
Mount Cross Chronicle

March 2024



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

"Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died – more than that, who was raised to life – is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us."
Romans 8:34

March has arrived! We are in the midst of Lent and our Wednesday Lenten meals and Holden Evening Prayer services have been well attended as well as our Sunday worship. If you haven't been able to attend any of the meals and services, I hope you will be able to join us sometime over the next few weeks.

Maundy Thursday will be celebrated with communion and the traditional stripping of the altar at the end of worship. On Good Friday, we will have a noon service here at Mount Cross that is called the "Service of the Nails." I am sure you will find this service to be very moving. Also on Good Friday, the Methodist Church will be hosting an ecumenical service at 6:00 p.m.

Although we are several weeks away from Easter, many people are already making plans for Easter gatherings. There are also a number of Easter traditions that people hold near and dear to their hearts. Every Easter, I always remember a family tradition that my parents and I observed on the Saturday before Easter. This tradition was the Blessing of the Easter Basket.

The Blessing of the Easter Basket was very important to my family and to all of the Polish families in my Chicago neighborhood. My parents had this very heavy wicker type basket with a handle that went from one side of the basket to the other. The food that would be placed in the basket were: fresh and smoked kielbasa (Polish Sausage), butter in the shape of a lamb, a circular loaf of fresh bakery rye bread with a purple sticker with a cross on it, a small amount of white and red horseradish, some baked ham, colored Easter eggs, some salt and this was all covered with a white linen cloth. The aroma of the food made it tempting to just reach in the basket and sample just a bit of the food. It took every ounce of my will power to not reach in and help myself to the food.

Then around 4:00 or 5:00 p.m., we would take our basket to the local Catholic church for the blessing. Everyone with a basket for blessing would be ushered into a room, usually in the church basement, and we would wait for the priest. As the priest entered the room dressed in full vestments, carrying a Holy Water pot and sprinkler (aspergillum), the room would become silent. The priest would say a prayer and then walk around the room blessing the baskets with Holy Water. The blessed food would then be eaten for breakfast on Easter morning.

No matter what our traditions may be, I pray that we all keep the resurrection of our Lord front and center in our celebrations. God bless you all and have a blessed Lent and a glorious Easter!

Peace,

Pastor Carl



Our STATEMENT . . .

† ChristConnectingCommunity



As our world continues to experience so many tragedies, let us pray that God will open the hearts of all of us to care about others, to give grace to others, and to remind us it is not about us, but by God's will. Pray for our world.



Due to the school schedule and Spring Break, Mount Cross will not be serving a sloppy joe supper during the month of March. The next date of service to PCK will be in April.

God's work. Our hands.



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

The biggest joy of giving of time and talent is that as we serve so that we reap the benefit of working along with other folks who wish to help be God's presence in our daily lives.

This year, Mount Cross' participation in the SouperBowl collection on Superbowl Sunday resulted in \$905.00, which will be sent to the Deacon's Food Pantry. Non-perishable food in the amount of 15 items were delivered to the Deacon's Food Pantry.



Thank you, Mount Cross, for the generosity that you show through giving a local organization that assists those who are hungry in the community.



Lent began on Wednesday, February 14th. We will again use the pink pigs as a vehicle for you to donate checks (written to Mount Cross with World Hunger in the memo line) or cash as gifting sources during the 40 days of Lent. Our gifts will be collected on Palm Sunday, March 24th.

A small table in the narthex has copies of the *40 Days of Giving* Lenten Study Guide and pink pig boxes for depositing "World Hunger" money.

Pastor Carl's weekly schedule

Monday: Sabbath (day off)	
Tuesday: 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.	Friday: 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.	Saturday: By appointment
Thursday: study, prayer time	

(not in office on Thursdays, but available by phone, emergencies)



2024 Lenten Schedule

Sunday, March 3 rd	3 rd Sunday of Lent	9:30 a.m.
Wednesday, March 6 th	Fingerfood Supper	5:00 p.m.
	Mid-week Lenten Service (Holden Evening Prayer)	6:00 p.m.
Sunday, March 10 th	4 th Sunday of Lent	9:30 a.m.
Wednesday, March 13 th	Fingerfood Supper	5:00 p.m.
	Mid-week Lenten Service (Holden Evening Prayer)	6:00 p.m.
Sunday, March 17 th	5 th Sunday of Lent	9:30 a.m.
Wednesday, March 20 th	Fingerfood Supper	5:00 p.m.
	Mid-week Lenten Service (Holden Evening Prayer)	6:00 p.m.
Sunday, March 24 th	Palm/Passion Sunday	9:30 a.m.
Thursday, March 28 th	Maundy Thursday Service – Mount Cross	6:00 p.m.
Friday, March 29 th	Good Friday Mid-day Service – Mount Cross	12:00 p.m.
	Ecumenical Good Friday Service – Payson United Methodist	6:00 p.m.
Sunday, March 31 st	Easter Sunday Service – Mount Cross	9:30 a.m.



Mount Cross Financial Report (January 2024)



2024 Approved Budget	\$318,013.00
Income	\$24,605.00 (7.73% of 2023 budget)
Expenditures	\$26,425.00 (8.31% of 2023 budget)

Total given to the Mortgage Fund during January 2024	\$8,712.00
Total paid out in 2024 for mortgage	\$2,865.00

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

Total income received from Thrivent "Choice Dollars" in 2024	
Mount Cross	\$389.00

At the end of this month, we will have completed the first quarter of the year. The monthly report in the newsletter is always a couple months in arrears, due to awaiting the end of month statement from the banking institution, which arrives after the beginning of the month prior to the newsletter month. Expenses are a bit higher because December through February are usually the coldest months of the year, thus the heating bills are higher. We would like to thank those who faithfully support Mount Cross with their contributions, as your gifts are of great assistance in covering the day to day operations.

Yours in Christ,
Financial Team



During this season of Lent, I think of this season as spiritual housekeeping, a time to rid ourselves of many things, habits, old ways of doing things, and a self-improvement list to ourselves as we sweep out the corners of our lives. This allows us time to touch our hearts on God. What is our relationship with him? Where would we like that relationship to be?

As an admitted military basic training person in the language department, my own choice is to get rid of any short four letter "F" words. The second is a matter of names. God does not have a last name and Jesus does not have a middle initial. I already caught myself sing the last name once, but at least I remembered and apologized. Much more on this issue will be worked upon.

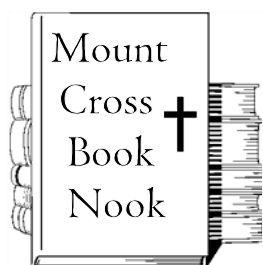
I came across a wonderful treaty from Pope Francis written in 1917 that pertains to Lent, as well as a wonderful pattern for daily life. Being a half-full glass type of person, I am sharing this with you.

FAST FROM HURTFUL WORDS...AND SAY KIND WORDS.
FAST FROM SADNESS...AND BE FILLED WITH GRATITUDE.
FAST FROM ANGER...AND BE FILLED WITH PATIENCE.
FAST FROM WORRIES...AND HAVE TRUST IN GOD.
FAST FROM BITTERNESS...AND FILL YOUR HEARTS WITH JOY.
FAST FROM PRESSURES...AND BE PRAYERFUL.
FAST FROM PESSIMISM...AND BE FILLED WITH HOPE.
FAST FROM GRUDGES...AND BE RECONCILED.
FAST FROM SELFISHNESS...AND BE COMPASSIONATE TO OTHERS.
FAST FROM WORDS...AND BE SILENT, SO YOU CAN LISTEN.

And with all of this, Happy Easter!

Alice Natale

WELCA president



During March, books featuring Lenten and Easter themes can be found on the cart. This month is a perfect time to spend reflecting on

the sacrifice that our Lord has made for us and the glory of the promise of eternal life through His resurrection!

Please make sure that you take a look at the books available on the "freebie" table, which is now set up in the narthex

Your Librarian,
Elaise Jones



Altar Guild will meet on Thursday, March 7th, at 9:00 a.m. in the Ponderosa Room. If you feel called to serve the Lord by setting His table, you are invited to attend this meeting.



March Birthdays

- 3 Jean Petrie
- 4 Ray Wiebe
- 6 Tony Andretta
- 9 Barb DeYoung
- 14 Sharon Vaplon
- 23 Jo Sirotzki
- 24 Audrey Ricker
- 27 Karen Ritterbusch

March Wedding Anniversaries

- 5 Jeff/Susan Nafziger
- Bill/Jean Petrie

March Baptismal Anniversaries

- 15 Tony Andretta

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 the 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, March 14th, at 10:00 a.m.

The subject of Gather's Bible study for winter/spring 2024 is "Scripture and Nature: Teachers of Faith" by Rev. Sara Olson-Smith. The March session will focus on "Rivers: Springs of Life and Hope."

Most of life on our planet depends on water, and the story of God's saving work flows alongside it. Stories of biblical rivers offer a vision of a flourishing creation. We'll discover how rivers are sites of healing and restoration

A video supplement is available that coincides with the month's study. You may access it at:

<https://www.gathermagazine.org/winter-spring-2024-scripture-and-nature-teachers-of-faith-bible-study-video-supplement-session-3/>

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. March 21st is the date for this month's meeting.

The group is currently 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.

