

HOLY CROSS VOICE

HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH
2033 Kaskaskia Road
P.O. Box 7
Renault, Illinois 62279



Rev. James Stefanic, Pastor
Office: 618-458-6680
email: holycross@htc.net

1853 – “Comfort, Comfort, Ye My People” – 2026

Volume XLX, Issue 3

Website: holycrossrenault.org

March 2026

A Pastoral Perspective

The Lenten Journey

Luke 9:51, *“When the days drew near for [Jesus] to be taken up, He set His face to go to Jerusalem.”*

Jesus was singular in focus. He kept His eyes ahead. Nothing would deter Him. He set His face to go to Jerusalem. His hand was set to the plow with eyes never wavering off His target. Jerusalem, the holy city, was His destination. His purpose was not to mingle. He was not going to Jerusalem to hobnob or take time to dig for the dirt of the day. He wasn't heading there for the temple or to consult with religious leaders. Jesus was going to satisfy the will of His Father. Jesus was going to die.

Luke's gospel takes a turning point in 9:51. Everything that follows is to be read in light of Jesus' journey to Jerusalem. *“The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priest and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.”* (Luke 9:22) Jesus knows what is ahead.

The season of Lent is a journey. We began it on Ash Wednesday with a reminder of our death and the reason we shall return to the dust from which we came. We continued with Jesus' defeat of the devil during the temptation in the wilderness. Each week will inch us ever closer to Jesus in Jerusalem. Each week the journey will beckon us to keep our eyes on Jesus.

Lent serves as a paradigm for the Christian life. Our life in Christ is a journey begun at the font and continued daily.

Journeys can be long. They can be mentally straining. A 5-hour drive can feel like it takes forever. Kids pester, “Are we there yet?” A 5-mile hike can be a slog. Obstacles arise. Boredom can set in. But eyes need to stay on the prize. One foot must step in front of the other. Each step makes the end ever nearer.

The 40-day journey of Lent teaches us how to put one foot in front of the other in our Christian life. Our eyes are to stay on the prize. *“For here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city that is to come”* (Hebrews 13:14). Obstacles arise. Boredom can set in. Distractions pop up along the way and seek to deter us. The evil one seeks to devour you.

If our life in Christ is to be strengthened, then we are to embrace the journey. Our life in Christ is strengthened when the Divine Service is a priority, when we daily read our Scriptures, when we daily pray, when we daily sing the hymns of the Church, when we daily take up our cross and follow Jesus.

Day after day...one foot in front of the other...fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith who for the joy that was set before Him journeyed to Jerusalem and endured the cross, scorning its shame.

May we ever walk with Jesus, and follow His example pure, through a world that would deceive us and to sin our spirits lure. Onward in His footsteps treading, pilgrims here, our home above, full of faith and hope and love, let us do our Father's bidding.

Onward to the heavenly Jerusalem. Blessed journey in Christ!

Peace,
Pastor Stefanic



What's Inside:

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Holy Cross Information

Phone: 618-458-6680
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Email: holycross@htc.net
Website: holycrossrenault.org
Facebook: Holy Cross Lutheran Church Renault



Official Acts:

Funeral:



Called to Her Eternal Home:

Mary Alice Veach

September 12, 1944 – February 15, 2026

Funeral: February 21, 2026

Officiated by Pastor James Stefanic



Thank you to everyone who attended our Holy Cross Family Movie Night. We appreciate everyone who was able to come. It was an enjoyable evening of fellowship and laughter.

Sunday School Staff & Board of Christian Education



The Season of Lent



continues on

Wednesday, March 4. More details on page 7.



Annual Report Booklets

There are still 2025 Annual Report Booklets in the narthex. The booklets have your name on them. Please pick up your copy when you are in church. The booklets will not be mailed out. Please let Suzanne know if you cannot find yours.



Holy Cross Women's Bible Study and LWML

We will not meet again until May.



Board of Community Outreach

(By Sharon Bartosik)

Friendship Sunday was held on February 15th with several additional friends and family in attendance at our worship service. Our youth and Sunday School teachers contributed to the service with the playing of the bells to the hymn of 'Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty'.

We would like for everyone to mark your calendars for our annual Confirmation Reunion which will be held on Sunday, April 12. We will be recognizing former confirmands from the years ending in 1 and 6. Following the service there will be a fellowship meal in the hall. The Board will provide the meat and drinks and our members may bring sides and desserts. Please come to worship and celebrate with our honored guests.



On Sunday March 8, 2026

****CELEBRATING IN MARCH****

God's Blessings to Holy Cross Birthdays

- 1 - Jason Bartosik
- 1 - David Keller
- 1 - Bonita Kent
- 6 - Bob Keller
- 9 - Cory Mosbacher
- 11 - Kyle Cowell
- 12 - Konner Ballard
- 13 - Jamie Matthews
- 14 - Kade Cowell
- 14 - Bud Huelsmann
- 15 - Brenda Warchol
- 16 - Donald Schultheis
- 18 - Kaitlyn Mueller
- 23 - Amos Matthews
- 29 - Connie Seboldt
- 29 - Joshua Stefanic
- 30 - Emmitt Crook

&

Anniversaries

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| Henry & Helen Koch | March 5, 2005 |
| Larry & Mary Mueller | March 9, 1985 |
| Mark & Brenda Seboldt | March 16, 2002 |
| Randy & Laveta Braun | March 29, 1980 |



REMINDER

Information for the **April Voice** is needed by *****March 20*****



- Mar 4: Confirmation Class 5pm
- Mar 4: Lenten Service 7pm
- Mar 4: Elders' Meeting 8:15 pm
- Mar 5: Pastor @ District Office 4:30 pm
- Mar 8: Council Meeting 11:00 am
- Mar 8: All You Can Eat Chicken Dinner Baldwin
- Mar 8: All You Can Eat Spaghetti Millstadt
- Mar 9: VBS Kick Off Meeting 7:00 pm
- Mar 10: Pastor @ Winkel, Millstadt
- Mar 11: Confirmation Class 5pm
- Mar 11: Lenten Service 7pm
- Mar 13: Wartburg Family Weekend
- Mar 18: Confirmation Class 5:00 pm
- Mar 18: Lenten Service 7:00 pm
- Mar 20: April Voice Deadline/First Day of Spring
- Mar 22: English Country Dance for 7th - 12th grades @ Christ Our Rock, Centralia
- Mar 25: Confirmation Class 5:00 pm
- Mar 25: Lenten Service 7:00 pm
- Mar 28: LYF Laser Tag 10:00 am
- Mar 29: Palm/Confirmation Sunday 10:00 am
- Apr 2: Maundy Thursday 7:00 pm
- Apr 3: Good Friday 7:00 pm



Scheduled to Serve in March

March 1 & 4:

- Elder: Leland Mueller (1st only)
- Head Usher: Mark Seboldt
- Ushers: Steve Henry, Matt Keller
Wayne Seders, Bella Corona
- Acolyte: Tad Henry (1st only)
- Counters: Jim & Connie Seboldt

March 8 & 11:

- Head Usher: Kyle Guebert
- Ushers: Mark Ottoson, Tim Dougherty
Donald Schultheis, Bob Keller
- Acolyte: Megan Moeller (8th only)
- Counters: Bill & Sue Kunkel

March 15 & 18:

- Elder: Mark Seboldt (15th only)
- Head Usher: Jim Seboldt
- Ushers: Kenny Schultheis, Bob Keller
Aimee Corona, Dwight Jacobs
- Acolyte: Elijah Stefanic (15th only)
- Counters: Ginny Strong & Bonnie Meyer

March 22 & 25:

- Head Usher: Mark Seboldt
- Ushers: Steve Henry, Matt Keller
Wayne S-eders, Bella Corona
- Acolyte: Lynnette Candler (22nd only)
- Counters: Kenny & Sandy Schultheis

March 29, April 2 & 3:

- Head Usher: Don Roth
- Ushers: Kenny Schultheis, Bob Keller
Mark Ottoson, Neil Huntley
- Acolyte: Bella Corona (29th)
- Counters: Bob & Linda Keller

- Apr 4: LYF Set up for Easter Breakfast 9:00 am
- Apr 5: Easter 6:30 & 10:00 am
- Apr 12: Confirmation Reunion
- Apr 14: Pastor @ Winkel, Renault
- Apr 14: Council Meeting 7:00 pm
- Apr 18: LWML Spring Retreat
- Apr 21: May Voice Deadline
- Apr 26: Trivia Event for Holy Cross Family
- Apr 27: Voters' Meeting 7:00 pm
- May 5: Pastor-Spring Pastors' Conference, Godfrey
- May 6: Wm Bible Study 10:00 am & 7:00 pm
- May 6: Elders' Meeting 7:00 pm
- May 12: Mother's Day
- May 14: Ascension Day
- May 15: June Voice Deadline
- May 19: Council Meeting 11:15 am
- Jun 3: Wm Bible Study 10:00 am & 7:00 pm
- Jun 3: Elders' Meeting 7:00 pm
- Jun 14: Council Meeting 11:15 am
- Jun 15: July Voice deadline
- Jun 21: Father's Day
- Jun 22 - 26: VBS Week
- July 6: SS Teachers & Bd of Ch. Ed Mtg 7:15 pm
- Sep 13: Rich in Years Sunday

**Holy Cross Women's Bible Study
and LWML News**

March 2026

by Linda Keller



- In February, we collected \$158.00 for Mites at our meeting and 10 ladies attended.
- Our next Bible Study will be on Wednesday, May 6, 2026. During Lent, we do not meet. Watch the bulletins and the April Newsletter for more information.
- Our “Living a Chocolate Life Tea” on February 15th was enjoyed by 27 ladies and girls. It was a great afternoon of fun with fellow Christians. Thank you to all who attended and who helped, to make the day a success.
- **Up Coming Events:**
- **Lower Kaskaskia Zone 2026 Spring Renewal--**
 - **Location:** Immanuel Lutheran (West Point), 1699 West Point Road, Campbell Hill, IL 62916
 - **Cohost:** Emmanuel (Percy)
 - **Date/Time:** Thursday, March 26, 2026, 8:30 – 11:30 a.m.
 - **Theme:** “Compassion, Forgiveness, and Mercy”
 - **Scripture Verses:** Lamentations 3:22-23 “The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”
 - **Guest Speaker:** Deb Mervert – Mercy Ship (floating hospital mission)
 - **Each group will need to send two delegates to vote for the zone president and vice president at the retreat.**
- **Southern Illinois Retreat** – April 18, 2026 at Our Savior Lutheran Church and Lutheran Student Center in Carbondale, IL, 9:00am-2:30pm. The theme for the day is “See How They Love One Another”, based on John 12:34 “*By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another*”. Registrations are due by April 1, 2026 with a cost of \$20.00 with includes snacks and lunch.
- **SID District Convention**—September 11-12, 2026 at Metro East Lutheran High School, Edwardsville, IL. More information to come.

“COMPASSION, FORGIVENESS, AND MERCY”

Is the theme for our next
Lower Kaskaskia Zone
LWML Spring Renewal

Our Guest Speaker is Deb Mervert
Mercy Ship (Floating Hospital Mission)

Immanuel Lutheran church (West Point)
1699 West Point Road, Campbell Hill, IL
Co-Host Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Percy

Thursday, March 26, 2026
Registration 8:30 am
Opening Devotions: 9:00 am

**We invite you to join
Lutheran Women in Mission
Southern Illinois District**

2026 Spring Retreat
See How They Love One Another
*“By this all people will know that you are my disciples,
if you have love for one another.”*
John 13:34

APRIL | SAT | 2026
18

FROM 9:00AM- 2:30PM
**OUR SAVIOR LUTHERAN CHURCH & STUDENT CENTER
700 S. UNIVERSITY CARBONDALE**

**Check-in, Coffee & Snacks will be from 9:00-9:30AM
Worship, fellowship & breakout sessions to follow.**

Name (First Last): _____
Home Address: _____
Email Address: _____
Phone Number: _____
Home Congregation & Location: _____

Permission to photograph (without names) for LWML publicity?
Yes or No

Registration Fee: \$20 per Person
(Lunch will be provided)
Please, select how you would like to pay.
Check Number: _____
Or Cash: _____

Checks should be made out to LWML SID
Kindly, RSVP by April 1, 2026 to:
Mary Gray
835 Thunderstorm Road,
Carbondale, IL 62901

**The ingathering will be a
monetary donation to Our
Savior LWML Refugee
Resettlement Project.
This project is aiding an
Afghan family get to
safety.**



Please keep them in your prayers!



MCMILLERS FROM ROME

Rev Tyler, Yanela, Lia and Alessia McMiller
 Italian phone number: +39-346-327-0882
tyler.mcmiller@lcms.org

&

THE SEMINARY'S

Michael, Ariann,
 and Jude Conroy
conroym@csl.edu



&

The Stefanic Family

Pastor James Stefanic
 Mrs. Sarah Stefanic
 John Mark
 Elizabeth
 Elijah
 Hannah
 Miriam
 Abigail
 Joshua
 Rebekah and
 Eve



**ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
 BALDWIN, IL**

All-You-Can-Eat Chicken Dinner
 (dine-in only)

March 8, 2026

Serving from 10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Carry Outs Available
 (1/2 chicken only with sides)

Menu:

Fried Chicken, Mashed Potatoes-Gravy, Corn,
 Green Beans, Slaw, Homemade Desserts,
 Tea, Lemonade, Coffee

Prices:

Adults - \$16 Children (4-12) - \$8 Under 4 – Free

Proceeds to support Lutheran Schools in Red Bud,
 Prairie, Steeleville and Chester



**TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH IN
 MILLSTADT**

will hold its annual Spaghetti Dinner

March 8

from 10:30 am to 2:30 pm.

The menu includes spaghetti, bread sticks,
 salad (featuring Papa Vito's salad dressings),
 dessert, and beverages.

Carry-outs will be available.

This is an "all you can eat" dinner;

the cost is \$13 for adults,

\$5 for children (ages 4 – 10)

and free for children ages 3 & under.

Trinity's address is 503 East Washington,
 Millstadt, Illinois 62260. The building is walker,
 wheelchair, and stroller friendly.

Carry-out Available

**WARTBURG
 FAMILIES**

"A retreat to bring the
 family together."

HIGHLIGHTED TOPICS

Personal & Family Values

Communication Skills

Personality Awareness

Leadership & Followership in the Family

Wartburg Family Retreats are designed with families of tweens and teens in mind, but all ages are welcome and will gain practical skills to strengthen the family unit.



FRIDAY EVENING
 -
 SUNDAY MORNING

**MARCH
 13-15**

STAY IN YOUR OWN
 CABIN AREA AS A
 FAMILY



This program is made possible through a grant from the Lutheran Foundation of St. Louis. The Foundation is the grant-making ministry of 83 St. Louis area Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod congregations. The Foundation's vision is to see the Church brought into the lives of hurting people and people included in the healing life of the Church.



REGISTRATION HELP
 Contact Camp
 Office:
 618-939-7715





Youth Confirmation Plans for 2026

Please let Pam Melching know no later than
Sunday, March 22nd

if you are interested in purchasing
an Easter Lily this year.

The cost is \$9 each.

Cards available in the narthex.

include your name and

“In Thanksgiving of” or “In Memory of”.

You can also mail it to:

Pam Melching

5131 Southfork Road

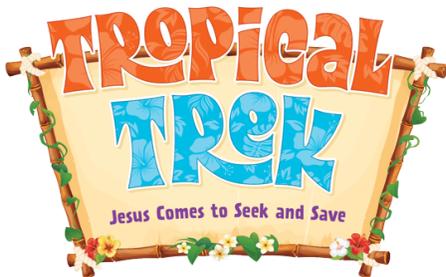
Prairie du Rocher, IL 62277

Note: not Renault

Please make checks payable to Pam
Melching.

Thank you,

Pam



2026 VBS

June 22 - 26

Thank you to those who have
volunteered to help with VBS.
The VBS Kick-off meeting will be
Monday, March 9 at 7:00 pm
in the Social Hall.

If you are able to help in any way,
Please let Brenda know.



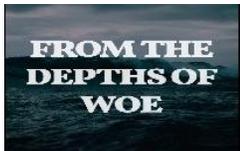
Spiritual Discipline (March):

Daily pray one psalm.

Hymn of the Month (March):

LSB #453 “Upon the Cross Extended”





“From Depths of Woe:
Redemption of the Patriarchs”
Midweek Lenten Services: 2026
Holy Cross Lutheran Church ~ Renault, Illinois



WEDNESDAY AFTER THE SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT
MARCH 4 AT 7:00 P.M.

“The Redemption of Our Brotherhood”



WEDNESDAY AFTER THE THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT
MARCH 11 AT 7:00 P.M.

“The Redemption of Our Witness”



WEDNESDAY AFTER THE FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT
MARCH 18 AT 7:00 P.M.

“The Realization of Our Rest”



WEDNESDAY AFTER THE FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT
MARCH 25 AT 7:00 P.M.

“Rebuilding of the House of God”



PALM SUNDAY/CONFIRMATION
MARCH 29 AT 10:00 A.M.
For Elizabeth Stefanic



MAUNDY THURSDAY
APRIL 2 AT 7:00 P.M.

GOOD FRIDAY
APRIL 3 AT 7:00 P.M.



EASTER SUNDAY – APRIL 5

AT 6:30 A.M.* & 10:00 A.M.*

Outdoor Service at 6:30 a.m.
(Indoors if bad weather)

LYF Easter Breakfast at ca. 7:40 a.m.

Sunday School Classes at 8:30 a.m.

Indoor Service at 10:00 a.m.

**Indicates the Lord’s Supper is celebrated*



LYF

serving breakfast

following Sunrise Service 6:30 am





February 2, 2026

Voters' Meeting

(January Meeting postponed due to snow storm)

President, James Seboldt, called the meeting to order and Pastor Stefanic opened with prayer.

There were 22 members with no guest or new members at this time.

The Minutes from the October 20, 2025, and December 14, 2025, Election meeting was read and approved as presented.

The Financial Secretary Report was presented by Brenda Seboldt in the absence of Bonnie Meyer who referred to her portion of the 2025 Annual Report on page 36. In addition, the Wurst Mart and apple butter transactions are listed on pages 45 and 46.

The Treasurer's Report was presented by Sue Kunkel who referred to the Treasurer's portion of the 2025 Annual Report on page 39.

A motion was made to accept the Financial Reports as presented. The motion was seconded and carried.

The Pastor's Report was presented by Pastor Stefanic who expressed his gratitude to the congregation for the warm welcome since arriving at Holy Cross. He is busy working on arranging visits with all members.

Holy Cross has received a letter of transfer from St John's Lutheran Church, Red Bud, IL of Neil Huntley to Holy Cross. He is accepted as a member as of February 2, 2026.

The Board of Elders Report was presented by Bill Kunkel. The only new information was that Holy Cross is going back to pre-COVID communion practice by using the real glass communion cups.

The Board of Finance reported that the board is scheduling a meeting to review property/liability insurance for the church grounds and building. The voters will need to decide whether to make the annual donation to Life Network of Southern Illinois.

The Board of Trustees Report was presented by Dwight Jacobs who referred everyone to the Trustee portion of the 2025 Annual Report on page 18. Bushes next to church were removed by Aaron, Jack and Sharon Bartosik. Jason Bartosik supplied the tractor to clean the church parking lot after the January 25 snow. The trustees noticed the stain glass windows of the church are deteriorating. The voters suggested Dwight obtain information on storm windows and any other options of protection. The social hall dishwasher is leaking. The board received a bid to replace a seal costing \$1800. Estimates were also obtained for a new dishwasher costing \$4600 + \$1300 for labor and electrical

updates. It was noted that the current dishwasher was purchased in 1978 and has lasted a long time.

A motion was made to have the trustees purchase a new dishwasher and make the appropriate updates. The motion was seconded and carried.

The Board of Community Outreach report was presented by Sharon Bartosik who referred everyone to their portion of the 2025 Annual Report on pages 15 & 16. The board will hold their 2026-year planning meeting on February 10, 2026. Sunday, February 15, 2026, is designated as Friendship Sunday to encourage all members to bring friends and family to worship with the members of Holy Cross. Valentine cards will be sent to the special care and Rich in Years members along with college student members.

The Board of Education and Sunday School Superintendent Report was presented by Suzanne Wilson who referred to the 2025 Annual Report on page 29. Movie night is set for Friday, February 6, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. The movie "CARS" will be playing and snacks will be provided. Suzanne explained the LYF report is on page 33 of the 2025 Annual Report.

OLD BUSINESS:

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Holy Cross needs to decide whether to donate money to the Life Network of Southern Illinois for their Banquet and the amount.
A motion was made to assign \$300 to Life Network of Southern Illinois for the annual banquet. The motion was seconded and carried.

There being no further business, *a motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting.* The meeting closed with The Lord's Prayer.

*Respectfully submitted by Wendy Mueller,
Congregational Secretary*



Financial Secretary Report

&



Treasurer's Report

Are listed in the
2025 Annual Report Books.



(By Jenny Candler)

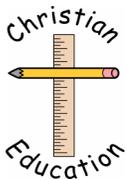
At the February meeting, the following activities were discussed: Laser Tag on March 28 and sponsoring a Trivia afternoon with the congregation on April 26. Each member was assigned a category and bring their questions to the next two meetings to discuss them. We will have the Easter Breakfast fundraiser with the same menu as previous years. Each member is asked to bring a dessert. We will set up for Easter Breakfast on April 4 at 9:00 am. Our next meeting will be March 1.

Acolyte March Schedule:

- 1: Tad
- 8: Megan
- 15: Elijah
- 22: Lynnette
- 29: Bella

Upcoming events:

- March 28: Laser Tag at The Edge 10am
- March 29: Confirmation Sunday
- April 4: Set up for Easter Breakfast 9 am
- April 26: HC Potluck & Trivia



Sunday School Teachers & Board of Christian Education Meeting:
July 6 at 7:15 pm



News

(By Suzanne Wilson)

We enjoyed an evening of fellowship and watching the movie “Car” on February 6. There were seventeen children and eleven adults. On Friendship Sunday fifteen children played “Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God Almighty” on the bells.

Congratulations to Elizabeth Stefanic who will be confirmed on March 29.

God's blessings to our March birthday:

- Amos Matthews on the 23rd
- Joshua Stefanic on the 29th



Happy March baptismal anniversaries:

- Evan Keller on March 6,
- Makinzie Kempfer on March 20, and Natalia Rhymes on March 23.
- Celebrating on March 15.

Upcoming Events

- March 29 – “My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less” & walk in with palm branches
- April 5 – Son rise Service
“Allelu! Allelu! Everybody Sing Allelu!”
- May 25 – Bells TBA
- June 22 - 26 VBS week

Sunday School Scheduled to Serve in March:

March 1:

- Acolyte: Aubrey
- Am. Flag: Kamden
- Ch Flag: Emily
- Greeter: Aimee
- Offering Usher: Elijah
- Pledge Boards: Megan

March 8:

- Acolyte: Tad
- Am. Flag: Hannah
- Ch Flag: Abigail
- Greeter: Bart
- Offering Usher: Johnna
- Pledge Boards: Andrew

March 15:

- Acolyte: Bella
- Am. Flag: Miriam
- Ch Flag: Matty
- Greeter: Lynnette
- Offering Usher: Joshua
- Pledge Boards: John Mark

March 22:

- Acolyte: Cailyn
- Am. Flag: Oliver
- Ch Flag: Evan
- Greeter: John Mark
- Offering Usher: Emma
- Pledge Boards: Raylan

March 29:

- Acolyte: Elizabeth
- Am. Flag: Rebekah
- Ch Flag: Elijah
- Greeter: Andrew
- Offering Usher: Ella
- Pledge Boards: Jaxon

Movie Night



L is for the life Jesus gave
E is for eternal life in heaven
N is for never losing faith
T is for trust Jesus will come again

