

Pastor's Report to Church Council for February 2020 Council Meeting
January 9 – February 18, 2020

This is a longer report period than usual due to the earlier scheduled January meeting to accommodate Annual Meeting timelines.

Worship at Mount Cross: There were 6 Sundays in this report period, with 12 Sunday worship services. I presided at 10 of them and preached at 8 of them. Pastor Lynn Enloe preached at both services on 2/2, allowing me to spend more time the previous week preparing for the Leadership Retreat. Pastor Bill Knutson preached and presided at both services on 2/16 while I was away for continuing education. I hope to welcome guest preachers about once a month to Mount Cross to allow the congregation to hear different voices and to allow me to give occasional focus to other congregational needs.

This month there was one baptism on 2/2 and three funerals on 1/18, 1/25 and 2/8. The funeral on 1/18 also included a graveside service. All three families expressed their deep gratitude to Mount Cross for beautiful services honoring their loved ones and for the Helping Hands ministry's compassionate assistance with the receptions.

I met with the Contemporary Worship Focus Team on 2/6. We continue to work together to offer a contemporary service that meets the needs of those in attendance. We are increasing opportunities for spontaneous prayers of intercession and offering healing prayer stations once each month. We are discussing the need to offer hospitality after the service to allow people to visit with each other. I am grateful to the Praise Band for their generous dedication to and care for the 10 am service.

I met with the Worship and Music Committee on 2/10. We discussed adding a 3rd service on Easter Sunday and decided it would be a sunrise service. We also discussed increased collaboration with our Full-Communion partners for Holy Week. At this time, St. Columba's *may* be joining us for the Easter sunrise service and we will make it a combined Easter Vigil – beginning in the darkness with the readings and celebrating Christ's resurrection as the sun rises. We *may* be joining with St. Columba's and another church for Good Friday. I invite Council comments about this.

Pastoral Care: I met with 6 people for "Get-to-Know-You" conversations this month, bringing the total to 67. Included in these conversations are potential new members of Mount Cross. I reach out to all local visitors who give their contact information and invite them to meet with me. Sign-ups from current members are slowing down. Please sign-up and encourage others to do so, either by calling the office or going online to <https://signup.com/go/> There are plenty of openings and I can always make more time slots available.

I made 3 Communion visits this month and, on 2/12, started what will be a monthly, short "Communion with Community" offering for people who are unable to make it to church for a full hour on Sunday mornings. 10 people attended. I continue to coordinate Home Communion visits from our wonderful Communion Ministers and always welcome referrals to this ministry. I had 11 pastoral meetings with Mount Cross people this month, including funeral and baptism preparation. I also offer pastoral care via phone and email, the number of which I do not track. I met with the Care Team on 1/9 and 2/6 and was happy to be at the well-attended luncheon for caring ministries on 1/12. We have an excellent and devoted Care Team. The addition of a Volunteer Coordinator will really help the Care Team expand its reach, as well as serving other needs in the church. The search is under way for the right person for that position. Please pray and spread the word.

Many thanks to local clergy, Pastor Lynn Enloe, Rev. Susan Klein and Pastor Bill Knutson for providing on-call pastoral care while I am away for continuing education 2/15-2/22.

Adult Education: Sunday Adult Education resumed on 1/5. The video series “The Lives of Great Christians” has been well-received. I estimate an average attendance of 15 people. Thank you to LaJean Wenzel for facilitating the class while I was away 2/16. Adult Bible Study resumed 1/15 and continues to reflect on the upcoming Sunday’s Gospel. Estimated average attendance is 10 people. Thank you to Allison Johnson for facilitating on 2/19 while I am away. Tuesday morning Women’s Bible Study resumed 1/14. We are using a study called “Slow Faith” published by Gather. Estimated average attendance is 9. Thank you to Allison Johnson for facilitating 2/18. Men’s Bible Study met at Denny’s on 1/9, 1/23 and 2/6. Estimated average attendance is 12. Thank you to Bill Stoll for facilitating on 2/6 and to Bill Greason who will facilitate on 2/20. In an effort to increase small group faith formation opportunities at Mount Cross, I invited a local spiritual director, Luisa Johnson, to offer introductory sessions of a group process called “Companions on a Journey with Jesus.” She offered these on 2/10 and 2/11. A total of 16 people attended. There may be enough interest to start two groups which would meet monthly.

Peace and Justice: The Peace and Justice Team met on 1/3 and 2/10. I am encouraged by the attendance (estimated 10-12 people). We are planning to be trained in a program called the Alternatives to Violence Project and, inspired by Karin Grennan, we set a goal to contribute 40 phone banking hours to Everytown for Gun Safety by Easter.

Children and Youth: Collaborating with Joe Zimmerly on Confirmation classes Wednesday nights continues to be a highlight of my week. We have wonderful middle school students and loving and dedicated Confirmation Guides, Brian Fischer and Patti Stouch.

Child Development Center: Joe Zimmerly has been leading Chapel for the CDC since he came on full-time in January. He has good ideas for building the connections between the church and the CDC, including offering “Ashes to Go” to preschool families at drop-off and pick-up times on Ash Wednesday. I’m looking forward to doing that with him.

Wider Church Involvement: I was approached by Pastor Brenda Bos (Pastor Reg’s successor at the Synod offices) asking if we would consider having a full-time ministry intern at Mount Cross for the coming academic year. This would be a person in seminary at Wartburg. No stipend is required but there is a hope that we would be able to contribute something. More conversations to follow about that.

I was pleased to write a letter of support for a grant application submitted to the Synod by Trinity, Ventura. They are partnering with a volunteer caregiving agency to establish comprehensive support services for older adults in ELCA churches. Mount Cross will be among the first churches they work with if the grant is funded.

I met with my clergy women’s support group at Holy Spirit Retreat Center in Encino on 2/3. I attended the ordinations for the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles on 1/11 at the Cathedral of St. John in Los Angeles as a member of the Bishop’s Commission on Ministry and also as a presenter of one of the candidates for the priesthood. Bishop Taylor has asked that I continue working with the Commission on Ministry to design the Diocesan Discernment Year for people considering ministry in the church. After a leave of absence from August-December 2019 while I was on-boarding at Mount Cross, it is important for me to re-engage with this service to the Diocese.

Full-Communion Partners and Ecumenical Involvement: I met with Father Greg Larkin from St. Columba’s to plan Ash Wednesday and to discuss the possibility of collaborating on some Holy Week observances, this year possibly including the Easter Vigil and Good Friday (see Worship above). I will be meeting with him and Pastor Gary Keene of Camarillo United Methodist Church in March to discuss other ways we can work together in the community.

Community Involvement: Representing Mount Cross, I attended the memorial service at Nancy Bush park for Kaydian Shipley. Also, from time to time I am asked to respond to pastoral needs of people not associated with

Mount Cross and who are unlikely to become formally associated. Sometimes people reach out to me directly or are referred by local health care providers. I respond as I am able, recognizing that my priority is to Mount Cross members.

Administration: Fingerprinting is still pending, but Safeguarding training is complete.

My first Mount Cross Annual Meeting was January 26. Thank you to President Craig Blois and Treasurer Keith Selbrede for clear presentations and a good meeting process and to the whole Council and congregation for a wonderful pot-luck dinner. Next year we can include narrative and/or visual highlights of the church year. Welcome new Council members! Thank you for serving!

The Leadership Retreat for Church Council and other leaders was Feb. 1. I was pleased with the turn out and the deep, thoughtful discussions. Notes from the day were sent to all in attendance. Based on the conversations that day and follow-up conversations. I will present some possible congregational goals to Executive Committee in March, to be further refined and brought to Council at the March meeting.

I met with the Personnel Committee on 1/31 to review the Employee Handbook. Thank you to Jim Prosser and his committee for bringing this big project to completion.

With the help of Becky Riley, I will be completing job reviews with the music staff in March, the Office Manager in April and the Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministries in May. Executive Committee will plan for my review in June or July.

My office remodel is progressing and looks great!

Looking Ahead:

- Mount Cross is hosting St. Columba's for Ash Wednesday at 7 pm on 2/26/20.
- Wednesday Lenten Soup Suppers (6pm) and Holden Evening Prayer (7pm) with a brief message every Wednesday in March.
- The Rev. Susan Klein will be preaching Sunday, March 15.
- I will attend the Bishop's Colloquy in Glendale the evening of March 15 - March 16.

Church Council: Thank you for your work, prayer and care! God bless you and our congregation.

Pastor's Report to Church Council for January 2020 Council Meeting December 17, 2019 – January 8, 2020

Worship at Mount Cross: Since the last Council Meeting, I preached and presided at 9 worship services, including 2 Baptisms and 2 Christmas Eve services. Thank you to the Altar Guild, Choir, Praise Band and all who served as Lectors, Assisting Ministers, Communion Assistants, Ushers and Greeters helping to make Christmas Eve beautiful, joyful and inviting. We had one worship service only on 12/29/19 and during the sermon I screened a short film on AMMPARO, the ELCA's strategy of Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities. On 1/2/20 I met with the Contemporary Worship Focus Group. We decided to incorporate an opportunity for healing prayers after communion on 1/26/20.

Pastoral Care: I met with 3 people for "Get-to-Know-You" conversations this month, bringing the total to 61. I made 5 Home Communion visits, and 6 pastoral visits, including 2 hospital visits. Services for John Colby III are being planned for 1/25/20. The Care Team is gathering all care related ministries for a lunch meeting on Sunday, January 12.

Adult Education: Since the last Council meeting, I facilitated one Wednesday night Bible Study on 12/18/19 and one Men's Bible Study on 12/19/19. Mark Storer's Sunday morning class on Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* concluded on 12/22 with a screening of a film adaptation of the book. Women's Bible Study concluded Advent Yoga Chapel with Pastor Jennifer Witten in December and will resume on 1/14/20 with another *Gather* curriculum. I launched the Adult Education series for this season after Epiphany on 1/5/20. It is called "The Lives of Great Christians" and will use video lectures from one of The Teaching Company's Great Courses.

Children and Youth: I joined the Confirmation class in Christmas caroling to some home-bound or elderly parishioners on 12/18/19. It was heart-warming to see how meaningful it was to both the carolers and those visited.

Child Development Center: I led 2 chapel services after the last council meeting in December. Chapel resumed 1/7 and 1/8 and I am working to transition Joe Zimmerly into the role of chapel leader for the CDC.

Wider Church Involvement: I met with my clergy women's support group at Holy Spirit Retreat Center in Encino on 1/6/20.

Administration: Joe, Carina and I completed the required Harassment Prevention and Safeguarding God's Children video training on 12/30 and 12/31.

We have been working to refine office hours, office coverage and days off. The office will continue to be open 10-5 Monday-Thursday and 10-1 on Friday. Carina will work most Sundays from 12-3 rather than Fridays from 10-1, thus allowing her to have two days off each week. She will arrange for volunteer office coverage on Fridays from 10-1. Joe will generally have Mondays and Saturdays off, although his camp schedule during January and February will require shifting days off. I am switching my day off to Monday (and Saturday when possible). I will use Fridays as a writing day off site.

I met with Executive Committee on 1/2/20 to consider the 2020 budget and Annual Meeting Agenda. Carina is completing assembly of the Annual Report so it will be available two weeks in advance of the January 26, 2020 Annual Meeting.

The new phone system is up and running, thanks to Gil Valencia and the Technology Committee!

Looking Ahead:

Men's Bible Study resumes 1/9/20

Women's Bible Study resumes 1/14/20

Wednesday night programs, including Adult Bible Study and Confirmation resume 1/15/20

The Annual Meeting and Pot-luck is Sunday, January 26 at 4 p.m.

The Church Council Retreat is Saturday, February 1 – time and place TBA

I will be away 2/15-2/22 for continuing education focused on worship and preaching for Lent, Holy Week and Easter.

Mount Cross is hosting St. Columba's for Ash Wednesday at 7 pm on 2/26/20.

Pastor's Report to Church Council for December Council Meeting November 19, 2019 – December 16, 2019

Worship at Mount Cross: In addition to the regular Sunday worship schedule this month (2 services each Sunday at 8:30 a.m. and 10:00 am.) Mount Cross offered a Thanksgiving Eve Holden Evening Prayer Service. I presided and preached at 6 of the 8 Sunday services. I am grateful to Pastor Ron Cox, the guest preacher and presider on 11/23, and Allison Johnson and Jayne Pompey, presiders at Holden Evening Prayer on 11/27, while I was away. We began a new church year with the first Sunday of Advent on December 1. "Farewell and Godspeed" to the Riley family was incorporated into the 8:30am service on 12/15. I met with the

Contemporary Service Focus Group on 12/5. While acknowledging the wide-range of hopes for the service, we chose to focus this month on inviting more heart-felt, spontaneous prayers during the Prayers of Intercession. I met with the Worship and Music Committee on 12/9. The Altar Guild, Sanctuary Choir, Bell Choir, Praise Band and Church Council are all represented on the Worship and Music Committee.

Pastoral Care: I met with 5 people for “Get-to-Know-You” conversations this month, bringing the total to 58. I made 9 pastoral visits, including 1 to the hospital. I met with the Care Team on 11/21. I appreciate their work to make sure that members of the congregation are supported in their physical and spiritual needs. The Care Team is gathering all care related ministries for a lunch meeting on Sunday, January 12.

Adult Education: Since the last Council meeting, I facilitated 1 Men’s Bible Study and 1 Women’s Bible Study. For Advent, the Women’s Bible Study welcomed Pastor Jennifer Witten to lead Yoga Chapel, an integration of yoga and Christian meditation. The prayerful yoga experience was well-received by the group. All 4 Sunday Adult Education classes this month had guest teachers. Many thanks to Allison Johnson for leading a session on “Reaching Out to the Unchurched” on 11/23 while I was away and to Mark Storer for teaching a three-week class (12/1, 12/8 and 12/15) on Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol*. Based on the high attendance at the Sunday Adult Education programs this month, I think people appreciate learning from a variety of teachers/facilitators, especially those who are passionate about the subject they are teaching. I welcome suggestions for adult education topics and leaders in the new year. The Wednesday evening Bible Study (focusing on the upcoming Sunday Gospel reading) met 3 times since the last Council meeting. Thank you to Melissa Henry for leading the study on 12/4. The Wednesday evening family dinners prepared by John Colby IV continue to earn rave reviews. I joined in the Peace and Justice Team meeting on 12/9 and am pleased with the group process to research community responses to gun-violence and discern how we can best participate in these efforts.

Children and Youth: Joe Zimmerly and I teach Confirmation on Wednesday nights, well-supported by Confirmation mentors Brian Fisher and Patti Stouch. We are working our way through the Hebrew Bible and, thanks to Joe’s connections, welcomed a CLU student to teach a class on Noah and the Flood as a project for an education class at CLU. Joe comes on as a full-time staff member in January.

Child Development Center: I led 4 chapel services this month and spoke about the Advent Wreath at the CDC Christmas program on 12/12. I will help transition Joe Zimmerly into the role of CDC Chapel Leader when he comes on staff full-time in January.

Wider Church Involvement: I hosted the Collegium (the Lutheran Clergy of the Channel Islands Conference) at Mount Cross on December 5. The Rev. Melissa Maxwell-Doherty, Vice-President for Mission and Identity at CLU, came to Camarillo to meet with me and offer her thanks for Mount Cross’ consistent support of PLTS (Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary) and CLU. We discussed ways to deepen these relationships.

Ecumenical and Community Involvement: About 10 Mount Cross families went to St. Columba’s Advent Preparation Evening on December 1 to join in a pot-luck dinner and make Advent wreaths together, followed by an evening prayer service and blessing of the Advent wreaths. Participants found this to be a fun and meaningful event and we hope to make it an annual tradition. I met with Pastor Gary Keene of Camarillo United Methodist Church. We discussed ways for Mount Cross and Camarillo UMC to collaborate and connect. I hope to start a regular “Round Table” meeting with lay and ordained leadership from St. Columba’s and Camarillo UMC in the new year to promote our full-communion partnerships. I marched in the Camarillo Christmas Parade with the Ventura County Interfaith Community on 12/14.

Administration: I have one-on-one meetings weekly with Carina McVeigh and Joe Zimmerly and we meet together as a staff Wednesdays at 2pm. We have set aside two days in late December and early January to do all of our required background checks and misconduct prevention. **The date for reports to be submitted for the Annual Meeting is December 31, 2019. Please notify your committees about this important deadline.** The Pastor’s office remodel is progressing. New furniture and an area rug arrived. Carpet will be installed in

the new year. The Technology Committee will install the new office phone system, likely within the week. Planning for and implementing annual staff reviews is still needed. Carina offers this update to Council:

The last few weeks in the office have been dedicated to preparation for the busy Advent and Christmas seasons as well as the new year. One of the biggest challenges we've faced has been the change of the Office Manager position from a full time (36-40 hours per week) to part time (30-32 hours per week) position, while currently requiring the same responsibilities. Pastor Julie and I are working together to see how to best meet the needs of the Office Manager position in the hours allotted to it, including discussion of outsourcing some of these tasks to volunteers or other means of assistance.

It has been discussed beginning the week of January 6, 2020 that I shift my Friday hours to Sundays after church to better accommodate the needs of the congregation, and to have volunteer office coverage on Fridays to assist with smaller tasks. In addition to this, Joe will move his current day off from Thursday to Monday. Therefore, the busiest days of the week (Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays) would have all three front office staff on site.

It has been recommended by our Insurance Company (Church & Casualty) that all members of the Mount Cross Church Council have background checks completed for their own and Mount Cross' protection. At the very least, it is highly recommended that all members of the Executive Committee have background checks performed. I have these forms available if that is something Council wishes to proceed with.

I am continuing to learn more about the position and about Mount Cross every day, and am compiling a binder of Office Manager Guidelines as I learn. My biggest projects consist of updating our membership tracking software (ICON CMO), switching most of our systems into being primarily digital (or at least having digital backup records), and reorganization of the front office and its processes. Thank you!

Pastor's Report to Church Council for November Council Meeting October 16- November 18, 2019

Worship at Mount Cross: Total Sunday worship services with Holy Communion: 11, including All Saints Sunday on 11/3 with 2 baptisms and the welcoming of 17 new members to Mount Cross in the morning and my installation service in the afternoon. **I am thankful to the Call Committee, the Church Council, the Altar Guild, the Choir, Praise Band and the whole congregation for making the installation and reception such a joyful and meaningful celebration.** I met with the Worship and Music Committee on November 4, the Communion Ministers and Worship Assistants on October 19 and the Ushers and Greeters on November 9. There was one funeral with interment this month for Clairbell Peterson on Saturday, November 16. The Praise Band Director and I convened a meeting on 11/14 for all who are interested in building up the 10:00 am contemporary worship service. There is strong commitment to the service and hope that it can develop and grow, even as there are a diversity of needs people are hoping to meet with the service and wide-ranging, even contradictory, definitions of "contemporary."

Pastoral Care: I met with 20 people for "Get-to-Know-You" conversations this month, bringing the total to 53. I made three hospital visits and one visit to a skilled nursing facility. I worked to prepare new members for Baptism and Affirmation of Baptism on Nov. 3. I joined the Care Team at their meeting on October 31 and am hopeful that we can develop a stipended Volunteer Coordinator position (MBC funds request submitted) to help meet the needs of Mount Cross members and ministries. I have consulted with mediators about a process for healing and reconciliation related to the Pavilion construction and will continue to discuss a path forward with Executive Committee. In addition to visits, I make phone calls and check-in personally with people when I am aware of specific needs. I would like to have more time to visit people. In December, I will focus on visiting those who are ill or homebound.

Adult Education: Since the last Council meeting, I facilitated 4 Women's Bible studies, continuing the *Gather* curriculum "In Good Company"; 3 Men's Bible studies at Denny's focusing on the upcoming Sunday Gospel text; 3 Wednesday evening Bible studies focusing on the upcoming Sunday Gospel (we had to cancel one Wednesday due to high winds and likely power outages) and Susan Prosser facilitated an inspiring discussion on stewardship on 11/13. I taught 3 Sunday Adult Education classes: "Living our Baptism – part 3" on 10/19 and "There is a Season" on 11/10 and 11/17 focusing on the liturgical calendar, especially Advent and Christmas. Mark Storer taught a well-received class on the stewardship of creation on 10/26. We are thrilled that he will be teaching Sunday Adult Education for three weeks (12/1, 12/8 and 12/15) on Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. I continue to attend Monday Meditation as much as possible. The Tuesday Women's Bible study will have a guest leader, Pastor Jennifer Witten, from 9:30am-10:30am on 12/3, 12/10 and 12/17 for "Advent Yoga Chapel" which integrates yoga and Christian meditation. The Service and Missions Committee launched a new Peace and Justice Team focused on responding to gun violence with a screening of the film *Beating Guns* on 10/22 and followed-up with a meeting on 11/5 for all who are interested. We will meet monthly. I am committed to this project.

Children and Youth: I am working with Joe Zimmerly on the Wednesday evening Confirmation Class. I am looking forward to the new year when he will be with us full-time.

Joe Zimmerly offers this summary of his work this month to Council:

This month we have implemented a nursery staff and fun with faith volunteers. As we slowly build our volunteer groups, we are continuing to work through the Old Testament with our Confirmands growing in our faith and in community with one another. On our Wednesday nights, we will be learning a new grace every month in hopes to learn 12 new table graces every year. For High School youth group we will be moving our meeting times from 11am-1pm on Sundays to a new time (to be decided) in the coming weeks. We also, have completed a Parents Night Out on Friday the 15th. We are preparing for the Christmas play which will be taking place on December 15th at 7pm. We look forward to the new year as we will begin having monthly "All Church" Events where we are hoping to gather people of all ages in the church once a month for a fun outing. We also will be starting a region-wide young adults bible study group that will meet regularly.

Child Development Center: I led 10 chapel services since the last Council meeting and spoke on family spirituality at the CDC Fall Open House on October 28. It had to be rescheduled from October 25 because of a power outage due to high winds.

Administration: I have one-on-one meetings weekly with Carina McVeigh and Joe Zimmerly and we meet together as a staff Wednesdays at 2pm. We have set aside two days in late December and early January to do all of our required background checks and misconduct prevention. In January, the Office Manager's Friday office hours will shift to Sunday. She will work to schedule office volunteers to cover the current 10am-1pm Friday window. The Pastor's office remodel is progressing: the walls and ceiling have been painted thanks to Melissa and Gordon Henry and Jan Mann. Furniture will soon be installed. Melissa Henry is assisting me in packing up the office so that the current furniture can be donated and space made for the new furniture. Carpet will be installed in the new year. The new phone system has been ordered thanks to the Technology Committee. Installation is pending. Planning for and implementing annual staff reviews is still needed. I welcome support from the Personnel Committee in this area.

Wider Church Involvement: I met with the Collegium (the Lutheran Clergy of the Channel Islands Conference) on November 7. I will host the Collegium at Mount Cross on December 5 from 10am-12pm. I have taken a five-month leave of absence from my work with the Commission on Ministry in the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles as I transition into my ministry at Mount Cross. The Diocese is understanding and I hope to resume that work in the new year.

Ecumenical and Community Involvement: I spoke with Father Greg Larkin at St. Columba's to discuss points of collaboration between our congregations. He invited us to their Advent wreath-making and pot-luck dinner on Sunday, December 1 at 5:30 p.m. I hope Mount Cross participation will be strong. We are also publicizing their contemplative prayer service offerings in our newsletter and email communications. I met with Father Patrick Mullen at Padre Serra Catholic Church. We discussed ways to join together in introducing people to Christianity. He invited us to have a table at their Alpha program, a program of basic Christian faith formation. This program is widely used across denominations to introduce seekers to the Christian faith. Ascension Lutheran is also using it. I am in communication with Pastor Gary Keene at Camarillo United Methodist to set a time to talk about how we might work together in ministry.

I am abundantly grateful for the grace of God dancing all around Mount Cross, noticeable especially in the generous service members offer inside and outside the church. The Church Council is doing a remarkable job of leading the congregation with skill as well as faith. Thank you Church Council!

Pastor's Report to Church Council for October Council Meeting September 17- October 15, 2019

Worship at Mount Cross: Total Sunday worship services with Holy Communion: 6, including the "Tent Service" following Make, Bake Celebrate. 1 Funeral. We returned to two services on October 6 (8:30 am and 10 am). I met individually with the Music Director and the Praise Band Director at the end of September in anticipation of moving back to two services. I met with the Worship and Music Committee on October 7 and the Altar Guild for a training/re-orientation session on Saturday, October 12.

Pastoral Care: I met with the Care Team this month and appreciate the many ways they reach out to support and care for members of the church, especially those who are no longer able to attend Sunday worship. I worked with Mary Goodenough, the Coordinator of the Home Communion Ministry, to train and re-orient Home Communion Ministers on Sunday, September 29. I met with 21 people for "Get-to-Know-You" conversations this month, bringing the total to 33. These conversations are the highlight of my work week. I made one Home Communion visit and continue to touch base in person or by phone with people experiencing health or other concerns. I have discussed with Executive Committee my sense that there is a need for healing and reconciliation around issues related to the Pavilion construction. In collaboration with the Executive Committee, I am discerning pathways towards reconciliation, including the possibility of bringing in skilled reconcilers to work with us at Mount Cross. I ask for your prayers about this matter.

Adult Education: I had one Adult Education planning meeting. The Adult Education Committee no longer has any active members. I am considering ways to move forward with a team approach to Adult Education. This month I held 4 Women's Bible studies using a Gather Curriculum called "In Good Company" about women in the Bible; 2 Men's Bible studies focusing on the upcoming Sunday Gospel text; 4 Wednesday evening Bible studies focusing on the upcoming Sunday Gospel and 3 Sunday morning adult education classes (9/21 "The Heart of Mount Cross" taught by Denise Sobolik; 10/6 "Living Our Baptism -Part 1; and 10/13 – Living Our Baptism part 2). I attend Monday Meditation when possible (love it!).

Children and Youth: I am working with Joe Zimmerly on the Wednesday evening Confirmation Class. The focus this year is the Hebrew Bible. The students are memorizing the books of the Old Testament and growing to appreciate the gift of scripture and the work of reformers whose courage and sacrifice made it possible for us to have access to the Bible in our language.

Joe Zimmerly offers this summary of his work this month to Council:

It has been over a month and I am overjoyed to be here at Mount Cross! Other than building relationships with our children, youth, and families I have started creating safe policies and

practices when working with children in effect like Safe Guarding God's Children, building a youth ministry team made of dedicated volunteers, and re-implementing the nursery and staffing it. During the first week of preschool I was able to meet every child and their parent as they walked in with a flyer that explained events to look forward to from September and October. Every week I average at about 20-25 hours a week (sometimes more) while balancing 17 units at school! Usually you can find me in the office Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings when needed along with Sunday mornings.

Looking forward, some things that will be happening is our Pumpkin Patch day at Limoneira Ranch with Camp Sunday with Lutheran Retreats Camps and Conferences visiting us and building our relationship with the camps. We also have a Parents Night Out coming up on October 25th. A youth room makeover is in the works and we are looking forward to a great year in all of our programs!

Child Development Center: I led 8 chapel services this month (two each week) for the preschool, usually focusing on the Sunday Gospel or an object (e.g. the stained glass windows or the Baptismal Font) they can see in the church.

Other Events:

Make, Bake Celebrate: WOW! The organizing and execution of the event was impressive, as were the results. It was a wonderful evening of generosity and community. Kudos to the planning team and thank you to all who contributed to the event!

Stewardship: I celebrate the excellent work of this year's Stewardship Team. I attended the Stewardship Dinner and "Money Matters" workshop for Adults and Children on October 13.

Administration: I have one-on-one meetings weekly with Carina McVeigh and Joe Zimmerly and we meet together as a staff Wednesdays at 2pm. The Pastor's office remodel is progressing – painting is planned for October 17 and 18. My phone still does not work, nor does Joe's. The Technology Committee is working on it. Another administrative need is planning for and implementing annual staff reviews.

Carina McVeigh offers this summary of her work to Council:

Things in the office are going well as I continue to get accustomed to the Office Manager position. Aside from maintaining weekly responsibilities such as the Sunday bulletins, announcements, worship PowerPoint presentations, etc., my main priorities are revamping the organizational system in the office computer, updating member logs, and simplifying some of our weekly processes. I've also been working with Joe and Pastor Julie to revitalize our social media presence and eventually, with the help of the communications team, the website. Pastor Julie, Joe, and I have also been discussing the possibility of modifying my work hours in the new year when Joe is full time. These modified hours would have me in the office from at least 10a to 5p Monday through Thursday, and staying after worship for between an hour and a half and three hours on Sundays. Balancing two roles at Mount Cross (Office Manager and Praise Band Director) has proven to be a challenge, but I'm hopeful and excited for all the wonderful things happening for the church in this time.

Wider Church Involvement: Along with 3 members of Mount Cross, I attended the Conference Assembly with met Bishop Guy Erwin at CLU on September 20. I met with the Collegium (the Lutheran Clergy of the Channel Islands Conference) on October 3. I attended the first half of the CLU Convocation as a Convocator on October 10.

Community Involvement: I spoke at the Interfaith March for Peace and Justice in Oxnard on September 21 for the International Day of Peace.

Installation: I'm looking forward to my installation as Pastor of Mount Cross at 2pm on Sunday, Nov. 3 and am grateful to the Music Director, Praise Band Director, Call Committee and Church Council for helping organize the liturgy and reception. Bishop Erwin will preach and preside and representatives from the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles will attend, as well as ecumenical and interfaith representatives.

Pastor's Report August 21- September 16, 2019

Respectfully Submitted by Pastor Julie Morris to the Mount Cross Church Council

Worship at Mount Cross: Sunday worship is the center of our congregational life and my first priority as Pastor. It is my joy to preach and preside at Sunday Worship and to offer a warm, friendly welcome to all on behalf of Christ and the congregation. This month: 4 Sunday services with Holy Communion, 1 funeral with Holy Communion, 5 sermons.

Pastoral Care: Through relationship-building with members, response to critical needs, welcome of newcomers and visitors and support for lay pastoral ministry, I hope to embody Christ's care for each person in our congregational community. I set a goal of having "get-to-know-you" meetings with every member of the church by Pentecost 2020. To date, I have formally met with 12 people. I also continue to reach out to all visitors and newcomers and respond to pastoral needs as they arise.

Committees and Teams: I give thanks for the many Committees and Teams at Mount Cross and the generosity of those who lead them and serve on them. My focus is getting to know the leadership and functioning of these groups. This month I attended the following committee and team meetings: Care Team, Welcome Team, Stewardship, Worship and Music (2), Helping Hands, MBC (Make, Bake, Celebrate), Praise Band, Learning Committee and Executive Committee. I also met with the Lead of the Altar Guild and maintain regular contact with the Lead of the Property Committee.

Adult Education: I am committed to ensuring Mount Cross offers quality adult Christian formation opportunities. Men's Bible study continues every other Thursday morning at Denny's; Sunday Adult Education resumed Sept. 8; a new Women's Bible study begins September 17; and Adult Bible Study resumes September 18. I facilitated two Men's Bible studies, attended Mary's Circle Women's Bible Study, attended Service and Mission's screening of *Wasted*, taught "The Heart of Christianity" on September 8 and attended "The Heart of Lutheranism" taught by LaJean Wenzel and Allison Johnson on September 15.

Children and Youth: Through supervision and support of our Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministry, I am committed to ensuring that Mount Cross offers quality Christian formation for our children and youth. Joe Zimmerly began his work as Director of Children, Youth and Family Ministries on August 26. I have been working closely with him to help orient him (as far as I can) to Mount Cross and the Children's Programs. He has been well-supported by the Learning Committee. Joe has coordinated and facilitated Children's Church and nursery each Sunday, as well as Youth Group. He took several youth to the Labor Day Interfaith Harvest preparation day on Sunday, Sept. 1 and the event itself on Monday, Sept. 2. He is coordinating Confirmation which begins on September 18. He and I will co-teach Confirmation.

Child Development Center: I met with the CDC staff at their opening staff meeting and lead their time of devotion on August 28, spoke at all of their parent orientations Sept. 3-6 welcoming families to Mount Cross and inviting moms to the new Women's Bible Study (REAL) and attended the CDC Board Meeting on Sept. 10. CDC Chapel resumes twice each week on Sept. 17.

Administration: The new Office Manager, Carina McVeigh, and I continue to work together to learn the administrative systems at Mount Cross. Carina, Joe and I are meeting weekly as a staff to help ensure good communication and collaboration and to follow up with necessary safety training (Safeguarding God's Children, fingerprinting, etc.)

Wider Church Involvement: I met with Bishop Guy Erwin and Pastor Reg Schultz-Akerson at the Lutheran Center in Glendale on August 21 and preached at their mid-week worship service. I met with the Collegium (the Lutheran Clergy of the Channel Islands Conference) on September 5. I continue to serve on the Commission on Ministry for the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles, serve as a formal mentor to a newly ordained clergy person and meet monthly with a clergy women's support group.

Community Involvement: I served as the M.C. at the Abundant Table's Feast in the Fields on August 26 and coordinated the 4th Annual Interfaith Labor Day Harvest at the Abundant Table Farm on Sept. 1. I presided at the funeral of a family member for a colleague from the Episcopal Church and at the renewal of wedding vows for a former campus ministry student.

Installation: The date for my installation as Pastor at Mount Cross has been rescheduled for Sunday, Nov. 3 in the afternoon, time to TBA.

FYI: An excerpt from Father Greg Larkin's Column in St. Columba's Episcopal Church September Newsletter

"Don't think that nothing ever happens in the summer. This past summer has been full of action and activity here at St. Columba's. We once again had a successful booth at the Camarillo Fiesta and continued our Stories Around the Campfire Bible Study and other programs as well. The Vestry Chili Cook-Off was a delightful evening of community and conversation, and we raised a little money in the process. And we refurbished the parish hall restrooms!

But all this pales in comparison with the summer our Lutheran Brothers and Sisters at Mount Cross have had. They made history by calling perhaps the first Episcopal Priest to be their full-time Pastor, Julie Morris. In a letter, Julie shares some of her hopes and dreams:

Dear St. Columba's,

I am writing to share with you that, after a surprising sequence of events that felt Spirit-led, I was called to serve as the Pastor of Mount Cross Lutheran Church in Camarillo beginning August 1. The Episcopal Church has been in full communion with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America since 2000. This full communion partnership, known as Called to Common Mission, allows for the sharing of ordained priests and pastors as a visible sign of the unity between our churches. Because I am an ecumenist by theology and life experience, I am especially excited for this opportunity to be living into what I hope is the future of the church: deeper relationships between denominations so that together we can be of greater service, in Jesus' name, to the community. I am grateful to Fr. Greg for his support and to our Bishop John Taylor and the Lutheran Bishop, Guy Erwin, for their blessings on this new call. I and the people of Mount Cross are looking forward to continuing and developing the already existing relationship between Mount Cross and St. Columba's according to the creative guidance of the Holy Spirit. I look forward with hope to all that is to come. As I said on Pentecost Sunday, when I had the joy of being with you for that great feast and St. Columba's

Day, "We are all in this together." Thank you always for your love and prayers!

Peace,

Julie Morris +

We don't know what all this means or where it will go. As we move forward, we will strive to be open to the whisper of the Holy Spirit as we work to be faithful to God's call to us.

Faithfully yours,

Fr. Greg"



Pastor's Report August 20, 2019

Gratitude: Office Volunteers! Church Council! Committee Leadership and Members! The warm welcome from the whole congregation!

Worship

3 Sunday worship services with sermons, 1 with a Baptism

Pastoral Care

- 1 Baptism preparation
- 2 deaths, funerals pending
- 1 funeral planning meeting
- 2 Telecare calls
- 1 Home visit with farewell blessing
- 1 Home visitation with Holy Communion
- 1 Home bereavement visit

Newcomer/Visitor Follow-up

- Emails sent to all inviting to meet with me in the office
- 4 newcomer meetings

Programs: VBS; Many Meals; Men's Bible Study; Monday Meditation (2)

Meetings: Executive Committee, Learning Committee; Adult Education; Service and Missions (partial); Lutheran clergy breakfast; Lynn Bullock regarding Synod Mental Health Programming grant; Bishop Erwin (8/21); Worship and Music Chair; oriented to Altar Guild

Administration: Working collaboratively on new hire arrangements for self, Office Manager, Youth Children and Family Director, Assistant and Cook; helping to on-board new Office Manager; thinking through Fall worship schedule; office remodel discussions

Pre-school: Will attend all orientations, first staff meeting and first board meeting

Adult Education Plan:

- "The Heart of the Matter" Sundays Sept. 8, 15, 22 11am-12pm
- The Heart of Christianity (9/8; Pastor Julie)
- The Heart of Lutheranism (9/15; LaJean and Allison)
- The Heart of Mount Cross (9/22; Denise S.)

Bible Study resumes Wednesday's at 5pm beginning 9/18

New Women's Bible Study Tuesdays, beginning 9/17 at 8:30am-10am with invitations to all, especially pre-school moms

Men's Bible Studies continue every other Thursday at 7:30 am at Denny's

On the horizon:

Fall Worship Schedule and Contemporary Service Planning; Joe Zimmerly begins 8/26

Nursery Care- may need to re-instate

All Saints Sunday welcome and Baptisms

Needs: Computer; prayers