

MISSION FRONTIERS

Mission Lutheran Church, Las Cruces, NM

Pastor's Pen

“On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus also was invited to the wedding with His disciples. When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, ‘They have no wine.’ And Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come.’ His mother said to the servants, ‘Do whatever He tells you.’ Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to the servants, ‘Fill the jars with water.’ And they filled them up to the brim. And He said to them, ‘Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast.’ So they took it. When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom and said to him, ‘Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now.’ This, the first of His signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested His glory. And His disciples believed in Him” (John 2:1-11).

This reading from John, chapter two, is the appointed reading for the Second Sunday of Epiphany in the Three-Year Lectionary: Year C. Likewise, it is the appointed reading for the Second Sunday of Epiphany in the historic One-Year Lectionary, so it's likely a familiar reading to many of us. And yet, it can be a difficult reading to fully grasp and understand.

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Important Dates:

- February 1: Pastors' Winkel meeting in El Paso
- February 2: Groundhog Day
- February 13: Super Bowl and LWML Bake Sale
- February 14: St. Valentine's Day
- February 21: Presidents' Day
- February 21: Memorial Service for Don Vandiver



I recall one of my professors at seminary saying that the Gospel of John is like a pool of water that is shallow enough for a toddler to wade in and deep enough to drown an elephant. Certainly this passage is deep enough to drown an elephant! It seems like every sentence, every phrase, is ripe with connections to the rest of the Gospel narrative according to John, as well as the other Scriptures. It begins with a reference to *the third day*. This miracle takes place at a *wedding*, so is that a veiled reference to the marriage feast of the Lamb? Jesus calls His mother, “Woman,” both here and as she stands at the foot of the cross. Jesus speaks of His *hour*, which is certainly a reference to His cross. The Apostle John loves numbers, so is there significance to the fact that there are *six* stone jars, particularly since six is a number symbolizing impurity yet these jars were for the Jewish rights of purification? Might we see a connection to Holy Communion in that Jesus gives wine for the feast? And if the wine is His blood, and the wine came from the water jars, is there a connection between the blood and water that flowed from Jesus’ pierced side at His death? Yes, there are many, many things packed into this brief narrative! And that’s why you can hear so many different sermons on this one text!

As I write this, we are right in the middle of the season of Epiphany. Like this reading from John, chapter two, the meaning of Epiphany can be a bit difficult to grasp. On the Day of Epiphany, we hear the story of the visit of the Magi. But the focus isn’t on the Magi, but rather on Jesus being the Savior of all people. Throughout Epiphany, we see Jesus’ revelation of who He is and what He came to do. We celebrate His Baptism and His Transfiguration, both days which revealed Him to be the Father’s only beloved Son, with whom He is well pleased. But at the same time, Epiphany is a “green” season. Aside from the feast days celebrating Jesus’ Baptism and Transfiguration, the Gospel readings seem to just march through the Gospel text in order, as do the appointed Epistle readings. The time of Epiphany can seem much like the long “green” season of Pentecost. In fact, like Pentecost, the season of Epiphany is referred to in the Church Year as “Ordinary Time.” This season can feel like we’re just taking a bit of a breather between the busy seasons of Advent/Christmas and Lent/Easter.

And this is why the story of Jesus turning water into wine is the perfect text for the season of Epiphany. Yes, there are many layers of interpretation, many connections to the rest of John’s Gospel, and indeed to many places throughout the Scriptures. But even though this pool of water is deep enough to drown an elephant, it’s still shallow enough for a toddler to wade in! Of all the other connections and meanings in the text, the main point shines through quite clearly: “This, the first of His signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested His glory. And His disciples believed in Him” (John 2:11).” That’s the central point of this miracle, that Jesus’ disciples saw what He did with the result that they believed in Him.

Epiphany is very much like this. While there are several different feast days and there’s a lot of meaning behind what this season is all about, the central message shines forth quite clearly, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. And as we’re in that time between celebrating Jesus’ Nativity and celebrating Jesus’ Passion and Resurrection, we remember and we take great comfort in this simple yet profound message. Jesus was born, lived, suffered, died, and rose again so that He would be the Savior of world—our Savior. And no matter how much we strive to better grasp and understand the depths of His Word, we will never lose sight of this central message of the Gospel. Amen.

Pastor Andrew Cave

Thank You!

Pastor Cave, Pastor Perry, and their families wish to extend their heartfelt thanks to the congregation for their generous gifts over the Christmas season. Your love, prayers, and support are very much appreciated, and we look forward to continuing to serve all of you with Christ’s good gifts of His Word and His Sacraments.



Mission Lutheran Church and School Prayer Ministry

Humility

1 Peter 5:6-7 says: *Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you, casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.*

Humility is something we as Christians strive to attain, yet how easy is it to fall into the trap of thinking of humility in terms of the world view? The world tells us humility is weakness. It tugs at us to be responsible for everything in our lives. The world tells us we can do or be anything and we can do it ourselves if we strive and try harder and harder and shows us so-called role models who handle everything easily “that life throws at them.” They rant with their sassy attitudes and take on a strong, proud pose. I must admit, I’ve embraced that attitude at times. This world view that constantly surrounds us can affect the way we think, the way we handle details of our daily lives and can even creep into our prayer lives.

Scripture shows us how to live in humility. The above passage invites us to cast those anxieties on God, and as we humble ourselves under His hand, we take hold of the knowledge of His love and promise to exalt us at the “proper time.” In the busyness and trials of life, we can forget that His grace is sufficient for us! He comforts us in His Word.

Matthew 11:28-30 Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Isn’t it comforting to know that the only role model we need for humility (or for anything else!) is our Lord Jesus?!?

Philippians 2:8-11 And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

We, like the rest of humanity, have faced the temptations of the world as it beckons us to “take charge.” We don’t have to struggle to know all the answers! We turn to our Lord in His Word and humble ourselves before Him in prayer.

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Isaiah 55:9 *For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.*



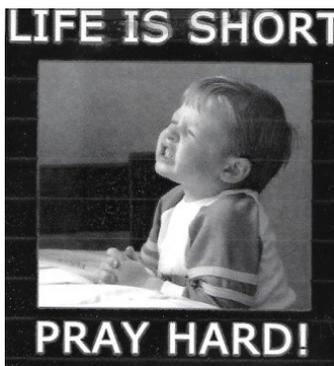
As Lutherans, we have a basic “reset button” that’s simple to use each morning and evening in Martin Luther’s morning and evening prayers, in which we humble ourselves and “commend ourselves into His hands, our bodies and souls and all things.”

Luther’s Morning Prayer

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that you have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Luther’s Evening Prayer

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ Your dear son, that you have graciously kept me this day, and I pray that you would forgive me all my sins where I have done wrong, and graciously keep me this night. For into your hands I commend myself, my body and soul and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.



*“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

God in Man Made Manifest

The season of Epiphany focuses on how God was made manifest in the flesh of Jesus. The church spends time hearing of the miracles, signs, and wonders of Jesus in the world. And this made plain to all that Jesus really is who He said He was. He is the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, the only begotten Son of the Father, in the flesh. For “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14).

It is revealed for all the world to see that Jesus is God in the flesh. It is made manifest by His words and His work, by what He said and by what He did. And these belong together, for “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” Jesus is the Word and will of God in the flesh, that is, He is the walking, talking enactment of God’s Word.

It is no different for us. We are called not just to believe in God in hearts but also to trust in God in word and deed. As James wrote: “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves” (James 1:22), and again, “What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? ... So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. ... Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. ... For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead” (James 2:14, 17-18, 26).

Our faith is lived out in works for our neighbor. Our trust in the Word and will of God is lived out not in word only but also in deed and in truth. In other words, the Epiphany of the Lord creates in us an epiphany of our faith in our works of obedience to God who commanded them. By this, our faith is made manifest to the world. It is, as Luther wrote of faith:

Faith is a divine work in us. It changes us and makes us to be born anew of God (John 1). It kills the old Adam and makes altogether different people, in heart and spirit and mind and powers, and it brings with it the Holy Spirit.

Oh, it is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, this faith. And so it is impossible for it not to do good works incessantly. It does not ask whether there are good works to do, but before the question rises, it has already done them, and is always at the doing of them.

He who does not these works is a faithless man. He gropes and looks about after faith and good works and knows neither what faith is nor what good works are, though he talks and talks, with many words about faith and good works.

Faith is a living, daring confidence in God’s grace, so sure and certain that a man would stake his life on it a thousand times. This confidence in God’s grace and knowledge of it makes men glad and bold and happy in dealing with God and all His creatures. And this is the work of the Holy Spirit in faith. Hence a man is ready and glad, without compulsion, to do good to everyone, to serve everyone, to suffer everything, in love and praise to God, who has shown him this grace.

And thus it is impossible to separate works from faith, quite as impossible as to separate burning and shining from fire. Beware, therefore, of your own false notions and of the idle talkers, who would be wise enough to make decisions about faith and good works, and yet are the greatest fools. (*Preface to the Book of Romans*)

So, then, let our faith be active by God’s power in the Word through the Holy Spirit. And let then our faith be made manifest to the world by what this faith does: serving our neighbor - in church, in the family, and society - with the works of faith in time, talents, and treasures.

LCMS Free Stewardship Resources





LWML - WINGS February Happenings:

Bake sale

Just in time for Valentine's Day!

The LWML is holding a bake sale in Luther Hall immediately following church on Sunday, February 13th. Proceeds will be used to help support our seminarian. Either bring something to sell, or purchase something to take home, or both!.



Ladies are also invited to join in our Bible study on Monday, February 14, at 1:00 PM in the church nursery.



Birthdays of the Month

February Birthdays

		Date
Miller	Kyle	6
Swedberg	Kay	8
Coughlin	Betty	10
Nicholson	Maya	10
Monica	Rachel	11
Bartels	Jean	20
Fulwiler	Sheila	22
Turquette	James	24
Ornelas	Alise	25
Wensel	Dianne	26
Roof	Walt	29

Happy Anniversary

February Anniversaries

		Date	# of years
Roof	Walt & Toni	13	40

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

May God continue to bless you.

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

"Working Through Us"

Jeremiah 1:4-10 - Now the Word of the LORD came to me, saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations." Then I said, "Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth." But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am only a youth'; for to all to whom I send you, you shall go, and whatever I command you, you shall speak. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you, declares the LORD." Then the LORD put out His hand and touched my mouth. And the LORD said to me, "Behold, I have put My Words in your mouth. See, I have set you this day over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant."

Jeremiah was nervous when God called him to be His prophet. "I don't know how to speak," he said. "I'm just a youth." Jeremiah was right—he wasn't up to the job, and he knew it. So far, so true.

But he missed one thing—and God pointed it out. "I have put My words in your mouth," God said. It's as if God said, "Don't worry. It's not about you. It's about Me. You don't have to be smart enough or strong enough or good enough. I have put My words in your mouth, and they will do the job." And they did. Jeremiah spent the rest of his life speaking God's Word to the people. He did the job God had for him.

God has called you, too, to certain jobs. They may not be flashy jobs like being a prophet. More likely they are humble jobs—being a parent, a child, a spouse, a friend. You may be a caregiver, an encourager, a pray-er, a protector. You may even think that you have no job at all, because at this point in your life your role is mainly to receive care from others. But that's a job! And a hard one, at times.

What happens when you feel overwhelmed by your job, whatever it may be? You can turn to the same source of help Jeremiah did. "I have put My Word in your mouth," God said to him. "You aren't doing it alone." And to us He says, "I have put My Holy Spirit in your heart. You are not alone. I laid down My life at the cross to make you Mine, and I will not forsake you now. I will work through you, with all your faults and weaknesses, and I will bring glory to My Name."

Jesus never sends us out alone. He is always with us, and we can call on Him for help and strength and wisdom. Because He loves us and holds us up, we can do the difficult jobs we face—one step at a time, supported by Him.

THE PRAYER: Dear Lord, help me when I am afraid or don't know what I should do. Amen.

This Daily Devotion was written by Dr. Kari Vo for Lutheran Hour Ministries

...you
SHALL
go
to all to whom
I send you, and
you
SHALL
speak
whatever
I command you...

JEREMIAH 1:7, NRSV

MISSION LUTHERAN CHURCH

Council Meeting

October 19, 2021

President Brad Springer called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. Attending were Brad Springer, John Guenther, Carol Moore, Jerry Stickles, Shirley Miller, Doug Lorenz, Alma Lorenz, Roberta Willett, Pastor Perry, Sonya Perry, Jacki McCurley.

Jerry Stickles led us in opening prayer.

The minutes of the September 20th meeting were approved.

President:

Brad and Carol Moore presented the changes to the constitution and by-laws. It was moved by Alma and seconded by Shirley to accept the changes made. Brad amended the motion that the changes are pending approval of the Voter's Assembly. Jacki seconded the motion. Motion passed. The proposals will be on the agenda at the next voters meeting.

Pastor Cave will be moving here on October 28th. Doug has arranged for members to help move the Pastor's items into his rental and church. Jacki has arranged for dinners for the family from October 29th to November 5th. A celebration will be planned after the installation. Jacki will coordinate with Pastor Cave on this issue.

Brad said we need to schedule the next Voter's Meeting. It will take place on November 14th at 2 pm with another one scheduled for December 12th, if needed. It was moved by Carol and seconded by Alma to accept these dates. It was approved by council.

The council slate of officers needs to be put together. Since we currently don't have a Vice-President we needed to come up with some ideas. Alma mentioned that we have a bulletin insert which shows what offices need to be filled. Brad, Jacki and Carol said they would continue their office for another year. Brad Mueller has offered to take over as Treasurer next year. We will have officers introduce themselves on Sunday October 31st and have the bulletin insert ready with openings needing to be filled.

Pastor's Report: Andy made it in time to give a report. Pastor Cave will be preaching on the 1st, 2nd and 4th Sundays and Pastor Perry will be preaching on the 3rd and 5th Sundays. There will be a memorial for LaDonna Lessman at the funeral home on Friday. Junior confirmation classes will start meeting on Sundays at 10:30 am.

Elder's Report: Report is attached. There was a concern in paragraph two about the elders making a decision to support Pastor Cramm's African ministries in the future.

Treasurer's Report: The report is attached. The church is going to have to decide who to give money to as the expenses keep going up on a continuing basis.

School Board: Report is attached. They would like to extend a call to Darci Grothman as administrator. She is currently on contract. This will be brought to the voter's assembly in November. There was an incident with Charles at the school. A letter has been written telling him that he is not to be on the property during school hours. The council agreed that if he is on the grounds, the police would be the next step for Charles.

Financial Secretary: Carol has enough counters that each person would have to count once a month.

Trustees: They will be changing Mary's lock so that they are all functional with 1 key. It will be done this week. The stucco repair is sticking to their bid and doing an outstanding job. There is a work day this Saturday from 9-12.

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Evangelism: The anonymous sand scratcher is still leaving messages. The Lord has blessed our Bible box.

Prayer Ministry: Continuing as usual.

Christian Education: Nothing new to report.

Stewardship: The report is attached and items were covered under the President's report.

Our next council meeting is scheduled for November 16th at 6 pm.

Pastor Perry led us in closing prayer.

It was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 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.



Meeting Minutes

TREASURER REPORT – JANUARY 2022 COUNCIL MEETING

Mission Lutheran Church and School

Report Preparation Date: January 9, 2022

<u>Budget Status:</u>	<u>Month of December 2021</u>		<u>FY Thru Dec 31, 2021</u>	
	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual*</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual*</u>
<u>Income:</u>				
MLC General	\$19,600.00	\$20,970.54	\$127,400.00	\$113,188.03
MLS Total	\$17,975.00	\$13,261.60	\$122,115.00	\$100,282.24
Designated / Other	\$196.67	\$31.64	\$1,180.00	\$7,953.68
	\$37,771.67	\$34,263.78	\$250,695.00	\$221,423.95
<u>Expenses:</u>				
MLC Total	\$15,180.33	\$19,547.91	\$102,406.85	\$99,826.46
MLS Total	\$26,342.51	\$23,542.35	\$170,845.66	\$141,012.24
	\$41,522.84	\$43,090.26	\$273,252.51	\$240,838.70
Net Difference	-\$3,751.17	-\$8,826.48	-\$22,557.51	-\$19,414.75

***Note:** Actual figures also include income and expenses not originally budgeted for the fiscal year.

MLC General Fund Contributions – FY 2021 (Thru January 9, 2022)

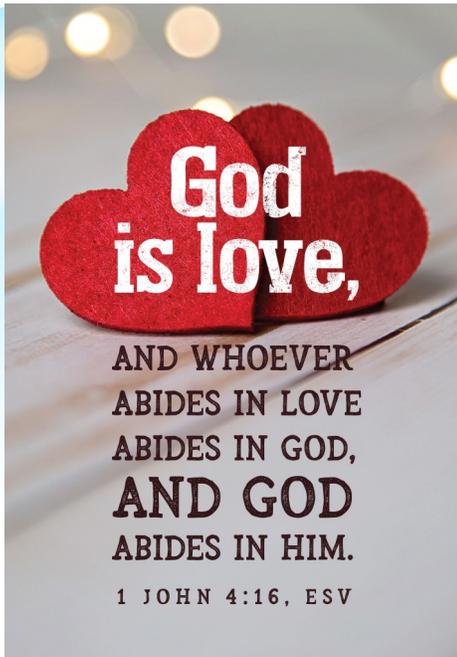
Average Weekly Contributions Needed:	\$4,900.00
Average Weekly Contributions Received:	\$4,687.32
General Fund Contributions Year-to-Date:	\$131,245.03
General Funds Budgeted Year-to-Date:	\$137,200.00
Surplus/Shortfall Year-to-Date:	-\$5,954.97

Assets / Liabilities

<u>Fund Assets:</u>	Endowment (as of Dec 9, 2021)	\$117,285.52
	Strasser (as of Sep 30, 2021)	\$81,479.04
	Thrivent (as of Sep 30, 2021)	\$405,478.00
	TOTAL	\$604,242.56
<u>Current Assets:</u>	Checking (as of Jan. 1, 2022)	\$21,222.87
	LCEF Savings (as of Jan. 1, 2022)	\$146,714.19
	(minus designated funds) { School Funds	\$11,507.95
	{ Youth Activity Funds	\$3,765.57
	{ Staffeldt Scholarship	\$10,000.00
	{ Other	
	Total LCEF Savings Available	\$121,440.67
<u>Liabilities:</u>	None	\$0.00

Comments:

1. Revenues lower due to low MLC general contributions and MLS enrollment being about 75% of needed tuition receipts.



Valentine's Day is
February 14th

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

Mission Lutheran Church and School

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Elder on call: Jerry Stickles (575) 640-8436

Officers and Board Chairpersons for 2022

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