

# MISSION FRONTIERS

Mission Lutheran Church, Las Cruces, NM

## Pastor's Pen

“Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, ‘So may the gods do to me and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by this time tomorrow.’ Then he was afraid, and he arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he asked that he might die, saying, ‘It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers.’ And he lay down and slept under a broom tree. And behold, an angel touched him and said to him, ‘Arise and eat.’ And he looked, and behold, there was at his head a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water. And he ate and drank and lay down again. And the angel of the LORD came again a second time and touched him and said, ‘Arise and eat, for the journey is too great for you.’ And he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mount of God.” (1 Kings 19:1-8)

I am writing this the day after the Mission Lutheran School teachers and myself attended the annual *Nurturing the Faith* conference in Albuquerque. The presenter spent much of the day discussing the story of Elijah, his prophecy of a drought, his confrontation with the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel, his fleeing to Mt. Horeb (Mt. Sinai), and the Lord’s care and provision through all of this. I was also reminded of how, a couple of years ago, I had attended a retreat through the Doxology program, and the presenters there had likewise drawn much theology and application from the story of Elijah.

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## Important Dates:

- March 3: Baptism during Chapel
- March 9: School Board meeting
- March 11: MLS Gala – celebrating 25 years!
- March 12: Daylight Savings Time begins
- March 12: Baptism class
- March 13: LWML gathering and Bible study
- March 19: Baptism class
- March 25: LWML Spring Workshop at Zion in El Paso

Why is the story of Elijah so memorable and so relatable? As the presenter in Albuquerque pointed out, we don't rightly understand the story of Elijah without understanding the time and place in which he lived. Elijah did not live during the "golden age" of King David and King Solomon. At that time, there was great military strength, a strong sense of national unity, incredible economic prosperity, and a fervor for worshiping the true God. But that's not the time in which Elijah lived. Elijah lived during the time of the split between the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah. Instead of peace, there was war. Instead of economic prosperity, there was drought. And instead of a nation full of people worshiping the true God, the few who still worshiped the Lord were in hiding.

After three and half years of drought, the Lord sent Elijah back to confront Ahab, the wicked king of Israel. Elijah arranged a contest between himself and prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel. The challenge was simple: whichever god rained down fire upon their sacrifice, that one was the true God. There were 450 prophets of Baal. Elijah was alone.

After the 450 prophets of Baal cried out futilely to their false god all day (with Elijah mocking Baal the whole time!) Elijah arranged his sacrifice and said a simple prayer. He said, "O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that You are God in Israel, and that I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word. Answer me, O LORD, answer me, that this people may know that You, O LORD, are God, and that You have turned their hearts back." (1 Kings 18:36b-37). And the Lord answered by fire, consuming Elijah's sacrifice. Elijah slaughtered the prophets, had a meal with the king, and then rain came. It seemed like the nation was on the verge of a revival!

But it was not to be. Already in Elijah's prayer we can catch a glimpse of a defect in his heart. Though he prayed that the people would know that the Lord was truly God, he also prayed that the people would recognize that he was the Lord's prophet. He is revealing a spirit within himself that wants to view himself as someone special, someone unique, someone through whom the Lord is going to do mighty things for the nation.

However, instead of revival, Elijah is threatened with death. Ahab's wife, Queen Jezebel, who was more wicked than King Ahab, promised Elijah that he was soon to die for what he had done. In the space of a day, Elijah goes from a grand mountain-top experience where he thinks that the nation is on the verge of revival to a man in the throes of depression who just wishes that it could all be over. In his mind, there is no point in continuing.

But the angel of the Lord came and strengthened Elijah with food and rest, and Elijah went in the strength of that food to Mt. Sinai, the mountain of God. God came to Elijah there, not in the wind, earthquake, or fire, but in the sound of a low whisper. And though Elijah complained that he was all alone and there was no point in continuing, the Lord reminded him that there were seven thousand faithful people in Israel who did not worship Baal. And the Lord commanded him to anoint Elisha to be prophet after him.

We relate so well to this narrative because we experience these sorts of things all the time. Few of us would say that the state of our nation is all that great right now. We can long for what we perceive as the better, simpler times of the past. The true faith is under attack in the land, and it can seem as if the number of true followers of the Lord is getting fewer and fewer. This can cause us to try and come up with some sort of plan, some sort of method, that will spark a revival in our nation and lead people back to God.

But when the plans we thought would work so well fall flat, we can feel as if the wind is taken out of our sails. We wonder, "What is the point?" Like Elijah, we may feel all alone and just wishing that it would all be over.

But what Elijah had to learn, and so do we, is that it's not all about us. We will never be able to comprehend everything that the Lord is up to. We will never fully understand the Lord's timing. We will never truly grasp how the Lord is working all things out for good. But we trust that He is. We know He is because we have something even more sure and certain than the prophetic word that Elijah heard. We have the eyewitness testimony of Jesus Christ, who came in the fullness of time in order to save the world from sin and death.

It is Jesus' job to save the world, not Elijah's. And it's not our job either. Whenever we become like Elijah and think that it is our job to save the world, we will soon slip into despair because the task is too great. But when we trust in the Lord's plan, when we understand that we are merely His servants tasked with sharing the word of His Son, then we can work with joy the task that is set before us. Like Elijah and Elisha after him, there are those who came before and those who will come after us. But Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Amen.

Pastor Andrew Cave



## Mission Lutheran Church and School Prayer Ministry

### Pray for the children through the days of Lent!

Our Mission Lutheran Church and School Prayer Ministry mission statement joins our entire congregation as prayer intercessors: ***“Built on Christ, we join together as God’s house of prayer for all nations.”*** As I pondered and prayed for a subject to encourage us to pray through Lent, Carol Moore, our church secretary, shared the e-mail below as an idea. We agreed, we see God at work *again!* The e-mail comes from the Reverend Dr. Stephen Post of Mission of the Good Shepherd in Belize. Please pray for each of these children listed in his e-mail as often as you are able throughout Lent—or even beyond Lent! [I’ve taken the liberty of slight modification of the email for ease of seeing the list of children for whom we pray.]

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Good Shepherd** <[missionarybelize@yahoo.com](mailto:missionarybelize@yahoo.com)>

Date: Thu, Feb 23, 2023 at 9:45 AM

Subject: Need Prayers for the Children

Dear Members of Mission Lutheran,

You may not know our Mission in Belize well, but would you be willing to pray for some of our youngest children who could really use your prayers? Their names are:

Dionnie Westby, age 6	Orin Jackson, age 5	Carlos Cade, age 4
Carson Cadel, age 3	Aniah Garbutt, age 2	Nailah Martinez, age 1

Although we have other children here at the mission who could use prayers, we’d like to ask that you pray for these special children who are all 6 years old and under.

These children's only crime in life is being born in a 3rd world country in Central America, certainly not something they could choose. We worry about them because they are faced with challenges that those in the US will never have to face. As an example, if you were one of these children above, born in Belize as they are, rather than in the United States, you would be 3.3 times more likely to die before the age of 5. If you lived to be an adult, you would die 11.7 years sooner. You would be 2.1 times more likely to be unemployed. You would be 11.9 times more likely to be murdered. You would make 83.3% less money and be 2.3 times more likely to have HIV/AIDS due to poor medical standards. This is unfortunately what these children have to look forward to as they grow up. This is why I, as a Missionary, try so hard to help them. And this is why I would like to ask you to pray for these, the youngest of our mission children.

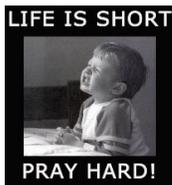
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I sometimes conceptualize Missionary work as a stool supported by three legs: intercession (prayers), investment (financial help), and involvement (my work on the Mission field). Without any one of these legs, a Mission simply cannot survive. Take away any one of these legs and a 3-legged stool falls. Without any one of these 3 legs, and the Mission (like a 3-legged stool) simply cannot keep going. It falls. Your prayers are really needed and really appreciated. They are one of the main legs of the stool.

These underprivileged and forgotten about children here in Belize are all crying out for love and friendship. And they all need your prayers. Please help us through prayer intercession. Especially by praying for the children that I mentioned above. They need your prayers, as does our whole mission. We don't want to fall like a 3-legged stool, after 19 years of helping some of the poorest of the poor children in this area.

May God Bless you always and in all ways for your prayers.

Rev. Dr. Stephen Post  
Mission of the Good Shepherd  
Mango Creek, Independence Village  
Stann Creek District  
Belize, Central America



# Stewardship

## Lenten Discipline: Denying the Self

We are at the beginning of Lent. During the Lenten season, the church calls to our attention the sufficiency of what God gives. It points to the sufficiency of God's grace in the atoning work of Jesus. It shows us the sufficiency of faith in Jesus' work for us. It makes known the sufficiency of God's Word in faith and life.

But Lent doesn't just remind us of the sufficiency of God's spiritual gifts — the gifts that pertain to our redemption and salvation. Lent also reminds us of the sufficiency of the physical, temporal gifts of God which pertain to this body and life. In other words, it reminds us of the importance of godly contentment and of outward discipline and training of the body.

This outward training of the body teaches us not to give in to every desire of our flesh, but to learn to say no to them. And it does this in such a way that if you fail, it is no sin. It is a way to practice without putting yourself into a compromising situation.

Fasting is a good example of this outward training. When you fast, you are practicing saying no to the desires of your body. But if you fail in this, if you break your fast, you have not sinned. But you have learned something about how your flesh works, how difficult it is to fight against it, and how you need help from above to discipline the desires of your body.

Another example is almsgiving. An increase in giving to the church and its mission during Lent is also a form of outward training. We all know that our flesh finds security in money and stuff. By committing to give more to the church, you are training your flesh. You are, by this outward discipline, training yourself to be content with what God gives. You are practicing saying "no" to your desires. Again, if you fail, you have not sinned. But you've learned just how powerful your flesh is — it leads you instead of you leading it. You've learned how you need help from above in being content with what God gives.

This is why St. Paul instructs young Pastor Timothy in this way:

But godliness with contentment is great gain, for we brought nothing into the world, and we cannot take anything out of the world. But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare, into many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs. (1 Tim. 6:6–10)

Our sufficiency is not of ourselves; it is in God. Let us learn this without sin by training our flesh this Lenten season.

– LCMS Stewardship Ministry: [lcms.org/stewardship](https://www.lcms.org/stewardship)



## March Happenings in the WINGS (Women IN God's Service) chapter of LWML

- All ladies are invited to join us on Monday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 pm in Luther Hall for Bible study and fellowship.
- Dessert and coffee will be served.
- Quilters meet at 9:30 am every Wednesday in the multi-purpose room of Luther Hall. More ladies are needed. If you can tie a knot, you can help tie the simple quilts. If you can sew, that's even better!
- The Rio Grande Zone of LWML is holding a workshop in March (see the next page). If you are interested in attending, we will carpool from the church parking lot. Contact Jan White or Carol Moore for more information.



# LWML-Rio Grande Zone Spring Workshop 2023

Saturday, March 25, 2023

9:30 -10:00 AM: Registration

Snacks and lunch will be provided

Zion Lutheran Church  
2800 Pershing Drive  
El Paso, TX 79903

**Theme:** *Women with Jesus at the Cross and the Tomb*

**Bible Study:** Jesus and the Women of His Ministry

**Mission Opportunity:** Filling small zip lock bags with beans and rice  
You'll need a 1-cup measuring cup for this activity.

**Collection:** Each society should bring a check for \$50 for YWR

Plan to come and talk about Jesus and then with each other while our hands are busy with mission work. If you have something you do or provide at your church, be ready to share. This is a wonderful opportunity to share our voices and hands in God's service.

**Ingathering Opportunity:** Zion makes bags for Ysleta during Lent. If you'd like to participate, these are the items in order of need:

16 oz bags of pinto beans

16 oz bags of rice

Cereal

Pasta

Canned goods



# Birthdays of the Month

## March Birthdays

		<u>Date</u>
<b>Guericke</b>	Roger	<b>5</b>
<b>Monica</b>	Josephine (Jo Jo)	<b>5</b>
<b>Bachmeier</b>	Bev	<b>7</b>
<b>Quinlan</b>	Jean	<b>7</b>
<b>Lujan</b>	Becky	<b>11</b>
<b>Franz</b>	Peter	<b>16</b>
<b>Graff</b>	Nathan	<b>16</b>
<b>Smith</b>	Shilo	<b>18</b>
<b>Grothman</b>	Darci	<b>21</b>
<b>Graff</b>	Elaine	<b>25</b>
<b>Carabotta</b>	Rev. Robert	<b>27</b>
<b>Wolf</b>	Nick	<b>27</b>
<b>Mueller</b>	Brad	<b>28</b>
<b>Babin</b>	Victor	<b>30</b>

*Happy Anniversary*

## March Anniversaries

		<u>Date</u>	<u># of years</u>
<b>Smits</b>	Robert & Tiziana	<b>11</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Ryberg</b>	Jan & Jacky	<b>15</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Persing</b>	Peter & Jan Peyton	<b>17</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Weber</b>	Glenn & Susan	<b>22</b>	<b>53</b>

*Happy Anniversary to all those couples married in March.*

*May God continue to bless you.*

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

## MISSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

Council Meeting

January 17, 2023

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

Pastor Cave led us in opening prayer.

The minutes of the December 20<sup>th</sup> council meeting were approved.

President (Brad Springer): Nothing to report.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Cave submitted his report. He noted that Pastor Schlack will be preaching on the 29<sup>th</sup> of January. Church council is in charge of set up for the potluck that Sunday. It was agreed we would meet at 11 am on January 28<sup>th</sup> after the memorial service for Peggy Scott.

Vice President Report (Wade Echtenkamp): Wade had no old business to report but was wondering about having a photo directory. Discussion followed but no decision at this time.

Secretary Report: No report

Treasurer's Report (Brad Mueller): The treasurer's report is attached. He asked that the Elders and Trustees look at their budget needs for next year and submit those to him by March. Giving has exceeded budgeted at this time.

Financial Secretary (Carol Moore): The annual statements have been distributed.

Elder's Report (Eric Gunderson): The elder's report is attached. The elders will be rearranging care groups with the addition of two new elders. Brad Springer appoints Michael Kaiser as elder to fill Jerry Stickles term this year.

Trustees (Brad Springer Sr.): He is working with Doug Lorenz on transferring information about repairs and maintenance to the property. He's going through both structures and working with Ray Grothman on cameras and gates. If you see something that needs attention, let him know.

School Board (Shirley Miller): The school board plans to start working on finding a new teacher. The application for accreditation for next year is completed. Registration for current members is February 1<sup>st</sup> and March 1<sup>st</sup> for the rest of the community.

Our next council meeting is scheduled for February 21<sup>st</sup> at 6 pm.

Pastor Cave led us in closing prayer.

It was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacki McCurley, Secretary

**Note:** Board Reports that are indicated as being attached are available from the church secretary upon request. They are not included in the newsletter in order to save space.

# JULIETs

The JULIETs (Just Us Ladies Into Eating Together) have set a schedule for the next 3 months. All women in the church are invited. And bring a friend!

Thursday, March 9 — Sunset Grill

Thursday, April 13 — Lescombes Winery & Grill

Thursday, May 11 — Cattle Baron

We meet at 11:30 am.

So that the restaurant can be prepared, please notify either Holly Poppy or Ruth Jakcsy at least 2 days in advance if you plan to attend.

Call or text Holly at (575) 932-8517

Call Ruthie at (575) 312-6166



**TREASURER REPORT –FEBRUARY 2023 COUNCIL/VOTERS MEETING**

**Mission Lutheran Church and School**

**Report Preparation Date: February 1, 2023**

<b>Budget Status:</b>	<u>Month of January 2023</u>		<u>FY23 Thru January 2023</u>	
	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Actual</u>
<b>Income:</b>				
MLC General	\$25,000	\$32,704	\$155,000	\$165,163
MLS Total	\$23,240	\$16,267	\$144,270	\$154,596
Designated / Other	\$280	\$78	\$1,960	\$3,413
	<b>\$48,520</b>	<b>\$49,049</b>	<b>\$301,230</b>	<b>\$323,172</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>				
MLC Total	\$15,554	\$14,697	\$120,998	\$119,194
MLS Total	\$24,580	\$26,115	\$183,891	\$184,479
	<b>\$40,134</b>	<b>\$40,812</b>	<b>\$304,889</b>	<b>\$303,673</b>
Net Difference	\$8,386	\$8,237	<b>-\$3,659 *</b>	<b>\$19,499 *</b>

**MLC General Fund Contributions – FY23 (Thru January 31, 2023)**

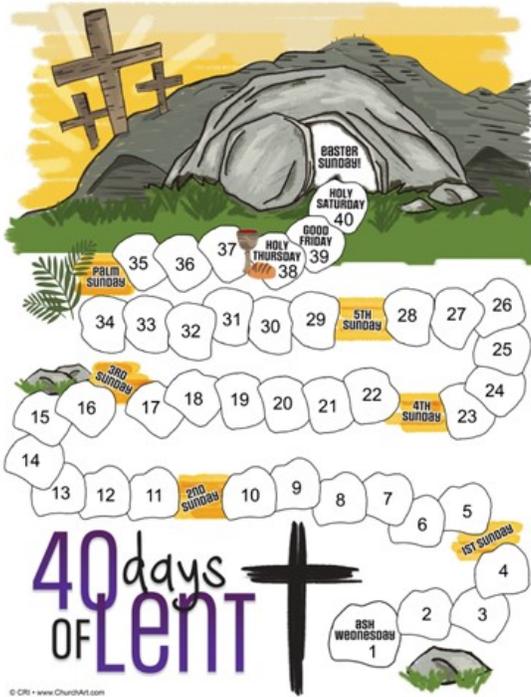
Average Weekly Contributions Needed:	\$5,000
Average Weekly Contributions Received:	\$5,328
General Fund Contributions Year-to-Date:	\$165,163
General Funds Budgeted Year-to-Date:	\$155,000
Surplus/Shortfall Year-to-Date:	<b>\$10,163</b>

**Assets / Liabilities**

<b>Fund Assets:</b>	E*trade Endowment (as of Jan 31, '23)	\$105,651
	Strasser Endowment (as of Dec 31, '22)	\$69,901
	Thrivent (as of Jan 31, '23)	\$394,269
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$569,821</b>
<b>Current Assets:</b>	Checking (as of Jan 31, 2023)	<b>\$109,480</b>
	LCEF Savings (as of Dec 31, 2022)	\$147,253
	(minus designated funds)	
	Angel Prog/TA Holding	\$1,851
	Reg/Tuition Holding	\$0
	Youth Activity Funds	\$3,766
	Staffeldt Scholarship	\$10,450
	COVID Grant	\$44,063
	School Security Grant	\$18,500
	Youth Endow ment	\$25,000
	Temp Holding	\$0
	<b>Total LCEF Savings Available</b>	<b>\$43,623</b>
<b>Liabilities:</b>	None	

**Comments:**

\* This current fiscal year's budget predicts a shortfall **-\$49,930** by the end of June .



**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)**

Lent continues with midweek services every Wednesday at 7:00 PM.

**Elder on Call: Nathan Graff (505) 280-4927**

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

### Officers and Board Chairpersons for 2023

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