



WE ARE TRANSFORMED IN CHRIST
to Share the Hope of Eternal Life.
First Sunday after Christmas 28, 2025

GOSPEL
MATTHEW 2:13-18



“Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt,
and stay there until I tell you.”

Holy Cross Lutheran Church
THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD

200 Market Street, Ste. Genevieve, MO.63670

Office Phone 573-883-5361

holycrossstegen@gmail.com

Website: holycrossstegen.org

Facebook: facebook.com/holycrossstegen

Needs for pastoral care in our area, call one of our Elders-

Rick Hutson 573-780-9390,

Randy Ruzicka 314-210-4279 or Wayne Schremp 573-883-6060

THE ORDER OF SERVICE

The ringing of the bells starts at 9 a.m. Pastor/Seminarian prepares for a long set of bell tones before walking up to altar.

Words written in **Bold** generally signify congregation response.

The Greeting

This is the day that the Lord has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

We are transformed in Christ

To share the hope of eternal Life.

Welcome, let us stand and share the sign of peace and conversation.

Sit

Confession and Absolution

519 In His Temple Now Behold Him

Text: Henry J. Pye, c. 1825–1903, alt.

Stand

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

P In the name of the Father and of the \dagger Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C **who made heaven and earth.**

P If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?

C **But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared.**

P Since we are gathered to hear God's Word, call upon Him in prayer and praise, and receive the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ in the fellowship of this altar, let us first consider our unworthiness and confess before God and one another that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and that we cannot free ourselves from our sinful condition. Together as His people let us take refuge in the infinite mercy of God, our heavenly Father, seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, and saying: God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

C **Almighty God, have mercy upon us, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.**

P Almighty God in His mercy has given His son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the \dagger Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Service of the Word

Introit

Psalm 31:1, 3, 5; antiphon: Revelation 7:14b

These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.

They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

In you, O LORD, do I take refuge; let me never be put to shame;

in your righteousness deliver me.

For you are my rock and my fortress;

and for your name's sake you lead me and guide me.

Into your hand I commit my spirit;

you have redeemed me, O LORD, faithful God.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son

and to the Holy Spirit;

as it was in the beginning,

is now, and will be forever. Amen.

These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.

They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Kyrie

LSB 204



C Lord, have mer - cy; Christ, have mer - cy; Lord, have mer - cy.

Gloria in Excelsis (intro)

LSB 204



C 1 To God on high be glo - ry And peace to all the earth;
2 To You, O sole - be - got - ten, The Fa - ther's Son, we pray;
3 For You a - lone are ho - ly; You on - ly are the Lord.



Good-will from God in heav - en Pro- claimed at Je-sus' birth!
O Lamb of God, our Sav - ior, You take our sins a - way.
For - ev - er and for - ev - er, Be wor-shiped and a - dored;



We praise and bless You, Fa - ther; Your ho - ly name, we sing—
Have mer - cy on us, Je - sus; Re - ceive our heart - felt cry,
You with the Ho - ly Spir - it A - lone are Lord Most High,



Our thanks for Your great glo - ry, Lord God, our heav'n-ly King.
Where You in pow'r are seat-ed At God's right hand on high—
In God the Fa-ther's glo - ry. "A - men!" our glad re - ply.

Text: Stephen P. Starke

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Let us pray.

Almighty God, the martyred innocents of Bethlehem showed forth Your praise not by speaking but by dying. Put to death in us all that is in conflict with Your will that our lives may bear witness to the faith we profess with our lips; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Sit

Old Testament Reading

Jeremiah 31:15–17

¹⁵Thus says the LORD:
“A voice is heard in Ramah,
lamentation and bitter weeping.
Rachel is weeping for her children;
she refuses to be comforted for her children,
because they are no more.”

¹⁶Thus says the LORD:
“Keep your voice from weeping,
and your eyes from tears,

for there is a reward for your work,
declares the LORD,
and they shall come back from the land of the enemy.
¹⁷There is hope for your future,
declares the LORD,
and your children shall come back to their own country.”

A This is the Word of the Lord.
C **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm

Psalm 54; antiphon: v. 4

¹O God, save me, by your name,
and vindicate me by your might.
²O God, hear my prayer;
give ear to the words of my mouth
³For strangers have risen against me;
ruthless men seek my life;
they do not set God before themselves.
⁴Behold, God is my helper;
the Lord is the upholder of my life.
⁵He will return the evil to my enemies;
in your faithfulness put an end to them.
⁶With a freewill offering I will sacrifice to you;
I will give thanks to your name, O LORD, for it is good.
⁷For he has delivered me from every trouble
and my eye has looked in triumph on my enemies.

Epistle

Revelation 14:1–5

¹Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father’s name written on their foreheads. ²And I heard a voice from heaven like the roar of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. The voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps, ³and they were singing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and before the elders. No one could learn that song except the

144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth.⁴ It is these who have not defiled themselves with women, for they are virgins. It is these who follow the Lamb wherever he goes. These have been redeemed from mankind as firstfruits for God and the Lamb,⁵ and in their mouth no lie was found, for they are blameless.

A This is the Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Stand

Alleluia and Verse (intro)

C Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

C These things are writ-ten that you may be - lieve that

Je - sus is the Christ, the Son of God.

C Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

Holy Gospel

Matthew 2:13-18

P The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the second chapter.

C Glory to You, O Lord.

¹³When [the wise men] had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” ¹⁴And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt ¹⁵and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

¹⁶Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. ¹⁷Then what was fulfilled was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah:

¹⁸“A voice was heard in Ramah,
weeping and loud lamentation,
Rachel weeping for her children;
she refused to be comforted, because they are no more.”

P This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

Apostles' Creed

C **I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.**

The third day He rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From thence He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life \ddagger everlasting. Amen.

Sit

389 Let All Together Praise Our God

Text: Nicolaus Herman, c. 1480–1561

Sermon

Pastor Mark Hofferber

For today's prayer requests, please write them on the attendance card provided during the service. Once completed, fold the card and either hand it to an usher or place it in the offertory plate. The Pastor or Seminarian will include these requests during the Prayers of the Church.

We honor the Lord with our tithes and our gifts. Please Stand as the offering is brought forward and sing

Stand

Three ways to give:

- 1) offering plate—cash or check.
- 2) online at holycrossstegen.org • Click the “Give” icon.
- 3) by mail.

Create In Me (intro)



Cre-ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re-new

a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a - way
 from Thy pres - ence; and take not Thy Ho - ly Spir - it
 from me. Re - store un - to me the joy of Thy sal - va - tion;
 and up - hold me with Thy free spir - it. A - men.

Text: Psalm 51:10-12

Tune: Johann Georg Winer, 1583-1651, adapt.

Text and tune: Public domain

Prayer of the Church First Sunday after Christmas

December 28, 2025

Let us pray for the whole Church of God in Christ Jesus and for all people according to their needs.

Gracious Lord, You sent forth Your Son as a shoot from the stump of Jesse to bear godly fruit. Grant that we who have been grafted into Christ would bear the same sevenfold fruit of the Spirit. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Almighty God, in the depth of love for Your creation, You brought Your Son to the temple and placed Him in the hands of blessed St. Simeon. Abide with those You place in the Office of the Holy Ministry, that their hands would be ever ready to deliver Your gifts to Your people and their lips bold to speak Your Gospel. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth! Out of the mouths of babes and nursing infants You have perfected Your praise. Silence the enemy and the avenger. Turn the hearts of all who, like Herod, would despise children or destroy the unborn for selfish gain. Show Your forgiveness to those who are penitent. Give Your comfort to all women who mourn the loss of infants, and fix our eyes on Christ, who for a

time was spared but has shed His blood for our salvation. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O God, Your own Son became incarnate for us and grew from childhood into maturity filled with wisdom, and Your favor was upon Him. Grant to parents and children the wisdom and courage to know You as Savior and Redeemer and to gather at Your bidding around Your Word and table. Help us form within our children the knowledge of what is right and good according to Your Word, as well as the will to do it. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Righteous Lord, graciously preserve our nation and cause our leaders to serve faithfully and wisely, making God-pleasing decisions and walking in integrity. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Heavenly Father, we thank You that You have declared us to be Your children and fellow heirs with Christ. Trusting that You delight to hear the prayers of Your children, we commend to You all who need deliverance from affliction, grief and suffering *[especially _____]*. Give them relief according to Your will, and work all things for their comfort and faith. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Merciful God, let all who come to the Sacrament of the Altar this day see their salvation in the very body and blood of Christ given them to eat and to drink. Let all return home like blessed Simeon, well prepared to depart in peace. Lord, in Your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

O Gracious Father, Grant to this congregation the guidance of the Holy Spirit to choose a Pastor according to Your will for Holy Cross church, Lord in your mercy **hear our prayer.**

All these things and whatever else You know that we need, grant us, Father, for the sake of Him who died and rose again and now lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God forever. **Amen.**

Service of the Sacrament

Stand

Preface

LSB 208

P The Lord be with you.

C And also with you.

P Lift up your hearts.

C We lift them to the Lord.

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

C It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

P It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, holy Father, almighty and everlasting God, for the countless blessings You so freely bestow on us and all creation. Above all, we give thanks for Your boundless love shown to us when You sent Your only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into our flesh and laid on Him our sin, giving Him into death that we might not die eternally. Because He is now risen from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity, all who believe in Him will overcome sin and death and will rise again to new life. Therefore with angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven we laud and magnify Your glorious name, evermore praising You and saying:

Sanctus

LSB 208



C Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth a - dored;



Heav'n and earth with full ac-claim shout the glo-ry of Your name.



Sing ho - san-na in the high-est, sing ho - san - na to the Lord;



Tru - ly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord!

Text: Stephen P. Starke

Prayer of Thanksgiving

P Blessed are You, O Lord our God, king of all creation, for You have had mercy on us and given Your only-begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

By faith the saints of old held fast to Your promise of things hoped for though not yet seen, leaving an example and encouragement for us who walk now by faith and not by sight.

Grant that we may faithfully eat and drink this Holy Supper of Your Son's body and blood and in the union of His mystical body, the Church, be joined in unending praise with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; Moses, Elijah, and all the faithful prophets; the blessed apostles and evangelists, the holy martyrs, and all the saints in glory who fought the good fight of faith before us.

Hear us as we pray in His name and as He has taught us:

Lord's Prayer

C Our Father who art in heaven,
hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done on earth
as it is in heaven;
give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses
as we forgive those
who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory
forever and ever. Amen.

The Words of Our Lord

P Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: “Take, eat; this is My $\text{\tfrac{X}{+}}$ body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.”

In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: “Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My $\text{\tfrac{X}{+}}$ blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

Pax Domini

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C Amen.

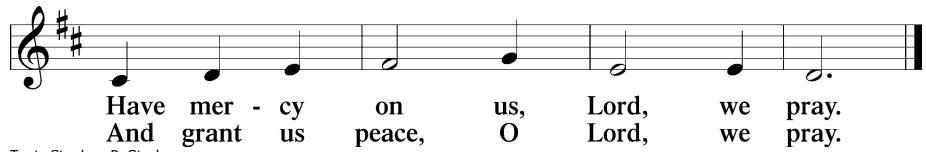
Agnus Dei (intro)

LSB 210

C 1 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,
2 O Je - sus Christ, true Lamb of God,

You take the sin of the world a - way;
You take the sin of the world a - way;

O Je - sus Christ, on us, Lamb Je - sus, of God, Christ,



Text: Stephen P. Starke

Sit

Distribution

The pastor and those who assist him receive the body and blood of Christ first and then distribute them to those who come to receive, saying:

Take, eat; this is the true body of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, given into death for your sins.

Amen.

Take, drink; this is the true blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, shed for the forgiveness of your sins.

Amen.

In dismissing the communicants, the following is said:

- P** The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen and preserve you in body and soul to life everlasting. Depart \ddagger in peace.
- C** Amen.

359 Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

360 All My Heart Again Rejoices

Text: Paul Gerhardt, 1607–76, abr., adapt.; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827–78, alt.

385 From East to West

Text: Coelius Sedulius, 5th cent.; tr. John Ellerton, 1826–93, alt.

Stand

Nunc Dimittis (intro)

LSB 211

1 O Lord, now let Your servant go -
2 All glory to the Son, For I have seen the glo - ry to the Son,
part in heav'n - ly peace, For I have seen the glo - ry to the Son,
glo - ry, Of Your re - deem - ing grace:
Spir - it, For - ev - er Three in One;
A light to lead the be - gin - tiles, Un -
For as in the be - gin - ning, Un -
to Your ho - ly hill, The glo - ry of Your
now, shall ev - er be, God's tri - une name re -
peo - ple, Your cho - sen Is - ra - el.
sound - ing, Through all e - ter - ni - ty.

Post-Communion Collect

A Let us pray.

We give thanks to You, almighty God, that You have refreshed us through this salutary gift, and we implore You that of Your mercy You would strengthen us through the same in faith toward You and in fervent love toward one another; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

A Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.

The Lord look upon you with favor and \ddagger give you peace.

C Amen.

390 Let Us All with Gladsome Voice

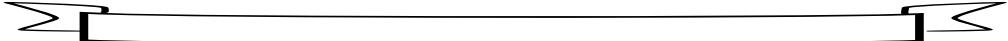
Text: German, 17th cent.; tr. Catherine Winkworth, 1827-78, alt.

Acknowledgments

Divine Service, Setting Four from Lutheran Service Book

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Created by Lutheran Service Builder © 2025 Concordia Publishing House.



DECEMBER/JANUARY EVENTS

Officers for 2027

Board of Elders Three-Year Terms

***Wayne Schremp 2 years (left)**
Rick Hutson 1 year
Randy Ruzicka 3 years

Board of Trustees Three-Year Terms

***Rick Hudson 1 year**
Jim Bell 3 years
Glenn Fleugge 3 years
Dan Sullivan 3 year

Board of Evangelism Three-Year Terms

* **Betty Schremp 2 years (left)**
Vicky Surman 2 years
Cathy, Dew 2 years

- Denotes Head of Boards

Church Council One-Year Terms

President - Vicky Surman
Vice president - Paul Ringwald
Treasurer - Tim Inman
Financial secretary - Donna Ringwald
Recording secretary - Connie Schwent

Footnote to our congregation Nathan Schultz has Affirmation of Faith and Debbie George has Recognition of New Membership and Debbie Fogarty also has new membership of Recognition. Congratulations to All, so excited to have you with Holy Cross Lutheran Church!!

Sunday, January 4th, 2026, at 4:00 PM Perry County Lutheran Chorale is having an after Christmas concert. Chorale with chamber ensemble- at the Trinity Lutheran church 57 Church St. Altenburg, MO. 63732, great music for everyone

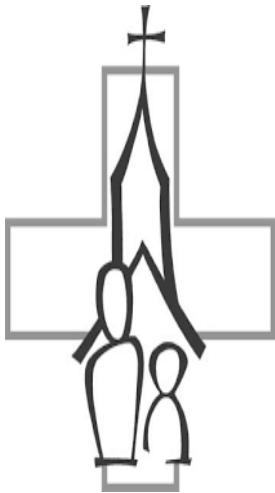
WEEKLY CALENDAR/UPDATES

Vacancy pastoral hours upon request

Secretarial hours Wednesday/Thursday/Friday 11:30 AM to 3:30 PM

Sunday's church doors open at 8:00 AM service begins at 9:00 AM following with a Bible Study coffee and pastries generally served.

Tuesdays Bible study starting at 10:30 AM to 11:30 AM



SERVING TODAY

Pastor/Seminarian: Pastor Mark Hofferber

Scripture Reader: Linda Ruzicka

Ushers: Wayne Schremp & Rick Hutson

Communion Servicer: Randy Ruzicka

Organist: Todd Brueckner

Up-coming Date: January 04,2026

Seminarian John Hansen

Scripture Readers: Linda Ruzicka

Ushers: Wayne Schremp & Rick Hutson

Communion Servicer: Randy Ruzicka

Organist: Todd Brueckner

Sunday Church Attendance	Attendance
First Week	36
Second Week	30
Third Week	35
Christmas Eve	63
Fourth Week	

Your Financial Support of Your Church	12/28/25	Year-to-Date
Weekly Budget Requirement		
Actual Offerings—including online offerings (budget)		
Ahead/Behind Budget Requirement		
% Ahead/Behind		

In Our Prayers This Week and Celebrations

Throughout the week, please keep these people in your daily prayers. As a model for prayer, consider going through the A.C.T.S. of prayer. Adoration: praising God for who He is. Confession: confessing your sins to God, especially those that weigh on your heart. Thanksgiving: thanking God for specific blessings. Supplication: asking God for help.

For those who are homebound **Barb Jones, Sharon Estes, Doug Arnold, Doris Bayuk, Nick Krege, Pansy Meyer, Valerie Rakey.**

For healing and continued recovery **Bill Staffen** (Bonnie Keir's brother, cancer), **Dustin Hutson** (recovering from a brain bleed), **Pastor Jim Kirk** (treatment for myeloma), **Carol Steiger-Rudoff** continued prayers for recovery of cancer (Connie Schwent's Sister In-law), **Laura Pruneau Fallert**, new cancer treatment, continued prayers for healing for **Wayne Phillips** and **prayers for Ray Beckham**. Please add prayers for **Maia Rottler** she is starting treatments for a form of Leukemia (Granddaughter of LaJune Rottler.)

For those celebrating birthdays in December **Nevaeh Schlueter** (Dec.15), **Nick Krege** (Dec. 16), **Helen Vickers** (Dec. 20), **Kara Inman** (Dec.23).

For those celebrating wedding anniversaries in December **Ron and Linda Bollinger** (Dec.09), **Jeff and Paula Boland** (Dec.19) **Bill and Vicky Surman** (Dec. 20).

For Those Who Mourn Warm thoughts for the people missing their loved ones over the holidays

For local, state, and national elected officials that they uphold goodness and work humbly for those they serve.

For our community that more people believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

We continue to pray for a Pastor to find his calling to Holy Cross Church.

For our church family that we are transformed in Christ to share the hope of eternal life.

To submit a prayer request for inclusion in the bulletin, contact Connie, the church secretary, at 573-535-0084, or the church office at 573-883-5361 or holycrossstegen@gmail.com. Please provide your request by Wednesday noon to ensure it appears in that week's bulletin. Prayer requests will continue to be listed until removal is requested by the submitting family. If you would like the Pastor or Seminarian to read a request aloud during the service, write it on the attendance card, fold the card, and either give it to an usher or place it in the offering plate.