurred upon request.
- Other pastoral care meetings, phone calls, and conversations have occurred as people have shared need.

Community Outreach

- Relationships with area faith communities, congregations, and service organizations have been ongoing.
- Facility usage has continued; several groups gather here throughout the week. These groups have expressed their gratitude and shared with Holy Cross that it has been a blessing to be able to meet here.
- Financial assistance has been given to several folks in need.

Administrative Ministry

- Ongoing attention has been given to smoothing workflow and scheduling for events and facilities.
- Pastor moved into his office; he purged the shelves and updated the computer, monitors, and some furniture.

Wider Church

- Bishop Donna Simon was elected as bishop of the Central States Synod.
- The Fall Theological Conference was held at the Kansas City CSS headquarters. Here, Dr. Craig Nessen, Prof. Emeritus, Wartburg Seminary, presented how congregations can adapt to changes in context. This included a revived focus on training and empowering the baptized in ministry to have greater reach.

Continuing Education

- Pastor Matt completed Lutheran Transitional Ministry Association training for certification (6 Continuing Education Units) with financial assistance from CSS, LuTMA, Living Christ, and Holy Cross.

Fellowship

- Refreshments and fellowship gatherings moved upstairs when the elevator was in disrepair. During this time, it was noticed that the narthex was a preferred location to gather between services, so it continued.
- Additional tables and stools were added to the narthex, furniture was rearranged to create a more welcoming setting, and donuts were added to the selection of refreshments.

Vision and Direction – *Some questions to consider in prayer and with each other...*

- How well is Holy Cross organized (or disorganized) to currently follow Jesus into a new expression of what it is to be God's Church on Earth?
- Ask the question: What is it that makes the Ministry of Holy Cross essential in the lives of people in our community?
 - How has God uniquely placed us (both individually and as a group) at this time and place to fulfill the purposes of God?
- What would need to be different in the ministry of Holy Cross to make it more essential in the lives of people in our community?
 - If God were to tell us to start over, or shuffle the proverbial deck, how else might Holy Cross uncover and adopt God's mission in our world?
- What is missing that God really wants us to invest in as an expression of Jesus?
 - Are we ready to consider this? What might this mean for Holy Cross? Is this exciting to you? Why or why not?

As followers of Jesus, we go forth into the world, inviting everyone to come, see, and be part of what the Lord is doing.

Inspirationally Yours,

Pastor Matthew P. Helfrich

2025 Report of the Treasurer & 2026 Expenditures Recommended by the Council

Description	Budget	Disbursed	Variance	Budget Increase	
				2026	(Decrease)
Congregational Benevolence	\$ 15,000	15,000	-	15,000	-
Staff Mileage Reimbursements	900	374	526	900	-
Staff Salaries & Benefits	194,740	158,020	36,720	174,678	(20,062)
Musicians	26,004	23,606	2,398	26,004	-
Pastor's Cont Ed & Prof Exp	500	776	(276)	1,000	500
Continuing Education for Staff & Council	300	94	206	100	(200)
Synod Assembly	2,000	2,061	(61)	300	(1,700)
Church Supplies	4,000	3,350	650	3,000	(1,000)
Digital Marketing	500	-	500	-	(500)
Payroll Processing	4,300	3,717	583	4,000	(300)
Property	40,000	48,072	(8,072)	40,000	-
Copy	4,000	4,783	(783)	4,000	-
Utilities	37,500	42,467	(4,967)	37,500	-
Insurance	21,000	21,768	(768)	21,000	-
Garden	300	-	300	100	(200)
Christian Education	1,000	46	954	500	(500)
Vision Implementation	750	200	550	400	(350)
Worship & Music	4,000	6,276	(2,276)	3,500	(500)
Sunday Youth Gatherings	150	-	150	150	-
Young Kids Events	100	-	100	100	-
Youth Trips	-	-	-	-	-
Benevolence Pass-Through	6,000	7,454	(1,454)	7,500	1,500
	\$ 363,044	338,064	24,980	339,732	(23,312)

2025 Actual and 2026 Proposed Income, Expenses, and General Fund Balances					
			2025	2025	2026
			Proposed	Actual	Proposed
Income:					
Pledged & estimated income		\$ 324,275	305,340	314,544	
Loose plate		2,300	2,186	2,300	
Building use		8,000	12,768	8,000	
Holiday income		700	400	700	
Benevolence income		6,000	7,304	7,500	
Total income		341,275	327,998	333,044	
Expenses:					
Operating budget		357,044	330,610	332,232	
Pass through benevolence		6,000	7,454	7,500	
Total expenses		363,044	338,064	339,732	
Net income (loss)		(21,769)	(10,066)	(6,688)	
Other general fund receipts (disbursements):					
Transfer to building fund		-	-	-	
Employee retention tax credit		9,700	9,994	-	
Transfers from (to) other funds, net		-	(520)	-	
Net other general fund receipts (disbursements)		9,700	9,474	-	
Net increase (decrease) from all sources		(12,069)	(592)	(6,688)	
General fund balance:					
Beginning of year		(2,360)	(2,360)	(2,952)	
End of year		\$ (14,429)	(2,952)	(9,640)	
Proposed 2025 Benevolence Summary					
Budgeted total benevolence				\$ 22,500	
Budgeted total income & benevolence pass-through				\$ 333,044	
Benevolence giving as a % of total income					6.8%

Holy Cross Lutheran Church - Creve Coeur MO
Balance Sheet as of December 31, 2025 (Balance Sheet Summary)

Thursday, January 8, 2026

Page 1 of 1

Account Name	Beginning Balance	Previous Period Balance	Amount Diff Period	YTD Balance
Assets				
First Mid Bank & Trust Checking	43,928.94	56,341.08	4,348.88	60,689.96
First Mid Bank & Trust Money Market	13,705.45	34,731.86	2.95	34,734.81
Mission Investment Fund	20,477.92	0.00	0.00	0.00
Bank Totals	\$78,112.31	\$91,072.94	\$4,351.83	\$95,424.77
ELCA Endowment Fund	206,412.11	206,412.11	0.00	206,412.11
First Mid Bank & Trust Endowment Fund	4,740.52	10,213.61	2,203.03	12,416.64
Mission Endowment Total	\$211,152.63	\$216,625.72	\$2,203.03	\$218,828.75
Gift Card Inventory	1,120.67	1,120.67	0.00	1,120.67
Total Assets	\$290,385.61	\$308,819.33	\$6,554.86	\$315,374.19
Funds				
General Fund	(2,359.63)	(2,650.31)	(301.94)	(2,952.25)
Prepaid Pledge Fund	10,900.00	8,000.00	0.00	8,000.00
General Fund Total	\$8,540.37	\$5,349.69	(\$301.94)	\$5,047.75
Afghanistan Family Fund	474.18	0.00	0.00	0.00
Altar Guild Fund	46.00	(12.97)	0.00	(12.97)
Audio Visual Fund	(114.25)	(109.25)	2,400.00	2,290.75
Banner Fund	1,454.06	1,454.06	0.00	1,454.06
Building Fund	5,329.38	19,723.84	0.00	19,723.84
Capital Campaign Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Council Discretionary Fund	358.00	129.35	0.00	129.35
Designated Estate Fund	50,485.70	47,444.22	(2,250.00)	45,194.22
Feed The Need STL Fund	(50.00)	458.75	0.00	458.75
Flower Fund	(250.77)	(1,268.53)	341.03	(927.50)
Food Drive Fund	1,237.18	1,791.31	0.00	1,791.31
Garden Fund	(325.00)	(325.00)	0.00	(325.00)
Greeting Card Fund	62.31	62.31	0.00	62.31
Holiday Fund Total	205.50	320.52	427.06	747.58
Kitchen/Bagels Fund	(144.96)	(532.95)	3.00	(529.95)
LFCS Fund	345.00	545.00	0.00	545.00
Memorial Fund	2,311.71	6,107.10	(90.25)	6,016.85
Mission Endowment Fund	211,152.63	216,625.72	2,203.03	218,828.75
Organ Concert Fund	389.00	820.46	(53.64)	766.82
Pastor Benevolence Fund	147.63	457.61	302.75	760.36
Seminarian Scholarship Fund	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Shawl Ministry Fund	63.44	63.44	0.00	63.44
Social Activities Fund Balance	268.32	449.06	0.00	449.06
Special Donation Fund	1,571.11	761.05	3,498.82	4,259.87
Stephen Ministries Fund	2,074.46	2,027.21	0.00	2,027.21
Sunday School	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Thrivent Fund	1,809.00	3,046.00	0.00	3,046.00
Vision Implementation Team Fund	79.89	19.92	0.00	19.92
World Hunger Fund	504.13	604.13	0.00	604.13
Youth Activity Fund	1,240.92	1,686.61	75.00	1,761.61
Youth Gift Card Inventory Fund	1,120.67	1,120.67	0.00	1,120.67
Total Funds	\$290,385.61	\$308,819.33	\$6,554.86	\$315,374.19
Total Liabilities and Funds	\$290,385.61	\$308,819.33	\$6,554.86	\$315,374.19

MISSION ENDOWMENT FUND

The Mission Endowment Fund was created to provide a way for people to make enduring contributions that will keep working for years to come. These perpetual gifts from estates, memorials or other sources will provide a legacy of support for missions at Holy Cross as well as missions outside the church.

We encourage people to consider the Mission Endowment Fund in their estate planning. Gifts can be designated to be split in any proportion between Option A for Holy Cross and Option B for outside missions. We also encourage suggestions for possible grants that we at Holy Cross might consider.

In 2025 the Mission Endowment received two additional gifts.

Income as of 12/31/2025:

- Two gifts of \$100.00 each
- Interest income was \$6.26
- ELCA Trust Income was \$8,408.88

Distributions Under Option A (Holy Cross)

- No gifts were distributed in 2025

Distributions Under Option B (Outside Missions)

- \$1,040.00

Total Distributions in 2024: \$1,040.00

Waiting to be distributed:

Option A: \$11,267.24

Option B: \$218.87

Balances as of 11/30/2025

ELCA Pooled Trust: \$244,391.80

First Mid Bank & Trust Money Market: \$11,052.11

Total Balances: \$255,443.91

Respectfully Submitted,

Julie Aleshire, Pat Goertzen, Diana Jost, Joan Paul, Rocky Stone

MEF QUARTERLY REPORT – 2025 SUMMARY (as of 12/31/2025)

QUARTERLY RESULTS	1 ST QTR	2 ND QTR	3 RD QTR	4 TH QTR	TOTAL 2025
Gifts	\$0.00	\$100.00*	\$100.00**	\$0.00	\$200.00
ELCA Trust Income (Includes Interest of \$6.26 YTD)	\$2,102.19	\$2,102.31	\$2,102.48	\$2,101.90	\$8,408.88
TOTAL INCOME>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>	\$2,102.19	\$2,102.31	\$2,102.48	\$2,101.90	\$8,608.88

***P. Goertzen gift of \$100.00 (6/12/2025) ** J. Aleshire gift of \$100.00 (7/21/2025)**

DISTRIBUTIONS YEAR-TO-DATE

OPTION A: Holy Cross	1 ST QTR	2 ND QTR	3 RD QTR	4 TH QTR	TOTAL 2025
TOTAL OPTION A-----→	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
OPTION B: Missions	1 ST QTR	2 ND QTR	3 RD QTR	4 TH QTR	TOTAL 2025
St. Philips Church – Assist 2025 Tornado Victims			\$200.00		\$200.00
S.O.C.K.s. – Payable to Jerry Doud (President)				\$280.00	\$280.00
FMSC – Feed My Starving Children				\$280.00	\$280.00
LFCS – Lutheran Family and Children Services				\$280.00	\$280.00
TOTAL OPTION B-----→	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$200.00	\$840.00	\$1,040.00
TOTAL ALL DISTRIBUTIONS	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$200.00	\$840.00	\$1,040.00
>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>					

WAITING TO BE DISTRIBUTED

Option A: Holy Cross	\$5,591.22	\$7,483.30	\$9,375.53	\$11,267.24	
Option B: Missions	\$428.20	\$638.43	\$648.68	\$218.87	

BALANCES

BALANCES					
First Mid Bank & Trust Money Market	\$6,842.75	\$9,045.84	\$11,052.11	\$12,316.64	
ELCA Pooled Trust	\$217,775.71	\$233,074.48	\$244,391.80		
TOTAL BALANCE >>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>	\$224,618.46	\$242,120.32	\$255,443.91		

2024(A) - \$9,531 2024(B) - \$800

OFFICE MANAGER CARRIE CURNUTTE

It has been a blessing to serve as the Church Office Manager for Holy Cross this year. In a small church, the office manager plays many roles, and I am grateful to be part of a close-knit church family where teamwork and care for one another are clearly seen.

Throughout the year, I handled daily office responsibilities such as answering calls and emails, preparing weekly bulletins and announcements, maintaining records, and helping coordinate church events and facility use. I also worked closely with our pastor, leaders, and volunteers to support ministry needs, special services, and pastoral care.

It was an unusual year and one that presented new opportunities. We welcomed our new pastor after working with supply pastors through the search process. We were sad to learn that Pastor Kraus passed away after a long illness. He is sorely missed.

The office helped keep communication flowing by sharing updates through bulletins, emails, and other methods, and by welcoming members and visitors who reached out with questions or needs. I also assisted with basic record-keeping tasks, as needed.

This year brought both busy seasons and meaningful moments, and I appreciate the patience, encouragement, and support shown by our church family. It is a joy to serve in a role that helps our church stay organized and connected.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve. I look forward to continuing to support the ministries and mission of Holy Cross in the coming year.

Carrie Curnutte
Church Office Manager

TRADITIONAL MUSIC DIRECTOR

Jack Hamill continued to provide music for the 8:30 am Sunday services and others, including: Ash Wednesday, some midweek Lenten services, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Pie Fest, some midweek Advent services, and Christmas Eve. The music included Prelude, Offertory, Communion Meditations and Postludes as well as accompanying hymns and service music. In coordination with Pastor Gerhard, Pastor Beverly and Pastor Matt, Jack has planned music based on pastors' themes and seasons of the church year. Linda Tyahla has helped Jack select hymns. Jack continued to report music with the copyright organization, One License.

Thanks to Moira McCracken, Linda Tyahla and Megan Tyahla for continuing to lead the singing at the 8:30 am service. This year we have welcomed Sarah Helfrich to our group of song leaders. Thanks to Linda Tyahla for scheduling singers.

The choir continued its mission to provide music for feast days and special events of the church year. The choir sang anthems and led singing on Ash Wednesday, Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Easter Sunday, Pentecost, Trinity, Reformation Sunday, All Saints Sunday, Thanksgiving/Pie Fest Service, and Christmas Eve traditional service. Joining the choir this year were Sarah Helfrich and Heather Gosma. The choir sang the Cantata, "The Birth of a King" by Lloyd Larson on Sunday, December 14th.

Jack continues to select appropriate music for the choir and to update the church's choral anthem library. Jack has the choir singing more outside of its usual feast days. Extra dates included Congregational Meeting Sunday on Feb 2, Irish music on Sunday, March 16, Good Friday on April 18, Songs Praising the Lord on July 2, and the Day of the Holy Cross on Sept 14.

Thanks to the sound booth crew for working with the microphones for the choir and flutes.

Jack performed organ concerts in May and October which were broadcast over Facebook Live. Guests also attended in person. Freewill offerings collected at the concerts go toward the purchase of music for the Holy Cross music program. Thanks to Donovan Lucas for making the live streaming possible for concerts and to the sound booth personnel for volunteering to work the concert. Thanks to Carrie Curnutte for her help with the program and promotion and to Pastor Gerhardt and Pastor Matt for introducing Jack at the concerts. Thanks to Darlene Kuhlman and the kitchen crew who prepared for and hosted receptions following each concert.

A special thanks to Carrie Curnutte for all her work in making fliers for the various music events here at Holy Cross and to Darlene Kuhlman for photographing the musical events here.

The Young Artists Series continued this year. Deirdre Jost and Teagan McCracken provided flute accompaniment to choir anthems and hymns as well as duets for services during the year.

The Music Endowment Fund Artists continued this year. The Clarion Brass played for Trinity Sunday, June 15 and for the Christmas Eve Traditional Service giving a 20 minute Pre-Service program.

Devon Carpenter, Classical Harpist, played on Sunday, December 7.

Jack has made an effort to have a musical event once a month; a list follows.

January: Music of George Frederic Handel, Young Artists Flutes

February: Choir sang the service for the Congregational Meeting Sunday

March: Choir sang Irish anthems for a Taste of Ireland on March 16

April: Choir sang on Good Friday

May: Organ Concert

June: Clarion Brass on Trinity Sunday

July: Choir sang anthems around the theme of Praising the Lord in Song on July 6

August: Bach-Inspired Music, Young Artists Flutes

September: Choir sang on Day of the Holy Cross, September 14

October: Organ Concert

December: Devon Carpenter, Harpist, on December 7; Christmas Cantata on December 14; Clarion Brass on Christmas Eve

Submitted by Jack Hamill

CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP MUSIC DIRECTOR

In 2025, Holy Cross welcomed Pastor Matt, who brings expertise in contemporary Christian music.

Plans are underway to enhance the contemporary service in 2026, aiming for a format that more closely aligns with contemporary worship practices rather than a traditional service featuring contemporary music.

The musicians in the praise band—Brendan, Brandon, Marty, and Matt—have consistently demonstrated exceptional talent and dedication, both musically and in their contributions to the worship experience. Their commitment throughout the past year has been remarkable, and continued excellence is anticipated in 2026.

We are also pleased to announce that Pastor Matt's wife, Sarah, will be joining the praise band as a female lead singer alongside Linda, Moira, Cindy, and Megan.

Although scheduling constraints prevented another praise band concert in the summer of 2025, efforts are being made to organize a concert in 2026. As with the previous event in 2024, this concert will feature contemporary Christian music as well as selected secular songs. It will offer opportunities for additional participants to share their musical talents beyond the core praise band.

As was true for 2025, we anticipate an inspiring and uplifting year in 2026.

David M. Reinking

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE and CONGREGATIONAL COUNCIL REPORT

The biggest news of the past year was the call of Pastor Matt Helfrich as our Pastor. Leading up to this, a Call Committee was formed to interview potential candidates. We would like to thank the members of that committee: Deirdre Jost, Kyle Koblas, Frank Barnhart, Cindy Lacks, Donna Jackson, Joan Paul, Andrew Tyahla, and Morgan Andrews.

It is also with great sadness that we learned that our Interim Pastor Gerhard Kraus had passed away. Pastor Kraus was well liked by the staff and members of our congregation and he will be greatly missed. We were able to use multiple supply pastors to continue providing Sunday services and Pastor Beverly (BJ) Arnold filled in as our bridge pastor until we were able to call Pastor Matt.

The Council held two retreats this year, using the framework of the Eastern Missouri Conference Retreat. The discussions covered forward-looking topics regarding how to grow the church, related to both membership and spirituality. We look forward to inviting the Vision Team to our next retreat so we can work together on coming up with ideas on how to better achieve our goals within the church.

Donovan Lucas presented an opportunity for folks to support the congregation of St. Philip's as they worked to help victims of the May tornado in St. Louis. We were able to collect personal hygiene donations and medical and first aid supplies, which were delivered to St. Philip's. Mike Prange was able to obtain Thrivent funds, which were also provided to the church. Pastor Richard Ashley of St. Philip's greatly appreciated these donations.

As part of the continuing commitment Holy Cross made to the local Boy Scout troop affiliated with our church, the Property Committee met with them to discuss projects. This year they were able to fix the hinges on the gates near the dumpster area. Chad Bruss is the scoutmaster with whom we hope to work in the future for any other projects that need to be done around the church. This alliance continues to benefit the Scouts and us.

Bob and Dee Morin attended the annual synod assembly, which was held from June 5th through 7th in Oleatha, Kansas. The biggest news that came out of this assembly was the election of Pastor Donna Simon as our new Central States Synod Bishop.

The Council would like to thank Court Templeton for her years of service as our Media Coordinator. Court left Holy Cross for an opportunity in Chicago. She was instrumental in leading our AV team and producing content for our online presence. We will attempt to maintain our online presence and retain our audiovisual capabilities using current members to fulfill this initiative. We wish Court much success with her future endeavors.

The Council thanks Moira McCracken and Courtney Andrews for their service in the first year of their Council terms. We extend our appreciation to Dave Winkler for his 6 years on Council, especially his years as President.

Finally, we were made aware of several maintenance issues that needed immediate attention throughout our building. These are in addition to several projects that are planned for the near future. The Property Committee has made the Council aware of building maintenance challenges we need to address – much needed updates and repairs to maintain our church.

The Council is committed to keeping the congregation informed of the extent of these needed projects and their estimated costs. With the cost of seemingly everything going up these days, we'll need to tighten our belts.

I would like to thank the entire Council and Executive Committee for their guidance and open discussion throughout the past year. The group did a wonderful job of sharing their thoughts and opinions, helping to ensure we made the best decisions together.

Together in Christ,

Bob Morin, Council President

VISION TEAM

Rather than starting by highlighting our 2025 accomplishments, it seems appropriate for the Vision Team to begin sharing our future focus as we enter 2026. It is an exciting time for us as we take advantage of having the fresh perspective of Pastor Matt Helfrich, who has been observing the strengths and areas for potential improvement for Holy Cross since he accepted our call. For example, we look to focus on who Holy Cross is and where we are going instead of making sure we have people signed up to fill roles. We see great opportunities for Holy Cross to be more accommodating to young families, and we want to lead the congregation's movement toward this.

The Vision Team will evaluate ways to improve our organizational structure to ensure our efforts support our vision. To make this a reality, the Vision Team will concentrate on developing strategies instead of running our various ministries (e.g., the Mitten Tree). We are looking for volunteers to help lead the ministries. We also look forward to collaborating more closely with the Holy Cross Council to enact our vision.

We would be remiss to not mention our 2025 successes, in collaboration with our Partnership teams:

Parkway Partners – In January, mittens and gloves donated to the 2024 Advent season Mitten Trees were distributed to Parkway elementary schools. The Adopt-a-Senior-Student drive was very successful, raising funds for 26 Parkway School District Seniors to cover their graduation fees. This allowed these students to “walk” at their graduation in May, and obtain diplomas and transcripts. Some late-arriving funds serve as seed funding for the 2026 drive, which has been kicked off. The Thanksgiving food drive to support the Parkway School District Food Pantry collected and distributed 248 stuffing mix boxes and 264 cornbread mix boxes, exceeding our goal (225 of each).

Lutheran Family and Children's Services – Holy Cross provided 25 children with Christmas presents during our Season of Sharing ministry.

Feed Our Neighbors Team – This partnership team organized two Feed My Starving Children “packs” this year, one in mid-April at Queeny Park and another in July at Lutheran Church of the Atonement in Florissant. The turnout by Holy Cross volunteers was tremendous for both events.

Welcome our Neighbors/ESL Team – This team met monthly with an English as Second Language (ESL) class that gathers at Holy Cross. They enjoyed a cup of coffee and sparkling conversation with class members who look to acclimate to life in the St. Louis region. Unfortunately, this successful ministry ended at the end of summer when the class organizers identified a requirement for Holy Cross volunteers to undergo a formal background check to participate.

Welcome Statement - A welcome statement was completed for Holy Cross to affirm that “All are Welcome” here and are invited to become members. This positive statement was affirmed by the organization, *Reconciled in Christ*, and was formally adopted by Holy Cross.

Our team is initiating a new “rotational chairperson” practice in which each member of the Vision Team will take a turn chairing our monthly meetings. It is with sincere gratitude that we thank Madde Hanson for chairing our team for the past four years.

We welcome and encourage your participation in building the Holy Cross Vision. Perhaps you want to collaborate with a Standing Team, a Partnership Team, or the Vision Team itself. Fresh ideas and helpful hands are always welcome as we bring God's acts of mercy to our community.

In Christ,

The Vision Team

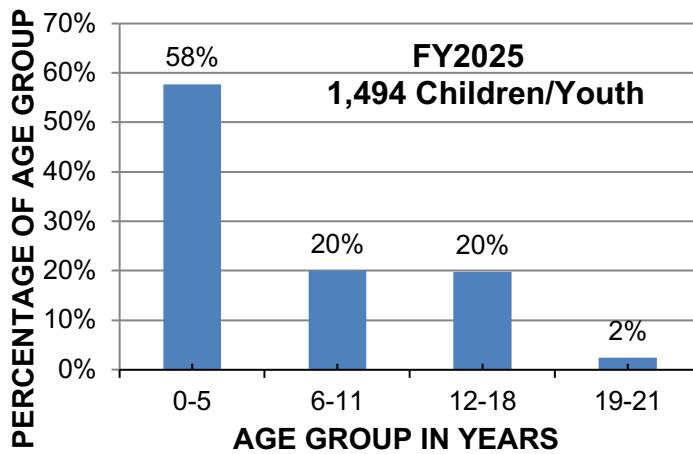
Madde Hanson, Helen Krull, Sarah Miller, Pastor Matt Helrich, and Philip Paul

FY2025 Holy Cross/S.O.C.Ks. Holiday Season Event Nov. to Dec.

Holy Cross and Serving Our Community Kids, Corp. (S.O.C.Ks.) have worked together for 38 years, providing new socks and underwear to local at-risk children/youth. This year we were able to help 26 local charities totaling 1,494 children/youth in need. It is because of your awesome and generous support we are able to provide each child/youth with socks & underwear in a retail package. These clothing items are the same first quality items available at Target, Walmart, Kohl's, and other retail stores.

FY2025 Socks & Underwear Statistics

1. These charities are located in the St. Louis and East St. Louis areas.



2. There are no administrative costs on donations, for these costs are paid by the S.O.C.Ks. staff.
3. Currently we are searching for a vice president and are in need of volunteers to do website development, website searching, grant writing, software development, purchasing, and as needed. Please contact Jerry Doud if you are interested in working with us.

Holy Cross Congregation, Thank You!

Serving Our Community Kids, Corp. (S.O.C.Ks.)

Jerry Doud

314-628-9032

YOUTH GROUP

Efforts were made this fall to coordinate youth activities at Holy Cross. We gathered with families who have children who would like to engage with other kids their age. During the meeting we discussed the age dynamics of our youth and how we could best structure activities to engage our children/youth in activities that would appeal to everyone. We proposed a plan that would include youth of about 10 years and up. We envisioned using a junior/senior dynamic, and planned activities accordingly, meeting one Sunday evening each month.

Pastor Matt, Cindy Lacks and Courtney Andrews coordinated the youth activities with the support and help of parent volunteers. Currently, we are operating without an official youth leader. We welcome anyone who is interested in working with youth to talk with us about leading the group.

This fall the youth group met on October 12th and November 19th and then participated in the December Santa and S'mores event as a holiday celebration. Courtney and Morgan Andrews also represented Holy Cross at the West County Interfaith Alliance meetings this fall.

Looking ahead to the Spring, we plan to invite youth to gather on January 25th, February 22nd, March 29th, and May 3rd. Our meetings focus on faith, service, fellowship, and fun. We welcome any and all to join us in mentoring our youth and joining in the fun!

Co-coordinators: Pastor Matt, Cindy Lacks, Courtney Andrews

PRAYER AND CARE TEAM

This team was formed in 2022 with members: Becky and Jeff Benson, Cathy Mosher, Susan Jentes, Renate Crutcher, Darlene Kuhlman, Sandy Kalin, and Bud Niebling.

Our team meets quarterly. We stay connected with our members who cannot attend church regularly through visits, phone calls and other means of contact. The altar flowers are regularly delivered to our members' homes, upon request, when they are shut in.

Special booklets are sent out every few months to members who have lost a loved one. It is our hope that communicating in this way helps those we care about work through the grief process.

We believe that as a congregation we have a responsibility to take care of our members. This means everyone – including mothers, children, people in prison, and people under oppression. We read this statement many times in the Bible and our mission is to follow it.

For the Prayer and Care Team,

Bud Niebling

SOCIAL ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE (SAC)

The mission of the Social Activities Committee is to bring unity and fellowship within the congregation and community. We hope to obtain this by providing various activities for all age groups and activity levels, sharing the love of Christ and Faith through His Word, kindness and acceptance. We hold planning meetings each month, either in person or by email.

Events held in 2025 include:

March 15, Chili Bingo with 68 people in attendance.

Everyone was eager to win one of the many “priceless” white elephants and, of course, one of the coveted gift certificates. John Caligiuri and Mark Rudolph did the honors of spinning the Bingo cage and calling numbers. Helen and Keith Krull made their delicious chili once more. Everyone couldn’t wait to get seconds! This year we also incorporated a silent auction to raise money for the building fund. The evening was definitely a success and everyone had a fantastic time!

April 22, Fairmont Park Horse Races

Opening day at the races was very crowded, but it was so much fun to see all the horses and to pick your favorite horse to win.

October 26, Reformation Sunday

It was a beautiful worship celebration with 97 people in attendance. Afterward, we feasted on pancakes and sausage prepared by the men of our committee plus a wide variety of other dishes brought by members of the committee and congregation.

November 26, Pie Fest

Our annual Thanksgiving Eve gathering following worship. 63 of us mingled and enjoyed pie and fellowship.

December 7, Santa & S'mores

What a great time! With 34 in attendance, hanging around the fire pit enjoying hot chocolate and s'mores, and listening to Christmas songs. And of course, don’t forget our special guest! Santa Claus!!

As always, thank you to our hardworking committee for all you do. And thank you to our congregation for your support. We welcome requests and suggestions for activities you would enjoy. Please share! See you next year with exciting new events being added each year! There’s always something for everyone!

Kelly Caligiuri, Chairperson for members: John and Kelly Caligiuri, Steve and Darlene Kuhlman, Mark and Penny Rudolph, Keith and Helen Krull, Kevin and Julie Aleshire, Rick and Pam Jokerst, Philip and Joan Paul, Jill Gehner, Dan and Judy Gockel, and Karen Sparks

PROPERTY COMMITTEE

The mission of the Property Committee is to provide oversight, guidance and actual labor for the upkeep and maintenance of the church property. .

We ask anyone who uses the church to make sure they clean up after themselves, reset thermostats (to 65 degrees for unoccupied and as desired for occupied), turn out the lights, and lock the doors. We need to leave our building cleaner/better than we found it.

Some of the committee's accomplishments this year include:

- Implemented maintenance contracts and repairs for HVAC and elevator
- Repaired sanctuary roof/office wing roof leaks
- Back property work included mowing, erosion control and mosquito control -
- Cleaned carpets
- Several sections of concrete sidewalk were replaced at church entrance
- Back entrance concrete steps were repaired
- Repaired driveway potholes
- Continued replacement of interior lighting with efficient LED lights
- Signed contracts for lawn care and snow and ice removal
- Landscaping work included removing 11 trees ourselves (a great savings to the church!)
- Plumbing repairs
- Security system repair

We have looked at major property capital improvements needed over the next 10 years. This is a **LARGE** expense item. This year (2026) we plan to reseal the parking lot (about \$13K) and we will need a decision on whether to repair or replace the inoperative Old fellowship hall (OFH) air conditioner (estimated cost \$65,000).

Finally, I would like to thank all committee members for their dedication and hard work. Many of the above tasks were accomplished by property committee members. This committee is always active, using our hands and ingenuity to accomplish our maintenance goals at Holy Cross. We welcome anyone who would like to help us work to beautify Holy Cross to the glory of God.

Respectfully submitted,

Steve Kuhlman, Chairperson for: Pat Goertzen, Clarence Jentes, Keith Krull, Philip Paul, Gary Prellwitz, Kyle Koblas, and Gerry Rechek

GARDEN COMMITTEE (Sub-Committee of Property)

It is a blessing to tend God's house, and we hope several of you will join us as new members of the Garden Committee in 2026!!!

This year the Committee:

- Held a number of outdoor workdays to plant, trim and weed
- Purchased and planted flowers including "Zillions of Zinnias" which adorned the church grounds. Special thanks to **Mike Prange** for acquiring them
- Decorated the interior of the church with flowers given by members for Easter and Christmas services in honor and/or memory of others
- Enjoyed the beautiful altar flowers arranged each week by **Mary Bailey**
- Maintained the interior church plants through the hard work of **Sandy Hagen and Susan Rockwell**
- Decorated the altar area, narthex and entry for the various church holidays and events with the inspirational help of **Helen and Keith Krull, Christine Doud, Janet Haas, Susan Rockwell, Sandy Hagen, Darlene Kuhlman, Becky Benson, and Sandy Kalin**
- Maintained the exterior of the church through the hard work of **Dee Morin, Penny Rudolph, Susan Rockwell, Sandy Hagen, Darlene Kuhlman, Keith Krull, and the Property Committee**
- Joined the Prayer Shawl Ministry and Helping Hands Committees for Easter and Christmas lunches

Please join me in extending heartfelt thanks to **all the committee members** for their hard work and faithfulness and to the congregation for your generous support of the committee's projects.

Respectfully submitted, *Darlene Kuhlman, Chairperson*

REPORT OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

CANDIDATES FOR COUNCIL

The Nominating Committee presents the following candidates for election to a three-year term on Council.

	<p>JILL GEHNER</p> <p>Jill joined Holy Cross three years ago. While a member of Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd she helped other members create an endowment fund. Jill is ready to bring her past experience with church councils to Holy Cross. She will serve with an open mind and will strive to always act with love.</p> <p>At Holy Cross, Jill has led the Green Team to get us started with conserving resources, recycling, and reducing our use of disposable products. She is also happily involved in our Social Activities Committee. You might know her as the "snow cone lady" at the annual Slip 'n Slide event.</p>
	<p>DONNA JACKSON</p> <p>Donna has served two 3-year terms on Council in the past, including two years as Vice-President. She and her family have been members of Holy Cross since 1989. Donna has served on altar guild, the Care and Prayer team, social ministry, and youth group committees. She has served as Sunday School teacher and youth group leader. Donna is a retired RN, wife to Paul, mother and caregiver to Adam, who lives at home, and to Travis, who is married and lives in Kansas City. In her spare time, Donna enjoys reading historical fiction and mystery novels and sharing video calls with her two granddaughters.</p>
	<p>BOB MORIN</p> <p>Bob and his wife Dee have been Holy Cross members for 4 years. He grew up in St. Louis, educating in Catholic schools. He and Dee were part of King of Kings Lutheran Church, Missouri Synod, for 30 years. Bob served on Council there for 6 years, but eventually became disillusioned with some aspects of the Missouri Synod. This led the Morins to Holy Cross.</p> <p>Bob is a software engineer, employed by Wells Fargo Advisors for 25 years. Bob and Dee have two adult sons, one in Kansas City and one in St. Louis City. Bob has been an usher and deacon at Holy Cross and has served on Council for 3 years, one year as Vice President and this past year as President. Bob would welcome serving another Council term.</p>
	<p>KYLE KOBLAS</p> <p>Kyle has been a member of Holy Cross for three years, after moving here from Chicago. In his time with us, Kyle has served as part of the Call Committee for Pastor Matt and has joined the property committee, a valuable help!</p> <p>Kyle is looking forward to becoming more involved with our church. He is already involved with the Men's Bible Study and is a much-needed male voice in the choir! Kyle would welcome the opportunity to serve on Council.</p>

CANDIDATES FOR MISSION ENDOWMENT FUND TEAM

The Nominating Committee presents the following candidates for election to a three-year term on MEF:

	PAT GOERTZEN Pat is a long-time member of Holy Cross and has been privileged to serve on the Mission Endowment Fund Team. Currently, he is also a weekly offering teller, and often ushers at the second service. Pat has served on the property committee for many years and is a liaison to the nearby Fernwood Subdivision. Pat enjoys doing volunteer and "handyman" work and playing golf following his retirement from Boeing, where he worked as a software engineer and group leader. Pat would like to continue helping the MEF team direct the fund's resources to benefit the church and community.
	DIANA JOST Diana is running for reelection to the MEF team, having completed her first three-year term. She and her family have been active members of Holy Cross for 20 years. Diana attended Sunday School and was confirmed at Holy Cross in 2013. She participated in youth group and mission trips during high school and took part in youth meetings while in college. Diana holds bachelor's and master's degrees in accounting from Truman State University. She holds CPA and CFE certifications and is currently working as an auditor for KPMG.
	RICK JOKERST Rick Jokerst and his family have been Holy Cross members for 37 years. He began his career in the grocery business, and after 23 years joined the home loan profession. Rick soon formed his own mortgage banking company, Access Capital Funding. He has helped homeowners across the country and here at Holy Cross manage their mortgage portfolios for 34 years. Rick and Pam have been married for 46 years and have one married daughter, Amanda. Rick served on Council for 9 years, including 3 years as president. He is a prior co-chair of Stewardship, current member of Social Activities, and participates in Men's Bible Study. His hobbies are water gardening and koi fish keeping. Rick is an avid Cardinals fan, he loves the Beatles, and knows his sports trivia. Rick will offer his time and talents to further the mission of Christ here at Holy Cross and in the larger community.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING OPENING LITURGY

Recognizing that our faith is a living, busy, active and mighty thing, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with each of you.

And also with you.

Teach us to love you with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Descend on our hearts, that we may love others in the ways Jesus loves us.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Empower us to be enthusiastic in pursuing your vision for our congregation.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Move us to engage issues in our community in Christlike ways, and to pursue deep and authentic relationships with those with whom we serve and partner.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Strengthen us to face the barriers we encounter in doing your work, learning to work with others amid disagreement.

Receive our prayer, O God.

Give us the ability to adapt to the cultural, economic and social changes that occur in the neighborhoods we serve.

Receive our prayer, O God.

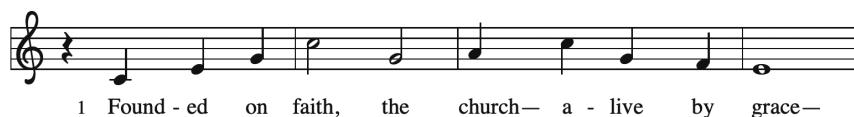
Guide us to be a healthy congregation that learns from its failures as well as its successes and offers wisdom to others.

Receive our prayer, O God.

As we strive to become the church that we proclaim to be, raise up leaders who focus on the gospel of freedom, forgiveness and reconciliation as given to us through God's indescribable act of love in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Renew us daily in our baptism, that we may discover vitality in our relationships with you, each other and those we serve in the world.

Amen.

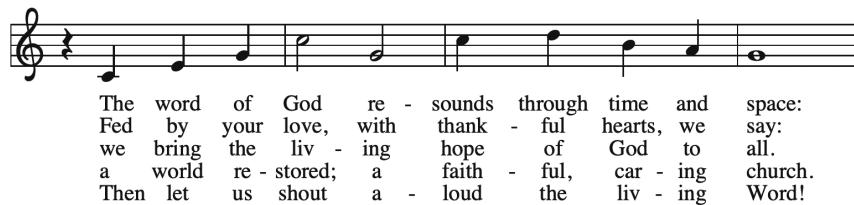
Founded on Faith



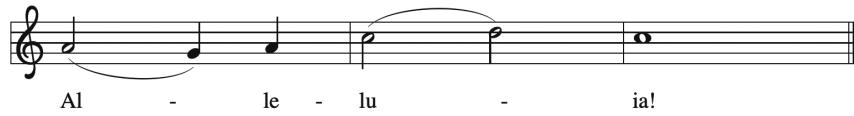
1 Found - ed on faith, the church— a - live by grace—
2 Your cross, O Christ, re - news our life each day.
3 E - quipped by prayer, we live the Spir - it's call.
4 Grow - ing in grace for God's cre - at - ed earth,
5 Found - ed on faith, called forth, em - pow'red to serve,



pro - claims the gos - pel here and ev - 'ry place.
Bap - tized in you, we learn and teach and pray.
Em - pow'red to serve with gifts, both great and small,
we yearn for jus - tice, peace, and hu - man worth;
we share God's end - less love with - out re - serve.



The word of God re - sounds through time and space:
Fed by your love, with thank - ful hearts, we say:
we bring the liv - ing hope of God to all.
a world re - stored; a faith - ful, car - ing church.
Then let us shout a - loud the liv - ing Word!



Al - le - lu - ia!

All Creation Sings, 1048

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THROUGH YOUR GENEROSITY, GOD IS AT WORK ACROSS THE ELCA.

MISSION SUPPORT

A portion of your offering, called Mission Support, advances the ministry of our church, helping the ELCA nurture Christian community, raise up leaders, serve our neighbors and strive for justice.

ELCA WORLD HUNGER

Part of our church's long tradition of meeting human needs, ELCA World Hunger testifies to our hope for and commitment to God's promise of a time when we will hunger and thirst no more. ELCA World Hunger walks alongside communities in more than 60 countries — including the United States — to create unique solutions to hunger and poverty.

LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE

Lutheran Disaster Response shares God's hope, healing and renewal with people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world. When the dust settles and the headlines change, we stay to provide ongoing assistance to those in need.

WHERE NEEDED MOST

Where Needed Most supports the powerful ways we work together around the world — supporting leaders, inspiring young people, fueling ministries and championing global mission. Gifts to Where Needed Most support and sustain the people, congregations, synods and ministries working around the world to realize the hope-filled future God promises.



Evangelical
Lutheran Church
in America

Sign up to hear more stories of impact from the ELCA churchwide organization at ELCA.org/subscribe.

Read about Mission Support and learn more at
LivingLutheran.org/SOFIA.