

# The Grapevine



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

No. 345

April 2021

## You are Invited to the Great Three Days

*The services of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Vigil of Easter unfold in a single movement, as the church year makes the passage with Christ through death into life.*

*(Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 247).*

Thursday, April 1, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. – Maundy Thursday Worship with St. Columba's Episcopal. This will be a pre-recorded service available on our Facebook and YouTube channels. We will hear Jesus' new commandment to love one another. The gospel and message will be told from the perspective of Peter. Holy Eucharist will be celebrated and all will be invited to join in a prayer of spiritual communion.

*[Good Friday, April 2, at the Abundant Table Farm: Help pull weeds in the organic field from 2:00-4:00 p.m. and/or join in the bi-lingual Via Crucis (Way of the Cross) service at 4:00 p.m. The farm is located at 1012 W. Ventura Blvd. off the Central Ave. exit of the 101 freeway in Camarillo.]*

Friday, April 2, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. – Good Friday Tenebrae Service with St. Columba's Episcopal live-streamed from the Mount Cross sanctuary. Candles are extinguished as we hear the story of Christ's passion from the Gospel of John, interspersed with hymns and special music. Before the Cross of Christ, we pray for the whole world.

Saturday, April 3, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. – The Easter Vigil with St. Columba's Episcopal. This will be a pre-recorded service available on our Facebook and YouTube channels. We will light the new fire of Easter, hear the great story of salvation, and affirm our baptismal covenant.

## Alleluia He is Risen!

Sunday, April 4, 2021 at 9:30 a.m. – Easter Sunday at Mount Cross.

We welcome you, weather permitting, to our festive, in-person, outdoor Easter Worship service with Holy Communion. Masks, social distancing, and temperature screening are required. We will have folding chairs, or you can bring your own lawn chairs. If possible, please park on the street and walk onto the church grounds. Parking is limited and we want to reserve the spaces for people with mobility challenges. The service will be live streamed at [facebook.com/MountCross/live](https://facebook.com/MountCross/live) and our live stream worshippers are invited to come to the church sanctuary to receive Holy Communion between 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Children are also invited for a safe Easter Egg Hunt on our campus from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.



*The church office will be closed on  
Easter Monday, April 5, 2021.*

## From Stumbling Blocks to Stepping Stones; My Spiritual Journey

Dear Mount Cross congregation,

On February 21, 2021, the theme of the sermon was "Perseverance." This theme was especially meaningful for me as it clearly defined my spiritual journey to become a Deacon in the ELCA. The journey has been long and arduous with many stumbling blocks along the way. With the help of God, however, those stumbling blocks became stepping stones.

Let me briefly explain what it means to be a deacon. The duties of a deacon and a pastor overlap, they are both ministers of the word who proclaim the gospel. Deacons, however, commit to social outreach and service paying particular attention to places of suffering.

My discernment process began many, many years ago. I did not act on the call to the diaconate because of college, employment, marriage and just life in general. The call, however, was persistent and in April 2012 I began the formal ELCA diaconal process. From that day forward, everything changed and the process took much longer than I anticipated.

My application for diaconal ministry was accepted by the Southwest California Synod (SWCA) in July 2012. My entrance into candidacy for ordained diaconal ministry in the ELCA was approved in December 2013. Just getting approval took almost two years (20 months). Stumbling block or stepping stone? I wasn't quite sure.

It then took another 2 ½ years for me to begin my formal theological classes (May 2016). Stumbling block or stepping stone? There were many classes to take and many, many papers to write. The real stepping stone was that each class was wonderful and the papers were a joy to write.

There were other steps in the approval process, but after another 3 years in November 2019, the last step of the process was in place, the Approval Essay and Committee Presentation. After meeting with the committee and making my theological presentation, the really hard part came, the WAIT! Did I make it? Is everything in order? Finally an e-mail came from Pastor Reginald Schultz-Akerson on December 3, 2019.

*Dear Cecelia:*

*Greetings from the Office of the Bishop of the SWCA Synod.*

*It is my pleasure to confirm the good news that the Cooperative Candidacy Committee of the Pacifica and Southwest California Synods on November 5, 2019 approved you to be rostered in the ELCA as a Word and Service minister. Congratulations! I have attached a copy of the committee's report which has been submitted to the Congregational and Synodical Mission Unit of the ELCA.*

The process took me 9 years, but it was well worth the wait. This process would not have happened without the support from Mount Cross Lutheran Church. Every time I faced a stumbling block, Pastor John, Pastor Jim, Pastor Julie, you the congregation, even when you were unaware of the inspiration you offered, and especially two members of Mount Cross who lifted me up and encouraged me to continue. One member of Mount Cross rode with me to the synod office for my approval essay and presentation. This member sat with Robert and kept him company while I made my presentation to the committee. That was an eight- to nine-hour day. I am so thankful and appreciative of the support and encouragement that I have received from Mount Cross.

Once I am ordained, I will be a Deacon of Word and Service. I ask for your prayers and your support as I enter this next and new phase of my life.

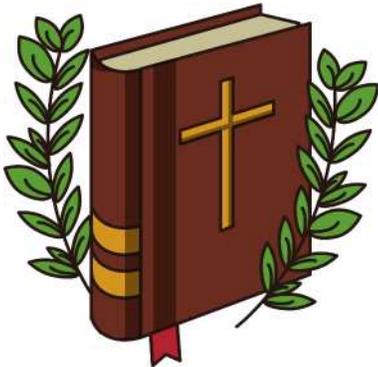
Grace, Peace, and Love to all of you,

*Cecelia Trauick-Jackson*



# Spiritual Growth at Mount Cross

**Women's Bible Study  
Weekly on Tuesdays at 9:00 a.m.**  
Women's Bible Study has moved back to campus and meets in the Sanctuary. If you have any questions, please contact Vicar Amanda (amanda@mountcross.com) or Pastor Julie (pastorjulie@mountcross.com).



**Wednesday Evening Bible Study at 5:00**  
All are welcome. To access the Zoom room, please visit <http://bit.ly/MCWednesdayNights> or call (408) 638-0968. The Meeting ID is 827 1932 0163 and the Passcode is 615543. If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Julie at [pastorjulie@mountcross.com](mailto:pastorjulie@mountcross.com).

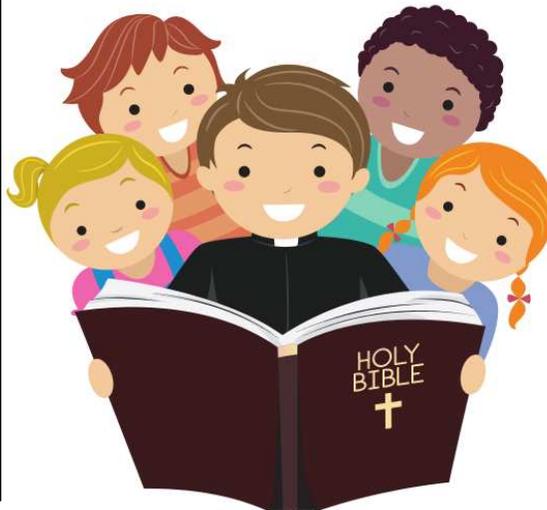
**Upper Room Zoom**  
Upper Room Zoom meets on Tuesdays at noon for fifteen minutes. Take a short pause in the middle of your day for prayer, scripture, and meditation. Join us as often as you'd like. Follow this link <http://bit.ly/MCUpperRoomZoom> OR, you can call in on a phone. Dial 1 (669) 900-6833. You will be asked for a Meeting ID. It is 843 6917 8221, then push pound (#). The passcode is 131024.

**Men's Bible Study**  
**Every other Thursday at 7:30 a.m.**  
**In April, we will meet on 4/1, 4/15, and 4/29.**  
We study the Gospel for the upcoming week. Contact Pastor Julie at [pastorjulie@mountcross.com](mailto:pastorjulie@mountcross.com) if you would like to be on the Men's Bible Study email list. To join us on Zoom, please use the following link, <http://bit.ly/MCMensBibleStudy>, or call (408) 638 0968. The meeting ID is 891 5038 5706 and the Passcode is 521872.

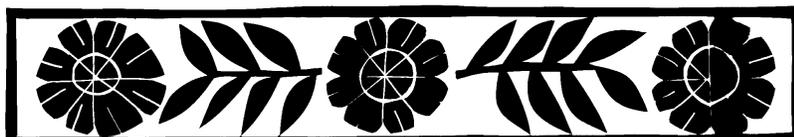
***If you are not receiving emails from Mount Cross, please contact the office so we can add you to our email list or add you to our call list! Make sure you also double-check your spam folder and add office@mountcross.com to your contacts so you have the most up-to-date information possible.***

***Thank you!***

**Amazon Smile**  
If you haven't already done so, choose Mount Cross Lutheran Church as your non-profit to support on smile.amazon.com so 0.5% of purchases will go to Mount Cross. Thank you!



***We are beginning to return to the Mount Cross campus for some of our activities! If you plan to physically come to Mount Cross, please remember to wear a mask and observe social distancing guidelines. If you have any questions, please contact the office.***



# Service & Missions



**FAIRTRADE**

## Monthly Fair Trade Sale: The Difference

What difference can a simple cup of coffee make? Jose Luis Castillo Vasquez, a member of a cooperative in El Salvador put it simply: "I want to thank all of the congregations that purchase our coffee," he said. "Thanks to Fair Trade, we will not die of hunger. We will not lose our land. Our children can attend school. It is thanks to you that we have a seed of hope in our lives." Coffee, tea, chocolate and other foods are available for purchase on the patio the first Sunday of the month - or call or text Melissa Henry for delivery. Thank you for continuing to support this worthwhile project and providing hope to many people around the world.

### Peace & Justice and Anti-Racism

We invite you to join the Mount Cross Peace & Justice Team and the Anti-Racism Check-in groups. For more information about either group, contact Bill Stoll at [peaceandjustice@mountcross.com](mailto:peaceandjustice@mountcross.com) or Vicar Amanda at [amanda@mountcross.com](mailto:amanda@mountcross.com).

The Peace & Justice Team meets on Tuesday, April 6, from 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. on Zoom - <http://bit.ly/MCPeaceandJustice>  
The Anti-Racism Check-In group meets on Thursday, April 8, from 7:00 - 8:00 p.m. on Zoom - <http://bit.ly/MCAntiRacism>.

***"Treat the earth well: it was not given to you by your parents, it was loaned to you by your children. We do not inherit the Earth from our Ancestors; we borrow it from our Children."***  
**- Native American Proverb**

### CROP Hunger Walk

It's not too late to take a walk and raise money for hungry neighbors in the county and around the world. If you missed your opportunity to sign up for our virtual CROP Hunger Walk team - there is still time! Join the team at <https://bit.ly/CamarilloCROPWalk2021>. Our team name is Mount Cross - from there, it's a few simple clicks to share your walk on social media, even set up a donation page for your friends and family to support your walk. Then, go walking, take a picture of your group to share (if you want) and you are done! Local and international hunger teams are grateful for your support.

### LWR Backpacks

Calling people who sew! We have a new batch of fabric waiting to be transformed into backpacks. Sign out a bag during drive-through Communion or during the week in the office - or send Melissa Henry a text or email and she can deliver you a bag. Each bag has enough supplies to sew 5 simple backpacks... and takes about an hour to complete. Bring it back to church when you have sewn it and we'll get the ropes in before we start filling them with school supplies in August.



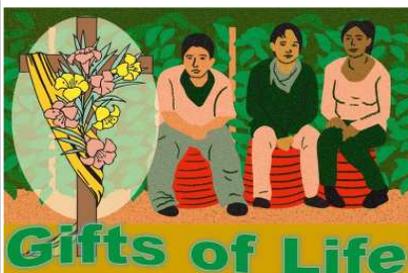
### The Mount Cross "Gifts of Life" Campaign Donate Now through Easter!

Amid economic hardships, poor health care, and high rates of mental distress, there is a growing concern for an increase in suicide rates within the farmworker/fieldworker community. The Mount Cross Peace & Justice Team, together with the Service & Missions Team, invites you to join in raising money for **Gifts of Life**.

Similar to the "Gifts of Hope" Christmas fundraiser, **Gifts of Life** is an opportunity to help our local farmworker community address the rising concern of suicide. Please join us in raising funds to send Pastor Fermin Hernandez and his wife, Lucila, to attend training to become "trainers of trainers" for the suicide prevention of farmworkers and others in Ventura County. Pastor Hernandez serves as an Oxnard Police Chaplain and pastor of Centro Cristiano Familiar de Oxnard. Pastor Hernandez works directly with many Ventura County farmworkers. After receiving this training, Pastor Hernandez

and his wife hope to train many in our local area in the prevention of suicide, including those interested here at Mount Cross. We are grateful for the opportunity to help them in receiving this important training. Thank you in advance for your generosity to this worthy cause. **Donations can be made at our table following the Sunday worship services through April 4.**

Donations may also be made during drive-through Communion or online through the Mount Cross website (designating your donation as "Gifts of Life"). Checks can be made out to Mount Cross Lutheran Church with "Gifts of Life" in the memo.





### Eco Tip of the Month

In honor of Earth Day on April 22, we want you to consider DIRT, or rather SOIL! Consider starting a compost bin with your food waste, or at least make an effort this month to make sure all food waste goes into the brown can for composting at the county level. Either composting at home or sending it to the "yard waste" helps make a difference by turning our food waste back into good SOIL. We found it super easy to separate food waste from trash by using an old Tupperware container next to the sink. Then this goes out to the brown can when it is full - and the lid keeps it from being stinky or attracting flies.

# Care Team

## *Caring Resources*

Pastor Julie, the Mount Cross staff, Care Team, and many willing volunteers of the church are available to offer care and support to members and friends of the church. This past year has taught us all to be even more alert to the needs of others. We are all encouraged to look at our selves as both givers and receivers – sometimes we are one or the other and often we are both. We are thankful to see God's love from every vantage point. You are encouraged to look to the church for support.

*Dear God, please help me recognize my inner strength, but help me also realize that I can't go at it alone. Please give me the courage to ask for help when I need it and also be willing to give it to others. Amen.*  
Excerpted from Maria Shriver's *The Sunday Paper*, March 8, 2021, "I've Been Thinking..."

### **Mount Cross Health Ministry Program**

**Healthy Aging Program - Sunday May 2, 2021, 4:00 p.m. – Teri Helton, RN**  
**Available both in person and on ZOOM.**

Aging has a bad name in our society with every form of media encouraging us at every turn to avoid it. However, the bad and the good news is that all of us age. In fact, studies show there is much that is great about aging, especially related to the brain and thinking. Those same studies show us the importance of caring for our bodies, mind, and soul throughout life and especially as we age. The body-mind-soul connection to health is a marvelous thing, making aging an amazing adventure at any age when we recognize and accommodate for the changes. So if you are 20 years old or 80 years old or someone who wants to support a loved one, plan to join us on Sunday, May 2, at 4:00 p.m.

### **COVID Updates from the Center for Disease Control (CDC)**

#### What we Know and What We're Still Learning

- † **We know** that COVID-19 vaccines are effective at preventing COVID-19 disease, especially severe illness and death.
- † **We're still learning** how effective the vaccines are against variants of the virus that causes COVID-19. Early data shows the vaccines may work against some variants but could be less effective against others.
- † **We know** that other prevention steps help stop the spread of COVID-19, and that these steps are still important, even as vaccines are being distributed.
- † **We're still learning** how well COVID-19 vaccines keep people from spreading the disease.
- † **Early data shows** that the vaccines may help keep people from spreading COVID-19, but we are learning more as more people get vaccinated.
- † **We're still learning** how long COVID-19 vaccines can protect people.
- † **As we know more**, we will continue to update our recommendations for both vaccinated and unvaccinated people.

For Health Ministry Information – Evonne Kuchera, RN (805) 377-0808 or [evonnemk@aol.com](mailto:evonnemk@aol.com).

If you would like information about the programs and services of the Care Team, please contact the Church Office [office@mountcross.com](mailto:office@mountcross.com) or (805) 482-3847 or Susan Prosser of the Care Team [prosser1@sbcglobal.net](mailto:prosser1@sbcglobal.net) or (805) 657-6222 and we will gladly provide you with information.

# Children and Youth

See below for scheduled children and youth activities! If you have any questions, please email Joe ([joe@mountcross.com](mailto:joe@mountcross.com)).

**Children's Church** - Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. on Zoom (except April 4)

**High School Youth Group** - Sunday nights at 6:00 p.m. on site (except Easter 4 and 11)

**Fun with Faith** - Wednesday nights at 5:00 p.m. on site (except April 7)

**Confirmation** - Wednesday nights at 6:30 p.m. on site (except April 7)



## Service Opportunity

The Graceful Diaper Pantry in Oxnard is looking for 2-3 volunteers to help package diapers from 9:00 - 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, April 3. If you would like to help, please contact Joe Zimmerly ([joe@mountcross.com](mailto:joe@mountcross.com)).

## Meet our Interns!



### Naomi

Habari! (That is "Hello!" in Swahili language.) I am Naomi Mbise, a current CYF Ministries intern. I am originally from Tanzania and I am a Political Science and Theology & Christian Leadership major at California Lutheran University. So far, I have had so much fun with faith! I love the community we build with those we work with. I love working with the kids so much! Feels like tapping into my inner child. It's always a good time to connect with everyone as a community of faith. I love CYFM and Mount Cross! I am happy to be here!



### Jaclyn

Hello, everyone! My name is Jaclyn and I'm currently a junior at Cal Lutheran. I am a member of the women's swim team and I lead a chapter of Delight, which is a women's college ministry on campus. I am also involved in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. In my free time I love to read, hike, be outside, and spend time with friends and family. I am majoring in Communications with an emphasis in Advertising and Public Relations and I am minoring in Christian Leadership & Theology. I am studying Christian Leadership because I hope to one day be involved in high school ministry. High school is such an important time in a person's faith and I want to be able to give students the tools they need to deepen their faith and to truly make it their own. It has been great to be involved with Mount Cross so far and to see the passion that the staff has for creating a community of believers that will continue to grow after they are gone. Everyone has been so kind and welcoming which makes me even more excited to continue learning from the amazing leaders at Mount Cross!



### Food for Thought!



"Greatness is not found in possessions, power, position, or prestige. It is discovered in goodness, humility, service, and character."

– William Arthur Ward  
via *Apple Seeds*  
(from the *Joyful Noise Newsletter*)

### PRAYER CONCERNS

We pray for an end to the coronavirus, for doctors, nurses, and caretakers, for researchers, all involved in the vaccine efforts, and for the families grieving the loss of each victim.

We pray for peace, unity, and understanding in our country.

We pray also for **Elizabeth A, Robert and Robin A** (friends of Becky & Ken Riley), **Cynthia Bishop** (friend of Bob and Judy Winters), **the Brazil family** (friends of the Blois family), **Mike Carpenter, Terry Cline** (relative of Jim & Karen Gramacki), **Rob Conant** (boyfriend of Mary Goodenough's daughter), **Bob Edell, Steve Engh** (friend of Gayle & Cy Johnson), **Tabitha Ebright, Nora Fajnor, the family of Alice Herbruck, Ron Higginbotham, Charles Hilley, Jo Holler, Joan Husband** (friend of Bill & Glenda Greason), **Nancy Jaeger, Clem Johnson** (aunt of Darryl Johnson), **Ric Kienitz, Michelle Kolder** (daughter of Karen & Joe Diehl), **Kathy Mann** (mother of Marilyn Gardner), **Jeff Miller** (friend of Becky & Ken Riley), **Dale and Mona Mueller** (cousin of Lois Watts), **Karen Nelson, the family of Bob Purdy, Allan Steele** (friend of Becky & Ken Riley), **Bill Voigt** (father of Heather Edwards).

*Unless otherwise specified, prayer requests remain in the bulletin for four weeks. If you would like to add or remove someone to or from the prayer list, please e-mail the church office at [office@mountcross.com](mailto:office@mountcross.com) or call (805) 482-3847.*



# Notes 'n' News

#### Legacy Giving/Endowment Team

The Legacy Giving Team is currently soliciting requests for distributions from the Endowment Fund. Requests may be made in the areas of Missions, Education, Children and Young Adult Ministry, Worship and Music, as well as capital projects. Please include requested funding amount and a justification statement. The Legacy Giving Team will consider all requests and will submit recommendations to the Church Council for funding. Provide funding requests to Carol ([office@mountcross.com](mailto:office@mountcross.com)) in the church office by Friday, April 30, 2021. Any grant requesting committee or charity will be invited to give a three-minute presentation on their ministry and how it serves Mount Cross and our community on May 16, 2021 at 12:30 p.m.

#### Eastertime Virtual Choir

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Easter Virtual Choir Video! We had 33 singers and 10 instrumentalists take part! The video of "Alleluia, Alleluia, Give Thanks to the Risen Lord" will premiere on Easter Sunday during our livestream worship. We appreciate all of you who shared your talents, including our technical team who recorded many of the videos - Bill Dawson, Justin Thai, Catherine Wong, and Raymon Chapman.

#### Organ Donation: An Amazing Gift

*Please pray for Nora Fajnor who is donating one of her kidneys on April 6.*

100,000 people are awaiting a kidney transplant. For more information about kidney donation, visit [kidney.org](http://kidney.org).

The Easter season is a good time to consider registering to become an organ or tissue donor following your death. Someone who chooses to donate their organs can help save the lives of up to eight people, and a tissue donor can help up to fifty people. Anyone over the age of 13 can become a potential donor regardless of age, ethnicity, or medical history. You may also choose to have only specific organs or tissues donated at the appropriate time. You can register at <http://donatelifecalifornia.org/>.

**Mount Cross Lutheran Church**  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**The next newsletter deadline is Thursday, April 15, 2021.**  
**Please send all articles to [carina@mountcross.com](mailto:carina@mountcross.com).**

# April Birthdays and Anniversaries

## Happy Birthday to...

- 1 Chloe Fernandez  
Nancy Rowley
- 2 Landon Stouch
- 3 Linda Austin
- 4 Blair Bender  
Jaci Corey  
Betty Ertel
- 6 Avis Miley
- 7 Jennifer Churchill
- 9 Joan Brundage  
Jordan Duran
- 10 Taylor Crawford
- 11 Jeanne Michel
- 12 Barbara Burrow  
Jason Lu
- 13 Mike Carpenter  
Jackson Fajnor  
Erin Ramirez

- 14 Kailey Vieira
- 15 Matthew Johnson  
David Lennox
- 16 Ric Kienitz
- 17 Cheryl Avery  
Christine Rueckert
- 18 Janet Mann  
Carina McVeigh  
Stan Patscheck  
Katarina Smith
- 19 Glenn Channels
- 20 Thomas LaCalamita
- 22 Brian Churchill
- 23 Randy Churchill  
Brandon Duran  
Zachary Schneider  
Kim Tasker
- 29 Wendy McClary  
Louise Stevenson

## Happy Anniversary of Baptism to...

- 1 Kay Koupal  
Joe Swindle  
Brandon Priest  
Rosanne Stevens  
Charlene Sakioka
- 3 Lily Friederichs  
Jaden Jones  
Claire Sheller  
Mateo Carpenter  
Anna Chen  
Jason Lu  
Mandy Lu  
Sarah Lu  
Troy Rueckert
- 4 Brian Fisher
- 5 Doug Posthauer
- 7 Sean Rose  
Evan Fanner  
Morgan Fanner  
Shenoah Rueckert
- 8 Barbara Sletten  
Scott Smith

- 10 Jaida Jones  
Eric Kienitz  
John Pitsch  
Madeline Sheller  
Brian Stouch  
Landon Stouch
- 13 Megan Pitsch
- 14 Paul Pickenscher  
Katherine Rose  
Christine Rueckert  
Eric Rueckert
- 15 Nicholas Sawyer  
Jackson Valencia  
Sophia Valencia  
Evan Artuso  
Nathaniel Artuso  
Kenneth Lewis
- 17 Don Hauser
- 19 Mark Jones-Quartles
- 22 Janet Mann
- 26 Amanda Smith  
Erik Johnson
- 29 Kelsea Smith

## Happy Anniversary to...

- 2 Judy & Bob Winters
- 4 Tom & Teri Crawford  
Kelly & Tim Schneider  
Keith & Dianne Selbrede
- 8 Michelle & Jerry Kienitz  
Mike & Kim Tasker
- 11 Susan & Ron Baier
- 14 Karen & William Fanner
- 28 Eric & Christine Rueckert