

Mount Cross Chronicle

November 2023



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

Sunday Worship Services

9:30 a.m.
Worship/Communion Service

Livestreamed
Online Worship Service

Pastor
Rev. Carl Sirotzki
474-2552
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

"I thank my God for every remembrance of you, always in every one of my prayers for all of you, praying with joy."

I couldn't think of a better way to open my first article for The Chronicle than to quote this verse from Philippians 1:3-4. This is a verse that a friend shared with me around 40 years ago and has remained one of my favorite biblical verses. It truly reflects how I feel about all of you here at Mount Cross.

To say Jo and I are excited to be here would be putting it mildly. We are so very excited to be here at Mount Cross! From the very first time I met with the Call Committee, I could tell there was something very special about this congregation and Payson itself. Each time I spoke with or met with someone from the Call Committee, I could feel the Spirit's presence stronger and stronger throughout the process.

When Jo and I came to visit in early August, we fell in love with Mount Cross and with Payson. During our visit, we were able to meet a number of the congregation members and being taken on a tour of Payson. To everyone who showed us around Payson and those who we were able to meet, thank you for opening your hearts and welcoming us with such warmth. Since coming to Mount Cross just a few weeks ago, you have truly made us feel at home.

I have had the pleasure to make some calls and visits recently and I have been welcomed in the warmest fashion. Also, I have enjoyed people just stopping by and visiting as I continue to try and get my office in some sort of order, which Jo has been such a great help with! Please know that you are always welcome to stop in whenever you get the chance. If I happen not to be in when you stop by, please leave me a note and I will get back to you as soon as I am able. You all mean the world to me.

We are all called to care for and love one another during our journey together. God has put us together so that we can help one another grow in a deeper relationship with our amazing God as well as with one another.

Jo and I are so happy and blessed to be here at Mount Cross! We are so awestruck as learn our way around Payson and see the beauty that is all around us which includes all of you! To quote one of my favorite songs "Indescribable" by Chris Tomlin, "All powerful, untamable, awestruck we fall to our knees as we humbly proclaim, you are amazing God."

Peace,

Pastor Carl

Pastor Carl's weekly schedule

Monday: Sabbath (day off)
Tuesday: 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.
Thursday: study, prayer time (not in office, but available by phone, emergencies)
Friday: 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.
Saturday: By appointment



Our STATEMENT . . .

† ChristConnectingCommunity

God's work.
Our hands.



Look around, there are many opportunities to serve God in our community. Our town has food banks, a domestic shelter, an organization called New Beginnings that focuses on women in the motherly way, the PCK after school program, all of which focus on helping families. On an expanded level, there is the option of assisting the police department by helping at the front counter or volunteering to help with crowd control during community events. Helping at the library, for parks and recreation events, and at the hospital are more forms of caring within the local area. This is just the beginning of a long list of opportunities. Service to others is the gift that you receive from God and God uses us as instruments to be a blessing to others.



Our world is at odds with itself.
Our prayers are essential.
Our hope is necessary
for a better tomorrow than what we are experiencing now.
We must pray...
for our own country,
for Israel,
for innocent people in Palistine,
the Ukraine, and other countries
of the world.

Do you ever wonder if God shakes his head in dismay at the antics of his people? Only prayer has the power to better these things.



Church or not churched? That is the question...

I receive an article about the *'Unchurched'* this past month, written by Carey Nieuwhof in May of 2023. He talks about the definition of the un-churched as being those who are bright, who may have had a difficult experience with church membership, or who choose to stay away from regular attendance, but who have a strong sense of Christian community. They often expect us to follow Jesus authentically, and thus hold us to a higher standard of living within Christian belief.

So with that in mind, I remind myself that we need a smile, a friendly attitude towards others both known and new, and get rid of any gloomy or angry faces on Sunday morning. God will bless you in joy.

Alice Natale



Our sloppy Joe supper for the Payson Community Kids' after school program will be held on Thursday, November 16th, with set-up at 4:15 p.m. If you would like to help us serve the children, please contact Sharon Vaplon.



Angeline Ng & Family
invite you
to a concert,
"Colors of Autumn"
on

Sunday, November 12th
3:33 PM
Mount Cross sanctuary



Mount Cross Financial Report (January – September 2023)



2023 Approved Budget	\$326,229.00
Income	\$186,158.00 (57.1% of 2023 budget)
Expenditures	\$156,901.00 (48.1% of 2023 budget)

Total given to the Mortgage Fund during September 2023.	\$2,030.00
Total paid out in 2023 for mortgage	\$25,785.00

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

Total income received from Thrivent “Choice Dollars” in 2023 Mount Cross.	\$449.00
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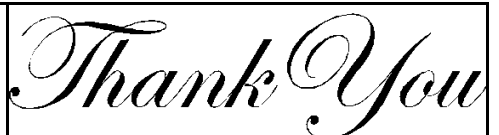
Our annual stewardship drive will be kicking off in the month of November with an anticipated Commitment Sunday date in December. These dates will be announced in the bulletin when the time draws near. The 2023 year has definitely stayed within the approved budget and the proposed budget for the 2024 year is approximately \$8K lower than 2023. The Council has worked diligently to provide this proposed budget and have taken into consideration rising costs of utilities. As you fill out your commitment cards, please take into consideration these costs that effect everyone, including the church. Thank you to those who faithfully support Mount Cross with their contributions.

Yours in Christ,
Financial Team



It is that time of year when we plan for the next calendar year’s budget. The Council works very hard to keep costs down, while planning for future needs carefully. In the past, you have seen many presentations regarding stewardship. For this year, we have a very simple plan, you will receive a pledge card and a *time and talents* sheet. The *time and talent* sheet is important for you to share which skills or interests you may have within the realms of church activities. The stewardship card assists in committing to the sharing of your funds for the ongoing support of the church and its activities. When involved in church, whether through *time and talent* or monetarily, your membership is enhanced to a new level.

The blood drive on Monday, October 23rd was an INCREDIBLE SUCCESS! Vitalant collected 100% of the projected target! There were 112 donors registered to donate! Of that, there were 99 successful blood donations!



THE LIVES OF 282 PATIENTS IN NEED COULD BE IMPACTED BY THIS LIFESAVING EVENT! We simply cannot begin to express our appreciation for your dedicated support!

We look forward to the next Payson Community blood drive on Monday, January 22, 2024!

I APPRECIATE MOUNT CROSS SO MUCH!

Lori Bone Hilliard

Senior Account Manager,



Women of the ELCA

On November 10th thru 14th, there is a Biennial Gathering for Grand Canyon Synod Women with a packed program on hunger, homelessness, human trafficking, climate control, migration, crafts, and conversation. If you wish to attend, you can obtain more information from the Grand Canyon Synod women's website:

<http://grandcanyonwomen.org/2023-convention-gathering/#page-content>.

I am unable to attend due to DAR obligations on that weekend.

We, as members, pay our own way to WELCA events. Once or twice a year there is a basket placed at the back of the church with little yellow boxes for your loose change that is collected and then sent to the national women's group, which is responsible for many activities for the Women of the ELCA. The best part of this year's triennial meeting is that Myrna Ulland from Scottsdale has become our national leader. Myrna is a person who gets things done.

You may wonder about what WELCA does? We have a monthly Bible study, collect donations for our Mount Cross quilter's group to purchase batting and other needed items, and also collect money to give as a *love offering* at our conventions.

Our local leader is Eloise, who conducts the monthly Bible study, in which the Gather magazine lessons are used. I occasional fill in as leader. Our donations, which are collected at our monthly study, fund the services we provide. We do not have a financial fund in the church budget.

All women of the church are members, and we encourage you to gather with us each month for a time of studying God's word and enjoying fellowshiping with each other, as God's women!

Alice Natale

WELCA president



Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service will be held at Mount Cross Lutheran Church on Tuesday, November 21st at 7:00 p.m.



Monday through Wednesday
November 6th through 8th
9:00 - 11:30 a.m.

Office Closed
Thanksgiving Day
and
Friday, November 24th
day after Thanksgiving.



Property Committee
will meet on Wednesday, November 29th at 8:00 a.m., in addition to the normal Thursday morning. The project for Wednesday will be to pull out the trees and decorations from storage and help get them set up in preparation for the Christmas tree lighting service. All are welcome to enjoy a morning of working together to get ready for the upcoming Advent season.



"Lighting the Christmas Tree"

Midweek Advent Service
Wednesday, November 29th

Finger Foods Supper
(hosted by Worship & Music Committee)
and

Tree Decoration
5:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Tree Lighting & Service
6:00 p.m.

Please bring cookies to share at the Wassail table.

Extras will be used for Sunday coffee time.



We wish to thank all who have supported us through help, prayers, and encouragement

during and following Kathryn's surgery in March, as well as in our work to move from here to La Posada Independent and Graduated Care in Green Valley, Arizona, which is 20 miles south of Tucson. We are most grateful.

We would also like to announce that we will be holding a huge Estate Sale the weekend of November 17th and 18th at 1107 N. Bavarian Way in Alpine Village off of McLane and Sherwood. There will be MANY treasures: furniture, bedding, tools, etc. We will have little need for these items in our one bedroom apartment at La Posada!

Please keep in touch. Our new address as of December 16th will be:

Bill & Kathryn Lee
La Posada at Park Centre
501 S. La Posada Circle, Unit 304
Green Valley, Arizona 85614

Blessings,
Bill & Kathryn Lee

GLOBAL **MISSIONS**

A final fund-raiser for the 2023 year will take place after church service on December 3rd in the log building. The proceeds will be sent to the Navajo Mission to assist with their winter heating costs. This year, the event will be in conjunction with a farewell potluck for Bill and Kathryn Lee. The fund-raiser will include a bake sale and sale of homemade frozen dinners. We are asking for volunteers to provide baked items and a for the "homemade frozen dinner" portion of the fund-raiser, we are suggesting that you double the recipe for what you plan to bring to the potluck and freeze the 2nd portion. By sharing your potluck item, it will provide a sample of the "frozen" dish, thus allowing the purchaser to know what the frozen dinner will taste like. The homemade frozen dinners should feed four people and each "frozen" meal will be sold for \$15.

A sign up sheet for the potluck will be located in the narthex; the sign-up sheet will include a column to indicate whether you are willing to double up and bring a "frozen dinner."

We would also appreciate volunteers to help with set up, which will occur on Saturday, December 2nd, as well as clean up after the event on Sunday. Save the date and be prepared to have a great time!

Nancy Kellett
Global Missions Team

2023 Annual Congregational Meeting

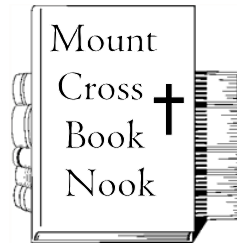
Sunday,
November 12th
after the
9:30 a.m.
service



Informational packets were sent via email on Sunday, October 29th. Those who do not have emails, be sure to check your church mailbox!

Items that will be addressed:

- ✦ 2024 budget
- ✦ voting for candidates for Council and Memorial Committee
- ✦ updated constitution and by-laws



For the month of November, I am going to do something a little different. On the cart, there will be one book pulled at random from each shelf in the library. They will not be listed here, so you will need to look for yourselves. You just might find a title or subject that interests you, so go for it!

Your Librarian,
Eloise Jones



November Birthdays

9 Dave Ritterbusch
12 Ed Stevens
14 Linda Wiebe
18 Sheryn Daw
21 Naomi Farber
29 Joe Dice

November Wedding Anniversaries

7 Tom/Carrie Backe
10 Tony/Lori Andretta
Bill/Kathryn Lee

November Baptisms

1 James Monroe
26 Ray Wiebe



PREPARETH THY HEARTS FOR HIS COMING!

The 1st Sunday of Advent is December 3rd and materials are available to help prepare your hearts for this joyful season leading into the celebration of Christ's birth. Please feel free to pick up, from the entrance table in the narthex, any or all of the following Advent items: calendars, study guides, and/or Good Gifts catalogs.



<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Time</u>
November 21 st	Ecumenical Thanksgiving - Mount Cross Lutheran Church	7:00 p.m.
November 26 th	Christ the King Sunday	9:30 a.m.
November 29 th	Potluck Finger-food Supper – by Worship & Music Committee	5:00 p.m.
	Christmas Tree decorating – sanctuary	after supper; before service
	Tree lighting and Music Service – sanctuary	6:00 p.m.
December 3 rd	1 st Sunday in Advent	9:30 a.m.

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 13 letters of Paul. All are welcome to attend.

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



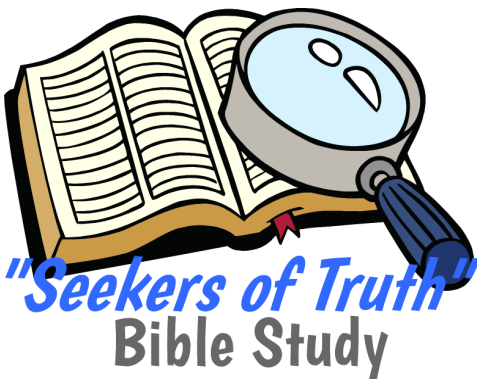
The monthly WELCA (Women of the ELCA) Bible study will be held in the Ponderosa Room on Thursday, November 9th, at 10:00 a.m.

We will be in the third and final 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: Pilgrimage." A pilgrimage is not only a journey to a sacred place, but in the Bible, a pilgrimage is also about the "holy place" of the journey itself.

A corresponding video for this month's Bible study can be viewed at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dtAkqCulquQ&t=23s>



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. November 16th 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.



Altar Guild will be meeting in the Ponderosa Room on Thursday, November 2nd at 10:00 a.m.



will have one gathering during the month of November, on the 8th in the log building at 9:00 a.m.