

MISSION FRONTIERS

Mission Lutheran Church, Las Cruces, NM

Pastor's Pen

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law" (Gal. 5:22-23).

As a people, as citizens of a blessed country, as members of a church family and as a congregation of a larger Church body, we have gone through something that has been unusual for us in our lifetime, a stay-at-home order during the outbreak of a pandemic/plague. This and other measures have affected us in ways that for some have been more than inconvenient. Some of our neighbors have been furloughed from employment, others have lost their jobs, some have gone from one level of financial stability into financial instability. Some worked from home. Some people were infected by COVID-19 and recovered, while others died at its indiscriminate hand. Some churches continued to gather for worship; most others did not but instead have recorded and viewed live-stream or video-recorded Services of the Word at home.

Continued on next page →

In this issue:

- Prayer Ministry
- Stewardship
- Youth fundraising
- Birthdays and anniversaries
- Council meeting minutes
- Treasurer's Report

Important Dates:

- June 2: Special Council meeting via Zoom
- June 6–7: In-person services resume
- June 9: School Board meeting
- June 9: LWML Bible study via Zoom
- June 14: Voters' Assembly via Zoom
- June 16: Church Council meeting via Zoom
- June 21: Father's Day

Vacation Bible School, originally scheduled for June 8-12, has been canceled



Some held Services in their church parking lots. Some businesses remained open throughout those stay-at-home orders while others closed. Some states remained opened and operated close to usual while most closed for several weeks.

This has been a time of ongoing evaluation of best precautions, better information, of comparison of various practices, and weighing the decisions of political, church, academic, medical and business leaders. It has been a learning process to be sure. Perhaps it is safe to say that each of us has had disagreements with our various leaders' decisions of how best to deal with this pandemic. If ever there was a time that we could have, like most of the Israelites did in the time of Moses, murmured against our leaders and against the Lord, it would have been this time. But you didn't, at least not to a public extent! Instead, you have given way to the Holy Spirit bearing His fruit in you, and for this I give our heavenly Father thanks in the name of our risen Lord Jesus Christ!

We must keep in mind the call of God to each of us who follows the Lord Jesus in a time of national plague or famine. The Lord says,

When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command the locust to devour the land, or send pestilence among my people, if my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land (2 Chronicles 7:13-14).

Let us not lose sight of this call to us as God's people in Christ. I have thought of this time as a penitential Lent out of its usual season, that what we have been bearing in heart is what a Lenten season is designed to evoke, a personal stripping away of distractions which have kept our hearts and minds away from pondering our Lord and higher, heavenly things (Colossians 3:1-3), a turning toward our neighbor in need (Isaiah 58:6-10), a renewed tending to that one thing that is needful for us which shall not be taken away from us (Luke 10:38-42). In short, the lifting up of our hearts to heaven and heavenly things of Word and the Sacraments, and of our eyes to our neighbor near to us (John 4:1-42).

We will resume in-person Services of the Word in the first weekend of June, having multiple Services in order to accommodate everyone and allow for social distancing. You will receive an email or letter from our church office explaining more of the specifics of when and how those Services will be held. I'm sure you say with me as we say with the psalmist, "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the LORD'" (Psalm 122:1)!

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Robert Carabotta



Mission Lutheran Church and School Prayer Ministry

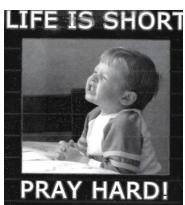
Still missing your church family?



How is our Heavenly Father calling us to pray as we journey through these unfamiliar times? Even as many of us resume a shorter, new version of worshipping together, we will not be “with” one another as we once were. We will be separated by fewer numbers joining together, by a “social distance” we never considered before, and by masks!

And yet, we are united with our Lord Jesus though we can’t yet physically be “with” Him! He is with us and we are with Him just as He prayed that night in Gethsemane (John 17) that as He and the Father are One, we would be one with Him. That unity has been and IS. He went on to pray that we would in the same way be one with one another. Our unity is not dependent on being together physically, just as our unity with our Lord is not dependent on being together physically. We can always unite in prayer! Some thoughts of how to pray for one another as we strive together to pray without ceasing...

That we all may witness God revealing His faithfulness, grace and love
That we are comforted, protected and strengthened
That our hearts, minds and spirits are renewed often
That we see the power of God at work in the world
That the Spirit works through each of us to reach out to others with the comfort of knowing Him
That we hunger to know our Lord better and spend time in His Word
That we have confidence in our Lord’s provision of all we need both individually and as His church
That our knowledge of our Lord’s love for us deepens
That we long for time in prayer, just as He longs for us to spend time in His presence



Stewardship

The sin of the world is paid for. God's Law has been kept perfectly on our behalf. The prophecies have all been fulfilled. Jesus Christ has finished it all! And that, dear Christians, should fill us with complete confidence in our salvation. Since Jesus has finished all these things in His self-sacrifice, we can be fully certain our sins are forgiven, and we have everlasting life!

St. Paul wrote: "I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship." (Rom. 12:1)

We hear the same teaching in 1 Peter. "As you come to him, a living stone, rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, you yourselves, like living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 2:4-5)

It's the very thing Malachi foretold of the Lord, that He would come and purify His priestly people, that they may offer to Him an offering in righteousness. (Mal. 3:3)

So, what does this mean? In view of God's mercies – that is, because Jesus sacrificed Himself to make us pure, giving His entire self into death – Paul said that we are to sacrifice ourselves entirely to God, offering Him our whole lives. For our Savior did not give Himself for us in part. So, we do not give back to Him in part.

We don't offer ourselves to God just on Sunday mornings or Wednesday evenings, for example. Rather, we give Him our whole selves, all the time. We understand that offering ourselves to God as living sacrifices involves the giving of our time. It requires us to be faithful stewards of the time He has given us. Yes, it means we devote to our Savior all our time. Otherwise we are not sacrificing our whole lives.

You see, God both teaches us, and has graciously qualified us, to present ourselves to Him as living sacrifices – to live as His holy priests, who offer Him acceptable sacrifices through Jesus Christ, all day, every day, in our various callings.

In the passages from Romans and 1 Peter, we hear several examples of Christian self-sacrifice: serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, leading, showing mercy, living peaceably with others, submitting to governing authorities and those over us in the workplace, wives submitting to husbands, husbands honoring wives, showing compassion, and suffering patiently in doing good.

In all these things, and in all our other everyday activities, we sacrifice ourselves by using our time, not just for our own benefit, but also and especially for the well-being of others. Work time, school time, exercise time, study time, mealtime, chore time, recreation and relaxation time, even sleep time – it's all God's gift to us to use for purposes that please and honor Him.

This challenges us to think about the way we spend our time, how we utilize our talents, and the way we spend our treasures. Whatever it is I'm doing, am I doing it "for the Lord"? (Col. 3:23) Am I presenting God a living sacrifice? Am I conducting myself as a holy priest, whose sacrifice is acceptable to God?

Because our Lord sacrificed Himself wholly for us, we offer ourselves wholly to Him as living sacrifices. This is following Jesus in self-sacrifice. By His saving mercy, yes, our sacrifice is acceptable to God. For the sake of Jesus' finished work, God is pleased with us.

Fundraising for Youth Attending the “Higher Things” Conference

Several youth members of our congregation will be attending the “Higher Things” Conference at Fort Collins, CO, this summer. This is an awesome opportunity for our youth to fellowship with youth from other congregations.

In order to allay the costs of attending, the youth are willing to provide a number of services to our church family members and friends any time between now and June 20th. If you have a need for any of the following, please contact Erin Nicholson:

- Yard work
- Dog washing/walking
- Car washing
- Manual labor
- Meal preparation
- Household chores

Please be as generous as you are able with your donations! Checks should be made out to Mission Lutheran church with “Higher Things” written on the memo line.

If you have any questions, please contact Erin at (512) 571-7505 or via email at erin.mn1482@gmail.com.





Birthdays of the Month

June Birthdays

Miller	Shirley	7
Vance	Jim	9
White	Jan	12
Dressler	Alice	16
Carabotta	Eva	19
Staffeldt	Chuck	21
Scaling	Bev	22
Siffring	Connie	26
Willett	Roberta	28
Carrera-Little	Amy	30



June Anniversaries

		Date	# of years
Turquette	James & Phyllis	4	43
Poppy	Mark & Holly	6	39
McCurley	Dan & Jacki	20	33
Quinlan	Pat & Jean	22	56
Siffring	Al & Connie	26	64

Happy Anniversary to all those couples married in June.

May God continue to bless you.

If your birth and/or anniversary date is missing or incorrect, please notify Carol Moore in the church office.

MISSION LUTHERAN CHURCH
Council Meeting
April 21, 2020

President Greg Fant called the meeting to order at 6:39 p.m. Attending were Greg Fant, Brad Springer, John Guenther, Carol Moore, Pastor Carabotta, Fran Gunderson, Doug Lorenz, Amie Springer, Megan Wood, Mark Krohn, Alma Lorenz, Roberta Willet, Jan Peyton., and guest Mary Martin.

Pastor Carabotta led opening devotion based on Psalm 46, the basis for the hymn, “A Mighty Fortress is Our God.”

The minutes of the March 31, 2020, meeting were approved as emailed.

Action Items:

COVID relief bill and the school: MLCS will not be requesting funds because we have enough resources available. An email from Greg to Council members is attached documenting the research and discussion which led to this decision.

Zoom conferencing is being used for Bible Studies, Thursdays for 6:45 a.m. praise and prayer hour, and LWML gatherings. The group felt Zoom could be used for Bread Breakers. It was noted that members without computers could use the call-in feature to participate. Greg said that if he loses internet at his home, the Zoom conference ends. If this should happen, please wait five minutes for the meeting to continue.

Treasurer’s Report and Budget: John Guenther’s financial report and draft budget are attached. John noted that general contributions via mail-in are holding up very well. Some families paid through the end of the school year will receive refunds. In some instances, the prepaid tuition will be applied to the next school year.

John said that the draft budget has changed since the first draft which was distributed last month. Mary Martin has agreed to continue her role as school administrator until a new administrator is hired. The budget now reflects this rather than trying to estimate the impact of a full-time administrator. John felt his initial budget for general contributions was overly optimistic and has reduced the budget to \$4,800 per week. School tuition has been lowered because we know that some students will not be returning. John noted that the call to Andy Perry is still uncertain.

Council will review the budget again in May prior to taking it to a Voters’ Assembly.

Greg thanked John for his thorough work on the budget.

Process for Extending a Call to Candidate Andrew Perry: Pastor Carabotta’s outline of steps to extend a call is attached. It was noted that our By-laws direct that the Board of Elders, and its designees as approved by the voters, are to comprise the call committee. The Elders will address what Andy would do as an associate pastor.

Elder Appointment: Pastor Carabotta announced that Ken Martin has agreed to serve as Elder. President Fant appointed Ken to serve as Elder. Harvey White and Ken Martin’s appointments will be set for ratification at the next voters’ meeting.

Other Business:

Pastor’s Report: Pastor Carabotta noted that dates for the reception of new members and confirmation of members is tentative. We are praying that the stay-at-home order will be lifted before May 24.

Greg asked that contingency plans be addressed should the stay-at-home order be lifted but social distancing still be recommended. He noted that the Governor’s team is addressing how to reopen and appears to be developing a phased approach. It was noted that some members will still refrain from attending church services and activities for a time. Contingent possibilities include multiple services, recording services for those who cannot or prefer not to attend at this time, and using Zoom conferencing combined with others attending at Luther Hall for Voters’ meeting. The Board of Elders will address this issue and develop plans for going forward.

Continued on next page →

School Board Report: Megan Wood said that the search for a school administrator has effectively come to a standstill because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Everyone at the school is busy developing online classes and arranging how to deliver the materials needed for use at home.

Paul Albers has given suggestions on our write-up documenting the role of a full-time administrator for MLS. One topic is how to allow a new administrator to become comfortable with New Mexico.

MLS is moving forward with Angel Fund applications. Ms. Chris is doing a music class each week.

Vice President's Report: Brad Springer noted that his role as Vice President is limited. He told Greg that if there is a task that needs to be addressed, he is ready to take it on.

Brad is ready to help anyone. He can do calls, emails, whatever is needed.

Brad thanked everyone for their participation as officers and board members and for the good job being done.

Fellowship Report: Brad and Amie Springer have some ideas for Fellowship activities using virtual tools, perhaps Zoom conferencing. These include the sharing of recipes and discussing books that have been read.

Financial Secretary Report: Carol Moore said that she and Eric Gunderson continue to meet each week to count money. Carol picks up the mail each day. Anyone who wants to drop off a check can call Carol to arrange a meeting.

Trustees Report: Doug Lorenz said that he and Don Hallem have not been over to the church. There will be a lot to do when they can return and there will be a need for volunteers to help catch-up with yard clean-up.

Evangelism and Prayer Ministry Report: Alma Lorenz said that the Prayer Ministry is considering Zoom conferencing for Monday morning prayer times. She is considering establishing a group on Facebook to offer prayer with individuals.

Elders Report has already been covered in the Pastor's report.

Christian Education Report: Roberta Willet indicated she is in a holding pattern for now.

Christian Service and Missions: Fran Gunderson said that the contents of Pastor's Pantry has been donated to the Aggie Foodbank. Her email to Council is attached.

Stewardship Report: Mark Krohn said he is full of thankfulness for our new members, continued Bible classes, and our success in staying together as a congregation during this period of self-isolation.

Our next meeting is Tuesday, May 19, at 6:30 p.m.

Leadership Prayer Shield will include many thanks to the Lord as noted throughout this report, guidance as we recruit a school administrator, Lord's help in planning how to get voters together, and support for those identified in our prayer chain.

Pastor's Announcement: Pastor Carabotta received a call this morning from Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church, Gunnison, Colorado, to serve as their pastor. Pastor is required to notify the entire congregation of this call and he will be emailing a letter tomorrow afternoon. Carol Moore indicated she would mail the letter to those members who do not have a computer. Pastor said the normal interval is two to three weeks to accept or decline the call. This interval may be longer due to the pandemic restrictions, and he will be praying for God's guidance. Pastor asks everyone to pray for him during this time.

Note: Pastor's letter to the congregation was mailed April 22. A copy is attached.

Pastor Carabotta led us in closing devotion.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice F. Peyton, Secretary

TREASURER'S REPORT – MAY 2020 COUNCIL MEETING

Mission Lutheran Church and School

Report Preparation Date: May 19, 2020

<u>Budget Status:</u>	<u>Month of April 2020</u>		<u>FY Thru April 30, 2020</u>	
	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual*</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual*</u>
<u>Income:</u>				
MLC General	\$19,200.00	\$26,680.00	\$206,400.00	\$200,099.22
MLS Total	\$16,515.00	\$8,186.34	\$172,810.00	\$183,907.67
Designated / Other	\$125.00	\$280.79	\$1,250.00	\$7,799.77
	\$35,840.00	\$35,147.13	\$380,460.00	\$391,806.66
<u>Expenses:</u>				
MLC Total	\$13,882.33	\$12,408.66	\$160,094.52	\$151,479.98
MLS Total	\$20,457.19	\$18,245.24	\$219,648.04	\$218,470.71
	\$34,339.52	\$30,653.90	\$379,742.56	\$369,950.69
Net Difference	\$1,500.48	\$4,493.23	\$717.44	\$21,855.97

*Note: Actual figures also include income and expenses not originally budgeted for the fiscal year.

MLC General Fund Contributions – FY 2020 (Thru May 19, 2020):

Average Weekly Contributions Needed:	\$4,800.00
Average Weekly Contributions Received:	\$4,591.59
General Fund Contributions Year-to-Date:	\$211,213.22
General Funds Budgeted Year-to-Date:	\$220,800.00
Surplus/Shortfall Year-to-Date:	-\$9,586.78

Assets / Liabilities (As of May 19, 2020):

<u>Fund Assets:</u>	Endowment (as of May 19, 2020)	\$92,637.38
	Strasser (as of March 31, 2020)	\$47,893.47
<u>Current Assets:</u>	Checking	\$46,491.25
	LCEF Savings	\$116,711.14
	MLS	\$24,958.26
(minus designated)	Sabbatical	\$8,673.62
	Youth Activity	\$1,628.97
	Other	\$16.00
	Total Savings Available	\$81,434.29
<u>Liabilities:</u>	Mortgage Loan	\$26,936.66

Notes:

- Overall surplus will diminish over the last months of the fiscal year.
- MLS did not collect elementary tuition for May and preschool tuition for April.
- MLC general contributions via mail-in did very well in the month of April.



**Father's Day is Sunday,
June 21st**

Mission Lutheran Church and School

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School: (575) 532-5489

Emails: pastor@missionlutheran.net

secretary@missionlutheran.net

office@mlschool.net

We're on the web!

<http://missionlutheran.net>

<http://mlschool.net>

Elder on call: Robert Smits (575) 496-9479

Officers and Board Chairpersons for 2020

President	Greg Fant	Trustees	Doug Lorenz
Vice President	Brad Springer	Christian Education	Roberta Willett
Treasurer	John Guenther	Evangelism	Alma Lorenz
Secretary	Jan Peyton	Christian Service & Missions	Fran Gunderson
Financial Secretary	Carol Moore	Stewardship	Mark Krohn
Elders, Chairman	Robert Smits	Day School Education	Megan Wood
Elders, Vice-chairman	TBD	Fellowship	Amie Springer