

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
- "The Gift of Christ is our Light"
- Birthdays and anniversaries
- Council Meeting minutes
- Treasurer's report

Important Dates:

- April 1: Maundy Thursday
- April 2: Good Friday
- April 4: Easter
- April 5: Easter Monday holiday
- April 12: LWML Bible study
- April 13: School Board meeting
- April 13: Elders' meeting
- April 20: Church Council meeting





Mission Lutheran Church and School Prayer Ministry

Covering all we do in prayer!

This is the second of our series of pandemic-modified prayer targets as we continue to be sure all we do is covered in prayer. Please pray regularly for last month's Worship and support and add the following for Christian Education!

Let's anticipate together what our Lord does at Mission as we seek Him together!

Christian Education

IN GENERAL, *may we all*

- Unite in worship and sharing our Lord's Supper regularly.
- Search the Scriptures for God's will and receive the spirit of wisdom.
- Maintain a deep desire to spend regular time in prayer.
- Be ever thankful for those serving the Lord in so many different ways, using their God-given gifts.
- Know God as our provider of more than we can ever ask or imagine and trust that He will provide all the help we need.
- Glorify God in all we do and say and in every attitude we hold.

FOR OUR PASTORS, *as they equip our boards and ministries at Mission to edify the body of Christ, that*

- Their hearts would be drawn to the place of prayer as a daily priority.
- They boldly proclaim God's unchanging Word, through speech, action and attitude.
- They are strengthened and protected as they lead according to God's Word and perfect will.
- God would be glorified through them.

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION, *pray that*

- Board members are constantly seeking God's leadership.
- That God would inspire board members with ideas for new Bible Study
- That board members are active and enthusiastic about sharing God's Word with children and adults.

BOARD OF DAY SCHOOL EDUCATION, *pray that*

- That they would lead in-person activities according to safe standards and God's leading
- They provide oversight and directional responsibility. Pray also for a united vision of the Mission Lutheran Church congregation, the Mission Lutheran School teachers and staff, and student families to provide a first-class, Bible-centered education.

Continued on next page →

- All relationships between School Board members, the school administration, parents, children and teachers are Christ-like.
- The operations represent the best interest of church and school and facilitates the business of the school in a Christ-centered environment, remaining faithful to the doctrine, scriptures, and guidelines of the LCMS.
- God would guide them in all their meetings and decisions.

MISSION LUTHERAN SCHOOL AND PRESCHOOL (STUDENTS AND STAFF), *pray that*

- Children are protected from evil and worldly influences, being led to maintain a relationship with God, trusting in Jesus as their Savior and having their faith strengthened daily.
- God would empower them to be powerful witnesses of Jesus Christ.
- Our students are prepared to transition to public/secular education, as they look to God’s future plans.
- Children are led to know Jesus as their Savior and their faith in Jesus is daily strengthened.
- Staff is encouraged and strengthened and given wisdom and guidance as they provide distance learning.
- Staff will have wisdom needed to teach, encourage and discipline each student with insight and compassion and will exhibit the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.
- God will protect and bless teachers and staff in every aspect of their lives – physically, spiritually, emotionally, mentally and financially
- There is a spirit of unity among staff, congregation and school families.
- Students hunger for learning, being disciplined in relationships.
- God will use Mission Lutheran School as a magnet to attract children and their families to Jesus.
- God will bless those who contribute to scholarship funds to aid struggling families and more will be moved to contribute.

SUNDAY SCHOOL and BIBLE STUDY, *pray that*

- All adults and children of the congregation and school community hunger for knowledge of our Lord and His Word, attending Sunday School and Bible Classes regularly as they become available again.
- Teachers and leaders pray for their students and teach with an excitement that reflects their own knowledge of Jesus as their Savior.
- Many are drawn to teach Sunday School and Bible classes.
- Methods to maintain excitement in learning God’s Word are continually sought through the guidance of the Holy Spirit

PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION, *pray that*

- Abundant volunteers graciously serve the school, students and administration in support of the ministry of Mission Lutheran School.
- God leads all the PTO activities and plans.
- The parents will be Christ-like role models for their children, being sensitive concerning the needs of their children, taking an active role in their children’s lives and education and that they support the teachers and school administration.

OFF-CAMPUS BIBLE STUDIES, *pray for the Bible Study activities to resume when it is safe*

- Leaders would reach out to, pray for and lead participants in knowing Christ and His Word.

- Participants will hunger for knowledge of God through his Word.

YOUTH AND ADULT CONFIRMATION, *pray that*

- The Lord calls many adults and youth to classes and works through our pastors as they equip them to grow in the knowledge of Christ their Savior.
- Participants have eyes to see and ears to hear God’s Word of their salvation and how to participate in their personal lives and church lives as Christians.
- The Lord would work mightily in the lives of confirmands to build a life-long relationship with the Lord, hungering for worship and joyfully serving Him a part of His body at Mission.
- Confirmands develop a faith that sticks with them and guides them life-long.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL, *pray for Vacation Bible School to again safely resume and*

- Coordinators and many other adult and youth volunteers would joyfully answer the call to share Christ’s love during Vacation Bible School.
- Growing numbers of children from around the community will be drawn to the opportunity of experiencing Christ’s love for them.
- The hearts of children will be touched by hearing about Jesus, planting seeds of faith that last a lifetime.
- The hearts of parents will also be touched by what their children are learning about Jesus.



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

—1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

The Gift of Christ is our Light

“When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, ‘In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel’” (Matt. 2:3–6).

Earlier in this journey of *Simple Gifts* we reflected on light. Today we spend a moment reflecting on the potential negative of light. What could be bad about light? Well, when the light comes on, that which you do wrong can no longer be hidden. When the light comes on you can't hide the fact that you are sneaking a midnight snack, snatching some loot or cheating on your spouse! The light reveals things. Sometimes what we see isn't always pleasant.

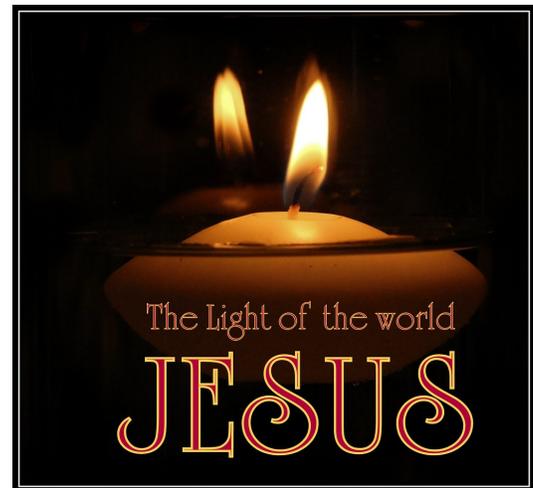
As the light shone on Jerusalem all those centuries ago, it brought to light two very clear and disturbing realities. First, the evil King Herod was not a godly man. Second, the very people who should have seen the same star that the Magi saw, missed it! The light of Christ reveals evil and ignorance.

The light of the Lord that shines on our stewardship can be just as damning to us. As we reflect on God's generosity toward us, it shines a light on our response. What does it show? Often, it reveals our stinginess in support of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the fact that we miss out on just how significant the role we have as stewards of resources plays in the sharing of the light of the Gospel.

As this light continues to shine on us today, may the Lord who calls us to faith and service, grant us His grace to reflect honestly and respond generously to His call to be stewards. Repentance is the answer to evil and ignorance. Jesus is just the light we need!

Prayer

Light of the world, Jesus the Christ, shine on us. Show us where we have fallen short as stewards of the simple gifts You give for us to show Your glory to our neighbors and the world. Overcome the evil in us and enlighten our ignorance that we may serve You and that others see the light of life in us! Amen.



Stewardship

Our Father in heaven sent His Son, Jesus, to be our Savior. His atoning sacrifice is the first fruits of all the dead, a pleasing aroma to His Father, so that His perfect life and death count for all who believe in Him. He claimed us as His own children in Holy Baptism. He sustains and strengthens our faith with His Holy Word and His Body and Blood.

As new creatures, who have put on Christ, we bear good fruit. We do the good works prepared for us, which He makes known to us in His Word. By faith then, trusting in the Word of God, we do what he says because He does not lie and always keeps His promises. For “without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him” (Heb. 11:6).

And so the Lord promises: “Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the first fruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine” (Prov. 3:9-10). How do we honor the Lord with the wealth that God has given us in His generosity? By giving generously to those whom the Lord has called us to love and support your family, your society, and your church. And His promise is that, in so doing, you will never lack.

A common counterpoint is: “But that’s from the Old Testament!” Our Lord Jesus Himself gives us similar promises in the New Testament. He says, at the conclusion of the parable of the talents: “For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance” (Matt. 25:29).

And then at the end of the parable of the dishonest manager, he says: “One who is faithful in a very little is also faithful in much, and one who is dishonest in a very little is also dishonest in much. If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches? And if you have not been faithful in that which is another’s, who will give you that which is your own? No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money” (Luke 16:10-13).

And in His sermon on the mount, he says: “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matt. 6:19-21).

We have become conditioned against these promises because of their misuse by the peddlers of the prosperity gospel - the guys on TV who say you get rich by putting God in your debt. And thus, we miss out on the fact that God does reward temporal faithfulness in temporal matters with temporal blessings. It’s no quid pro quo. It’s all from God’s grace and His fatherly divine goodness and mercy. But those Bible passages do in fact say what they say! It’s not the Old Testament’s problem. It’s ours. It is almost as if we have become so jaded against this that we think it a virtue to be stingy with our offerings.

But our Father in heaven still loves to bless those who bless others. He loves to give to those who give freely and generously. In fact, he challenges us to challenge Him: “Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. And thereby put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need” (Mal. 3:10).

And so, while we don’t give so that we would get, we do receive from the Lord in order to give, and He will bless your giving with more receiving. As St. Paul wrote in Rom. 8:32: “He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?”



Birthdays of the Month

April Birthdays

		<u>Date</u>
Dodge	Joyce	1
Kenny	LaVerne	1
White	Robert ("Quail")	6
Skelton	Marcele	8
Vance	Chari	8
Jakcsy	Bob	9
McCurley	Jacki	18
Brennan	Frank	20
Lessman	LaDonna	28
Uhde	Ordella	28
Echtenkamp	Debra	30
Lessman	Mark	30

*Happy
Anniversary*

April Anniversaries

	<u>Date</u>	<u># of years</u>
Mueller Brad & Barb	1	32
Jakcsy Bob & Ruth	27	53

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

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
February 23, 2021

President Brad Springer called the meeting to order at 6:12 p.m. Attending were Brad Springer, John Guenther, Carol Moore, Pastor Cramm, Alma Lorenz, Doug Lorenz, Jerry Stickles, Shirley Miller, Amie Springer and guest Mary Martin.

Pastor Cramm led us in opening prayer.

The minutes of the January 19th meeting were approved.

President: President Brad Springer reported on the progress of the call committee. An opening and closing date have been set from March 1st to March 15th for congregation members to nominate a candidate for Pastor. A letter will be sent out to the congregation along with the nomination form.

Brad brought up discussion about the church website. We need to consider cost, maintenance, touch up and whether we have a professional do this or on our own. We do need someone knowledgeable to maintain the website. After discussion, Mary offered to help put together a survey for congregational input about possible changes/updates to the website. It was determined we should stay with WIX to keep our domain name. Mark and Brad will talk with Laura to see where we should go from here. Jacki has offered to work with them on this endeavor.

Pastor's Report: The elders approved that he can be in Las Cruces more than 1 day a week. He has a couple of candidates for new instruction class. They will begin after Easter.

Elder's Report: Report is attached. They will be meeting on March 2.

Treasurer's Report: Report is attached. John said we have decreased revenue but not much change from last month.

School Board: They are continuing their search for Administration. A survey will go to parents to ask if they want to go in person in 4th quarter. Angel scholarships open April 6 - May 15th. Tuition assistance is open from March 1 to June 11. Numbers for next year: Kindergarten/First grade with 10 students, Second-Third grade with 10 students and Fourth-Fifth grade at 8 students. Preschool will be 6 students a day.

Fellowship: Just thinking of things we can do as we move forward and open up more in the state.

Financial Secretary: Nothing new to report.

Trustees: They are keeping up with the maintenance in buildings. Carol asked them to take a look at the Sanctuary doors for possibly staining them.

Evangelism: Sonya Perry will be the chair. They sent cards, emails or phone calls to everyone in the guest book the last two years.

Prayer Ministry: Nothing new to report.

Christian Service: Report is attached.

Stewardship: Nothing to report.

Our next council meeting is scheduled for March 16th at 6 pm.

Pastor Cramm led us in closing prayer.

It was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The meeting was adjourned at 6:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Jacki McCurley, Secretary



MEETING MINUTES

TREASURER'S REPORT – MARCH 2021 COUNCIL MEETING

Mission Lutheran Church and School

Report Preparation Date: March 16, 2021

<u>Budget Status:</u>	<u>Month of Feb. 2021</u>		<u>FY Through Feb. 28, 2021</u>	
	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual*</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual*</u>
<u>Income:</u>				
MLC General	\$19,200.00	\$18,520.00	\$168,000.00	\$170,649.00
MLS Total	\$17,600.00	\$6,621.25	\$163,050.00	\$93,020.63
Designated / Other	\$266.66	\$34.13	\$1,933.33	\$2,932.58
	\$37,066.66	\$25,175.38	\$332,983.33	\$266,602.21
<u>Expenses:</u>				
MLC Total	\$14,988.50	\$9,595.64	\$131,222.63	\$98,739.94
MLS Total	\$21,811.72	\$15,053.09	\$186,537.47	\$144,343.54
	\$36,800.22	\$24,648.73	\$317,760.10	\$243,083.48
Net Difference	\$266.44	\$526.65	\$15,223.23	\$23,518.73

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

MLC General Fund Contributions – FY 2021 (Through March 14, 2021)

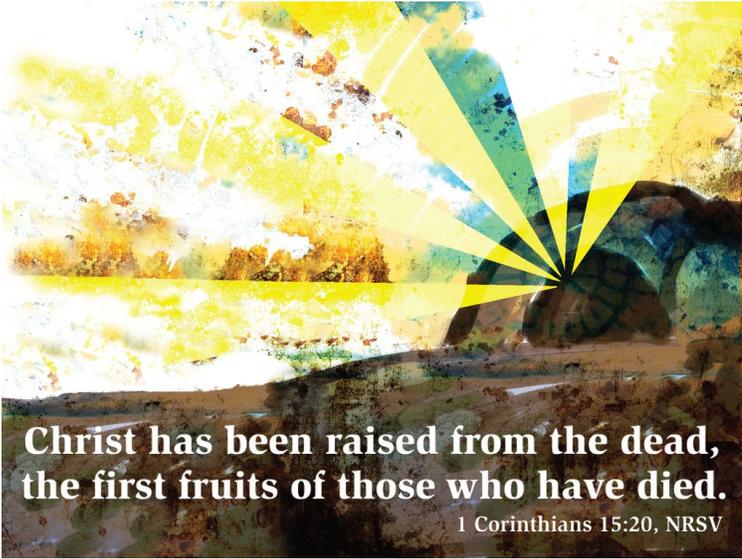
Average Weekly Contributions Needed:	\$4,800.00
Average Weekly Contributions Received:	\$4,892.59
General Fund Contributions Year-to-Date:	\$181,026.00
General Funds Budgeted Year-to-Date:	\$177,600.00
Surplus/Shortfall Year-to-Date:	\$3,426.00

Assets / Liabilities

<u>Fund Assets:</u>	Endowment (as of Mar. 16, 2021)	\$113,460.27
	Strasser (as of Dec. 31, 2020)	\$66,569.29
	Thrivent (as of Feb. 28, 2020)	\$396,048.51
<u>Current Assets:</u>	Checking (as of Mar. 16, 2021)	\$39,838.18
	LCEF Savings (as of Mar. 16, 2021)	\$146,560.48
	(minus designated funds)	
	{ School Funds	14524.81
	{ Youth Activity Funds	\$3,565.57
	{ Bible Stix/MLS PTO	\$587.37
	Total LCEF Savings Available	\$127,882.73
<u>Liabilities:</u>	None	\$0.00

Comments:

1. The COVID-19 induced lower revenues balanced against corresponding lower expenses for the church and school are leaving a stable financial status to this point in the fiscal year.



**Christ has been raised from the dead,
the first fruits of those who have died.**

1 Corinthians 15:20, NRSV

April 4 is Easter Sunday.

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

Mission Lutheran Church and School

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

Officers and Board Chairpersons for 2021

President	Brad Springer	Trustees	Don Hallem
Vice President	TBD	Christian Education	Roberta Willett
Treasurer	John Guenther	Evangelism	Sonya Perry
Secretary	Jacki McCurley	Christian Service & Missions	Mark Krohn
Financial Secretary	Carol Moore	Stewardship	Alma Lorenz
Elders, Chairman	Jerry Stickles	Day School Education	Shirley Miller
Elders, Vice-chairman	TBD	Fellowship	Amie Springer