

HOLY CROSS VOICE

HOLY CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH
2033 Kaskaskia Road
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 7

Website: holycrossrenault.org

July 2026

A Pastoral Perspective

Freedom

It is, once again, the month of freedom. No one can quite agree on what it actually is, but everyone seems to agree it's a good thing. Everyone wants “freedom”. Freedom may mean the opposite of slavery. Some interpret freedom to be released from any and all constraints. Some understand freedom to mean that no one has any right to tell *me* what to do.

The questions we should be asking ourselves as the Church is this: What is Christian freedom?

Wrapped up in the worldly cry for freedom is another word: autonomy. Autonomy is about self-rule. Autonomy is about the self-made man. Autonomy means to be self-governing. Lurking behind the sinful nature's call for freedom is the quest for man to be in control. “No one can tell me what I should or should not have!” “Who do you think you are, Mr. Big Stuff?” “I will march to the beat of my own drum, thank you very much.”

Our desire for control is nothing other than sin. The cry for autonomy is misguided. Adam and Eve wanted just that. They wanted to be free! They wanted to be from the authority of the God who created them. They wanted to be free to know good and evil. They wanted to be free to let their hearts do whatever they so desired. For Adam and Eve, freedom meant control. The pursuit of that old buzzword meant the death of them.

Our quest for control means the same for us. It is nothing more than believing we are free to do what we want, any old time. Truth be told, we are bound. We are not free. St. Paul writes in Galatians 5:17, ***“For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to***

do.” The sinful flesh consumes itself with self-importance. The sinful flesh binds itself again and again to a yoke of slavery. Freedom is not something achieved. It cannot be. There is no possibility for it. Freedom is something given.

“For freedom Christ has set us free”

(Gal. 5:1). Jesus alone grants freedom. Bound to sin, there is no hope for escape. But in Christ, there is freedom. ***“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (Gal. 3:27).*** Freedom comes from outside of you. Freedom is a gift. It is not something for which you fight or strive. Freedom in Christ is pure Gospel. ***“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me” (Gal. 2:20).***

Christ sets you free. Freedom is only found in Him. So entwined is your life in the crucified Christ that you are bound to Him. You are under His domain. You are under His control. His freedom means the death of you. He kills the self-made man you try to construct for yourself and rebuilds you as His own Spirit-filled follower.

To Him alone who sets you free, be all glory, honor, and power.

Peace,
Pastor Stefanic



What's Inside:

Page 2 Thank you Note, Upcoming July Events
Page 3 Camp News & Summer Sunday School
Page 4 Church Events & Schedules
Page 5 VBS News
Page 6 VBS News continued
Page 7 LWML News & TIMS month
Page 8 LYF & SS News
Page 9 LWML Cookbook & Convention
Page 10 June Calendar

Spiritual Discipline (July):

Memorize a Hymn

Hymn of the Month (July):

LSB #745. “In God,
My Faithful God”

Holy Cross Information

Phone:

618-458-6680

Parsonage Phone:

618-458-7142

Email:

holycross@htc.net

Website:

holycrossrenault.org

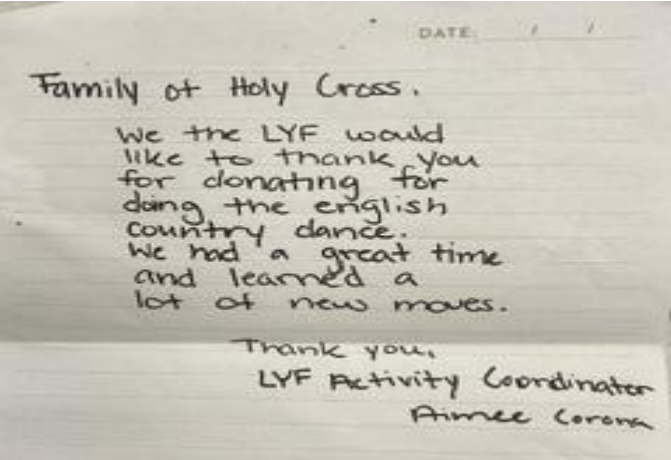
Facebook:

Holy Cross Lutheran Church Renault



A Thank you to Tim Dougherty,
For making the wooden note holders for our VBS class. Your creative ideas to improve the project was a fantastic one and greatly appreciated.

*Suzanne Wilson and the
7th & 8th Grade Classes*



(The money was donated from the Easter Breakfast.)

Thank you to everyone who made 2026 VBS a huge success. Whether you taught a class or music; helped with crafts or games; brought delicious snacks or served them; helped set up and/or take down decorations and games; drove children to and from VBS; organize the event or just included us in your prayers. Thank you also to Pastor Stefanic for leading our openings & closings each day. A special thank you to our Lord for blessing us with nice weather during the week. Even though it rained on Friday, we were prepared with water games. We truly appreciated each & every one of you.



REMINDER
Information for the
August Voice
is needed by
*****July 17*****



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



Holy Cross Women's Bible Study and LWML

We will meet on Wednesday, July 1, 2026 at 10:00am and 7:00pm in the social hall.

Our bible study will be from Page 18 of the Spring Quarterly. Join us, for what God's word says to us when we ask, **“How Long, Lord?”** Please bring your bible, mites and plan to attend.



Church Council & Voters' Meeting

The Church Council will be meeting upstairs of the Social Hall on Tuesday, July 7th at 7:00 p.m.

The voters' meeting will be a joint meeting with the congregation. It will be in the Social Hall on Sunday, July 13. There will be a potluck meal following the worship service. The meeting will be immediately after the meal. All members of the congregation are invited and encouraged to attend this meeting for food and fellowship.



You Are Invited...



**LYF hosting an
Ice Cream Social
On Friday, July 10.
At 6:00 pm.**

The meal will consist of hot dogs, chips and lemonade. The dessert will be ice cream with toppings.

If you are unable to attend and wish to help sponsor a Holy Cross confirmation student, please place your donation in the offering plate and mark it, “Confirmation Camp”. Thank you in advance for your donations. (see page 3 to see who you are helping and more details)

Ice Cream Social
July 10, 2026
6:00 pm

Hot Dogs & of course ICE CREAM with all the toppings!!

Cost: Free Will Donation

To Benefit: LYF members attending the Camp Wartburg for Confirmation Retreat

Who's invited: All our Holy Cross Family and interested neighbors and friends

Pack a cooler if you want something other than water or lemonade to drink. Lawn chairs recommended.

We'll have a few games handy, and plan to socialize under the trees.

Please contact Jenny Candler if you'd like to contribute in some way, but cannot make it.

Potential Toppings we're contemplating:

Strawberry topping
Chocolate syrup
Pecans
Peanuts
Toasted Coconut
Caramel topping
Fudge topping
Mini chocolate chips
Brownie bites
Sprinkles
Bananas?
Berries?

Our Holy Cross
Confirmation 5th through 8th Grades
include the following:
8th - Andrew, Emma, Oliver, Elijah,
7th - Raylan, Craig, Emily,
6th - Ella, Hannah
5th - Evan

Have you turned in your
Favorite recipes?



LWML is needing them
By Sunday, August 2.

Please submit your favorite recipes
on the template.
(See page 9)

If you need extra, they are in the narthex.
There are no limits
to the number of recipes
you can turn in.

Thank you for making this activity a success.



Save
the Date



RICH IN YEARS SUNDAY
September 13, 2026

&

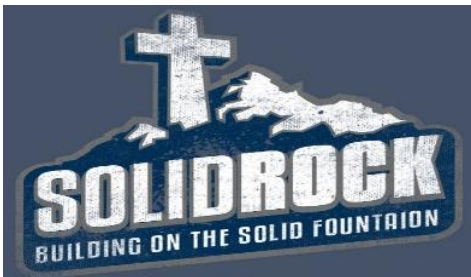


Holy Cross Wurstmarkt
October 25, 2026
Everyone's help is appreciated.



Summer Sunday School
July & August
GOD'S SOLID ROCK TRUTH
Begins July 5

What the world says vs What God says



Blessed is
the nation
whose God is
the LORD. . .
PSALM 33:12



Scheduled to Serve in July

July 5:

Elder: Leland Mueller

Head Usher: Jim Seboldt

Ushers: Tim Dougherty, Bella Corona,
Wayne Seders, Tad Henry

Acolyte: Elijah Stefanic

Counters: Kenny & Sandy Schultheis

July 12:

Head Usher: Don Roth

Ushers: Mark Ottoson, Donald Schultheis
Kyle Guebert, Austin Melliore

Acolyte: Jaxon Pigg

Counters: Bob & Linda Keller

July 19:

Elder: Mark Seboldt

Head Usher: Bill Kunkel

Ushers: Kenny Schultheis, Bob Keller
Aimee Corona, Dwight Jacobs

Acolyte: Cailyn Wilson

Counters: Jim & Connie Seboldt

July 26:

Head Usher: Mark Seboldt

Ushers: Wayne Seders, Steve Henry
Neil Huntley, John Mark Stefanic

Acolyte: Aubrey Melching

Counters: Bill & Sue Kunkel



Upcoming July Events:

July 1: Wm Bible Study 10:00 am & 7:00 pm

July 3: Friday morning Bible Study 10 am

July 6: SS Teachers & Bd of Ch. Ed Mtg 7:15 pm

July 7: Circuit Confessions Study 9:30 am

July 7: Council Meeting 7:00 pm

July 9: Garden Place, Oak Hill, Cedarhurst

July 10: Friday morning Bible Study 10:00 am

July 10: LYF sponsoring an Ice Cream Social 6pm

July 12: Voters' meeting 12:30 pm after potluck

July 14: Circuit Confessions Study 9:30 am

July 17: August Voice deadline

July 17: Friday morning Bible Study 10:00 am

July 20 – 22: Confirmation Camp Wartburg

July 24-25: Pastor @ St Paul's West Allis, WI

July 27-29: Pastor @ Bugenhagen Conference,
Racine, WI

July 28: Board of Community Outreach 7:00 pm

July 31: Weekly morning Bible Study 10 am

****CELEBRATING IN JUNE****

*God's Blessings to Holy Cross
July Birthdays*

1 – Mark Wilson

2 – Emily Moeller

8 – Cailyn Wilson

10 – Wendy Mueller

10 – Abby Stellhorn

12 – Samantha Wilson

13 – Jessica Venatta

15 – Aimee Corona

18 – Micah Moeller

19 – Hannah Stefanic

20 – Joe Keller

20 – Carter Cox

21 – Isabella Corona

22 – Jim Seboldt

24 – Laverne Hinrichs

24 – Roger Johnson

29 – Shelby Geurin

29 – Charles Mosbacher

July Anniversaries

Steve & Doris Mosbacher..... July 2, 1988

Bud & Tammy Huelsmann July 7, 2001

William & Deborah Rosser..... July 8, 1988

Tiffany & Andrew Stellhorn July 24, 2010



*Upcoming August - October
Events:*

Aug 5: Wm Bible Study 10:00 am & 7:00 pm

Aug 5: Elders' Meeting 7:00 pm

Aug 7, 14, 21, 28: Friday Bible Study 10:00 am

Aug 10: Council Meeting 11:15 am

Aug 17: September Voice deadline

Sep 2: Wm Bible Study 10:00 am & 7:00 pm

Sep 2: Elders' Meeting 7:00 pm

Sep 4, 11, 18, 25: Friday Bible Study 10:00 am

Sep 11-12: LWML SID 43rd Biennial Convention

Sep 13: Rich in Years Sunday

Sep 20: Council Meeting 11:15 am

Oct 25: HC Wurstmart



Vacation Bible School NEWS
By Brenda Seboldt



Tropical Trek
Jesus Comes to Seek and Save

“The Son of Man came to seek and save the lost.” Luke 19:10
VBS is June 22-26



It was an amazing week praising God at a **Tropical Trek – Jesus Comes to Seek and Save**. The church grounds erupted with lots of energy and celebrating as well as Pastor Stefanic

The Key Bible Verse was “*The Son of Man came to seek and save the lost.*” Luke 19:10

Lessons and Memory Verses:

Day 1: Lesson-God Saves Baby Moses
“*Call upon Me in the day of trouble, I will deliver you.*” Psalm 50:15

Day 2: Lesson-Ruth and Naomi
“*Fear not, for I am with you.*” Isaiah 41:10

Day 3: Lesson-Jesus and Zacchaeus
“*You are precious in My eyes...and I love you.*” Isaiah 43:4

Day 4: Lesson-Jesus Rises from the Dead
“*You, O Lord, are my hope, my trust.*” Psalm 71:5

Day 5: Lesson-Jesus Appears to Paul
“*Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.*” 1 Timothy 1:15

Mission Project:



Our Mission project was a collection of items and monetary donations for Camp Wartburg. New items needed were: pool noodles, playing

cards, Crayola markers, sidewalk chalk. Money collected will be used to help send kids to camp.

We collected 74 items and a total of \$681.75 during VBS. Our total collection for the week including the closing is \$861.00.
Thank you for your support.

DONATIONS			
	MONEY	ITEMS	TOTAL
Mon	\$215	3	
Tues	\$126	22	\$341
Wed	\$134	17	\$475
Thur	\$103	27	\$578
Fri	\$103	5	\$681

Average attendance: 30 students

Everyone enjoyed the snacks organized by Cindy Keller and Lydia Chambers.



Thank you to Betty Gross, Cindy Keller, Linda Keller, Sue Kunkel, Bonnie Meyer, Wendy Mueller, Wayne Seders, Connie Seboldt, and others we may have missed who made cookies

or donated snacks. Thank you also to those who provided monetary donations.

Pastor Stefanic did an outstanding job leading the Openings and the Closings at VBS. Tiffany Stellhorn and John Mark Stefanic led music time for the students, who really enjoyed this part of their day.



Group Project:

Our Group Project was a Colorful Cross. Each student colored a paper cross, and Linda Keller assembled them into a cross to display. The key bible verse

was the center of the cross.

Thrivent Action Grants: thank you to everyone who applied for an Action Grant. We were able to purchase lesson materials, craft supplies and ice cream for the closing program. The support of the Congregation for VBS is greatly appreciated.

Thank you: to everyone for volunteering to help on the VBS Team and to those who brought in supplies for our craft projects and allowed us to borrow picnic tables.

Our VBS Team:

Opening & Closing: Pastor Stefanic, Tiffany Stellhorn

Music: Tiffany Stellhorn and John Mark Stefanic

Pre-K – K: Lynnette Candler and Bella Corona

1st & 2nd Grade: Gina Matzenbacher

3rd & 4th Grade: Lisi Stefanic

5th & 6th Grade: Sandra Ottoson and Cailyn Wilson

7th & 8th Grade: Suzanne Wilson

Snacks: Cindy Keller, Kadie Keller, Jacqui Keller, Mary Weiser, Betty Gross

Games: Sarah Bartosik and Tad Henry

Helpers: Aimee Corona, Linda Keller, Doris Mosbacher, Sandy Schultheis, Sarah Stefanic

Director: Brenda Seboldt

Prayers: Everyone



Gaga Ball is always a favorite of the VBS students. Thanks to Tim Dougherty for building that several years ago. Thank you for setting it up and taking it down: Tim Dougherty, Leland Mueller, Caleb & Mark Seboldt, Abby, Becky, Elijah, Eve, Hannah, Josh and Lisi Stefanic.

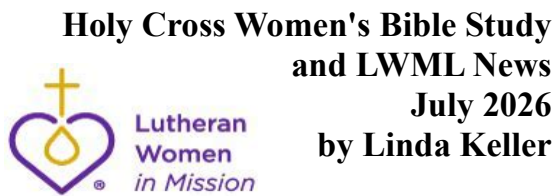


The Closing Program was held on Friday night. The students did an outstanding job singing songs and saying the bible verses from each day. We had 76 in attendance, 25 students, 3 kids and 48 adults for the closing program. Attendees were treated to ice cream treats.

Holy Cross is blessed with talented, creative, and willing individuals eager to help with projects. Many members are unable to help with VBS, but their prayers are certainly needed and appreciated. Overall, this was a successful week, and it could not have been done without the help of every member of Holy Cross, the students, and their parents.



A Bird who also listened to our VBS.



- Our next Bible Study will be on **Wednesday, July 1, 2026 at 10:00am and 7:00pm in the social hall.** Our Bible Study will be **“How Long, Lord?”** on page 18 of the Spring Quarterly. Join us, for what God's word says to us when we ask How Long, Lord?
- **Up Coming Events:**
- **SID District Convention—“Rooted and Grounded in Love!”** will be held September 11-12, 2026 at Metro East Lutheran High School, Edwardsville, IL.
 - Registration begins on Friday, Sept. 11th at 6:30pm with activities from 7:00-8:30pm. Fridays featured speaker is Rev. Paul Ernewein, from Louisiana, who is coming to share about his ministry, **Forged by Fire.**
 - On Sat. Sept 12th, registration is 7:00-8:20am and Opening Worship begins at 8:30am. Keynote speaker will be Deaconess Rosie Adle, she has co-authored a book, Ladylike with her sister, Rebekah Curtis and is the Associate Director of Deaconess Formation at the Seminary in Fort Wayne, IN. During the afternoon, there will be six different breakout sessions, with different speakers, you will get to choose 3 sessions.
 - There will be an in-gathering for Metro East Lutheran High School of Amazon or Sam's gift card or a monetary gift. Also, in support of our new mission projects, there will be “Mite Market” with items from various groups.
 - **We have 2 delegates and still need 2 alternates from our ladies of the congregation.** Registrations for the convention are **due by July 1st.** Cost is \$35.00 per person for lunch on Saturday and snacks both days. You are not required to attend both days. Anyone wishing to attend, please see Linda for extra information or questions.

We are planning to collect recipes for a Holy Cross Cookbook. Please submit your favorite recipes on the template or talk to Linda about an alternate way to submit. We are hoping for 200 recipes, so please consider including several,

there is no limits to the number of recipes you can include. **The deadline for turning in your recipes is August 2nd.** We are hoping to have the cookbook completed by Wurstmart in October. Thank you for making this activity a success. (see pg. 9)



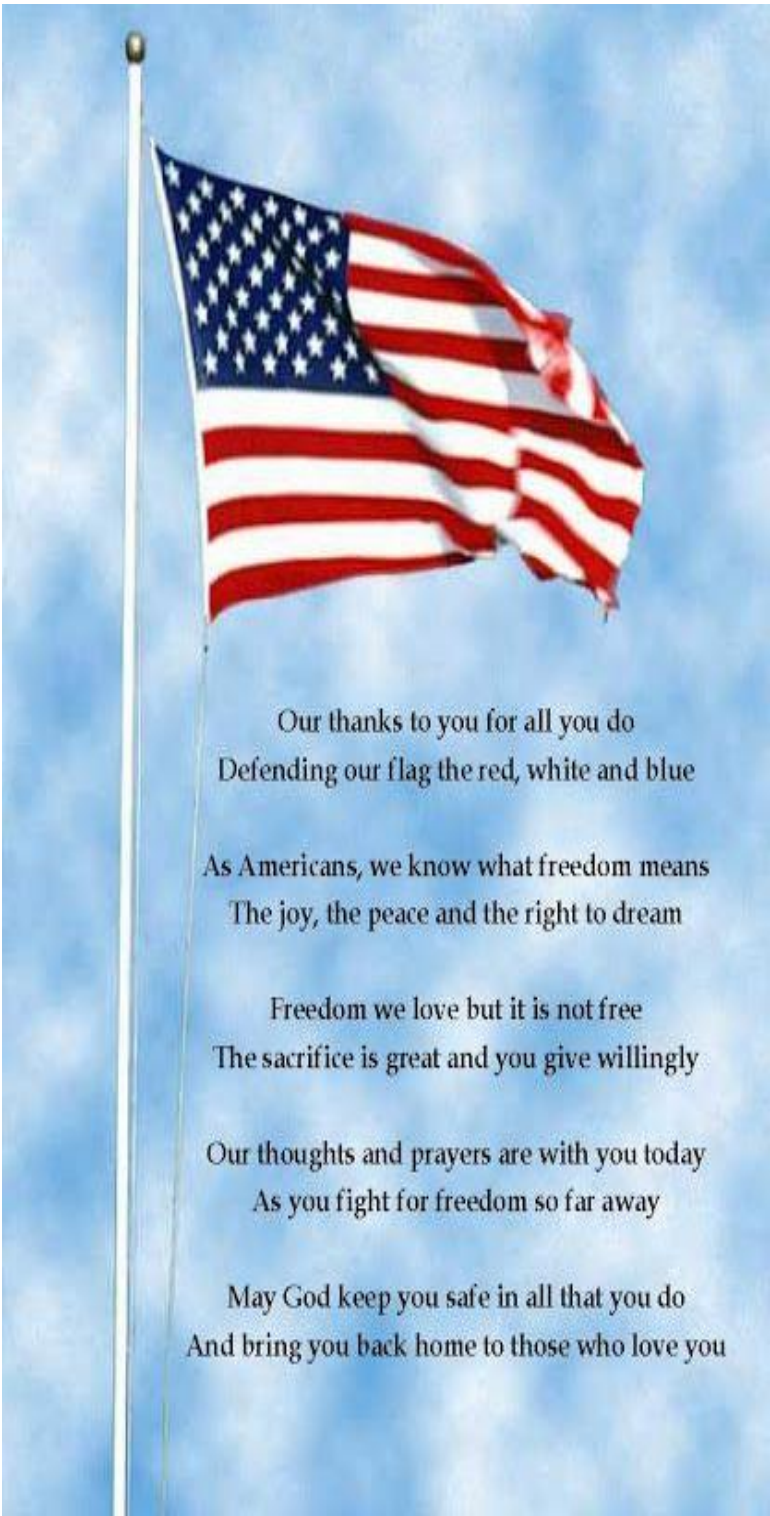
Please keep them in your prayers!

MCMILLERS FROM ROME

Rev Tyler, Yanela, Lia and Alessia McMiller

VICAR ELECT's NEWS

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





(By Jenny Candler)

At the June meeting, we discussed going to the zoo on Saturday morning, June 13. We would leave at 7:30 am from church or meet at the zoo at 8:30 am. Parking could cost \$15 but admission is free. Jenny will contact the members to see if this day works for them. This will be a fun time with the graduated Seniors. To help raise funds for our Confirmation members, we will have an Ice Cream Social on July 2 or July 10. It was agreed that the LYF will pay for the confirmation members to attend the Camp Wartburg Camp on July 22-24. We will ask our Holy Cross family for support also. Our next meeting will be during lunch on the zoo trip in place of meeting in July.



Following the worship service on June 14, our LYF group went to the zoo and had their July meeting during their lunch.

On June 21, three of our members and two Sunday School girls helped pass out treats to the adult men for Father’s Day.



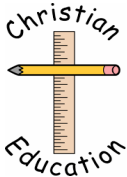
Acolyte July Schedule:

- 5: Elijah
- 12: Jaxon
- 19: Cailyn
- 26: Aubrey



Upcoming events:

- July 10: Ice Cream Social 6 pm
- July 19 – 26: Monroe County Fair Week



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



News

(By Suzanne Wilson)

On May 24, our Sunday School played the bells for Memorial Sunday.



Children sang VBS Theme song after worship service on June 28.



God's blessings to our July birthdays:



Emily Moeller, Cailyn Wilson,
Abby Stellhorn, Aimee Corona,
Isabella Corona & Hannah Stefanie

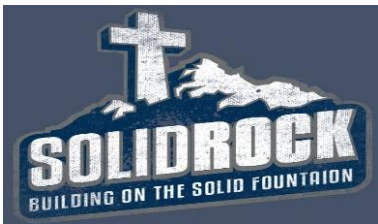


Happy July baptismal anniversaries:

Sandra Ottoson & Hannah Stefanie
Celebrating on July 12.

Upcoming Events

July 20 – 22 Confirmation Retreat
At Camp Wartburg



**Summer Sunday School Scheduled
to Serve in July:**

- July 5:**
Offering Usher: Joshua
- July 12:**
Offering Usher: Becky
- July 19:**
Offering Usher: Matty
- July 26:**
Offering Usher: Craig

During Summer Sunday School we meet as one group. We will begin with prayer, discuss the lesson, play a game or craft and then close with prayer.

[illegible]

LWML is collecting recipes for their cookbook.

A collage of kitchen-related items. At the top is a spiral-bound recipe book with a red and white checkered cover. A white ribbon bow is tied around the top left corner. A green herb sprig is placed on the top right. A yellow notepad with a shopping list is visible on the right side. A blue-handled knife is at the bottom left. The shopping list on the notepad reads: '1/2 cup of green peas', '1/2 cup of green beans', '1/2 cup of green corn', '1/2 cup of green peas'. There is also a small drawing of a shopping cart on the notepad.

Please reserve _____ cookbook(s) for me

INSTRUCTIONS

- **PRINT NEATLY IN INK, NOT PENCIL**, and please only **ONE RECIPE** per form.
- If more food is needed, use another sheet of the same size and staple together.
- Please **WRITE LEGIBLY**, as this will greatly reduce errors.
- List all ingredients in order of use in ingredients list and directions.
- Include container sizes, e.g., 2 (8-oz.) cans, and baking/cooking times.
- Keep ingredients separate and directions in one paragraph. Do not submit recipes in steps, columns, or charts. Recipes which cannot conform to our chosen recipe format will be omitted.
- Use names of ingredients in the directions, e.g., "Combine flour and sugar."
- **DO NOT** use statements like, "combine first three ingredients."
- Be consistent with the spelling of your name for each recipe you contribute.
- Any special recipe notes (anything other than ingredients, directions, contribution name, serving size, or recipe title) should be kept as a separate comment on the bottom of this form, as they may not be included unless we pay extra for it.
- Your recipes should fit into one of the following categories:

Appetizers & Beverages	Breads & Rolls
Soups & Salads	Desserts
Vegetables & Side Dishes	Cookies & Candy
Main Dishes	This & That

Rooted & Grounded in Love

"You, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God." Ephesians 3: 17b-19



LWML SOUTHERN ILLINOIS DISTRICT

43rd BIENNIAL CONVENTION

September 11 – 12, 2026

Metro East Lutheran High School

6305 Center Grove Road
Edwardsville, IL 62025

Saturday Keynote Speaker –
Deaconess Rosie Adle
Co-Author of *LadyLike*
Associate Director of Deaconess
Formation at Concordia
Theological Seminary
Featured Friday–
Rev. Paul Ernewein,
Forged by Fire Ministry

Convention Statement: *By faith, we acknowledge that the grace & love of Christ Jesus for us is the epitome of our salvation. Being rooted and grounded in His love toward us, we may share His great love through our lives toward others, that together we may be filled with all the fullness of God.*

Convention Goals- That by the work of the Holy Spirit, attendees will be

- ✚ Grounded in Christ's love for them
- ✚ Filled with the joy of being rooted in Christ Jesus, their Savior
- ✚ Blessed to go forth & share His fullness & love with others



Ingathering for MELHS
Monetary collection, or
Amazon or Sam's gift cards

Friday, Sept 11: Registration 6:30 p.m.
Activity from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.
Saturday, Sept 12: Registration 7:00-8:20 a.m.
Opening Worship 8:30 a.m.

