

Pastor's Report for March Church Council Meeting

February 11, 2023 – March 20, 2023

- The new Church Council and other interested members met on Saturday, February 12 for the annual Leadership Retreat. I think the gathering was productive and energizing. We are blessed with skilled and engaged leaders. We focused on Reconciling in Christ, re-imagining our committee structure, how to communicate the energy centers we are experiencing at Mount Cross, and the gift policy. Thank you to all who helped plan the day, those who attended, and those who provided the lunch.
- I hosted Collegium (clergy from the ELCA Channel Islands Conference) at Mount Cross in the sanctuary on Feb. 16.
- February 19 was a joyful worship service. It was Transfiguration Sunday. We had baptisms and welcomed new members.
- Ash Wednesday on Feb. 26 at St. Columba's Episcopal Church was a combined service with three churches – Mount Cross, St. Columba's, and Camarillo United Methodist. 160 people attended the service and all three churches appreciated the opportunity to gather together for the start of this holy season.
- On Feb. 28, I conducted Joe Zimmerly's Annual Ministry Review, along with the in-coming and out-going chairs of Family Faith Formation. We celebrated Joe's contributions to ministry at Mount Cross and discussed ways we could increase collaboration to further the ministry.



seeking:
honest questions
for deeper faith

- LENT: Our Lenten theme and programs were off to a good start with Wednesday programs including *Life Transformed: The Way of Love in Lent* for adults and Fun with Faith for kids at 5 p.m. Soup Supper at 6 p.m. and Holden Evening Prayer at 7 p.m. The messages at Holden are focusing on the “energy centers” at Mount Cross. Jeffrey Saner gave the message on March 1, focusing on his involvement with Music Ministry. The focus on March 8 was Service and Missions and Peace and Justice, with a representative from Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services speaking. We had a COVID hiatus March 15, but are looking forward to hearing from Cy Johnson about Property on March 22 and Evonne Kuchera about Senior Ministry on March 29. Family Faith Formation will produce a video message sometime in the next few months.

- Sundays in Lent, I have been weaving the theme of SEEKING and asking honest questions into my sermons. Kevin O'Farrell and I are team-teaching an adult forum class on Sundays from 11-Noon called “Christianity Through a Lutheran Lens.” We are using Daniel Erlander’s *Baptized We Live* booklet. The class is well-attended and people are reporting that they are finding it meaningful.
- For the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles, I helped plan our first ever Diocesan Information Gathering for people considering God's call in their lives. Over 80 people attended the event in Echo Park on March 4. As part of the program, I led a group discernment exercise.
- With sadness and grief, as well as hope and gratitude, we said goodbye to beloved Mount Cross member, Pat Dawson, on March 4.
- I was interviewed by Tim McDonell March 8 about my experience with the *Interfaith Friendship Project*. He and Tim Helton will be presenting about it at the World Parliament of Religions this summer.

- Staff COVID infections, including my own, cancelled on-site programs, meetings, and worship from March 13-March 19, but Joe, Carol, and I have been able to work from home. I am thankful for the care and prayers extended to all of us, and for the wise leadership of our President, Bill Stoll.
- I met on Zoom March 14 with the pastors from Camarillo UMC and St. Columba's to finalize plans for combined Holy Week services. See below for our Holy Week plans. I hope Council members will attend as many services as possible.

With Christ through Death into Life

Palm Sunday, April 2nd 9:30 a.m. at Mount Cross, Bishop Brenda Bos, Presiding and Preaching

Maundy Thursday, April 6th 7:00 p.m. at Camarillo United Methodist Church (291 Anacapa Dr.) A dramatization of the Last Supper with Holy Communion

Good Friday Prayer Walk with the Cross of Christ for Peace and Healing, April 7th, meet at Camarillo UMC at 5:30 p.m. We will walk two miles to Mount Cross Lutheran Church, carrying the cross and the prayers of the community. Email prayers to CamarilloCross@gmail.com

Good Friday Worship Service, April 7th at 7:00 p.m. Mount Cross Lutheran Church (102 Camino Esplendido) The Passion of Christ with musical interludes

The Easter Vigil, Saturday, April 8th 7:00 p.m. at St. Columba's Episcopal Church (1251 Las Posas Rd.) The new fire of Easter, the story of salvation, the Easter Gospel, and Holy Communion. Meet at the fire pit in the back of the parking lot.

Easter Sunday Worship, April 9th 9:30 a.m. at Mount Cross **Alleluia! Christ is Risen!** Bring a flower to add to the cross.

Time Away:

- 10 hours Sick Time taken for March 13-19
- 2 days vacation, including 1 Sunday, for time away March 24-28. Pastor Ron Cox will be the supply pastor on March 26.
- I am taking a “buy out” Sunday on April 30. Pastor Ron Cox will be the supply pastor that day, as well.