
Mount Cross Chronicle

April 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

Supply Pastor
Rev. Lance Kittleson
474-2552
chapkitt@icloud.com

Music Director
Daria Mason
daria1024mason@gmail.com

Accompanist
Angeline Ng

Office Administrator
Lenore M. White
secretary@mountcross.org

Custodian
Keri Morris

Pastor's Ponderings

Rev. Eugene Smith never sang much because he didn't have much of a voice and couldn't read music. But one year, on Easter Sunday, his daughter persuaded him to sing along with the choir when it came time for the "**Hallelujah Chorus.**" He really got caught up in the last part when they were singing all of those "**Hallelujah's.**" He said that as they were singing all of those **Hallelujahs**, he got carried away. He loved to sing those **words** and he was just about to sing a couple more when all of a sudden the choir **stopped**, the director **stopped** and the organ **stopped**. He said they stopped **too soon** and "**Since that time I've been going around with a couple of Hallelujahs inside of me - just waiting to get out.**"

I can identify with Pastor Smith's musical abilities or lack thereof...but also that the Psalmist bids all worshippers of God: 'Make a joyful noise unto the Lord' (Psalm 98:4 - NRSV). A '*noise*' I can handle pretty well while singing, but an *Easter* noise made singing "Hallelujahs?" Every Christian should be an expert at this! Why? Because 'Hallelujah' and "He is risen" are joined at the hip within sight of an empty tomb. '**Hallelujah**', as a reminder, is Hebrew for "**Praise the Lord**" which when it traverses through Greek and Latin morphs into our familiar 'Alleluia'.

And so, on Easter Sunday, April 9th, when singing "Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia, Alleluia, our triumphant, holy day...Alleluia, Alleluia," we can let out all of our "Hallelujahs" with a joyful sound.

We put away our 'Alleluias' with the beginning of Lent as we focus more closely on the 'cost of our salvation in the suffering and death of Christ Jesus', but at the shout of '**He is risen**' we bring them back with a vengeance, with renewed joy. Our separation from God's love through our sinful rebellion is past, forgiven. We are restored as children of God and now nothing and no one can separate us from God's love ever again! Can I get an '**Hallelujah**' to that?...**BUT FIRST**, in order to sing those 'Hallelujahs' with all the joy and fullness they deserve, we need to travel **with Christ** through the despair, agony and apparent 'defeat' of God in HOLY WEEK. To think, feel, experience in a small way the transitoriness of the palm waving and triumphant procession accolades leading to the grievous sadness of the Last Supper and Jesus' 'Last Will and Testament' to his disciples, the betrayal, his abandonment, the 'crown of thorns', the agonizing nails in His hands and feet, the pitiful cry from Psalm 22, "**My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?**", the dying cry "**It is finished**", and finally, the ensuring of death's 'victory' in the final spear thrust into His side.

For years as a pastor, I've begged congregations not to skip from the celebration of Palm Sunday to the joy of Easter Sunday. In glossing over these unpleasant details, not walking with Jesus through the agony, our 'Alleluias' tend to be more perfunctory, flat, 'ho-hum,' another boring Easter, a "What time is Easter dinner?" instead of leaping and shouting for joy at the victory our God brought out of absolute and total defeat, a victory for you, for me, for all of us.

So that now even when we “walk through the valley of the shadow of death”, when we stand over the grave of a loved one or peer into our own grave, when the news from the doctor sounds hopeless, the family is fractured and crumbling, the nation seems hopelessly bent on its own destruction, the Lord of our Easter tomorrows arises out of the garden tomb and declares to His people “**I AM THE RESURRECTION AND LIFE**”... and I am with you, will never abandon you and together we will triumph in life and in death.”

So...please, please **WALK WITH CHRIST ALL THE WAY THROUGH HOLY WEEK** and so that on Easter morning, we can all let ‘**RIP**’ every ‘**Hallelujah/Alleluia**’ inside us and never stop even if the organ ceases and the choir stops singing! Don’t hold back a single ALLELUIA because Easter Day and **EVERY DAY** for the rest of our lives are forever “Praise the Lord, PRAISE THE RISEN LORD” days!

Come let us sing, let us shout that heartfelt, eternal “joyful **NOISE** unto the Lord”, the Risen Lord, Jesus Christ, our loving and living Savior!

He is Risen, HALLELUJAH!

Lance
aka Supply Pastor



Our **†**
STATEMENT . . . ChristConnectingCommunity



PRAY, PRAY, PRAY

Prayer is so important.
Spend time with God
each and every day.

Pray for His help in
many of this world’s problems.
Pray for your country,
Pray for your community,
Pray for your family,
And lastly, pray for yourself.



Payson Community Kids Sloppy Joe
supper will be served on Thursday,
April 20th. Please plan to arrive at
4:15 p.m. and we are done about 5:00
p.m.

Payson Community Kids building is
located at 213 S. Colcord Rd, just
north of Expedition Church.



DIVE IN!
God has work for us.
Seek His commands,
Listen to His voice,
and get started.

Mount Cross Lutheran Church
601 E. Hwy 260
Payson, Arizona

Holy Week 2023

<p>April 2</p> <p>Palm/Passion Sunday</p> <p>Worship @ Mount Cross 9:30 am</p>	<p>April 6</p> <p>Maundy Thursday</p> <p>@ Mount Cross 6:00 pm</p>	<p>April 7</p> <p>Ecumenical Good Friday</p> <p>@ Comm. Presbyterian Church 7:00 pm</p>	<p>Easter "He is Risen!" April 9</p> <p>Ecumenical Sunrise Service @ Rumsey Park 6:30 am</p> <p>Worship @ Mount Cross 9:30 am</p>
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TIME CHANGE FOR CHURCH SERVICE
STARTING SUNDAY, APRIL 16 at 8:30AM

As you all know, Pastor Lance will be with us through Easter day. As most of you don't know the Church Council has me tasked with the assignment of finding a supply pastor, Lance's replacement, for the church.

Coincident with this activity, Reverend Tom Hawkins from St. Paul's Episcopal Church has talked with Lance, and then with me about helping out. I learned a lot when I talked to him about the concordant the Lutherans and Episcopalians have in place. Father Tom is willing to do our service starting April 16.

He would do our service first on Sunday and his service following ours. St. Paul's service is at 10:00 a.m. So we need to move our service to 8:30AM, while he helps us out. He would help us for 4 weeks, and maybe longer.

When I find a supply pastor, we will go back to our regular service time of 9:30.

We have a wonderful congregation and everyone deserves the best, full-time pastor available. The Call Committee is working diligently on finding the right person.

I would appreciate your support during this time of transition. Please support the time change needed to allow Father Tom to help us out.

As always, feel free to talk to me about this change. I want to hear your thoughts.

Blessings,

Marlu Allan

Church Council VP



Mount Cross Financial Report (January – February 2023)

2023 Approved Budget	\$326,229.00
Income	\$33,357.00 (10.2% of 2023 budget)
Expenditures	\$32,402.00 (9.93% of 2023 budget)
Total given to the Mortgage Fund during February 2023	\$1,325.00
Total paid out in 2023 for mortgage	\$5,730.00

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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Another great month of contributions, which exceeded expenses. Thank you to those who faithfully support Mount Cross with their contributions. Mount Cross is so very blessed to have dedicated disciples as part of the congregation.

Yours in Christ,
Financial Team



Because of you, life doesn't stop.

#VitalToLife

ADVANCE APPOINTMENTS are encouraged to help maintain social distancing.

FACE MASKS ARE NOW OPTIONAL FOR VITALANT DONORS



DONATE BLOOD
vitalant.org | 877-25-VITAL

Payson Community BLOOD DRIVE

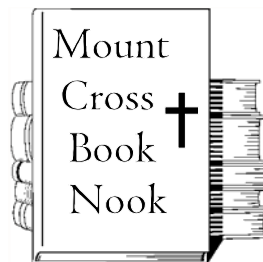
Monday, April 24, 2023
10:00 am - 6:00 pm

Mount Cross Lutheran Church
601 E Hwy 260 - Payson
Donate in the Log Cabin

To schedule your lifesaving appointment, call 1-877-25-VITAL (258-4825), visit donors.vitalant.org (Blood Drive Code: P1057) or scan the QR Code.







Left on the cart are several books pertaining to the Passion week by Max Lucado, Lee Strobel and others. Also there are new donations as noted below:

Fiction

An Elm Street Quilt Album
by Jennifer Chiaverini, 3 novels in one volume

Nonfiction

The Race to Race
by Sister Madonna Bruder
Healing After Loss, daily meditations for working through loss by Hickman
Heart Ignite 166 engaging prayer experiences for all ages by Gainer
1000 Unforgettable Senior Moments by Friedman

Happy reading!

Your Librarian,
Eloise Jones



Altar Guild will meet in the Ponderosa Room on Thursday, April 6th at 9:30 a.m.

Assignments for the stripping of the altar will be decided for the evening's Maundy Thursday service, which will be held at 6:00 p.m.



April Birthdays

- 2 Terri Stevens
- 4 Sallie Loman
- 7 Judy Douglas
- 13 Bill Petrie
- 24 Erik Knudsen
- 30 Rick Ludwig

April Wedding Anniversaries

- 5 Mike Buskirk/Daria Mason
- 18 Scott/Marlu Allan Stallard
- 27 Rob/Donna Reifschneider
- 30 Clyde Longberry/Gail Bensen

April Baptisms

- 14 Linda Wiebe
- 17 Myra Herbster
- 24 Audrey Ricker

SPECIAL



Congregational MEETING

Sunday, April 16th
after the service

Purpose:
addressing of roof issues



The Global Missions Committee will meet on Sunday, April 23rd, after the service. All members, please attend the meeting. Anyone who is interested in joining the team is invited to attend!

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 biblical prophets. All are welcome to attend.

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





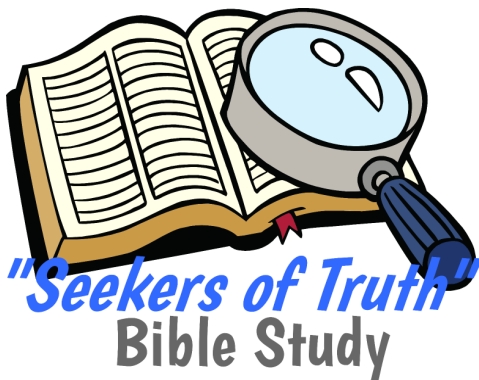
Women's BIBLE STUDY



The monthly WELCA (Women of the ELCA) Bible study will be held in the Ponderosa Room on Thursday, April 13th, at 10:00 a.m.

It is a fourth and final session of the 10 commandments study 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 April session, entitled

“*Reviving the Soul*,” will focus on commandments 7 through 10 and will utilize sayings from Proverbs and other biblical wisdom related to minding our tongues, integrity in the marketplace, and practical ways to serve our neighbors. Get ready to continue exploring 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. April 20th 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.



The Call Committee finalized the Ministry Site Profile (MSP), which describes Mount Cross and what we are looking for in a pastor, prior to the March Council meeting. It was presented to the Church Council at their meeting on March 21st and they readily approved it. The next day, the MSP was

sent to the Grand Canyon Synod office, where it was approved by Bishop Hutterer and immediately posted to the the ELCA website, where it can be seen by any potential pastoral candidates.

Please pray our future Mount Cross pastor will see it soon and reach out to us. Thank you all for your continued prayers and support!

Easter blessings to you,

Jan Bartoli
Call Committee Chairman

OFFICE HOURS



Office will be closed
on
Good Friday, April 7th

Office hours
for
Monday, April 10th
9:00 – 11:30 a.m.



Easter is just around the corner. It is a time for celebration, remembering what God has provided, and most importantly, rekindling our faith in God's Son, Jesus, who gave us a simple commandment, "Love One Another" and treat others as you would wish to be treated.


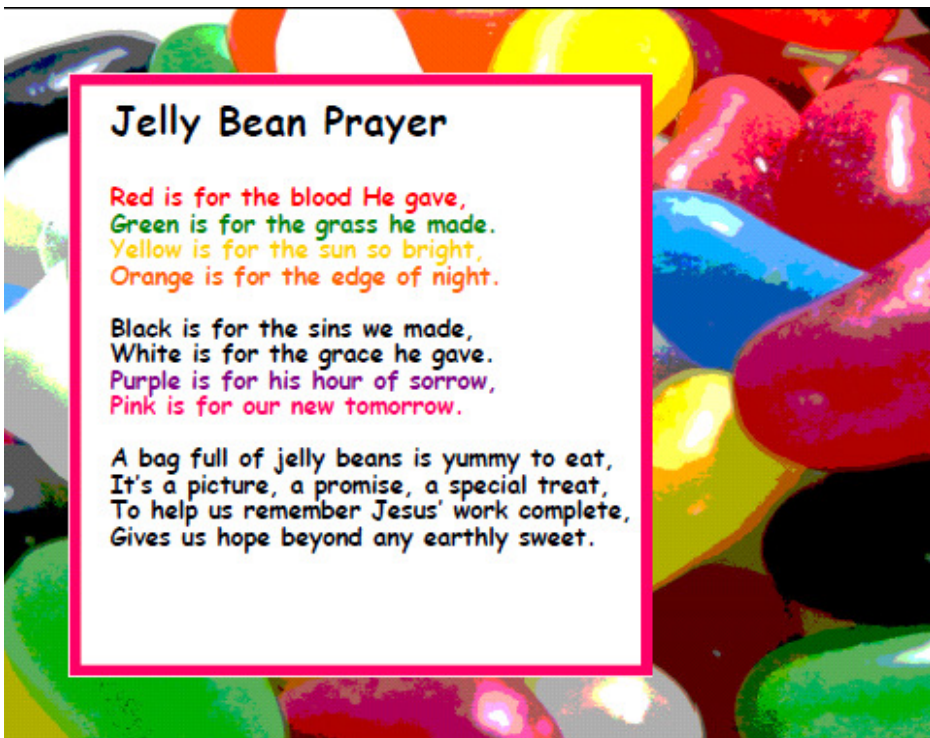
Our sign on Highway 260 reads "Kindness Counts." There is a group here in Payson who also advocate kindness. We see it promoted in many places. What does it take to get the world to open their eyes and to embrace this concept?

In our church, many of us practice the concept of kindness. The reason I attend our church is that the congregation practices kindness to others. It is done in many ways. Many of us participate in activities to help others. Some are dedicated to establishments such as Kiwanas, Lion's Club, or different Lutheran organizations. Still others practice kindness on a daily basis by assisting at the hospital, the food bank, or in programs focusing on the children in our town. Each small contribution makes a difference in our overall community.

As we enter the post Easter period, we will have much to consider. Are we truly living the way Jesus challenged us to do? Are we praying for others, asking God to help us in our faith walk? Do we need to practice being humble? It is so easy to believe our own myth that we need to hold ourselves in check.

As I write this article, we are starting the spring time blooming season. God gives us hope in the Spring: new birth, new focus, new opportunities. The WELCA study is focused on the 10 commandments and we are discussing them a few at a time, giving us time to consider what is important. Some folks view them as a bit outdated, but please remember they came from God thru Moses. When Christ was born, two new all-encompassing commandments were given, which seems to summarize the original ten. No matter what, take the time to review, look for areas you are weak in, and then develop an action plan to do better...as a post-Easter celebration tool. Our lives will be enhanced by how we perceive our ability to consider all the things God has done for us and to truly appreciate what He has done.

Alice Natale
WELCA president



for
MYRA HERBSTER

Saturday, April 29th
in the
main sanctuary
at
1:00 p.m.

All are welcome to visit
and share stories of Myra
at a reception
held in the narthex
after the service