

MISSION FRONTIERS

Mission Lutheran Church, Las Cruces, NM

For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For when He received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to Him by the Majestic Glory, “This is My beloved Son, with Whom I am well pleased,” we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with Him on the holy mountain. And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. (1 Peter 1:16-21)

We confess that “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 complete, equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17). We acknowledge Scripture alone to be only rule and norm of faith. In other words, we do not recognize any doctrine or dogma that comes from the tradition of man apart from Scripture. We do not bind consciences on matters where Scripture is silent, while we also refuse to be silent on matters where Scripture speaks. We regard the Scriptures with such seriousness precisely

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Important Dates:

- February 8: Super Bowl Sunday – Super Bowl Might Mites
- February 13: Valentine’s Day dinner in Luther Hall
- February 16: Presidents’ Day
- February 18: Ash Wednesday



because they are the very Word of God. Inspired by the Holy Spirit, the biblical authors wrote the words that God desired His people to hear. The Holy Spirit was pleased to have the various authors' own literary styles shine through (for example, the Apostle Paul will use certain words or phrases more commonly than the Apostle John, and vice versa) but nevertheless it is all God's very Word.

So we know that the Scriptures are God's authoritative Word. But there is always the question of how do we come to understand them? Martin Luther and the other Reformers taught the "perspicuity of Scripture," which means that the message of the Scriptures is readily apparent to the reader. The message that we are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone is clear. That being said, the Church has a long history of working carefully in submission to the text in order to properly understand what the Word is saying. The fundamental message of the Bible is clear, but many passages are less clear and require diligent study. So how can the faithful Christian go about understanding the Scriptures?

I offer one of several methods by which we can strive to properly understand the Scriptures. This is by no means the only way to study the Scriptures, but it can be quite useful. And it must be said that prayer and meditation are necessary at every step in this method. We ought not to think that we can lean on our own understanding when it comes to God's Word!

The first step is to strive to understand the original context within which a particular passage of Scripture was written. It's important to know the time period. For example: was this the Exodus, or the time of the Judges, or the time of the kings, or after the Babylonian exile? Knowing what was happening is often vital to understanding why these passages of Scripture were first written. To the best of our ability, we should try to understand the cultural context of the people groups we find in the Scriptures. Even if one hasn't studied Hebrew or Greek, well-researched commentaries can offer solid explanations of key features of the original languages.

Also, we must be cognizant of the genre of Scripture that we're reading. For example: is this narrative, poetry, or prophecy? The four Gospel accounts record many of the same historical events, but they structure their narratives to bring out unique emphases. Apocalyptic literature such as the second half of Daniel, many parts of Ezekiel and Zechariah, and certainly the book of Revelation, require an even greater amount of due diligence in order to understand the symbolism of what is being described.

Once the reader has a firm grasp of what the particular passage was stating in its original context, the reader then needs to consider the differences between the original context and our context. Our language is certainly different. Many of our customs are different. Some of our cultural values will be different, but not all. Some passages will have a wide gulf between the original context and our context. One example of this would be God's commands to Joshua to lead the conquest of Canaan. We are not military commanders under God's direct command to conquer a physical nation, so our contexts certainly differ! But in some cases, the reader may find that there doesn't seem to be as great a gulf between their time and ours. This can be particularly true in the Psalms or wisdom literature like Proverbs or Ecclesiastes.

It should also be said that whenever one is reading an Old Testament passage, we always need to make sure we understand this passage in light of the New Testament, and particularly looking for how the Old Testament is fulfilled in Jesus.

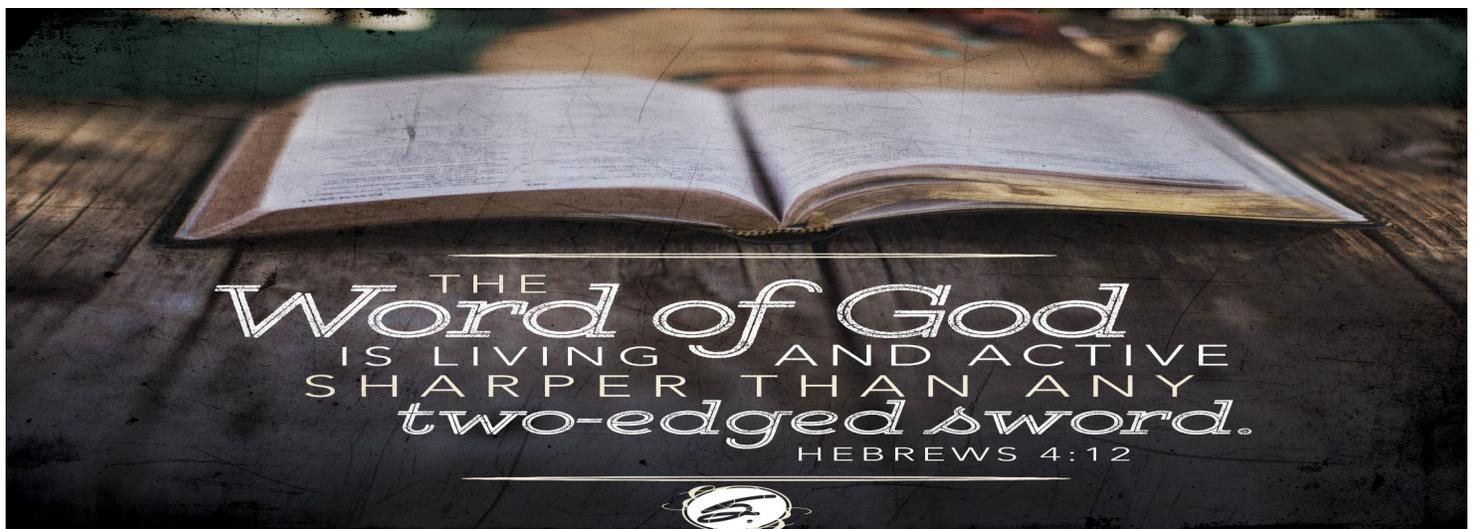
Once we have established the differences between the original context and ours, we look for that which is true in both. Particularly, we are looking for how the Gospel is proclaimed. There isn't always just one "correct" understanding here, and when we see the Gospel throughout the Scriptures we will come to see how the Gospel is multi-layered and multi-faceted. For example, in some cases, we will see Christ's authority to forgive sins, whereas in other passages we will see how Christ has power over the devil.

Once we "cross the gulf," the next step is to re-orient ourselves by examining the rest of the witness of Scripture. We are checking to make sure that our understanding of what we're reading is supported by other passages of Scripture. We can also utilize trusted resources like our Lutheran Confessions or solid commentaries to see how these have understood the passage we're studying. It must be noted that, while we affirm that the Lutheran Confession found in the Book of Concord are correct expositions of Scripture, we must exercise care when using commentaries. It's always possible for even faithful and well-studied theologians to err, and commentaries are not written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Finally, we take what we have learned and apply it to our context. The Word of God may have been written in specific times and places in the past, but "the Word of God is living and active" (Hebrews 4:12a). It is through the Word that the Lord speaks to His people. This is not a dead word, but a living Word that continues to speak and will continue to speak to us until the Day when Christ returns. Therefore, the Word will always have bearing in our present lives.

There is much more that can be said about how to properly understand Scripture. And even when it comes to this method in particular, what I have offered here is a brief outline of what constituted an entire ten-week class at seminary. But it is my prayer that this will be helpful to you as we all strive to properly understand and be submissive to God's living Word. Amen.

Pastor Andrew Cave



Mission Lutheran Church and School Prayer Ministry

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



**Give thanks to the Lord,
call upon His name,
make known his deeds among the peoples,
proclaim that His name is exalted.**

(Isaiah 12:4 quoting David’s song of thanks from 1st Chronicles 16)

Times like these certainly need the strength and courage that can only come from our Lord. It is easy to get caught up in stress, uncertainty, indignation—and name any other emotion that comes to mind—but in all circumstances we look to our Lord. Below are a few scriptures with which to spend time in prayer when the world tries to impose its influence...

Isaiah 41:10

*fear not, for I am with you;
be not dismayed, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you,
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.*

2 Timothy 1:7

for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

1 John 4:18-29

There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love. We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, “I love God,” and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

Psalms 34:4

*I sought the LORD, and he answered me
and delivered me from all my fears.*

Proverbs 29:25

*The fear of man lays a snare,
but whoever trusts in the LORD is safe.*

Continued on next page →

Psalm 56:3-4

*When I am afraid,
I put my trust in you.
4 In God, whose word I praise,
in God I trust; I shall not be afraid.
What can flesh do to me?*

Psalm 51:10

*Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and renew a right^[a] spirit within me.*

Ezekiel 36:26

And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

Deuteronomy 31:6

Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the LORD your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you.”

Psalm 27:14

*Wait for the LORD;
be strong, and let your heart take courage;
wait for the LORD!*

Proverbs 21:2

*Every way of a man is right in his own eyes,
but the LORD weighs the heart.*

Romans 8:31-39

*What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be^[i] against us? 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? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.^[l] Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written,
“For your sake we are being killed all the day long;
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”*

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 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.

1 John 3:1:

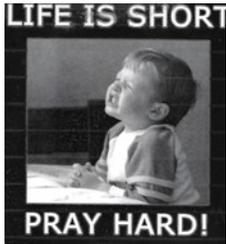
See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him.

Ephesians 6:10-11

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.

John 16:32-33

Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In



“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

Let us pray!

We join together in prayer during Sunday’s Divine Service. Join your Mission family in prayer during the week:

Tuesdays at 12:30pm in the church library there is both open prayer and silent prayer as we cover all we do at Mission in prayer and pray for other prayer needs and concerns. (Usually less than 30 minutes)

Wednesday mornings during the school year at 7:35am in Luther Hall, members join the MLS staff to pray for the school and individual students in brief around-the-table prayer. (Usually 10 minutes)

Thursday mornings at 6:45 am on ZOOM for the Mission “Prayer and Praise Hour” which consists of Morning Prayer (from the Lutheran Service Book) led by four alternating men, three scripture readings, a handful of songs sung while muted and open prayer. Some pray aloud while others pray silently in agreement. (Usually 45-50 minutes) Contact Doug Lorenz with your email address to be added to the weekly reminder with the Zoom link.
Doug.4corners@gmail.com

Stewardship

Table of Duties: The Forgotten Stewardship Tool

Luther's Small Catechism is a magnificent tool. Joined with a well-used copy of the Holy Scriptures and an orthodox hymnal, and the Christian is well equipped to live a life of faithfulness to the Lord and service to the neighbor. First in German and now in English and just about any language known to man, this handy masterpiece has introduced generations of people to the central doctrine of justification by grace, through faith, on account of Jesus Christ. The Six Chief Parts have proven to be a faithful framework for a clear confession of the truth of the Gospel for nearly five hundred years!

But more than a textbook, the Small Catechism also serves well as a handbook for Christian living. As a part of its treasure, there is an element that teaches an extraordinarily strong message of stewardship. That hidden treasure that needs to be rediscovered is called the Table of Duties.

The Table of Duties is really nothing more than a categorized gathering of Bible verses. These verses are set apart for "various holy orders and positions, admonishing them about their duties and responsibilities." Addressing pastors and people, government and citizens, husbands, wives, children, youth, workers and so many more, it very clearly lays out what faithful stewardship looks like. Even better, these assembled passages teach one important truth: we are stewards of one another!

The Table is much more than a "how-to" tool; it also lays out the interconnectedness that exists within the body of Christ. Pastors are described by what they are to be as stewards of the Word. 1 Timothy 3 highlights the characteristics of a faithful pastor. Even more, Titus 1 highlights the need for the pastor to be faithful for the sake of those under his care.

Those who hear the faithful preaching of the pastor are stewards of the pastor as well. 1 Corinthians 9 talks about the need for the people to support the livelihood of the pastor. Galatians 6 talks about how the hearers share in the good things that the pastor teaches. 1 Timothy 6 talks about the honor that is owed to the pastor, not because of WHO he is, but rather WHAT he is teaching! Hebrews 13 shows the impact of this stewardship on the pastor, that they perform their duties with joy. Joyful pastors and people are always going to be better stewards of the Gospel!

Outside the church this interdependent stewardship is on display as well. Romans 13 highlights the respect necessary for the governing authorities. As citizens, the faithful steward is called to pay taxes (Matthew 22), pray for their leaders (1 Timothy 2) and that they should be ready to serve in the civil realm (Titus 3), because they are in these positions by God's direction (1 Peter 2).

These steward duties are in the home too! 1 Peter 3 and Colossians 3 shape the husband steward. Ephesians 5 and 1 Peter 3 shape the wife steward. Ephesians 6 form parental stewards and child stewards.

The Table of Duties is a wonderful place for the individual steward to learn how much our stewardship is more than just a "me and Jesus thing!" In fact, it ends with these words: "Let each his lesson learn with care, and all the household well share fare." This is interdependent stewardship on clear display. As each learns stewardship in this way, the more faithful we will be as a family, congregations, communities and the church at large.

Time, Talents and Treasure



Stewardship is many things. Our congregation has always been more than generous with their church contributions. But stewardship also requires that we give of the talents God has given each of us. That means using some of our time to further the mission of our church. Here are just some of the ways that you can contribute.

Prayer Ministry: We strive to cover all areas of the Church's life in prayer. We currently meet every Tuesday at 12:30 pm in the church library for a short time of prayer. We also meet every Wednesday morning at 7:35 am to pray with the teachers before the start of the school day. Those who aren't part of the school staff then meet for breakfast. And we meet via Zoom every Thursday morning at 6:45 am when we follow Responsive Prayer 2 in the hymnal. This includes singing at least 3 hymns! A wonderful way to start the day. We could use more leaders for this prayer time. Everyone is welcome to join in any of these prayer opportunities.

Sunday School: Instruction in the Bible and in the faith and worship life is currently provided only to young children. We would love to be able to offer classes to older children. Ideally, we would have someone to coordinate this effort with a team of people to lead classes so that each person would lead once or twice each month rather than every Sunday.

Altar Guild: The volunteers of the altar guild prepare the bread and wine for Communion, prepare the altar for the appropriate time in the church year, and prepare the baptismal font for baptisms. Training is provided to ensure that all volunteers are well equipped and supported in their work of the Lord's house.

Choir: Come and make a joyful noise! The choir meets to rehearse on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 pm from September through May. While you do need to be able to read and carry a tune, no other particular skills are required - just a love of sacred music.

Ushering: Ushers hand out bulletins before the church service, advise those taking communion when it's time to approach the communion rail, and take up the offering by passing the offering trays. They may also direct late arrivals as needed to show them where there is open seating. In the event of a medical emergency, they may also be tasked with calling 911.

Greeting: Greeters arrive a bit early in order to greet members and guests as they arrive. If someone is attending our church for the first time, greeters are to make sure they sign the guest book.

Church Council Officers are all elected by the voting members of the congregation.

President: The president oversees the corporate/business concerns of the congregation and presides over the monthly Council and quarterly Voters' Assembly meetings of the congregation.

Vice President: The vice-president assists the president in his tasks and is responsible for the recruitment of officers and leaders for election to the positions and boards of the congregation.

Council Secretary: The secretary records the minutes of the Council and Voters' Assembly meetings and forwards all minutes and board reports to the Church Secretary for posting and filing.

Financial Secretary: The financial secretary records and keeps confidential records of each member's giving for tax purposes and makes the bank deposits of weekly offerings.

Treasurer: The treasurer is responsible for the payment of bills and the recording and publishing to the congregation its progress in offerings toward, and expenses within, the congregation's yearly budget. Prepares the budget every year for voter approval.

Board of Elders: The men of this Board assist the pastor in the spiritual care of the members, the leading of worship and the oversight of the adult Bible studies, provide communication to the pastor of the needs of the members, and make visits to the members of the congregation.

Board of Trustees: The members of this board oversee the repair and maintenance of the buildings and grounds of the Mission Lutheran Church and School campus and administrate the volunteers of the congregation in that ongoing maintenance work.

Board of Day School Education (School Board): The School Board is responsible for the ministry of Mission Lutheran School; it provides counsel and direction to the school ministry, including interviewing candidates for open positions and providing input to documents required for maintaining the school's accreditation.

Board of Outreach: This board of members initiates and manages outreach activities with the purpose of bringing the Gospel to unchurched people. Activities include: maintaining a Bible box which provides a free Bible to anyone who wants one; changing the verse on the church sign (facing Roadrunner Parkway); sending a note to someone who visits the church for the first time; offering to visit first-time visitors to answer questions about the church; assist members of the community who are in need of financial assistance; or other activities as deemed helpful to reach unchurched people in our community

Committees. The following are volunteer opportunities and the members are not elected by the voting members of the congregation.

Stewardship Committee: This committee is for the purpose of equipping the all of the boards with the human and information resources needed to carry out their work. This committee also encourages church members to share their time, talent and treasure as needed to support Mission Lutheran Church.

Fellowship Committee: The Fellowship Committee is responsible for strengthening the fellowship between congregational members spiritually and socially, supporting the integration of new members into the life of the congregation, planning and implementing outreach events in which the larger community's participation is invited, and in general building mutual cooperation, trust, and enjoyment among the members of the congregation.

None of these opportunities require great amounts of time (with perhaps the exception of the Treasurer!). Please prayerfully consider where you might best put your God-given talents to work for the good of our church family.



February/March Birthdays

		February
Jace	Melton	8
Kay	Swedberg	8
Betty	Coughlin	10
Maya	Nicholson	10
Rachel	Monica	11
Mark	Krohn	14
Kenneth	Springer	16
Jean	Bartels	20
Sheila	Fulwiler	22
Alise	Ornelas	25
Dianne	Wensel	26
Walt	Roof	29
		March
Roger	Guericke	5
Josephine	Monica	5
Bev	Bachmeier	7

Happy Anniversary

February Anniversaries

		Date	# of years	
Michael & Shirley	Kaiser		2	24
Walt & Toni	Roof		13	44

Happy Anniversary to all those couples married in February.

May God continue to bless you.

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

JULIETS

All women in the church are invited to our monthly ladies' lunch. And bring a friend!

Thursday, February 12th at
Paisano Café
1740 Calle De Mercado Ste C

We meet at 11:30 am.

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

Call or text Debra at (901) 830-7216



WINGS/LWML

The next gathering of WINGS (Women in God's Service) will be on Monday, **February 9th**, at 6:30 PM in Luther Hall. All women are invited for fellowship and Bible study. Dessert will be provided.



LWML would like to thank everyone for their participation in Operation Christmas Child.

Samaritan's purse delivered 12,205,900 shoeboxes to children in 100 countries for Christmas 2025.

The shoebox receipt numbers we followed were all delivered in Mexico.



Haley DeRossitt has been so gracious to take over the ordering of flowers each week. Please make checks out to Haley and get payment and flower selection to her or in her box the Sunday before your chosen week. Thank you!

MISSION LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

January 20, 2026

President Doug Lorenz called the Mission Lutheran Church Council meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

Council Members present: Pastor Cave, Treasurer: Brad Mueller, Board of Elders: Richard Turk, Church Secretary: Jennifer Diaz, Board of Trustees: Brad Springer, Sr., Financial Secretary: Carol Moore, School Board: Karen Springer, Council Secretary: Carol Cooper and Vice President: Eric Gunderson.

Pastor Cave opened the meeting with prayer.

The minutes of the November meeting were approved as corrected with a note of the water heating working, but on it's last leg

The following reports were given:

Pastor Cave: Pastor Cave's report is attached. Mentioned that Ash Wednesday is coming up. Trinity in Alamogordo called a 2nd Pastor that declined the call. And mentioned how fantastic Concordia Choir and Epiphany party were.

Vice President: Eric Gunderson reported on what Officers will need to be replace end of term.

Secretary: Carol Cooper-No report.

Treasurer: Brad Mueller's report is attached.

Financial Secretary: Carol Moore reported that Dustin Villarreal will be replacement at end of the term.

Elders: Richard Turk reported Richard Ojinaga will be the liaison for Music, Richard Turk for Stewardship, Michael Kaiser for Alter Guild. Actively working on building Usher's and formally organizing group. After speaking to Walt Roof and receiving good advice, Elders are planning and implementing who can be used in which roles.

Trustees: Brad Springer, Sr. reported on completed tasks-new water fountain, cabinet installed, painting, moving of pianos, as well as new tasks-deadbolts for the teachers' closet in the Annex, motion light in front of the sanctuary, replacing water heater and taking out the gas furnace enabling extra storage for the office.

School Board: Karen Springer-report is attached.

President: Doug Lorenz: Next meeting will be February 17, 2026.

Pastor Cave led us in the Lord's Prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol L. Cooper, Secretary



MISSION LUTHERAN CHURCH and SCHOOL

Treasurer's Report for the Feb. '26 Council/Voters Meeting

Report Preparation Date: Feb 1, 2026

<u>Budget Status:</u>	<u>Month of Jan '26</u>	<u>FY26 thru Jan '26</u>
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u> <u>Budget</u>
<u>Income:</u>		
MLC General	\$31,667	\$207,248 \$264,750
MLS Total	\$23,640	\$204,645 \$214,898
Designated / Other	<u>\$424</u>	<u>\$201,759</u> <u>\$1,225</u>
	\$55,731 *	\$613,652 * \$480,873 *
<u>Expenses:</u>		
MLC		
Total	\$16,322 *	\$131,890 * \$143,329 *
MLS Total	<u>\$46,387</u>	<u>\$341,066</u> <u>\$343,105</u>
Total Expenses	\$62,709	\$472,956 \$486,434
		\$42,341
Net Difference	-\$6,978 *	\$140,696 * -\$5,561 *

MLC General Fund Contributions – FY26 as of Jan 31, 2026

Average Weekly Contributions Needed:		\$8,825
Average Weekly Contributions Received (FYTD) :		<u>\$8,117</u>
	Average Weekly Surplus/ <u>Shortfall</u> :	-\$708 *
General Fund Contributions Year-to-Date:		\$243,520
General Fund Budgeted Year-to-Date:		<u>\$264,750</u>
Fiscal Year-to-Date Surplus/ <u>Shortfall</u> :		-\$21,230 *

Investments & Assets / Liabilities as of Jan 31, '26

<u>Investments:</u>	Morgan Stanley/E*Trade	\$136,561
	Mission Lutheran Endowment Fund (American Century)	\$94,482
	Thrivent - School Endowment Fund	\$272,144
	LCEF MLC Youth Development CD	<u>\$13,863</u>
	TOTAL	\$517,050 *
<u>Current Assets:</u>	Shepherd's Staff Checking	\$100,180
	LCEF All Access	\$200,280
	minus	
Dedicated Funds	Youth Activity Fund	\$3,766
	Youth Endowment Fund	\$12,500
	MLS Reg/Tuition Holding	\$0
	Angel Scholarship Program	\$4,537
	COVID Grant	\$23,413
	Apple Tree Donations	\$451
	Emergency Tuition Assistance	\$5,850
	School Security Grant	\$8,774
	Thrivent Funds	\$52,265
	Coats for Kids	\$0
	Staffeldt Scholarship Fund	\$9,377
	Trustee Projects Fund	\$9,024
	Total Checking Available After Dedicated Funds	\$179,880 *

Liabilities: None

*Generated via spreadsheet



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 School: (575) 532-5489
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 secretary@missionlutheran.net
 office@mlschool.net
 Elder on Call: Michael Kaiser (915) 525-6794

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

Officers and Board Chairpersons for 2025-26

President	Doug Lorenz	Elders, Chairman	Richard Turk
Vice President	Eric Gunderson	Elders, Vice-chairman	Nathan Graff
Treasurer	Brad Mueller	Trustees	Brad Springer, Sr.
Secretary	Carol Cooper	Outreach	Brad Springer
Financial Secretary	Carol Moore	Day School Education	Karen Springer