

# Mount Cross Chronicle

January 2026



601 E. Highway 260  
Payson, AZ 85541  
Phone: 928-474-2552  
[www.mountcross.org](http://www.mountcross.org)

**Sunday Worship/Communion Service**  
9:30 a.m.

Livestreamed  
*Online Worship Service*

Mount Cross Facebook Page  
<https://www.facebook.com/MountCrossPayson>

Mount Cross YouTube Link  
[https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=payson+mount+cross](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=payson+mount+cross)

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Pastor  
Rev. Carl Sirotzki  
928-474-2552  
608-370-1284 (emergencies)  
[pastor@mountcross.org](mailto:pastor@mountcross.org)

Music Director  
Daria Mason  
[daria1024mason@gmail.com](mailto:daria1024mason@gmail.com)

Accompanist  
Angeline Ng

Office Administrator  
Lenore M. White  
[secretary@mountcross.org](mailto:secretary@mountcross.org)

Custodian  
Keri Morris

## **Pastor's Musings & Ponderings**

*“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.” Philippians 2:3-4, (ESV)*

Happy New Year! I pray that 2026 will be filled with blessings for you and your families. Jo and I wish to thank you for all of the cards, gifts, prayers and good wishes that you have given us this Christmas season as well as throughout the year. I know I've said it before, but I will say it again, you are such a marvelous congregation! Thank you for your love and caring for us and for one another.

I don't know how many of you listen to the radio, but several of the stations I frequently listen to always have a top 100 songs that are voted in by the listeners. I always find it interesting how many of the same songs are voted into this list year after year, though their place in the standings may have changed.

Now here is something to consider, I wonder if we did this same kind of thing with blessings each year. How many would be the same year after year? Would we even have enough to fill the top 100 blessings chart? If not, why do you think that is? Is it because we didn't receive enough blessings or would it be that we just didn't recognize or acknowledge the true blessings that we received?

I guess this may also be a result of what we consider to be blessings. Over the last twelve months, how have we been a blessing to others? What is interesting about blessings is that we may never know how many people or how often we may actually have blessed someone. Now, some may say, “Hey pastor, we aren't supposed to keep track of those we believed we blessed.” True enough. However, if we are truly following Jesus' teachings and example, wouldn't we be blessing others by what we do and say? Do we practice forgiveness as we have been instructed by Jesus?

Here are a couple of scripture verses that might prove helpful about our being blessings to one another. The first one comes from 1 Peter 3:9, “Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing.” We are not to exact revenge or some form of getting even. For one thing, no matter how we may think about getting even, it really never turns out the way we think it will. Instead, we are called to act with kindness and compassion even when we face hostility.

Another verse comes from Proverbs 11:25, “Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered.” This verse emphasizes the gift of generosity in that those who give blessings will receive blessings in return. Now, that doesn't mean we are to bless others solely for blessings in return. That would mean we are making it about ourselves. When we make every effort to lift up those around us by giving of our resources, time, or love, we will find

abundance and blessings in our own lives. The important thing to remember is that these verses are not intended to mean a one time thing, but a lifetime of giving.

I know it may be a little late for making our New Year resolutions, but maybe we can rework those resolutions to include blessing others throughout the year.

Peace,

*Pastor Carl*

Philippians 1:3-4



Our  
**STATEMENT . . . ChristConnectingCommunity**

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Dear Lord,

After celebrating the birth of Your son, and enter into a new calendar year, help us to focus on beginnings...beginnings of the life that has been provided through the gift of Jesus and a new year filled with chances to become more like Your son. As we walk through the 2026 year, help us to make wise decisions that will glorify You!



You Are Invited to Assist the Worship & Music Committee, Altar Guild, and the Property Committee...

Sanctuary Un-Decorating Event  
and Christmas Tree Removal  
Friday, January 9<sup>th</sup>  
beginning at 8:00 a.m.



Altar Guild will meet on Friday, January 9<sup>th</sup>, at 9:00 a.m. in the Ponderosa Room.

If you feel called to serve by setting the Lord's table, you are welcome to attend.



Congregational Life Team will be meeting on after the service at the tables in the back of the sanctuary on Sunday, January 18<sup>th</sup>. You will have a chance to meet Cheryl Roberts, the new co-ordinator. Please attend if you would like to help with receptions or coffee-time.



The Worship & Music Committee will be meeting in the conference room on Sunday, February 1<sup>st</sup> after the church service.



Coming up next month!

Gather your cash,  
write a check,  
bring your non-perishable  
food items  
on Sunday, February 8<sup>th</sup>.



### Mount Cross Financial Report (January – November 2025)

|  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| 2025 Approved Budget .....                                 | \$335,793.00                         |
| Income .....   | \$291,525.00 (86.8% of 2025 budget)  |
| Expenditures .....   | \$276,441.00 (82.3% of 2025 budget)  |
| Under (Over).....  | \$15,084.00                          |
| Pledged-to-date / Given.....                               | \$215,641.00 / \$223,683.00 (103.7%) |
| <b><u>2025 Mortgage Fund</u></b>                           |                                      |
| Total given to the Mortgage Fund during November 2025..... | \$27,927.00                          |
| Total Principal paid out in 2025 for mortgage.....         | \$21,830.00                          |
| Current Principal balance .....                            | \$350,185.00                         |
| Pledged-to-Date / Given-to-Date .....                      | \$32,083.00 / \$32,186.00 (100.3%)   |

*Please note: above amounts are rounded to the nearest dollar.*

Total income received from Thrivent “Choice Dollars” in 2025

Mount Cross..... \$2,935.00

In Christ’s service,  
The Finance Team



The Council members for the 2026 year are:

Marlu Allan, Carrie Backe, Shannon Bleakley, Sheryn Daw, and Barry DeChaine, Barb DeYoung, and Daria Mason

The executive positions will be elected at the January Council meeting on Wednesday the 21<sup>st</sup>.



#### **January Birthdays**

- 11 Ernie Kellett
- 12 Vickie Weins
- 13 Marilyn Black
- 24 Sherri Taylor
- 28 Mark Duffy

#### **January Wedding Anniversaries**

- 14 Tom/Maria Koch
- 28 Gary/Barbara Greer

#### **January Baptisms**

- 27 Sherri Taylor

## Spiritual Growth Opportunities

### Worship Services

Weekly in-house communion & worship service held in the sanctuary; live stream of the service is available on Facebook.

Sundays, 9:30 AM

### Weekly Prayer sessions

The focus of the sessions are to bring concerns and prayers of thanksgiving to God.

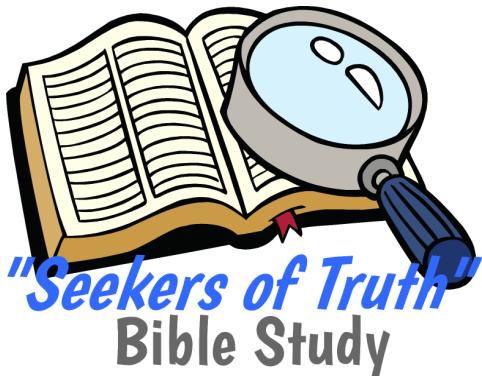
Friday afternoons, 1:00 PM in the Ponderosa Room.



### Seekers of Truth Bible study

This is a monthly Bible study which will be focusing on the parables of Jesus. All are welcome to attend.

3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month, 10:00 AM in the conference room.



Seekers of Truth is a small Bible study and fellowship group for women and men, which is held on the third Thursday of each month in the conference room at 10:00 a.m. January 15<sup>th</sup> is the date for this month's meeting.

The group is currently studying the parables of Jesus.

All are welcome to attend. All you need is a Bible. The formal discussion period of the meeting generally lasts about an hour and is followed by a time for sharing and support. If you have questions please contact Susan Nafziger, the group discussion leader, or Jan Bartoli, the group facilitator.



Because of you,  
life doesn't stop.

BLOOD  
DRIVE

## PAYSON COMMUNITY BLOOD DRIVE

MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 2026  
10:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Mount Cross Lutheran Church  
601 E Hwy 260 ~ Payson  
Donate in the Log Cabin

To schedule your lifesaving appointment,  
call 1-877-25-VITAL (258-4825), scan the QR Code  
or visit [www.vitalant.org](http://www.vitalant.org) (Blood Drive Code: P1057).

~ Arizona Renaissance Festival voucher for a complimentary one-day admission.

~ Donate Jan. 5-Feb. 8 for 26 chances to win a \$500 Rewards gift card, opt-in required!\*



For more information or to schedule a donation, call 877-25-VITAL or visit us at [vitalant.org](http://vitalant.org)  
Find us @vitalant:

vitalant

# GLOBAL MISSIONS

Cheryl Roberts has volunteered to coordinate, plan, and lead the rest of the Team in events that will generate money to assist local organizations, the Navajo Mission, and our missionary in Madagascar. Thank you, Cheryl!!

A meeting will be held on Sunday, January 18<sup>th</sup>, at the tables in the back of the sanctuary after the service. Global Missions Team members, please be sure to attend so that you can meet Cheryl and bring ideas for future events to share with her.

In keeping with a couple of the previously initiated general program actions, we will continue with the *“Featured Food Item for the Month”* and *“Food Bank Sunday.”*

The featured items for the month of January are **1# bags or boxes of pasta and cans of spaghetti sauce**. Featured items may be placed on the table located in the narthex near the entrance doors going into the sanctuary.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month is *Food Bank Sunday*. You are encouraged to purchase any non-perishable food items and place them in the grocery cart on that Sunday.

The annual December fund-raising event for the Navajo Mission heating was quite successful. The four lovely silent auction baskets, which were put together by the very creative Mary Havenor, were awarded to Carrie Backe, Barb DeYoung, Susan Nafziger, and Sharon Vaplon. The total received through the silent auction baskets was \$480.00.

The raffle and craft/baked goods table portion of the event brought in the amount of \$2,210.82. The quilt was won by Emily Linkey and the Diamond Restaurant winner was Ernie Kellett.

The Lego Castle guesses brought in \$127.00 (\$100.00 for the adult category and \$27.00 for the youth category). The amount of Legos that were actually used to build the diorama totaled 12,865. Roger Rohrbach was the closest guess (11,500) in the adult category and the youth category was awarded to a student from the Maison Schoolhouse, whose guess was 12,000. The student is an avid Lego constructor who guessed that 12,000 Legos were used. Each winner was given a \$50 gift card.

The total amount received during this fund-raising event was \$2,817.82. A big “thank you” to all who participated in making this event a success!

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It's a new year and there are plenty of opportunities for you to beautify the altar with a gift of fresh flowers. Some of you may be new to Mount Cross and may not be familiar with the process of giving flowers; the procedure is as follows:

- Locate the flower chart on the wall close to the mailboxes in the narthex.
- Pick your desired date, place your name on the line next to that date, and provide a reason for the flower gift.
- Either buy flowers and bring them to the church. You may also order flowers and have them delivered to the church OR call the church office to arrange delivery/pick up for your chosen date.
- On Sunday, you may pick up your flowers after the service. Take them home and enjoy their beauty.

If you have any questions, please call the church office at 928-474-2552.

