

MISSION FRONTIERS

Mission Lutheran Church, Las Cruces, NM

Pastor's Pen

Pastor Andrew Cave

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of the one who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the servant of God, an avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer. Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom

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Important Dates:

November 2: All Saints' Day/ Daylight Savings
November 11: Veteran's Day
November 27: Thanksgiving



taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed. (Romans 13:1-7)

Some of you are aware that I was on-call for jury duty during the month of October. There was a case for which I was required to report that was postponed before I reported. I was required to appear for another case the following week, but I was not selected for the jury. So ultimately, my jury duty was mostly uneventful and inconsequential. However, this experience calls to mind how we as Christians, and specifically as Lutherans, can think about our roles and responsibilities within the civic realm.

One term that is often used in Lutheran theological circles is the concept of the “two kingdoms,” the kingdom of the right and the kingdom of the left. That’s not a bad term in and of itself, but it can run the risk of being confused with the idea of the “kingdom of heaven” as opposed to the “kingdom of darkness,” where one kingdom is good and the other evil. But when we’re referring to “two kingdoms theology” in this context, we’re not talking about good versus evil, but rather about the Christian’s roles and responsibilities within two realms that are ordered by God and His Word. Luther himself didn’t use the word “kingdom,” but did talk about the right hand and left hand “realm,” understanding that God’s Word enlightens our understanding of both.

The right-hand kingdom or realm is the realm of the church. This is the realm of faith, the forgiveness of sins, and the receiving of the Holy Spirit. The final word of the right-hand realm is the Gospel. To be sure, we hear the Law proclaimed from the lectern and the pulpit. But the purpose of the Divine Service is that the sinner leaves having been justified by grace. That’s the right-hand realm.

The left-hand kingdom or realm has to do with all the various vocations that God has given us in this life. God rules the left-hand realm, and His Word is still the only rule and norm, just as in the right hand. In other words, the left-hand realm is not separated from God’s Word in the way we think of the so-called “separation of church and state.” But the left-hand realm is not the realm of the Gospel. The left-hand realm is the realm of God’s will for the ordering of His creation.

We learn God’s will for creation through His Word of Law. However, we ought to take care not to think of *Law* only in a negative sense. While the Law always accuses us because our nature has been corrupted by sin, before mankind fell into sin God still expressed His will for the ordering of creation. He gave the first woman to the first man, instituting marriage, and He bid them to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it. He gave them the task of caring for the garden, and they

were to exercise Godly dominion over the earth. And they were given a command not to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. So we can see that God's ordering of creation, while a condemning Law for sinful mankind, is ultimately made for our good.

And despite our current sinful state, God's Law is still for our good. He has taught us what to do in the various left-hand vocations we have. For example, husbands and wives are to love one another, parents are to raise their children in the fear and knowledge of the Lord, children are to honor and obey their parents, employers should pay fair wages, employees should give honest labor, and so on. The responsibilities of all of these various vocations can be summarized by the Law, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

And the left-hand realm is most certainly the realm of the government. While it may be debatable what the role of government would have looked like had mankind not fallen into sin, the role of government now is outlined in Scripture. The above passage from Romans 13 states that the primary role of the government is to approve good behavior and punish wickedness. Within this God-given role, the government ought not to be called a "necessary evil," but rather is most properly labeled as a servant of God for the good of mankind. When the government functions according to God's authority and direction, it brings peace, justice, and stability to the people.

Some Christians serve in various governmental capacities, be it in law enforcement, military, or the legal system. Christians may serve in these vocations with a clear conscience if they do so by faith in Christ, for God has granted His good and proper authority to these vocations.

But what of those Christians who do not serve in these vocations? What has God given them to do with relation to the government? According to Romans 13, one of the Christian's responsibilities is to be subject to the authorities, meaning that we submit ourselves to their authority and we obey them in all matters that do not violate God's clear commands (see Acts 5:29). Another Scriptural responsibility we have is outlined in 1 Timothy 2:1-4: "First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, Who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

So when we think about the Christian's roles and responsibilities with relation to the government, it comes down to the same Law as all other left-hand realm vocations, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." God has given His Law for our good. We are not saved by the Law; we are saved by the Gospel, which is a Word for the right-hand realm. But the Law of God enlightens us as to how we may best serve our neighbor, which is something we desire to do out love for God and for one another. Amen.

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)

As our busy season begins to get busier, let’s pause together to pray, giving thanks to our Heavenly Father. He deserves our thanks in so many ways—and we cannot even count the ways! Let’s consider but a few scriptures as our guide for prayer, considering ways each applies to our lives and the world around us:

*“And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD,
“For he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever toward Israel.”
And all the people shouted with a great shout when they praised the LORD,
because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. “– Ezra 3:11*

*“It is good to give thanks to the LORD,
to sing praises to your name, O Most High;” - Psalm 92:1*

*“I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was
given you in Christ Jesus, that in every way you were enriched in him in
all speech and all knowledge— even as the testimony about Christ was
confirmed among you— so that you are not lacking in any gift, as you wait
for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will sustain you to the
end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, by whom
you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. “-1
Corinthians 1:4-9*

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“I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.” – Ephesians 1:16-23

“We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing.” – 2 Thesalonians 1:3

*“Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
and his courts with praise!
Give thanks to him; bless his name!” – Psalm 100:4*



***“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

Stewardship

Pointing to the Rock of Ages

*Not the labor of my hands Can fulfill Thy Law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know, Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone; Thou must save, and Thou alone. (LSB 761:2)*

While the classic hymn “Rock of Ages” shows up in the *Lutheran Service Book* in the “Hope and Comfort” section, it can also teach us a valuable lesson about Christian stewardship. If that surprises you, stay with me on this one.

No Lutheran would ever dispute the fact that our work does not save us. Ephesians 2 makes it truly clear that we are dead in our trespasses and sins and would remain in that state until Christ raises us by grace. There is not a ladder on which we can climb out of the grave that our sins have dug for us. No blood, sweat nor tears will be able to rescue us. We all know this.

Our works do not save. Christ's work on the cross of Calvary does! He bore human flesh. He carried the burden of our sin to the cross. His body was beaten, bruised and bloodied for us. He has indeed atoned for us! This is more than enough reason for this hymn to be bouncing around in your head all day today!

But our work has a place. The place is in response to what the Father has done for us in Jesus. The Rock of Ages, who is Jesus, becomes the foundation on which our lives of faith are built. The Holy Spirit uses the means of grace to make us God's workmanship that Paul talks about in Ephesians 2:10.

Our workmanship does not display our power or prowess. Like the heavens declare the handiwork of the Creator, the works of a redeemed sinner point others to the salvation that is worked only by Jesus alone. Our work is a response to and reflection of a grace and glory that we ourselves could never accomplish or achieve.

We become stewards of the treasure that is the Gospel. When we faithfully support the work of the Gospel of Jesus Christ with our financial support, we are doing the work which points to the One who alone atones. When we come alongside a struggling sister or brother for whom Christ died and we share the stewardship work of compassion and care, we en flesh the treasure of God's love and redemption. When we make it a weekly priority to arrange our schedule to be in the Lord's House with other stewards of the Gospel to receive again and again the Gospel's precious gift, we are stewards of the Body of Christ in the congregation that points even more people to Jesus.

We cannot do this. Jesus does it through us. We are simply stewards of this precious treasure!

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.



November Birthdays

		Date
Patricia	Pathy	2
Kaidyn	Lanham	4
Karen	Reyes	11
Charlotte	Muchow	12
Jerry	Del Bozque	12
Sawyer	Monica	13
Vicki	Kofoot	14
Larry	Tate	15
Pat	Duever	15
Ciara	Aguilera	17
Sonya	Perry	17
Socorro	Del Bozque	19
Cora	Cave	21
Janet	Franz	21
Cathy	Stegemann	22
Rosalie	Burns	23
Alvin	Siffring	28
Fran	Gunderson	29
Kerri	Shaw	30

Happy Anniversary

November Anniversaries

		Date	# of years
Lujan	Al & Becky	8	39

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 Jennifer Diaz
in the church office.

JULIETS

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

Cattle Baron
790 S Telshor Blvd

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, **November 10**, at 6:30 PM in Luther Hall. All women are invited for fellowship and Bible study. Dessert will be provided.

MISSION LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL

MEETING MINUTES

AUGUST 19, 2025

Minutes approved on October 21, 2025

President Doug Lorenz called the Mission Lutheran Church Council meeting to order at

6:32 PM. Other Council Members present were: Vice President: Eric Gunderson, Secretary: Carol Cooper, Treasurer: Brad Mueller, Financial Secretary: Carol Moore, Pastor Cave, Board of Elders: Richard Turk, Board of Trustees: Brad Springer, Sr., School Board: Karen Springer. Pastor Cave opened the meeting with prayer.

The minutes of the May 20, 2025 meeting were approved as presented .

Doug called for the following reports:

Pastor Cave - see Report attached. Pastor Cave noted that Adult Instruction will be wrapping up, and we will be welcoming new members soon. Pastor Cave also noted that the Circuit Forum will be meeting September 28, so we should elect our "lay representative" to that meeting at our September 14 Voters' Meeting. (On September 14, the voters approved Michael Kaiser to be the lay representative to the Circuit Forum meeting on September 28, 2025; the purpose of Circuit Forum meeting is to elect delegates to the Synod Convention to be held in July, 2026.)

Vice President - Eric Gunderson - see report attached. Eric reported that he is continuing to gather a slate of officers for consideration in June, 2026, and he noted that the by-laws state that members may not serve more than two consecutive terms; Carol Moore offered to help Eric determine which members will be eligible to serve on the Church Council for the 2-year term beginning July 1, 2026. Brad Mueller asked that we invite interested members to consider training with Brad to become an "assistant treasurer". He explained that some treasurer duties must be timely performed. For example, it would be very helpful to have a second person who could timely prepare payroll if the treasurer became ill or needed to be out-of- town.

Secretary - Carol Cooper-Minutes of the May 20, 2025 meeting are attached.

Treasurer - Brad Mueller - See report attached. There were no questions regarding financial statements.

Financial Secretary - Carol Moore - No report.

Elders - Board of Elders - Richard Turk reported that Austin Nathaniel's care group is still without an Elder. (Austin was recently transferred to Colorado Springs, CO.) Doug asked to speak to the Elders regarding church security and emergency situations.

Trustees - Brad Springer, Sr. - See report attached. Brad observed that most of his activity has been "pretty routine". When cooler, he will be painting fences. Other possible improvements discussed focused on the upper parking lot (adjacent to school on the west side).

Outreach/Fellowship/Stewardship - "Lumberjack Days" (Youth/Family gathering in Cloudcroft) is set for Saturday, August 23 from 9AM to 1PM at Zenith Park; Karen and Brad Springer are doing a cook-out.

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MISSION LUTHERAN CHURCH COUNCIL
MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 19, 2025

School Board - Karen Springer - see Report attached.

President - Unfinished Business - YOUTH, STEWARDSHIP & FELLOWSHIP COMMITTEES, SECURITY & EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

YOUTH ACTIVITIES

Youth Group Meetings-Kathy Mailander has invited our Youth Group to the Mailander home for their meetings.

Christian Education for our Youth Group-Jim Roberts "Have a devotion in every activity."

STEWARDSHIP

Time, Talent, Treasure

"Temple Talks"

FELLOWSHIP-Soup Suppers

SECURITY - PASTOR CAVE IDEAS

Present to Congregation-MEDICAL EMERGENCY

List of Medically-trained members

List of members who know where medical supplies are located

"NarCan" on hand - free from the State

Present to Congregation-ACTIVE SHOOTER EMERGENCY

Small camera that is connected to a monitor

Communication to Congregation - "Run!" - "Hide!" - "Fight!" - "Hit the Floor!"

Doug suggested we condense the information for Voters' Meeting in a 2-Minute Video

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30PM.

Respectfully submitted,



MISSION LUTHERAN CHURCH and SCHOOL

Treasurer's Report for the Sept '25 Council/Voters Meeting

Report Preparation Date: Sep 1, 2025

<u>Budget Status:</u>	<u>Month of Aug '25</u>	<u>FY26 thru Aug '25</u>
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual Budget</u>
<u>Income:</u>		
MLC General	\$22,487	\$52,417 \$79,425
MLS Total	\$57,416	\$89,080 \$44,769
Designated / Other	\$149	\$300 \$350
	\$80,052 *	\$141,797 * \$124,544 *
<u>Expenses:</u>		
MLC Total	\$16,316 *	\$31,803 * \$35,627 *
MLS Total	\$45,711	\$89,939 \$91,055
Total Expenses	\$62,027	\$121,742 \$126,682
Net Difference	\$18,025 *	\$20,055 * -\$2,138 *

MLC General Fund Contributions – FY26 as of Aug 31, 2025

Average Weekly Contributions Needed:	\$8,825
Average Weekly Contributions Received (FYTD) :	\$6,291
Average Weekly Surplus/ <u>Shortfall</u> :	-\$2,534 *
General Fund Contributions Year-to-Date:	\$56,616
General Fund Budgeted Year-to-Date:	\$79,425
Fiscal Year-to-Date Surplus/ <u>Shortfall</u> :	-\$22,809 *

Investments & Assets / Liabilities as of Aug 31, '25

<u>Investments:</u>	Morgan Stanley/E*Trade	\$129,589
	Mission Lutheran Endowment Fund (American Century)	\$84,989
	Thrivent	\$501,250
	LCEF MLC Youth Development CD	\$13,639
	TOTAL	\$729,467 *
<u>Current Assets:</u>	Shepherd's Staff Checking	\$40,181
	LCEF All Access	\$70,478
	Youth Activity Fund	\$3,766
	Youth Christian Development	\$12,500
minus	MLS Reg/Tuition Holding	\$0
Dedicated	Angel Scholarship Program	\$1,695
Funds	COVID Grant	\$25,733
	Apple Tree Donations	\$1,213
	Emergency Tuition Assistance	\$5,850
	School Security Grant	\$8,774
	Musical Donations	\$60
	Coats for Kids	\$500
	Staffeldt Scholarship Fund	\$377
	Total Checking Available After Dedicated Funds	\$50,191 *
<u>Liabilities:</u>	None	



Mission Lutheran Church and School

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School: (575) 532-5489

Emails: pastor@missionlutheran.net

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