Mount Cross Chronicle

November 2026

Mount Cross Lutheran Church
(ELCA)

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

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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

Fall is my favorite time of year as it is with many, many people. The deep heat is gone, the sweatshirts come out again, the leaves are turning, etc., etc. but, it is more than the changing seasons. In the church we have so many wonderful days to celebrate our heritage and the joy, power and challenge of our faith in Christ.

We ended October with Reformation Sunday recalling Luther and the Reformers and Scripture's "Salvation by grace through faith," immediately followed the next Sunday by ALL SAINTS Day on November 1st. It's a beautiful day of worship when we can remember our brothers and sisters in Christ who over the ages have kept the faith as well as those who have "gone to be with the Lord" since All Saints Sunday 2025.

Then, as we move closer to the actual holiday season (we've already heard/seen a month's worth of Christmas commercials), we'll remember that the season of joy is not always joyful for everyone. On November 15th, we'll have a "Blue Christmas" service to encourage those just trying to get through all the singing of "Joy to the World" when in their troubles and grief they feel anything but "Joy."

"Christ the King" Sunday (November 22nd) follows the next week, when we hear from Scripture that all the world will one day stand before our Creator and give an account of ourselves. Except in this accounting there's a very surprising twist which God's people do well to remember and practice (Read Matthew 25:31-46).

But that Sunday is also the final one of our "liturgical year" where the church moves from reading the Gospel of St. Matthew each Sunday to reading St. Mark with St. John's Gospel filling in the gaps. It's part of our usual three-year liturgical cycle.

Thanksgiving comes November 26th, and although it is not a church holiday as such, (every day is a day of thanksgiving for Christians), we can still celebrate God's goodness to us personally as well as to our nation even as we eat some turkey and watch a little football. No ecumenical Thanksgiving service has been planned, but keep your eyes and ears open for further details. It may happen yet.

Finally, this month in preparation for a "Hanging of the Greens" (Christmas Tree Lighting) service on the first Sunday of Advent (November 29th), we will be decorating the church on Tuesday, Nov. 24th at 8:00 a.m. That Advent Sunday service at the end of the Thanksgiving week will feature carols and Scripture and explain "the whys and meaning" of the Christmas decorations that we love to adorn our worship and home spaces with each year (sorry, no Santa Claus though).

It's a busy, but wonderful time for the church and for our faith. Please participate as much as you can and bring a friend, too, while you're at it.

Lance

GLOBAL MISSIONS

The featured food item for the month of November is **cans of fruit** *(pop tops 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.

The winners of the October fund-raiser, in which the proceeds go to “Shop with a Hero”, are Emily Linkey for the BBQ dinner and Cheryl Roberts for the antique quilt.

November–December Fundraiser for the Navajo Winter Heating Program

Mount Cross ELCA's November–December fundraiser for the Navajo Winter Heating Program is underway! Your gift helps Navajo families — especially elders — stay warm through the winter, when heating fuel is essential and often hard to come by.

Three ways to join in:

- Raffle for dinner for two at Diamond Point Steakhouse
- Gift baskets
- How many Legos did it take to build the display?

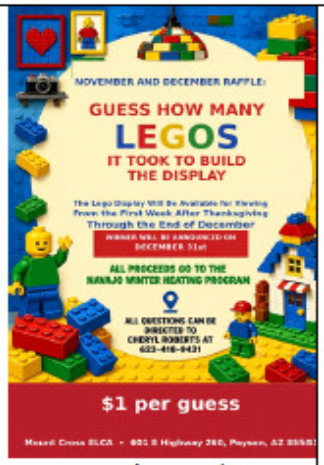
Raffle tickets are available at Mount Cross ELCA Church, November and December — $5 for one ticket, or 3 for $10. Dinner and gift basket winners will be announced December 13. The Lego winner will be announced December 31st.

The Lego display will be available for viewing from the first week after Thanksgiving through the end of December.

Join us in sharing warmth this holiday season.

Fundraiser flyers

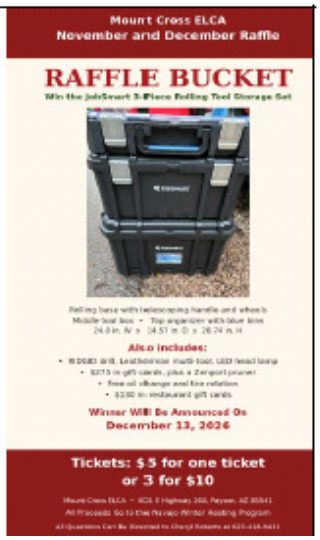




Lego Guessing — $1 per guess



Dinner for Two





Join us on Tuesday, November 24th at 8:00 a.m. The trees and decorations will be pulled out from storage and set up in preparation for the *Hanging of the Greens* service. All are welcome to enjoy a morning of working together to get ready for the upcoming Advent/Christmas season.

Your Property, Altar Guild, and Worship & Music Committees



Monthly Jazz Concerts

The Jazz Concert during the month of November will occur on the 8th at 2:00 p.m. in the Mount Cross sanctuary.

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



Thanksgiving Service will be held at the Payson Unity Church on Monday, November 23rd at 1:30 p.m.







Date	Event	Time
November 23rd	Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service	1:30 p.m.
November 24th	Christmas Decorating	8:00 a.m.
	join the Altar Guild, Property and Worship & Music Committees	
November 29th	1st Sunday in Advent service	9:30 a.m.
	Brunch after service: hosted by Worship & Music Committee – sanctuary	10:45 a.m.
	Advent Carol Program – sanctuary	11:15 a.m.
December 6th	2nd Sunday in Advent service	9:30 a.m.
	Brunch after service: hosted by Altar Guild – sanctuary	10:45 a.m.
	Advent Carol Program – sanctuary	11:15 a.m.
December 13th	3rd Sunday in Advent service	9:30 a.m.
	Brunch after service: hosted by Church Choirs – sanctuary	10:45 a.m.
	Advent Carol Program – sanctuary	11:15 a.m.
December 20th	4th Sunday in Advent service	9:30 a.m.
	Brunch after service: hosted by volunteers– sanctuary	10:45 a.m.
	Advent Carol Program – sanctuary	11:15 a.m.
December 24th	Christmas Eve service	9:30 a.m.

Please note: hosts for the December 20th Advent brunch is needed; it can be provided by individual or group of church members. Please contact the office to sign up.

2026 Advent Season
Advent, Brunch, & Carols

We are going to try something new this year for the Advent season. There will NOT be Wednesday evening services. Instead, we will have a brunch after each of the 4 Advent Sundays. Each brunch will conclude with singing a Christmas carol and discussion around the history/origin of the hymn.

<u>The Sunday Advent services and brunch hymns will be:</u>

Nov 29 – "Christmas Tree Lighting"
Brunch hymn - *"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"*

Dec 6 – The Advent/Christmas Names of Jesus
"Immanuel" (Isaiah 7)
Brunch hymn - *"The First Noel"*

Dec 13 – The Advent/Christmas Names of Jesus
"Wonderful" (Isaiah 9)
Brunch hymn - *"It Came Upon a Midnight Clear"*

Dec 6 – The Advent/Christmas Names of Jesus
"Mighty God" (Isaiah 9)
Brunch hymn - *"Angels We Have Heard on High"*

The Christmas Eve Candlelight service
Thursday, 12/24/2026 – 5:00 p.m.

Car pool services will be available for those requesting it.





Mount Cross Financial Report (January – September 2026)

2026 Approved Budget $308,699.90

Income . . . . . $217,214.00 (70.4% of 2026 budget)

Expenditures . . . . . $195,845.00 (63.4% of 2026 budget)

Under (Over) $21,369.00

Pledged-to-date / Given . . . . . $153.840.00 / $162,520.00 (105.6%)

2026 Mortgage Fund

Total given to the Mortgage Fund during September 2026 . . . . . $3,011.00

Total Principal paid out in 2026 for mortgage $38,484.00

Current Principal balance $284,912.00

Pledged-to-Date / Given-to-Date . . . . . $28,590.00 / $43,766.00 (153.1%)

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

Total income received from Thrivent "Choice Dollars" in 2026
Mount Cross $655.00

Yours in Christ,
Barb DeYoung
Finance Secretary

OFFICE HOURS

Office hours for the following days will be 9:00 – 11:30 a.m.
Tuesday and Wednesday, November 24th & 25th
Monday, November 30th through Wednesday, December 2nd
Normal office hours resume on Thursday, December 3rd



BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

November Birthdays

9	Dave Ritterbusch
12	Ed Stevens
14	Linda Wiebe
18	Sheryn Daw
30	Ashley Crowe

November Wedding Anniversaries

10	Tony/Lori Andretta

November Baptisms

26	Ray Wiebe

Spiritual Growth Opportunities

Worship Services

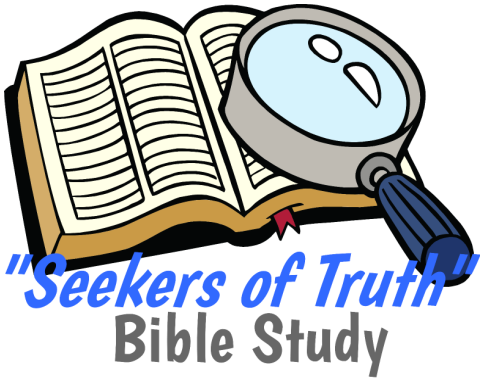
Weekly in-house communion & worship service held in the sanctuary; live stream of the service is available on Facebook.

Sundays, 9:30 AM

Seekers of Truth Bible study

This is a monthly Bible study which will be focusing on the book of James. 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. November 19th is the date for this month's meeting.

The group is currently studying the book of James.

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.



2026 Annual Congregational Meeting

Sunday, November 22nd after the service

Informational packets will be sent via email prior to the meeting. Those who do not have emails, be sure to check your church mailbox!

Items that will be addressed:

- **2027 budget**
- **Voting for candidates for Council, Memorial Committee, Mission Endowment Committee**



"Hanging of the Greens"

Sunday, November 29th

Brunch
(hosted by Worship & Music Committee)
10:45 a.m.

Advent Carol Program
11:15 a.m.

Altar Guild

Altar Guild will be meeting on Thursday, November 5th at 10:00 a.m.

If you would like to serve the Lord by preparing His table, please feel free to attend.



Payson Choral Society
Presents

On A Midnight Clear



Payson High School Auditorium
December 5 – 4:00 PM
December 6 – 2:00 PM

$10 Advance Tickets. $15 at the Door
Students admitted free of charge
Tickets available from Payson Choral Society members and at the Payson Public Library

Adam Burriel, Director
Beth Christensen, Collaborating Pianist

Start the Christmas Season by attending CONCERTS in DECEMBER

Concert Band & Jazz Ensemble
Directed by Mr. Alan Simpson



Tuesday, December 8, 2026
7:00 p.m.
Mt. Cross Lutheran Church
Free admission & refreshments

PAYSON CAMPUS
Eastern Arizona College, Payson Campus
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