

MISSION FRONTIERS

Mission Lutheran Church, Las Cruces, NM

Pastor's Pen

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit. For the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as He chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. (1 Corinthians 12:12-26)

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Important Dates:

- April 1: April Fools' Day
- April 13: Palm Sunday
- April 17: Holy Thursday
- April 18: Good Friday
- April 19: Easter Vigil
- April 20: Easter
- April 24: Holocaust Remembrance Day



In the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed, we say, "I believe in the holy Christian church, the communion of saints." On the one hand, we might question why we would confess that we *believe* in the Church. After all, is it not plain to see that the Church exists? But on the other hand, we say that we *believe* in the Church because we believe that there is an assembly of holy people here on earth, a communion or a *community* of saints. The fact that the Church exists is obvious. But what we believe and confess is that the Church, properly speaking, consists of people who are already declared to be righteous and holy in the sight of God.

There are several tensions or paradoxes within our belief regarding the Church. One paradox is that because the Church, properly speaking, consists only of believers, the true Church is therefore invisible. And yet, the true Church can always be found by the visible "marks of the Church," the chief marks being the public proclamation of God's Word and the proper administration of the Sacraments. Another tension that we see in our belief regarding the Church is that the communion of saints will by necessity be expressed in the gathering of the local congregation. The Church does not exist in theory, but rather in the real flesh and blood people whom the Lord has gathered together in this or that particular time and place. And yet, the Church is also universal. Even though people gather within specific congregations, the Lord does not have multiple churches. Rather, He has one Church that is found in every region of the globe.

This universal nature of the Church leads us to see ourselves in our local congregation as a part of a greater whole. The uniqueness of a local congregation is not diminished when we think of the universal Church but rather is enhanced. The Apostle Paul used the analogy of the human body to describe the Church, all unique parts with specific functions working together. Those passages are often applied to individual people fitting within their congregation, but the analogy can likewise be understood to apply to various congregations fitting into their region, state, country etc.

In the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, local congregations are grouped into circuits. Circuits often range from eight to twelve congregations and are grouped based mostly on geography. Mission Lutheran is a part of the (aptly named) Rio Grande circuit. Every congregation is also a part of a district. Mission is a part of the Rocky Mountain District. And the thirty-five districts constitute the Synod.

And the word "synod" means simply "to walk together." And that's what we do. Each congregation goes about the work of spreading God's Word in their own communities while also working with one another, praying for one another, and supporting one another.

This support of one another can come in a variety of ways. One of the most visible ways we help one another is to support one another in Word and Sacrament ministry when a congregation does not have a pastor. Most of you will remember God's faithful servant, Pastor Kevin Cramm, who was a member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Alamogordo and yet came to Las Cruces to serve Mission during its vacancy. In addition to Pastor Cramm, we've had other pastors, both local and non-local, come and proclaim God's Word to us.

One way that we at Mission will be showing our support and aid to the Church beyond our own local congregation will be happening at the end of April. Many of you heard announced before Divine Service that there will be a special dinner and worship service on the evening of April 30th. The occasion for this is that every year the pastors of the southern region of the district gather for a regional conference in the Spring. We do this for the purpose of growing in fellowship with one another, having the opportunity to worship with one another, and to learn from leading theologians in our Synod. And this year, the conference will be held in Las Cruces.

This year, our keynote presenter is Rev. Dr. Leopoldo Sanchez, a professor of systematic theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. The topic of his conference presentation is *Theological Approaches to Immigration Today*—quite a timely topic, especially for our area of the country! And on the evening of the first day of the conference, April 30th, we at Mission will be hosting a dinner for the pastors and their families who have traveled here. Afterwards, we will participate in a Divine Service, where we will receive God’s good gifts of His Word (proclaimed to us by Pastor Sanchez), receive the Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and respond to Him with our praise and thanksgiving. We will hear musical offerings from our own choir, as well as from the local Lutheran Mariachis! And not only the pastors, but all people at Mission and other congregations in our circuit are invited to come and worship.

This will be a great way that we at Mission can be of great service to the broader Church. Though we are local to Las Cruces, we will be serving pastors and other church leaders from many congregations, granting them an opportunity to learn, be refreshed, and receive the Lord’s gifts in Word and Sacrament in a way that they don’t always get to receive them. I am thankful for those who have already stepped up to help make this event happen, and I invite as many of you who are able to come and be a part of this day. Amen.

Pastor Andrew Cave





Mission Lutheran Church and School Prayer Ministry

Easter Prayer Vigil

An Easter Prayer Vigil has been a tradition at Mission since 2013. Together, we are “God’s House of Prayer” and we take this opportunity to pray for ourselves as a Mission family and for those beyond our walls. We set aside the day of Holy Saturday, the day before Easter, to pray throughout the day, prior to the Easter Vigil Service and Pot Luck: Saturday, April 19th.

Each of you are encouraged and invited to participate. It’s a time of reverence to spend with our Lord!

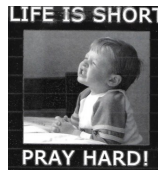
How does it work?

1. Look for the signup sheet! You will have an opportunity to sign up for the time slot of your choice for an hour. A signup sheet will be posted in the Narthex beginning Sunday, April 6.
2. You may be alone in the sanctuary or there may be one or two others praying during the same time slot. (We strive to have every time slot filled.)
3. When you go to church to pray during your time slot, there will be a sheet of prayer targets and scriptures near the entrance. You will find a spot of your choice or move quietly around the sanctuary and pray silently. You can pray from the target sheet, pray what’s on your heart or find a Bible in the pew and pray other scriptures as you wish.

If you have questions, talk to Alma Lorenz or Shirley Miller.

As Jesus was praying in the garden, He came and found the disciples sleeping.

“So could you not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.” - Matthew 26:40-41



“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

Whose Is It Anyway?

If you have ever bought or sold a house, you are acquainted with the concept of a “title search.” Before you can sell your house, and before anyone else will feel comfortable putting down the money to buy it, you have to prove that you really own it. So a title company looks through the public records to ensure that you bought it from the person who really owned it, who bought it from the person who really owned it before that, all the way back to the earliest records of your state, including when your state was only a territory or colony of England.

Peak into a preschool classroom during playtime and you’ll see a simplified version of this. A child starts playing with a ball, but another child says, “That’s mine: I had it first.”

You can’t understand the Seventh Commandment without understanding this concept of ownership or title. As the Small Catechism puts it:

You shall not steal. What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not take our neighbor’s money or possessions, or get them in any dishonest way, but help him to improve and protect his possessions and income.

Your neighbor’s possessions are *his*: you don’t have a right to take them. And likewise, your possessions are yours. Ownership and property rights are foundational to any functioning society.

But there is something deeper to know about ownership, and that is the question of who has the title and ownership *to you*? Paul says, “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price” (1 Cor. 6:19-20).

If you yourself are owned by God, then of course everything that you own, you really only possess by God’s leave: all of it, at bottom, belongs to Him since *you* belong to Him. For you were bought with the blood of Christ.

This notion is the foundation of all Christian stewardship. It all belongs to God. It should all be used for things that bring honor to His name, blessings to our neighbors and the extension of His kingdom.

– LCMS Stewardship Ministry: lcms.org/stewardship





It's a Boy!

YOU ARE INVITED TO

*Victoria Graff
Baby Shower*

April 26, 2025 | 2:00 PM

Mission Lutheran Church
2752 N. Road Runner Parkway
Las Cruces, NM. 88011

Gift Registry: [babylist.com/victoria-graff](https://www.babylist.com/victoria-graff)

Bring diapers to enter the gift drawing





Birthdays of the Month

April Birthdays

		Date
Robert ("Quail") White		6
Marcele	Skelton	8
Bob	Jakcsy	9
Emily	Cave	12
Tracy	Sanchez	17
Jacki	McCurley	18
Frank	Brennan	20
Ordella	Uhde	28
Debra	Echtenkamp	30

Happy Anniversary

April Anniversaries

		Date	# of years
Brad & Barb	Mueller	1	36
Larry & Debra	Tate	5	51
Bob & Ruth	Jakcsy	27	57

Happy Anniversary to all those couples married in April.

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.

JULIETS

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

Thursday, April 10 — Red Lobster
575 S. Telshor

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, April 7, at 6:30 PM in Luther Hall. All women are invited for fellowship and Bible study. Dessert will be provided.

Mission Lutheran Church
Voters' Assembly Minutes
December 8, 2024

The Mission Lutheran Church Voters' Assembly was called to order at 11:50 AM by President Doug Lorenz. Elaine Graff was approved as a voting member. A quorum (consisting of 41 members) was present.

Pastor Cave led the opening prayer.

The Minutes of the June 9 and September 22, 2024, Voters' Assembly meetings were presented for approval. Frank Brennan moved to approve the minutes of both meetings; Bob Jakcsy seconded the motion. All voters approved the motion.

President Lorenz called for the following reports:

Pastor Cave-see report attached-Pastor Cave regularly conducts Divine Service on Sundays at 9AM, Adult Bible Class on Sundays (current study is 1st and 2nd Samuel), ML School chapel on Fridays at 8:30AM, Confirmation on Mondays at 3:15 pm, Karate on Wednesdays at 3:15PM and Adult Instruction as needed. Pastor Cave baptized Kaidyn Lanham on November 7.

Circuit Forum is scheduled for January 19, 2025.

Nomination forms for District offices have been received. The Voters' Assembly took a vote and nominated Jason Rust, pastor of Shepherd of the Hills, Ruidoso, to be Vice President of the southern region of the Rocky Mountain District. The nomination forms were signed by the Voters' Assembly President, Doug Lorenz and Secretary, Carol Cooper. Nominees for office will be voted on at the District Convention which will convene in Denver, CO, May 29-30, 2025.

Vice President-Wade Echtenkamp-no report

Secretary-Carol Cooper-no report

Treasurer-Brad Mueller-see report attached-Brad emphasized that our congregational giving is under budget while our subsidy to Mission Lutheran School has increased 26% over last year's subsidy. "The increase in the subsidy to the school is due to the increase in salaries for teachers while enrollment has not yet increased. Brad explained, "This is why I redeemed one of our \$50,000 certificates of deposit and, in January, I plan to redeem more."

Doug Lorenz asked Pastor Cave to "offer up a prayer of thanksgiving for the blessings we have received as our school expands and to ask His continued blessings on our school and its mission."

Financial Secretary-Carol Moore-no report.

Elders-Richard Turk reported that we need new elders for "Bread Breaker" groups. Eric Gunderson commented that the Bread Breaker groups are filling up.

Trustees-Brad Springer, Sr. reported that maintenance upkeep is "squared away." The parking lot will be a consideration for a future project; Bob Jakcsy observed that repaving the parking lot will be expensive. Pastor Cave reported that our clean-up day was very successful; parents of students were well-organized, and there was great fellowship.

Outreach/Fellowship/Stewardship-Brad Springer, Jr. reported: 1) The "Hoody Project" was a fun project that engaged 15 volunteers. 2) There was a special donation of 50 gifts to students. 3) "Great fellowship and great food" describes the October Fall Festival. Needed: Lots of volunteers (which we had this year), greeters, signs, ideas...Doug expressed gratitude to Brad and Amy for taking on "Outreach."

Mission Lutheran School Board-Karen Springer reported: 1st Semester achievements: The Board regularly prays for the teachers and students. Standards compared to achievements are regularly looked at by the Board, and the teachers and students are doing well. Life skills such as "cooking" are being taught in school; e.g. Ben Wood, a parent volunteer, taught cooking, and Pastor Cave will be teaching "fire-making." Other life skills can be taught (or suggested) by parishioners. Life-skills sessions should be held to one hour and of course arranged through teachers and administrator.

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Elaine Graff has volunteered to serve as a member of Mission Lutheran School Board. Karen Springer made a motion to accept Elaine Graff as School Board Member, and Amy Springer seconded Karen Springer's motion. The Assembly vote was unanimous for accepting Elaine Graff as Mission Lutheran School Board Member.

Karen reminded the Assembly, "The School needs more financial support, and prayers are always needed."

President-Doug Lorenz reported in "Unfinished Business" that a) Telstar has been chosen as our provider for our new Voice Over Internet WIFI phones. We hope to have them installed over the school break; b) Changes to our By-Laws were approved by District, and Carol Moore has made the appropriate changes; and c) Officer/Committee Member Slate needs filling, and Wade Echtenkamp will be discussing.

President: Doug Lorenz is willing to serve as President in the coming year. No other member expressed a desire to serve as President of Mission Lutheran Church Council.

Vice President: Wade explained that the Vice President fills in for the president of the council when the president is unable to serve. Eric Gunderson volunteered to serve as Vice President of Mission Lutheran Church Council.

Secretary: Carol Cooper said she would like to serve another year as Secretary of Mission Lutheran Church Council.

Treasurer: Brad Mueller said he would like to serve as Treasurer of Mission Lutheran Church Council and suggested we also consider the need for an Assistant to the Treasurer because 401K and other opportunities for teachers are now a part of the job of the Treasurer.

Financial Secretary: Carol Moore said she is willing to serve another year as Financial Secretary.

Board of Elders: President Lorenz explained that the most important concern of each elder is the spiritual well-being of our Pastor and our Congregation. Richard Turk, Ken Martin, Michael Kaiser, Jace Melton, Richard Ojinaga, and Wade Echtenkamp are willing to serve as Elders; Austin Nathaniel is willing to serve as Elder until he is transferred to military duty elsewhere.

Board of Trustees: Brad Springer, Sr. is willing to serve as chairman of the Board of Trustees.

Board of Outreach/Fellowship/Stewardship: Brad Springer, Jr. is willing to serve as chairman of the Board of Outreach/Fellowship/Stewardship.

President Lorenz called for an Assembly Vote to accept by acclamation Council Members who have agreed to serve in 2025 the office they held in 2024. The office held and the Council Members accepted by acclamation are listed as follows:

President: Doug Lorenz; Secretary: Carol Cooper; Treasurer: Brad Mueller; Financial Secretary: Carol Moore; Board of Elders: Richard Turk, Ken Martin, Michael Kaiser, Jace Melton, and Austin Nathaniel; Board of Trustees: Brad Springer, Sr.; Board of Outreach/Fellowship/Stewardship: Brad Springer; Mission Lutheran School Board: Karen Springer.

President Lorenz called for an Assembly Vote for Members new to Mission Lutheran Church Council to serve during 2025; the vote was unanimous to accept for:

Vice President-Eric Gunderson
Board of Elders-Richard Ojinaga and Wade Echtenkamp

New Business:

Our Congregation appointed Michael Kaiser as our lay representative to the Circuit Forum. As Pastor Cave reported earlier, Circuit Forum is scheduled for January 19, 2025, at Zion Lutheran Church in El Paso, Texas.

As Pastor Cave also reported earlier, the 2025 District Convention will be held May 29-30, 2025, in Denver, Colorado. Our Congregation elected Richard Turk as our lay representative and Jace Melton as our alternate lay representative to the 2025 District Convention.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol L. Cooper, Secretary



MISSION LUTHERAN CHURCH and SCHOOL
Treasurer's Report for the Mar '25 Council/Voters Meeting

Report Preparation Date: Mar 1, 2025

Budget Status:	<u>Month of Feb '24</u>		<u>FY25 thru Feb '25</u>	
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	
<u>Income:</u>				
MLC General	\$23,505	\$211,334	\$267,478	
MLS Total	\$21,480	\$216,146	\$232,243	
Designated / Other	\$1,740	\$5,734	\$1,400	
	<u>\$46,725 *</u>	<u>\$433,214 *</u>	<u>\$501,121 *</u>	
<u>Expenses:</u>				
MLC Total	\$14,768 *	\$122,648 *	\$144,095 *	
MLS Total	\$42,868	\$326,027	\$350,577	
	<u>\$57,636</u>	<u>\$448,675</u>	<u>\$494,672</u>	
Net Difference	<u>-\$10,911 *</u>	<u>-\$15,461 *</u>	<u>\$6,449 *</u>	

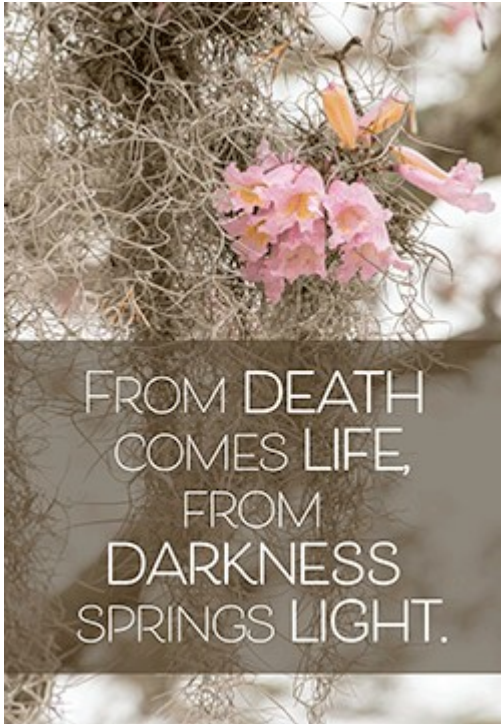
MLC General Fund Contributions – FY25 (Thru Feb 28, 2025)

Average Weekly Contributions Needed:	\$7,867
Average Weekly Contributions Received (FYTD) :	<u>\$6,596</u>
Average Weekly Surplus/ <u>Shortfall</u> :	<u>-\$1,271 *</u>
General Fund Contributions Year-to-Date:	\$224,266
General Fund Budgeted Year-to-Date:	<u>\$267,478</u>
Fiscal Year-to-Date Surplus/ <u>Shortfall</u> :	<u>-\$43,212 *</u>

Investments & Assets / Liabilities

<u>Investments:</u>	Morgan Stanley/E*Trade (as of Feb 28, '25)	\$123,249
	Mission Lutheran Endowment Fund (as of Dec 31, '24)	\$83,348
	Thrivent (as of Feb 28, '25)	\$470,452
	LCEF MLC Youth Development CD Account	\$13,372
	TOTAL	<u>\$690,421 *</u>
<u>Current Assets:</u>	Shepherd's Staff Checking (as of Feb 28, '25)	\$27,805
	LCEF All Access (as of Feb 28, '25)	\$122,228
	Youth Activity Fund	\$3,766
	Youth Christian Development	\$12,500
	minus MLS Reg/Tuition Holding	\$3,183
	Angel Scholarship Program	\$2,420
	Dedicated Chaplin PE Equipment Grant	\$119
	Funds COVID Grant	\$27,481
	Apple Tree Donations	\$0
	Emergency Tuition Assistance	\$5,850
	School Security Grant	\$8,774
	Staffeldt Scholarship Fund	\$7,877
	Total Checking Available After Dedicated Funds	\$78,063 *
<u>Liabilities:</u>	None	

*Generated via spreadsheet



Mission Lutheran Church and School
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Las Cruces, NM 88011-8081
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School: (575) 532-5489
Emails: pastor@missionlutheran.net
secretary@missionlutheran.net
office@mlschool.net
Elder on Call: Ken Martin (575) 650-3304

Holy Week begins on Palm Sunday, April 13.

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

Officers and Board Chairpersons for 2025

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