
Mount Cross Chronicle

July 2021



601 E. Highway 260
Payson, AZ 85541
Phone: 928-474-2552
www.mountcross.org

Sunday Worship Services

8:15 a.m.

Online Worship Service

9:30 a.m.

In-House 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



....And the Rockets' Red Glare....

Beautiful colors and smoke fills the sky.

Sadly it's not from July 4th, but from all the fires burning around Arizona. The Backbone Fire is the one hitting close to home. Many people from Mount Cross are counted among the evacuees. The smoke has been drifting into Payson, and there is no way for us to ignore or pretend that there is no danger.

On the other hand, we love to embrace July 4th, Independence Day. We enjoy the colorful fireworks that explode in the sky, familiar patriotic music and parades. Perhaps, we think back to the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776, declaring our independence from England. We do love our independence.

Yet, July 4th always reminds me of our dependence on God; not independence from God. How blessed we are that we are able to depend on God. Our relationship with God is like no other. God's grace and love permeate our lives, even though we deserve absolutely none of it. God has been a constant in our past and present and promises to still be with us in the future. God has proven to be dependable.

I don't believe we benefit most by declaring our independence from one another either. I think we are at our best when we find that we can actually depend on and help each other. I believe our current situation illustrates that nicely.

As people have had to evacuate the safety and comfort of their homes, many of those people have landed in Payson. **Payson has responded!** Currently, firefighters are housed in the middle school. Evacuees have found shelter and food at the high school, where the Red Cross is keeping busy. Other evacuees have settled in our bunk house where there is a little bit more privacy. The Payson Homeless Initiative has stepped up in amazing ways. Skyler is helping people who seem to be making a steady stream into the old east church. Emily and her crew from the Homeless Initiative are preparing & serving two meals each day at the high school. So many people, including some from the valley, have been bringing in donations. The movie theater has offered free movies, popcorn and soda to evacuees. The Humane Society

is housing and caring for their pets, and the thrift store has been giving out free clothing. Firefighters have come in from Sacramento and other places including 500 from Canada. I'm sure so much more is being offered.

I believe that when we can depend on one another and offer our help to each other we are at our best. I think that when we look to make each person's life better, we are best mirroring Christ in our lives. So, no doubt, independence can be nice, but dependence on God and being able to depend on each other, can create such a better world.

Wishing you a safe and blessed July 4th holiday,

Pastor Cliff Hanus



Our STATEMENT . . . † ChristConnectingCommunity



DEACON'S FOOD PANTRY

UPDATE

The food pantry has managed to operate successfully during the Covid-19 time, which is hopefully behind us.

As of now, the National Guard plans to support us through July. That can change easily, so we need to be ready with our own volunteer staff.

If you are interested in working from 4:45 p.m. – 7:15 p.m. on Tuesday evenings, please contact Sharon Vaplon (928-468-8711).

If you are interested in helping with the Monday/Wednesday/Friday daytime shifts from 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. or 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., please contact Alice Natale (928-474-2838).

Mount Cross has given wonderful support to the Deacon's Food Pantry at the Community Presbyterian Church with our grocery basket collection of foods. You can also give monetarily to the program by designating a gift in our offering. The moneys are then transferred to the Food Pantry program.

Thanks to everyone who supports this program with time, foods and donations.

Sharon Vaplon
Tuesday Evening Volunteer

Vacation

Pastors Hanus and Lenore will be on vacation July 11th through 18th.

Jan Bartoli will be manning the office Monday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. and the office will be closed on Friday, July 16th.

Many thanks to our faithful "go-to" gal!!



For your dining pleasure!

You are invited to gather in the sanctuary/narthex at noon, every Wednesday, to eat your lunch while enjoying special live music provided by Daria Mason, Angeline Ng, and other musicians. Bring your own lunch, please. What a great way to celebrate the summer season.



Mount Cross Financial Report (January – May 2021)

2021 Approved ½ year Budget	\$152,461.50
Income	\$129,914.00 (85% of 2021 budget)
Expenditures	\$117,763.00 (77% of 2021 budget)
Total given to the Mortgage Fund during May 2021	\$2,380.00
Total paid out in 2021 for mortgage	\$14,876.00

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

Total income received from Thrivent "Choice Dollars" in 2021

Mount Cross	\$1,234.00
-------------------	------------

Libby Winter had resigned from Council and as Finance Secretary prior to the Congregational meeting, which was held on Sunday, June 20th. The amount of \$153,111.50 for the 2nd half of the year's budget for 2021 was approved. James Zorn and Libby Winter had met previously with Rob Reifschneider regarding the current loan. Rob had offered a discount of \$100K on the loan if a refinance could be acquired from a banking institution before September. The congregation had approved to move forward with the refinancing of the current church at the meeting on June 20th.

Lenore White
Member of the Finance Team



Just L.I.F.E
(Liberation Is For Everyone)

Just Truth

The women's Bible study for July will be held on Thursday, July 15th at 10:00 a.m. in the Ponderosa Room. If you would like to join them for a time of fellowship after the study, please bring your own lunch (BYOL).

This month, the study will continue to explore **Just L.I.F.E.** Session 2 focuses on "*Just Truth.*" During the study, we will travel with Paul when he experienced his life-changing transformation on the road to Damascus. A closer look will be taken at how our Savior chose to share difficult truths with God's people and we will witness his boldness in speaking truth to power.



For this month, we can pray to God for a restoration of our planet, with all of us doing are part. We can pray for rain, rejuvenation of water sources, clean air due to conserving and cleaning up industrial waste, our own waste, and even others waste as we see a piece of paper laying on the ground, or a banana peel or other bits of trash and we pick it up and place it where it belongs.

Thank you God, for our beautiful planet, please help me to be a part of the clean-up.

Alice Natale

We have many tasks that we can do. A simple one would be to hand out cool water at the Warming Center. Or if you are not able to help with that simple task, perhaps donate water for the same, as well as for the food bank. With the weather reaching into the triple digits, water will be welcomed!

Another easy way to show the homeless and poor in Payson that you care is to carry gift cards to fast food restaurants, supermarkets or grocery stores. Handing gift cards to persons is a simple way to pass on God's love. 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'

Matthew 25:40



July Birthdays

- 1 June McHenry
- 3 Gary Wilder
- 11 Roberta Cogswell
Barbara Greer
- 12 John Miller
- 13 Ron Nelson
- 15 Sylvia Sandoval
- 17 Myra Herbster
- 20 Sally Rohrbach
- 21 Karyl Blair
Velma Conner
Lynne Wayne
- 25 Sherrie Loomis
- 31 Barbi Buchanan

July Wedding Anniversaries

- 1 Ray/Linda Wiebe
- 5 Ray/Jerre Leavens
- 17 Scott/Karla Fellin
- 27 Clay/Audrey Ricker

July Baptisms

- 1 John Miller
- 10 Clyde Longberry
- 15 Patric Taylor
- 22 Wes Hathaway
- 29 Bob Walker

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 online worship service available through the church website on Facebook or through Mount Cross Vimeo channel <https://vimeo.com/channels/1341353>

Sundays, 8:15 AM

Weekly in-house communion & worship service held in the sanctuary

Sundays, 9:30 AM



As we embrace the very high temperatures of June, we pray for rain in July to give our drought ridden woods and desert a good soaking and to refill our lakes and streams. This very hot weather serves to remind us that we have a very difficult job of conserving our planet. God created our planet as well as the universe. I often wonder if he just shakes his head as he watches us destroy this beautiful gift.

I also wonder if he, at times, weeps in horror at the misbehavior of his beloved people as they fight, argue, show disrespect for each other, and generally ignore those beautiful lessons given to us through the prophets, and Jesus Christ. What if we simply love each other, care for each other, and dedicated our lives to serving God? Is this even possible? I am a firm believer that if we simply make a small step towards that goal, the world in a small way would be better.

For the past 18 months we were isolated to a large degree. I think we forgot how to behave. Please understand that we may behave ourselves, but on occasion patience may be needed. I recently was speaking with a friend who will be ordained this fall. She suggested that each of us, when irritated, can simply do an internal prayer when we encounter rudeness, ugliness, and disrespectful behavior. Simply pray, GOD BLESS YOU AND YOURS, over and over again while listening to the individual who is acting out. I am working on remembering that prayer each time I witness such events.

For now, please have a blessed month, year, and life.
God Bless You All!

Alice Natale

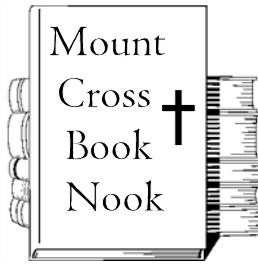
WELCA president



A celebration of the lives of John & Lynn Shoemaker will occur on Saturday, July 10th at 2:00 p.m. in the sanctuary.

Our time together will begin with a presentation by the Payson Honor Guard.

A light meal and a time of sharing conversation & memories will be held in the log building following the service.



Be sure to keep your eye out for a “freebie” book table sometime in July. It is a great time of the year to sit in a cool place and enjoy a good book!

Your Librarian,
Eloise Jones

CONGRATULATIONS Jan & Sherrie on Your New Grandbabies!

Jan & Sherrie Loomis are proud grandparents of twins! Ernest Dean and Kathleen Kay were born to Jen and Katie Tann-Loomis on Monday, June 14th.



In the Near Future

The church parking lot is scheduled to be resurfaced on Tuesday, August 3rd, beginning at 6:30 a.m. This process requires that the parking lot not be in use for the 24 hour period following the resurfacing. If you have business to take care of on the campus, please use the dirt parking lot between the dorm and the log building on Tuesday and Wednesday of the first week in August.



Holiday

Church office will be closed
Monday, July 5th
for
Independence weekend

May our Lord Jesus bless this nation and guide those who are leaders, that they make wise decisions. Give the judges clarity in the cases they listen to and deliver just rulings. Provide to the Senators and Representatives in our legislative branch of the government the ability to determine what is necessary for the good of the whole.



Calling all quilters, and anyone who can tie knots!

We will meet on the second Wednesday of the month at 9:00 a.m. in the log building. Beverages will be provided.

Look forward to seeing you on July 14th!

Eloise Jones

Lector Schedule for July 2021 9:30 AM Sunday Service

4	11	18	25
Nancy Kellett	Jean Larson	Eloise Jones	Ray Wiebe

The online service lector for July is Mary Havenor.



Perspectives of the Grand Canyon Synod Assembly

A year ago, the Grand Canyon Synod Council cancelled its yearly meeting. The 2021 Synod Assembly met on a digital platform June 11 – 13. We rejoiced in the many creative ways we remained a church together. With a meeting chaired by Bishop Deborah Hutterer, different leaders within the synod updated our delegates – Pastors Linda and Cliff, Ron Nelson, and me – on our ELCA missions, ministries, finances and leaders amidst diversity and change. In between, smaller break-out groups would address one topic or another.

In 2020-2021, mission support was 16% over the anticipated gifts. The Synod was able to support *Native American Ministries* along with food ministries and hunger advocacies. We helped rebuild an earthquake-damaged parsonage in Mexico. We maintained our support to seminary students. *Lutheran Advocacy Ministry* in Arizona continued focusing its advocacy energies on hunger. Through *Cruzando Fronteras* (Crossing Borders), we kept on offering assistance to those seeking asylum on our southern borders.

Growing Generosity was launched with a goal of raising \$500,000 between now and the end of 2023. It has three key initiatives: financial viability, future ministries, and fervent voices. While delayed due to the pandemic, *Faithful Innovations* will be re-launched to help teach congregations ways to be curious about how the Spirit of God was active in their communities.

Thirty people are in the process seeking ordination within our synod. We have candidates at six of our seven ELCA seminaries across the US. Our *Campus Ministry* sites continue to thrive at NAU, ASU & UofA. Three scholarships were awarded to students preparing to attend California Lutheran College in the fall. We were updated on retirements, deaths, and ordination anniversaries. Our interim-minister, Pastor Terry Pletkovich, celebrates his 40th ordination anniversary this year. A congratulatory card will be in the narthex during the month of July for all of us to sign.

Leaders from across our synod meet monthly to discuss skin-tone politics. *Simon's Project* celebrates the rich diversity of churches filled with tables ready to welcome all. We are developing learning opportunities along with pastoral care at the *Rock Point Navajo* community. The Grand Canyon Synod engages in Senegal and builds tables for global engagement.

The ELCA realized Covid-19 forced our churches to reevaluate how we “do church.” In the future most congregations will continue some sort of hybrid worship, both on-line and on-ground. The ELCA churches are no longer one-size-fits-all churches. Our future is in building relationships, not necessarily through youth groups, Sunday schools, music or worship entertainment. We might not simply focus on drawing folks through our doors, but on us walking through those same doors into the community. God has reformed his church thousands of times. The Holy Spirit will guide us as our church continues to thrive through traditional, relevant, and even radical means.

Barbi Buchanan

Lay Representative for Mount Cross

Summary & Highlights of the 2021 Grand Canyon Synod Assembly “Freed in Christ”

Introduction:

The 2021 Assembly was held June 11-12, and was hosted by Community Lutheran Church in Las Vegas, but transmitted live to remote voting delegates via ZOOM online sessions. The theme, “Freed in Christ”, is based on the scripture of Galatians 5:13-14 of love for neighbor as for self. Broad Goals of the Assembly were to: a) Communicate Jesus, b) Connect People, and c) Create Possibilities. Within these guidelines, more specific objectives were to:

- Elect council members, committee members, and also voting members to attend the Churchwide Assembly in Columbus, Ohio in August, 2022. Promote the ongoing “Growing Generosity” Appeal, having a goal to raise \$500,000 for new growth areas in our synod.
- Approve the fiscal 2022-2023 Mission Spending Plan.
- Conduct other Assembly business; receive reports, to include a presentation by visiting Churchwide representative Rev. Albert Starr; engage in focus group discussions; engage in worship with Rev. Starr as guest pastor; enjoy performances by a 44- member virtual choir and other special music groups.

Summary:

The Assembly opened with devotion and prayer at 9 am in the June 12 session. The mission spending plan proposed for the fiscal term 2022-2023 of \$2,243,000 was up from the 2021-2022 approved plan of \$2,174,000. The plan proposed for 2022-2023 was approved. Details of the plan are provided as an attachment to this summary.

Elections of nominees for vacant positions on synod council, various committees, and for attendees to the Churchwide Assembly in Columbus, Ohio in August, 2022 were conducted through the ZOOM group voting technology. Open Synod Council positions voted upon were for: Vice President; At-large representative, lay male; At-large representative, lay female; At-large representative, rostered minister; and Youth representative, male or female. Synod committee openings were on the Consultation Committee and on the Committee on Discipline. Attendee positions to the Churchwide Assembly in 2022 were for: Lay male rep (2); Lay female rep (2); Rostered Minister rep (3); Person of Color/language other than English (1); Youth or Young Adult rep (1). Although election results were announced during the assembly, they were not available in written format. (It was noted, however, that Mount Cross’ own Pastor Linda was chosen to the Consultation Committee!)

The “Growing Generosity” Appeal of the Synod seeks to raise \$500,000 by 12/31/2023 for a new generation of synod growth in three areas: Growing Financial Viability (\$150K); Growing Future Ministries (\$250K), and Growing Fervent Voices (\$100K). Although launching of this Appeal was delayed by cancellation of the 2020 Assembly due to the pandemic, Bishop Hutterer announced that over half of the goal (\$281,656) has already been met in gifts and pledges. More information on support for this appeal is at gcsynod.org/generosity.

A GC Synod Diakonia class graduation ceremony was presented in the evening on June 11 of the Assembly as a separate Zoom session. Diakonia is a two-year educational program intended to deepen and strengthen lay people in preparation for lay leadership roles in support of the church mission. Training in theology, worship, Bible, church history, and practical ministry are included. More information on Diakonia can be found at www.diakoniaaz.org.

The Assembly concluded with a worship service in which the ELCA visiting Rev Albert Starr provided the Gospel lessons and sermon. More detailed information on many of these Assembly events and proceedings is available on www.gcsynod.org/assembly and the GC Synod website.

Holding the Assembly remotely on ZOOM went quite smoothly, for the most part, thanks to the effort in preparation/planning by synod staff and other dedicated helpers.

Ron Nelson

Lay Representative for Mount Cross

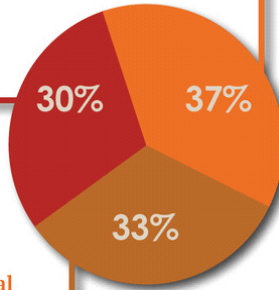
The following pages provide information regarding Grand Canyon Synod Mission Support that was presented at the Assembly.



Where does my congregation's mission support go?

Communicate Jesus

- Funds the work of [Lutheran Advocacy Ministry of Arizona](#) (LAMA) and [Lutheran Engagement and Advocacy in Nevada](#) (LEAN), and supports [Arizona Faith Network](#) (AFN)
- Contributes funds to [Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary](#), [California Lutheran University](#), and supports 3 [Lutheran Campus Ministries](#) ([UofA](#), [ASU](#), [NAU](#))
- Expands ministry and resources to **serve the poor and provide basic needs** to 70,000+ through partnership with [Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest](#) (LSS-SW) and [Lutheran Social Services of Nevada](#) (LSSN)
- Nurtures **companion synod relationship** ([Senegal](#)) and **explores new synodical relationships** (Mexico)
- Funds 10 **project grants** for congregations and organizations to better Communicate Jesus, Connect People, and Create Possibilities
- Supports [Lutheran Disaster Response](#) and [Lutheran World Relief](#)
- Supports ELCA membership in the [Lutheran World Federation](#): 145 members for ecumenical work and world service relief and development



Connect People

- Shares **mission support** dollars with [ELCA](#) (churchwide) and [Region 2](#) (Southwest Region)
- Provides a ministry of presence for congregations and pastors during **crisis** and **transition**
- Leads Convocation of **rostered leaders** (active and retired pastors/deacons) for theological discussion and fellowship, and supports the **retired pastors' retreat**
- Supports and helps lead [youth faith formation camp](#)
- Organizes [Synod Assembly](#) meeting and voting based on congregational identity
- Participates in [Churchwide Assembly](#), [ELCA Youth Gathering](#), and [Rostered Ministers Gathering](#) every 3 years
- Funds [Diakonia](#) lay leadership program, 4 cohorts
- Supports the work of [Phoenix Fusion](#) (collaborating initiative)

Create Possibilities

- Supports & oversees 4 **congregational renewals** and 10 **new starts** across the synod
- Organizes **candidacy** process supporting 14 candidates in the process for ordination
- Supports pastors and deacons in **mobility** and **leadership**
- Supports 10 **congregations in transition**
- Funds **ministry grants** for 11 congregations under development and renewal
- Works in collaboration with Rocky Mountain Synod on [Lilly 3E program](#) ([Stewardship for all Seasons](#), [Ministerial Excellence Fund](#), [Vital Right-Shaped Congregations](#))

Mission Support

	Unaudited Actual: 2020-21	Approved Mission Plan: 2021-22	Proposed Mission Plan: 2022-23
Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest	\$55,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00
Lutheran Social Services of Nevada	\$17,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00
Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary	\$41,000.00	\$35,000.00	\$35,000.00
California Lutheran University	\$2,000.00	\$12,000.00	\$12,000.00
ASU Campus Ministry	\$37,000.00	\$37,000.00	\$37,000.00
ASU Polytech - Campus Ministry	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00
NAU Campus Ministry	\$37,000.00	\$37,000.00	\$37,000.00
UArizona Campus Ministry	\$37,000.00	\$37,000.00	\$37,000.00
Native American Urban Ministry	\$13,000.00	\$0.00	\$15,000.00
Border Ministry - Cruzando Fronteras	\$0.00	\$10,000.00	\$12,000.00
Iglesia Luterana Mexicana (ILM) / Lutheran Church of Senegal	\$15,000.00	\$0.00	\$10,000.00
Spirit in the Desert Retreat Center	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$9,000.00
Advocacy/Lutheran Engagement & Advocacy in Nevada	\$5,000.00	\$15,000.00	\$5,000.00
Navajo Evangelical Lutheran Mission	\$10,000.00	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00
ELCA Region 2 Program Support	\$10,000.00	\$9,000.00	\$5,000.00
Arizona Faith Network	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,000.00
Total Mission Support - Other	\$290,000.00	\$273,000.00	\$290,000.00

**Grand Canyon Synod of the ELCA
Proposed 2022 - 2023
Mission Plan**

	Unaudited Actual <u>2020-21</u>	Approved Mission Plan <u>2021-22</u>	Proposed Mission Plan <u>2022-23</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense			
Income			
Congregation Support - Plec	1,837,315	1,822,000	1,874,000
Congregation Support - Oth	47,747	0	25,000
Other Gifts	35,938	16,000	25,000
Grant Income	4,000	0	0
Restricted Contributions	162,694	0	150,000
Other Income	20,377	39,000	21,000
Total Income	<u>2,108,072</u>	<u>1,877,000</u>	<u>2,095,000</u>
Expense			
Personnel	364,162	388,000	402,000
Professional Fees/Services	133,805	178,400	179,000
Communication	7,879	8,000	10,000
Postage and Supplies	4,668	9,000	8,000
Administrative	15,386	29,000	27,000
Equipment and Software	7,764	11,000	10,000
Building	38,491	38,000	40,000
Travel	8,491	50,000	50,000
Mission Support - ELCA	918,657	911,000	937,000
Mission Support - Other	290,000	273,000	290,000
Grants	198,570	200,000	210,000
Program	49,835	78,600	80,000
Total Expense	<u>2,037,709</u>	<u>2,174,000</u>	<u>2,243,000</u>
Net Ordinary Income	70,363	(297,000)	(148,000)
Other Income/Expense			
Other Income			
Restricted Investment Incon	80,221	100,000	82,000
Other Investment Income (L	86,018	20,000	38,000
Total Other Income	<u>166,239</u>	<u>120,000</u>	<u>120,000</u>
Other Expense			
Restricted Release - Net Ass	231,095	297,000	148,000
Net Assets Released	(231,095)	(297,000)	(148,000)
Depreciation & Other	5,036	6,000	5,000
Total Other Expense	<u>5,036</u>	<u>6,000</u>	<u>5,000</u>
Net Other Income	<u>161,203</u>	<u>114,000</u>	<u>115,000</u>
Net Income	<u>231,566</u>	<u>(183,000)</u>	<u>(33,000)</u>