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# Mount Cross Chronicle

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March 2026

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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***

*"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* 1 John 1:19 (ESV)

We are fully into our Lenten journey both together as a body and individually. Our Wednesday services will feature The Holden Evening Prayer along with monologues from *Voices of Lent* by Jeri Shumate through special arrangement with Christian Publishing. I believe you will find these monologues as well as the Holden Evening Prayer a very moving Lenten experience.

In spite of the weather, it was great to see the number of people that were able to attend the noon Ash Wednesday service here at Mount Cross and the Ecumenical service at the Community Presbyterian Church. There were also several folks who came for Ashes on the Go, including a couple who were on their way to Denver that stopped in for directions and wound up receiving ashes before they went on their way. I was so encouraged by this that we will again have Ashes on the Go next year.

We again have some new and creative things going on this Lent. Thanks to those who have put together the "Daily Kindness Challenge," the "Weekly Enrichment Challenge," and the "Giving Tree." If you haven't had the opportunity to pick up either or both challenges, I invite you to stop by that table and pick them up. In addition, as long as you are there, please write your personal message on a leaf and add it to a branch on the tree. I hope that you will be able to attend our Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday worship services. On Palm Sunday there will be a special gift that will help you celebrate each day of Holy week.

In Bishop Hutterer's letter on February 17<sup>th</sup>, she reminds us that when we pray "Our Father, Daily Bread, Forgiveness, Deliverance and a kingdom coming we are connected in the story of God who provides, forgives, liberates and reigns in mercy." She continues, "Lent prepares us to tell that story in a world that is hungry for hope." She invites us all to consider, "Where has God's story met your own? Where are your roots being strengthened? Who needs to hear the story of hope you carry?"

Have a blessed Lent, Holy Week and glorious Easter for He is risen!

Peace,  
*Pastor Carl*  
Philippians 1:3-4



Our STATEMENT . . . ChristConnectingCommunity



2026 Lenten Schedule

Table with 3 columns: Date, Service Name, and Time. Rows include dates from Sunday, March 1st to Sunday, April 5th, with services like '2nd Sunday in Lent', 'Mid-week Lenten Service', and 'Easter Sunday Service'.



Lent began on Wednesday, February 18th. We are again using the pink pig boxes 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 29th. The entrance table just inside the sanctuary has pink pig boxes for the purpose of depositing "World Hunger" money.

This Lenten Season please join us in a personal Faith Enrichment Journey. There is a Daily Kindness Challenge and/or a Weekly Enrichment Challenge. Both can be found in the narthex on the table under the "Giving Tree." Also, each Sunday of Lent, stop by the "Giving Tree" and take a leaf and write your personal message (suggestions include acts of kindness, giving, love; scripture verses; prayers of need, hope, peace, faith). After you've written on your leaf add it to the branches on the tree. By Easter we will have a beautiful tree full of generous acts of love!

Mount Cross Financial Report (January 2026)



2026 Approved Budget . . . . .	\$333,699.58
Income . . . . .	\$33,493.00 (10.04% of 2026 budget)
Expenditures . . . . .	\$24,241.00 (7.26% of 2026 budget)
Under (Over) . . . . .	\$9,252.00
Pledged-to-date / Given . . . . .	\$16,677.00 / \$22,631.00 (135.7%)

2026 Mortgage Fund

Total given to the Mortgage Fund during January 2026 . . . . .	\$21,728.00
Total Principal paid out in 2026 for mortgage . . . . .	\$5,547.00
Current Principal balance . . . . .	\$317,849.00
Pledged-to-Date / Given-to-Date . . . . .	\$3,177.00 / \$21,728.00 (683.9%)

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

Total income received from Thrivent "Choice Dollars" in 2026	
Mount Cross . . . . .	\$49.00

Yours in Christ,  
 Barb DeYoung  
 Finance Secretary

This year, Mount Cross' participation in the SouperBowl collection on Super Bowl Sunday resulted in \$322.00, a substantial drop from the previous year. The money collected will be sent to the Deacon's Food Pantry.

Non-perishable food in the amount of 3 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.



Office hours during the first two weeks of March:

- Monday & Tuesday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup>  
8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
- Wednesday & Thursday, March 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup>  
9:00 – 11:30 a.m.
- Friday, March 6<sup>th</sup>  
Closed
- Monday through Thursday, March 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>  
9:00 – 11:30 a.m.

<u>Pastor Carl's weekly schedule</u>
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 on Thursdays, but available by phone, emergencies)
Friday: 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.
Saturday: By appointment



As we enter the Lenten season, let us use this time to do some introspection.

Am I kind to those I meet?  
Do I feel ill will towards someone who has offended me?  
If so, have I truly forgiven them?  
Am I critical of others?  
Do I feel envy?

May we ask God to give us insight when looking within ourselves and assist us in striving to become more like the example He has provided to us through His son, Jesus.

**God's work.  
Our hands.**



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

What can you do to be a part of God's work? The simple answer...just look around you and see where your talents lie.

Do you enjoy chatting with people and making them feel welcome?

Perhaps you could become involved with the Congregational Life Team or become a greeter or usher at the Sunday service.

These groups are integral to making people feel at home.

For more information about becoming:

- ◆ a team member for Congregational Life, contact Cheryl Roberts (623-418-9431)
- ◆ a greeter/usher, contact Sharon Vaplon (928-970-0860)



**March Birthdays**

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

**March Wedding Anniversaries**

- 5 Jeff/Susan Nafziger
- 7 Ed/Ellie St.Clair

**March Baptismal Anniversaries**

- 15 Tony Andretta
- 26 Patience Linkey

**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

Seekers of Truth Bible study

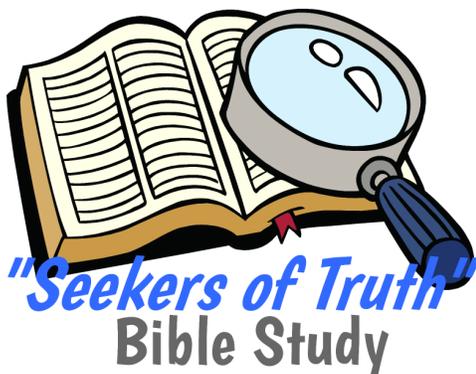
This is a monthly Bible study which will be focusing on the parables of Jesus. All are welcome to attend.

3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month, 9:30 AM in the conference room.

Weekly Prayer sessions

The focus of the sessions are to bring concerns and prayers of thanksgiving to God.

Friday afternoons, 1:00 PM in the Ponderosa Room.



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 conference room at 9:30 a.m. March 19<sup>th</sup> is the date for this month's meeting.

The group is currently studying the parables of Jesus.

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 Susan Nafziger, the group discussion leader, or Jan Bartoli, the group facilitator.

MOUNT CROSS LUTHERAN CHURCH on Monday, March 16, 2026

Special screening package for \$129 for our members includes:

- Carotid Artery Disease Screening
- Atrial Fibrillation Screening
- Peripheral Artery Disease Screening
- Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening

Call to schedule an appointment near you! **800-324-9458** and use code: **HABC001**



## March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

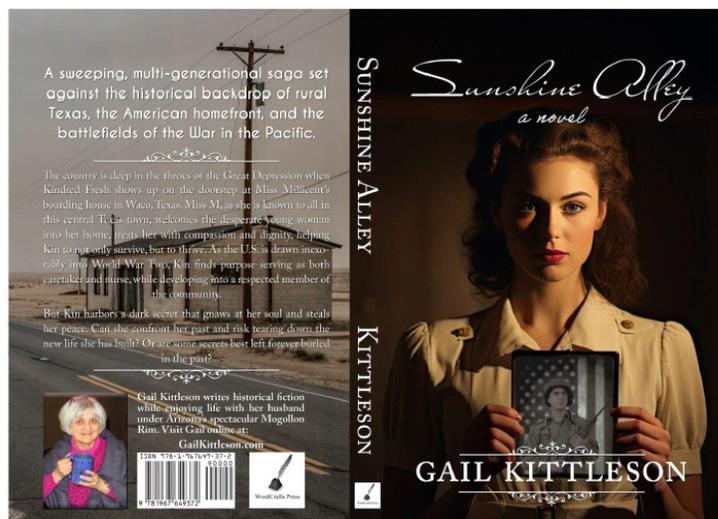
Life Line Screening will be offering preventive health screenings on Monday, March 16, 2026. As part of the screening event, Life Line Screening will offer low-cost take-home colorectal cancer tests called FIT (Fecal Immunochemical Test) in recognition of March as Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. These tests are simple, accurate, and recommended for the early detection of colorectal cancer. According to the Centers for Disease Control, the risk of developing colorectal cancer increases with age. More than 90% of cases occur in people aged 50 and older.

Other preventive screenings provided check for stroke risk, abdominal aortic aneurysms, and osteoporosis. Mount Cross Lutheran Church is pleased to make these important screenings available by hosting Life Line Screening, the nation's leading provider of preventive health screenings.

Screenings are fast, painless and affordable. Three key tests check for blocked carotid arteries, an irregular heart rhythm called atrial fibrillation, and high blood pressure, which are the three leading risk factors for stroke. Strokes are the third leading cause of death in the U.S., yet, with preventive strategies, 80% of strokes can be prevented.

For more information regarding the screenings or to schedule an appointment, call 800-324-9458, go to [LLSA.SOCIAL/HABC](https://llsa.social/habc) or text the word *circle* to 216-279-1607. Pre-registration is required.

## Historical Fiction Release!



WAR TURNS THE WORLD UPSIDE DOWN, stirring personal fears, heightening racial conflicts, and creating devastating loss. What can bring comfort and healing?

Mogollon Room  
March 2, 2026

Payson Public Library  
10:30-11:30

Learn more about Gail at [www.gailkittleson.com](http://www.gailkittleson.com)

## Monthly Jazz Concerts

Jazz Concerts will be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month at 2:00 p.m. in the Mount Cross sanctuary.

The first of these concerts will occur on Sunday, March 8<sup>th</sup>.

All in the Payson community are invited to attend and enjoy an afternoon of music!



# SPRING!!

A time...for music



A time...  
to make your heart sing



### Concert Band & Jazz Ensemble

Directed by Alan Simpson



**Tuesday, March 10, 2026**  
**7:00 p.m.**

**Mt. Cross Lutheran Church**  
**Free admission & refreshments**

 **PAYSON CAMPUS** Eastern Arizona College, Payson Campus  
201 N. Mud Springs Rd. Payson, Arizona 85541  
(928) 468-8039 - www.eac.edu

Eastern Arizona College does not discriminate in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in, its programs and activities on the basis of race, creed, color or national origin, sex, disability, or age. Approved for veterans benefits. Tuition is waived for Arizona residents who are 55-plus. Tuition waiver does not cover class or lab fees, books, or out-of-state tuition.

*Imagine*

*A Concert Presented by  
Angeline Ng, Family, and Friends  
at Mount Cross Lutheran Church*

*Easter Sunday  
April 5th at 4:00 p.m.  
Free admission*

A decorative border featuring watercolor-style flowers in shades of blue and pink, with green leaves, framing the text.

**A time...  
for rejoicing!**