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# Mount Cross Chronicle

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February 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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Supply Pastor  
Rev. Lance Kittleson  
474-2552  
[chapkitt@icloud.com](mailto:chapkitt@icloud.com)

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*

It seems like we are hardly done with Christmas when we have to start thinking about Ash Wednesday (Feb. 22) and the Lenten season.

Lent, as we all know, is not nearly as much 'fun' as Advent. In church history both were seen as penitential seasons where we 'prepare' our hearts and lives through some soul searching to welcome the Good News once again through the pivotal events of Jesus' life and mission. Advent leads to the joyous birth of Jesus, but Lent leads to his suffering and death and then TO THE surprise and joy of Easter morning.

Lent is a 'tough love' season of the year where taking a good look at ourselves, we ask, "How am I doing with you, Lord? Am I seeking to truly follow Jesus?" How can I "**know Him more clearly, love Him more dearly, follow Him more nearly,**" as expressed in Richard of Chichester's almost 775 year old prayer (England: 1197-1253) and in the 1970s "Godspell" musical and song "Day by Day."

This season is **NOT** about 'beating ourselves up,' eating more fish or temporarily denying ourselves our favorite chocolate treats. It is, as Bishop Richard prayed, to "know **MORE** clearly, follow **MORE** nearly, love **MORE** dearly" the Savior, Jesus the Christ.

The emphasis is on the "**MORE**" because our faith, which began in baptism, is a continuous journey of learning about the infinite God who has chosen to love and call us into his family of grace. We never completely 'arrive' in our relationship with God this side of heaven. Still, we are like children who are loved unconditionally, but yet needing to grow and mature continuously or else there is something dangerously wrong. The church, for over 1,700 years, has observed the season of Lent in order to help to constantly call our hearts and minds back to the eternal theme of..."seeking to know, to follow and to love our loving, redeeming triune God **MORE** and **MORE** and **MORE**."

I would encourage all to do their best to live out the Prayer of Richard of Chichester, this "**MORE** and **MORE**," through the **Ash Wednesday Joint Worship at the Methodist Church**, followed by Mount Cross's mid-week services using Holden Evening Prayer to center our thoughts while meditating on our Savior and Lord.

May each of our own personal Lenten journeys truly include 40 days of "**to know Him more clearly, love Him more dearly, follow Him more nearly**"- **DAY BY DAY**, especially in this Lent of 2023.

*Lance*  
(aka Pastor)

**RICHARD OF CHICHESTER'S FULL PRAYER:**

Thanks be to Thee, my Lord Jesus Christ  
For all the benefits you have given me  
For all the pains and insults you have borne for me  
O most merciful Redeemer, friend and brother  
May I know You more clearly,  
Love You more dearly,  
Follow You more nearly.

**ALTAR GUILD**

Anyone (men, women, couple) interested in being a part of a most blessed and rewarding ministry of the church, the Altar Guild, is invited to come to our first meeting of the 2023 year on Sunday, February 19<sup>th</sup>, after the church service.

Grab your coffee & cookies and join us in the conference room to learn what this ministry is all about!

†  
**ChristConnectingCommunity**



As our winter of many changes has started to ebb, it is time to rejoice in all things given to us by God.

Celebrate the beginning of spring, celebrate the world we have been given. Celebrate our music, our voices, our church, our world, and our families.



Mount Cross volunteers will again serve a sloppy joe supper on Thursday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>. If you are willing to help us out at 4:30 p.m. or provide funds for the food that we buy, please contact Sharon Vaplon, 928-468-8711.



We need people to volunteer for Property Committee, people who love to sing top try out for choir, folks who wish to serve God's table of worship by serving on the altar committee, and people who love the cookies and coffee by signing up for providing cookies and cleaning up afterwards. These are the internal needs, we also need prayer warriors for our overall care.

**LEN / EN  
SERVICES**

**Ash Wednesday Service**  
Payson United Methodist Church  
(414 N. Easy St.)  
February 22, 7:00 p.m.

Midweek Lenten services at Mount Cross begin on Wednesday, February 29th.  
A Soup/Bread Supper will be served between 5:00 -5:45 p.m. in the back of the church.  
**The service will be at 6:00 p.m. with Holden's Evening Prayer** being presented this year.  
Daria Mason and others will be soloists



Mount Cross Financial Report (January – December 2022)



2022 Approved Budget . . . . .	\$306,010.00
Income . . . . .	\$268,302.00 (% of 2022 budget)
Expenditures . . . . .	\$250,916.00 (% of 2022 budget)

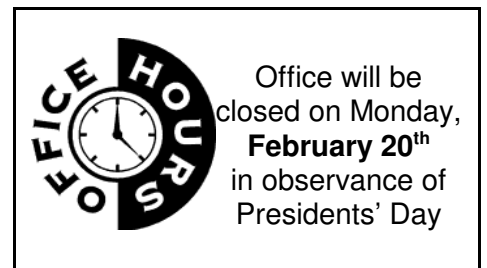
Total given to the Mortgage Fund during December 2022 . . . . .	\$2,049.00
Total paid out in 2022 for mortgage . . . . .	\$84,380.00

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

Total income received from Thrivent "Choice Dollars" in 2022	
Mount Cross. . . . .	\$4,708.00

Good news! Mount Cross ended the 2022 year with contributions exceeding expenses, so we ended the year on a positive note. Thank you to those who faithfully support Mount Cross with their contributions!!

Yours in Christ,  
Financial Team



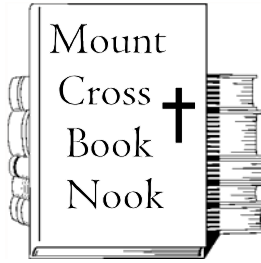
Last month I talked about the Holy Spirit and how spending regular quiet time gives us the connection with God to hear what he has to say. In a reading I did this past month, the transformation either occurs instantly or gradually, but it does occur in God's time.

Witness the instant one of Paul (Saul) on the road to Damascus. He saw a bright light, fell to the ground, and then heard a voice asking why he was persecuting me? Saul asked, "Who are you?" The voice told him he was Jesus. Others around him also heard the voice. No one knew where it came from, but Saul was transformed by God to share the message of Jesus to the Gentiles. He became Paul. That is an example of an instant transformation. The holy Spirit descended to this man who had persecuted those who were early believers of Jesus message.

In our world, we see many who claim such a role. Some are real and others are not. For ourselves, we can claim that transformation by listening each day to God. Quiet time!. Not jumping into the next thing that comes to mind, which is off subject, can give us those small insights into that special time with Jesus.

As we wait for the time of Lent, let's plan for our quiet time. Since Lent is a period of reflection and redemption, start your engines folks. We are about to embrace that special time of the year when our faith can be bolstered through our walk with Jesus. Think of a sacrifice, think of restoration of faith, think of how God has chosen you to be his faithful follower here on earth and then share that faith walk with anyone who you may choose.

*Alice Natale*  
WELCA president



Books that will be placed on the library cart for the month of February will focus on maintaining good health. Is your new year resolution related to taking care of your health? If so, you will definitely want to take a look at what is available.

Your Librarian,  
*Eloise Jones*



We welcome our new custodian to our staff this month. Keri Morris will handle the duties of cleaning our church building and part of the cleaning of the log building. Keri has had her cleaning business for four years and is a lifelong resident of the Payson-Pine area. We hope you will welcome Keri if you're in the church area when she's cleaning.



**February Birthdays**

- 6 Carrie Backe
- 12 Mary Walker
- 21 Diana Fletcher
- 25 Cathy Stewart
- 26 Gary Greer

**February Wedding Anniversaries**

None in February

**February Baptisms**

- 10 Tonnie Dice



**2022 Lenten Schedule**

Wednesday, February 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Ecumenical Ash Wednesday Service – Payson United Methodist	7:00 p.m.
Sunday, February 25 <sup>th</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup> Sunday of Lent	9:30 a.m.
Wednesday, March 1 <sup>st</sup>	Fingerfood Supper	5:00 p.m.
	Mid-week Lenten Service	6:00 p.m.
Sunday, March 5 <sup>th</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Lent	9:30 a.m.
Wednesday, March 8 <sup>th</sup>	Fingerfood Supper	5:00 p.m.
	Mid-week Lenten Service	6:00 p.m.
Sunday, March 12 <sup>th</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Lent	9:30 a.m.
Wednesday, March 15 <sup>th</sup>	Fingerfood Supper	5:00 p.m.
	Mid-week Lenten Service	6:00 p.m.
Sunday, March 19 <sup>th</sup>	4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent	9:30 a.m.
Wednesday, March 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Fingerfood Supper	5:00 p.m.
	Mid-week Lenten Service	6:00 p.m.
Sunday, March 26 <sup>th</sup>	5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday of Lent	9:30 a.m.
Wednesday, March 29 <sup>th</sup>	Fingerfood Supper	5:00 p.m.
	Mid-week Lenten Service	6:00 p.m.
Sunday, April 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Palm Sunday	9:30 a.m.
Thursday, April 6 <sup>th</sup>	Maundy Thursday Service – Mount Cross	6:00 p.m.
Friday, April 7 <sup>th</sup>	Ecumenical Good Friday Service – Community Presbyterian	7:00 p.m.
Sunday, April 9 <sup>th</sup>	Easter Sunday Service – Mount Cross	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.

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.

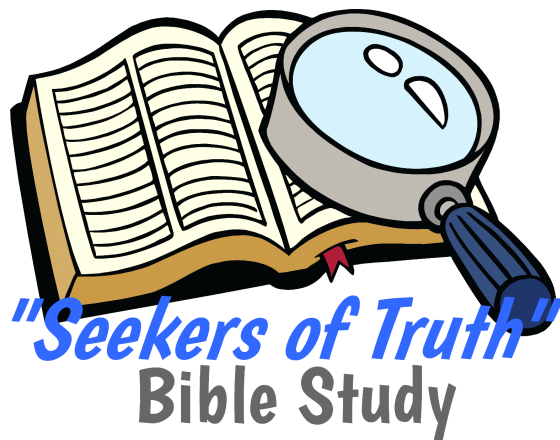
3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month, 10:00 AM in the Ponderosa Room.



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

It is a four-session study of the 10 commandments by ELCA pastor and Bible study author Christa von Zychlin. She will help us see how these commandments are more than they may appear at first glance. The February session, entitled "Rhythms & Respect," will focus on the third and fourth commandments. Get ready to explore old and new interpretations of God's laws!

Seekers of Truth Bible study, support, social, and friendship group, is held on the third Thursday of each month in the Ponderosa Room at 10:00 a.m. February 16<sup>th</sup> is the date for this month's meeting. Refreshments will be served; BYOB (Bring Your own Beverage).



The group continues to focus on sixteen major and minor Old Testament prophets.

Members of the group will be given handouts before each meeting with information about the prophet or prophets to be discussed. There is NO book requirement. Members of the group who have study Bibles will be encouraged to read about each prophet in their own Bible and to share with the group what their Bibles say about each prophet.

The last part of the meeting will be a time for socializing, eating, and supporting each other.

Jan Bartoli is the facilitator of the group and Sue Bobek is the discussion leader. If you have questions, suggestions, or wish to be a part of this group, please call Jan at 928-517-1119 or Sue at 928-478-6166.

**ALL ARE WELCOME!**

## SOUPERBOWL SUNDAY

February 12, 2023

Along with congregations, schools, businesses, and passionate individuals throughout the country, Mount Cross will be participating in Souperbowl Sunday on February 12, 2023, while we all tackle hunger. Both dollars and food items will be collected on this Sunday and the total of dollars and food items will be reported to the national SouperBowl of Caring to add to the national total and witness the united power of caring.



Non-perishable food items will be collected as you enter the church. Soup pots for money contributions will be passed during an offering time, where either checks or cash can be placed. All checks should be written to Mount Cross with Souperbowl on the memo line. All food items will be given to the Deacon's Food Pantry and monetary donations will be split between St. Vincent De Paul and the Deacon's Food Pantry.

*Thank You*

THANKS for the GREAT blood drive we hosted at the Mount Cross Lutheran Church on January 23<sup>rd</sup> !!!! Considering the winter weather that Monday, this blood drive had an incredible turnout!!!!

A total of 64 donors registered to donate; 3 donors were deferred. We collected 57 units of whole blood. There were 4 donors that donated power red cells, and 61 successful donations in all at the blood drive.

**The lives of 179 patients in need could be impacted by this blood drive!!!! WE ARE SO VERY GRATEFUL!!!!**

Lori Hilliard  
Senior Account Manager  
Vitalant Blood Services

Hello dear siblings in Christ,

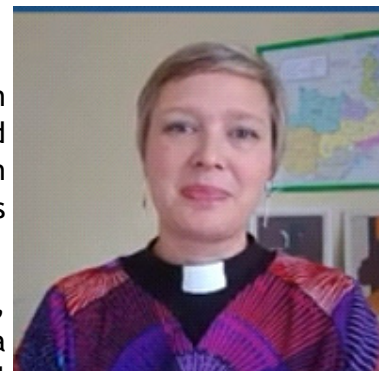
I hope you had a wonderful Christmas celebration and a Happy New Year.

I have been here in Zambia, working with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Zambia (ELCZA), for almost a year now. During that time, I have been welcomed and invited into ministry by our siblings in the ELCZA. The church here has been a blessing, even as the work I am called to has challenged me to develop new skills and ways of ministry that are appropriate for the Zambian context.

In order to share with you about the ministry I am now called to with the ELCZA, I have made a short video overview (5 mn). You are invited to share this video via social media, in worship services, or perhaps at an upcoming congregational meeting.

Here are the links to the video:

YouTube: [https://youtu.be/QgYS\\_eoxBwk](https://youtu.be/QgYS_eoxBwk)



Mulungu, a kudalisani. (*God bless you*),  
Pastor Kristin Engstrom