
Mount Cross Chronicle

December 2021



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

Pastors

Rev. Cliff Hanus
Rev. Linda Hanus
474-2552

pastor@mountcross.org
emergency phone
928-363-1683

Music Director

Daria Mason

daria1024mason@gmail.com

Accompanist

Angeline Ng

Office Administrator

Lenore M. White

secretary@mountcross.org

Custodian

Rod Rice

Pastor's Ponderings

"Twas the Night before Christmas"

The Rev. Linda C. Hanus

Twas the night before Christmas and all through the world
People were frantic, caught up in a mad swirl.
Shopping and baking and spending prevailed
And folks shared their greetings in cards that were mailed.

The night breeze was cold with a frost in the air
Some hoped for snow, while others didn't care.
The retailers closed early and headed for home
Glad that the end of the big rush had come.

The presents were wrapped and hid out of sight
But some children do snoop, which just isn't right.
The cookies and carrots were placed out for Santa
But no milk this year, in case he's lactose intolerant.

And while one could imagine that all was in place
Something was missing- stop, stop this fast pace.
For Christmas is much more than shopping and eating
It's more than just sending an annual holiday greeting.

For some of God's children have nothing to buy
They don't have much food; their babies just cry.
'Cause famine and war and poverty are theirs
They pray and they wonder if anyone cares.

And while life is a struggle and their future seems bleak
There's good news to share and hopeful words to speak.
For God has seen the troubles of those whom God loves
God sent prophets and kings and messengers from above.

But when nothing else worked after many a try
God sent us a Savior, God's Son from on high.
God sent us the best, the best God could give
In hopes that God's people would learn how to live.

To love one another through every good deed
To take care of the hungry and serve those in need.
To tend to the earth with respect and good care
To be faithful stewards of the water and air.

To look out for neighbor and strive for world peace
 To remember that all that we have is on lease.
 Yes, Christmas, you see, is much more than one day
 It's a lifestyle we live every day that should say

That the One who was born in Bethlehem long ago
 The Word Became Flesh, the Christ child we know
 Who lived and who died, so that we might be freed
 From sin, pain and suffering, death's darkness and greed

Is the One who is with us and shows us the way
 To keep us from following those who would lead us astray.
 Lord Jesus, the Christ- our Savior Divine
 Rules in our hearts; he's our bread and our wine.

He's our reason for being, our hope and our friend
 The One who has promised to be with us to the end.
 So give thanks to God, as we gather this night
 For we have much to celebrate and some candles to light.

A meal to be shared at God's Table of Grace
 Some hymns of rejoicing here in Payson and everywhere.
 May the Spirit of Christmas be with you all year
 May our Lord's grace be upon you and those you hold dear.
 Amen.

Wishing you and yours a most blessed Christmas season of celebration,

Pastor Linda Hanus and Cliff Hanus



<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Time</u>
December 1 st	Advent Finger-food Supper – Worship & Music Committee Christmas Tree decorating – sanctuary Tree lighting and Service – sanctuary	5:00 p.m. after supper; before service 6:00 p.m.
December 5 th	2 nd Sunday of Advent	9:30 a.m.
December 8 th	<i>Mid-week Advent Supper</i> – Altar Guild 2 nd Mid-week Advent service - sanctuary	5:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m.
December 12 th	3 rd Sunday of Advent	9:30 a.m.
December 15 th	<i>Mid-week Advent Supper</i> – Choir & Bells 3 rd Mid-week Advent service - sanctuary	5:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m.
December 19 th	4 th Sunday of Advent	9:30 a.m.
December 24 th	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service with Holy Communion	7:00 p.m.
December 26 th	Communion/Worship Service – <i>“Lessons and Carols”</i>	9:30 a.m.



Our STATEMENT . . .

† ChristConnectingCommunity



DEACONS FOOD PANTRY

We have been notified that the National Guard will not be coming to Payson after November, having given us almost two years of service on COVID duty. The Presbyterian Church Food Pantry sessions will all need to build up a list of people to volunteer to keep the program flowing successfully.

We are open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings with two shifts and on Tuesday evenings from 5:00-7:00 p.m.

If you are interested in helping at the Food Pantry (starting in December and onward), please contact Alice Natale or Sharon Vaplon for information. Every week, twice a month, once a month, occasionally — we will welcome all who care to serve!

Mount Cross will serve the sloppy joe supper, the last one for the 2021 year, to the Payson Community Kids on Thursday, December 16th. If you are willing to help us out at 4:15 p.m. or provide funds for the food that we buy, please contact Sharon Vaplon, 928-468-8711. Supper dates for January through May will be arranged before the beginning of 2022.

The staff really appreciates our service, because if no one volunteers, they then have to put a meal together. Their goal is to send the children home from the after-school program with a supper each day they attend.

Your support of time and funds for this program are appreciated!



God's work.
Our hands.



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

We can offer so much to so many by the ways in which we help others.

Help the sickly,
help the poor,
help those who are struggling to find God's peace and joy.

Mount Cross Financial Report (January – October 2021)



2021 Approved ½ year Budget	\$153,111.50
2021 Total budget for the year	\$305,573.00
Income	\$241,434.00 (79% of 2021 budget)
Expenditures	\$241,443.00 (79% of 2021 budget)

Total given to the Mortgage Fund during October 2021 \$900.00
 Total paid out in 2021 for mortgage \$20,606.00

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

Total income received from Thrivent “Choice Dollars” in 2021
 Mount Cross. \$1,234.00

The Annual Congregational meeting took place on Sunday, November 21st. The budget of \$306,010.32 for the 2022 year was approved. The upcoming year will bring an additional member to the staff, Candice Taylor, who will be handling the projection of the service on Sundays.

We would like to thank all of you who have faithfully support Mount Cross with their contributions during the 2021 year.

Yours in Christ,
 Financial Team

CONTRIBUTING IN 2022

Your contribution envelopes for 2022 are now available and have been placed in your church mailbox.

Christmas Poinsettias

If you would like to remember a loved one during the Christmas season by placing a Poinsettia in the sanctuary, please complete the form found in your Sunday bulletin, place in one of the inserted envelopes, and either place in the offering plate or bring/mail to the church office. If writing a check, please make it payable to: Mount Cross Lutheran Church with “Poinsettias” written in the memo line. If you would like your poinsettia, you may pick it up after the Candlelight service on December 24th. This year the price is \$5 each and we must have your order by December 20th.



The final Bell & Chancel Choir rehearsals for the 2021 year will be held on Thursday, December 23rd. Practices will resume at the normal 5:30 (Bell) & 6:45 (Choir) times on Thursday, January 20th.

Hope you had a Happy Thanksgiving and have rolled up your sleeves to prepare for Christmas. Every book in the church library that pertains to Christmas can be found on the library cart in the narthex.

Surprisingly, there are only a few non-fiction.

They are as follows:

The Heart of Christmas by Max Lucado and others

Keeping the Spirit of Christmas and *A Recipe for a Merry Christmas*, both by Handel Brown

Unplug the Christmas Machine by Jo Robinson

Simplify & Celebrate by Michael Schwartzenruber

Whew, that was a mouthful!

Now for the fiction:

Gold Rush Christmas by Colleen Coble and others

What Child is This by Caroline Cooney

Christmas at Barncastle Inn by Susan Davis

All Jingled Out by Pamela Dowd

The Christmas Box and *The Christmas List*, both by Richard Paul Evans

Magi by Daniel Gilbert

Skipping Christmas by John Grisham

Engaging Father Christmas and *Finding Father Christmas*, both by Robin Gunn

A Cup of Christmas Tea by Tom Hegg

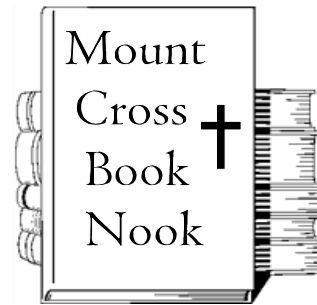
The Christmas Bride by Grace Livingston Hill

Shepherds Abiding by Jan Karon

A Christmas Visitor by Thomas Kinkadee

An Angel's Story, *The Christmas Candle*, and *The Christmas Child*, all by Max Lucado

and finally, *Texas Christmas Grooms* by Vickie McDonough.



Wishing you all a very MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Your Librarian,

Eloise Jones

Let's Heat Things Up!!



A "Craft and Bake Sale" will be held in the Mount Cross narthex on December 5th and 12th, to help raise money for the heating bills at the Navajo Lutheran Mission in Rock Point. The Four Corners area is one of the colder places in Arizona during winter. We welcome any donations that will help this cause. If possible, bring your items to the office prior to those two Sundays.

As you are baking for the holidays, you may have the desire to bake some extra items for the bake sale...like breads, pies, candy, cookies, or homemade jam, jelly, and pickles. All crafts are welcome like carvings, quilts of any size, table runners, knitted mittens and caps, homemade soaps and holiday decorations or other items that can be used as gifts. If possible, decorate your items as if they are gifts. Put the name of your item on a tag and place it on the item where it can be seen.

Your generous contributions can be put into the firepot. If you write a check, please make it out to Mount Cross and put "Navajo heating" on the memo line.

The Global Missions Team

Christmas Eve
CANDLELIGHT
SERVICE

Friday Night
December 24th
7:00 PM



Women's BIBLE STUDY

The ladies will meet this month on December 9th at 10:00 a.m. in the Ponderosa Room. December's Bible study features the Women of Advent, a devotional centered around Hannah, Mary, Elizabeth, and Anna. These four women showed courage to ask for the desire of their hearts and accept God's calling...no matter how life-changing these events were.

Hannah, desperate to conceive a child, bargained with God. Mary, accepting of God's plan for her to bear his son, even knowing she could be shamed or even stoned. Elizabeth, beyond her child bearing years, was willing to carry a child in her old age and raise a son that was destined to prepare the way for Jesus. Anna, a prophetess who awaited the coming of the Messiah and immediately recognized him at his dedication.

You won't want to miss this Bible study! All ladies are welcome to attend the Bible study. What a wonderful way to celebrate women's participation in God's plans.



Council

Gary Greer (3 year term)
Sharry Lien (3 year term)
Ron Nelson (1 year term)
John Proescholdt (1 year term)
Sharon Vaplon (1 year term)

Memorial Committee

Tony Andretta (3 year term)
Barb Greer (3 year term)
Bill Lee (2 year term)
Sharon Vaplon (3 year term)

Mission Endowment

John Proescholdt (3 year term)
Donna Reifschneider (3 year term)
Ed Stevens (1 year term)

Congratulations and welcome, newly elected/re-elected members!

Many thanks to the following for accepting nomination for reelection: Tony Andretta and Sharon Vaplon for the Memorial Committee; John Proescholdt, Donna Reifschneider, and Ed Stevens for Mission Endowment; and John Proescholdt for Council.

We would like to thank Ron Nelson and Sharon Vaplon for their willingness to be nominated and elected to Council after completing the 2021 year for Scott Fellin and Libby Winter.

A warm welcome to these newly elected members: Gary Greer and Sharry Lien for Council and Barb Greer and Bill Lee for Memorial Committee.

Also, much appreciation to Diana Fletcher, the outgoing member of the Council for her willingness to serve Mount Cross as Council Secretary!

Budget of \$306,010.32 for the 2022 year was approved.



This is the month to pray for the world,
 pray for our faith
 and pray for each other as we go about our lives.
 Let's grow our Faith and let's experience the joy of Christ's birth.



REMINDER

Attention Committee Chairs:
 Annual Report time is just around
 the corner.

Reports for committees not
 reporting financial detail are due to
 the church office no later than
 Friday, December 10, 2021.

Committees requiring end of year
 financial statements from the
 bank, your reports are due to the
 church office no later than Friday,
 January 14, 2022, in order to allow
 for receipt of year-end financial
 statements.



Office Hours
 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
 Tuesday, December 14th
 through
 Friday, December 17th

Closed
 Monday, December 13th
 Friday, December 24th
 Monday, December 27th
 (in lieu of normal office holidays:
 Christmas and day after Christmas)

and
 Friday, December 31st
 (In lieu of New Year's Day)



December Birthdays

- 4 Jan Bartoli
- 12 Sue Hess
- 16 Lynn Hess
- 17 Nancy Kellett
- 19 Helen Swenson
- 29 Bill Lee
- 31 Carol Wilder

December Anniversaries

- 9 Jim/Majel Potter
- 12 Ernie/Nancy Kellett
- 26 Jim/Virginia McCall

December Baptisms

- 6 Gail Bensen
- 7 Mavis Denofsky
- 17 Lori Andretta
- 21 Eloise Jones
- 30 Jan Bartoli



ELCA Good Gifts catalog are available in the narthex for you
 to use to provide ideas and answers for your CHRISTmas
 gift list.

There are hundreds of ELCA projects in 80 countries around
 the world that your gifts help fund. Gifting of farm animals
 helps provide ongoing food sources for many of the people
 who live in those countries. You can also choose to the gift

of education, as the people are taught how to care for the animals and grow crops. Education also includes providing
 children with school supplies or vocational training for adults. There are many options to select from and you can view
 them and order online at <https://goodgifts.elca.org/all-gifts>. Ornament-shaped name tags can be picked off the tree
 in the narthex and are used to tell others about the gift you are giving them. Free Advent calendars can also be found
 on the *Good Gifts* table, which you can use for yourself or family members.

Spiritual Growth Opportunities

Daily Devotions

A daily devotional time, led by Pastors Linda and Cliff Hanus, is available online via the church website on Facebook.

Online devotional held Tuesdays through Saturdays, 8:30 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.

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



As we begin the Christmas season, it is so easy to get caught up in all the must do's, have to do's, and many other events that take our time. So, let's take a morning or an hour to think about God, and the gift of his son, Jesus. Who was born of the Virgin Mary,

and brought into this world to save us from ourselves as we muddle along, not always following what God gave us a directions for living.

I recently watched a program on NOVA that was about the exploration of space beyond our own galaxy. The program showed the millions and billions of stars and planets in the Cosmos. I started thinking of how God chose our planet to place those things that would become part of humanity. It really brought into perspective the concept of his decision to create a place with life that would be his people. As the space exploration zooms on, there has been no other planet that would match our planet's conditions.

If we ever doubt that God gave us his Son to bring us to him as resurrected beings, who will praise and serve with love, this vastness has brought it home to me.

The birth of Jesus was transforming. Here was this tiny babe who would become the Savior of the world. How do you treat such a child? What does his future hold? How Mary and Joseph strove to protect him from the political events that Herod decreed. As parents, it must have been overwhelming. We are raising the Son of God! How humble they must have been. How watchful were they as this child grew? I cannot imagine how panicked they must have been when they took Jesus to the temple at age 12 and he did not return to them since he was preaching in the temple. Each of these events show us that God was in charge, not the parents who raised him.

So as we enter this very Holy Season, think about the joy of this even, and also think about the gift we experienced as believers in Christ.

Alice Natale

WELCA president

