

The Grapevine



No. 334

May 2020

The Gift of Clarity: A Message from Pastor Julie

Dear Mount Cross Community,

It has been well over one month since Ventura County issued the “Stay at Home” order and most of us are feeling the strain of it. Even while we are glad to be doing our part to reduce the spread of illness, we hope it will soon be safe to go out more, see family and friends in person, and pray and sing together at Mount Cross. When we are through this pandemic, there will be a lot of reflection on the lessons, mistakes, opportunities and heroes of this time. Recognizing that we are still in it and don’t yet have the benefit of hindsight, I wonder what gifts you have identified in this extraordinary time?

I am grateful for the gift of clarity. Very literally, people are observing clarity in the air and water around the world because decreased human activity is giving nature a chance to heal. For example, it was inspiring to read about the people in a city in northern India who were able to view the Himalayas for the first time in decades. Normally the mountain range is clouded from their view by air pollution. I have received some clarity of vision, too, about the importance of things it is easy to take for granted: health, humor, celebrations to mark milestones and holidays, the freedom to travel and visit family, the beauty of our neighbors’ front yards and the goodness of our neighbors, in-person meetings, the excellent schools in our community and the dedicated teachers who work in them, and the blessing of gathering for worship, to share just part of my list. I pray that the insights we are gleaning from this time will guide our priorities and commitments moving forward.

Thank you, people of Mount Cross Lutheran Church, for all the ways you are living with patience, grace, compassion and generosity amid the challenges of today. God bless you and our world with health and strength.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Julie +

Worship Schedule

Holden Evening Prayer every Wednesday during Quarantine at 7:00 p.m.

Sunday morning worship every Sunday at 9:30 a.m. (In the month of May, services will be combined with St. Columba’s Episcopal Church).

Services will be live at [facebook.com/MountCross/live/](https://www.facebook.com/MountCross/live/) or will be available the following day on our website (mountcross.com) and our YouTube Channel (Mount Cross Lutheran Church, Camarillo, CA).

Join us after the service for coffee, community, and connection on Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/574003985>

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102 Camino Esplendido, Camarillo, CA 93010 • (805) 482-3847

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Like us on Facebook (www.facebook.com/MountCross) or Subscribe to us on YouTube (Mount Cross Lutheran Church, Camarillo,

Children and Youth

See below for scheduled children and youth activities! If you have any questions, please email Joe.

Fun with Faith - Wednesday Nights at 5:00 p.m. and Friday afternoons at 1:30 p.m. on Zoom and Padlet

Confirmation - Thursday Nights at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom

High School Youth Group - Sunday Nights at 5:00 p.m. on Zoom

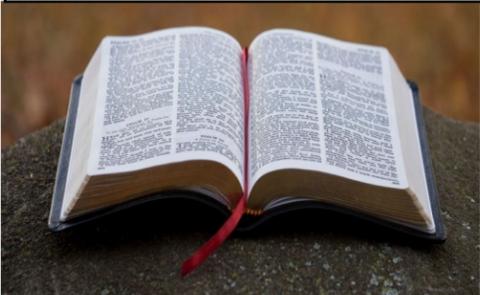
Morning Devotion - Monday through Saturday at 9:15 a.m. on Zoom

Open Zoom Hours - every day from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. by request



Spiritual Growth Opportunities

Our group Bible studies continue during this time by meeting online using Zoom. If you would like help figuring out how to use Zoom, please call the church office and we will match you up with someone to assist you.



Men's Bible Study: May 14 and 28, 7:30 - 8:30 a.m.

We study and discuss the Gospel for the upcoming Sunday. Join us on Zoom. On your computer or smart device go to <https://zoom.us/j/122561229> OR from your phone dial **1.669.900.6833**. You will be asked for a meeting ID number. Enter **122 561 229** and then push pound (#).

Women's Bible Study: Tuesdays in May, 9:00 - 10:00 a.m.

All Mount Cross women are invited to join our Women's Bible Study. We are reading *Boundless Compassion: Creating a Way of Life* by Joyce Rupp. "Through this six-week personal transformation process for developing and deepening compassion, Rupp nudges, encourages, and inspires you to grow in the kind of love that motivated Jesus' life and mission for his disciples."

Let Pastor Julie know if you need help ordering the book. Join us on Zoom. On your computer or smart device, go to <https://zoom.us/j/718448990> OR to call on your phone dial **1.408.638.0968**. You will be asked to enter the Meeting ID which is **718 448 990** and then push pound (#).

Wednesday Night Adult Bible Study, 5:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Open to all, we study the Gospel for the upcoming Sunday on Wednesday evenings. On your computer or smart device go to <https://zoom.us/j/861819171> OR to call on your phone dial **1.669.900.6833**. You will be asked to enter the Meeting ID which is **861 819 171** and then push pound (#).



May the Lord reward you for your kindness. Ruth 1:8

Mask-Making Undertaking...



It all started on Sunday, March 22. Nanci Paulson from Women's Interfaith Network (WIN) sent a plea out to the interfaith community to see if there were people willing to sew masks for our local healthcare workers. Pastor Julie, a member of WIN, contacted the Mount Cross Quilters to see if we would help.

Almost immediately our quilting group and friends went into action. Shortly after the first request came another from Friends of the Farmworkers for 40 masks. On April 3rd the Center of Disease Control (CDC) recommended that everyone wear a mask when in a public place. Our group, now renamed the "Mount Cross Seamsters," kicked into high gear, some making medical masks for healthcare workers and others making masks for farm workers, the church staff and the congregation.

As of April 18, we have provided masks to the following: Friends of Fieldworkers, Harbor House, COVID 19 Unit at Los Robles, The Lighthouse, Gabriel's House, Community Memorial Hospital's Lab technicians, the five Urgent Cares in Camarillo, the ER and Sub-acute Units of Pleasant Valley Hospital, the Mount Cross staff/congregation, and their own family and friends. When a request came in, these dedicated seamsters jumped into action. Hours turned into days, days turned into weeks. Sewing machines would break down and were taken in for repair; we borrowed machines and continued to sew. To date, we have made over 450 masks. Not too shabby for a small quilting group of retirees and friends!

A heartfelt thank you to everyone that helped sew, donate and cut fabric, purchase/donate supplies, and deliver masks. A special thanks to our seamsters... Dian Blois, Carol Broderick, Marion Cole, Luanne Crockett, Kris Dawson, Diana Hagen, Jan Mann and neighbor Barbara, Valerie Patscheck, and Nanci Paulson. Thank you to those who helped in other ways...such as delivery, correspondence and moral support...Brian, Kaitlyn, and Heather Edwards, Rick Gardner, Mary Goodenough, Norma Harvey, Melissa Henry, Carina McVeigh, Pastor Julie Morris, Susan Prosser & the Caring Committee, Jean Scott, Meredith Smith, and Joe Zimmerly. Everyone played a part in this mask-making mission.

We are currently on a well-deserved break...not to say we won't resume when needed. The seamsters will continue to supply the church office with masks for congregants as the need arises.

Thank you to everyone for your help and kindness during this pandemic!

In His Service,
Marilyn Gardner
Mount Cross Quilters, AKA Mount Cross Seamsters



Service & Missions



Monthly Fair Trade Sale

Melissa Henry is continuing to offer porch delivery of your favorite Fair Trade Foods from Mount Cross. We have tea, coffee (decaf and regular, ground or bean) olive oil, chocolate bars, soup mixes, and a few spices and balsamic vinegars. Please check the Mount Cross website for a more complete listing of items and prices, or give Melissa a call, email, or text! (mgreason@hotmail.com or 805.279.9256)

“Sometimes put yourself very simply before God, certain of his presence everywhere, and without any effort, whisper very softly to his sacred heart whatever your own heart prompts you to say.”
- St. Jeanne de Chantal, co-founder of the Order of the Visitation (1572-1641)

Habitat for Humanity Makes Progress in Camarillo

Even without volunteer labor, the two homes in Camarillo are moving ahead and close to completion. We would normally invite you to a House Blessing Ceremony, but that is currently on hold. However, the families are hoping to move in by the end of May. There are plans for a parade of sorts to drive past and wish the families well in their new homes... as we know more details, we will share in Friday emails. Continue to pray for the two families, and for construction workers of all types, as their work is essential!

Harbor House Help

Harbor House continues to provide daily lunches for homeless neighbors in Thousand Oaks from the parking lot of Holy Trinity. They would welcome lunch contributions - just sign up on their website at www.harborhouseto.org. They are also providing over the phone meetings with clients to help people get assistance - from a place to spend the night to getting access to food stamps or applying for the stimulus money. We are so grateful for their presence in our county.

Gown Brigade

Don't sew - but want to help protect our medical personnel? Ventura County Medical Center sent out an appeal for hospital gowns made from plastic garbage bags. It's a bit tedious, but only requires a clean area, an iron, a scissors, and your time. We have detailed directions and videos - just send an email to Gordon Henry (ghenry33@hotmail.com) and he will forward you all the instructions.

Blood Donations Needed

Yep, you guessed it - blood donations are down as we've all been "safer at home"... and the blood drive we planned has been postponed. But Vitalant is open at their location in Ventura and welcomes donors. Visit www.vitalant.org to schedule a donation time that works for you. They have added extra precautions to keep us donors safe in the time of COVID-19. Please consider donating a pint this month, if you are able!



URGENT NEED
GIVE BLOOD TODAY

vitalant.

Request from Friends of Fieldworkers

Friends of Fieldworkers is looking for people who are interested in talking with children a few times each week to check in with them about their homework. Training is available. Please contact Judy Lucas 805.312.0579 or email judy.fisk.lucas@gmail.com. Also, please pray for farmworker families during this stressful time.

Service & Missions

Food Pantry Collection Point

St Columba's is continuing to operate the food pantry - and they were so grateful for our last donation. They have seen a rise in the numbers of people asking for help, and a decline in the number of food items being donated to them. So, we're doing another parking lot food collection!

On **Tuesday, May 12 from 3:00 - 6:00 p.m.** we will again be in the Mount Cross parking lot to collect items from you! Here's how you can help:

We ask that you bring items you have already purchased. Please do not go out to the grocery store to pick up items to donate. (However, there is time to add a few items to your next run or delivery order!)

Put your donations in the trunk. Our gloved coordinators will take the donation items from your trunk, so no need to leave the car! Just pull up to the curb by the pavilion and pop your trunk.

Our coordinators will disinfect donated items. Items will be stored at the church for a few days before being brought to the food pantry.

Volunteer Opportunity

2-1-1 Ventura County is in need of call center volunteers to begin service immediately. You can sign up directly by going to http://www.volunteerventuracounty.org/need/detail/?need_id=508264

Lutheran Office of Public Policy - Advocacy in Quarantine

LOPP is having a weekly Zoom meeting to keep us apprised of their work - and to give us quick 5 minute advocacy work we can do from home. Send an email, call your representative, that sort of thing! The Zoom call is every Wednesday at noon. Also, there is a new Social Statement in the works - on Church and State - and there will be a conversation about it on Tuesday, April 28 from 5-6:30. If you are interested in either of these two events, visit www.lutheranpublicpolicyca.org for more info.



**LUTHERAN OFFICE
of PUBLIC POLICY
- CALIFORNIA**

Lobby Day - May 20

In honor of Earth day (or really, due to Covid-19 precautions) - LOPP is now having Lobby Day as a virtual event. No need to drive to Sacramento - just stay in your chair and join us on Zoom. There will be a group session from 9-10:30, then small groups will have legislative visits between 10:30 and 2:30. You need to register ahead of the event, but registration is free and easy. Just visit www.lutheranpublicpolicyca.org and click the link to Virtual Lobby Day.

Treasurer's Report - April 2020

Budget Performance (through March 2020):

Gross income was 90.4% of budget, down from 96.6% last month.

Pledged giving was 101.2% of budget, down from 105.6% last month.

Expenses were 96.2% of budget, down from 98.3% last month.

Calculated reserves were \$64,556, down from \$69,864 last month.

Child Development Center YTD results through March 30 showed a net shortage of \$6,579 versus a profit of \$12,274 last month. Work has started to determine the expected financial impact of the Coronavirus on Mount Cross and the CDC.

Keith Selbrede, Treasurer

Your Welcoming Spirit

It has been exciting to watch you grow as you have been sharing your welcoming spirit with our new members and visitors.

They have noticed! Now because the virus is keeping us apart, it is even more important for us to continue to share that welcoming spirit. We can do this, perhaps by using emails, hand written notes or phone calls. Let them know that they are not forgotten; not by us and most certainly not by God.

To the right you will find the words to a beloved hymn. We hope that you like it.

Together with God and our Mount Cross family, in peace and Christ's love,

Your Mount Cross Welcome Team

"We Are the Church"

Refrain:

I am the church! You are the church! We the church together!
All who follow Jesus All around the world! Yes, we're the church together!

The church is not a building, The church is not a steeple,
The church is not a resting place, The church is a people; *refrain*
We're many kinds of people, With many kinds of faces,
All colors and all ages, too, From all times and places; *refrain*
Sometimes the church is marching, Sometimes it's bravely burning,
Sometimes it's riding, sometimes hiding, Always it's learning; *refrain*
And when the people gather There's singing and there's praying,
There's laughing and there's crying sometimes, All of it saying; *refrain*
At Pentecost some people Received the Holy Spirit
And told the Good News thru the world to All who would hear it; *refrain*
I count if I am ninety Or nine or just a baby;
There's one thing I am sure about and I don't mean maybe; *refrain*

Words and Music by Richard Avery and Donald Marsh

Mount Cross Cares - About You

Jesus told his disciples, "I am with you always" and we too take that to heart. The church carries his message into the world and lives out Christ's admonition to love one another.

Volunteers and staff of the church have connected with most of the members and friends of the church by phone, letter or email. This was done in order to inform everyone of the options for worship, Bible study, and group interaction while the church campus is shut down. The other important reason was to establish connections with members in order to offer friendship and spiritual and physical support when needed. Over four dozen ongoing "check-in" pairings are in place. Reports indicate real joy from these relationships.

No doubt we have missed making a connection with some. If you did not receive a phone call, message or a letter within the last month, you are encouraged to let the church know how you are doing and if there is any information or support Mount Cross can provide to you. The longer we remain in our homes (in some cases alone), our needs or desire for interaction may very well change. Even if we have previously connected and your needs have changed, please let us know how we might help.

Mount Cross can help with:

- Information about how to connect to worship services and other church activities
- Spiritual support and materials
- Matching you with an ongoing check-in friend
- Grocery or other pickup errands run by member volunteers
- Limited financial help, confidential through Pastor Julie (store and gas gift cards, emergency funds)

Name your need and we will work to respond or assist in finding help if possible!

Let the connections we are building between members and the strengthening of members relationship with the church be among the silver linings from this challenging time in our lives. The Bishop of the ELCA has asked that we view this as "...a time to live and act as faithful people of God."

You can contact the church office at office@mountcross.com; Pastor Julie at pastorjulie@mountcross.com; or leave phone messages at the church at 805.482.3847. You can also contact Susan Prosser, Care Team Chair at prosser1@sbcglobal.net or 805.657.6222.

Stewardship

Making an Impact through ELCA in Action

Stewardship is not only year-round; it is also world wide! ELCA ministries have witnessed unprecedented growth since the launch of "Always Being Made New" in 2014. ELCA ministries received \$250 million to continue, strengthen, and expand their work here at home and with our global companions around the world. This growth was made possible through the generosity of faithful members and friends of Mount Cross Lutheran Church like you! Thank you for being a part of this historic effort. Keep an eye out every month of 2020 for a new statistic about the work the ELCA is doing.

46 New or enhanced Youth and Young Adults ministries received grants to grow existing programs or start new ones



PRAYER CONCERNS

Sharon Benner (sister of Karen Gramacki), **The Burch family, Janet Colby, Steve Engh, the family of Arlene Fajnor, Karen Guetschoff, Norma Harvey, German and Connie Hernandez** (friends of Gil Valencia), **Hilary** (niece of Julie Merrick), **Judy, Karen** (mother of Julie Merrick), **Janet Kessler, Ingrid Poehler** (friend of Pastor Lynn Enloe), **Stephanie Purdy** (friend of Gail Baird), **Steve True** (nephew of Ken and Becky Riley), **Jamie Thoburn** (nephew of Cy and Gayle Johnson)

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.

Giving in a Time of Need

We are connected to a church. We are members and friends of a congregation because: we want spiritual nourishment, guidance, and comfort; it provides a community of believers in both good times and times of trial; together we spread the love of God in our words and actions; to find Christ because "whenever two or more of you are gathered in my name, I am there."

COVID 19 has presented challenges to the church. A closed church campus and broadcast or recorded worship services are big changes. Our Pastor and others have worked to meet not only normal expectations but new challenges. Worship, Bible study, hospitality opportunities, small group gatherings, learning, and social options for children and youth are continuing in ways we might not have imagined. Personal connections are maintained or built by phone calls, cards and notes and caring acts of kindness. Are there any silver linings?

- **All are welcome** - Remote access to worship allows participation by people who couldn't otherwise
- **Personal** - The worship provided has been surprisingly intimate and meaningful and offers unique spiritual experiences through worship and music in new ways
- **Care shines through in Community** - Efforts to reach out to fellow members and friends in our circle of acquaintance or through organized congregational effort has multiplied many times over
- **God's Grace continues to grow** - Pastor Julie and staff have offered a wide variety of worship, study, and devotions during this time to strengthen our connection to God

What the church is endeavoring to GIVE to members and the community has not diminished during the challenge of ministering during a pandemic, rather more and/or different effort has been required. This has been possible with the committed effort of the full staff. The fixed costs for the church have not changed.

Stewardship is the best use of our God given time, talent, and treasure. Mount Cross has been blessed with faithful pledged givers whose financial contributions have been maintained on track thus far. While not gathering in worship, we are experiencing a drop in the financial gifts in other categories that are often tied to church attendance. If this trend continues, the church could be in a difficult financial position as the year progresses.

For those who are able, we ask that you consider mailing your regular offering to the church office (102 Camino Esplendido, Camarillo, CA 93010). Another option is to donate on the Mount Cross Church Website (www.mountcross.com). Automated forms of giving can be discussed with Financial Secretary Joan Brundage if you leave a message for her at the church office (805.482.3847).

"God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble" Psalm 46:1

Mount Cross Lutheran Church
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
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Camarillo, CA 93010-1717

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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**The next newsletter deadline is Thursday, May 21, 2020.
Please send all articles to office@mountcross.com.**

May Birthdays and Anniversaries

Happy Birthday to...

1 Karen Nelson
2 Diana Rose
4 Marion Cole
5 Kathleen Bergh
6 Jo Holler
Dana Tingle
7 Lauren Bender
11 Kate Fisher
13 Bryn Godon
15 Rhonda Churchill
Juli Watts
16 Stephanie McCormick
Joe Zimmerly
17 Bob Edell
John Lu
18 Jeffrey Bricker
Dianne Selbrede
19 Harold Koch
20 Janet Kessler
21 Jim Nelson

22 Eric Carr
Peter Johnson
23 Donald Daily
Kimberly Stevens
24 Sabrina Ebright
Janet Rubin
Emily Valencia
25 Marvel Sheller
26 Bill Bender
Amy Carr
James Dinges
27 Janet Colby
Jean Leistico
Bruce Stevenson
28 Diana Hagen
Joseph Swindle
29 David Artuso
Kylan Blois
Mason Riley
31 Gil Valencia

Happy Anniversary to...

3 Jim & Susan Prosser
Sean & Cheryl Casey
7 Ron & Betty Ertel
12 Tom & Mona Neuhaus
Joe & Joni Swindle
20 Janet & Bill Bender
Karen & Robert Vieira
21 Jason & Jamie Godon
25 Nannette & Kevin Phipps
27 Brian & Patti Stouch
29 Pam & Mark Hoffman
30 Mark & Lisa Saner
31 Kathryn & David Artuso
Paul & Jenny Christensen

Happy Anniversary of Baptism to...

1 Diana Rose
Kevin Mason
Jeanne Kuchera
Daniel Casey

3 Jan Mason
Casey Barrett
Taylor Jane Barrett
6 Nancy Rowley
8 Rochelle Knutsen
10 David Hauser
11 Kate Fisher
Logan Riley
12 Pam Hoffman
Christopher Knutsen
15 Chloe Fernandez
Mia Fernandez
19 Heather Anderson
21 Nora Fajnor
23 Jim Nelson
Juli Watts
28 Barbara Burrow
29 James Geary
31 Jordan Duran