

CROSSVIEW CLARION

December 2025

"Music has always been a crucial element of our worship, celebration, understanding, and sharing of God's promise of salvation." – David Mennicke



Songs for the Season

by David Mennicke, Director of Music and Choir Ministries

Greetings in Christ! By the time you read this column, we'll have been inundated with Christmas "music" (starting around Labor Day?) on the radio, advertising, mall Muzak, etc., perhaps to the point of being tired of it already. Hopefully our progression of music in worship together in Advent and Christmastide is guiding us through a more uplifting journey that points to the cradle and Cross of Christ—truly the "reason for the season."

Indeed, music has always been a crucial element of our worship, celebration, understanding, and sharing of God's promise of salvation through Jesus Christ. The Psalms are the largest book in the Bible and reveal and relive the gamut of our emotions about and encounters with God. The Bible also contains many "canticles," or non-Psalms songs God's people have been inspired to sing over the ages, such as: Adam's response to God's creation of Eve ("This is now bone of my

bones..." Genesis 2:3), the Song of Miriam and Moses at the Red Sea (Exodus 15), the Song of Solomon, the lyric poems in the book of Isaiah (e.g., "Comfort Ye"), and the Lamentations of Jeremiah to name a few.

In the New Testament, God has blessed us with yet more songs of praise and proclamation. The beloved first chapters of Luke read like a musical theatre script, full of exciting plot lines, journey quests, and characters breaking out into song every few verses! The angel Gabriel announces to Mary in a song-like "aria" that she will bear the Messiah: "Hail, Mary, full of grace! The Lord is with you!" (Luke 1:28b)—the beginning of the Ave Maria that countless composers have set to music. When Mary visits her cousin Elizabeth six weeks later, she pours out the canticle known by its first word in Latin, the Magnificat: "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God,

my Savior" (Luke 1:46a-47). A few months later at John the Baptist's naming ceremony, his father Zechariah, filled with the Holy Spirit, prophesies in song: "Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, for He has redeemed His people...You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High..." (The Benedictus, Luke 1:68, 76a).

At Jesus' birth, the heavenly host of angels sing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to all!" (The Gloria in excelsis Deo, Luke 2:14). Yet more people are woven into the story; 40 days after Jesus' birth, He is presented at the temple in Jerusalem where Simeon lovingly holds Jesus in his arms and sings, "Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace. . .for my eyes have seen Your salvation..." (The Nunc Dimittis, Luke 2:29a, 30a). We even get a "reprise" of one of Isaiah's Old Testament songs 30 years later when John the Baptist repeats the Isaiah 40 song, "Prepare the way of the Lord..." (Luke 3:4b).

On the third Sunday of Advent (December 14), we will feature three of these Biblical canticles in our early worship service, starting with a paraphrase of the Benedictus ("Blest be the God of Israel") as the opening hymn. The Handbell Ensemble will play a setting of Mary's Song, the Magnificat ("Canticle of the Turning") for the musical offering. Our final communion hymn will be the Nunc Dimittis ("O Lord, Now Let Your Servant") from the LSB Setting 4 Communion liturgy.

These ancient songs, inspired by the Holy Spirit, have stood the test of time. Musicians have written wondrous music in many styles to help us express their richness and imprint the words on our hearts. Amid the "bleak midwinter" of holiday music that often trivializes Christmas, may we again revel in these ageless songs of the Gospel as we sing them together in community with renewed purpose, meaning, and vigor!

Christmas Season Schedule

Sunday, December 14

8:15 AM Traditional Service

9:30 AM Education Hour

10:45 AM Children's Christmas Celebration

Christmas Eve, December 24

1:00 PM Traditional Service

3:00 PM Contemporary Service

5:00 PM Traditional Service

Christmas Day, December 25

9:30 AM Worship Service

Sunday, December 28

9:30 AM Traditional Service

No Education Hour

Sunday, January 4 (regular schedule resumes)

8:15 AM Traditional Service

9:30 AM Education Hour

10:45 AM Contemporary Service

Wednesday, January 7

Recharge resumes

Services available both onsite and via live stream.

Financial Update

Year-to-Date Results

- Year to date income is \$24,141 unfavorable to budget and \$73,216 greater than YTD 2024.
- The key income driver is member contributions being less than pledged and \$42,025 less than YTD 2024.
- Year to date expenses are favorable to budget, primarily due to lower wages. Missions payments are lower as they are a percentage of contributions.
- ECC Income was unfavorable to budget primarily due to enrollment vacancies and a vacation budgeting error.
- ECC Expenses are favorable to budget primarily due to lower than planned wage and benefit expenses and payoff of 4.0 loan obligation.
- ECC Net Deficit is unfavorable to budget by \$138,533

Cross View Lutheran Church			
10/31/25	2025 Actual Year to Date	2025 Budget Year to Date	Actual vs. Budget Favorable (Unfavorable)
Total Income	\$1,309,180	\$1,333,321	(\$24,141)
Total Expenses	(\$1,360,110)	(\$1,385,890)	\$25,780
General Fund Net Surplus (Deficit)	(\$50,930)	(\$52,568)	\$1,638
Designated Fund Transfer	(\$175,000)		

Stewardship of Skills and Interests

How is the Lord calling you to use your gifts at church? As we focus on stewardship, take the time to pray about this and update your Skills and Interests listed on your profile on CV Connect under "Serving". On a computer, click the three dots and select "edit." On mobile device, tap the forward arrow. Or scan the QR code above. Check all that apply. If you would like help accessing your profile, contact the church office. May Jesus be glorified in all that we do!



Looking Ahead

Year-end offering deadline is Wednesday, Dec. 31. IRS regulations make it very clear that for a contribution to be credited to the 2025 tax year, it must be received on Cross View's premises by the close of business on Wednesday, December 31st, or postmarked no later than midnight on December 31, 2025. Dropping it off in January with a December date on the check does not qualify.

LCEF Financial Solutions

Choose a term note from LCEF before interest rates go down. Currently, a LCEF six-month term note pays 3.50% interest rate. Either a one year or 18-month term note yields 4.00%. And a 2-, 3-, 4- or 5-year note yields 3.50%. Go to www.lcef.org to learn more.



Holiday Decorating Opportunities

There are still opportunities for all ages to make our building beautiful for the holiday season.

• **Poinsettia Decorating:** Sunday, December 21, Noon–2:00 PM. Join us after the second service to decorate our worship spaces. Lunch provided.

• **What Goes Up Must Come Down:** The "Undecorating" Sunday, January 4, Noon–2:00 PM. Lunch provided. Help take down and put away the decorations placed throughout the church.

Questions? Call the church office at 952-941-1094 or email FrontDesk@crossview.net.

Sunday Morning Treats

Wanting some variety on Sunday morning treats? Now YOU can be part of the answer. The Café Cross View Ministry Action Team (MAT) would like to try going back to a shared model where families bring treats of all kinds to be shared.

What kind of treats would you like to see offered at Café Cross View? Donuts? Cinnamon rolls? Cookies? The Café Cross View MAT is open to receiving any store-bought dated individually marked treat donations which can be shared with all during the coffee hour. Treats can be left on the back counter and will be placed out at the coffee hour for all to enjoy.

We will continue to accept financial donations to cover the cost of supplies and equipment maintenance.

Bring your favorite Sunday morning store-bought treat to share this next Sunday.

Game Night

During this busy holiday season, Game Night will not take place in December. Please plan on joining them in the New Year.

Christian Education

LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS

Sundays, November 30, December 7, 14, 21

9:30–10:30 AM in the sanctuary

Advent is a THE season of light! A light like none other entered the darkness of our world over 2000 years ago. Come and join us for a four-week journey through John 1:1–18 as we ponder the mystery of the incarnation—the first and greatest gift of Christmas.

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

Women's Bible Study will be starting a new study, *Be Still & Know*, a Study of Rest and Refuge, by Deb Burma, in January 2026. The group meets on the first Monday of the month at 9:30–11:30 AM in room 218 at Cross View. This study will run from January through May and then start again from September through December. If you would like to join our study or if you have questions, please contact Marcy at mrepse@hotmail.com.



MEN'S BIBLE STUDY AT AMBROSIA

Join us for a continued study on the book of Hebrews starting on September 13th from 9:30–11:00 AM. We meet every other Saturday at Ambrosia Coffee Shop, 7373 France Ave. S., Edina.

THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY OPPORTUNITY

Have you ever wanted to learn from the Bible and others in a discussion-oriented format? Fellow Christians have been meeting every other Thursday at 9:30–11:00 AM in the fireside room at church to study and discuss how the Old Testament Tabernacle and God's message to Moses guided the Israelites through the wilderness to the chosen land. They are looking at how God's guidelines and covenants made between Him and His people have impacted the New Covenant and true Temple, Jesus Christ. Come join us September 4th and every two weeks thereafter. Contact Steve Koepcke if you have any questions.

COMMUNITY LIGHT SCHOOL OF DISCIPLESHIP (CLSD)

Registration for the spring 2026 CLSD is now open [in CV Connect](#). The speaker will be Dr. Dean Nadasdy and the topic will be "Answer Me This: Tough Questions for Christian Apologists" (an apologetics class). The session will start on April 8 and run for seven weeks to May 20.



Early Childhood Center

ECC CHILD AND TEACHER OPENINGS

Child Openings: The ECC currently has openings in toddler and preschool rooms. If you know of anyone looking for childcare, please refer them to Cross View's Early Childhood Center.

Teacher Opening: The ECC also currently has one opening for a float teacher. If you know of anyone qualified with great love for the Lord and for children, please also refer them to the ECC office.

For either child or teacher inquiries, families or teachers can reach Tania Rivera by emailing tania@crossview.net or calling the office at 952-941-0009.

ECC FOOD DRIVE

To complement the monetary gifts Cross View church members gave in November to provide food for those in need, the ECC hosted a food drive for VEAP in mid-November, providing a tangible way for ECC children, staff and families to share with others. Conversations between parents and children as they brought food to the ECC that week confirmed that the spirit of giving is alive and well in the ECC families! Children's minds and hearts were opened to the knowledge that not everyone is able to buy food for

their families. Hearing the children pray together for others during chapel was a sweet conclusion to the week.



HALLOWEEN PARTIES

Children had a fun time at the ECC on October 31st as each classroom had a party with crafts, games and special treats. Children enjoyed dressing in costumes and going trick or treating at the other classrooms and church offices. One of their favorite stops was at the kitchen with Chef Luis!



PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES

On November 6th and 18th, the ECC was filled with a different type of energy than normal. During scheduled conferences, parents were able to meet with both classroom teachers together to celebrate the children's growth, development, and gifts. What a blessing to have time to share and encourage each other in the care of the children God has entrusted to both parents and teachers.

ECC CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

The annual ECC Christmas Program will be held on Thursday, December 11th at 5:00 PM in the sanctuary. You are invited to join as the toddlers and preschoolers lead us in celebrating the birth of our Savior. Happy Birthday, Jesus!

ECC PRAISES AND PRAYERS

Praises:

- For more new families that toured and have started attending the ECC
- For the privilege of partnering with parents to care for their children

Prayer Requests:

- For a God-glorifying Christmas program as the message of God's love is shared
- For one more well-qualified teacher- with great love for the Lord and for children- to join our team
- For more families to hear about openings at the ECC and for open spots to be filled with more of God's precious children
- For health and safety of everyone in the ECC— children and staff—especially as the winter cold and flu season hits

ECC MISSION STATEMENT

Growing loving followers of Jesus Christ through early care and education.

Children's Ministry

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

Cross View's Children's Christmas Celebration for children ages 2 to 6th grade will be on Sunday, Dec 14th at the 10:45 AM service. The children are already working hard learning the Biblical story in Luke 2 to be ready for the celebration. They have made their stage props and set design too. There will be a cookie reception to follow the celebration in the narthex. Be sure to come and support the children!

KIDSTITUTE CHRISTMAS PARTY

All kiddos in kindergarten to 6th grade are invited to the Kidstitute Christmas party on Wednesday, December 17, at 6:30–7:30 PM. There will be a fun craft, games, and snacks all in the Christmas theme of course.

UPCOMING CHILDREN'S MINISTRY DATES

December 2025

- Sunday, December 14: Children's Christmas Celebration at 10:45 AM
- Wednesday, December 17: Kidstitute in classroom Christmas party at 6:30–7:30 PM
- Sunday, December 21: No Sunday School due to Christmas break
- Wednesday, December 24: Christmas Break; no Kidstitute
- Sunday, December 28: No Sunday School due to Christmas break
- Wednesday, December 31: Christmas Break; no Kidstitute

January 2026

- Sunday, January 4–11: Journey Stepping Stone classes (sixth grade)
- Friday, January 16: Family Movie Night with Pizza, Popcorn and PJs at 5:00 PM
- Sunday, January 18: Celebration of Journey Stepping Stone (sixth grade)

PARENT CORNER



A fun Christmas movie to watch and discuss as a family— *The Polar Express*

The boy risks his life to recover another child's lost ticket. Talk about the story of the lost coin and the lost sheep from Luke 15:1–8. Recall that "the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10).

The conductor, or someone similar to him, seems to appear throughout the story whenever help or encouragement is needed. We have a Savior who has promised to always be with us whenever we journey in his name. See Matthew 28:16–20.

Talk about:

- A long trip you made on or around the holidays
- A Christmas present you received as a child that you still have today
- A sound or a particular song that makes you think of Christmas, no matter when you hear it



Adult Ministry

WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

Women's Book Club will read *Christmas Jars* by Jason F. Wright for their December meeting. They will meet at church in room 120 on Monday, December 15, at 1:00 PM to discuss the book. Please feel free to join them as new members are always welcome.



SENIOR ADULT "APPETIZERS AND ADVENT ALLELUIAS"

All Cross View senior adults are invited to join at Cross

View for an evening of "Appetizers and Advent Alleluias" on Friday, December 5, 5:00–7:00 PM. Please bring an appetizer to share as we enjoy ushering in the holiday season. We will close the evening by singing wonderful Advent and Christmas carols in the sanctuary accompanied by Judy Campen.

Please [sign up on CV Connect](#) or at the Registration Desk. Contact Kathy Fulkerson at kkfulkerson@yahoo.com or Sue Harrison at kharrison1111@gmail.com for more information on the event.

TNT – TWENTIES & THIRTIES YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

Come and get to know others in the same stage of life at TNT (Twenties & Thirties Young Adult Ministry) through Bible study and time hanging out together! Bible studies and outings are held every second and fourth Thursdays of the month; running from 6:00–7:30pm. Contact Nicole at nclvvo@gmail.com or Hannah at hannah@crossview.net with questions or to be added to the TNT GroupMe.



The past few weeks, the TNT group has been busy doing Bible studies, painting, and celebrating Friendsgiving together.

Winter Sessions:

- December 12: White Elephant at Cross View
- January 8: Bible Study (Cross View)
- January 22: Famous Dave's (Hwy 7)
- February 5: Bible Study (Cross View)
- February 19: My Burger (Minnetonka)
- March 12: Winter Service Project



FOOD, FELLOWSHIP, AND FUN!

A big THANK YOU to all who attended the Women's Ministry Fall Luncheon and who contributed to our charitable ingathering for Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery. A representative from the GMCN gratefully accepted the many donations that were collected. Our speaker Gaye Lindfors was wonderful and encouraged us to let the Holy Spirit shine through us to a world in need of the Light of Christ. See you again next November for this memorable event!



Outreach & Missions

CAREPORTAL UPDATE

The upcoming CarePortal training offered via Zoom for those interested in becoming a member of our CarePortal Response Team will be on Monday, January 12, and Monday, February 19, from 6:30–8:00 PM, and Friday, February 13, 8:30–10:00 AM. CarePortal will also be offering an event called COPE, The Cost of Poverty Experience on Saturday, January 24, from 9:00–11:30 AM at Vision of Glory Lutheran Church in Plymouth. The Cost of Poverty Experience is a simulation designed to deepen our understanding of the lived realities and human impact of poverty in America. This event is open to everyone—seasoned responders, new responders, church leaders, and friends.

How CarePortal works; it starts with a child or family in crisis and in need of help from a child/family serving

professional. The child/family serving professional vets and then enters the needs into a request on CarePortal. Local churches and communities then can pray, fund, or supply the items for the families. Cross View has fulfilled 221 requests, served 485 children, and had an economic impact of over \$300,000. The CarePortal team would like to give a big thanks to our amazing parishioners. Without them we would not be able to fund and supply the items needed for these families. The CarePortal team is always looking for more volunteers for our shopping and delivery teams. We will also be looking for a new leader come May 2026.

If you'd like to get involved in helping families in crisis, please contact Pam Olsen at careportal@crossview.net or Nicole Krueger at careportal2@crossview.net.



CarePortal

STEPHEN MINISTRY CORNER

Our congregation's Stephen Ministry equips laypeople to provide one-to-one Christian care to people in our congregation and community who are experiencing difficulties in their lives. Stephen Ministry is a confidential ministry. The identity of those receiving care and everything they discuss with a Stephen Minister remain private.

A Stephen Minister is...

- A child of God who walks beside someone who is hurting.
- A congregation member who is carefully selected to serve in this role because of his or her caregiving gifts.
- A layperson with 50 hours of training in providing high-quality, distinctively Christian care.
- A caring Christian friend who listens, cares, prays, supports, and encourages.
- Someone who meets faithfully each week with his or her care receiver for as long as there's a need.

If you need a Stephen Minister or are interested in becoming a Stephen Minister, please contact Pastor Steve.

***"Bear one another's burdens,
and in this way you will fulfill
the law of Christ."***

-Galatians 6:2



Youth Ministry

JUNIOR HIGH YOUTH DECEMBER SCHEDULE

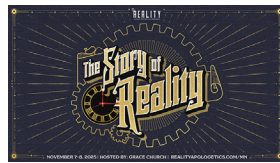
- December 7: Junior High Christmas Party at CV, 3:30–5:30 PM

SENIOR HIGH YOUTH DECEMBER SCHEDULE

- December 7: Senior High Christmas Party at CV, 6:00–8:00 PM
- December 14: Youth at CV; college freshmen invited
- December 21: No Youth; Christmas weekend
- December 28: No Youth; New Year's weekend

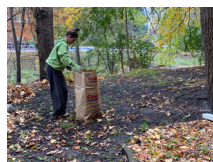
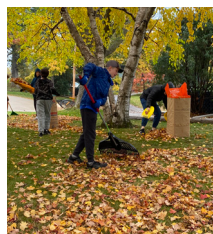
REALITY APOLOGETICS CONFERENCE: THE STORY OF REALITY

Both Junior and Senior High youth spent the weekend of November 7–8 at Grace Church in Eden Prairie attending the Reality Apologetics Conference: "The Story of Reality." There, both youth and adult volunteers learned about the truth of the Christian worldview and how that shapes our everyday lives. It was a wonderful, faith-shaping experience for both youth and adults!



RAKE AND RUN

On Saturday, October 25, 31 youth and adults went around to different homes, raking leaves as a youth fundraiser. The youth split into four groups, raking a total of 17 yards. Thank you to all who signed up to get their lawns raked, and to the youth and adult volunteers who helped rake the lawns! The funds will be used for the Senior High Mission Trip to South Dakota next summer and other youth events.





Developing fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ along life's journey

Rev. Steve Wheeler, Senior Pastor
952-941-1094, steve@crossview.net

Rev. Dr. Reed Lessing, Associate Pastor
952-941-1094, reed@crossview.net

Deaconess Barbara Coffin, Director of Children's Ministry
952-243-2062, barb@crossview.net

Renee Kirchner, Church Administration
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José Portillo, Minister of Facility & Maintenance

Matthew Salzwedel, President

The *Clarion* is published monthly by Cross View Lutheran Church.
Items for inclusion should be sent via email to clarion@crossview.net.



SUNDAY WORSHIP

8:15 AM Traditional Worship in the Sanctuary

10:45 AM Contemporary Worship in the Great Commission Room

Sunday services are also [live streamed](#).

Communion is on 2nd & 4th Sundays.

SUNDAY EDUCATION

9:30 AM Onsite & Online

RECHARGE

Wednesdays, Sept. – May
5:00 PM Programming Begins
www.crossview.net/recharge

OFFICE HOURS

Mon.-Fri., 9:00 AM – 4:30 PM

CALENDAR

Our most current calendar is always available at www.crossview.net/calendar

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