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# Mount Cross Chronicle

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October 2023

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

## Sunday Worship Services

9:30 a.m.

*Worship/Communion Service*

Livestreamed

*Online Worship Service*

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Pastor  
Rev. Carl Sirotzki  
474-2552  
[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 Ponderings*

I was born and grew up in Chicago on the near Northwest side of the city in a neighborhood referred to as Bucktown. I am of Polish and Russian heritage, attended St. John Berchman's Catholic School, served as an altar boy, and sang in the boys' choir. After grade school, I attended and graduated from Holy Trinity High School in Chicago.

I had lived in Chicago and various suburbs before I met my wife, Jo, who grew up in Prairie du Sac, Wisconsin. We will celebrate our 37<sup>th</sup> anniversary on November 8<sup>th</sup>. Our son Matt and his wife, Christine, live in Crystal Lake, Illinois, with our "grandpuppies," *Happy* and *Ginger*.

I have a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology from Dominican University, River Forest, Illinois, a Master of Arts in Human Services and Counseling from DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois, and a Master of Divinity from Wartburg Theological Seminary, Dubuque, Iowa. I was ordained in November 2015 and had previously served as a pastor for ELCA congregations in Wisconsin, Nebraska, and now in Payson, AZ!! Jo and I are very excited about coming to Payson and serving the congregation of Mount Cross!

My professional background includes counseling, teaching middle school and high school social studies, divorce mediation, and theater. My hobbies include listening to and singing folk music and traditional Irish music, as well as reading and researching American and Irish history, and learning about other cultures. Jo and I enjoy traveling, music, movies, and watching and attending sporting events.

*"Lord Jesus, you shall be my song as long as I journey; I'll tell ev'rybody about you wherever I go...Lord Jesus, I'll praise you as long as I journey; May all of my life be a faithful reflection of you...Lord Jesus, make me your servant."* - Stephen Somerville

Your shepherd in Christ,  
*Pastor Carl Sirotzki*



Our STATEMENT . . .

† ChristConnectingCommunity



Our sloppy Joe supper for the Payson Community Kids' after school program will be held on Thursday, October 19<sup>th</sup>, with set-up at 4:15 p.m. If you would like to help us serve the children, please contact Sharon Vaplon.



ON SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2023, St Paul's Episcopal Church has invited any interested Cursillo members to attend a gathering at their church to celebrate Cursillo folks, including a session along with lunch for a binding together of the Cursillo community. Here in the Payson area, we have members from St. Paul's Episcopal, Payson United Methodist, Catholics, and Mount Cross Lutheran. The session will be from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM.

For Mount Cross members who wish to attend, please call Rhonda Caldwell to make a lunch reservation at 928-978-6017. The session is open to any who wish to learn more about Cursillo, as well as long term members of the Cursillo community.

A gathering is an uplifting session, with prayers, song, and conversation.



**Rummage / Craft Sale Volunteers**

Front row: Mary Havenor, Sheryn Daw, Eloise Jones, Alice Natale, Marilyn Black, Patty Niebch.  
Back row: Bob & Mary Walker, Ernie & Nancy Kellett, Carrie Backe, Linda & Ray Wiebe.  
Unavailable for the picture were Daria Mason and Jean Petrie.

**A wonderful group of volunteers, that have huge hearts for members of the Payson community who are in need, donated of their time to plan, set-up, and were available to assist those who attended and contributed to the event. The fund-raising event took place during rodeo weekend on Friday & Saturday, August 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup>.**

**Their efforts paid off, as *Katie's Closet* and *Meals on Wheels*, the two local community groups, were the recipients of the proceeds. Each of the two organizations received over \$2,000 and were extremely thankful for receiving this support.**

**The Missions Team would like to thank all who assisted with the fund-raiser, donated items for the sale, those who attended, and *U-Turn for Christ* for taking all the remaining items after the event. As the adage says, "It takes a village!"**



Mount Cross Financial Report (January – August 2023)

2023 Approved Budget . . . . .	\$326,229.00
Income . . . . .	\$169,719.00 (52.0% of 2023 budget)
Expenditures . . . . .	\$139,998.00 (42.9% of 2023 budget)

Total given to the Mortgage Fund during August 2023 . . . . .	\$3,020.00
Total paid out in 2023 for mortgage . . . . .	\$22,920.00

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

Total income received from Thrivent “Choice Dollars” in 2023	
Mount Cross. . . . .	\$449.00

Mount Cross is now going into the final quarter of the year and the financial situation, as of the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter is looking good. The new pastor and his wife, Carl and Jo Sirotzki, are settling into their new home as this newsletter is being produced. The life of Mount Cross is in the process of becoming “normal” again.

As always, a “big thank you” to those who faithfully support Mount Cross with their contributions.

Yours in Christ,  
Financial Team

**Mount Cross Bells are Ringing!!!**

In 2019 discussion began about upgrading our choir chimes and augmenting Bells to include 5 octaves. Our music director, Daria, contacted a bell company in Pennsylvania and got prices for new bells. Then COVID came upon us! All was put on hold.

In November 2022,Daria updated the pricing for buying new bells. The price had increased to over \$23,000. We decided to shop for used bells that were in satisfactory condition for our use. Our thanks to Daria for watching patiently for some bells to come our way. In April of 2022, we purchased 5 octaves of choir chimes from a church in Mesa.

We were shopping for 3 octaves and got all five octaves and cases for less than half price. The Council approved funds from the Jacob Waechter estate gift to pay \$3,000 for these bells.



In September 2023, Daria found half the 4<sup>th</sup> octave for sale at a church in Scottsdale. We purchased them for \$2,700, including the case and a table. The price was less than half the price of new bells. The Dedicated Choir/Bells Fund had been receiving gifts over the past couple of years and we had just over \$2,700 so this purchase came from that fund. Our wish list now includes the rest of the 4<sup>th</sup> octave and the 5<sup>th</sup> octave of bells. After we purchase them, we can return the bells that we have been using on loan for several years.

The DEDICATED MUSIC & BELL fund is your opportunity to help us build up money so that when our next “big deal” comes along we will be ready to buy the remaining bells. Dedicated funds are used only for the purpose of their name!

Thank you for your support!  
Worship & Music Committee

# Women of the ELCA

This is a report on the Triennial Gathering of 1100 women from all over the country at the Phoenix Convention Center held over the weekend of September 21 through September 24, 2023. Eloise and I attended Friday and Saturday.

The session was devoted to an overall *JUST LOVE* theme. Human trafficking and immigration, as well as hope, were a few of the topics. The “hope” part gave us insights into how Matthew devoted time to growth by having hope for the future as a focus, with sharing that Jesus is sitting at the right hand of God and citing the Great Commandment: “*Love one another and love your neighbor as you love yourself.*” If only we, as people of God always did that!

The presentations were provided by both pastors and individuals who were working towards that goal. Many of the presenters had experienced coming to America as immigrants, some with an easy transition within a Lutheran community, as well as others who entered the hard way. Two were our own native women who have lived on reservations, which were called a prison in many ways.

One main speaker, who is from the Cherokee nation in Oklahoma, cited the plight of the LAKOTA, as well as our own Rock Point reservation. Running water is considered liquid gold when you do not have running water, owning land is not possible since the land is federal and cannot belong to the people. They are simply living there as assigned by federal designation. He also stressed the missing women who are either killed or kidnapped, tortured, treated badly, and forced to go into the sex trade. There are not enough Federal agents to police the reservations, and the local native police cannot make such an arrest.

I found this interesting, since a meeting I attended at one of the weekly Tuesday morning Veterans’ meeting included the police chief of our local Apache reservation, along with two officers, who can hold but must have local Sheriffs do the big arrest. They do a great job in locating drug traffic. All very complicated.

The Triennial was interesting, very informative, and kept all of us on our toes.

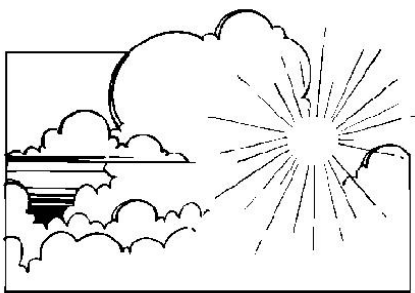
For our local group, we are small, but we meet the second Thursday of each month in the Ponderosa Room at 10:00 a.m. All women are welcome.

Now for a change of tune. I recently received this email from a friend, quoting Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, who writes: “*It is far more demanding to believe that God summons us to responsibility, that He asks us to fight for justice, equality and human dignity, and that He holds us accountable for what we do, rather than believing there is no meaning to human existence other than the ones we invent for ourselves. No ultimate truth, no absolute moral standards, and no one to whom we will have to give an account of our lives. He goes on to say, Atheism in a secular age is the default option. ...It takes courage to have and live by religious faith.*” So as believers, it is important to keep our faith as a living and viable way of life.

*Alice Natale*  
WELCA president



Lord,  
May our eyes be opened to see the beauty all around us,  
though ordinary, is quite extraordinary.  
Simple joys, like the coolness of the Autumn day  
and the colorful leaves as they dance their way to the ground.  
May the glory of all that You have made  
remind us of Your presence and lead us closer to You. Amen.



# Memorial S E R V I C E

for

**Wes Hathaway**

Saturday, October 14<sup>th</sup>

11:00 a.m.

in

**Mount Cross sanctuary**

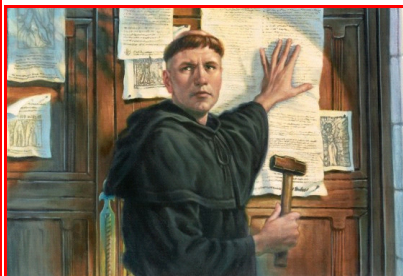
### Upcoming Committee Meetings

after Sunday service:

Global Mission Committee  
Sunday, October 15<sup>th</sup>

Endowment Committee  
Sunday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>

## REFORMATION SUNDAY



### OCTOBER 29<sup>th</sup>

**"Wear Red" Sunday!**

Installation  
of  
Rev. Carl Sirotzki  
as  
Pastor of Mount Cross



### October Birthdays

3	Roger Rohrbach
8	James Monroe
	Herb Mueller
17	Patric Taylor
19	Jan Harper
24	Daria Mason
25	Mavis Denofsky
31	Bob Walker

### October Wedding Anniversaries

4	John/Patricia Proescholdt
10	Dave/Karen Ritterbusch

### October Baptisms

1	Roger Rohrbach
30	Herb Mueller

### 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.

2<sup>nd</sup> 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 biblical prophets. All are welcome to attend.

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



# Thank You

Dear Mount Cross Lutheran Church,

Thank you for your very generous support to the Payson Senior Center Meals on Wheels program. You have helped us on this path to bring quality of life to those we serve. You and your donation is a blessing and appreciated!

Debbie Stephens  
Director of Development, Payson Senior Center



# Women's BIBLE STUDY

The monthly WELCA (Women of the ELCA) Bible study will be held in the Ponderosa Room on Thursday, October 12<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 a.m.

We will be in the second session of a three-part study, “*Holy places*,” by the Rev. Dr. Meghan Johnston Aelabouni, an ELCA missionary living in Jerusalem. She will guide the ladies in an exploration of what holy places mean, not only for the Holy Land of the Bible, but for each of us, wherever we may be.

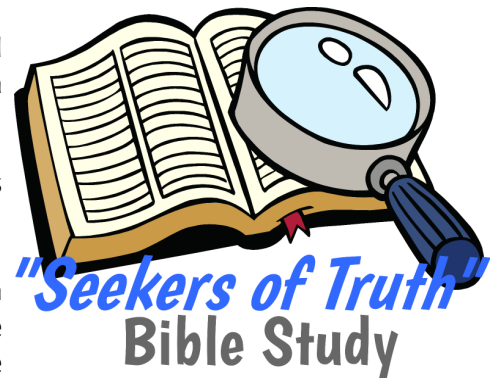
This month’s focus will be “Holy places: Sanctuary;” home can be the place we lay our head and the people we call family. Home can be our community or homeland. Home is also found wherever we truly and fully belong. This month, we consider the complexity and the promise of “home” through the stories of Israel’s exile, the ministry of Jesus, and the promises of Revelation.

A corresponding video for this month’s Bible study can be viewed at:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=EPP-roZQeJI&t=5s>

*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. October 19<sup>th</sup> is the date for this month’s meeting.

The group has completed its study of the Old Testament Prophets and has begun studying the 13 letters of Paul in the New Testament.

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.



## *Passing on a Legacy*

Gail Kittleson will be conducting a memoir-writing class at the Payson Public Library in the East Verde Room from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on the following Thursdays: October 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup>, and November 2<sup>nd</sup>. If you have the desire to write your memoirs to pass down to family members, here is a great opportunity to fulfill that desire.



Quilters gatherings in October:  
2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays  
October 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>  
in Building B (log building)  
at 9:00 a.m.



*All Saints Sunday* will be celebrated on November 5<sup>th</sup>. 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 on November 5<sup>th</sup> during the prayers of intercession. Please contact the office with your name requests before Monday, October 30<sup>th</sup>.

## NEWS FROM ZAMBIA

Summer greetings to you, my siblings in Christ,

Yes, summer has arrived here in Zambia. That is not a typo in my greeting. The sun has moved south again, the fans are on, the birds have returned and we try not to walk anywhere in the middle of the day. Everyone is complaining that it's toooooo hot. I am also a bit jealous of all the fall pictures from those of you in the northern hemisphere. As I try to stay cool in front of the fan, I'm happy to share with you my September 2023 Newsletter.

The September Newsletter can be downloaded as a pdf: [September 2023 Newsletter](#) here or read it on my blog:

<https://alongwithpastorkristin.blogspot.com/2023/09/september-2023-newsletter.html>.



You'll find news of the biggest happening in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zambia (ELCZa) since I arrived - the 2023 ELCZa Church Assembly and Service of Ordination, which took place in Zambezi in Northwestern Zambia. I've also included pictures in my newsletter of the Lusaka District Youth Camp that took place in August.

Thank you also, for your support of my work as an ELCA global missionary. I would not be able to serve as a missionary without you. As we say here in Zambia, "ti yenda pamozi" or "we move together."

God be with you,  
*Pastor Kristin Engstrom*

### MOUNT CROSS MEMORIAL FUND

IN 2023, MOUNT CROSS MEMORIAL FUND  
HAS RECEIVED GIFTS IN MEMORY OF THE FOLLOWING:  
MYRA HERBSTER, LYNN HESS & DARRELL HESS, JOHN BUCHANAN,  
DON FLETCHER, AND WES HATHAWAY.

MEMORIAL FUNDS ARE USED TO HELP SUPPORT COMMITTEES WITHIN MOUNT CROSS WHEN SPECIAL PURCHASES ARE NEEDED. SINCE WE MOVED TO OUR NEW SANCTUARY, THE MEMORIAL FUND HAS HELPED PURCHASE COMMUNION-WARE, ASSISTED WITH THE PURCHASE OF A VAN, SOFFIT REPAIRS ON THE MAIN CHURCH BUILDING, PURCHASE OF AN ORGAN STORAGE CABINET & A PIANO BENCH, PROVIDED A SANCTUARY BANNER FOR ALTAR GUILD, FURNITURE FOR THE PONDEROSA ROOM, TV FOR THE BACK OF THE SANCTUARY, AND MOST RECENTLY, WE GAVE \$1000 TO THE PROPERTY COMMITTEE TO HELP IN THE PURCHASE OF A MOPIT SELF-PROPELLED CORDLESS FLOOR CLEANING MACHINE TO USE ON THE HALLWAYS AND SANCTUARY FLOORS.

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO HAVE REMEMBERED LOVED ONES AND FRIENDS  
WITH A GIFT TO THE MEMORIAL FUND!

Concert Band & Jazz Ensemble  
Directed by Mr. Michael Buskirk



Tuesday, October 17, 2023  
7:00 p.m.  
Mt. Cross Lutheran Church  
Free admission & refreshments

**God's work.  
Our hands.**



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

Every September we have the "Gods Work, Our Hands" weekend and week. Two years ago, we cleaned up Jacob's home in preparation for selling it. In addition, Sharon Vaplon's husband, Gary, got the truck and the motorcycle running and sold. Jacob gave all he had to our church, which resulted in a reserve fund.

Now we are at that time of year again. I watch the CBS Morning show on Sunday mornings and saw a true case of *God's work, Our hand* take place. A gentleman named Craig has ALS, or Lou Gehrig's disease, which is fatal...as we witnessed with John Buchanan. In his garage, there was a Mustang from the 1970's that was no longer in good repair; his original plan was for his two boys and himself to restore the car and the kids had no interest. They named it the giant paperweight, but God had other plans. Craig's high school friends decided to rebuild the car in honor of Craig. They completely restored the car, painted it, and then Steve Hartman of the CBS show took Craig for a ride in his car. Their hands did God's work and gave this man some joy at a time when he needed that joy. This is an example of what it means to be involved in *God's Work, Our Hands* on a personal basis.

God's work on this earth may not always be focused on our own church, but focused on helping those who need a lift, whether spiritually, financially, or in person. Do you know of someone who needs assistance, then get to work. Each encounter where we can assist in some small or large way is what this is all about.

Our sale in late August was focused on Meals on Wheels and Katie's Closet. Both of these services help in small ways, with a big impact. Watching kids walk out of St. Paul's with new shoes or seeing folks who need and receive a meal smiling when they see the delivery person is the reward for the givers.

We do not need to be present to see the results, but we need to trust God for knowing who has a need and who can give. We simply need to hear or feel God's direction and then take heed.



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 5<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 a.m. for their annual luncheon. The venue this year will be The Fairways at Payson Golf Club, located at 1504 W. Country Club Dr.