
Mount Cross Chronicle

September 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

"Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known." Jeremiah 33:3 (ESV)

This verse from Jeremiah serves as a direct invitation from God to God's people. God is urging the people to reach out to him. In this urging, God wants to have a relationship with each one of us and promises that anyone who truly and humbly seeks him will be guaranteed an answer. God is showing unconditional love for the people not only in Jeremiah's time, but to all of us today.

To say that Jeremiah was written during a very difficult and trying time for the people of Israel is putting it mildly. They faced chaos, despair and uncertainty through invasions and destruction. In spite of all this, God, through Jeremiah, reminded the people that they were not facing this alone. In the verse above, God's promise of God being in control still stood. All they had to do was to call out to him.

We are often reminded through scripture and hymns that we have a God who is always with us. A God who is faithful. A God who loves us unconditionally. This reminds me of a hymn I learned some time ago. It is, *"I Will Call Upon The Lord."* This hymn is in my top ten of favorite hymns/praise tunes. It is based on Psalm 18, in which David expresses his deep love and trust in God as his strength, rock, fortress, and deliverer in the context of battle and overwhelming circumstances.

Whenever we feel overwhelmed in the midst of challenges, instead of pointing fingers or making misguided attempts to control the situation, we are to *"call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised. So shall I be saved from my enemies. The Lord liveth and blessed be the rock."* God is always ready to unveil His plans for us. When we go to God, we are taking the first steps in seeking God's divine insight. When we sincerely seek God, the Holy Spirit opens our hearts and minds to hear what God has to say, which is way beyond what anyone of us can do on our own.

With all that said, what are we waiting for? Let each one of us truly seek and take the time to listen to God's plan! Let us humbly lay our burdens, be they personal, professional or congregational, before God and seek his wisdom in dealing with what is laying heavy in our hearts. It is when we allow the stresses and burdens we are holding on to, that prevents us from hearing tell us "great and hidden things that you have not known."

I hope that you will be able to attend the prayer sessions for our congregation that will start on Wednesday, September 3rd, at 1:00 p.m. in the conference room.

Peace,
Pastor Carl
Philippians 1:3-4



Our  STATEMENT . . . ChristConnectingCommunity

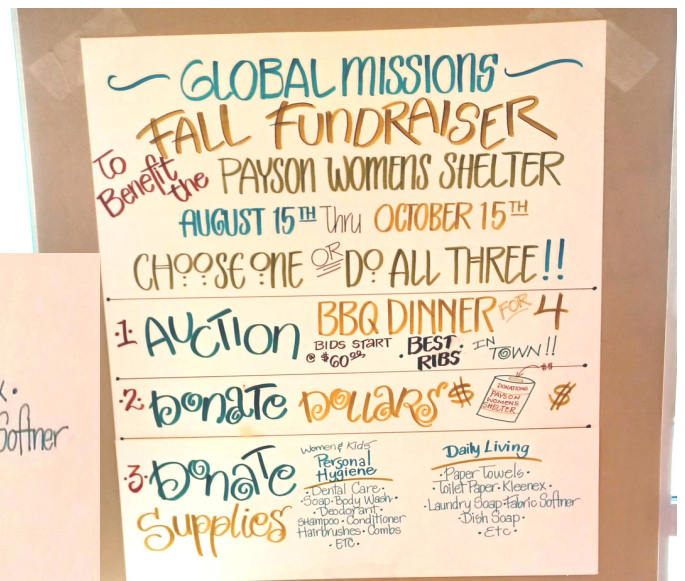
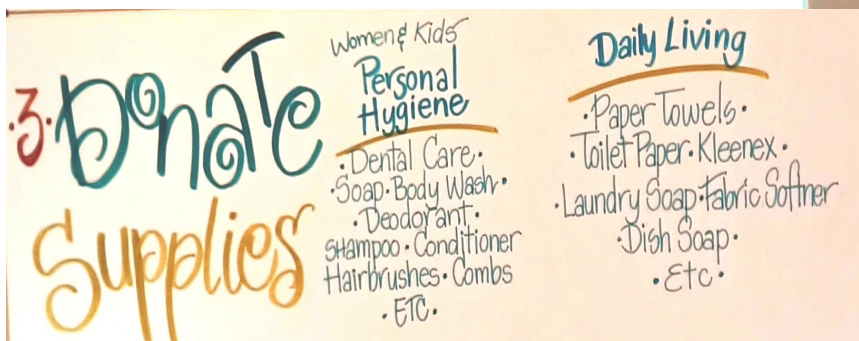
GLOBAL MISSIONS

The featured food item for the month of September is **cans of fruit**. Featured items may be placed on the table located in the narthex near the entrance doors going into the sanctuary.

Reminder: the 3rd 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 Kaitie's Closet Fundraising event ended as of July 31st. The total monetary gifts received was \$276.00. Many chose to provide clothing items rather than monetary donations. Mary Walker's name was drawn from the submitted tickets, thus is the winner of the \$50 Noley's gift certificate. Congratulations, Mary!!

The Fall Fundraiser began on August 15th and will continue through October 15th for the benefit of the Time Out Shelter. There are 3 ways to contribute to this worthy cause:



The Deacon's Food Pantry is in need of bags and would be so very thankful to have you save your plastic grocery bags for their usage! Your saved bags can be placed in the grocery cart located in the church narthex.





Mount Cross Financial Report (January – July 2025)

2025 Approved Budget	\$335,793.00
Income	\$173,366.00 (52% of 2025 budget)
Expenditures	\$180,256.00 (54% of 2025 budget)
Under (Over)	(\$6,890.00)
Pledged-to-date / Given	\$137,218.00 / \$133,374.00 (97%)

2025 Mortgage Fund

Total given to the Mortgage Fund during July 2025	\$3,042.00
Total Principal paid out in 2025 for mortgage	\$11,001.00
Current Principal balance	\$361,014.00
Pledged-to-Date / Given-to-Date	\$20,416.00 / \$22,450.00 (110%)

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

Total income received from Thrivent "Choice Dollars" in 2025	
Mount Cross	\$1,997.00

Yours in Christ,
Mike Roberts
Finance Secretary



ANNUAL STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN

This year's theme is "Responding in Faith"

Mount Cross' annual stewardship campaign is literally just around the corner. Please check your church mailboxes as of Sunday, September 7th, for this year's stewardship materials.

Are you *responding in faith*? Do you give financially with a conscience that is at peace, knowing that you have given without feeling that you *had* to?

Do you know the needs within our church where you might have the skills, time, and the desire to volunteer and provide for that need with all your heart?

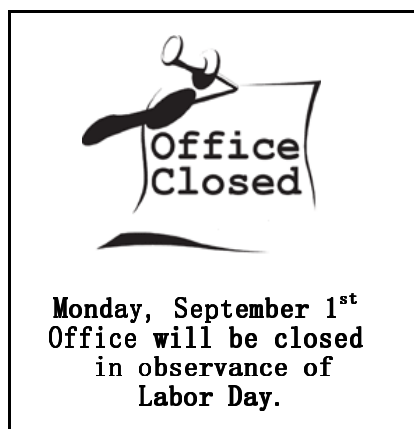
These are questions each of us must contemplate as we consider our giving back to the One who created us and gives us a reason for our living. There will be approximately 3 weeks to ponder these questions and find the answers.

Please return your pledge cards and your time & talent sheets in the envelope provided before *Commitment Sunday*, September 28th, by either dropping it in the church offering plate, turning it in at the office during the week, or mailing it.



Altar Guild will meet on Thursday, September 4th at 10:00 a.m. in the conference room.

You are invited to attend, if you are interested in serving the Lord by setting up for communion and taking care of the linens. What a wonderful way to honor our Lord and Savior!



Monday, September 1st
Office will be closed
in observance of
Labor Day.



Are you willing? You may ask "willing for what?" Council has recently lost two members and is in need of a few people to fill vacated spots until the end of the year.

If you choose to participate and find it to be an important position within the church that you would like to continue serving in, you may run for election at the Congregational meeting in November.

PRAYER SESSIONS

Fridays
at 1:00 PM
in the
Ponderosa
Room



September Birthdays

6	Ron Plantz
	Gene Verhulst
8	Jean Larson
11	Virginia McCall
12	Kathi Merkel
17	Susie Duffy
19	Cyndi Plantz
21	Clyde Longberry
23	Eloise Jones
	Barry Peiffer
25	Marlu Allan
27	Brenda Brusacorum

September Wedding Anniversaries

1	Bob/Mary Walker
15	Patric/Sherri Taylor

September Baptisms

25	Catalina Dietrich
	Virginia McCall

Spiritual Growth Opportunities

Worship Services

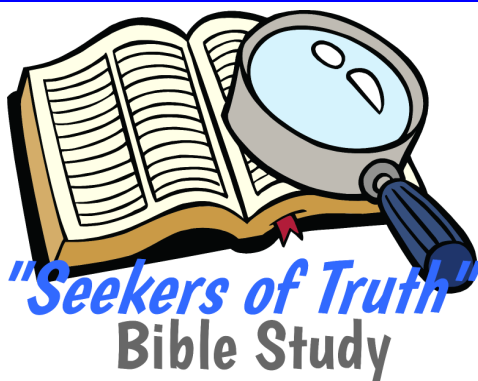
Weekly in-house communion & worship service held in the sanctuary; live stream of the service is available on Facebook.

Sundays, 9:30 AM

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.

3rd 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. September 18th 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.



Mount Cross Vaccine Event Coming This Fall!

Where: Mount Cross Ponderosa Room
When: Sunday 09/07/25 8:00am-9:30am

Vaccines Offered:

Flu • new Covid • RSV • Pneumonia • Shingles
Tetanus/Pertussis • And more!
(based on guidelines and availability at time of event)

Receive a **10% off groceries** coupon with **each vaccine**
(can be used with **Senior Wednesday Discount**).

Most vaccines covered by Medicare, Medicaid,
and private insurance.*
If not covered, ask about our discounted pricing.

Can't make it to this event? Our pharmacy has vaccines
available during normal business hours as well.

Mon-Fri 8am-8pm, Sat 9am-6pm, Sun 10am-6pm
Closed for lunch from 1:30-2:00pm every day.



*Pharmacy may confirm insurance coverage and eligibility prior to vaccination.

UPCOMING HEALTH EVENTS AT MOUNT CROSS

*Please be aware that a prescription from your doctor
needs to be brought with you to the Vaccine Event in order
to receive the Covid shot.

Schedule Your Stroke & Cardiovascular Disease Risk Screening

Over 11 million people screened since 1993



Where: Mount Cross Lutheran Church

When: Monday, September 15, 2025

Who should attend:
Anyone **age 40+**

Special Pricing for \$129

- ♥ Carotid Artery Disease Screening
- ♥ Atrial Fibrillation Screening
- ♥ Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening
- ♥ Peripheral Artery Disease Screening

4 ways to book your appointment...

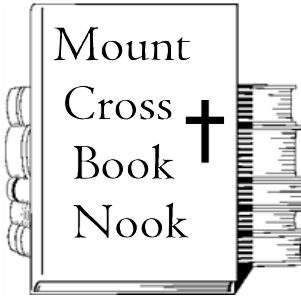
Call **800-324-9458** and use
promo code **HABC001**

Visit  **LLSA.SOCIAL/HABC**



Text the word **"circle"**
to **216-279-1607**

These tests cannot detect all risk factors for all conditions, such as and including the presence of coronary artery disease.
Those with abnormal results should discuss possible next steps with their family healthcare provider and ensure they
understand the risk and benefits of any additional testing or procedures.



The Congregation Council would like to thank Eloise Jones for her many years of service in developing our library and keeping it in operation. It started with an idea in our old church with just a few shelves of books, which quickly filled all the shelves in that room and then we moved it over to our new Ponderosa room. We have our lovely setting that includes the peaceful ambience created by our library.

Eloise has decided that the time has come for her to step aside from this responsibility. We all thank Eloise for her many years of dedication for the benefit of the readers among us. Please extend your appreciation to Eloise the next time you see her!

The Council is hoping that someone will step up to continue with the organization of the library. If this is something that you would like to do, please contact one of our Council members.

Sharon Vaplon

Mount Cross Congregation Council Member

HOW DOES THE CHURCH COUNCIL DEVELOP A BUDGET?

As a former Council President, several times over, as well as developing a budget for various other places, it is important to have an idea of what incoming resources are available. So with that I will start my own journey towards pledging my giving to a church and to the community.

I was a single mother in the 1960s, and then again in the 1970s. Money was tight, and giving was limited since I worked one to four jobs to support my family. My pledge to the church was \$5.00 per week, payable twice a month to match paydays. That \$5.00 represented a fortune to me. We lived on Ramen, grilled cheese sandwiches, creamed tuna on toast (day old bread), dried milk reconstituted, oatmeal, cracked eggs, and an occasional bag of oranges from one of my coworkers. There was no welfare, no food stamps, or any other assistance so it was dealt with it. All I could do was pray.

I knew church was important, but giving was not a big thing for me. But I trust God and that was good because when I started my job with Los Angeles County, food stamps were available but we were not eligible to use them. However, in the 1970's, I coached cheerleading for POP Warner football, announced little league games, and helped in any other thing I could participate in during the evenings. After a couple of years things got better with a few well-placed promotions. Finally, the shelves bloomed with yellow cans from Lucky stores, fruit from the farmers market (which was cheap then), and we moved along.

When I joined St. John's Lutheran Church in Orange, California, I was able to pledge a whopping \$50.00 per month. Trust God, things get better. At St John's, I was a Christ Care leader, a Stephen's Minister, led a Bible study with another woman, and would make a casserole for a funeral if I had two days notice so I could drop it off at night before the funeral. Trust God. I got several big promotions and I could give \$200.00. Yeah! Study the Bible, learn more, live with the need to give God 10% as first fruits. It worked and when I retired, I could buy a home, give to the church and the community, and love the people.

So back to Mount Cross. Each year we have a pledge drive. WHY? In order to prepare a budget. It is critical to have some idea of possible income sources. For the few years the budget was on guesstimate, based upon a few pledges and reliance on weekly giving in the collection plate. Many of you are very generous, many give what they can and others may give as they feel. This makes it very difficult for the church Council to plan for the various needs of the church.

At present, we are in a position of needing to build up funds to pay for the sidewalk and rebuild the reserve account for emergencies. So this year's pledge drive is really important. It is not fear, but good planning for the future. We have some help with the school rent and any other bookings we may have of the log building. We, the members of a strong church known as the amazing Mount Cross, need to commit what we can to ensure a good future for church.

Please help if you can, and thanks for tolerating my spiel.

God's blessings on you,

Alice Natale, Mount Cross member

