

# MISSION FRONTIERS

## Mission Lutheran Church, Las Cruces, NM

Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."  
(Mark 1:14-15)

There are times when someone may ask if there's anything in particular that distinguishes the Lutheran tradition from other denominations. There are certain outward distinctives that bear the brunt of self-deprecating jokes, such as the Lutherans' affinity for green Jello, Wienerschnitzel, lutefisk, and let's not forget beer! And perhaps we joke about such things because there are many aspects of our theology that don't seem much different between the Lutherans and other Christians. We believe in the Triune God: one God who exists in three distinct Persons. We believe that Jesus Christ is both fully God and fully Man. We believe that He died on the cross and rose again on the third day in order to save us from our sins and grant us eternal life. These are fundamental aspects of our faith, and yet when we discuss these things with other Christians, we're not going to find any disagreement. Much of what we believe as Lutheran Christians is common amongst all of Christianity.

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### Important Dates:

October 5-16 : Fall Break for MLS

October 24 : Oktoberfest



Nevertheless, Lutheran theology has some clear distinctives that aren't found elsewhere, and one of those is that our theology makes a clear distinction between Law and Gospel. Many of us are familiar with this teaching, but it's helpful to consistently review this because natural human reason is constantly confusing Law and Gospel in our lives.

Fundamentally, God's Law is His good and gracious will. God's Law is the way in which He has designed and ordained this world to function. Thus, God's Law is not bad or evil. Nor is God's Law a response to sin entering the world. God's Law was present in creation prior to the fall into sin. He created the world, and He bid the animals to be fruitful and multiply. He likewise told the man and woman to be fruitful and multiply, and they were to have dominion over creation and tend the Garden of Eden. They were permitted to eat of any tree except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. So God had an order to His creation from the very beginning.

But then sin entered the world. Sin is a thorough corruption of the nature of mankind so that our nature is in constant rebellion against God. Thus, God's Law has become something that sinful mankind no longer takes delight in. Instead, we find it oppressive, we question its wisdom and goodness, and we fight against it. But the problem lies not within the Law, which is still good, right, and holy. The problem lies within sinful humanity.

Since the fall into sin, God's Law serves three purposes. The first use of the Law is what Lutheran theology calls a "curb." Even though mankind is corrupted by sin, we still retain an inherent albeit imperfect knowledge of the Law written upon our hearts. This is why people have a general sense of right and wrong, even if we don't always follow through. This general sense of right and wrong is shared across cultures and across time periods. The Law written on our hearts teaches us that sins such as murder, adultery, and theft are wrong. The first use of the Law is called a "curb" because it curbs gross manifestations of sin and keeps mankind from utterly destroying one another.

The second use of the Law is its primary use, and this is called the "mirror." It's called the mirror because the perfection of God's Law shows us how far we fall short of His holiness and glory. The Law always accuses. And the more we understand God's Law, the more we feel its accusation. For example, we might look at the 5th Commandment, "You shall not murder," and think that we're basically following that part of God's Law. But Jesus famously said in the Sermon on the Mount, "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.' But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire" (Matthew 5:21-22). When we understand that God's Law requires perfection in outward actions, in our speech, in our will, and in our inner thoughts, then we see how thoroughly corrupted we are.

As was said above, the Law is good. But when accused by the good Law's righteous condemnation, we have good news, which is the Gospel. In distinguishing Law and Gospel, the Gospel should not be seen as the antidote the problematic Law. Rather, the Gospel is the answer to the Law's righteous accusation of the sinner. The Gospel is the good news of the free forgiveness of sins in Jesus Christ. The Gospel is the declaration to the sinner that the blood of Jesus Christ, spilled on the cross, is the payment for all sins. The Gospel is the declaration that the sinner who is dead in their trespasses has been raised to new life. The Gospel is the promise that all who believe in Jesus will be raised from the dead to eternal life on the Last Day.

The word of Law and the word of Gospel are both from God. But they are distinguished in that the Law is God's will for us. The Law demands perfection, promising life for those who follow it, but unable to deliver on that promise because no one can keep it. The Gospel is a pure gift, requiring absolutely nothing from us. We hear both Law and Gospel from the Scriptures, we hold them both as sacred, but we dare not mix them. We cannot add to the Gospel by telling someone that they must do something to earn salvation or to remain in the state of grace. Living our lives for Jesus, striving to keep God's Law, is still Law. The Gospel is nothing more and nothing less than the free gift of God in Christ Jesus.

There is still a purpose for the Law of God in the life of the Christian in addition to making us aware of our sin and our need for a Savior. For those who have received the Gospel, the Law has a third use, a use we call a "guide." This is how the Law instructs us to live our lives according to God's good and gracious design. For the Christian, the Law remains something that is good. And yet, we also must keep in mind that the third use of the Law is still not salvific. We did not earn grace before we became a Christian, and we do not earn grace afterwards. And the instruction the Law gives to the Christian in its third use will simultaneously by its second use accuse us of our sin, which is why we consistently need to hear the word of Gospel in our day to day lives.

There is much more that can be said concerning Law and Gospel. Many theologians much wiser than I have written volumes of books on this subject. But I pray that this brief article serves as a reminder of how we hear and receive God's word. We hear the word of Law, and its primary use is to show us our sin and our need for a Savior. And we then hear the word of Gospel, the free forgiveness of sins in Christ. Both words are necessary, but they must be properly distinguished. The proper distinction between Law and Gospel is truly a hallmark of the Lutheran tradition. Amen.

Pastor Andrew Cave

This article was originally published in the September 2024 newsletter

The time of fulfillment has arrived, and  
the kingdom of God is close at hand.  
Repent, and believe in the gospel.  
**Mark 1:15**

# Mission Lutheran Church and School Prayer Ministry

June 2026



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

“He covers the heavens with clouds; he prepares rain for the earth; he makes grass grow on the hills.”

Psalm 147:8

“And [Jesus] awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” And the wind ceased,  
and there was a great calm.” Mark 4:39

One of our common prayers, perhaps especially here in New Mexico, is for seasonable weather.

This past month has seen some extremes, both in temperature and in precipitation. We had warnings for flash floods, heavy thunderstorms, and even the possibility of tornadoes! In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus demonstrates His divine nature when He calms a storm that was strong enough to sink the boat He and His disciples were in. In the midst of a torrential storm, we understand just how unpredictable and outside of our control the weather is. There are long periods of drought and heat when we long for the rain. Then there are those times when we receive soft showers that rejuvenate the desert. In any case, our prayer is of praise for our powerful God, who gives rain, sunshine, and is completely in control.



*“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

It's in the Way that You Use It

Originally Published October 2023

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Consider the humble baseball bat. It is a simple tool designed for a complex task. The batter needs a tool that can consistently deliver force to a small ball which may be thrown at over 100 miles per hour, but which might also come slanting across the plate as a slow curve. For a game like this, the founders of baseball had to redesign the old cricket bat, which is more of a flat paddle. The tool had to fit the job.

But even a specially-designed tool can be used for a different purpose. It turns out that some years ago in England, the home of cricket, baseball bats suddenly started selling like hotcakes. What were folks across the pond doing with all those baseball bats? Using them as clubs in riots!

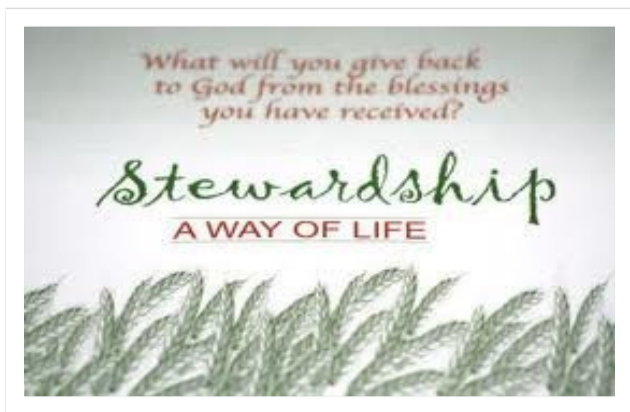
A tool can be used, and it can be misused. It's all in the way that you use it. The same is true with the things of God. The Second Commandment states that we should "not misuse the name of the Lord." In the Small Catechism, Luther goes on to tell us exactly what this misuse is, as well as the proper use:

"We should fear and love God so that we do not curse, swear, use satanic arts, lie, or deceive by His name, but call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks." (SC I)

The Lord has given us His name: He has placed it upon us in Holy Baptism and He has invited us to pray to Him as our Father. In this sense, the Lord's name is something for us to use. We should not misuse it ... and we should not fail to use it. The Pharisees of old were so afraid of misusing the name of God that they decided to simply never say the name of God (YHWH, Jehovah) at all! This non-use is just as bad as misuse. The Lord gives His gifts for our use.

A Christian steward is one who is called to use all of God's gifts for His purposes. This includes things like the Name of God, the Sacraments and the Word, and it also includes things like our family and friends, our talents and skills, our money and resources. Everything that God has given to you, He has given to you so that you may be blessed to use it for His kingdom.

It's all in the way that you use it!



# Time Talent Treasure

Stewardship at Mission is joining together as a church and school family to keep our church home running and growing as an inviting place to worship, grow in our knowledge of the Lord, fellowship together and attract others to know our Lord! God

has gifted each of us with time, talents and treasure to this end. Below are ways to use those talents!

Which opportunities speak to you?

**Prayer Ministry**—we want to insure all we do at Mission is covered in prayer!

- Worship – our Divine Service is filled with prayer
- Intercessors – pray with the pastor, elders, acolytes before service and pray for individuals after service
- Tuesdays -12:30-12:50 prayer for church, school and individual needs – pray aloud or silently
- Wednesdays at 7:35-7:45am – pray with Pastor and school staff for school – optional fellowship for breakfast out afterward
- Thursdays – 6:45-7:30am Praise and Prayer Hour via Zoom – Four current or former elders lead Responsive prayer 2 from Lutheran Service Book, includes open prayer and singing (muted 😊 )
- At home individually – email prayer chain and praying with Scriptures from Prayer Ministry newsletter article

**Divine Service Support**—it takes many to make our worship time meaningful

- Greeter (part of Outreach Board)
- Usher
- Acolyte/ Crucifier
- Altar Guild
- Music – Choir, Organist/Pianist, other music instruments
- Misc – collecting attendance records, straightening pews, sharpening pencils, etc
- Audio visual – sound and computer
- Emergency Support

Continued on next page →

### **Church Council Officers (elected)**

- President – Oversees business concerns of church and presides over Church Council and Voter Assembly meetings
- Vice-President – Assists president, recruits officers and Board members and oversees Fellowship and Christian Education Committees
- Council Secretary – Records minutes of Council and Voter's Assembly meetings, maintains quorum determination and reports from boards
- Treasurer- Preparation of budget, prepares monthly reports and pays bills
- Financial Secretary – Maintains scheduled offering counters and confidential records of giving for tax purposes; makes weekly deposits

### **Elected Board Members:**

- Board of Elders – Six or more men are elected to assist in leading worship, assist with Pastor's needs, communicate regularly with members and oversee Stewardship Committee and Breadbreakers
- Board of Trustees – Two elected members lead a committee to oversee building repair and maintenance
- School Board – Six elected members and Treasurer Oversee the direction of our school ministry
- Board of Outreach – Two elected members and volunteer members establish and promote outreach activities to invite and welcome new and potential members. These include greeters, welcome cards, free Bible box, slogans on our church sign and may include community or on-campus events and activities. Board also oversees funding of missions and community assistance.

### **Committees:**

- Christian Education – Oversees Bible studies, Sunday School and other Christian Education under the guidance of the Vice-President
- Fellowship Committee – Provides opportunities for fellowship among church family members through regular and special events typically including organizing, food and/or activities, decorating, etc. Memorial meals may be provided following funerals of church members. Under the guidance of the Vice-President

- ROMEO (Retired Old Men Eating out) – men gather weekly for breakfast and fellowship
- JULIET (Just Us Ladies Into Eating Together) Ladies enjoy lunch out on the third Thursday of each month
- Stewardship Committee – Leadership and encouragement to congregation to share time, talents and treasure under the direction of a member of the Board of Elders
- Breadbreakers – Small groups of 6-8 are formed to fellowship, share a pot luck meal and study God's Word. The groups are changed each year to allow members to become better acquainted with one another. Group studies are led by qualified men and overseen by the Board of Elders.

### ***LWML (Lutheran Women's Missionary League):***

Women of the congregation meet on the second Monday of each month at 6:30pm for Bible study, activity planning and preparing "Wee Care" bundles for newborns at Memorial Hospital. Other activities include:

- Quilting – Most Wednesdays at 9 am. Women create quilts for Wee Care, homeless, overseas military, etc. and some are sold.
- Missions include support to a seminary student through special sales and events.
- Provides events for congregation such as Advent by Candlelight, Epiphany Party and Mother-Daughter Tea.



## October/ November Birthdays

|                      |            |
|----------------------|------------|
| John V. Guenther     | October 9  |
| Barbara Mueller      | October 9  |
| Robert Smits         | October 10 |
| Clark Andrews        | October 11 |
| Ryan Turk            | October 12 |
| Heidi Babin          | October 13 |
| Nico Carrera-Little  | October 15 |
| Jo Wylie             | October 15 |
| Matthiew Austin      | October 18 |
| Jan Peyton           | October 18 |
| Maria Andrews        | October 20 |
| Karen Buls           | October 20 |
| Shylo Carrera-Little | October 20 |
| Jeannette Aguilera   | October 23 |
| Zackary Sanchez      | October 23 |
| Winnie Lee           | October 24 |
| Michael Andrews      | October 28 |
| Asher Eggebraaten    | October 28 |
| Scott Staffeldt      | October 30 |
| Janet Franz          | November 4 |

## Happy Anniversary October/ November Anniversaries

|                            |          |    |
|----------------------------|----------|----|
| Robert & Helen Houck       | October  | 5  |
| JR & Karen Johnson         | October  | 8  |
| Jerry & Amy Carrera-Little | October  | 15 |
| Rev. Warren & Elaine Graff | October  | 25 |
| Brad & Amie Springer       | November | 6  |

Happy Anniversary to all those couples married in  
October/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!

## Chope's

16145 NM Hwy 28 in La Mesa, NM  
on Thursday, October 15th.

Because of the distance we have decided to carpool from the church for those who are unfamiliar with the restaurant.

If you would like to carpool, please be at the church no later than 11:00 AM on that Thursday. Otherwise, we will meet you there at approximately 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

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## WINGS/LWML

The next gathering of WINGS (Women in God's Service) will be on Monday, **October 12th**, at 6:30 PM in Luther Hall. All women are invited for fellowship and Bible study. Dessert will be provided.



# MISSION LUTHERAN CHURCH and SCHOOL

## Treasurer's Report

Finance year 2027, September

| <b>Budget Status:</b>  | <b>Month of Sep '26</b> | <b>Month of Sep '26</b> | <b>FY27 thru Sep '26</b> | <b>FY27 thru Sep '26</b> |
|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
|                        | <u>Actual</u>           | <u>Budget</u>           | <u>Actual</u>            | <u>Budget</u>            |
| Church Income:         | 19,248.00               | 27,843.00               | 79,073.93                | 90,446.00                |
| Church Expense:        | 31,148.44               | 33,165.48               | 98,942.84                | 99,496.44                |
| Church Net Income:     | <u>-11,900.44 P</u>     | <u>-5,322.48 P</u>      | <u>-19,868.91 P</u>      | <u>-9,050.44 P</u>       |
| School Income:         | 33,188.09 P             | 52,771.86               | 104,496.30 P             | 137,555.58               |
| School Expense:        | 45,434.02               | 45,445.04               | <u>128,525.37</u>        | 131,937.70               |
| Thrivent Funds Effect: | <u>-12,245.93</u>       | <u>7,326.82 P</u>       | <u>-24,029.07</u>        | <u>5,617.88 P</u>        |

### Investments & Assets / Liabilities

D-Designated R-Restricted

|                     |                                         |                             |   |                           |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| <b>Investments:</b> | Mission Lutheran Church Fund            | (Morgan Stanley / E-Trade)  | D | 141,767.98                |
|                     | Mission Lutheran Endowment Fund         | (Strasser/American Century) | R | 106,706.90                |
|                     | Duever School Endowment Fund            | (Thrivent)                  | R | 436,791.02                |
|                     | Mission Lutheran School Investment Fund | (Thrivent)                  | D | 212,092.43                |
|                     | MLC Youth Development CD                | (LCEF)                      | D | 14,236.06                 |
|                     | All Access Savings - Rainy Day          | (LCEF)                      | D | <u>187,427.72</u>         |
|                     | TOTAL                                   |                             |   | 1,099,022.11 <sup>P</sup> |

|                        |                                |                   |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Current Assets:</b> | BMO Checking                   | <b>55,789.57</b>  |
|                        | All Access Savings - Rainy Day | <b>187,427.72</b> |

|           |                            |           |   |
|-----------|----------------------------|-----------|---|
| m inus    | Youth Activity Fund        | 3,765.57  | D |
| Dedicated | Youth Engagement Fund      | 12,500.00 | D |
| Funds     | MLS Reg/Tuition Holding    | 0.00      | D |
|           | Angel Scholarship Program  | 2,524.77  | D |
|           | Apple Tree Donations       | 6,675.19  | D |
|           | Emergency Tuition Assist.  | 5,850.00  | D |
|           | School Security Grant      | 7,997.68  | R |
|           | Liquidated Thrivent Funds  | 27,446.07 | D |
|           | Sabbatical                 | 650.01    | R |
|           | Coats for Kids             | 100.00    | D |
|           | Staffeldt Scholarship Fund | 10,052.00 | D |
|           | Temporary Holding          | 0.00      | D |
|           | Trustee Projects Fund      | 7,175.07  | D |

**Total Checking Available After Dedicated Funds** **158,480.93** P

MISSION LUTHERAN CHURCH  
VOTERS' ASSEMBLY MINUTES  
JUNE 14, 2026

President Doug Lorenz called the Mission Lutheran Church Voters' Assembly to order at 11:42 AM.

Pastor Cave opened the meeting with prayer.

A quorum was present. New member Dustin Villarreal was welcomed to the Voters' Assembly.

The minutes of the March 15, 2026 Voters' Assembly were presented for acceptance with the proposed change of omitting the paragraph regarding Jan White's "pro-life" information which was not an agenda item. Carol Moore made the motion, and Karen Springer seconded the motion; the motion passed unanimously.

Pastor Cave's report - see report attached. There were no questions or comments.

Vice-President - Eric Gunderson will conduct the Election of Officers in New Business.

Secretary's report - Minutes of March 15, 2026.

Treasurer's report - Brad Mueller presented the 2026-2027 Budget in New Business.

Board of Elders - Carol Moore observed that James DeRossitt's name needs to be added to the list of Elders; James became an Elder in Fall, 2025 to replace Austin Nathaniel.

Board of Trustees - Brad Springer reported that the church offices air conditioning system is not repairable and proposed replacing the system with a new AireServe air conditioning system which will cost approximately \$20,000. Carol Moore made the motion to appropriate up to \$20,000 to replace the church offices air conditioning system with the AireServe air conditioning system proposed by Brad. Amy Springer seconded the motion, and all voters were in favor of the motion. Brad also observed that Luther Hall is not in immediate need of air conditioning improvement; the mini-splits in Luther Hall seem to be working well.

Outreach/Christian Services and Missions - No Report

Continued on next page 

School Board - Megan Wood reported that four students graduated from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class. The school board would like to increase the number of students in the school to 50. A survey has been done, and the results are very positive. Megan also noted that Vacation Bible School is good support for the school.

Budget Committee - Alma Lorenz reported the Budget Committee has met twice so far. She noted that the Committee is adding a Budget line item to report Church fundraising for Mission Lutheran School.

Endowment Committee - Dan McCurley presented the report attached.

Youth Group - Doug reported that we still need a coordinator for youth activities.

#### New Business:

Doug reported on Vacation Bible School which will be June 22-26. We are still needing help to do decorating. All VBS volunteers will meet on Sunday, June 21 at 3PM in Luther Hall for briefing and assignments, etc.

Vice President - Eric Gunderson presented the 2026 Slate of Nominees. Jacki McCurley moved and Debra Echtenkamp seconded the motion to approve Alma Lorenz to chair the Board of Outreach. All voters were in favor of the motion. Doug asked for a co-chair to work with Alma. Carol Cooper said she would like to work with Alma, and Doug encouraged the voters to support the leaders of the Board of Outreach.

Amy Springer volunteered to continue maintaining the Mission Lutheran sign on Roadrunner with Bible verse and October special events.

Treasurer - See Budget Report attached. Brad Mueller presented the proposed 2026-2027 Budget. Alma Lorenz made the motion to accept the budget as presented, and Don Hallem seconded the motion; all voting members were in favor of passing the budget.

There being no further business, the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer at 1:02PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol L. Cooper  
Church Council Secretary





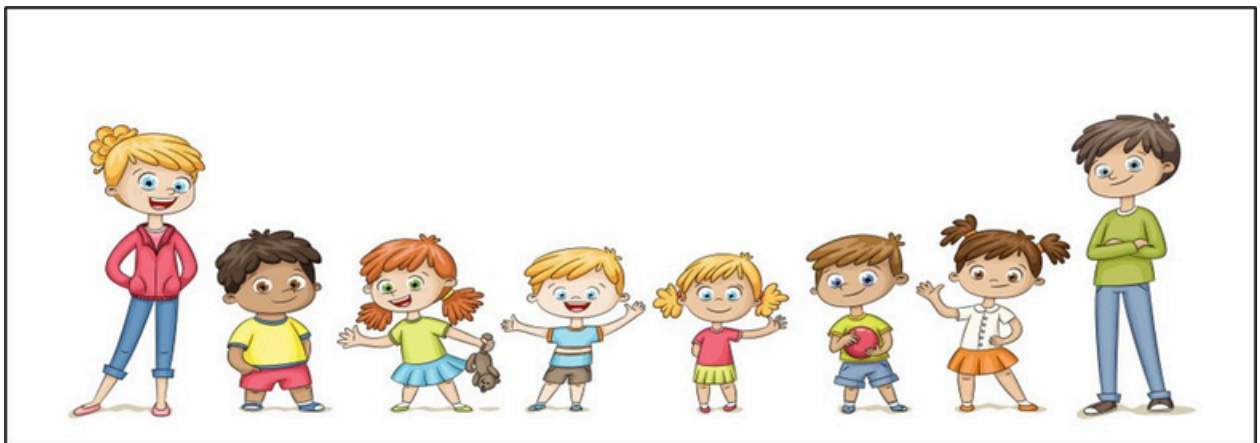
Oct 4 - "The Fish-and-Bread Sign" - Susie Melton

Oct 11 - "A Hearing Aide" - Amie Springer

Oct 18 - "A Mercy-Full Message" - Brianna Duerksen

Oct 25 - "A Prayer Lesson" - Brianna Duerksen

All lessons taught to Middle School students by Amy Krohn





Pictures:  
Constitution  
Day  
and Fine Arts  
Fridays



Continued on next page →



## Upcoming Events

**October 5-16** – Fall Break

**October 22-23** – Report cards/Parent Teacher Conf

**October 28** – Picture Day

**October 30** – Reformation Celebration

**November 7** – Rummage Sale

Please join us!

Wednesdays

7:35 am – Prayer

Fridays

8:30 am – Chapel



# Oktoberfest

brought to you by  
MISSION LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

OCTOBER 24  
4 - 7 PM

PUMPKIN PAINTING

GAMES AND PRIZES

FOOD BRATS, STRUDEL,  
AND OTHER GERMAN FOOD

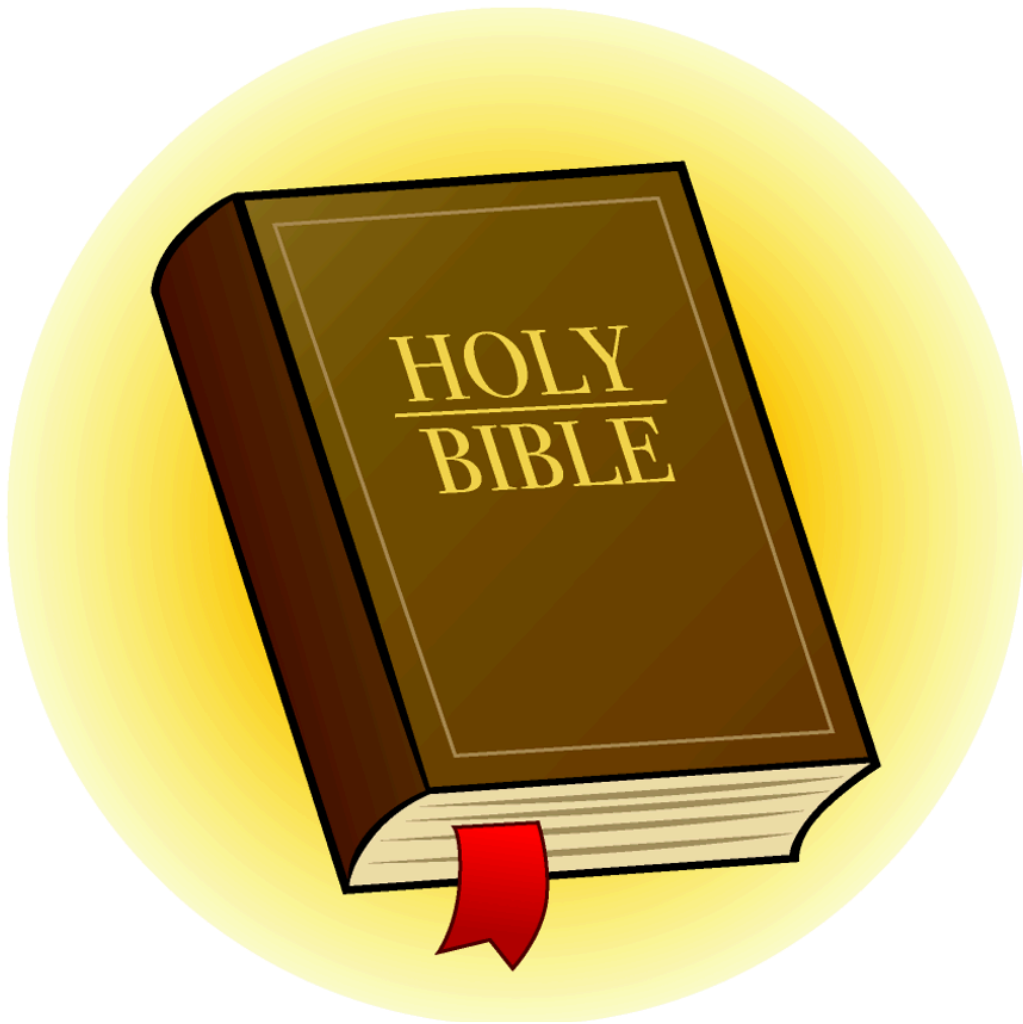
CAKE WALK

HOME-BREWED ROOTBEER!

MLSCHOOL.NET

## THE BIBLE BOX!

That's the box that stands on Calais Street at the entrance of the church parking lot. It needs more Bibles please! You may donate a used Bible directly to the box, or drop it by the office on Sunday morning. Someone will see that it is carefully placed in the box. Thank you!





***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](mailto:pastor@missionlutheran.net)***

***[secretary@missionlutheran.net](mailto:secretary@missionlutheran.net)***

***[office@mlschool.net](mailto:office@mlschool.net)***

***Elder on Call: James DeRossitt ((505) 506-8812***

**We're on the web!**

**<http://missionlutheran.net>**

**<http://mlschool.net>**

## **Officers and Board Chairpersons for 2026-2027**

|                     |                   |                       |                    |
|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| President           | Doug Lorenz       | Elders, Chairman      | Richard Turk       |
| Vice President      | Jace Melton       | Elders, Vice-chairman | Nathan Graff       |
| Treasurer           | Brad Mueller      | Trustees              | Brad Springer, Sr. |
| Secretary           | Tracy Krauser     | Outreach              | Alma Lorenz        |
| Financial Secretary | Dustin Villarreal | Day School Education  | Karen Springer     |