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# Mount Cross Chronicle

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June 2024

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601 E. Highway 260  
Payson, AZ 85541  
Phone: 928-474-2552  
[www.mountcross.org](http://www.mountcross.org)

## Sunday Worship/Communion Service

9:30 a.m.

Livestreamed  
*Online Worship Service*

Mount Cross Facebook Page  
<https://www.facebook.com/MountCrossPayson>

Mount Cross YouTube Link  
[https://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=payson+mount+cross](https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=payson+mount+cross)

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Pastor  
Rev. Carl Sirotzki  
928-474-2552  
608-370-1284 (emergencies)  
[pastor@mountcross.org](mailto:pastor@mountcross.org)

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 Musings & Ponderings**

*"<sup>4</sup>A body is made up of many parts, and each of them has its own use. <sup>5</sup>That's how it is with us. There are many of us, but we each are part of the body of Christ, as well as part of one another." (Romans 12:4-5, CEV)*

I have always considered June to be the kickoff month for the summer. It always seems like there is something going on throughout the month. A good number of people are going on vacation or at least making plans for their vacation or get-away time. I have always enjoyed June because it serves as a time of reflection for me. However, this June also has me looking forward to the future. On June 9<sup>th</sup>, we will celebrate the Affirmation of Baptism /Confirmation with four confirmands and their families. Also, on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, we will celebrate the installation of eight new members to our congregation. I hope and pray that you all will join in on these two special celebrations!

I also like to reflect on the number of individual and family stories you have shared with me and Jo over these past eight months. We have truly enjoyed being here with you and look forward to the years ahead here at Mount Cross. We all know the importance of connecting with one another, building meaningful relationships with each other and moving forward together to figure out who we are as a church. This is something that is always foremost and important for us to do.

I realize that we are still getting to know one another and that just can't be rushed. I pray that we continue to grow with one another. Please let me know if there is any way I can be of service to you and your families. If you ever get the chance, stop in to the church office and say "hi." Let's meet for coffee sometime. I care about all of you and want us to get to know one another better. If I am not in the office, send me an email, text or call me and let's arrange a time for us to get together. I am here for you and I know you are here for Jo and me. I am looking forward to hearing from you and continuing to share our life stories with one another.

In the month of July, I will be presenting a new and thought-provoking sermon series on some of the men and women of the Bible. Some of those that are being considered for this series are: Lot's wife, Esther, Lydia, Daniel, Jonah and Noah. I hope you will be able to join us in person or online.

The Spirit truly is alive here at Mount Cross!

Peace,

*Pastor Carl*  
Philippians 1:3-4



Our  
STATEMENT . . .

†  
ChristConnectingCommunity

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## Missionary News from Africa!

In February, I was in the process of transitioning from Zambia to Madagascar. ELCA Global Mission has reassigned me to serve as the ELCA Country Representative, as well as the Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) Country Coordinator for the YAGM program in Madagascar. The people of Mount Cross may remember that before I came to Zambia I was also a YAGM coordinator - but in Senegal, West Africa.

I left Zambia on February 15<sup>th</sup> and flew directly to Madagascar where I met up with my colleague, Rev. Themba Mkhabela, who previously served in Madagascar, but is now serving in South Africa.

In early May, I attended the Malagasy Lutheran Church (MLC) National Council meeting. The National Church Council meeting takes place twice a year, and includes about 200 synod delegates and ministry department leaders. The National Church Council meeting in May is identified as the meeting where financial reports and financial questions are discussed, reviewed, and approved. This meeting also gave me the chance to meet many of the 26 MLC synod presidents and other church leaders. The National Church Council even approved the request for a new synod to be created in this ever-growing church.

In this photo, I am with the Malagasy Lutheran Church leadership.



**From left to right: me; Vice-General Secretary, Toromare Mananato; General Secretary, Rev. Kotobesoa; Vice President, Rev. Gastrien Ratsitonianirina; and President, Rev. Denis Rakotozafy.**

Happy Pentecost to you and the people of Mount Cross. May God be with you.

*Pastor Kristin Engstrom*

Mount Cross Financial Report (January – April 2024)



2024 Approved Budget . . . . .	\$318,013.00
Income . . . . .	\$86,651.00 (27.25% of 2023 budget)
Expenditures . . . . .	\$103,153.00 (32.44% of 2023 budget)

Total given to the Mortgage Fund during April 2024 . . . . .	\$5,040.00
Total paid out in 2024 for mortgage . . . . .	\$11,460.00

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

Total income received from Thrivent “Choice Dollars” in 2024	
Mount Cross. . . . .	\$1,220.00

Mount Cross has completed the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter of 2024 and are now moving into the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, with expenses surpassing the income by approximately \$16,500. Many items factor into basic expenses, including the increase in utility rates, postage, etc. Everyone is experiencing these increases and the church is not exempt from such costs. We sincerely thank those who faithfully support Mount Cross with their ongoing, regular contributions and ask those who may give when they can to prayerfully consider their gifts, keeping these increases in mind.

Yours in Christ,  
Financial Team



LIVING IN FAITH can be a strong backbone to our lives. In reading the lesson for June, it addresses how so many of us are living with knowledge that God is in charge, and He has a master plan. Then you listen or watch the news and wonder how so much uncertainty can be around us, so many things that can happen that are negative, and you wonder, how can this be?

The writer of the article takes a view that this may be a spiritual opportunity. Most of us are more comfortable with plans, a degree of certainty, and a faith that gives us a level of comfort about our lives. Now we are faced with change, challenge, and a testing of our faith. Our lives are unsettled, but think of Job and Jeremiah, they just keep on “keeping on.” For us, we just need to trust, trust, trust in God...knowing He will be our constant source of strength.

In our world, we try to take charge of things, directing, testing, and developing better ways, quicker ways, and most of all things we can control ourselves. What if we just let God do His job and we do not try to take over? Interesting thought? We might remove angst from our lives. We might find that we have more time to explore new ideas. We might find our daily walk with God more satisfying.

*Alice Natale*  
WELCA president



Pray for our world,  
it needs all of our prayers.  
Pray for country,  
that we can work together once  
again.  
Pray for each other,  
we all need prayers.  
Pray for our families,  
that they all share in God's love.



We need volunteers in our church,  
all committees have space for your  
time and talents.

As we come into the season of the  
nomination for positions in the  
church, open your heart and mind  
to what you can do in service to our  
church.



**June Birthdays**


- 1 Rob Reifschneider
- 5 Lori Andretta
- 7 Doug Herbster
- 10 Donna Reifschneider
- 11 Gail Bensen  
Jim McCall
- 14 Mary Havenor
- 15 Tom Backe  
Nancy Peiffer
- 16 Alice Natale
- 21 David Bollard
- 26 Marty Ahlman
- 29 Doug Mann

**June Wedding Anniversaries**

- 1 Gary/Sharon Vaplon
- 21 Barry/Nancy Peiffer

**June Baptisms**

- 15 Tom Backe



**Office hours will be 9:00 – 11:30 a.m.**  
on Tuesday – Thursday, June 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> and  
Wednesday & Thursday, June 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup>  
**Office will be closed** on Friday, June 14<sup>th</sup>  
It will also be closed for the newest Federal holiday,  
Wednesday, June 19<sup>th</sup>.



Our Father in Heaven,  
We thank You for loving us, cherishing and forgiving us, and welcoming  
us with open arms into Your Kingdom. Oh, what would we do without  
You, our God? You've given us life and opened our eyes to so many  
blessings that we've sometimes taken for granted. You've given us hope  
and a future that we do not deserve. And You've promised us eternal life  
with You in heaven that we cannot comprehend. For all these, we are so  
grateful. Help us to live our lives only for You and to become your hands  
and feet for all the days on earth. In Jesus' name, Amen.

**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



May all the men who are fathers,  
or set a fatherly example,  
enjoy a blessed Father's Day!



# Thank You!

To my Mount Cross Lutheran  
Church Family and Friends:

*Thank you for your  
encouragement, well wishes,  
and monetary gifts.*

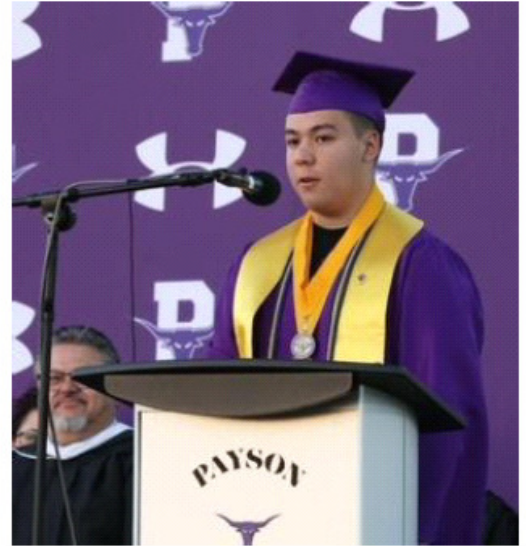
*I will be majoring in  
Computer Science at NAU  
in the Fall.*

*I will do my best to glorify God and make  
you proud!*

If you are interested in listening to my valedictorian speech,  
go to

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1B1OzJkVRDVqjo8fxc8MS-RZtT1r6-Uph/view?usp=sharing>

Daniel Schalesky, 2024



## 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 13 letters of Paul. All are welcome to attend.

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



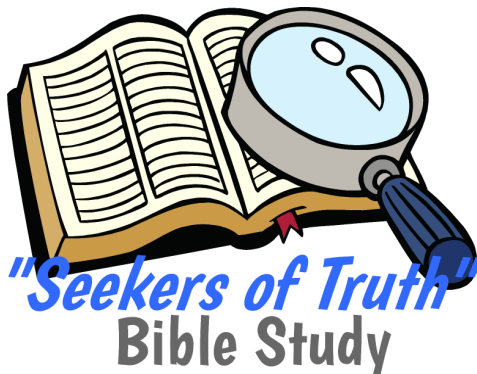
The monthly WELCA (Women of the ELCA) Bible study will be held in the Ponderosa Room on Thursday, June 13<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 a.m.

Gather Magazine's Summer Bible Study subject is "After certainty: A biblical guide" by the Rev. Dr. Meghan Johnston Aelabouni.

For the people of the Bible, life was often shaped by deep uncertainty. Encounters with God sparked awe, confusion or courage, but rarely certainty. Instead, God's people have

always been called to follow God into the unknown, trusting in God's certain grace and love. This three-session summer Bible study explores God's invitation to the people of the Bible and to us, to take the holy journey beyond certainty to curiosity, community and compassion, where we find abundant life in Christ.

The first session is entitled "After certainty: Curiosity." Jesus' ministry, during the uncertainty of the first century Roman occupation, often challenged the "certainties" of the status quo when it came to faith, power and relationships—both the relationships between people and God, and between people in community. Just as curiosity drew people to Jesus and his message, holy curiosity can still lead us to the places where God transforms "what is" to "what could be."



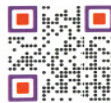
Seekers of Truth is a small Bible study and fellowship group for women and men, which is held on the third Thursday of each month in the Ponderosa Room at 10:00 a.m. June 20<sup>th</sup> is the date for this month's meeting.

The group is currently studying the 13 letters of Paul in the New Testament. In the month of June, the group will be delving into Paul's letter to the Ephesians.

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.



**DONATE BLOOD** May 24 – Sept. 6 and you will be automatically entered to win a 2024 VW Jetta S donated by our Valley Volkswagen dealers.



## Payson Community BLOOD DRIVE

Monday, June 24th

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), scan the QR Code or visit [www.vitalant.org](http://www.vitalant.org) (Blood Drive Code: P1057)

♦ Donate June 1-30 receive a \$10 gift card and be automatically entered for a chance to win one of five \$5,000 gift cards. Details at [vitalant.org/gasgiveaway](http://vitalant.org/gasgiveaway)



To learn more about our new brand, please visit us at [vitalant.org/ourbrand](http://vitalant.org/ourbrand)



# IT'S ALL ABOUT HEALTH!

**GIVING BLOOD  
COULD HELP SAVE A LIFE**

**GETTING A  
HEALTH SCREENING  
COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE**

## RightPath HEALTH SCREENINGS

*Now you know.*

Your trusted partner in preventive healthcare since 1986!

**We will be coming to your community soon!**



**Wednesday, July 3, 2024**

Mount Cross Lutheran Church  
601 E State Hwy 260  
Payson, AZ  
Conference Center

Schedule your screening today at:  
<https://july032024.youcanbook.me>

Or Scan  
this QR  
code



Our comprehensive screening is \$200  
<https://rightpathscreenings.org/upcoming-screening-events>

If you are unable to book online, call 602.254.7130

*This screening could save your life!*

Our Comprehensive Screening consists of 11 cardiovascular and abdominal screenings listed on the back. We also check your blood pressure, pulse and blood oxygen level. A complete report is provided.

### Complete Cardiovascular Ultrasound

- **Heart Ultrasound Screening:** Scans the heart valves, measures systolic function, the motility of the left ventricle, the ejection fraction and the dimensions of the atrium and ventricles.
- **Atrial Fibrillation Screening:** Atrial fibrillation is a heart rhythm problem found in almost one in every 150 people, causing palpitations, shortness of breath, fatigue and risk of stroke.
- **Carotid Artery Screening:** Stroke is the most common cause of long term care admissions in the US. This screening will show your level of plaque build up in the carotid arteries.
- **Thyroid Ultrasound Screening:** Scans for cysts, nodules and other abnormalities that may indicate signs of thyroid disease.
- **Peripheral Arterial Disease (PAD):** Peripheral arterial disease (PAD) is a condition where blood circulation is restricted. It affects over 8 million Americans. Scans for signs of circulatory problems in the lower extremities.

### Complete Abdominal Ultrasound

- **Abdominal Aorta Screening:** Aneurysms form as a result of weakening in the arterial wall. Scans for aneurysms and other abnormalities.
- **Liver Screening:** Scans for cysts, nodules, masses, texture and density and size dimensions of the liver.
- **Kidney Screening:** Scans for cysts, nodules, masses, stones, fluid and more.
- **Gallbladder Screening:** Scans for stones, sludge, wall thickening and other abnormalities.
- **Pancreas Screening:** An important organ providing essential hormones and digestive enzymes. This screening detects small lesions, abnormalities and other signs of disease.
- **Spleen Screening:** This organ is essential in regard to red blood cells and the immune system. This screening detects an enlarged spleen and additional signs of disease.

**BEST VALUE ALL 11 SCREENINGS FOR ONLY \$200**

Appointments are required. Call 602-254-7130 or book online. Please wear a two-piece outfit. A minimum 4-hour fast is required with the Abdominal Ultrasound Screenings. A confidential report is immediately provided.

RightPath Health Screenings is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization