Cross Connection

NORTH AMERICAN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Growing Together

November 2026

Cross Lutheran Church & School
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Our mission:

Bring people to Christ.

Teach Christians to be disciples.

Send disciples to reach the world.

Inside this issue:

Preparing for	2
Celebration	3
Save the Date	4
Counsil Minutes	5
Financial	9
School Board	10
Calendar	15

From the Pastor's Desk

Thanks and Praise

My favorite Thanksgiving story is actually a Christmas story, and it's not even mine. Old Testament Professor Mark Throntveit told us a story about his sons back in the 1980s. Grandma came to spend Christmas with the family. So, on Christmas morning, the boys could not wait to get downstairs and see the gift that Grandma brought. (Hers would naturally be the best.) One by one, the boys received the coveted gift from Grandma, and one by one their faces dropped when they ripped open the paper to discover a package of Underoos. (For those who may have forgotten the 80s, Underoos were underwear with popular cartoon characters on them.) Not wanting to be ungrateful, each boy dutifully went to Grandma to give her a hug and a kiss and say an almost forced "thank you."

What the boys didn't realize is that while they were opening their Underoos, their uncle was in their bedroom installing a new Nintendo Entertainment System to a small television. When the boys took the rest of their presents upstairs, they discovered the Nintendo with a small card attached that simply said, "Love, Grandma." When they saw it, they came running back downstairs saying things like…

This is the best gift ever! You're the best, Grandma! This is awesome!

Notice, they never actually said the words "thank you" for the Nintendo. Even so, I think Grandma got the idea.

As it turns out, the Hebrew language in which the Old Testament was written does not actually have a word for "thanks," even though the translations sometimes say it. The word used actually means "praise." Praise goes beyond thanks. One can thank a person by simply saying "thanks." To praise a person, you must speak about the person and the things they have done, or reflect their good deeds in some other way.

Our lives as Christians are meant to be lives of praise. God's people were once disappointed with the gift of God, the child Jesus. They were disappointed that he did not immediately draw a sword and defeat the occupiers of Rome, or remove from their sight the tax collectors and prostitutes. They thought they just got underwear. They discovered later on that Jesus was greater than all of that. He did not get rid their streets of sinners, but he restored them. He could be killed (only by his permission), but he could not be kept in death. They wanted a mere hero, but they got God incarnate. They got their Nintendo.

What God has done for us is not meant to remain only with us. Those whom God has saved are part of something greater, the church. We are meant to come together and remember God's great works in Christ as we worship. We are meant to remember and partake of God's forgiveness in the sacraments. We are meant to lay down our lives in service for each other, and for those who do not yet believe. Praise is not just spoken. It is lived.

With that in mind, from everyone at Cross…

Happy Thanks – praise – giving!

Preparing for Worship

November 1 - All Saints Sunday- 1R-Revelations 7:2-8) 9-17 P-149 2R-1John 3:1-3 G-Matthew 5:1-12

November 8- Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost- 1R-Amos 5:18-24 P-70 2R-1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 G-Matthew 25:1-13

November 15- Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost- 1R-Zephaniah 1:7-6 P-90:1-12 2R-1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 G-Matthew 25:14-30

November 22 - Christ the King - 1R-Ezekiel 34:11-16, 20-24 P-95:1-7a 2R-1 Corinthians 15:20-28 G-Matthew 25:31-46

Worship and Music Ministry
Meeting Report
October 6, 2026

Members present: Peg McCrimmon, Mike Sting, Beth Elston, Pastor Kevin Kaiser, John Trowbridge - Trustee, John Smith - Council President, Karen Schuette - Chair.

*PIPE ORGAN REPAIR AND/OR UPGRADE - The Pipe organ committee recommended to Church Council to approve Phase I of the proposed work of releathering and restoration to the pipe organ. (Covenant Organs LLC to do the work). Church Council approved. The committee will meet to discuss fundraising for future work on the pipe organ.

NEW BUSINESS
*ALL SAINTS RECOGNITION - Peg and Karen will contact families for the recognition on Sunday, November 1. Pastor Kevin will give a list of the people who have passed this last year to Karen.

*SUNDAY SERVICES WITH COMMUNION
>REFORMATION - SUNDAY, 10/22
>ALL SAINTS - SUNDAY, 11/1
>CHRIST THE KING - SUNDAY, 11/22

*ADVENT BEGINS ON SUNDAY 11/29/26
>USING THE JESSE TREE FOR CHILDREN'S TIME??? - Pastor will talk with Leanne Smith about this possibility.
>ADVENT WREATH - Neil Hereford will stabilize the holders on the wreath and Peg and Karen will prepare it for use during Advent.

*Discussed the importance of communication between the Ministries, Committees and Pastor with a focus on last minute changes to the worship service. All Ministries,etc need to let Pastor and Worship and Music know in advance when something needs to be added.

NEXT MEETING - TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2026 AT 5:30PM

Birthdays

11/2	Natalya Salowich
11/4	Eric Gardy
11/4	Margaret Schneck
11/4	Shane Schulze
11/4	Bella Smith
11/5	Dorothy Rummel
11/5	Don Wheeler
11/5	Noah Young
11/6	Kristine Gettel
11/6	Peter Shupe
11/7	Dawn Hendricks
11/7	Adalynne Lange
11/9	Robert Johnson
11/9	Brennan Lange
11/9	Jayden Papkey
11/9	Joshua Rosenthal
11/11	Duane Baur
11/11	Steven Schulze
11/13	Randall Buchholz
11/13	Mark Kretzschmer
11/14	Alexander Peyerk
11/14	James Smith
11/16	Delores Lange
11/16	Ben Walsh
11/16	Bailey Welchner
11/17	Kevin Kaiser
11/17	Austin Roestel
11/17	Gina Smith
11/19	Kyle Edler
11/21	Tracy Polega
11/22	Jennifer House
11/22	Kassidy Swanson
11/24	Corbin Buchholz
11/24	Travis Fritz
11/25	Michael Sting
11/26	Madison Edler
11/26	Cameron Schuette
11/28	Grace Higgins
11/28	Tamara Vermeersch
11/29	Sarah Henkelmann
11/29	Jenna Lindenberg



Anniversaries

11/9	Gene & Pearl Persell
11/19	Cody & Haley Cucinello

In Loving Memory

Of **Atlas Burns** to Cross General Fund: Arloia Lutz,

Carol Bridges

Of **Sally Rogers** to Cross School:

Tom & Bernice Shupe

Of **Eunice McKenzie** to Cross School:

Tom & Bernice Shupe

Prayer LIST

THOSE IN NEED OF CONTINUED PRAYER

Dawn Hendricks, Bernice Shupe, Beth Elston, Mike Eden, Terry Sturm, Clark Elftman, Hannah Britt, Tom Shupe, Whitney Peyerk, Joe Stodola, Matt Edler, Larry Adams, Al Collison, Susan Beller, Hope Kittel, Noah Adams, Kay Schuette, Kevin Faupel, Ezra Sturm, Robert Blunt Jr, Marilyn Blunt, Alan Licht, Richard Baranski, Ron Kubacki, Danielle Corp, Justine Beltz, Dale Schuette, Gary Forster, Kaleb S, Mike & Jeanne Sting.

CROSS CHURCH SHUT INS

Vivian Buschlen, Cordelia Trost, Roberta Danks, Marvin Trost.

THOSE IN SERVICE OF OUR COUNTRY

Nicholas Swanson (US Air Force) Warren Walker (US Army)

If you would like your name or an immediate family member added to any of these lists, please contact the church office; additionally, if you would like your name removed, please do the same.







"Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ." -Colossians 3:23–24 (ESV)





OCC UPDATE

We hope you have all been busy shopping for various items for our shoebox project here are Cross. We do not need any more shoeboxes, pencils, crayons, band aids, toothbrushes or scissors, but there are many items that we could still use! We need notebooks, boys and girls toys, erasers, shoes, gloves, hats, jewelry, tools, combs, hair ties, nail clippers, calculators, jump ropes, marbles, harmonicas, cars, trucks, baby dolls, and much more. We are also asking members of our church to save and bring in their empty pill bottles so they can be made into more fishing kits, sewing kits, and jewelry kits! There is a bag by the mailboxes where you can put them! Please place all your other donations in the OCC Shoebox totes in the church entry ways. Our shoebox packing will take place on November 8th after the service. There will also be a special coffee hour that day in the gym. The offering from the coffee hour will go to help pay the $10 shipping and handling on each shoebox gift. If you have any questions, please ask someone from the Mission Outreach Ministry. Happy Shopping!

Cross Lutheran Church Council Minutes
Regular Meeting - September 8, 2026

The Regular Meeting of the Cross Lutheran Church Council was held on September 8, 2026 at the Church, 200 Ruppert Street, Pigeon, MI. President John Smith called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. Pastor Kevin Kaiser offered the opening prayer.

Members Present: Nancy Heck, Kent McKenzie, Kim Sears, John Smith, Kevin Stachowiak, and John Trowbridge.

Members Absent: Josh Barry, Kim Delpiere and Peter Shupe.

Also in Attendance: Pastor Kevin Kaiser and Day Care Director Miki Sageman

Agenda Update and Approval: Motion by Sears, second by Stachowiak to approve the agenda as presented. All Ayes. Motion carried.

Review of Minutes
Motion by Sears, second by Stachowiak, to approve the minutes of the August 11, 2026 meeting as presented All Ayes. Motion carried.

Pastors Report
Pastor Kaiser submitted a written report for Council to review.

Staff Reports
Day Care Director Sageman reported repairs to daycare walls have been made and we have two new Daycare Staff members.

Officer Reports
Treasurer Sears submitted a written financial report. The Combined Church Fund had a beginning balance of $159,554 and an ending balance of $161,937. Included in the fund balance are the Building Fund Balance of $5,415 and the Roof Repair Fund balance of $1,230. A $700 payment was made from the Building Fund to the General Fund leaving a remaining balance of $18,081 to be repaid. Motion by Stachowiak, second by Trowbridge, to approve the Treasurer's Report. All Ayes. Motion carried.

Trustee Reports
Ministry of Properties: Property Committee will meet to select the shingles for the Church Roof. Hope to have a completion date for the Roof by next meeting. The Parents of the school students and day care will he notified as to the starting and completion dates.

Worship and Music: Proposals for repairs and updates to the organ were reviewed. The Organ Repair Committee will review the proposals and then make a presentation to the Congregation. The Children's Christmas Program will be included in the December 20th Sunday Church Service and the Christmas Eve Service will be on December 24th at 7 p.m.

Old Business
Council discussed needed landscape clean up. It was suggested that we plan a Spring clean-up of the Church and School Grounds.

New Business
Thanks to all who helped with the Chicken Barbeque. It was a sellout (12:30 p.m.) event and raised an estimated $6,000.

Motion by Trowbridge, second by Heck, to adjourn. All ayes. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Heck
Cross Council Secretary

MISSION OUTREACH

minutes

October 7, 2026

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 1:05 p.m. with a prayer by President, Krisie Janke.

ATTENDANCE: Those in attendance were Krisie Janke, Tonja Nelson, Kay Schuette, Lorraine LePage, Laura Trost, Nancy Heck, Lori Smith, John Smith, and Nancy Schuette.

MINUTES: There was a motion made by Tonja Nelson to approve the September 2, 2026 minutes. Krisie Janke seconded the motion. Minutes approved.

COMMUNICATIONS: There were no communications at this time.

TREASURER'S REPORT: The Treasurer's Report was given by Lorraine LePage. Nancy Heck made a motion to pay Lori Smith for materials used in the sewing and fishing kits for OCC in the amount of $194.67. Tonja Nelson seconded the motion. Motion approved. Nancy Heck made a motion to pay Lorraine LePage for the key chains she purchased in the amount of $80.71. Krisie seconded the motion. Motion approved.

BUSINESS: Lori Smith gave the group an update on OCC. The kickoff was October 4. Information was put in the bulletin on Sunday with ways to help with OCC. Lori told the group that 40 shoeboxes were purchased and that there were wrapped boxes as well. Lori would like to meet on October 14 at 3:00 p.m. to go through the OCC items and make more sewing and fishing kits. Krisie suggested making a chart of what we have and what is needed.

Special guest, Rebecca Helmuth joined our meeting to talk about a mission trip she was planning on. The Lord had called her into missions the Summer of 2025. The organization she is working with is called "Youth with a Mission". Rebecca told us that she was raising money to go to Hawaii to be trained to be sent on to mission work in another country. She had been accepted into the program and is planning on leaving January 12, 2027. She would return in June. She is in need of $15,000 for her mission trip and has so far raised $9,000. After much discussion,

the group decided our Outreach check this month in the amount of $100 would go to Rebecca Helmuth. There was discussion about possibly seeing if the congregation would like to donate for Rebecca's mission. A motion was made by Nancy Heck to give a check to Rebecca for $100. Lorraine LePage seconded the motion. Motion approved.

Discussion was made about putting something in the Bulletin about wrapping up the food pantry collection. The day for the collection to end would be November 22.

Lori Smith has been busy sending out cards for the card ministry. Our next coffee hours will be October 11 and November 8. Pastor Appreciation Day will be October 11. Nancy Schuette purchased a cake. There will be a special collection for Pastor that day. On November 8, all members will be involved in helping with Coffee Hour.

The Church Directory is still in progress.

OTHER BUSINESS: Lorraine LePage suggested making a small pot of coffee for Sunday School families that gather in the overflow. More discussion to follow.

COFFEE HOUR: October 11 and November 8. Workers for October 11: Krisie Janke, Lori Smith, and Steffany Kaiser. Workers for November 8: All members who can be there.

NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be held on November 4, 2026 at 1:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:50 p.m. with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Laura Trost

Cross Lutheran School Board Minutes From Thursday, October 1, 2026

(To be approved at the Thursday, November 12, meeting)

Present: Kevin Stachowiak, David Faupel, Rita Herford, Michelle Walsh, Stephanie Ellicott, Matt Egan
Absent: Katie Van Valkenburg, Pastor Kevin

David opened in Prayer at 5:39 pm.

Rita made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Stephanie. Motion Carried.
Stephanie made a motion to approve the September 10th minutes, seconded by Matt. Motion carried.

No guest presentations.

CEA Treasurer's Report:

- October 1st Balance $65,912.46

School Treasurer's Report:

- October 1st Total Balance $81,255.26
- $1,000 Donation was made with no specific allocation
- Rita made a motion to put it into the Annual Fund for future needs. Seconded by Stephanie. Motion carried.

Motion to approve the treasurer's report by Matt, seconded by Rita. Motion carried.

CEA President's Report:

- Purchasing 9 first Aid Kits for school classrooms and athletic teams
- Monthly teacher appreciation ideas
- Buses for larger school field trips
- Funds were designated for the new Heating unit
- New ideas for gym soundproofing
- Walsh Meat Fundraiser Starting Friday, Nov 13th
- Option to go towards Tuition or Scholarship Fund

Principal's Report:

- Oct. 14 STEAM Day For 3-8th Grade
- Oct. 15-16 No School Teachers/ Conference
- Oct. 23 ½ Day Grandparents Day; End of 1st Quarter
- Oct. 29- Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Enrollment 65

New Business:

- Cross Country Coaching Stipend

- Michelle made a motion to pay the cross country coach stipend. Seconded by Rita. 1 abstained. Motion carried.

- Heating Unit

- Matt made a motion to take $3,000 from the Annual Fund and put it towards the Heating Unit. Stephanie seconded. Motion carried.

- Class sizes-ideas for t he future were discussed

5 Year Goals/Plans:

- Kevin reported that there are some topics to discuss on plans for growth at the next unification meeting.

Motion to adjourn by Michelle at 6:42pm. Seconded by Rita . Motion carried.

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Next Meeting is Thursday, November 12, at 5:30pm.

Respectfully submitted, Michelle Walsh

HONOR ROLL

1st Quarter 2026 / 2027

3rd Grade
*Lauren Herford
*Amelia Peyerk
Eve Herrin
Charlotte King
Everley Stonecipher
Carter Walsh

4th Grade
*William Oeschger
*Henley Ramsey
Hannah LaFave
Clayton McCain
Leo Peyerk
Jesse Segroves

5th Grade
*Alexis Herford
Lyncoln Janssen
William Kaiser
Ben Lounsbury
Rosalee Parker
Brynlee Walsh

6th Grade
*Jade Gong
* Kelsey Gong
* Ava Stachowiak
Rebekah Eberly
Addison Steinhorst
Lily Yackle

7th Grade
Avenia Thiel

8th Grade
RosaMae Lounsbury
Cole Walsh
Allison Yackle

* *indicates All A's*

November

11/5 & 11/6 Full day
(No PM Busses)
11/8 Kids sing at Church
11/11 Veterans Program 8:05 am
11/13 Walsh Meat Fundraiser Starts
11/25-27 No School
11/30 Walsh Meat Fundraiser DUE

From the desk of Mrs. Gebauer



Happy fall time everyone! Autumn has always been one of my favorite seasons ever since I have been a child. Since being back in Michigan for the last five years the season is so wonderfully long here compared to Alaska. Time is flying, the colors are changing, students are growing and learning, and the first quarter of the school year just ended. 5th/6th grade has had a great first quarter so far this year. They have so many questions and just love learning. I'm so blessed to be able to teach them and to watch them grow.





We are learning about the early history of the world this year. We have studied the book of Genesis and the timeline leading up to the flood with the ages of Noah's ancestors. We are studying how the flood impacted and changed the earth. Students are studying the geological evidence of the flood, plate tectonics, and earthquakes. We have mapped where earthquakes happen and made models for different types of plate tectonic movements.



We are also studying the archeological evidence for early civilizations like the Sumerians, Mesopotamia, and where Abraham lived. Students had fun making ziggurats out of playdough.

The students also enjoyed another awesome STEAM Day with many engaging and fun sessions. They used their skills in science, technology, engineering, art and math to complete many activities. This year in the 5th/6th grade classroom we had a mathematical escape room, "Crack the Code" designed by Mr. Faupel and Mrs. Shupe. It was fun to help facilitate and watch the students solve the mystery of who stole the STEAM Day celebration prize under a time crunch.



Celebrating Grandparents/Special Person Day at school is always a heart warming day at Cross Lutheran School. I love watching the students interact with their families as they play games and do crafts. It is fun to see them share their classrooms and a little of what they do each day.



I'm looking forward to the rest of the autumn season and especially the seasons of thanksgiving we are entering. The students and I thank you for your prayers and support as we continue to learn how we are fearfully and wonderfully made this school year.

Staff Spotlight



Meet **Ms. Gebauer**, our 5th and 6th grade teacher! This is her fourth year at Cross Lutheran School, where she especially enjoys teaching Language Arts and Social Studies. Ms. Gebauer attends Bad Axe Free Methodist Church and has many favorite Bible verses and hymns that are meaningful to her. She enjoys reading, crocheting, baking cookies, spending time with family, and serving at church. Ms. Gebauer has had quite a few unique life experiences, including growing up with sled dogs, performing with her brother and high school choir in Vienna, Austria, and playing the flute throughout middle and high school. Her favorite animal is a frog! What Ms. Gebauer loves most about Cross Lutheran is that God is at the center of everything. She describes the school as an extended family where students and staff feel safe, supported, and encouraged to grow academically, socially, and spiritually.

Meet **Mrs. Segroves**, our Spanish teacher! Although she is on loan from Lakers, this is her second year teaching at Cross Lutheran. Mrs. Segroves and her husband, David, have two children, Jesse and Josiah, along with two dogs and two cats. Her home church is Pigeon River Mennonite, and her favorite subject is Spanish, of course! In her free time, she enjoys gardening and playing the ukulele. Mrs. Segroves loves that every student at Cross Lutheran is respected and valued, with individual needs being met to give each child the best opportunity for success.

Her favorite Bible verse is Psalm 87!





Meet **Ms. Rebekah**, one of our Latchkey Teachers! Ms. Rebekah has been part of Cross Lutheran for seven months and is the daughter of Joel and Melissa Helmuth. She attends Elkton Missionary Church, and her favorite subject is math. Some of her favorite verses and songs include “It Is Well” and Proverbs 16:24. Ms. Rebekah is preparing to attend YWAM, a campus where young adults are equipped to become missionaries. She has already been on four mission trips to Cyprus (twice), Bali, Indonesia, and Alaska! In her free time, she enjoys watching movies, camping, shopping, traveling, and hiking. Her heart is to love the children she cares for just as Jesus loves them!

Youth and Education

On October 17, our youth joined with Pigeon River Mennonite Church Youth for an evening of snacks, devotions, a fun activity, and then traveled to Kohl Farms for the Flashlight Corn Maze. Sixteen (8 from Cross plus 2 friends) Middle School/High School youth attended!

Our next event at Cross will be held on **Wednesday, November 11** in our church and gym from 4:30-6 PM. We will have a **GIVE THANKS** party. There will be a time to worship, snacks, games, and projects that will go home and some that will be distributed to others. This event will be for **all youth** from **Preschool-High School.** We are requesting that Jr. High and HS youth assist with the activities. We welcome donations of easy to handle snacks such as cookies, bars, cheese, veggies, and fruit. Contact Gwynne Barry if you are able to help in any way.

Plans are being made for special activities for **ALL** ages each Sunday in Advent beginning on November 29. We will open with a special chapel service at 4 PM which will be followed with activities for all ages. Please plan to join us as we prepare our hearts for the celebration of the birth of our Savior. This Advent activity's focus will be "Let's Go See the Savior!".

"The Great Search" will be our message presented by our youth on Sunday, December 20. Preparations have begun! Children of God of **all** ages will be involved in our service beginning at 9:30 AM. PS-6th grade students have begun learning the songs during SS.

As always, Sunday School teachers are needed. Please consider this ministry. Your input and involvement in the ministry of youth and education in any area is welcome! Don't wait until the time is "right" in your life. Now is the time!

In His love,

Gwynne Barry
Ministry of Youth and Education



November

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1  Sunday School 8:45am Communion Service 9:30am	2 Handbells 5:30 pm Choir 6:30pm	3 Worship & Music 5:30pm	4 Mission Outreach 1:00 pm Chapel 8:05 am Bible Study 6:00pm	5 Jean Quilts 1:00 pm	6	7
8 Sunday School 8:45am **Kids Sing in Church** Service 9:30am	9 Handbells 5:30 pm Choir 6:30pm **Jr. High Girls Basket Ball 6pm @ Caseville**	10 Counsil 7:00pm School Photo Retake day	11  **Veterans Program Chapel 8:05 am** Bible Study 6:00pm	12 Quilters 1:00 pm CEA 4:45 pm School Board 5:30 pm	13	14
15 Sunday School 8:45am Communion Service 9:30am	16 Handbells 5:30 pm Choir 6:30pm	17	18 Chapel 8:05 am Bible Study 6:00pm	19 Jean Quilts 1:00 pm **Thanksgiving Dinner**	20 **11/20 Robotics Tournament** **NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**	21
22 Sunday School 8:45am Communion Service 9:30am	23 Handbells 5:30 pm Choir 6:30pm	24	25 	26	27	28
29 Sunday School 8:45am Communion Service 9:30am	30 Handbells 5:30 pm Choir 6:30pm					