
Mount Cross Chronicle

February 2025



601 E. Highway 260
Payson, AZ 85541
Phone: 928-474-2552
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

Pastor

Rev. Carl Sirotzki
928-474-2552

608-370-1284 (emergencies)
pastor@mountcross.org

Music Director
Daria Mason

daria1024mason@gmail.com

Accompanist
Angeline Ng

Office Administrator
Lenore M. White
secretary@mountcross.org

Custodian
Keri Morris

Pastor's Musings & Ponderings

"Each of you has been blessed with one of God's many wonderful gifts to be used in the service of others. So use your gift well." (1 Peter 4:10, CEV)

We are such a blessed people. Our congregation, as well as others, have been lovingly blessed with an array of spiritual gifts that are to be used in helping one another, all for God's glory! Just as Paul addressed the Church of Corinth, whatever gifts we have been blessed with, no one's gift(s) are more important or less important than another's. The key is to use our gifts for the good of one another and what may be difficult for some, is to do so with a joyful heart and without looking for our own notoriety.

Now, I have a couple of questions for you. Do we really understand what a Spiritual Gift is? Do we really know what our Spiritual Gifts are? Hopefully, these will be answered throughout the coming year as we continue to delve into scripture through reading, studying and prayer. To help our investigation of Spiritual Gifts, I will be offering a class on Spiritual Gifts sometime in March. You will be advised of the start date soon.

Ash Wednesday is March 5th and we will be hosting the Ecumenical service at 7:00 p.m. We will also be offering an additional Mount Cross Ash Wednesday service at noon. I hope you will be able to attend one of those services.

The Wednesday services will include a soup supper at 5:00 p.m. with the Holden Evening prayer service at 6:00 p.m. Please watch the Chronicle and bulletins for more information as we get closer to Lent. Wednesday evening services during Lent and will be using the Holden Evening Service along with monologues from five New Testament individuals. We already have three congregation members who have volunteered to present the monologues of Martha, Peter's mother-in-law and Mary Magdalene. There are two powerful male monologues yet to be cast: Lazarus and the paralytic who was lowered through the roof. If you are interested in reading for one of the male monologues, please let me know as soon as you can.

There will be a New Member Orientation on February 16th after Sunday worship. There will be reminders of this in upcoming bulletins and the Chronicle. I am so glad to have heard from several members who have expressed a desire for me to visit them, family members or neighbors. Thank you for sharing this with me.

We will be having a couple of theme Sundays coming up in the next couple of months, bring a friend to church Sunday and wear your favorite team's colors. Quite often, these theme Sundays can be fun without taking away from our worshipping. If you have an idea for a special themed Sunday, let's talk!

Peace,

Pastor Carl
Philippians 1:3-4



Our STATEMENT . . . † ChristConnectingCommunity



Lord, You have given us a new year to work on perfecting our relationship with You. Please help us to remember to share all of our joys and sorrows with You. Let us be thankful for all the good things that You provide, and also be thankful for the not-so-good things that come our way. You want to be a **BIG** part of our lives and we often times forget to “let You in.” Help us to treat You as we would a good friend, because You are the best friend we could ever have!



There are so many ways to do God's work. Here are some suggestions:

- ✧ Speak to someone in line next to you at a store's check stand. You may be the only person who talks to a lonely person that day.
- ✧ A smile can brighten the day for someone who is feeling down.
- ✧ Call a neighbor, friend, or church member who is not able to get out much. It will reassure them that someone cares.
- ✧ Send out a “thinking of you” card, text message, or email. The person who receives it might have had a bad day or gotten some sad news. This might be an encouragement that was much needed.
- ✧ Know someone who can't go shopping or who might need a ride to pick up some groceries? It could provide relief from a concern about how the person might be able to get what they need.
- ✧ Is there a movie that you plan to see? Would you be attending alone? Someone may just love to be invited and share some time with you.
- ✧ Valentine's Day is coming up...perhaps someone has lost their spouse or had a break up with the person they cared about. A dinner invitation, sending flowers, or giving a box of candy might help the person focus on something else, instead of their loss.

SouperBowl Sunday is just around the corner, so please begin to keep in mind the date of February 9, 2025, as a day to assist in tackling hunger...not just a day to watch your favorite team make football tackles on the field. This goal can be met in two ways: financially – giving money toward the cause and kept within the Payson community, or providing non-perishable food that will be transported directly to the Deacon's Food Pantry. Here at Mount Cross, we will be collecting both and reporting our giving to the national organization, tacklehunger.org.



We truly appreciate our partnership with the Mount Cross Lutheran Church! Thank you for providing such beautiful location to host this lifesaving event!

At the blood drive on January 27th, there were 78 successful donations at the blood drive! We collected 67 units of whole blood, 8 donated power red cells and 3 donors that donated red blood cell/plasma! THE BLOOD DRIVE EXCEEDED OUR EXPECTATIONS! We collected 118% of our projected target for the blood drive! THE LIVES OF 224 PATIENTS IN NEED COULD BE IMPACTED BY THIS BLOOD DRIVE!!!

We look forward to the next Payson Community blood drive on Monday, April 21, 2025.

*With appreciation,
Lori Bone Hilliard
Vitalant Senior Account Manager*

Mount Cross Financial Report (January – December 2024)



2024 Approved Budget	\$318,013.00
Income	\$280,780.00
Expenditures	\$314,943.00

Total given to the Mortgage Fund during December 2024	\$3,120.00
Total paid out in 2024 for mortgage	\$34,380.00
Additional gifting paid toward principal in 2024	\$14,112.00

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

Total income received from Thrivent “Choice Dollars” in 2024	
Mount Cross	\$1,362.00


We have now entered a new year and once again can start out with a fresh slate, both on a personal level and also for the church. If you haven’t turned in a pledge/commitment card for the 2025 year, it isn’t too late to do so. A card can be acquired by stopping by the office to pick one up or you can email secretary@mountcross.org and provide your box number and one will be placed in your church mailbox. Thank you to those who faithfully support Mount Cross with their contributions.

Yours in Christ,
Financial Team



was held on Sunday, January 19th. The congregation voted to expend money for the repair of one of the HVAC units in the amount of up to \$6,000.

OFFICE HOURS



Monday, February 10th
9:00 – 11:30 a.m.

Office Closed

Monday, February 17th
in observance of
Presidents’ Day.



February Birthdays

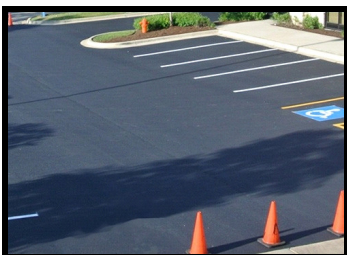
- 6 Carrie Backe
- 7 Carl Sirotzki
- 12 Mary Walker
- 25 Cathy Stewart
- 26 Gary Greer

February Wedding Anniversaries

- 11 Mike/Alicia Roberts
- 12 Doug/Cathie Mann

February Baptisms

- 10 Tonnie Dice



Please be aware that portions of the parking lot will be closed for asphalt crack sealing starting on Monday, March 3rd...weather permitting. Holbrook Asphalt Company will be performing this service.

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

WELCA Bible study

This is a monthly Bible study using the studies found in the WELCA publication "Gather". All women are welcome to attend.

2nd Thursday of the month, 10:00 AM in the Ponderosa Room.

Seekers of Truth Bible study

This is a monthly Bible study which will be focusing on the 13 letters of Paul. All are welcome to attend.

3rd Thursday of the month, 10:00 AM in the Ponderosa Room.



The monthly WELCA (Women of the ELCA) Bible study will be held in the Ponderosa Room on Thursday, February 13th, at 10:00 a.m. Pastor Carl will be facilitating the discussion.

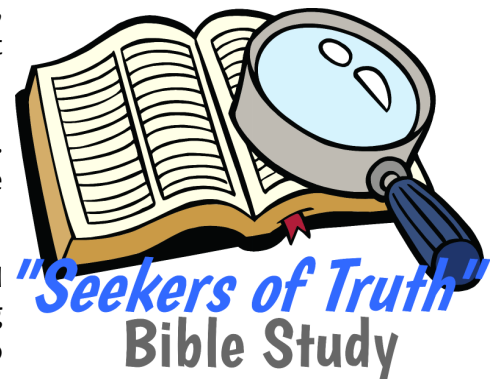
Gather Magazine's Fall Bible Study subject is "Faithfulness" by the Denise Rector. The second of 4 sessions is focuses on "Psalm 22." David testifies that God is God and worthy of praise, even as David is in despair. It's no wonder that Jesus cried out to God during the crucifixion using these very words. In our worst times, this psalm gives us a way to contemplate God's holiness.

Should you desire to view the video by Denise Rector for the January the Bible study, you can access it through this link: <https://www.gathermagazine.org/january-2025-faithfulness-bible-study-video-supplement-session-1/>

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 Ponderosa Room at 10:00 a.m. February 20th is the date for this month's meeting.

The group is currently studying the 13 letters of Paul in the New Testament. Since the study was cancelled for January, the second letter to Timothy will be discussed in February.

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 Sue Bobek, the group discussion leader or Jan Bartoli, the group facilitator.



Lent will begin next month on Wednesday, March 5th. We will again use the pink pigs as a vehicle for you to donate checks (written to Mount Cross with World Hunger in the memo line) or cash as gifting sources during the 40 days of Lent. Our gifts will be collected on Palm Sunday, April 13th.

A table in the narthex will have copies of the *Lent Study 2025* and pink pig boxes for depositing money "World Hunger." These materials are available for your use during this Lenten season.



Valentine's Day is named after Saint Valentine, a Catholic priest who lived in Rome in the 3rd Century. At the time of Valentine's life, many Romans were converting to Christianity, but the Emperor Claudius II was a pagan and created strict laws about what Christians were allowed to do. Claudius believed that Roman soldiers should be completely devoted to Rome and therefore passed a law preventing them from marrying. Valentine began to marry these soldiers in secret Christian ceremonies and this was the beginning of his reputation for believing in the importance of love. Eventually, Valentine was found out and jailed for his crimes against Claudius. While imprisoned, Valentine cared for his fellow prisoners and also his jailor's blind daughter. Legend has it that Valentine cured the girl's blindness and that his final act before being executed was to write her a love message signed 'from your Valentine'. Valentine was executed on the 14th of February in the year 270.

It wasn't until more than 200 years later that February 14th was proclaimed St. Valentine's Day. By this time Rome had become Christian and the Catholic Church was determined to stamp out any remaining paganism, thus the Pope abolished the pagan fertility ritual that was held in February each year and proclaimed February 14th as Saint Valentine's Day, thus establishing this holiday.



Concert Band & Jazz Ensemble

Directed by Mr. Michael Buskirk



Tuesday, March 4, 2025

7:00 p.m.

Mt. Cross Lutheran Church

Free admission & refreshments



**PAYSON
CAMPUS**

Eastern Arizona College, Payson Campus
201 N. Mud Springs Rd. Payson, Arizona 85541
(928) 468 - 8039 - www.eac.edu

Eastern Arizona College does not discriminate in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities on the basis of race, creed, color or national origin, sex, disability, or age. Approved for veterans benefits. Tuition is waived for Arizona residents who are 55-plus. Tuition waiver does not cover class or lab fees, books, or out-of-state tuition.

GLOBAL MISSIONS

The Global Missions Team is initiating a new program for the 2025 year. Each month a particular food item will be featured. It is requested that the items be purchased and placed in the grocery basket. A display of the monthly featured item can be viewed on a table located at the entrance to the sanctuary. The focus for the month of February is jars of peanut butter or jelly.

They are also reinstating the 3rd Sunday of the month as *Food Bank Sunday*. You are encouraged to purchase any non-perishable food items and place them in the grocery cart on that Sunday.

Please remember that the national SuperBowl of Caring event is coming up on Sunday, February 9th. You may either contribute to "*tackling hunger*" by bringing non-perishable food items for distribution to the local food banks or contribute money. If you choose to write a check, please write it to Mount Cross Lutheran Church with "SuperBowl" written in the memo line.

Special request: the Deacons' Food Pantry is in need of plastic grocery bags; it would be appreciated if you could please save yours and place them in the grocery cart in the narthex or drop them by the Community Presbyterian Church office.

Please note that the next Global Mission meeting will be held Sunday, February 2nd at the back of the sanctuary.

Cozy Mystery Unleashed!

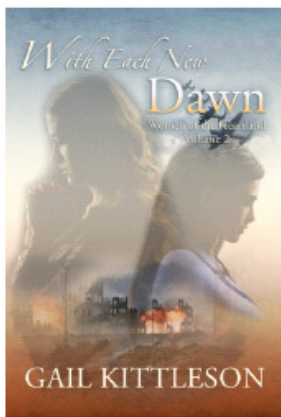
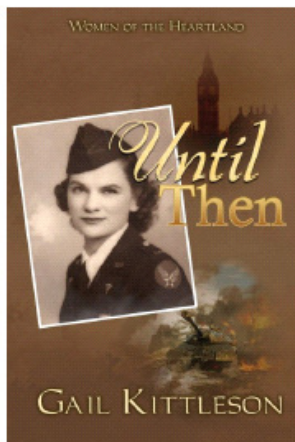
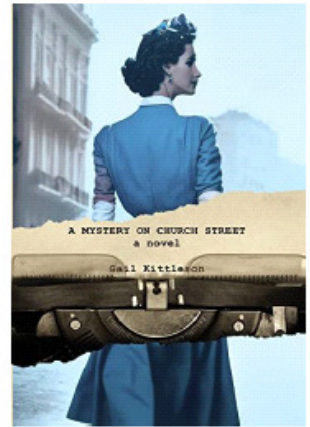
Cozy Mysteries have taken readers by storm...

want to learn more about them and maybe even write one??

Then this is the workshop for you. Learn about this genre's ins-and-outs and how to develop the sleuth, build a cast of supporting characters, and a solid suspect list that will keep your readers guessing until the very end.

Gail Kittleson writes historical fiction (WWII usually) and has published one cozy mystery.

**At 1:00 p.m. on February 5th, February 19th,
March 5th, and March 19th**



Location of the workshop is at the Payson Public Library