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WHAT'S INSIDE

NEW SHOPS IN AITKIN
Page 2

COMMUNITY EVENTS
Page 3

CLASSIFIEDS
Page 5

MEMORIAL DAY EVENTS
Page 6

St. Joseph Catholic Church breaks ground for new church



Bishop Daniel J. Felton and Father Elias Gieske at the ceremonial groundbreaking for the new St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Crosby on May 18. Construction begins immediately and is expected to be completed by the fall of 2026.

Joan Hasskamp photo

With shovels in hand and spirits lifted by song and prayer, the St. Joseph Catholic Church community turned a long-awaited dream into motion on Sunday, May 18 as they broke ground on their new church campus on Deer Trail Drive between Crosby and Deerwood.

On a cool spring day, Bishop Daniel Felton of the Diocese of Duluth and St. Joseph's pastor Fr. Elias Gieske led a joyful crowd of parishioners and visitors in a ceremonial blessing of the land. A recitation of the rosary echoed through the 30-acre site—ten

of which remain wooded—marking the spiritual foundation of what will soon be a new home for the faithful of the area.

"It is really exciting to finally be at this point," said Fr. Gieske. "I can't wait to see the building begin to take shape. I want to thank the parishioners for continuing to support the church operating costs and the building project."

The \$10 million development kicks off with Phase One: a 600-seat traditional-style church and a welcoming social hall outfitted with a commercial kitchen and seat-

ing for 280—expandable to accommodate twice as many. It's a significant milestone for a project nearly a decade in the making, sparked by the 2016 merger of the Catholic church-

es in Crosby and Deerwood.

Construction begins immediately, with completion of Phase One projected for the fall of 2026.

Future plans—Phase Two

of the project—include an educational wing, offices, an adoration chapel, and a new rectory, signaling a vibrant and growing Catholic

Continued on Page 4

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Heartbeat of downtown Aitkin pulses with new shops and more coming



Laura Smith, floral designer and Crystal Thomsen, owner showcase floral arrangements at Aitkin Flowers.

By ANN SCHWARTZ

The heartbeat of a small, rural community is its downtown and Aitkin is no exception. Shoppers can find healthcare, thrift stores, retail, banks, financial services, gas, oil, a post office, hardware, lumber, arts, gifts, attorneys, printing, real estate, history, medicine, police, insurance, accountants, a school, fitness, yoga, churches, a movie theater, restaurants, ice cream, coffee, flowers, lawncare, economic development, nonprofits and much more. One can find both things one wants and things one needs.

A recent change was the acquisition of Aitkin Flowers and Gifts by Crystal Thomsen of Palisade. The flower shop



Vintage items on sale in Aitkin Vintage Market housed with the flower shop.

remains inside the store as it has for many years on the spotlight corner of Minnesota Ave. N. and Hwy. 210. But the former gift shop is now the Aitkin Vintage Market, featuring various vintage displays and contemporary gift items, such as soap by Ole Lake Farm. Laura Smith of Aitkin is the floral designer.

"We are having our grand opening on Friday and Saturday, June 6 and 7," said Thomsen, who has a background in antiques. "I want to emphasize that the flower shop remains open and we sell stems, bouquets, arrangements and plants and garden items. We have a Facebook page for each business and we will rent space to vendors in the Vintage Market."

Just up the street to the north, Nallely Koehler opened an exquisite storefront for her All Ways Nature shop of creative self-care products. Known for peddling her wares at various farmers' markets and in other shops, and selling on Etsy, Koehler took over the space formerly occupied by Rita Fortunato's Art Studio in the Ripple Center (Butler's). (Fortunato, who offers classes and lessons for all ages, and sells arts pieces and cards, moved into a larger space on the main floor of the building. Recent grants from the Minnesota Arts and Cultural

Heritage Fund has expanded her offerings.)

Some of the products Koehler offers include solid shampoo bars, soap, bath bombs and shower steamers. As a satisfied customer, I can tell you that Koehler will put together a unique gift pack or help you select just the right product for your special person.

She is open middays, and, keeping it family friendly, she takes her children to work with her and has a child-friendly area in the store.

Skye Fiedler, who previously owned Wise Skye Gifts and then the Green Owl Gallery, got bit with the bug to come back downtown. She is opening Green Owl Gifts in the Ri-alto Theater building in Aitkin this week. The new shop will feature yarn, embroidery floss, candy, jewelry and more.

Ginger Marie's Clothing and Gift Shop on Minnesota Avenue North is closed now but a sign advertises that an antique store is coming soon to that former Ben Franklin space.



Nallely Koehler in her new All Ways Nature store in Aitkin. Ann Schwartz photos

Sun Bucks available this summer

Summer EBT is now SUN Bucks. SUN Bucks is an income-based food support program that provides families with \$120 per eligible school-aged child to buy groceries when school is out.

Minnesota Department of Education. School-aged children between the ages of 7-17 whose households participate in specific public assistance programs, or children who have an approved application to receive free and reduced-price school meals through the National School Lunch Program or the School Breakfast Program.

New SUN Bucks cards will be mailed to families in late May through September 2025. The benefits can be used at grocery stores, farmers markets and other retailers that accept EBT cards.

For more information on the SUN Bucks program, visit dcyf.mn.gov/sun-bucks



Memorial Day Weekend Events

Friday, May 23 Seafood Boil 5-8 p.m.

Games on the Green: Ladder Golf, Giant Jenga, Connect 4 9 a.m.-8 p.m., Bingo 7-8 p.m., Bonfire-n-Smores 8:30-9:30 p.m.

Saturday, May 24 Cookout 5-8 p.m.

Northwoods DJ playing tunes 6-9 p.m

Games on the Green: Bocce, Cornhole, Spikeball 9 a.m.-8 p.m., Slingshot Alley 2-3 p.m. \$10 fee per person Meet at Alex 9 Golf Shack

Family Craft \$8 fee per craft 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Bonfire-n-Smores Lakeside Fire Pit 7:30-8:30 p.m.

Sunday, May 25 Outdoor Cookout 12-2 p.m.

Games on the Green: Bocce, Cornhole, Ladder Golf, Giant Jenga 9 a.m.-8 p.m., Family Craft: Tie Dye \$20.00 - T-shirts provided / Build-a-Critter \$25.00 4-5 p.m.

Bonfire-n-Smores Lakeside Fire Pit 7:30-8:30 p.m.

Speed Puzzle Night 6-7 p.m.

\$12 per team - Teams of 4 or less race to complete a 500 piece puzzle. After one hour, the most completed puzzle wins. Register by calling 218-678-4666.

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READER RIBBETS

Senator Keri Heintzeman update

Today [May 19] is the last day of the 2025 legislative session. With state leaders announcing a budget deal last Thursday we were hopeful it will get us to an orderly end of session today. The agreement was reached by House Republicans and Democrats, Senate Democrats, and Governor Walz. Senate Republicans took part in discussions, but we were not part of the final handshake, did not sign off on the agreement and have not committed one way or another to backing the plan.

There are some good things and some bad things in the agreement, and a lot of work is still left to reach an agreement before the constitutionally mandated end of session, which will be tonight by midnight. Stay tuned for more to come.

Also, on Wednesday, Senate Democrats passed a Health and Human Services budget bill

that continues taxpayer-funded healthcare for illegal immigrants, even as our state faces a \$6 billion deficit. With the budget agreement that was announced on Thursday, the Senate Democrat HHS budget proposal will not become law. An updated bill is still to be written. But it is important to note what their true position is.

When this program began in January, it was expected to enroll just under 6,000 individuals in the first year. But only four months in, enrollment has already exploded to more than 20,000 people. Projected costs have more than tripled, now topping \$600 million.

Meanwhile, California (hardly a model of fiscal responsibility) just announced plans to pause new enrollment in a similar illegal immigrant healthcare program due to soaring costs.

If even California liberals realize this is unsustainable, why

can't Minnesota Democrats?

Senate Republicans offered multiple amendments to stop this spending and instead invest in real priorities that help Minnesota families, like mental health services, early learning scholarships, and support for childcare providers. Democrats voted against all of them.

It's clear where their priorities lie: expanding state benefits for those here illegally, while asking hardworking Minnesotans to pay more and get less. That's wrong. With a massive deficit on the horizon, we should be protecting programs that support our citizens, not programs for illegal immigrants.

If you have any questions or feedback, I would love to hear them! Please reach out any time. It is an honor to serve you,

Keri Heintzeman
Minnesota Senate, District 6

Ordinances work, if enforced

It amazes me that Crosby's mayor, her council and the supposed eco. dev. comm. they financially support, continue to expect new businesses to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to restore their properties, yet sit silently allowing for more private residential properties to become overtaken with blight. They cowardly expect their complaint driven system to balance things out, but when less than eight hours a week gets dedicated to addressing the complaints our city's representatives feel should be addressed, not much gets achieved.

In fact, Crosby's blight problem is the worst it's ever been. There are just too many properties that have been uncompliant and prob-

lematic for a town our size, some of which have been on record for over a decade. But our mayor and puppet council don't seem to have the initiative to work on solutions. As an example, after one couple invested over a half million dollars restoring their formerly vacant building, their guests now enjoy the panoramic, scenic views of three of the worst properties our town has to offer. In addition, these dilapidated, junk filled properties happen to be what everyone first notices when driving into town. Its bad enough our mayor and her puppet council continue to throw the tax paying residents under the bus, but foolishly they are even ignoring our business owners best interests. Its embarrassing and

hypocritical for the city to make new businesses diligently hold to all state and city codes yet turn a total blind eye on private residents or favored, grandfathered in businesses who intentionally continue to defy the law.

Ordinances designed to protect only work if enforced. Our mayor, puppet council, and police chief have proven they don't have the desire or guts to enforce our city's ordinances. So all the remodels, restorations, and craftsmanship that should be celebrated or showcased, gets overlooked as their valued tourists have to pass by dilapidated residences full of debris. Good governance?

Chris Ryan,
Crosby

Mille Lacs Energy conducts meeting

The 2025 Mille Lacs Energy Cooperative Annual Meeting was held on Thursday, May 15th, at MLEC Headquarters in Aitkin. There were 186 registered members, with a total of 296 in attendance.

The election results had a total of 1,404 ballots cast with 64 ballots cast at the meeting. For District 1, Mark Anderson ran unopposed and was elected by acclamation. For District 2, Carol Pundt received 1,089 votes via mail and online and 49 at the meeting for a total of 1,138. Kevin Waterston received 251 votes via mail and online with 15 votes cast at the meeting for a total of 266 votes.

The theme for the meeting was "Moving Forward While Remembering the Past." Members heard comments from Board President Harold Harms, who talked about the various projects MLEC completed in 2024 and how we have adjusted to our new location. CEO Sarah Cron explained our

financial outlook for the future and answered questions about the access charge. Accounting and Finance Manager Mark Vosacek presented the financial report to the members.

Special guest speaker Zac Ruzicki, Power Supply Director of Great River Energy, gave a wholesale power report. He discussed carbon-free legislation and rate projections for the future. Chuck Schotzko, MLEC Community Trust Board President, thanked members for their generosity of contributions to Operation Round Up, a program in which members' bills are rounded up to the nearest dollar, and the money raised is given back through grants to local organizations.

Various questions were answered in the Ask the Co-op section of the meeting. Everyone who attended had the opportunity to submit their questions and have them answered by MLEC staff and board members.

Many door prizes were given away during a drawing for those in attendance. Before the presentations and the official annual meeting, a pancake dinner was prepared and served by MLEC staff. We were proudly featured local businesses including Lemire's Pure Maple Syrup, Double D's Custom Processing, Glen Meats, and Paulbeck's Market. Milk for the event was donated by Kemps. We look forward to seeing you next year!

MLEC is a not-for-profit, electric distribution cooperative owned by the members we serve. We provide service to over 13,000 members in parts of Aitkin, Crow Wing, and Mille Lacs counties. Our headquarters is located at 36559 US Highway 169, one mile east of Aitkin, MN.

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Rep. Ben Davis legislative update

We are in the final days of the legislative session, with the constitutional adjournment date of May 19th coming up fast on Monday. A lot is happening quickly. Bills are being passed off the House floor one after another, including the education finance and policy bills that were debated and passed late last night.

Yesterday, there was a rally at the Capitol pushing for free health insurance for people who are in our country illegally. I want you to know I stood firmly against it. Your hard-earned tax dollars should not be used to fund benefits that many Minnesota families can't even afford for their own kids. That's not justice, and it's not right. We need to focus on taking care of our citizens first.

On the budget front, lawmakers and the Governor reached an agreement late Wednesday night. It's a step in the right direction to clean up the mess left by the last DFL-controlled session. Here's

some highlights from the deal:

- We stopped the Governor's sales tax hikes, the social media tax, the provider tax increase, and a new top income tax tier
- We protected non-public school funding, a win for religious, charter, and homeschool students across our state
- We froze enrollment in illegal immigrant healthcare programs and are phasing out adult coverage by 2026
- We made smart investments in county technology and shut down wasteful projects like the Northern Lights Express train to Duluth

There's still work to do. Conference committees are taking these budget targets and turning them into real bills. There may be some bumps along the way, but I'll keep fighting to make sure your tax dollars are protected and our values are reflected in the final deal.

Demanding Transparency from our Attorney General.
After a House Fraud Committee

hearing on April 28, we sent a letter demanding answers about possible links to fraudsters, questionable campaign contributions, and suspicious Capitol activity. Minnesotans deserve honesty and accountability from the push.

I'm Pushing Hard for Fraud Prevention.

My bill, House File 2, would require state agencies to report fraud immediately, not just "encourage" them to do it. We're also working on stronger protections for whistleblowers so honest employees can safely expose wrongdoing.

Closing Days of Session

Session may wrap up Monday, or we could be heading into a special session. Either way, I'll be right here, standing for truth, standing for you, and fighting to keep government accountable. There's much more to come and I will be sure to keep you updated as we learn more.

Ben Davis, District 6A
State Representative

Vacationland book club read

Book lovers, mark your calendars! The Northland Arboretum invites readers to escape into the pages of Vacationland by Minnesota author Sarah Stonich at their upcoming book club meeting on Monday, June 9, from 5 to 6:30 p.m.

This month's selection promises a rich discussion steeped in regional flavor, as Vacationland explores life and layered stories in a fictional northern Minnesota

resort town. Whether you're a longtime fan of Stonich or discovering her work for the first time, this is a gathering you won't want to miss.

The book club is free and open to the public, but pre-registration is required by calling 218-829-8770. Participants are encouraged to register early to receive discussion questions in advance, helping spark a lively and thoughtful conversation. Arboretum members may

check out a copy of the book at the front desk. Non-members are asked to obtain their own copies prior to the event.

The meeting will take place at the Northland Arboretum, located at 14250 Conservation Drive, Brainerd—a fittingly serene spot for readers to come together and share stories under the trees.

So, grab your book, bring a friend, and join the conversation in one of Brainerd's most beautiful settings.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

- May**
- 22nd -24nd - JFHML Friends Mini Book Sale at Hallett Library. Thursday and Friday, five books for \$1; Saturday bag sale.
- 30th - Registration deadline for the The Hallett Center of Crosby Kids Camp from June 2 to August 22. The camp offers three sessions: June 2 – June 27, June 30 – July 25 and July 28 – August 22 Camp hours are Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information, call 218-546-2616 or visit the Hallett Center at 470 8th Street NE, Crosby.
- 31st - Because of Brandon ATV Ride. Guided rides with a dart run on Miller Black Bear/Section 6 Trail System starting at 10 a.m. A free will lunch provided. Fund-raiser for juvenile diabetes education. Contact Andy Suchla 612-669-6317
- 31st - Aitkin Food as Medicine Festival, 10 a.m.-1p.m. at the Aitkin Farmer's Market, 190 Southgate Dr., Aitkin clearlakegardens.org/events
- 31st - Bird Hikes at the Northland Arboretum, 8 a.m. Binoculars are provided or bring your own. Open to the public. Free for members, \$10 gate fee for non-members. Northland Arboretum is located at 14250 Conservation Drive, Brainerd. Call 218-829-8770 for more information.
- 31st - Shop 4 Free at Faith Baptist Church, 229 28th St. E. Brainerd, 9am-2pm. Free clothing, housewares, toys, books and more.
- June**
- 2nd, 5th & 9th - Northland Arboretum Stepping Stone Garden Art class 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. each evening The cost is \$45 for Arboretum members or \$50 for non-members, and spaces are limited. Call Northland Arboretum at 218-829-8770 to register or learn more.
- 5th - Music in the Park, 5- 8 p.m., at Crosby Memorial Park on Serpent Lake. Call Cuyuna Lakes Chamber at 218 546-8131 for more info.
- 7th - Take a Kid Fishing event hosted by Community Effect on Serpent Lake in Crosby. For more information contact Tyler Scull at 612-212-5772.
- 8th - Cuyuna Off-Road Triathlon. Paddle, shred and tread the red in the Cuyuna Country State Recreation Area. Visit www.cuyunaoffroadtri.com to register.
- 13th - Registration deadline for the Northland Arboretum quarter-mile guided Pink Lady's Slippers hike on June 19 at 5:30 p.m. A pink-themed bash featuring delicious food and drinks will follow. Tickets are \$25 for Arboretum members or \$30 for non-members, and the fee is non-refundable. To secure your place or get more details, call Northland Arboretum at 218-829-8770.
- 14th - Woodtick Races in downtown Cuyuna at the Woodtick Inn. Races start at noon. Call Bill Bedard at 218-546-5883 for more info.
- 19th - Music in the Park, 5- 8 p.m., at Crosby Memorial Park on Serpent Lake. Call Cuyuna Lakes Chamber at 218 546-8131 for more info.
- 20th - 22nd Midwest Mountain Bike Fest Expo, Croft Historical Park, Crosby. Scavenger Hunt Challenge and Vintage Mountain Bike Meetup and Group Ride
- Send your community events to hopper@crobyironton.net**



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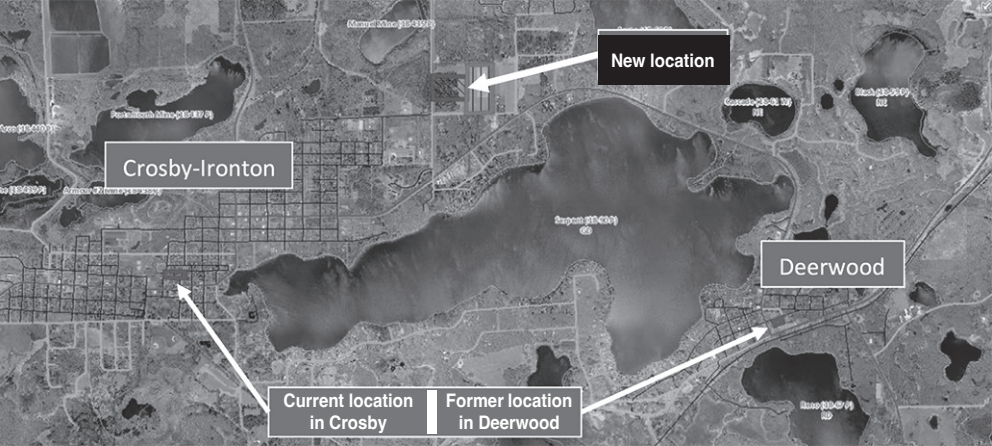
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St. Joseph Catholic Church groundbreaking | Continued from Page 1



A ceremonial groundbreaking for St. Joseph's Catholic Church was held Sunday at the site of the new campus on Deer Trail Drive. Participating in the ceremony were (left to right) Jesse Hopkins of HHR Architecture in Brainerd; Shawn Close, senior project manager with Rice Lake Construction; Bishop Daniel J. Felton of the Diocese of Duluth; Darin Dirkes, pre-construction services manager with Rice Lake Construction; Doreen Miller-Fish and Michael Aulie, trustees of St. Joseph's Catholic Church; and Father Elias Gieske, pastor of St. Joseph's.



The site for the new church will be located between Crosby and Deerwood near Super One Foods, Heartwood Senior Living, Cuyuna Range Elementary School and Cuyuna Regional Medical in Crosby.



A portion of the crowd of parishioners and visitors that were on hand for groundbreaking ceremonies for the new St. Joseph Catholic Church on Deer Trail Drive between Crosby and Deerwood. Joan Hasskamp photos

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CHURCH DIRECTORY

* Indicates handicap accessible. NOTE: All times are Sunday morning (a.m.) unless indicated otherwise.

ALLIANCE
Aitkin* — New Life Church of the CM&A; Worship 10:15 am; Services on Sunday at 10:15am and 6pm; 11-1st Street SW; newlifeaitkin.com 218-927-2823.
Baxter* — Pointway Alliance Church; Rev. Charles Bolstridge, 218-537-6505; 7756 Highland Scenic Road; Worship 10; www.pointway.org
Garrison* — Worship 10:30am
Onamia — Vineland Native American Chapel, Hwy. 169 north of casino; Worship 11; Pastor Boeringa 320-532-4449

ASSEMBLY OF GOD
Aitkin — Pastor Andrew Jergenson; Sunday Morning Service 10.
Baxter — Heritage Church, Pastor Heath Beard; 8:30, 10 & 11:30 Sundays, 6:30p Wednesdays, iamheritage.org
Crosby — Pastor Dustin McCaleb; Worship 10:30
Crosslake — Crossroads Christian, Rev. Gary Espeseth; SS at 9:30; Worship at 10:45
Hill City — Interim Pastor John Koppel, Staff Pastor Lisa Jordan; Worship 10; hillcityagchurch@gmail.com; 218-697-2662
Palisade — Pastor Charlie Bell; SS 9; Worship 10; Kids Church; Small groups during the week 218-845-2726

BAPTIST
Aitkin - Northwoods Community Church, Pastor William Verbeke, Worship 10:30, northwoodscommunitychurch.org
Baxter - Eagle Brook Church , Worship 9 & 11, www.eaglebrookchurch.com/locations/brainerd-lakes/
Brainerd* - Faith Baptist Church, Pastor Jim Stephens, 218-829-3191; SS 9:00, Worship 10:30 and 6 p.m., Wed. Classes and Clubs 6:30 p.m.; fbcbraainerd.com
Brainerd- The Church On The Wise Road, Pastor Todd Stumbo 218-829-4673, Worship 11:00, SS 9:45 www.thechurchonthewiseroad.org
Breezy Point — Eagles Nest, Pastor Zach Broom 218-562-5252, Worship 9:30, SS 11.
Crosby — Bible Baptist, Pastor Jon Thorson; SS 9:45; Service 10:45 and 6 p.m., Bible Study Wed. 7 pm
Deerwood* — Jeff Shadrick, SS 9:30; Worship 10:30 and 6 pm; Wed. Service, 6:30 pm.
Glory* — SS 9:15; Worship 10:30 a.m.; Wed 6pm Glory Family night, KidMin grades kindergarten - 6, Mad4Christ grades 7-12, aitkinchurch.com
Hill City — Pastor Lonnie Lee; 218-697-2645; Adult SS 9; Worship 10 am; Bible Study, Fri., 7 pm.
Isle — Pastor Nick Skogen; 676-3171; SS 9:30; Service 10:30; Bible Study, Wed., 7 p.m.
Opstead — 676-8859; SS 9:30; Worship, 10:30; Bible Study Wed., 7 p.m.

CATHOLIC
Aitkin* — St. James, Fr. Mike Patullo, 218-927-6581; Mass Sat. 5 pm, Sun. 10:30. Confession Sat. 10-10:45 and 4-4:45 pm.
Brainerd — St. Andrew's, Fr. Gabriel Waweru, Sat.4:30; Sun. 10:00 and St. Mathias Sunday 8:00.
Brainerd — St. Francis, Fr. Michael Garry, Sat. 5:00; Sunday 7:30, 9:00, 11:15 and All Saints Saturday 4:00 and Sunday 10:30.
Cromwell/Wright — Immaculate Conception, Mass: Sat. 5 p.m.
Crosby* — St. Joseph's, Fr. Eli Gieske, Mass: Thurs. and Fri. at 8; Tues at noon, Sun. 8:30 & 10:30.
Crosslake — Immaculate Heart, 218-692-3731; www.ihmstemilys.org; Mass: Sat. 4 pm; Sun. 8:30; Confession Sat. 3 pm.
Emily — St. Emily, Mass: Mon. & Wed. 8; Sun. 10:30; Confession 1st Sat. 11 or by appt. 218-763-2101.
Garrison — Our Lady of Fatima, Fr. Eli Gieske, Mass Wed. 9 & Sat. 4 pm, Confession Sat. 3:30 - 3:50 pm
Grand Rapids — St. Joseph's, Fr. Jerry Weiss, Mass: Sat. 5 pm; Sun. 8 & 10:30. 218-326-2483
Hillman — Holy Family; Sun. 10 to Mass Sat. 6:30 pm (only through Labor Day) w/ confession before or by appt.
McGregor — Holy Family, Fr. Mike Patullo, 218-927-6581; Mass Sun. 8; Confessions Tues. 5:30-6:30 pm
Vineland — St. Therese, Mass Sun. 11; Holy Days 8:30.

CHURCH OF CHRIST
Baxter, Lakes Area — Nondenominational; 7001 Highland Scenic Road; Bible Study every Wed. 7 pm; Worship 10:30-11:30. 218-828-1362
Tamarack — Pastor Terry Banker, 608-475-1528, Worship 9:30; SS 10:45; Wed Youth 4 pm.

CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS
Aitkin — Co. Rd. 12, Chapel Ph. 218-927-4454; Kevin Haffner 218-792-5684; Sacrament Mtg. 10

COMMUNITY
Aitkin — Nondenominational; 927-2749; at 219-1st Ave. NE., Aitkin, Services Sun. 10, 218-927-6959
Brainerd - Community of Hope Church of the Nazarene- Pastor Dave McGaffey Sunday worship at 10, SS 9; 16549 Johnson Rd -church phone 218-829-9005
Glen — Pastor R. F. Stauter, 218-838-1981; Worship 9 May-Oct.
Grand Rapids — Solid Rock Church of God, Pastor Robert Kimberling; 218-326-0711; Sun. BS 9:30, Worship 10:30; Wed. BS 6:30 pm
Jacobson — Jacobson Community Church, Pastor George Collins, 218-252-5938, Sun. SS (All ages) 9:30, Worship 10:30; Family Time 2nd & 4th Sundays; Wed. BS 7 pm
Kimberly — Nature Ave. Rev. Rick Perry; Worship 9; Adult Bible Study & Sunday School 10:30; 218-927-6256.
McGregor — The Lighthouse Christian Church; Worship 10; 99 South 1st Street (at the McGregor United Methodist church [shared] in downtown McGregor) Pastor Joel Seibel.
McGregor — Victory Mission, Pastor J. Gould, 218-768-2160; Sun. 10; Wed. Bible Study, 7:30 pm.
Merrifield — Community Church of the Nazarene, Pastor Ron Christenson; Service 11 & 6 pm. Wed. Prayer Meeting, 7 p.m.; 218-829-7536.
Merrifield — Ossipee Community, SS 10; Service 11; Wed. Bible Study Prayer, 7:00 p.m.
Nisswa — Christ Community Church, Pastor Richie Bean; Service 10; Fellowship 9:30-10
Outing* - Narrows Community Church, Pastor Kenny Holm, 218-792-5530 Worship 9:30; 6297 Woods Bay NE, just north of Hwy. 6 bridge
Palisade —Hilltop Chapel (Waukenabo Twp)*- service 10 a.m.; Adult and Children's SS 9 a.m.; 49448 Osprey Avenue, Palisade.
Tamarack — Church of Christ, 218-768-3898; Service 9:30; SS 10:45.

EPISCOPAL
Aitkin — St. John's, Holy Communion or Morning Prayer 9
Brainerd* — St. Paul's, Rev. Joyce A. Rush. In-person worship service at 10 am Sunday. Online at 5 pm Saturday. Call the church 219-829-3834 and leave a message with email to receive a Zoom invitation.

EVANGELICAL FREE
Baxter — Lakewood EFC, Pastor Matt Nagel; Worship at 9:00 and 10:45. Wednesday for all ages 6:30 pm.
Crosslake — The Log Church 9:30, Pastor Troy Nelson; 218-692-4141, 37218 County Road 66, www.crosslakeefc.org
Isle — Pastor Mark Lee; Sunday School 9:00 am; Worship 10:30 am, Sun. Youth group 6:00 pm, Wed. Adult Prayer 6:30 pm and Kids Konnect 6:30 pm
Malmö — Pastor Glenn Browning; SS 9:30; Fellowship 10; Worship 10:15
Wright — Pastor Ken Mitchell, 218-426-5115; SS 9:30; Worship, 10:30; Thu., Bible Study, 7 pm.

HEBREW/MESSIANIC
Glen — Beth Shalom Tabernacle of Truth, for information 320-684-2804

LUTHERAN
Aitkin — Bethlehem (ELCA), Rev. Rebecca Hinz; Worship 9:30; Holy Comm. 1st & 3rd Sun each month.
First* — (ELCA) Pastor Reggie Denton, worship Sun. 9am (also available via livestream on YouTube — First Lutheran Church, Aitkin) and (broadcast on KGIN 94.3 FM radio at 10am), take out community meal every Mon. & Thurs. 5pm and Tues. 12pm; food shelf 2nd & 4th Thurs. each month 9am- 4pm. Office open M-Th 7:30am — 4pm.
Aitkin (Cedarbrook) — St. John's (ELCA) Pastor Sarah Stadler, 602-318-6876, 27452 St. John's Church Road, Aitkin. Worship on Sundays at 9:00 am followed by Sunday school at 10:00 am. stjohns-cedarbrook.weebly.com.
Aitkin — St. John's (Missouri Synod), Pastor D. Becker; Worship Sun. 9, SS 10
Baxter — Christ Lutheran Church and Preschool (WELS). Pastor Bill Werth. Sunday Worship 9. Sunday School/Adult Bible Class 10:15. 13815 Cherrywood Dr. in Baxter. (Corner of Ingelwood and Cherrywood). 218-829-4105. www.christbaxter.com.
Baxter — Prince of Peace (LCMS); Community every Sunday 9, Fellowship 10:15, Adult Bible Class & Sunday School 10:30 am 218-829-7092 www.princeofpeace-lutheran.church
Beaver Township — Finnish EA, Hwy. 27, Worship 1st &

3rd Sun., 10:30.
Brainerd — First Lutheran Church (ELCA) Pastors: Patty Bjorklund and Jordan Gades, Sunday worship 9, Sunday School following worship. Services also available on YouTube and Facebook. 218-829-9552 flicbrainerd.com 424 8th Street South, Brainerd
Brainerd* — Good Shepherd Free Lutheran Church (AFLC), Pastor David Franz, find service info at www.goodshepherdfree.lutheran.church, 5878 Pine Beach Road, Brainerd, 218-824-3052
Brainerd — Laestadian Lutheran Church, 1501 So. 8th St. - Sunday Worship Services 10:30 am. (www.lchurch.org)
Brainerd — Trinity Lutheran Church (ELCA) 1420 South 6th St. Brainerd, Worship time September through May 8:15am & 10:30am; worship (June through August) 9 am. 218-829-5147. Website: www.trinitybrainerd.org. Email: trinity@trinitybrainerd.org
Brainerd — Truth Lutheran Church (LCMC, Pastor James Walth, Corner of 5th and Kingwood, Worship 9
Brainerd - Zion Lutheran Church (LCMS) Pastor Steve Benson, Sunday Worship 9, Monday Worship 6 pm. Education hour Sunday 10:15 am. 220 N. 8th St. Brainerd. 218-829-4317. www.zionbrainerd.com.
Cedar Lake, Norwegian Lutheran — Third Sun 11, May - Oct. Crosby — Immanuel (LCMC) Rev. Paul Mattson; Sun. 9:30 worship; SS (Sept.-May) 10:15; 10:30 fellowship
Crosby — Zion (LC-MS) Worship 9 (alternates with Immanuel Iron Hub) 218-546-6910.
Crosslake Lutheran Church (ELCA) www.crosslakelutheran.com • Kristin Oltmann, Pastor • Becky Swanson, Pastor 218-692-3682, May 18-Labor Day: Sun. Indoor 8:30am, Outdoor 10am Indoor: 35960 CR 66, Outdoor: 14019 Daggett Pine Rd., Weekly Free Community Drive Thru Meals-To-Go - Wednesdays from 5-6pm - All are welcome!
Crosslake —Mission of the Cross (LCMS), Pastor Leslie Uhrinak; Worship 9:30 with every Sunday Communion, Fellowship 10:30, Adult Bible Class 11, 218-692-4228, www.missionofthecross.org
Deerwood* — Salem (ELCA), Pastor Amanda Kempthorne; Worship 9; Sunday School 9:50.
Garrison — Light of the Cross (ELCA), Worship 9 SS 9; 320-692-4773 or 877-406-9101.
Garrison — Shepherd of the Lake (LCMS), Rev. Caleb Worrel. Worship 10 with Communion Every Sunday. Adult Bible Study 8:30am, Sunday School Sept-May, 8:30am. Fellowship 11am. 320-692-4581. www.shepherdofthelake.org.
Giese — Immanuel, Rev. R. Langhorst & Rev. R. Lovaas; Worship 9; SS 10; Holy Communion 1st Sun. of month 8:45.
Hill City — Trinity, (Missouri Synod), Pastor M. Eckert; Worship 9; Bible Study 10:15.
Hillman — Immanuel, (ELCA) Sun. Worship 11, fellowship follows. Located on the corner of Hwy. 27 and Co. Rd. 47. (Handicap accessible)
Iron Hub — Immanuel (LC-MS) Worship 10:30, Pastor Donald Klatt 218-534-3069
Isle — Faith (ELCA), Pastor Josh Blair; Worship 9:30; handicapped accessible.
Isle — Holden (ELCA), Worship 9:15
Isle — Trinity (Missouri Synod), Rev. Mark Maunula; Worship 9; Fellowship follows; SS 10:30; Adult Bible 10:30.
Jacobson — Carmel, Vicar Mark Wagner; SS 1st & 3rd Sun. 10, Service 11, fellowship follows.
Lake Shore — Living Savior Lutheran Church, 8327 Interlachen Rd.; Worship 9 Sunday mornings, followed by fellowship and Bible study. (Located on Co. Rd. #77 N)
Malmö — Bethesda (ELCA) Rev. James Muske: Sun. Worship 9am. Fellowship following Service. Communion every Sunday.
McGrath — Grace; Wed. potluck 5 pm, Bible study 6 p.m.; SS 10; Worship 11.
McGrath — Zion (ELCA), Worship 9; SS 9.
McGregor/Big Sandy Lake — Grace Lutheran Log Church (LCMC), Pastor Lorelie Robinson; Worship 9, Fellowship follows, SS 10.
McGregor — Our Savior's (Missouri Synod), Pastor Joshua C. Reinke; Worship 9; SS 10; Bible Study Tue. 9, Wed. 7 pm
Outing — Our Saviors ELCA; Pastor Luke Lekander, Worship 9.
Palisade* — Bethel (ELCA), Pastor Steven Teff; Worship 9:30.
Pequot Lakes - Gloria Dei Lutheran Church (LCMS) Pastor Monte Meyer Worship 9 am, Fellowship 10 am, Sunday School and Adult Bible Study 10:15 am
Pequot Lakes* - Our Savior's Lutheran Church (ELCA) Rev. Stephen Blenkush Worship 9:00 a.m., SS 9:15 a.m., Fellowship 10:15 a.m. Wed. Adult Bible Study 11:00 a.m.
Rossburg — Bethesda Lutheran (LCMC Congregations in

Mission for Christ) 11:30 service. Communion 1st & 3rd Sunday each month.
Tamarack (AFLC) — Pastor Ron Staudinger; 1st, 3rd and 4th Sundays 10 am; 41163 Kestrel Ave 3.3 mi. South of Hwy 210
Thor — Zion, Worship 11; 1st and 3rd Sun. April through December.
Wright — Bethlehem, Worship; SS 9.
Wright — St. John's (Missouri Synod), Pastor Joshua Reinke; Worship 10:30; Bible Study and Sunday School Sun. 9:30; Lent services Wed. 5:30 pm.)

NON-DENOMINATIONAL
Aitkin—Cedar Lake Norwegian Lutheran Church, service is the 3rd Sunday of the month May-October at 11am , 3100 Pioneer Ave., Aitkin.
Brainerd—Oak Street Chapel, Pastor Todd Wooden, Worship service is Sunday at 9:30, 523 SE 11th Street, Brainerd, 218-454-0984
Brainerd—Remnant Ministry Center, Pastor Ben Davis, Worship service is Sunday at 10am, 512 S 8th St., Suite 2, 218-829-2989.

PENTECOSTAL
Baxter — Christ Alive, 12485 Forestview Drive, Baxter, MN 56425. Pastor Walter Starr, 763-316-7270, Sunday Worship 10:00am, Wednesday Bible study 6:30pm
Emily — Cornerstone Church; Pastor Earl Ready; Worship 10, 41536 Birchwood Drive, Emily; 218-763-2939.
Ironton — Iron Range Christian Center; Pastor Dwight Semler; 218-546-6523; meeting at Irondale Town Hall*, Co. Rd. 12, (Deerwood Shortcut); Worship 10 & Wed. 7 pm. Tamarack — Warriors of the Rainbow Ministry, Pastors Ken and Ron Fairbanks, Sat. 11. 218-768-3585

PRESBYTERIAN
Crosslake - Pastor Mark Ford, 218-692-4769; Worship 9; Fellowship 11, 14444 Daggett Pine Road, Crosslake, just passed the Community Center; www.crosslakepres.org.
McGrath — Calvary, Pastor - Todd Oltmann; Worship 9.
McGregor/Round Lake — Pastor Talley; Worship Sat. 5 pm. Tamarack — First, Rev. J. Yingling; Worship 11.

REFORMED
Crosby — Lifespring Church, a member of Fellowship of Independent Reformed Evangelicals, 9:30, 30 Hallett Ave NE 218-545-5433. www.visitlifespring.com

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST
Aitkin — Pastor Josh Jeresek; Worship Sat. 9:30, Prayer Meeting & Bible Study Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.; www.aitkinadventist.org; 423-805-0933; 830 Minnesota Ave S
Brainerd — Pastor Josh Jeresek; Worship Sat. 11:10, Bible Study 10; Bible Study & Prayer Mtg. Wed. 6:30 p.m.; 2910 Oak Street, Brainerd, 218-829-1676

UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST
Pequot Lakes — 28877 State Hwy 371, Pequot Lakes 10:30 1st and 4th Sundays. 218-330-3476

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
Brainerd — First Congregational UCC, 415 Juniper St, Brainerd. Sunday worship at 10. Pastor; Leslie Moughty. Handicapped accessible. www.uccbbrainerdmn.org

UNITED METHODIST
Aitkin* — Aitkin - Pastor Dawn Houser; Worship 10, Wednesdays at 5:30 pm Bible & Brew, Facebook live.
Crosby/Deerwood* — Cascade, Pastor Gary Taylor; Sunday Worship with Youtube live streaming 10 am with fellowship to follow. Cascade Ladies meet on the first Wednesday of each month at noon. Come & Eat Community dinner on the third Wednesday of each month at 5:30 pm. Please call the office to sign up: 218-534-3507.
Cutler* (South Aitkin Church) — Pine Lake Chapel, Pastor Gary Taylor; Worship Sunday 1 p.m. Fellowship follows.
Cromwell — Pastor Tim Homstad; Worship 10; SS 9
Emily* — Pastor Gary Taylor; Sunday Worship with Facebook live streaming 8:30 with fellowship to follow. UWV meet on the first Sunday of each month following worship. Men's prayer breakfast 2nd Saturday of each month at 8. Bible Study Thursday at 6 pm.
Fleming* — (Northern Lights Parish) SS 9:15; Worship 10:30; fellowship follows.
Hill City — Pastor Roger Lynn; Worship 10
McGregor* — (Northern Lights Parish) Worship 8:45; fellowship follows.
Onamia — Pastor Rick & Judy Wilder; Worship 11; fellowship 10; 2 blks north of Post Office; handicap ramp; 320-532-3150; office: 218-546-7656; cell: 218-360-1947

WESLEYAN
Emily — Rev. Jason Gressman; Worship 9; Friendship Time 10; SS 10:30; Wed. Activities 6:30 p.m.; 218-763-HOPE.

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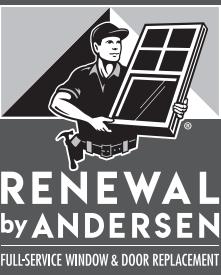


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Community comes together for Memorial Sunday Service in Crosslake

This Memorial Day weekend, Crosslake Lutheran Church invites the community to come together for a heartfelt observance of those who have served and sacrificed for our country. On Sunday, May 25, the church will host two services to honor veterans and military personnel. The first, a more traditional worship service, will be held at 8:30 a.m. in the sanctuary at Crosslake Lutheran Church, located just across from the campground.

For a larger, community-wide Memorial Weekend observance, the second service will take place at 10 a.m. outdoors at 14019 Daggett Pine Road, right across from the Crosslake Community Center baseball field. Both services are open to the public, and everyone is encouraged to attend and take part in this special occasion.

The Memorial Sunday ser-



vice promises to be a moving tribute, featuring a recognition of veterans and military personnel in attendance. In addition, special music will fill the air, and the guest speaker for the event will be Bill Woolie, a Vietnam War veteran whose dedication to his fellow servicemen and women is truly inspiring.

Honoring a local hero

Bill Wroolie's story is one of service, sacrifice, and resilience. A Vietnam veteran, Bill enlisted in the U.S. Army Reserve in 1964 as a combat engineer. He completed his basic training at Ft. Leon-

ard Wood, Missouri, and later specialized as a heavy equipment operator. In March 1967, Bill transitioned to the regular Army and was deployed to Vietnam, where he served in three units over the course of his tour: the 102nd Engineer Company, the 170th Assault Helicopter Company, and B Troop 2/17th Cavalry, 101st Airborne Division.

While in Vietnam, Bill was wounded on May 25, 1969—an anniversary he will never forget. Serving as an observer in a Loach helicopter during a first-light mission, Bill was hit by one of two anti-aircraft rounds in Tam Ky. He was evacuated first to Japan and then back to the U.S. for recovery.

Bill's bravery in combat earned him numerous awards, including the Distinguished Flying Cross, Purple Heart, Air Medal with 22 Oak Leaf Clusters, Army Com-

mendation Medal with Combat "V," and the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm. But Bill's commitment to veterans extends far beyond his military service. Over the years, he has held leadership positions in several veteran organizations, including the Military Order of the Purple Heart, Disabled American Veterans, and the V4V organization, which assists Minnesota veterans and their families.

Currently, Bill serves on the board of the Minnesota Military and Veterans Museum, which is in the process

of constructing a new facility near Camp Ripley.

Bill is a native of Brainerd, Minnesota and has lived his entire life in central Minnesota. Currently he and his wife, Mary Beth, make their home in Brainerd. They have a combined family of three children and five grandchildren.

A full day of remembrance

The outdoor Memorial Day service will include more than just speeches. Weather permitting, attendees will be treated to an aerial flyover, a powerful tribute to those who have given their lives in service. The Crosslake-Fifty

Lakes American Legion Post 500 Color Guard will present the colors and conduct a ceremony honoring both the colors and the fallen. A bugler will also perform the solemn notes of "TAPS," a musical salute that has become a lasting symbol of respect for military personnel.

The service is free and open to all. Whether you're a veteran, a family member, or simply a community member who wants to show your support, this event is a meaningful way to honor the brave men and women who have served our country.

Other Memorial Day Services

Several communities are planning special Memorial Day ceremonies to honor those who served and sacrificed for our country.

Aitkin will host a Memorial Day service at 11 a.m. at the Aitkin American Legion, with a light lunch served afterward. All are welcome to attend and join in the ceremony.

Brainerd will kick off the day with a moving wreath-laying ceremony on the Laurel Street Bridge at 9 a.m., followed by a formal ceremony at the All-Veterans Memorial at 9:30 a.m. The parade begins at 10 a.m., marching up Third Avenue Northeast to Evergreen Cemetery. The main service at Evergreen will begin at 10:30 a.m. with Chaplain Rev. Eusebia "Chappy" Rios as the speaker. If the weather doesn't cooperate, the ceremony will be moved to the Brainerd National Guard Armory. Afterward, a free picnic lunch hosted by the American Legion and Brainerd Elks will be served until 1 p.m. at 708 Front Street.

For those who can't make it in person, the service will be streamed online by mid-evening at facebook.com/brainerdmemorialday.

Crosby – The Myrin-James

American Legion Post #443 will present a Memorial Day service at Lakewood Cemetery at 10:30 a.m. Following the ceremony, a complimentary meal will be served at the Ironton American Legion from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The meal will include pulled pork sandwiches, sloppy joes, baked beans, coleslaw, and more. Donations are welcome. If the weather doesn't cooperate, the ceremony will be moved to Mayberry Auditorium at C-I High School.

Deerwood – The Walter Scott Erickson American Legion Post #557 will present a Memorial Day program starting at 9 a.m. at the Deerwood Auditorium. The event will feature a variety of speakers, including Army veteran Steven Jenniges, who is also the current commander of Post #557. Coffee and treats will be served afterward by the American Legion Auxiliary Unit.

Emily will honor veterans at the Pine Ridge Cemetery with a service at 9 a.m. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own chairs. In case of rain, the service will be held indoors at the Emily Wesleyan Church. Military members are invited

to attend in uniform to be recognized during the reading of deceased veterans' names.

Palisade – The Palisade VFW will hold two services on Memorial Day, starting with a ceremony at Waukenabo Cemetery at 10 a.m. followed by another at Pine Grove Cemetery at noon. It's a meaningful day of reflection and remembrance.

Pequot Lakes – The Pequot Lakes American Legion Ben Krueger Post 49 will host a Memorial Day ceremony starting at 10 a.m. at the high school auditorium. Following the ceremony, there will be honors at the Pequot Lakes Cemetery and the Post 49 Memorial at Trailside Park, concluding with a Quilts of Honor ceremony at the American Legion. A lunch will be served afterward.

Pine River – Pine River will hold services at 9:30 a.m. at the Pine River Dam and at 11 a.m. at Swanburg Cemetery. The ceremony at the dam will include a speech, taps, and a wreath-laying honoring those who died at sea. The ceremony at Swanburg will honor both veterans and those who sacrificed all during their service. A reception will follow at Faith Lutheran Church.

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Governor Walz signs first tribal-state cannabis compact

In a historic step for both the state and tribal sovereignty, Governor Tim Walz signed the first-ever Tribal-state compact under Minnesota's 2023 cannabis law. The agreement, signed on May 20, establishes a groundbreaking partnership between the State of Minnesota and the White Earth Nation to regulate cannabis, with a strong focus on promoting public health, safety, and economic development.

This compact is the first of its kind since the state Legislature authorized the Governor to negotiate similar agreements—known as cannabis compacts—with Tribal Nations. These compacts are designed to enhance the regulation of cannabis in a manner that is beneficial not only to the state but also to the Tribes, ensuring that the cannabis

market operates legally and responsibly while supporting the economic well-being of both the state and Tribal communities.

A collaborative approach to cannabis regulation

The agreement between the White Earth Nation and the State of Minnesota outlines a cooperative approach to managing cannabis in a way that benefits everyone. The compact will help establish a well-regulated market, encourage public health measures, and foster economic growth on both sides. The agreement also sets the stage for the White Earth Nation to exercise its sovereignty in regulating cannabis on its land, creating new opportunities for the Tribe.

What this means for Minnesota's cannabis landscape

Minnesota's cannabis law, passed in 2023, tasked the

Governor with negotiating compacts with Tribes that share territory with the state. The goal is clear: to create a legal and safe cannabis marketplace that works for everyone. In addition to ensuring public health and safety, the compacts aim to generate economic benefits through legal cannabis sales, create jobs, and open up new avenues for Tribal economic development.

The White Earth Nation, located in northwestern Minnesota, is the first of many Tribal Nations to enter into such an agreement. The compact sets a powerful precedent for future negotiations with other Tribes in the state, further cementing the state's commitment to respecting Tribal sovereignty while promoting a regulated and responsible cannabis industry.

A new era of tribal-state

collaboration

The cannabis compact is not just about business—it's about fostering a new era of collaboration between the State of Minnesota and Tribal Nations. By empowering Tribes to regulate cannabis on their own terms, the compact strengthens the government-to-government relationship and builds a foundation for future agreements that benefit all parties involved.

For the White Earth Nation, the agreement also means greater autonomy in the regulation of cannabis within its own territory, with the flexibility to address the unique needs and priorities of the Tribe. The compact allows for the Tribe to have a seat at the table as the state continues to develop its cannabis regulatory framework.

Looking ahead: more com-

pacts to follow

This initial compact with the White Earth Nation is just the beginning. The Office of Cannabis Management has made it clear that additional compacts will be negotiated with other Tribal Nations in the coming months, creating a broader framework for collaboration across the state.

For those interested in learning more about the compacting process or reviewing the signed agreements, the Office of Cannabis Management's Tribal Compacts website provides access to all relevant documents and updates on future agreements.

A win for public health, safety, and economic growth

The cannabis compact marks a significant milestone in Minnesota's evolving cannabis landscape, providing a framework for responsible regulation while respecting Tribal sovereignty. It's a win for public health and safety, a win for economic development, and a step toward stronger relationships between the state and its Tribal Nations.

As more agreements are signed, the hope is that the lessons learned from this partnership will serve as a model for other states seeking to navigate the complexities of cannabis legalization in a way that benefits all communities—both Native and non-Native alike.

For more information about the compacting process, including copies of signed cannabis compacts, visit the Tribal Compacts section on the Office of Cannabis Management's website <https://mn.gov/ocm/tribal-nation/>.

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