
Mount Cross Chronicle

October 2026



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

Interim Pastor

Rev. Lance Kittleson

928-474-2552

641-430-2400 (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

Pastoral Ponderings

October is a transition month. It's not just the weather or the leaves that change. It's also a church month where we are on the cusp liturgically of going from Pentecost through several church celebrations and ending up in the Advent/Christmas season and the start of a new liturgical year.

This October we begin with the celebration of the life of a saint of God, Eloise Jones, which will occur on Friday, October 2nd at 2:00 p.m. and end the month with the annual Reformation Sunday on October 25th (wear **RED**, if you can); **red** is the ancient festive color of the Church.

Not many, though, of our fellow churches celebrate Reformation Sunday anymore. There might be a short reference to it here and there, but it's not a highlight as it is for us Lutherans. Of course, you recall that on October 31, 1517, Martin Luther posted his 95 Theses (statements), which called theologians to debate whether or not indulgences (paying for forgiveness and/or time off in purgatory) was biblical and God's SOP (Standing Operating Procedure).

That simple call to just debate ignited a European and worldwide movement to reform 'The Church' and return it to its biblical and Gospel roots. St. Paul's writings in Romans 1:17 and in Ephesians 2:8,9 were key then as now: that we are "saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone" and nothing else.

As the movement grew, people wanted to call Luther's followers "Lutherans," but he himself fought this. He wanted the breakaway church to be called "Evangelicals" which means in Greek "Bringers of Good News." Obviously, Luther lost that name battle, but what better way to describe our faith than "Evangelical?" This was and is still the best and most appropriate name for us, called not to just be 'saved ourselves', but to share that same 'Good News' everywhere we go and with everyone we meet. The Gospel is not, and never will be, for sale or based on what we do, but rather is for all who dare to trust by faith in the Savior, Jesus Christ.

May each of us seek to be truly 'evangelical' in all our dealings with a crass and faithless world. And may God's Holy Spirit bring 'Good News' increasingly into our lives and to all whom we encounter.

That's what Eloise was all about.

Lance

aka Interim Pastor



Our
STATEMENT . . . ChristConnectingCommunity



The featured food item for the month of October is **cans of soup** (*pop-tops are preferred*). 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.

Current Fund-raising Events

Antique Quilt Raffle to benefit “*Shop with a Hero*”

An antique quilt raffle will be held during the month of October. The quilt may be viewed in the Mount Cross narthex. Tickets are \$5.00 each or 3 for \$10.00. Tickets are available and may be placed in the can near the displayed quilt. The winning ticket will be drawn on Sunday, October 25, 2026 and the winner may pick up the quilt at Mount Cross Lutheran Church, 601 AZ-260, Payson, AZ 85541.

Silent Auction – Win a Delicious Barbecue Dinner

The community is invited to support Mount Cross’ silent auction fund-raiser. Bids for a chance to win a mouth-watering barbecue dinner for 2 (two) start at \$60. You can find the bid sheet on a table in the narthex near the Bidding closes on Sunday, October 25th and the winner will be announced.

The proceeds from both the raffle and the silent auction will go to benefit the Gila County Sheriff and Payson Police “*Shop with a Hero*” program. This program provides an opportunity for the local children to interact with these law enforcement groups in a memorable way and gives them a chance to realize the men and women serving Payson are not enemies, but people who care about helping, protecting, and supporting families in the community.

For more information about either of these fund-raisers, call Cheryl Roberts at (623) 418-9431.

Future Fund-raising Events

Future fund-raising events planned for the months of November and December are silent auctions on various gift baskets, Lego diorama guesses, crafts and baked goods sale. Proceeds from those events will be sent to the Navajo Mission with the intent of defraying the winter heating costs.

Events Within the Community...

WORKFORCE HOUSING CHALLENGES AND SOLUTIONS

Rim Country Housing Coalition
Thursday, October 8, 2026, 6:30 pm
at Payson United Methodist Church
414 N. Easy St.



Panelists from 3 local institutions:
Banner Payson Medical Center
Payson Unified School District
Gila Community College

OCT. 15

GREEN VALLEY PARK

**FOOD TRUCKS
FIRE TRUCKS
MUSIC
FAMILY FUN
& MORE**

SHINING A LIGHT ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & BULLYING

EVENT SCHEDULE

4:00pm Let the Gathering Begin!

5:00pm Annual Awareness Walk Around the Lake

6:00pm Lantern Decorating & Food Continues

LANTERN LAUNCH AFTER SUNDOWN!

LEARN MORE HERE!

EVENT PARTNERS & GUESTS INCLUDE:
Payson Police Dept. | Payson Fire Dept. | Native Air Helicopter | PUSD
Chapman Auto Center | Live Music | Rim Country Artists | & More!



Monthly Jazz Concert

There will be a Jazz Concert on the 11th of October at 2:00 p.m. in the Mount Cross sanctuary.

All in the Payson community are invited to attend and enjoy afternoons of music!



The following elected positions are in need of candidates:

<u>Council</u>	<u>Memorial</u>	<u>Mission Endowment</u>
2-3yr positions	2-3 yr positions	1-1yr position 1-3yr position

If you would like to become a part of one of these very important roles within the church, please contact Marlu Allan or one of the Council members.

Rim Country Artists & Mud Club
Members Present:

Empty Bowls

An event to fight hunger



Saturday, October 17, 2026
Doors open @ 4:00 • Dinner: 4:30-7 pm

Payson Elks Lodge
1206 N. Beeline Hwy
Payson, Arizona

Tickets: \$25.00 (additional donations appreciated)

Tickets are available beginning on September 5th at these location:
 ♦ Gila Community College-Majestic Rim Retirement Living-
 ♦ The Payson Senior Center or Barbara Zirinsky 928-978-3433

Your handmade bowl will be filled with tasty soup or chili from Majestic Rim & Macky's Kitchens, fresh rolls from Fargo's and a coupon for a serving of Culver's yummy frozen custard!

 **Awesome Music by Local Favorites:**
Trouble in Paradise 

 100% of the proceeds will be donated to the Payson and Pine/Strawberry food banks!

Special thanks to:
 Rim Country Artist-Gila Community College & the Ceramic Department-Macky's Restaurant-Payson Elks Lodge-Culver's-Majestic Rim Retirement Living
 -Printing by George-Fargo's Steakhouse

For more information contact: Barbara Zirinsky 928-978-3433 • bzbeefun1@yahoo.com



Because of you,
life doesn't stop.

**BLOOD
DRIVE**

Payson Community Blood Drive

DATE: MONDAY, OCTOBER 26, 2026

TIME: 10AM - 6PM

**MOUNT CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH
DONATE IN THE LOG CABIN
601 E. HWY 260 ~ PAYSON, AZ**

Culver's would like to thank you with a voucher for a complimentary pint of Fresh Frozen Custard!

Donate Oct. 1-31 and you'll be automatically entered for a chance to win one of two \$10,000 gift cards! *

To reserve your donation time, sign up online at vitalant.org (Enter Code: P1057) or scan the QR code.



For more information or to schedule a donation, call 877-25-VITAL or visit us at vitalant.org
Find us @vitalant:   

vitalant. 



Mount Cross Financial Report (January – August 2026)

2026 Approved Budget	\$308,699.90
Income	\$196,397.00 (63.6% of 2026 budget)
Expenditures	\$172,958.00 (56.0% of 2026 budget)
Under (Over).	\$23,439.00
Pledged-to-date / Given	\$136,747.00 / \$145,130.00 (106%)

2026 Mortgage Fund

Total given to the Mortgage Fund during August 2026	\$2,886.00
Total Principal paid out in 2026 for mortgage.	\$38,484.00
Current Principal balance	\$284,912.00
Pledged-to-Date / Given-to-Date	\$25,413.00 / \$41,081.00 (162%)

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

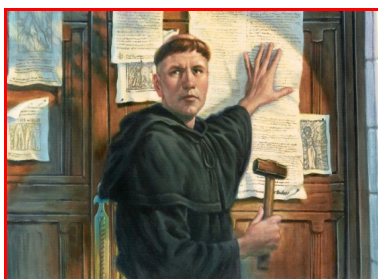
Total income received from Thrivent "Choice Dollars" in 2026	
Mount Cross.	\$665.00

Yours in Christ,
Barb DeYoung
Finance Secretary



All Saints Sunday will be celebrated on November 1st. It is the custom at Mount Cross to add ribbons to the Memorial Wreath with the names of those who have died and entered the Church Triumphant since last **All Saints Sunday**. Their names will also be read at the worship service that day during the *Prayers of the Church*. Please contact the office with your name requests before Monday, October 26th.

REFORMATION SUNDAY



OCTOBER 25th

"Wear Red" Sunday!



October Birthdays

3	Roger Rohrbach
8	James Monroe
9	Jeff Nafziger
13	Earl Clark
17	Patric Taylor
19	Jan Harper
24	Daria Mason
25	Mavis Denofsky
31	Bob Walker

October Wedding Anniversaries

10	Dave/Karen Ritterbusch
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October Baptisms

10	Roger Rohrbach
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Spiritual Growth Opportunities

Worship Services

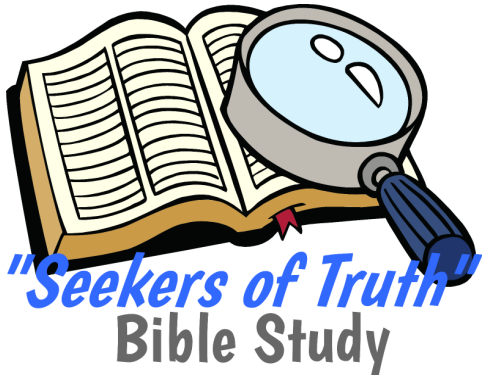
Weekly in-house communion & worship service held in the sanctuary; live stream of the service is available on Facebook.

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, 9:30 AM in the Ponderosa 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 9:30 a.m. October 15th is the date for this month's meeting.

The group is currently studying the book of James.
James 1: 5-18 will be the focus for October's session.

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.



What better way to serve the Lord than preparing His table for His sacred meal. If you feel led to assist in this manner, you are invited to attend the next Altar Guild meeting on Thursday, October 1st at 11:30 a.m. for their annual luncheon. The venue this year will be at Fargos, located at 620 E. Highway 260.



The Quilters meet every 2nd & 4th Wednesdays of each month in Building B (aka the log building) at 9:00 a.m. Anyone who has a heart to bring warmth through the giving of quilts are welcome to participate!



There will not be any Thursday Praise Choir or Bell rehearsals October 15th through November 4th. Normal practices will resume on Thursday, November 12th.

Praise Choir practices occur on Sunday mornings at 8:45 a.m. (just prior to the service) on October 25th, November 1st & 8th. On Sunday, November 15th, an additional practice will take place at 9:00 a.m.



The Worship and Music Committee will meet in the conference room on Sunday, October 4th, at 10:45 a.m.



REGISTER NOW

Grand Canyon Growing In Faith Program Presents:

Guest Speaker: Shelley Bryan Wee,
Bishop of the Northwest Washington
Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran
Church in America

A DIFFERENT WAY: JESUS AND THE CALL BEYOND CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM – Hope, Courage and Community for such a time as this



November 14, 2026



9:30 AM – 3:00 PM



[American Lutheran Church](#)
Sun City, Arizona



In-person or virtual



Snacks and Lunch will be served.



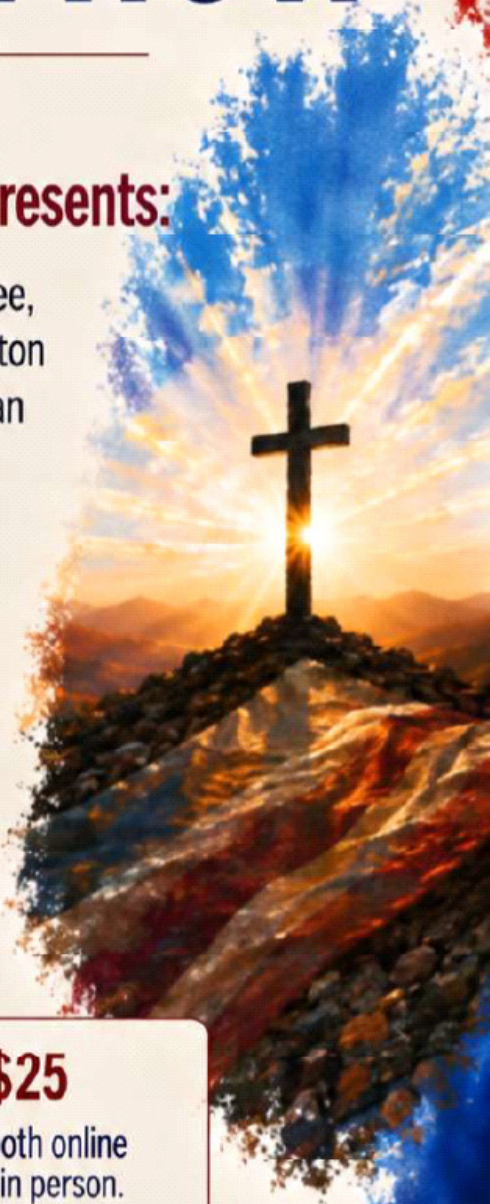
TO REGISTER:

www.growing-in-faith.org >
[Upcoming Special Events](#)

\$ \$25

for both online
and in person.

For administrative costs.



FAITH | JUSTICE | LOVE | NEIGHBOR



Grand Canyon Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

September 2026

Dear Siblings in Christ,

In a nation and a world that is so divided, I often wonder how I can help share the Lutheran witness of grace beyond myself, our synod, and even the ELCA. I have come to believe the answer lies in our relationships: with God, and with one another. Through your congregational mission support, you make room for exactly this kind of relational leadership to emerge, **whether it is lived out three pews from you or three continents away.**

This fall, Pastora Verónica Alvarez of Faith/La Fe Lutheran Church in Phoenix will travel more than 5,600 miles to Wittenberg, Germany, to take part in the 31st Lutheran World Federation (LWF) International Seminar for Pastors. For two weeks, she will join colleagues from all seven LWF regions to study Luther's own writings, worship together, and grow in relationship with God and with one another in ways that seminar alumni describe as shaping their calling long after they return home.



Pastora Verónica was selected by the LWF Center Wittenberg, chosen from pastors nominated by member churches across the Lutheran World Federation, the global communion of roughly 150 Lutheran church bodies to which the ELCA belongs. Each year, the Grand Canyon Synod nominates one of our own leaders, rostered or lay, for these seminars and funds roughly half the cost of attending, so that stepping into this kind of responsibility is never limited by a leader's ability to pay.



Last year, that leader was Sarah Lee, a lay leader serving Northern Arizona University's Lutheran Campus Ministry, who returned home with deepened relationships across the global church and a renewed sense of calling to serve where she is planted.

When your congregation makes a gift of mission support, half of every dollar the synod receives is shared as our own benevolence to ELCA churchwide ministry. With this gift, together we are supporting the ELCA's broader work around the world, including its membership in the LWF. The other half of your mission support stays in the synod, **investing directly in rostered leaders like Pastora Verónica and lay leaders like Sarah.**

Pastora Verónica will carry the story of Faith/La Fe, and of our whole synod, into a room filled with church leaders from every corner of the globe. She will carry their stories home to us in return, stories of a God already at work far beyond anything we could do alone. "Synod" means to journey together, and this November, our journey takes us all the way to Wittenberg and back.

Thank you for your gift of mission support that, whether called to serve in a congregation, synod, churchwide, or the global church, equips leaders to deepen relationships in the name of Jesus. This is what it means to be church together: to bear witness to Christ far beyond ourselves as one synod, one church, one world.

With you in Christ,

The Rev. Deborah K. Hutterer, Bishop
Grand Canyon Synod of the ELCA