
Mount Cross Chronicle

December 2024



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

Pastor

Rev. Carl Sirotzki
928-474-2552
608-370-1284 (emergencies)
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

"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son and shall name him Immanuel."

(Isaiah 7:14, NRSVUE)

Christmas can be a time of family traditions. How do you celebrate Christmas? Do you do the same thing every year with little or no change? Is every year's celebration different than the last? By the way, there is no correct answer. How you celebrate is your personal decision. Some celebrate Christmas on Christmas Eve and others on Christmas Day. When I was growing up, my family would celebrate Christmas on Christmas Eve. Although there wasn't one tradition that we followed every year, we would usually have a special dinner and participate in the Polish tradition of "Oplatki." Now, what I have found out over the years is that even this tradition can vary from family to family. The oplatki is a large, thin and rather tasteless wafer that usually had a Nativity scene on it. On Christmas Eve, our family would gather around our kitchen table and share the oplatki with one another. My dad would break the wafer in three pieces and pass one piece to my mom, one piece to me and he would have the remaining piece.

We would say what we were thankful for or what our hope was for the coming year, break off a piece of the wafer and pass it to the next person. This would continue until the wafer was eaten completely. It was considered to be symbolic of sharing God's love that comes to us through the Eucharist. It would also be a time to look forward to with traditional wishes of forgiveness, reconciliation, health, happiness and prosperity for the coming year. We would then open a couple of presents, attend midnight mass and then come home and open the remaining presents.

Whatever our celebration traditions are, let us remember that Christmas is a time to celebrate the birth of our Redeemer and Savior. Let that really sink in to our hearts and share the good news with one another. Hey, here's an idea, invite someone you may or may not know well to our Christmas Eve worship!

May you have a Blessed and Merry Christmas that continues all the year through!

Peace,
Pastor Carl
Philippians 1:3-4



Our  STATEMENT . . . ChristConnectingCommunity



Thanksgiving Concert

Tired of another bite of Turkey?
Here's a way to spend Thanksgiving Sunday
with family.

Angeline Ng and family will be performing
a variety of music from Bach to Piazzolla
on the piano, cello, and organ.

This free concert will be held
at Mount Cross Lutheran Church
on Sunday, December 1st, at 2:30 p.m.



Concert Band & Jazz Ensemble

Directed by Mr. Michael Buskirk



Tuesday, December 10th, 2024

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.



ELCA Good Gifts catalog are available in the narthex for you to use to provide ideas and answers for your CHRISTmas gift list.

There are hundreds of ELCA projects in 80 countries around the world that your gifts help fund. Gifting of farm animals helps provide ongoing food sources for many of the people who live in those countries.

You can also choose to the gift of education, as the people are taught how to care for the animals and grow crops. Education also includes providing children with school supplies or vocational training for adults. There are many options to select from and you can view them and order online at <https://goodgifts.elca.org/all-gifts>.

Free Advent calendars and devotionals can also be found on the *Good Gifts* table, which you can use for yourself or family members.



Mount Cross Financial Report (January – October 2024)

2024 Approved Budget	\$318,013.00
Income	\$218,115.00 (68.58% of 2023 budget)
Expenditures	\$253,926.00 (79.85% of 2023 budget)

Total given to the Mortgage Fund during October 2024	\$3,985.00
Total paid out in 2024 for mortgage	\$28,650.00

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

Total income received from Thrivent “Choice Dollars” in 2024	
Mount Cross.	\$1,362.00

During the months of September and early November, a few payments were made toward the mortgage principle totaling \$10,700.00. This was due to the generosity of a couple of church members, as well as a gifting from the estate of a member who joined the Church Triumphant. We would like to thank them and continue to thank those who faithfully support Mount Cross with their contributions.

Yours in Christ,
Financial Team



As we enter the Advent Season, let us take time to think about the miracle of the Christ Child. The many things Christ did during his short time of setting the course for the future, the many miracles he performed, and the birth of a faith that is ongoing.

Each morning at this time of the year I get up, open the blinds, watch the sunrise and contemplate how God is so good and loving that he gave us his Son to live among us, knowing our many little traits of less than admirable behavior, such things as greed, lust, hatred, pettiness, jealousy, power seeking, nasty comments, and overall human behavior. I often wonder what God thinks about these creatures he has made. How did we get to these traits? How do we correct them to honor the love he has given?

Looking at the world at present, our only hope is to have Faith in God at all times that we, mere humans, can overcome our present status, and return to respect, understanding, gratefulness, and love.

It is Christ’s Birthday, a birth of a new way to live, a new way to worship, a new way to share, protect and comfort. Lets us all spend the next four weeks in prayer and love, thanking God for all He has done. Amen.

Alice Natale
WELCA president



<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Time</u>
December 1 st	1 st Sunday of Advent Worship Service	9:30 a.m.
	Thanksgiving Concert by Angeline Ng & family – sanctuary	2:30 p.m.
December 4 th	Church decorating... <i>join the Altar Guild, Property and Worship & Music Committees</i>	8:00 a.m.
	Finger-food Supper – hosts: Worship & Music Committee	5:00 p.m.
	Christmas Tree decorating – sanctuary	after supper; before service
	Tree lighting and Mid-week Advent Service – sanctuary	6:00 p.m.
December 8 th	2 nd Sunday of Advent Worship Service	9:30 a.m.
December 10 th	Community Jazz Band Concert – sanctuary	7:00 p.m.
December 11 th	Finger-food Supper – hosts: Altar Guild	5:00 p.m.
	Mid-week Advent Service (theme: <i>Pause, Prepare, Ponder</i>) – sanctuary	6:00 p.m.
December 15 th	3 rd Sunday of Advent Worship Service	9:30 a.m.
December 18 th	Advent Finger-food Supper – hosts: <u>(hosts needed for this meal!)</u>	5:00 p.m.
	Mid-week Advent Service (theme: <i>Pause, Prepare, Ponder</i>) – sanctuary	6:00 p.m.
December 22 nd	4 th Sunday of Advent Worship Service	9:30 a.m.
December 24 th	Christmas Eve Worship Service	4:00 p.m.
December 29 th	1 st Sunday of Christmas Worship Service	9:30 a.m.

Congratulations and welcome, newly elected/re-elected members!

Council

Nancy Bollard (3 year term)
Mike Roberts (3 year term)
Sheryn Daw (2 year term)
Sharon Vaplon (1 year term)

Memorial Committee

Barbara Kishbaugh (3 year term)
Sharon Vaplon (3 year term)
Tony Andretta (1 year term)

Mission Endowment Committee

Susie Duffy (3 year term)
Scott Stallard (3 year term)



Many thanks to Sharon Vaplon and Tony Andretta for accepting nomination for reelection for Memorial Committee.

A warm welcome to these newly elected members: Nancy Bollard, Mike Roberts, and Sheryn Daw for Council. Sharon Vaplon has agreed to return to the Council for one year and will complete Tom Spencer's term.

Also, a **BIG** "thank you" to Alice Natale, the outgoing member of the Council, for her willingness to serve on Mount Cross Council for so many years! Alice had served as president and also as secretary during her years on Council.

Budget of \$335,792.28 for the 2025 year was approved.

CONTRIBUTING IN 2025

Your contribution envelopes for 2025 may be found in your church mailboxes as of the middle of December. The new in-house created envelopes, which was adopted in 2024, worked well and will be continued. You will find a banded set of envelopes, based on your giving style. If you give monthly, you will receive 12 envelopes plus some extra for Advent and Lenten midweek giving. If you give weekly, you will receive 52 plus extras for the special offerings. Those giving via their bank bill pay will not receive any envelopes. Should anyone desire additional envelopes, just contact the office and extras will be printed for you.



You're invited to a Life Line Screening event!

Where: Mount Cross Lutheran Church

When: Monday, December 2nd



Life Line Screening is the nation's leader in **Stroke and Cardiovascular Disease Risk Screenings.**

Trusted by over 10 million customers.

Screenings are simple and painless. Get peace of mind or early detection.

Who should attend: Anyone over the age of 40

Special Pricing for \$159

- Carotid Artery Disease Screening
- Peripheral Artery Disease Screening
- Atrial Fibrillation Screening
- Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm Screening
- Plus a FREE Hypertension Screening

4 ways to book your appointment...

Scan here:



Call 888-814-0466
and use promo
code: HSCA001

Visit
LLSA.SOCIAL/HSCA

Text the word
"circle" to
216-279-1607

These tests cannot detect all risk factors for all conditions, such as and including the presence of coronary artery disease.

Those with abnormal results should discuss possible next steps with their family healthcare provider and ensure they understand the risk and benefits of any additional testing or procedures.

God's work. Our hands.



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

Since this is a season of giving, think of all the opportunities for help others as well as your won families and friends. How can we, as a church, give to others to ease their lives.

Also during this month, enjoy the many gifts of music, songs, and other bits of merriment with an open and grateful heart.

MERRY CHRISTMAS.



Pray for healing of the sick, the lame, the poor, and the poor in spirit. Rejoice in God's goodness.



REMINDER

Attention Committee Chairs:
Annual Report time is just
around the corner.

Reports for committees not
reporting financial detail are due
to the church office no later
than Friday, December 20, 2024.

Committees requiring end of
year financial statements from
the bank, your reports are due
to the church office no later
than Friday, January 17, 2025, in
order to allow for receipt of
year-end financial statements.



Office Closed

Friday, December 6th

Friday, December 20th

Wednesday, December 25th
(Christmas day)

&

Friday, December 27th
(in lieu of the day after Christmas)

and

Wednesday, January 1st
(New Year's Day)



December Birthdays

4 Jan Bartoli
12 Sue Hess
17 Nancy Kellett
18 Patience Linkey
25 Susan Nafziger

December Anniversaries

1 Charley/Barbara Kishaugh
2 David/Nancy Bollard
12 Ernie/Nancy Kellett

December Baptisms

6 Gail Bensen
7 Mavis Denofsky
17 Lori Andretta
21 Eloise Jones
30 Jan Bartoli

Christmas Poinsettias

If you would like to remember a loved
one during the Christmas season
purchasing a Poinsettia to decorate the
altar for Christmas, please complete the
form found in your December 8th
Sunday bulletin, place in one of the
envelopes provided, and either place in
the offering plate or bring/mail to the
church office. If writing a check, please
make it payable to: Mount Cross
Lutheran Church with "Poinsettias"
written in the memo line. If you would
like your poinsettia, you may pick it up
after the Christmas Eve service. This
year the price is \$15 each and we must
have your order by December 16th.



Christmas Eve CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

Tuesday
December 24th
4:00 PM

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.



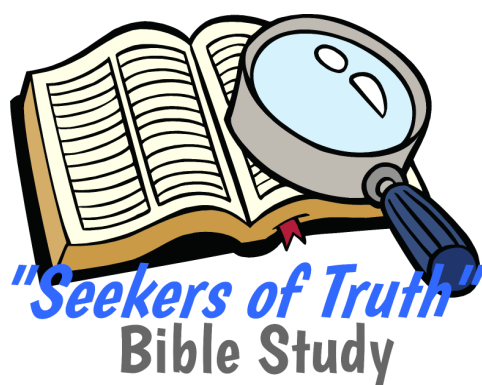
The monthly WELCA (Women of the ELCA) Bible study will be held in the Ponderosa Room on Thursday, December 12th, at 10:00 a.m.

Gather Magazine's Fall Bible Study subject is "*Receiving Grace: A Study of Ephesians*" by the Rev. Heidi Haverkamp.

The third session is entitled "*Grace-filled Living – Living as Children of the Light.*" What concrete advice can Ephesians give us on how to live a fuller, happier life? What poetic inspiration can it offer us for living as Christians?

An accompanying video supplement is available each month. This is the link for December's study:

<https://www.gathermagazine.org/fall-2024-receiving-grace-a-study-of-ephesians-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. December 19th is the date for this month's meeting.

The group is currently studying the 13 letters of Paul in the New Testament. The letter to Titus will be discussed in December.

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.



The final Praise Choir rehearsal for the 2024 year will be on Thursday, December 19th. Practices will resume beginning January 9, 2025. Practices will remain on Thursdays, with Praise Choir meeting at 4:15 p.m. and Bell Choir at 5:30 p.m.



Church Decorating for the Christmas Season

You are invited to help decorate the church on Wednesday, December 4th at 8:00 a.m. The trees and decorations will be pulled out from storage and set up in preparation for the Christmas tree lighting service. All are welcome to enjoy a morning of working together to get ready for the Advent/Christmas season.

Be sure to come back at 5:00 p.m. to share a finger-food supper, decorate the Chrismon tree, and stay for the 6:00 p.m. mid-week Advent service. The theme for the mid-week Advent services is *Pause, Prepare, Ponder*.



Please join us for our
Annual

HOLIDAY MARKET FUNDRAISER

For The
NAVAJO MISSION at ROCK POINT
For Winter Heating Expenses

SUNDAYS • 9:00-11:00
DECEMBER 1ST THROUGH DECEMBER 22ND

ARTS & CRAFTS ♥ BAKED GOODIES
PERSONALIZED ORNAMENTS

GUESS THE NUMBER OF LEGOS!
IN THE LEGO NAVAJO HOUSE
WIN A \$50 GIFT CARD \$1.00 PER GUESS

~ SILENT AUCTION ~
BBQ RIB DINNER FOR 4!

HOSTED BY CURT & WENDY GORIS
BIDDING STARTS AT \$60

