

MISSION FRONTIERS

Mission Lutheran Church, Las Cruces, NM

Pastor's Pen

I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now. And I am sure of this, that He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. (Philippians 1:3-11)

The month of October is designated by some as "Pastor Appreciation Month." I don't know where that tradition started or who started it. It's certainly not a bad tradition to take a moment to show appreciation to the pastors in your life. Most pastors, myself included, are very grateful to receive words of encouragement. However, I think there are a couple of things regarding "Pastor Appreciation Month" that I would like to speak on a bit further.

The first thing I would like to talk about is a topic that should be spoken of with care, and that is, the tendency during Pastor Appreciation Month to speak at length of the difficulties of pastoral ministry. On the one hand, it is certainly true that pastoral ministry has some unique challenges. Few vocations are targeted so specifically by the evil one for spiritual assault. The pastoral office was established by Christ for the purpose of proclaiming God's Word of Law and Gospel and rightly administering the sacraments. The Holy Spirit works when and where He will to create and sustain faith through these means of grace. And because of this, the evil one has a particular hatred towards faithful pastors, and he tries every trick he knows to cause them to stumble. And he is an expert at his craft!

Continued on next page →

In this issue:

- Prayer Ministry
- Stewardship
- "Let's Work Together"
- JULIETs
- WINGS-LWML
- Birthdays and Anniversaries
- Church Council meeting minutes
- Treasurer's Report

Important Dates:

- November 1: All Saints' Day
- November 5: Daylight Saving Time ends
- November 7: Election Day
- November 11: Veterans' Day
- November 23: Thanksgiving Day



But at the same time, there are aspects of this vocation which are sometimes brought up as being unique stressors to pastors. And frankly, some of those things are not all that unique to pastors. Some of these challenges include having to “wear multiples hats,” be proficient in a variety of tasks, be personable with a wide variety of people, be willing to work long hours, and be on call for emergencies at all times of the day. Those challenges certainly are present in pastoral ministry, but I would say that many vocations share similar burdens.

And my point in bringing this up is simply this: I want to avoid any temptation to use Pastor Appreciation Month as a way to engender sympathy or make congregations feel sorry for their pastors. Because truth be told, being called into the pastoral office has been one of the greatest blessings I’ve received! Yes, there are hard days. But there are many great days as well! I have the awesome and sacred privilege to publicly proclaim the Gospel to a world that so desperately needs to hear it. I am able to be present for many of the important moments in people’s lives. But even more so, I am able to bring the presence of Christ by bringing His Word and by administering the sacrament of Holy Baptism—that sacred washing which is the Spirit’s entry—and the sacrament of Holy Communion—the very Body and Blood of our Savior which we receive into our moral bodies. This is, in the words of Paul, a “noble task.” And not everyone gets to do it.

And this leads me to the second thing I want to talk about, and that is, what about “Congregation Appreciation Month?” If such a thing exists, I have not heard about it. And yet, I see multiple examples in the Scriptures of exactly that. The Apostle Paul is well-known for spending time in almost all of his letters giving thanks to God for the congregation to whom he is writing. The Scripture quoted above from Paul’s letter to the church in Philippi is one section from a letter that is full of Paul’s words of thankfulness to God and his rejoicing over them.

And it is right for a pastor to feel thankful to God for his congregation. These are souls for whom Christ died, people who have gathered together in the presence of God’s means of grace in order to receive forgiveness, and who have committed to loving and caring for each other as family. What a blessing!

And so, if I may, I’d like to spend some time expressing why I am thankful *for you*. I thank God that He saw fit to call me to serve Mission Lutheran because you all are a congregation that strives to be faithful to the Scriptures. You hear the Word of God gladly, and I see you striving to keep it. I thank God that you are a peaceful people. Various board meetings and voters’ meetings are times where you all work together rather than quarrel and bicker. I thank God that you are a generous people. You support many different charities in the community. You work to support the poor, needy, and vulnerable. And you support the work of our school. And speaking of that, I thank God for our school! Our school draws people from the community to us, people for whom Christ died, and people who need to hear the Gospel. Our school has faithful and caring teachers and staff who teach the children to know not only academics, but also to know our Savior. And finally, I thank God that you all have welcomed me and my family as your own.

Perhaps this is a bit of a different sort of newsletter article. But as I consider how I appreciate words of encouragement and thankfulness during Pastor Appreciation Month, I considered that it would be good to speak to you all likewise and to express how thankful I am to God for all of you. Amen.

Pastor Andrew Cave

GRATEFUL
Thankful
& BLESSED



Mission Lutheran Church and School Prayer Ministry

*“Built on Christ, we join together as God’s house of prayer
for all nations.”*

Thanking our Heavenly Father

November is a time when we start to consider all for which we are grateful. Yes, as His adopted sons and daughters, we can never adequately thank Him. Yet, as I look at ways we can pray during November, I’m not content to write a “Father, we are thankful, let us count the ways” sort of prayer target list. There is an achy twinge in my heart. As we look around in the fall season, we see plants becoming dormant. (Will you pray along with me?)

“Father, please, may we not become dormant!”

The prayer of my heart is that we at Mission wake from our COVID slumber, see the coming of our Lord and ACT! November is also the time when we plan for the coming year by electing officers and board members and when helpers are recruited for boards and committees.

Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us;

And establish the work of our hands upon us;

Yes, establish the work of our hands!

Psalm 90:17

“Father, thank you for Your gifts that you graciously shower over each of us at Mission—our salvation, our time, our talents and our treasury. Please help each of us to recognize these gifts and use them to Your glory.”

“Lord, forgive us when we fail to recognize your gifts. Please grant us wisdom and discernment to hear You calling us to serve You.”

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God, not as a result of works, so that none may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

--Ephesians 2:8-10

“Lord, please forgive us for those times we become complacent to let others carry the load. Help us at Mission to be Your light in the desert for others to find their way to You.”

“Psalm 18:32 tells us we are equipped with strength. Thank you Father, for sending Pastor Cave to equip the body of Christ at Mission through Your Word.”

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers to equip the saints for the work of the ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ.” --Ephesians 4:11-12

“Heavenly Father, will You please ease our fears of not being good enough or the right ‘fit’ for the offices and boards on which we are asked to serve? Please give strength and confidence to all who agree to serve. We know the plans You have for us—plans to prosper us and not harm us.”

“If you can?” Jesus said, “Everything is possible for him who believes.” --Mark 9:23

All things are possible through Christ who strengthens me.

--Philippians 4:13

All scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for training in righteousness, that ‘the man of God’ may be competent, equipped for every good work,

--2 Timothy 3:16-17

[Thank you for indulging me in wearing both the prayer ministry coordinator and stewardship committee hats today. I am praying for each of you! God’s Blessings! --Alma Lorenz]

Stewardship

Give Thanks with a Grateful Heart!

Our Father in heaven has claimed us as His own. By the shedding of His Son's blood, by His death for our sins and His resurrection for our justification, God the Father has received us back into His family. By water combined with His Word, promise and name, the Holy Spirit has taken up residence in us. We belong to Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He is in us, and we are in Him. And being in Him, all things are ours. In Him, we are richly and abundantly blessed.

Our true treasure and wealth is that we belong to the most holy Trinity and everything that is His belongs also to us: righteousness, peace, eternal life. Even our temporal treasures are gifts from His fatherly, divine goodness and mercy.

We receive our treasures from Him, and thus, as good stewards of His varied grace, we manage them in such a way that they may be returned to Him. We bring them to Him, hallowed through prayers of thanksgiving and God's Holy Word, as a sacrifice. Thus all our possessions, as gifts from God, are also sacrifices to Him, from which we eat to nourish our bodies and share with our family, neighbors and fellow Christians, with the poor and even our enemies, as holy things given by our holy God. His temporal gifts are blessings to and for us, and bring blessing upon us even as they are pressed into His service for His kingdom and the souls that receive them.

Thus we place all that we have into God's hands. He never fails to remember us and pours out the fullness of His promises upon us. We give thanks for all that He has done, is doing and will continue to do. We give thanks by not taking for ourselves, but giving to all even as our heavenly Father has given to us.

As we prepare for Thanksgiving celebrations, may we all give thanks continually for all that we are and all that we have because of God's providential care. And may we be all the more diligent in bringing everything that we have received from God to Him, so that He may bless it and employ it for the good of all — even for us. For to the one who has, more will be given, and he will have an abundance.

– LCMS Stewardship Ministry: lcms.org/stewardship



Let's Work Together

Here are some of the ways we can all serve at Mission (and the name of someone to contact):

- Sunday School teacher or aid - Carol Cooper
- Fellowship activities - Amie Springer
- Endowment Board - Ken Martin
- Stewardship Committee - Alma Lorenz or any of the elders
- Altar Guild - Carol Cooper, Alma Lorenz, or Jan White
- Prayer Ministry - come pray with us on Tuesdays at noon in the church library; on Wednesdays at 7:35 am with the school teachers; on Thursdays at 6:45 am on Zoom; or become a prayer intercessor - see Alma Lorenz or Shirley Miller
- Building and campus maintenance - Brad Springer Sr., Doug Lorenz or Don Hallem
- Offering counter - Carol Moore
- Outreach Board - currently in need of a leader; contact Wade Echtenkamp or Brad Springer
- Greeter - sign up on the bulletin board in the narthex - Fran Gunderson can answer any questions
- Choir - Jacki McCurley
- School activities - Darci Grothman
- WINGS/LWML - Women's fellowship and Bible study once each month - see Jan White, Jacki McCurley or Carol Moore
- Serve as an officer of the congregation - new officers are elected every year; none of the positions require a huge time commitment; Officers are President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Financial Secretary
- School Board - Mission Lutheran School is an important mission, if not the most important one for our church. Help support this mission by serving on the School Board - contact Shirley Miller



JULIETs

The JULIETs will be gathering for lunch again in November. All women in the church are invited. And bring a friend!

Thursday, November 9 — Bite of Belgium
741 N. Alameda

We meet at 11:30 am.

So that the restaurant can be prepared, please notify either Debra Echtenkamp or Olga Turk at least 2 days in advance if you plan to attend.

Call or text Debra at (901) 830-7216

Call or text Olga at (575) 571-6251



Women in God's Service

The next WINGS (LWML) gathering will be in Luther Hall at 6:30 PM on Monday, November 13. All women are invited to join us for fellowship and Bible study. Dessert will be provided

What does WING/LWML do?

- * We collect mites which help fund huge mission projects at the national level – mites are collected at every monthly gathering and on Super Bowl Sunday. Anyone can add to our mites collection at any time. A mite box is kept on the table in the narthex. (See Mark 12:41-44 and Luke 21:1-4 for the history of “mites.”)
- * We make quilts to donate to those who are ill, in the hospital, in hospice care, or homeless. We sell enough quilts, especially baby quilts, to make the project self-funding. Quilters meet in Luther Hall every Wednesday morning except during the summer months. No special skills are needed to help tie quilts, but those who enjoy sewing are encouraged to participate by making simple quilt tops and/or doing the finishing work (binding the edges of the quilts).
- * We collect and donate wee care bundles to Memorial Hospital's maternity ward for women in need.
- * We provide supplies needed for coffee and goodies on Sunday mornings.
- * We organize fellowship events (Spring tea, Advent by Candlelight) for the women in our church and school and include school moms who might be interested.
- * We organize the annual Epiphany party for all the adults in our congregation.
- * We participate in LWML Sunday every October.
- * We sell greeting cards (these can be found in Luther Hall in the desk against the wall).
- * We raise money through bake sales to help support a seminary student.
- * We host the Rio Grande Zone Fall Rally and the Spring Workshop every 3rd year (rotating with Trinity in Alamogordo, and Zion and Ascension in El Paso).

Come and Join us!



*Birthdays
of the Month*

November Birthdays

<u>Date</u>		
2	Pat	Pathy
4	Janet	Franz
12	Karen	Reyes
12	Cathy	Stegemann
13	Rosalie	Burns
14	Charlotte	Muchow
15	Jerry	Del Bozque
15	Sawyer	Monica
17	Vicki	Kofoot
17	Al	Siffring
19	Larry	Tate
21	Pat	Duever
21	Fran	Gunderson
23	Sonya	Perry
29	Kerri	Shaw
30	Cora	Cave

*Happy
Anniversary*

November Anniversaries

<u>Date</u>		<u># of years</u>
8	Al & Becky Lujan	37

Happy Anniversary to all those couples married in November.

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

September 19, 2023

President Brad Springer called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. Attending were Brad Springer, Brad Mueller, Jacki McCurley, Carol Moore, Pastor Cave, Eric Gunderson, Shirley Miller, Brad Springer Sr. and guest Doug Lorenz.

Pastor Cave led us in opening prayer.

The minutes of the August council meeting were approved.

President (Brad Springer): Brad set the next voter's meeting for December 10th at 11:30 am. Currently the agenda will consist of the election of officers, the by-laws and the phone system in the church.

Pastor's Report: Pastor's report is attached.

Vice President Report (Wade Echtenkamp): Wade was not present at the meeting.

Secretary Report: No report

Treasurer's Report (Brad Mueller): The treasurer's report is attached. He is having Ken Martin take care of getting John Gunther's name off of the e-trade account. We need to get two members elected to a two year term for the Endowment Fund as per the by-laws. They need to be on the slate of officers this December. The Endowment fund proposal, per by-law #9, needs to be sent to the President and put in the secretary books for keeping. Brad Mueller proposes that we need to change a few things in the by-laws. The spending threshold of \$2500 for any type of purchase should be higher and also that the Treasurer can make payments other ways than just a check. This was tabled for everyone to review the constitution and by-laws for any other corrections that may need to be made.

Financial Secretary (Carol Moore): With the Willett's out some of the counters have had to count more often. If it becomes a burden, she will need to ask for more counters.

Elder's Report (Eric Gunderson): In early October the information for bread breakers will go in the worship folders. Responses are needed back by December 3rd to work on groups for next year.

Trustees (Brad Springer Sr.): The trustees report is attached. Doug Lorenz was present to address the phone system at the church/school. He presented two proposals for the phone system. We are not in dire need at this time, but there is no fix if something happens to the phone system. The quotes given are in effect until the end of the year. Please look over the proposals and send questions in writing to Doug Lorenz. The HVAC has been inspected.

Continued on next page →

The Trustee's will put up the Christmas tree the last week of November.

School Board (Shirley Miller): The report is attached. They are happy to have Darci Grothman back from maternity leave. They are going to pay Pam Kell for the work she is doing in the 1st/2nd grade classroom. The search has started for a new administrator.

Our next council meeting is scheduled for October 17th at 6 pm.

Pastor Cave led us in a closing prayer.

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

TREASURER REPORT for the October 2023 COUNCIL/VOTERS MEETING

Mission Lutheran Church and School

Report Preparation Date: Oct 1, 2023

<u>Budget Status:</u>	<u>Month of Sep 2023</u>		<u>FY23 Thru Sep 2023</u>	
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>
<u>Income:</u>				
MLC General	\$23,060	\$19,185	\$74,945	\$68,938
MLS Total	\$28,270	\$26,888	\$73,490	\$106,551
Designated / Other	\$333	\$520	\$1,000	\$699
	\$51,663	\$46,593	\$149,435	\$176,188
<u>Expenses:</u>				
MLC Total	\$19,705	\$15,518	\$52,598	\$49,062
MLS Total	\$39,652	\$31,254	\$115,322	\$101,466
	\$59,357	\$46,772	\$167,920	\$150,528
Net Difference	-\$7,694	-\$179	-\$18,485	\$25,660

MLC General Fund Contributions – FY23 (Thru Sep 30, 2023)

Average Weekly Contributions Needed:	\$5,765
Average Weekly Contributions Received (FYTD) :	\$5,485
General Fund Contributions Year-to-Date:	\$71,310
General Funds Budgeted Year-to-Date:	\$74,945
Surplus/Shortfall Year-to-Date:	-\$3,635

Assets / Liabilities

<u>Fund Assets:</u>	E*trade Endowment (as of Jun 30, '23)	\$107,033
	Strasser Endowment (as of Jun 30, '23)	\$70,425
	Thrivent (as of Sep 30, '23)	\$390,264
	LCEF MLC Youth Development CD Account	\$12,589
	LCEF General Funds CD Account #1	\$50,358
	LCEF General Funds CD Account #2	\$0
	TOTAL	\$630,669

Current Assets: Checking (as of Sep 30, '23) **\$48,518**

	LCEF Savings (as of Sep 30, '23)	\$147,988
	(minus designated funds)	
	Angel Prog/TA Holding	\$724
	Registration/Tuition Holding	\$0
	Youth Activity Funds	\$3,766
	Staffeldt Scholarship	\$4,425
	COVID Grant	\$43,738
	School Security Grant	\$11,502
	Youth Christian Development	\$12,500
	Other	\$0
	Total LCEF Savings Available	\$71,333

Liabilities: None

Comments:



November 1 is All Saints' Day

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: Ken Martin (575) 650-3304

We're on the web!

<http://missionlutheran.net>

<http://mlschool.net>

Officers and Board Chairpersons for 2023

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