

The Grapevine



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

No. 362

September 2022

Dear Mount Cross Community,

I am a Christian because Jesus invited me into his open, gentle, and humble heart offering rest, grace, guidance, strength, and a deeply meaningful life. He was and continues to be true to his word.

As I follow Jesus, I notice my own heart expands. I care more for others; I want all people to experience belonging and love; I appreciate the beauty of the earth and the wonder of life; my priorities become clear; I recognize the world's empty promises; I find friends and companions with whom I can share burdens and joys; and I can face risk, suffering, evil, and death through the lens of the cross, trusting in the ultimate victory of goodness and life. Although I doubt I'll get beyond beginner status, I aspire to embody Jesus' way of courageous, down-to-earth love and service wherever I find myself. Knowing Jesus has led me to encounters with the most wonderful people, from living Christian saints to holy men and women of other faiths. I have learned that God-shaped people and places are full of gratitude, generosity, compassion, justice, and joy. I want to be around them forever.

Why are you a Christian? What difference does Jesus make in your life? What does following Jesus mean to you? Where do you meet Jesus at Mount Cross? Who would you like to invite to join us in the way of Christian discipleship? I hope you will think about these questions and discuss them with each other. Your answers matter very much as we enter a new era in the history of the church and the world. Things will not go back to "how they were." It is our task now to hear the Good Shepherd's voice and follow where he leads. I'm glad to be on this journey with you. See you this month at Mount Cross and the park!

Peace and Blessings,

Pastor Julie Morris

Worship in the Park & Church Picnic
Sunday, September 18 at 9:30 am

Join Us for Park Worship!

In the covered picnic area at Bob Kildee Park
(1030 Temple Ave. in Camarillo)

Bring your most comfortable lawn chairs (some folding chairs will be provided). We will have sandwich sack lunches available. We encourage those who enjoy a more elaborate picnic or who have special dietary requirements to bring your own.

We will all eat together after worshipping together and then enjoy games and fellowship. Invite your families, neighbors, and friends!

Sign-up online at <https://bit.ly/MCPicnic> or at church on Sundays or call or email the church office at (805) 482-3847 or office@mountcross.com.



Spiritual Growth at Mount Cross

Discipleship Opportunities for Adults: Growing in Christ's Way of Love

Tuesday Morning Women's Bible Study resumes meeting weekly at 9:00 a.m. on **September 13**. We meet in the sanctuary and will follow the *Gather* study, "Jesus and Nature: Teachers of Faith." Jesus often turned to the natural world in teaching, opening our eyes to see creation not just as something to be cared for, but as our teacher and kindred. It is no mistake that Jesus, who lovingly spoke of soil and plants, was thought to be a gardener that first Easter morning. This Bible study will shift our perspectives and allow nature to be our teacher, through the words of Jesus and other parts of Scripture. The trees, the soil, and the creatures will offer us new perspectives on the character of God and challenge us to deepen our stewardship of God's precious creation.

ROOTED for Faith Formation parents and others, Wednesdays, 5:00 - 5:45 p.m., beginning **September 14**. See the announcement below! If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Julie at pastorjulie@mountcross.com.

Wednesday Night Bible Study resumes weekly at 5:00 p.m. on **September 14** in the Parish Life Center, facilitated by Allison Johnson. All are welcome. Come and abide together in God's Word, and stay for dinner at 5:45 p.m.

1st and 3rd Thursdays Men's Bible Study and Breakfast meets **September 1 and 15 at Marie Callender's**, (185 E. Daily Drive, Camarillo). A \$15 donation covers breakfast and a tip, but don't let the cost prevent you from attending. What matters most is that you join us. No RSVP necessary, but reach out to Randy Churchill (hrchurchill@verizon.net) if you have questions.

Afternoon Chapel

The Holy Spirit has descended upon us, and we are filled and equipped to carry forth the teachings of Jesus.

Join us for **Afternoon Chapel** on **September 15** at 2:00 p.m. in the Mount Cross Sanctuary. This shortened Worship Service is complete with communion, singing, prayers and fellowship. Contact the Mount Cross office at 805-482-3847 if you need a ride to the Chapel Service or for more information. Please join us as we celebrate Pentecost.



New Program!

ROOTED for Parents and All Adults

Wednesdays, 5:00 – 5:45 p.m., beginning **September 14**. Attend weekly or occasionally.



Instead of preparing dinner, set aside 45 minutes in the center of the week to be re-centered and rooted in God's grace. Pastor Julie will facilitate a space for you to breathe, pray, savor scripture, move a little bit, and connect with God and each other about things that matter. Fun with Faith is offered at the same time for preschool through elementary-aged children. Community dinner is served at 5:45 p.m. for all to enjoy. Meet Pastor Julie in the Prayer Garden.

Mental Health Forum at Mount Cross

Mount Cross Care Team and Learning Committee, Sponsors

October 2, 2022, at 1:00 p.m.

Alene Campbell-Langdell, Episcopal priest and Social Worker, Speaker

Join with others on the first day of National Mental Health Week to hear a wide-ranging presentation on the growing problem of Mental Health among all age groups. The health survey taken at Mount Cross confirmed that our congregation is interested in learning more about mental health issues. Join in this session for an opportunity to learn, question, and discuss. Refreshments and resource materials will be provided. There is no target age or gender for this informative session. Any questions? Contact Susan Prosser at prosser1@sbcglobal.net.

Holy Baptism and

New Member Information

Sunday, **September 25, 11:00 a.m. - Noon** in the Parish Life Center

Pastor Julie will host an informational meeting for all who are interested in exploring Baptism into the Body of Christ and Membership at Mount Cross. Contact Pastor Julie for more information or if you would like to attend: pastorjulie@mountcross.com. Childcare is available upon request. Save the date: We will offer the Sacrament of Holy Baptism and receive new members on All Saints' Sunday, November 6, 2022.

Reconciling in Christ (RIC)

Each Sunday we confess our sins, asking the Lord to:
 “Show us Your ways; Teach us Your paths; and lead us in justice and truth.”

At the March leadership retreat, we listened to a team of speakers from Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Thousand Oaks tell us about their experience in becoming a “Reconciling in Christ” (RIC) congregation. Since 1974, “Reconciling Works, Lutherans for Full Participation” has advocated for the full welcome, inclusion, and equity of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual/aromantic (LGBTQIA+) Lutherans in all aspects of the life of their Church, congregations, and community. Since 1983, the Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Program has been a public way for faith communities to see, name, celebrate, and advocate for people of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions in the Lutheran church.

At our April 19 meeting, the Mount Cross Church Council approved an ad hoc committee to gather more information regarding RIC. During the months that followed, the Team spent time looking through and discussing RIC’s extensive website (www.reconcilingworks.org) as well as other resources on the topic. We met with Southwest California Synod Bishop Bos and Pastor Emily Ebert from Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. We spent time with the ELCA Social Statement on Human Sexuality.

Becoming an RIC congregation is not a decision that should be made hastily or taken lightly. It is a process that may take many months or even years. It is not a decision that can be made by a small ad hoc team or even the Church Council. It is a process that deserves education, study, and prayer by the whole congregation.

We are at the very beginning of developing this process. Please stay tuned for notices about informational and educational forums.

In the meantime, feel free to contact Jessica Easter (jeaster@callutheran.edu), Bill Stoll (billstoll50@gmail.com), or Becky Riley (beca104@aol.com). Although it is unlikely we will be able to answer all of your questions (at the outset perhaps very few), we will do our best to discuss them and find answers as best we can.

Care Team

Last of the **Health Ministry Education Series** - End-Of-Life Issues
Sunday, September 11, at 1:00 p.m. – Decisions & Documents

People of all ages may unexpectedly be in a position where they cannot speak for themselves, such as an accident or severe illness.

Have you given thought to important matters that may affect decisions that need to be made upon your death or incapacitation? Learn how to make decisions and share your values and preferences in advance. Presenters include Teri Helton, frequent speaker on this subject; Jennifer Christeson, Mount Cross Health Ministry Social Worker; a local estate planning attorney; and Pastor Julie Morris. There will be time for questions.

All members are encouraged to attend & bring a friend. There is no target age or gender!
 Refreshments and resource materials are provided.

Talking With Your Doctor in the Office or Over the Phone

- † Decide ahead of time what questions are most important to ask the doctor - make a written note.
- † Stay focused - each patient has limited time. Describe symptom, when started, how often, and if getting worse or better.
- † Be honest - your doctor can give the best treatment only if you say what’s really going on.
- † Share your opinion about the visit - say if you feel rushed, worried, or uncomfortable.
- † The doctor’s instructions are vital -take notes or have someone you trust take notes.
- † Remember, the doctor may not be able to answer all your questions.

This content is provided by the National Institute on Aging (NIA).

Service & Missions

Lutheran World Relief Personal Care Kit Collection

Cleanliness may not actually be next to godliness, but it certainly helps a person feel more human. When families find their homes destroyed, or must flee for their safety, soap and a towel rarely make the cut for what they can carry. Arriving in a refugee camp or other place of safety, they are scared, vulnerable and dirty from the travel. The simple items included in a Personal Care Kit provide much-needed self-care, critical germ fighting, and the chance to regain dignity amidst situations of fear and uncertainty. Here's what we need to build these kits:

- † **Towel** - light-weight, bath-size (40" x 20" or 52" x 27"), dark color recommended. Room Essential bath towels from Target are PERFECT and they cost just \$3. Remember, the recipient will likely be hand-washing and line drying, not tossing it in their machines, so less fluff and size is actually better in this case. And towels are the item we need the most!
- † **Soap** - bath-size bars, any brand, in original wrapping
- † **Toothbrush** - adult size
- † **Comb** - sturdy is best, for all hair textures, please
- † **Nail Clippers** - metal, attached nail file is optional

The items in this list are very specific. LWR kits are highly regarded throughout the world because of their quality and consistency - they strive to be USEFUL, CONSISTENT, and FAIR. Bring these items to church anytime in September and early October. We'll be assembling both School and Personal Care Kits in mid-October before the truck comes to Mount Cross in late October to pick them up, saving us the cost of shipping them to the warehouse in Maryland.

Melissa Henry is again willing to serve as a personal shopper, so an alternative to buying items yourself is to give a donation marked "LWR Kits" and she will happily find the best deals to stretch our dollars. We've done this project for a few years - let's see if we can match our collection of 130 kits last year.



Harbor House Concert 4 the Conejo

Saturday, **October 1**, is the second annual "Concert 4 the CONEJO" fundraiser for Harbor House. This fundraiser supports those living in poverty, the homeless, and foster youth in the Conejo Valley. Harbor House helps the homeless, those in poverty, and foster youth who have aged out of the system. Their goal is to prevent more homelessness in our community. Come out for a fun night to support those in our community who need help! The night will include a concert featuring local bands, a taco dinner, mocktails, a silent auction, and a craft boutique. Visit the website for more info or to buy tickets. Events - Harbor House Thousand Oaks (harborhouseto.org) Also, Melissa Henry is looking for donations for the silent auction - and volunteers to help with set-up and organization of the silent auction in the weeks leading up to the event, and the day of. Contact her if you would like to be a part of the team.



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!

God's Work, Our Hands Sunday

Sunday, **September 11**, is God's Work, Our Hands Day. Plan to join us after service that morning as we make and assemble 80 bag lunches for the Harbor House meal program. Your Service & Missions committee and Thrivent are purchasing all the supplies; we just need your hands to help! We have to make sandwiches, fill the bags, and maybe even write a note on the bag for the recipient. Then those meals will travel to the hands of our neighbors to help fill their bellies and their hearts.

Fair Trade Order

If you are interested in Fair Trade items, we are preparing to place an order. Please see the order forms on the kiosk, and turn them in by **September 11**. This is a new way of supporting our Fair Trade farmers, so be patient with us as we work out the kinks!



FAIRTRADE

Coastal Cleanup Day

International Coastal Cleanup Day on September 17 is a promise to bring cleanliness and purity to nature as a whole. The day was started as a way to raise awareness about the growing pollution on various beaches of the world. Population growth and capitalism are just two of the main factors that have led to severely high levels of pollution in the environment, particularly in the oceans that make up over 70% of our planet. Water has a cyclical nature, which means that anything we are putting into our oceans and other water bodies will come back to us sooner or later. For every square mile of ocean, there are at least 46,000 pieces of plastic debris floating within said distance. Furthermore, as plastic does not decompose over a long period and only disintegrates, minute plastic particles are already showing up in our food and water. If these trends continue, it won't be long before we face disastrous outcomes for our environment. Visit the California Coastal Commission website to pick a spot for you to join with others and make a small difference in our local environment. Consider inviting your friend group from Mount Cross to clean a site together.



Donate to the Mount Cross CDC Scholarship fund!

The scholarship fund honoring the founder of Mount Cross Child Development Center, Cathy Channels, helps pay tuition for eligible families that attend our very own Mount Cross CDC. As a Christian preschool, part of our mission is to bring education to all who seek it. By donating to the Cathy Channels Scholarship Fund, you can help ensure the CDC is open to all families in our community.

You can donate two ways: online through the Mount Cross website (mountcross.com) by clicking "Online Giving" under the "Give" tab and specifying "CDC Scholarship Fund" next to the option labeled "Other," or by check made out to Mount Cross CDC.

Food Share FED UP Annual Shindig

Our congregation is a supporter of Food Share and the work they do in our county. Here's what they say about themselves and their event. "We're pretty good at feeding people. 220,000 Ventura County residents depend on Food Share for food assistance every year. Are you FED UP about food insecurity? We are too! Join us in your boots and jeans as we gather to ensure our food-insecure friends and neighbors in Ventura County get FED UP. With your help, we can and will feed everyone! Purchase your tickets today to get an exclusive tour of our 36,000 sq ft facilities with drink and tasting stations, a cocktail hour with entertainment, and a full meal prepared and plated by Peirano's. The FED UP Shindig is on Friday, **September 23**, at **5:00 p.m.** Look for more information on the kiosk, or visit foodshare.com.



Amazon Smile

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



Connect with Us!

Do you have a YouTube or Facebook account? We'd love to get connected! Make sure to follow **Mount Cross Lutheran Church, Camarillo, CA** on Facebook or subscribe on YouTube to stay updated on all the latest worship recordings and Mount Cross news.



Peace & Justice Team

The Peace and Justice Team will meet on **Tuesday, September 6**, at **7:00 p.m.** on Zoom. The Zoom link is bit.ly/MCPeaceandJustice.



Lord, the earth is yours and all that is in it, the seas and all that dwell in them. Grant that we, tasked to be stewards of your creation, might fulfill this responsibility with joy, enjoying and caring for all that you have created, by what we choose to do and what we choose not to do. For the sake of your creation, and for the sake of you, the Creator, amen.

Notes 'n' News

Generosity is Year-Round

Be Biblical. Let God do the talking.

"I was hungry and you gave me something to eat."
Matthew 25:35

Generosity is year-round but our time for Estimated Giving/Pledges and the Time & Talent forms is near. You will see more information in October but hopefully you will start praying about what you can do to further the mission of Mount Cross to "be Rooted in God's Grace as we Joyfully Witness and Serve."

Matthew speaks of hunger and receiving something to eat. Mount Cross deals with this spiritually through Worship & Music, Missions/Outreach, Youth programs, Bible studies, Anti-Racism work, VBS, our Prayer ministry and Meditation group. We also receive physically through the Caring team, Quilters, Food Pantry, Helping Hands, Disaster Relief & Disaster Response, and many other services provided by our generous staff and volunteers at Mount Cross.

We appreciate all that you do and hope to continue these missions into the new year.
- Your Generosity Team

What Can Happen When You Say "Yes"

by Debbie Boross, Church Member and Vacation Bible School Volunteer

Vacation Bible School was a huge hit for me and my four grandchildren. The Eckman's—Nash, Troy, Addison & Matthew—had a blast! We were all first-timers!

Nana (me) and the kiddos had such enjoyment; singing praise songs with terrific musicians, time in prayer, arts and crafts and recreation time. Joe & his team put on a great week and the VBS program on Thursday evening too! I was so surprised at all the cool extras that the kiddos received. Name tags, t-shirts, nylon bags. Yummy snacks, lemonade, Otter Pops and the BIG TO DO out of this world "Crumb!" cookies!!

I signed up to volunteer as I have always wanted to have a part in shepherding the grandchildren towards the Lord. When Joe called to say they really needed a teacher and would I agree? I was apprehensive for sure. I did it!!! This was such a special experience and immediately into Day 1, I felt surrounded by phenomenal volunteers, staff, and just such an encouraging team. I am very grateful for my experience and that my precious kiddos learned more about God's precious love for them.

Thank you to Joe, Pastor Julie, Jessica, Morgan, Chrissy, Mia, and all the other lovely and kind people at Mount Cross.

P.S. Please sign me up for 2023 VBS!!

Mount Cross Music Ministry Notes

Here we are in September already! Some of our ministry folks have been dealing with serious health issues this summer. We continue praying for Marion Cole as she recovers from cancer surgery and for Guy Ervin III, who has one more medical procedure this month. We certainly miss them both! Our many talented music members have stepped up to keep leading our congregation in our sung prayer.

We continued some bell choir rehearsals and "summer choir" rehearsals over the summer and will be getting back to a regular Wednesday night schedule this month. Our bell choir is working on putting together an afternoon program later in the fall.

May you be blessed and inspired this month as we sing our faith and give glory to God through music!

In Christ,
Carol Browning, Music Director

Upcoming Meetings

Executive Committee:

Thurs., Sept. 1, 7:00 p.m.

Property Committee:

Thurs., Sept. 1, 7:00 p.m.

Senior Adult Ministry Luncheon:

Fri., Sept. 2, 11:30 a.m.

Peace & Justice Team:

Tues., Sept. 6, 7:00 p.m.

Care Team:

Thurs., Sept. 8, 2:00 p.m.

Quilters:

Thurs., Sept. 8 & 22, 2:00 p.m.

Generosity Committee:

Mon., Sept. 12, 10:00 a.m.

Learning Committee:

Mon., Sept. 12, 7:00 p.m.

CDC Board:

Tues., Sept. 13, 7:30 p.m.

Afternoon Chapel:

Thurs., Sept. 15, 2:00 p.m.

Church Council:

Tues., Sept. 20, 7:00 p.m.

Fellowship Committee:

Tues., Sept. 27, 7:00 p.m.



PRAYER CONCERNS

Did you know Mount Cross has an email Prayer Chain? If you would like to be a member of our Prayer Chain, or would like a prayer request sent to our Prayer Chain, please let Carol Browning know by emailing office@mountcross.com.

We pray for Levi (friend of Dan & Karen Nelson), **Barbara Burke**, **Crista** (niece of Karen Cherry), **Marion Cole**, **Joseph and Rosanna DeVere** (son and daughter-in-law of Jody DeVere), **Guy Ervin III**, **Johnathan Hammersley** (great-nephew of Marni Engh), **Doug Harris** (cousin of Kristine Dawson), **Tom Heathorn** (cousin of Marni Engh), **Charles Hilley**, **Jo Holler**, **Nancy Jaeger**, **Jerry Kochans**, **Joyce Larisey** (mother of Val Starkgraf), **Kathy McBroom** (friend of Nancy & Bill Rowley), **Dave McDonnell** (friend of Karin & John Grennan), **the family of Lucille Miley**, **Marion Murray** (aunt of Patricia LaCalamita), **Karen Nelson**, **Scott Otjen** (friend of Mary and Ric Kienitz), **Ellie Ranson** (friend of Evonne Kuchera), **Maria Riley** (daughter-in-law of Becky Riley), **Heather Rogers** (granddaughter of Jim & Nancy Jaeger), **the family of Gloria Saldano** (mother of Lisa Saner), **the family of Byron Selbrede** (brother of Keith Selbrede), **Marie Swartz** (sister of Jo Holler), **Chris Valenzano** (grandson of Herb & Jo Holler, on active military deployment), **Diana Washington** (friend of Karen Cherry).

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 or call (805) 482-3847.

Mount Cross Facilities Improvement - Progress Report

The Ad Hoc Facilities Improvement Committee formed following the January Annual Congregational Meeting submitted a Final Report to the Church Council which was accepted on August 16. This report was the product of the generous time and input from the staff, committees, and members of Mount Cross who expressed great interest in major repairs, improvements, modifications, and expanded use of our facilities and property. Many thanks to those who participated in this process with thoughtful and creative input.

The Church Council has referred the Ad Hoc Committee's consolidated list of projects to the Property Committee for:

1. Cost estimates
2. Assessment of feasibility
3. Identification of those projects suitable for Property Committee involvement
4. Identification of known funding sources

As this information is available, it will be presented to the Church Council for consideration.

Having a ranked master list of needed and desired projects will be a tremendous aid for the congregation in moving forward with funding and scheduling. Those who wish to read the Ad Hoc Facilities Committee Final Report can obtain a copy by contacting the church office.

Congratulations to Marli & Jeffrey Saner!

Jeffrey had a 4.0 GPA all 3 years of Middle School and received "the only" American Legion Award for recognition of courage, honor, leadership, and patriotism.

Marli graduated with Honors in all classes and received the Junior Scholarship honor award.

As they start this new chapter of their lives, they will attend Newbury Park High School.

Marli will join the #1 cross country team in the state and Jeffrey will start his education pathway in science and Spanish.

We thank "our congregation" for all the years of support with our twins.

Lisa & Mark Saner

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The next newsletter deadline is Thursday, September 15, 2022
Please send all articles to carina@mountcross.com.

September Birthdays and Anniversaries

Happy Birthday to...

- 4 William Fanner
- 5 Rene Turk
- 6 Sonja Demeter
Alan Scott
- 7 Annalyssa Niedens
Danny Schmeichel
- 9 Holly Ebright
Cade Kenz
- 10 Sedona Brickley
Jessica Easter
Darryl Priest
- 11 Madison Davis
Scott Fajnor
- 12 Lori Baker

- 13 Rae Russell
- 15 Todd Ebright
- 16 Anna Chen
Karen Diehl
- 17 Jim Gramacki
Megan Pitsch
- 18 Sarah Lu
Chrissy O'Farrell
Christina Tovar-Hamernik
- 21 Karen Gramacki
- 21 Katherine Wikholm
- 25 Jean Bricker
Ivan Fernandez
- 26 Scott Stevens
- 29 Tim Schneider

Happy Anniversary of Baptism to...

- 1 Gail Baird
- 3 Kaitlyn Laskey
- 10 Ron Baier
- 11 Adam Carr
- 16 Gayle Johnson
- 18 Gail Gramacki
- 20 Sarah Fox
- 21 Darryl Johnson
- 22 Kathleen Bergh
Robert Burrow



Happy Anniversary to...

- 13 Rae & Gordon Russell
- 20 Thomas & Robin Carr
Tracy & Craig Blois
- 21 Paul DeBusschere & Julie Morris
- 23 Brian & Janet Rubin
- 27 Janet & Rick Mann
- 28 Joe & Stephanie McCormick

