

CROSSVIEW CLARION

January 2025

"Now we affirm that God's intension is for his Light to go forth to the ends of the earth." – Reed Lessing



Empowered for Witness

by Reed Lessing, Associate Pastor



Most nativity sets include the three "wise men" who followed a star that led them to Bethlehem. There they worshiped Jesus, the newborn King. But were these men really "wise?" Not really. Other biblical texts mention "magi." And they are never "wise."

Daniel 2 is a good example. In this story, the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar has a dream and asks for help interpreting it. The king's interpreters include "magicians, magi, sorcerers, and astrologers" (Daniel 2:2). These magi? They're dealing in the occult. They work for a pagan king. And they're unable to interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dream. These magi are hardly wise!

Note also the story in Acts 13:6–12 where we meet another magi named Bar-Jesus. Bar-Jesus is also a false prophet, a sorcerer, a son of the devil, an enemy of all righteousness, and full of deceit and villainy. Bar-Jesus isn't very wise! And that's putting it mildly!

Why, then, does Matthew include magi in his Christmas story? It's certainly not to create a bumper sticker that says, "Wise men still seek Him." Matthew's message instead is this. Jesus comes for everyone—even people enmeshed in pagan religion and astrology; who are in league with the devil; and who are living in complete darkness.

This is the Gospel of the Lord! Jesus turned these

magi into humble worshipers who offered him gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

This profound Gospel encounter announces, at the very outset of Jesus' life, that the King of the Jews is also King of the World. Jesus has come, as Simeon prophesied, "To be a light for revelation to the Gentiles" (Luke 2:32). Jesus has come to be a blessing for all people.

Epiphany, then, is an appropriate culmination to our observance of Christmas. After anticipating the Light during Advent and welcoming Jesus at Christmas, now we affirm that God's intension is for his Light to go forth to the ends of the earth.

Like Easter, Epiphany is the first day of a liturgical season: a period of time that frames our worship as well as our reflection on Christ's mission to the world.

The movement of this Light — the life of Christ — is one that ultimately leads him to the cross. Even during Epiphany, we receive multiple foretastes of the suffering in store for Jesus; reminders of just how much it will cost him to reveal God's love to a world

engulfed in darkness.

How will Cross View celebrate Epiphany? Let us count the ways!

My sermon on January 5th will take a close look at Matthew's account of the magi. I'll also begin an Adult Sunday School class on God's Mission in the Old Testament.

In his sermon series that begins on January 12th, titled "Empowered for Witness," Pastor Steve will help us understand Cross View's mission to the world. On January 5th, he will also launch an Adult Sunday School on Empowered for Witness: Discovering your Unique Witnessing Style.

In February I'll preach and teach from 1 Corinthians 13. Truths from this famous chapter on love will equip and empower us to join Jesus in loving the world.

The word Epiphany comes from the Greek epiphaneo, meaning "to reveal" or "to make manifest." God gives an epiphany to pagan sorcerers called magi. God shows His love for us as well. Our response? We take it to the world!

THANK YOU!

The staff of Cross View extends our sincere thanks to the members and friends of Cross View for your Christmas gifts. Thank you for your support and encouragement throughout this last year. We are grateful for your partnership in the ministry and look forward to an exciting 2025! Blessings on your New Year.

Financial Update Year-to-Date Results

- Year to date income is slightly favorable to budget.
- Year to date expenses are \$167,287 favorable to budget and higher than 2023.
- The primary expense variances were lower utility costs, lower wage expenses, and underbilling of medical insurance, which will correct by year end.
- ECC Income was unfavorable to budget due to a lag in state of MN payments. Tuition is at 98% of plan.
- ECC Expenses are favorable primarily due to medical insurance underbilling mentioned above.
- ECC Net Surplus is unfavorable to budget by \$19,077.

Cross View Lutheran Church			
11/30/24	2024 Actual Year to Date	2024 Budget Year to Date	Actual vs. Budget Favorable (Unfavorable)
Total Income	\$1,352,541	\$1,340,351	\$12,190
Total Expenses	(\$1,273,765)	(\$1,441,052)	\$167,287
General Fund Net Surplus (Deficit)	\$78,776	(\$100,701)	\$179,477
General Fund Ending Balance	\$351,273	\$171,796	

Christian Education

GOD'S MISSION IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Teaching Leader: Pastor Reed Lessing

Date: Sunday mornings, 1/5–1/19

Location: Sanctuary

The title of this class seems like a contradiction, doesn't it? There's no mission in the Old Testament, right? Israel's scriptures are full of history and laws and predictions about Jesus. But mission? Really? Yes! Really! You're invited to found out how the Old Testament is chock-full of God's mandate to make disciples of all nations. There's much to learn!

EMPOWERED FOR WITNESS: DISCOVERING YOUR UNIQUE WITNESSING STYLE

Teaching Leader: Pastor Steve Wheeler

Date: Sunday mornings, 1/5–1/19

Location: Fellowship Hall

Do you know someone who doesn't have a relationship with Jesus Christ? Have you had opportunities to share your faith, but felt ill-equipped to share it with that

person? Come and discover your unique witnessing style and be empowered for witness. Utilizing concepts from Bill Hybels' and Mark Mittleberg's book and video series, *Becoming a Contagious Christian*, we'll explore several key Biblical texts, and several great strategies that will help to empower you for witness.

COMMUNITY LIGHT SCHOOL OF DISCIPLESHIP (CLSD) Wednesdays from 6:30–8:00 PM

The second session of CLSD with Rev. Dr. Dean Nadasdy entitled "Threads: Celebrating the Biblical Tapestry" will resume on January 8 and continue through February 12. It is not too late to join, [sign up on CV Connect](#). The lecture will be followed by discussion in small groups.



Early Childhood Center

NATIONAL LUTHERAN SCHOOLS WEEK

This month we will celebrate National Lutheran Schools Week January 27–31. More than 1,800 LCMS preschools, elementary, and high schools will be celebrating that we can share the love of Jesus everyday with amazing kids and their families. The theme for the week is Endure which is based on Hebrews 12:1–3 focusing on staying strong in faith through challenges.

EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

In December we had our Christmas Program. We shared the story of Jesus and how each one of us needs to be plugged into Jesus to shine our light for him. The sanctuary was packed with over 200 people. It was amazing to see the preschool kids sing and dance to songs to share the story. Again, Ms. Julie did an excellent job directing the program. We would also like to thank Pastor Steve, Ms. Amy, Phil Johnson, Brad Starr, and Marian Kratzke for all their help to make this program a success. Take a look at the Cross we lit up and all the kids.



DOOR DECORATING CONTEST

We also had a door decorating contest this year. All the teachers worked hard on decorating their door with the kids' help. There had to be a part on the door that the kids in the class were a part of. The winning class was Toddler Teddy Classroom and here is a picture of their door.



ECC PRAISES AND PRAYERS

Praises:

- Sharing the Story of Jesus Birth with over 200 people
- One of our infants getting baptized at Cross View
- That we found a new staff member, Rosa, to join our team
- Over 10 families came to Live Nativity
- The smiles of the kids and excitement when the stable went up and the three huge camels.

Prayer Requests:

- Health during the hard winter months
- Pray for our families who have lost loved ones or loved ones that are sick
- Pray for all the Lutheran Schools — that we continue to reach families and spread the good news of Christ

ECC MISSION STATEMENT

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

Children's Ministry

FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT

Finding Nemo

Friday, January 17

5:00 PM

Popcorn and pizza will be provided



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY DATES: JANUARY

- Wednesday, January 1: Christmas Break — No Kidstute
- Friday, January 17: 5:00 PM Family Movie Night
- Friday and Saturday, January 24 & 25: Feed My Starving Children service event at Cross View

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY DATES: FEBRUARY

- Sunday, February 2: Mission Festival
- Sunday, February 9: Mission and Service Stepping Stone (third grade)
- Sunday, February 16: Mission and Service Stepping Stone Celebration (third grade)
- Sunday, February 16: Class for Together We Worship Stepping Stone (three year olds)
- Wednesday, February 19, 6:30–7:30 PM: Scripture Sharing Night
- Wednesday, February 26, 7:00–8:30 PM: Feed My Starving Children Service event for sixth grade
- Wednesday, February 26: Last day of Kidstute party

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

It was so much fun to watch this year's children's program that focused on the Bible story of Luke 2. The 3rd to 6th grade students made such an awesome set and all the kids did a great job with their Bible verses and songs. There was a cookie reception to celebrate the children after the program.



PARENT CORNER



With winter upon us here are the top 10 ideas of things to do inside with your family.

Ten things to do indoors:

1. Create an indoor obstacle course
2. Put on a play
3. Have a paper airplane competition
4. Watch a movie
5. Make homemade modeling dough
6. Host a comedy show or open mic night
7. Make a movie
8. Do a science experiment
9. Bake and decorate something
10. Play board games

Youth Ministry

JUNIOR HIGH YOUTH JANUARY SCHEDULE

- January 11: Junior High Movie Night at CV, 6:30–9:00 PM

SENIOR HIGH YOUTH JANUARY SCHEDULE

- January 5: Youth at CV
- January 12: Bowling and Laser Tag at Bowlero, 6:00–8:00 PM
- January 19: Youth at CV
- January 26: Youth at CV

YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTIES

On Sunday, December 8, both Junior and Senior High groups met for their own, separate Christmas parties. Both groups participated in a white elephant gift exchange and played different games. The Senior High participated in a friendly Christmas competition for the "Christmas Cup." It was a great evening of fellowship, laughter, and fun!



NATIONAL YOUTH GATHERING BAKE SALE AND HOSTING CAFÉ CROSS VIEW

The youth who are attending the National Youth Gathering hosted a bake sale before and after services on Sunday, December 15. It was a wonderful success! Thank you to all who supported the youth and bought goodies for the Christmas season!

The youth attending the Gathering will also be hosting Café Cross View every second Sunday of the month, running from January to June. There will be a free will donation to help support these youths as they prepare for this big event in July!



JUNIOR HIGH MOVIE NIGHT

The Junior High youth will have a movie night on Saturday, January 11, from 6:30–9:00 PM at Cross View in the Fellowship Hall. There will be snacks provided but no meal.

SENIOR HIGH BOWLING AND LASER TAG AT BOWLERO

Senior High youth will be heading to Bowlero in Eden Prairie for an evening of bowling and laser tag on Sunday, January 12, from 6:00–8:00 PM. Food will be provided at the bowling alley. Cost is \$25 per person. Please register by January 5 on [CV Connect here](#).

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."

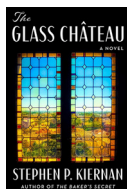
-Galatians 6:2



Adult Ministry

WOMEN'S BOOK CLUB

Women's book club will meet at church in Room 120 on Monday, January 20, at 1:00 PM. They will be discussing the book *The Glass Chateau* by Stephen Kieran. Please feel free to join them as new members are always welcome.



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! Locations vary and there has been a change in time and days. Bible studies will be held on Mondays and outings on Thursdays; both running from 6:00–7:30 PM. Contact Nicole at nclvvo@gmail.com or Hannah at hannah@crossview.net with questions or to be added to the TNT GroupMe.

Winter Sessions:

- January 6: Bible study at Cross View
- January 23: Davanni's in Richfield
- February 3: Bible Study at Cross View
- February 20: Good Day Café in Wayzata
- March 3: Winter serving project

RETRO ARCADE EXTRAVAGANZA

ALIT GROUP — ADULT LIVES IN TRANSITION

ALIT is a social and service group for members of Cross View in their late 30s, 40s, and 50s. Join them for a fun afternoon with your Cross View friends on February 1st from 2:00–5:00 PM. Relive some of your childhood memories at Rent My Arcade in St. Paul. This is an awesome “mom and pop” family business run by a husband and wife who fix up older full-sized video games and they welcome people to come play. Their classic arcade is filled with refurbished arcade games — and a few newer ones.

COST: \$15 per person for three hours of as many games as you can play. Anyone older than 13 years old is welcome. So, bring your teenagers! Optional dinner out together nearby once we are done.

SENIOR ADULT MINISTRY (60+) SAVE THE DATE! VALENTINE LUNCHEON, FEBRUARY 13

Mark your calendars to join the Senior Adult Ministry special Valentine Luncheon. Watch for more details to come!

JOIN A SMALL GROUP!

At Cross View, we know being a member of a small group can be transformational. Groups spend time together in God's Word, share life's joys and challenges, pray for one another, and serve others like Jesus did. Several new groups are starting to form over the summer. If you'd like to join a group or become a small group leader, please contact Amy Gundermann at amy@crossview.net or complete the [interest form on our website](#).

Outreach & Missions

THANK YOU, TRINITY FIRST THANKSGIVING FAMILY NIGHT VOLUNTEERS!

Our volunteer team did an outstanding job of creating a memorable family night for the school community at Trinity First in Minneapolis on November 26th. There were fun activities, food, and an opportunity for a family photo. Bloom for Jesus Indian Fellowship partnered with us by providing take-home boxes for each family with pantry items for Thanksgiving. It was a great night celebrating God's goodness and love!



THANK YOU, NATIVITYFEST VOLUNTEERS!

Thank you to our more than 60 volunteers who helped to make our NativityFest outreach event on December 7th a success! You helped to make our entire church property a welcoming place, from the parking lot to each activity area. We pray that seeds of the Gospel were planted among those who attended, and that Jesus' birth would have new meaning this Christmas!



PERSONAL CARE KITS SERVICE PROJECT

During our NativityFest event, families were invited to help assemble 100 Personal Care Kits. The kits will be given to those in need around the world through Lutheran World Relief. Please pray for those recipients and for God's love to be evident in their communities. Thank you to everyone who helped with this service project!

SIGN UP FOR THE FEED MY STARVING CHILDREN MOBILEPACK

Cross View's second FMSC MobilePack on January 24 and 25, 2025. We have four time slots to choose from and 120 volunteer slots at each one with a goal of packing 101,088 meals! Plan to bring your family and friends to join us for a weekend of global impact right here at Cross View. Sign up to volunteer or donate to help cover the cost of the ingredients at give.fmsc.org/crossview.



CELEBRATING CAREPORTAL'S IMPACT

Picture this — a living room with no furniture, a tv on the floor, and toys piled in a corner. A kitchen with no tables and chairs. A bedroom with clothes stacked on the floor of the closet and other items on hangers. A bed frame with no box spring, but cardboard stacked up with a strong sheet of plastic stretching across and tied to all 4 corners to give extra support to the mattress placed on top.

A smiling little girl and her mom meet us at the door. They are thrilled that we have arrived to bring a couch, a table and chairs for the kitchen, a small plastic table and chairs for the child to sit at and draw. A kitchen playset with pots and pans which was opened and immediately used by the little girl to give pretend lunch to her mom. Three of our delivery team members got going on putting together a bedframe with a support platform and a headboard to support the mom's mattress. She was thrilled and said "I've never had a real bed with a headboard. Please take my bedframe and give it to someone else who is in need". A second delivery trip brought a tv stand and three dressers to this family along with gift cards to Aldi's where she walks for her groceries.

Picture this — a single mom with four children (ages 13, 8, 7, and 4). Mom has recently been going through extensive chemotherapy treatments for her breast cancer. While she's been in treatments and therapy, she has struggled to keep up with cleaning as she has low energy. The family has also experienced the recent loss of her brother (mom's support person), compounding her depression. The children help when they can. Her needs are great for supplies of food, winter accessories, and cleaning supplies. *(See pictures of items delivered.)*

The delivery was made of all the items requested along with five bags of non-perishable food, five bags of frozen food, and two bags of refrigerated items. Mom was overwhelmed and extremely grateful for the support. Our delivery team was touched by her story and her need during this stressful time. One of our parishioners is keeping in contact with her.

Did we make a difference in the lives of these families? Yes, through the giving of our money, time, possessions, and prayers we did make a difference to help these families, and many others, stabilize and strengthen for the next chapter in their story.

Thank you for your support and participation in the CarePortal ministry this year. We have witnessed the want and need that is right here in our community and we have answered the call.

Cross View 2024 Statistics: Received 256 requests; Responded to 113 requests; Completed 55 deliveries; Served 227 Children; With an economic impact of \$211,505. May God continue to bless you and may we not grow weary in doing good works. Thank you to our Lord for his example of leadership and servanthood. By His grace, we are the hands and feet of Jesus right here and right now. May the New Year be filled with love, hope, and grace.



CAREPORTAL TRAINING

There is a training offered via Zoom for those interested in becoming a member of our CarePortal Response Team. If you'd like to get involved in helping families in crisis, please contact Pam Olsen at careportal@crossview.net.

January training dates:

- Thursday, Jan. 16, 6:30–8:00 PM
- Friday, Jan. 24, 8:30–10:00 AM

CROSS VIEW'S GUATEMALA MISSION TEAM UPDATE

Many thanks for the sewing supplies and sewing machines donated to the young women in Los Vásquez. They were amazed at the generosity of the members of Cross View. They were so grateful that they have material to work with!

During the week, Cross View's Guatemala mission team provided materials to build two chicken coops and provide ten hens for each coop. These families are already enjoying fresh eggs. Thank you for your support, Cross View!





Cross View LERT Volunteers Make an Impact on North Carolina

On Friday, November 15, three from Cross View, Marc Wedo, Rick Thompson, and Phil Johnson, headed out for a weeklong Lutheran Early Response Team (LERT) deployment to North Carolina. They were part of a 12-member team from across the Minnesota South District. The team was led by Pastor Kristian Bjornstad (who conducted LERT training at Cross View last April). The damage in central North Carolina (Asheville) was extensive from floodings that occurred during hurricane Helene.

The deployment focused on two communities in North Carolina, one in Clyde (about 30 minutes west of Asheville) and Tryon (about an hour south of Asheville).

Clyde work was done at the home of a member at Our Savior Lutheran. There, about half of the team worked on demo'ing in the members home, mucking out the foundation area, replacing a wood fence, and getting an outbuilding back on its foundation.

The Cross View team was based in Tryon at Trinity. A nearby stream turned into a raging river knocking loose the foundation of the church and filling the crawl area beneath full of mud and silt. As a result, all the flooring needed to be pulled, the foundation shored up, and about a foot of remaining mud hand removed through a fire-line sort with filling hundreds of 5-gallon buckets of mud and moving them about 100 yards away. Other work there included general clean up, tree clearing, and simply being a sounding board to members and neighbors traumatized by the destruction.

To learn more about this deployment and how you might participate with LERT in the future, plan to attend a presentation on the trip during the Adult Education hour on Sunday, January 26. In the meantime, contact Phil Johnson at philj23@gmail.com or Amy Gunderman at amy@crossview.net for more information.

Voters' Assembly Meeting January 26

Please join us for our Voters' assembly meeting on January 26 following the second service at noon in the Fellowship Hall.

WEATHER-RELATED CHURCH AND OFFICE CLOSINGS

All unscheduled closings and late starts will be posted to CV Connect and our [website](#). Cancellations of evening activities will be posted no later than 3:00 PM.

January Giving Trees

Celebrating the Sanctity of Life

Visit the Giving Trees in the Lobby January 5–19 as we celebrate the Sanctity of Life. Select a tag and bring your donated items back by January 26th to help Crystal Women's Clinic as they empower families to "choose life through education, practical help, and hope in Jesus Christ." Learn more at supportlife.org.

Cross View Game Night

Do you love games? Join us for fun and fellowship every second Sunday of the month from 6:30–8:30 PM in Rooms 209/210. Cross View Game Night is open to all teens and adults, including church members and their guests. Everyone is encouraged to bring his or her own board or card games. If you bring a game, be prepared to show others how to play. Questions?

Questions? Contact John Daenzer at johndaenzer@gmail.com or Michael Kibat at mgekibat@centurylink.net.



Benjamin Mangum Welcome



Please welcome Benjamin Mangum to our Cross View family. Ben will work alongside our many media volunteers as our Multimedia Storyteller and Producer.

Ben's passion for live sound engineering began at age 11 as a volunteer in a local church. His artistic and entrepreneur background includes establishing a media company and coordinating live concert performances. Ben's love for music, video and audio production, and visual arts will expand Cross View's ministry. We look forward to expanding our community outreach through new and innovative ways to develop fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

Welcome MAT Volunteers Needed

It's a new year, and, as in the past, we are looking to add more volunteers to our Welcome Ministry. The jobs, or shall we say opportunities, this ministry entails are the Hosts that greet visitors at our doors every Sunday and the Welcome Desk Attendant who extends that welcome a little further with our visitors. As long as you can smile, say hello and welcome, there are no other skill requirements. The

time commitment is minimal, usually once every other month, if that. These positions are open to seniors, adults, teens, and children (to serve with a parent). If you are looking to find a ministry spot and think this might be something you would be interested in, please contact Sue Harrison, Welcome MAT leader, at kharrison1111@gmail.com or 713-269-9657. The Welcome MAT wants YOU!

What Goes Up Must Come Down: The "Undecorating"

1. **Sunday, Jan. 5, noon–2:00 PM:** Lunch provided. Following the second service, help take down and put away the Christmas decorations placed throughout the church. Call the church office at 952-941-1094 or email FrontDesk@crossview.net with questions.
2. **Saturday, January 11, 10:00 AM–12:30 PM:** Help us take down the nativity stable. Heavy lifting involved. Contact Denny at DSchepp@msn.com with questions.



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
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Stacey LaMere, Director of Early Childhood Center
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Barbara Coffin, Director of Children's Ministry
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Renee Kirchner, Church Administration
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Amy Gundermann, Director of Outreach and Adult Ministries
Contemporary Worship Team Leader
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Hannah Zahrte, Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministry
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Dr. David Mennicke, Director of Music and Choir Ministries
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Brian De Young, Organist
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Alyssa Meger, Finance Specialist
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Ben Mangum, Multimedia Storyteller and Producer
952-243-2044, ben@crossview.net

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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