

MISSION FRONTIERS

Mission Lutheran Church, Las Cruces, NM

Pastor's Pen

The Pastor's Pen article will not appear again until God leads a new shepherd to serve our congregation. Stay tuned!

In this issue:

- Prayer Ministry
- Stewardship
- Birthdays and anniversaries
- Church Council meeting minutes
- Treasurer's report

Important Dates:

October 10: LWML Rio Grande Zone Rally via Zoom

October 13: School Board meeting via Zoom

October 14-16: MLS Fall Break

October 19: LWML Bible study via Zoom

October 31: Reformation Day





Mission Lutheran Church and School Prayer Ministry

As we follow our Lord Jesus through this time, do we see Him at work? Do you see His answers to our prayers? I think in particular of His response to our diligent and sometimes desperate prayers for our sister-in-Christ, Ruth Staffeldt. We prayed diligently when her health deteriorated after surgery and she was on a ventilator. Her family told us it was hour by hour. Complications continued. As a congregation, we prayed. Our Lord's will was to heal her against human expectations. His further blessing was that she was unaware of uncomfortable times during her recovery! Let's continue to pray for Ruth, as her healing continues at home.

We have been blessed so many times to see our Lord's healing hand, and yet that is not always the case! Sometimes His answers are not what we expected... those for whom we pray are not healed in the way we hoped or in the time we hoped. There are times when our Lord is working in a different way, just as He did when Apostle Paul asked for healing for "the thorn" in his flesh: *"Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me, But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me."*

Particularly in these times, we are given the opportunity to see and experience answers to our prayers in more subtle, yet equally powerful ways. Patience, grateful hearts, peace and comfort are a few of the gifts given by our Heavenly Father to guide His loved ones through turbulent times. As Paul remembered his partners in faith in prayer, so we pray for one another! May we always remember to pray for (and notice!) less obvious ways our Father heals and shows His presence. May His love flow through us to others as we pray and assure one another of His love!

Is our Lord tugging at your heart to be a bigger part of the prayer effort at Mission? Even though many of our activities have been limited during the pandemic, opportunities for prayer abound! Spending time in our personal prayer closets is important, as is the corporate prayer during our Sunday worship services. You are invited and encouraged to join in other prayer activities!

E-mail prayer chain – contact Carol Moore with any prayer requests or to be added to the prayer distribution list.

Phone Prayer chain—contact Sonja Bonse to be added to her contact list .

Thursday Morning Prayer and Praise Hour – 6:45-7:30am via Zoom –the Morning Prayer Service is followed, along with a couple of (muted) hymns sung together and prayer for any current prayer needs. Some participants pray aloud, while others pray in silent agreement, as the Spirit leads. Contact Doug Lorenz to join.

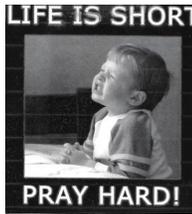
Saturday morning prayer 11:00-11:15 am via Zoom—"Mission Prayer Shield" - prayer coordinators, and others who are interested in joining, pray for the following areas of our lives together along with other prayer needs as they come up:

Missions and Fellowship
Christian Education
Pastors
Worship and Support

Contact Alma Lorenz to join.

Please also pray for the prayer ministry in your prayer times. If you see prayer opportunities for us during these times, please contact one of the prayer ministry coordinators, Alma Lorenz or Shirley Miller.

“Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”



"What God Ordains Is Always Good"

"What God ordains is always good; He is my Friend and Father; He suffers naught to do me harm,

Though many storms may gather. Now I may know both joy and woe; Someday I shall see clearly That He has loved me dearly.

"What God ordains is always good: This truth remains unshaken. Though sorrow, need, or death be mine, I shall not be forsaken. I fear no harm, for with His arm He shall embrace and shield me; So to my God I yield me."

"What God ordains is always good." As of this writing, the coronavirus pandemic still rages worldwide, bringing illness, death, financial loss, and fear. How can any of this be good? Scripture tells us of God's almighty power. He sent devastating plagues against Egypt, knowing Pharaoh would not release the Israelite slaves "unless compelled by a mighty hand" (Exodus 3:19b). God gave His permission to Satan to test faithful Job. At different times, God allowed enemies to conquer His people in order to bring Israel to repentance. He has said, "I form light and create darkness; I make well-being and create calamity; I am the LORD, who does all these things" (Isaiah 45:7).

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We have no biblical accounts or prophecies concerning the specifics of the coronavirus or detailing other disasters that we experience today, but we know from Scripture that God desires our salvation. He created us to live in paradise, as Adam and Eve once did. Yet we, like our first parents, choose otherwise, rebelling against God's Word and will, preferring to rule our own lives in a created world that suffers with us in "its bondage to corruption" (Romans 8:21b). But before the foundation of the world, God chose us, by grace alone, to be His own. He sent His Son to suffer the penalty of death that we deserve, to restore to us the life in paradise that we rejected through our sinful rebellion. Through Jesus' redeeming work, God is now our "Friend and Father." Storms still gather in this fallen world, and each day we experience "both joy and woe." Yet in "sorrow, need, or death" we know that God will never forsake us. We may not, in most sorrowful circumstances, recognize the "good," but we can be certain "that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28).

Our human intellect can never fully understand God's almighty power. It is not for us know His reasons or to expect, during this earthly life, the answers to all of our questions. One day, in God's presence in paradise, we will see clearly that even through pandemic, fear, and loss, He loved us dearly, embracing and shielding us in ways we could not see or imagine. We do not have the answers to every question, but we can be confident in this: "For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39).

THE PRAYER: Almighty Lord, lead us to trust Your promises, confident that what You ordain is always for our good. Amen.

From Lutheran Hour Ministries, this Daily Devotion was written by Dr. Carol Geisler. It is based on the hymn, "What God Ordains Is Always Good," which is found on page 760 of the *Lutheran Service Book*.



Stewardship

We celebrate the Reformation at the end of each October. The Reformation began on All Saints' Eve in 1517, which was when Martin Luther posted the 95 Theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg. So, let's hear from Luther himself on the topic of giving and stewardship.

In the Small Catechism under the Table of Duties, Martin Luther gives specific Bible passages to help Christians know their duty in their various vocations as members of their family, society at large, and in God's family, the Church. Under the heading "What Hearers Owe Their Pastors," Luther lists five passages from the Bible, three of which have to do with giving to your local congregation. They are these:

"The Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel." (1 Cor. 9:14)

"Anyone who receives instruction in the word must share all good things with his instructor. Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows." (Gal. 6:6–7)

"The elders [presbyters, i.e., pastors] who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially whose work is preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, 'Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain,' and 'The worker deserves his wages.'" (1 Tim. 5:17–18)

Luther comments on these passages in his 1535 Lectures on Galatians. He wrote:

"When Paul says 'all good things,' this is not to be taken to mean that everyone should share all his possessions with his preacher. No, it means that he should provide for him liberally, giving him as much as is needed to support his life in comfort. ... The apostle is so serious in advocating this topic of support for preachers that he adds a threat to his denunciation and exhortation, saying: 'God is not mocked.' ... All this pertains to the topic of support for ministers. I do not like to interpret such passages; for they seem to commend us, as in fact they do. In addition, it gives the appearance of greed if one emphasizes these things diligently to one's hearers. Nevertheless, people should be taught also about this matter, in order that they may know that they owe both respect and support to their preachers. Christ teaches the same thing in Luke 10:7: 'Eating and drinking what they provide, for the laborer deserves his wages'; and Paul says elsewhere (1 Cor. 9:13–14): 'Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings? In the same way the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the Gospel should get their living by the Gospel.' It is important for us who are in the ministry to know this, so that we do not have a bad conscience about accepting for our work wages ... it happens when those who proclaim the glory of God and faithfully instruct the youth derive their livelihood from them. It is impossible that one man should be devoted to household duties day and night for his support and at the same time pay attention to the study of Sacred Scripture, as the teaching ministry requires. Since God has commanded and instituted this, we should know that we may with a good conscience enjoy what is provided for the comfortable support of our lives from church properties to enable us to devote ourselves to our office." (LW 27:125–126)



Birthdays of the Month

October Birthdays

| | | |
|-----------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Eisenbraun | Joanie | 3 |
| Poppy | Mark | 4 |
| Fant | Beth | 5 |
| Guenther | John V. | 9 |
| Waters | Yvonne | 9 |
| Smits | Robert | 10 |
| Turk | Ryan | 12 |
| Carrera-Little | Nico | 15 |
| Peyton | Jan | 18 |
| Buls | Karen | 20 |
| Carrera-Little | Shylo | 20 |
| Aguilera | Jeannette | 23 |
| Duever | Doug | 23 |
| Lee | Winnie | 24 |
| Eggebraaten | Asher Elliot | 28 |
| Staffeldt | Scott | 30 |

Happy Anniversary

October Anniversaries

| | | Date | # of years |
|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Johnson | JR & Karen | 8 | 60 |
| Carrera-Little | Jerry & Amy | 15 | 32 |

*Happy Anniversary to all those couples married in
October.*

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
August 18, 2020

Vice President Brad Springer called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. Attending were Brad Springer, John Guenther, Carol Moore, Pastor Cramm, Robert Smits, Megan Wood, Fran Gunderson, Doug Lorenz, Amie Springer, Alma Lorenz, Roberta Willett, Andy Perry, Jan Peyton, and guest Mary Martin.

Andy Perry led us in devotion using Acts Chapter 16, verses 4-5.

Alma Lorenz moved, and Robert Smits seconded, that the minutes of the July 21 Council meeting be approved as emailed. The motion passed.

Acceptance of resignation of Greg Fant and appointment of Brad Springer as President: Vice President Springer announced that Greg Fant, who has moved to Colorado, has tendered his resignation as Council President. Greg's resignation was accepted. Brad said that he is willing to serve as President. Carol Moore moved, and Jan Peyton seconded, that Brad Springer be appointed as Council President. The motion passed.

Appoint Vice President: President Springer asked for recommendations for a replacement Vice President. Council identified several men to serve as Vice President. Brad will talk with them and, God willing, we will have a Vice President appointment at our September meeting.

Establish Nominating Committee: President Springer indicated that our by-laws state that a Nominating Committee be formed at August Council. That committee is to be comprised of all Officers and Board members whose terms are expiring at the end of the year. Jan Peyton moved, and Alma Lorenz seconded, that the Nominating Committee be formed following the specific guidelines in our by-laws. The motion passed.

Church Charter Frame Reimbursement: Greg Fant has been securing the original charter for Mission and he has returned it. The original copy is extremely faded. Carol Moore has had the charter framed using UV protective glass. The cost was in excess of \$700. Doug Lorenz moved, and Jan Peyton seconded, that Carol be reimbursed. The motion passed.

Pastor Perry Ordination Update: Synod approved Mission's call to Andy Perry, and Andy has accepted. Brad will work with the District President to hold Andy's ordination as soon as possible.

School Board Report: Megan Wood said that plans for the next school year have changed. Our Governor has indicated that private schools are considered to be businesses, which means that MLS can operate at only 25% of capacity. This would be five students per classroom, which is untenable. MLS will be offering off-site teaching for the entire semester and there will be no preschool. Some of our school parents asked MLS to consider going hybrid, but we do not have enough resources to do so. The School Board will revisit going back on-site in October. Some parents are unhappy with this change. We have lost a few students.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Cramm's report is included within the Elders' Report, which is attached. Andy Perry will be making contacts to schedule the Youth Confirmation Class. Nova Wood was identified as ready for this class. After ordination, Andy will begin visiting school families.

Elders' Report: Robert Smit's report is attached. August and November have five Sundays and Elder assignments have been made for those Matins services. Some folks have asked that we resume hymn singing. Two Breadbreaker groups are meeting via Zoom conferencing.

Four to five people are joining the Sunday 10:30 a.m. service via Zoom conferencing.

Treasurer's Report: John Guenther's report is attached.

Fellowship Board Report: Nothing new to report.

Financial Secretary Report: Carol Moore said that the Shepherds Staff software had a programming error that locked everyone out of the system. Microsoft had to patch the program to correct this situation.

Trustees Report: Doug Lorenz said that fixing the shed stucco cost \$2,100. On the north wall of Luther Hall, there is cracking and spreading at some of the windows. Doug anticipates this maintenance will cost around \$3,000.

Board of Evangelism and Prayer Ministry Report: Alma Lorenz thanked Pastor Cramm and Reverend Perry for reminding us to share our faith, as opportunities are few during this time of social restrictions. The Board is considering offering "Joining Jesus on His Mission" via Zoom conferencing. The Monday morning prayer meeting has been moved to Saturday at 1:00 p.m.

Board of Christian Education: Nothing new to report.

Board of Christian Service and Missions: Fran Gunderson said that we have provided some meals for the Staffeldts and will continue to do so until Ruth returns home and is able to resume meal preparations.

Board of Stewardship Report: Nothing to report.

Robert Smits said that Greg Fant has suggested MLC considering registering Zoom for the church, rather than individuals having separate accounts. Brad will work with Robert and John Guenther to do this.

Our next Council meeting will be Tuesday, September 15, at 6:00 p.m.

Brad Springer said that the next Call Committee meeting is Tuesday, August 25, at 6:00 p.m. Brad is continuing to work on the self-study portion of the call documentation. Brad indicated that he may not be available next Tuesday so it may be necessary to reschedule that meeting.

Pastor Cramm led us in closing prayer.

John Guenther moved, and Carol Moore seconded, that the meeting be adjourned. The meeting was adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice F. Peyton, Secretary



**MEETING
MINUTES**

TREASURER'S REPORT – SEPTEMBER 2020 COUNCIL MEETING

Mission Lutheran Church and School

Report Preparation Date: September 14, 2020

Budget Status: Month of August 2020 FY Through August 31, 2020

| | <u>Budgeted</u> | <u>Actual*</u> | <u>Budgeted</u> | <u>Actual*</u> |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <u>Income:</u> | | | | |
| MLC General | \$24,000.00 | \$22,748.00 | \$43,200.00 | \$41,322.00 |
| MLS Total | \$26,725.00 | \$6,472.24 | \$54,725.00 | \$35,114.21 |
| Designated / Other | \$266.66 | \$737.11 | \$333.33 | \$867.72 |
| | <u>\$50,991.66</u> | <u>\$29,957.35</u> | <u>\$98,258.33</u> | <u>\$77,303.93</u> |
| <u>Expenses:</u> | | | | |
| MLC Total | \$15,150.69 | \$9,927.77 | \$33,350.00 | \$20,897.85 |
| MLS Total | \$22,601.78 | \$19,232.60 | \$46,743.73 | \$49,312.15 |
| | <u>\$37,752.47</u> | <u>\$29,160.37</u> | <u>\$80,093.73</u> | <u>\$70,210.00</u> |
| Net Difference | \$13,239.19 | \$796.98 | \$18,164.60 | \$7,093.93 |

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

MLC General Fund Contributions – FY 2021 (Through September 13, 2020):

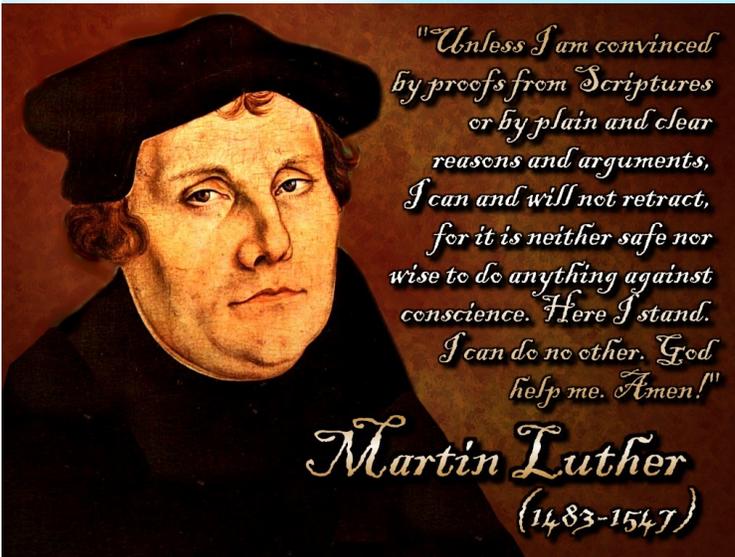
| | |
|--|-----------------|
| Average Weekly Contributions Needed: | \$4,800.00 |
| Average Weekly Contributions Received: | \$4,796.82 |
| General Fund Contributions Year-to-Date: | \$52,765.00 |
| General Funds Budgeted Year-to-Date: | \$52,800.00 |
| Surplus/Shortfall Year-to-Date: | -\$35.00 |

Assets / Liabilities (As of September 14, 2020):

| | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| <u>Fund Assets:</u> | Endowment Fund (as of Sep 14, 2020) | \$102,523.78 |
| | Strasser Fund (as of Jun 30, 2020) | \$56,146.13 |
| | Thrivent Fund (as of Aug 31, 2020) | \$365,196.09 |
| <u>Current Assets:</u> | Checking (as of September 14, 2020) | \$52,740.92 |
| | LCEF Savings | \$116,919.34 |
| | (minus designated) | |
| | { School Funds | \$9,382.50 |
| | { Youth Activity Funds | \$3,565.57 |
| | Total Savings Available | \$103,971.27 |
| <u>Liabilities:</u> | Mortgage Loan | \$23,987.38 |

Notes:

1. MLC expenses lower due to not having full time pastor.
2. MLS expenses higher due to added costs needed for distance off-site teaching – mostly for technology purchases. Some of these costs will ultimately be reimbursed of time.
3. MLS registration/tuition revenue reduced due to students pulling out. Final losses will be determined based on course of future events and possibility of renewing on-site classes.



**Reformation Day is
October 31st.**

We're on the web!
<http://missionlutheran.net>
<http://mlschool.net>

Mission Lutheran Church and School

2752 N. Roadrunner Parkway

Las Cruces, NM 88011-8081

Church Office: (575) 522-0465

School: (575) 532-5489

Emails: pastor@missionlutheran.net

secretary@missionlutheran.net

office@mlschool.net

Elder on call: Jim Bonse (575) 526-8675

Officers and Board Chairpersons for 2020

| | | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|------------------------------|-----------------|
| President | Brad Springer | Trustees | Doug Lorenz |
| Vice President | TBD | 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 |