

# MISSION FRONTIERS

Mission Lutheran Church, Las Cruces, NM

## Pastor's Pen

"In the first book, O Theophilus, I have dealt with all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when He was taken up, after He had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom He had chosen. He presented Himself alive to them after His suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. And while staying with them He ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, He said, 'you heard from Me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.' So, when they had come together, they asked Him, 'Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?' He said to them, 'It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by His own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be My witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.' And when He had said these things, as they were looking on, He was lifted up, and a cloud took Him out of their sight. And while they were gazing into heaven as He went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, Who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.'" (Acts 1:1-11)

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## Important Dates:

May 5: National Day of Prayer  
May 8: Mother's Day  
May 8: Youth Confirmation Day  
May 21: Armed Forces Day  
May 23: LWML Bible Study  
May 30: Memorial Day



There are two seasons in the Church Year that receive a lot of attention from us Lutherans: Advent and Lent. Advent is a period of about four weeks that leads up to Christmas, the second-greatest day in the Church Year. And naturally, we don't have to worry about forgetting Christmas! It predictably comes on the twenty-fifth of December every year, its arrival announced in retail stores beginning sometime in September. And Lent is the forty-day period leading up to Easter, the greatest day in the Church Year. And although the date of Easter fluctuates year to year—the date of Easter being set on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the vernal equinox—we likewise are not going to forget it. As soon as Advent and Christmas are past, we're checking our calendars to see if Lent is beginning earlier or later this year.

It's without question that the Resurrection of Our Lord is the most important event in all of world history, and thus the most important feast day for us to celebrate. And Jesus would not have suffered, died, and risen without first taking on human flesh and being born, and thus Christmas is without question the second most important feast day. But there is another feast day that is of vital importance to our Christian faith that is, sadly, often forgotten. And that is the feast day of the Ascension of Our Lord.

The reasons why the feast day of the Ascension of Our Lord can be forgotten or overlooked are understandable. After the busyness of Advent, Christmas, Lent, and Easter, we can sometimes want to slip into an "ordinary" church schedule. The extra mid-week services for Advent and Lent are observed on Wednesdays, with the services lasting several weeks in a row, and thus allowing the formation of a habit. And yet, since Ascension Day falls forty days after Easter, it will always be on a Thursday—and it's only the one service. And by the time Ascension Day rolls around, we're heading into late spring or early summer with all the attendant activities of wrapping up school years and contemplating vacations. Given all of that, it's easy to let Ascension Day slip by as if it's just another Thursday.

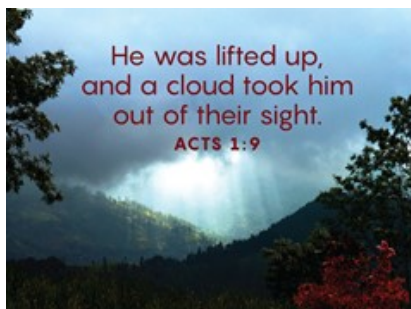
But it's not just another Thursday. Our Lord's Ascension into heaven is just as central to His work of salvation as was His incarnation, death, and resurrection. All three ecumenical creeds, the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian, mention Christ's Ascension. The Ascension of Our Lord is an indispensable part of the story.

Now, I grew up as a Christian, but not as a Lutheran. I knew the story of Jesus and the Gospel, but I was unfamiliar with the Church Year. When I began attending a Lutheran Church, the small congregation I joined had an interesting practice. In addition to the Pascal Candle, they had a Christ Candle that came out at Christmas Eve and remained on the altar throughout Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, and Easter. This symbolized Christ's earthly life. At their Ascension Day service, the candle was extinguished and removed to symbolize Christ's bodily departure from this earth. Having experienced the seasons of the Church Year for the first time in my life, I felt an odd sort of sadness at this, as if I wished that Christ would have stayed forever. But in the sermon that day, I learned that the Ascension of Our Lord is not really His departure, for He promised to be with us always. His Ascension is not an epilogue to an epic story—the hero riding off into the sunset. No, it's far more.

Christ's Ascension is Him taking His rightful place at the right hand of the Father in glory. Christ's Ascension is Him being seated on His throne so that He rules over this world. Christ's Ascension is His visible departure, yet He would soon send His Holy Spirit to dwell within His people. Christ promised to be with us, and He is—in the Word and the Word made visible in the Sacraments. And He is coming again. In the same way He was taken up, He will return on the Last Day.

So as another Easter Sunday has come and gone, we continue to celebrate this Easter Season. We continue to hear about Christ's resurrection appearances, the work He continued to do through His Apostles, and His promise to come again. Forty days after Easter, we will celebrate His triumphant Ascension to the Father's side. And we will continue to live our lives knowing that He is with us always, even to the end of the age. Amen.

*Pastor Andrew Cave*





# Mission Lutheran Church and School Prayer Ministry

When the Prayer Ministry was formed nine years ago, we determined that we as a congregation would be “God’s house of prayer,” with our mission statement, ***“Built on Christ, we join together as God’s house of prayer for all nations.”*** [Ephesians 2:17-22 and Isaiah 56:7-8] We pray for each of you to join in prayer. We offer a few prayer targets as we pray in our individual prayer and devotion times.

This past month, we have been humbled by the heart-wrenching ransom our Lord Jesus paid to free us from our captor! Many of us sat in quiet reverence and prayer in the sanctuary during the prayer vigil. And we rejoice that He perfectly fulfilled the Scripture and that ***HE HAS RISEN!*** We know our grasp of the magnitude of the gift we hold is not full, but we know it is awesome, don’t we? What are we to do with this gift? As our Lord physically left this world to be with our Heavenly Father, he gave each of us a job.

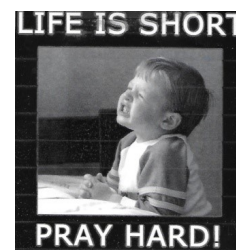
***“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always to the end of the age.”*** [Matthew 28:19-29]

I know I feel inadequate to fulfill this job. I also know I don’t do it on my own. Whatever we do, it begins with taking hold of the Word and spending time with our Lord in prayer. Here are a few prayer targets you may wish to use. Some are taken from our targets from the prayer vigil. Let us pray for:

- ◇ Ourselves, that we will constantly look for the opportunities the Lord gives us to share what He has done in us
- ◇ Each of us to show Christ’s love in all we do, say and think, that others might see Him in us and want to know and believe in Him
- ◇ All who are in authority will know and honor God in all they do
- ◇ All who lead and serve in our community, state, nation and world to do so according to God’s will; that they would know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior
- ◇ All who protect (armed forces and law enforcement, first responders...) would be comforted, strengthened and protected themselves
- ◇ Christians around the world are protected
- ◇ Religious liberty, the sanctity of life and traditional marriage are preserved
- ◇ The Holy Spirit will convict of sin and open the hearts of lost and straying persons to believe in Jesus Christ as Savior and to connect each of them with His church
- ◇ That each of us stand ready to joyfully welcome and encourage those who come to Mission
- ◇ That we at Mission love, encourage and pray for one another
- ◇ That we eagerly serve our Lord in unity and joy

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

1 Thessalonians: 16-18



## Breadbreakers

The Breadbreakers program here at Mission Lutheran consists of small groups of congregation members and friends (typically 8 to 10 people) who meet, on a rotating basis, at one of the members' homes once a month for supper and small group Bible study. The meals are usually "pot luck" with each participant contributing something to the meal.

Members in some of the groups remain the same year to year, while membership in some of the groups change yearly so that the members of the groups can meet and mingle with a variety of people.

We try to set up the groups so that an Elder is in the group and the Elder leads the Bible studies. If there are no Elders in a group, a volunteer in the group leads the Bible studies.

During the last two COVID-19 years, many of the groups did not meet at all. With the waning of COVID-19 cases, many people are interested in starting up Bread-breaker groups again. If you are interested in being part of the Breadbreaker experience, please fill out an information form on the table in the Narthex (next to the "breadbox").

The Breadbreakers program started up during the first year or two after I became a member here at Mission Lutheran. Not only did I find the Bible studies beneficial in getting to understand God's Word, but I found it a particularly productive way to meet and get to know other members of Mission Lutheran on a more personal level.

Eric Gunderson



# Stewardship

## Living Sacrifices

Stewardship is not just about giving money to the church. It includes this, to be sure, but it is not limited to it. Stewardship involves our whole life – everything we have and everything we are.

Let us not, though, fall into the trap of thinking that because we give of ourselves in one area then we can neglect giving in another. Stewardship is not stealing from Peter to pay Paul. It is not a game that we play whereby we justify ourselves in not giving a tenth of our income because we have given in some other way.

This is why our Lord warns: “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others.” (Matthew 23:23) We are given to do both – tithe of ourselves and what we have.

And so it is that St. Paul makes his appeal to us: “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. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12:1–2)

We are to present our bodies as a living sacrifice to God. We are not to have the mind of the world, where we exchange equal weight of this for an equal weight of that and think that we have done what God has required. Our whole life is given over for service in and for the Church of God. This is to be done in thanksgiving for what God in Christ has accomplished for us. This is our spiritual worship, the reasonable response to what He has done for us. Not one for the other but all in all.

But what does this look like? St. Paul never lays down a general principle without also giving us some practical application of what shape that principle is to take concretely. He gives the general principle that our bodies are to be living sacrifices to God. And, after admonishing those who have been given particular gifts of grace to serve the church, St. Paul then speaks generally of what is expected of all. He says:

“Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.” (Romans 12:9–13)

This is what it looks like to present your bodies as living sacrifices. This is how we live out the grace of God here in time.

Let us then heed the apostle’s teaching. Let us present our bodies – everything that we have and everything that we are – as living sacrifices to God, our reasonable response to what God in Christ Jesus accomplished for us by His death and resurrection. Through this, we have forgiveness of sins, a new life in Christ, and eternal salvation. And through this worship, the grace of God is made manifest in His saints – for the church and the world.







## May Birthdays

		<u>Date</u>
Kaiser	Michael	3
Willett	Tom	5
Micklevitz	Chris	8
Tate	Debra	8
Shaw	Ashley	10
Lyons	Alexander	11
Lenahan	Joanne	12
White	Harvey	15
Turk	Richard	18
Bork	Fred	19
Kaiser	Stephen	25
Carrera-Little	Jeamy	26
Wood	Megan	27
Mailander	Kathy	29
Perry	Andrew	29
Martin	Ken	31

*Happy Anniversary*

## May Anniversaries

		<u>Date</u>	<u># of years</u>
Bonse	Jim & Sonja	22	51
Fant	Greg & Beth	22	40
Wood	Ben & Megan	24	19
Graff	Nathan & Victoria	25	3
Kell	Robert & Pamela	25	37
Gunderson	Eric & Fran	29	52

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

*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**

**Voters' Assembly**

**December 12, 2021**

President Springer called the meeting to order at 11:41 a.m. There were 35 of 51 members in attendance.

Pastor Cave led us in opening prayer.

Doug Lorenz moved that we accept Chuck Canada, Karen Jensen and Barbara Honda as voting members. Debra Echtenkamp seconded. It was moved and passed.

Jerry Stickles moved and Don Hallem seconded, that minutes of the November Voters' Assembly be approved. The motion passed.

Alma Lorenz presented the slate of officers adding Wade Echtenkamp for Vice President. Jerry Stickles moved to accept the slate of officers by acclamation. It was seconded by Alma Lorenz. Motion passed.

President Brad Springer asked the voters to approve a housing allowance (40 of salary) designation for Pastor Cave. This allowance is for tax purposes. Bobby Jakcsy moved we accept this allowance and it was seconded by Shilo Smith. The motion passed.

Jerry Stickles made a motion to dismiss the council reports at this meeting. Jill Smith seconded. The motion passed.

The next meeting will be determined at a later date.

We stood and closed with the Lord's Prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:51 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jacki McCurley, Secretary

## MISSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

Council Meeting

March 15, 2022

President Brad Springer called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m. Attending were Brad Springer, Wade Echtenkamp, Brad Mueller, Jacki McCurley, Carol Moore, Pastor Cave, Pastor Perry, and Eric Gunderson.

Pastor Cave led us in opening prayer.

The minutes of the February 15<sup>th</sup> council meeting were approved.

President (Brad Springer):

We need a lay delegate for the convention in June. Carol will send out an email to the congregation to see if we get a volunteer.

The Elders are asking for the acceptance of Nathan Graff to the Board of Elders. Brad Springer made a motion to accept Nathan and it was seconded by Carol Moore. All council members approved. We will get voter approval at the next voters meeting.

The first quarter voters meeting will be on April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 11:30 am. The council tentatively set June 5<sup>th</sup> as the voters meeting to approve the budget.

Pastors' Reports: Pastor Cave's report is attached. He will be having baptism classes in April with the main focus on school members. Pastor will be filling in a grant with LCEF for cameras to help with streaming. A Wi-Fi extender will be put in the sanctuary.

Pastor Perry said that May 8<sup>th</sup> will be confirmation Sunday. Pastor Perry mentioned that he has been talking to other congregations about a Circuit Wide Youth Director (possibly a DCE Intern). Where each congregation puts in money for the salary and they would visit and work with the youth in each congregation. It may be some time before this can happen but he is asking everyone to pray about it and talk to others to see if it is something we might want to be a part of.

Vice-President (Wade Echtenkamp): Nothing to report.

Treasurer's Report (Brad Mueller): The report is attached. Brad said we are in the black right now. He is asking everyone to start looking at the budget for our next meeting. School board wants to look at teacher raises. He wants to get input on the budget in April with a rough draft for May and the final budget approved in June.

Elder's Report (Eric Gunderson): Report is attached. Eric will be meeting with Alma to help get bread breaker groups set up again since we have new members at church. The Elders need to look at care groups.

Trustees (Doug Lorenz): The trustees are busy working on maintenance projects.

School Board (Shirley Miller): Shirley was absent and Carol Moore presented notes given to her from Jan White. School board will need to make a decision about Preschool and also need to talk to Ruth Staffeldt about the scholarship. The school calendar and the budget are being put together. Spring break is the next two weeks.

Our next council meeting is scheduled for April 19<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm.

Pastor Perry led us in closing prayer.

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It was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The meeting was adjourned at 7:04 pm.

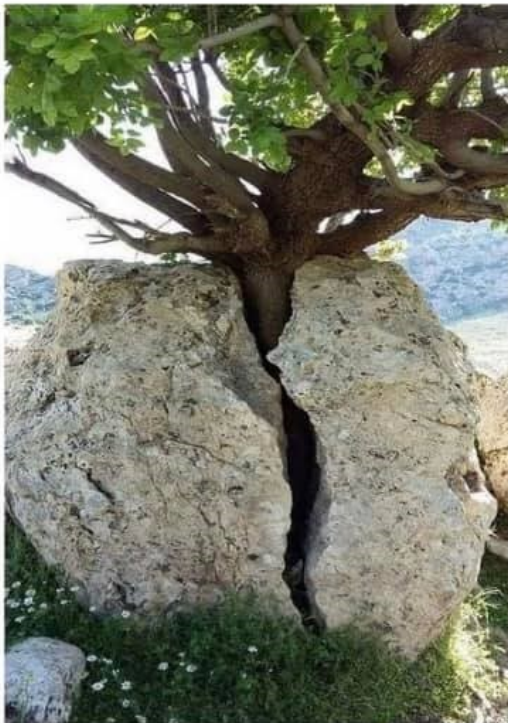
Respectfully submitted,

Jacki McCurley, Secretary

**Note:** Board Reports that are indicated as being attached are available from the church secretary upon request. They are not included in the newsletter in order to save space.



## Meeting Minutes



We cannot force someone to hear a message they are not ready to receive.

But we must never underestimate the power of planting a seed.

# TREASURER REPORT – APRIL 2022 COUNCIL/VOTERS MEETING

## Mission Lutheran Church and School

**Report Preparation Date: April 1, 2022**

**Budget Status:**

**Month of March 2022**

**FY Thru March 2022**

**Budget**

**Actual**

**Budget**

**Actual**

**Income:**

MLC General	\$19,600.00	\$20,577.56	\$191,100.00	\$191,102.65
MLS Total	\$17,975.00	\$16,798.13	\$177,430.00	\$152,981.45
Designated / Other	\$196.67	\$455.22	\$1,770.00	\$8,472.48
	<u>\$37,771.67</u>	<u>\$37,830.91</u>	<u>\$370,300.00</u>	<u>\$352,556.58</u>

**Expenses:**

MLC Total	\$15,255.33	\$20,790.33	\$148,910.76	\$186,605.00
MLS Total	\$26,942.51	\$33,230.06	\$251,349.00	\$219,834.74
	<u>\$42,197.84</u>	<u>\$54,020.39</u>	<u>\$400,259.76</u>	<u>\$370,502.08</u>
Net Difference	-\$4,426.17	-\$16,189.48	-\$29,959.76	-\$17,945.50

**MLC General Fund Contributions – FY 2021 (Thru Mar. 31, 2022)**

Average Weekly Contributions Needed:	\$4,900.00
Average Weekly Contributions Received:	\$4,906.99
General Fund Contributions Year-to-Date:	\$191,372.65
General Funds Budgeted Year-to-Date:	\$191,100.00
Surplus/Shortfall Year-to-Date:	<b>\$272.65</b>

**Assets / Liabilities**

**Fund Assets:**

E*trade Endowment (as of April 1, 2022)	\$111,442.77
Strasser (as of Sep 30, 2021)	\$81,479.04
Thrivent (as of Sep 30, 2021)	\$405,478.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$598,399.81</b>

**Current Assets:**

Checking (as of April 1, 2022)	<b>\$25,011.50</b>
LCEF Savings (as of April 1, 2022)	\$146,759.42
(minus designated funds)	
School Funds	\$12,912.30
Youth Activity Funds	\$3,765.57
Staffeldt Scholarship	\$11,000.00
Other	
<b>Total LCEF Savings Available</b>	<b>\$119,081.55</b>

**Liabilities:**

None

**Comments:**

1. Revenues lower due to low MLC general contributions and MLS enrollment being 69.59% of needed tuition receipts.

May we never forget  
freedom isn't free....



(with deepest gratitude to those  
who paid the ultimate price)

Armed Forces Day is  
May 21st, and  
Memorial Day is May 30<sup>th</sup>.

***Mission Lutheran Church and School***

***2752 N. Roadrunner Parkway***

***Las Cruces, NM 88011-8081***

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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>

## Officers and Board Chairpersons for 2022

President	Brad Springer	Elders, Chairman	Eric Gunderson
Vice President	Wade Echtenkamp	Elders, Vice-chairman	Richard Turk
Treasurer	Brad Mueller	Trustees	Doug Lorenz
Secretary	Jacki McCurley	Outreach	Sonya Perry
Financial Secretary	Carol Moore	Day School Education	Shirley Miller