

MISSION FRONTIERS

Mission Lutheran Church, Las Cruces, NM

In this issue:

- Pastor's Pen
- LWML news
- Birthdays and anniversaries
- Voters and Council meeting minutes
- Treasurer's Report

Pastor's Pen

Advent

It's a most mysterious time of the year,
 With words from the pages
 Of holy Hebrew sages crying with tears---
 It's a most mysterious time of the year!

There are warnings of judgment
 Yet God's promise of fulfillment
 Of good news for the contrite of heart,
 Intensive time of fasting
 News of life everlasting
 That Christ will come to impart.

Yes, the season of Advent, a time for rejoicing, a time for carols enjoining our voices in song, the anticipation of the celebration of Christmas! Advent, a time of wonder, a season of mysteries so bright, glimmering like glitter on dark globes, only these real mysteries shine within the darkness and radiate outwardly to our hearts in need of hope, hope for deliverance from sin and evil.

From sin and evil?

Yes, Advent, a time to walk in wonder over the glories of Christ Jesus, our Savior, our God and King, our soon-returning Judge.

Our soon-returning Judge?

Indeed, Advent, a season for warm greetings, of gift wrapping and cheerful tidings to one and all, a season of fasting and repentance.

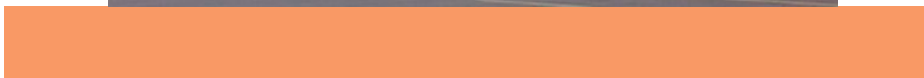
Of fasting and repentance?

Yes, of joy and hope, of deliverance from sin and evil, of salvation

Continued on next page →

Upcoming Events:

- ◇ Dec. 4: Advent by Candlelight
- ◇ Dec. 6, 13, and 20: Advent soup suppers and Vespers
- ◇ Dec. 12: LWML Cookie Walk
- ◇ Dec. 21: Winter break begins for MLS
- ◇ Dec. 24: Christmas Eve
- ◇ Dec. 25: Christmas Day
- ◇ Dec. 25—Dec. 29: Office is closed — Carol Moore is on vacation



and judgment, of fasting and repentance from sin, giving way to feasting and the celebration over the birth of Christ Jesus, our blessed Savior. It's all that.

Now, I know that all our lives, perhaps, we never heard anything about the season of Advent being a season of repentance into prayer and fasting and away from sin. Furthermore, my bringing our attention to it being such a season is a little inappropriate, we might think, for that would be a little bit like making a movie about ghostly goblins before Christmas. Oh, wait, that was already done, and who wants to think of that? Well, maybe making us aware of Advent actually being a season mostly of repentance before judgment, with undercurrents of hope fulfilled, is out of place, for that would be like singing a song about Christmastime being a time of happiness, of singing, of marshmallows roasting, of children playing and of fun parties and then saying in the middle of the song that it's a time for scary ghost stories. Uh, come to think of it, that was already done, too, and *that is* out of place for a Christmas song!

Anyway, to sharpen our sights and hearing to the message of Advent let us consider some of the readings from Holy Scripture that for generations and centuries unto today we hear from within the Divine Services of Advent:

Behold, you were angry, and we sinned;
in our sins we have been a long time, and shall we be saved?
We have all become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous deeds are like a polluted garment.
We all fade like a leaf,
and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.
There is no one who calls upon your name,
who rouses himself to take hold of you;
for you have hidden your face from us,
and have made us melt in the hand of our iniquities.
But now, O LORD, you are our Father;
we are the clay, and you are our potter;
we are all the work of your hand.
Be not so terribly angry, O LORD,
and remember not iniquity forever.
Behold, please look, we are all your people. (Isaiah 64:5b-9)

The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they

burn! But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. (2 Peter 3:9-13)

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

As it is written in Isaiah the prophet,

“Behold, I send my messenger before your face,

who will prepare your way,

the voice of one crying in the wilderness:

‘Prepare the way of the Lord,

make his paths straight,’”

John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And all the country of Judea and all Jerusalem were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. (Mark 1:1-5)

For the appropriate anticipation of Christmas and the surrounding society’s concentration on all things happy, we easily fail to hear the Advent themes of Holy Scripture, the messages of God’s displeasure and anger over the rebellion of His people, of prayers for pardon, of confession of sins, of repentance, of the judgment and destruction to come. Yet, historically, and unto today in the Divine Services of God’s house, the season of Advent is a season of repentance, of returning to the Lord in singleness of heart, of reconciliation and living in the mysteries of Christ with us, Christ among us, Christ before us leading the way to our neighbor in need and toward our heavenly inheritance. All of these things make for a grand celebration of the Christ who makes Christmas into Christmas, the Child who unto us is born for our salvation, the Son who unto us God has given for our escape from the world and from the wrath to come. Our exalted Judge wrapped forever in our flesh, bearing the marks of our salvation that He won for us with His own blood!

Like Mary and Joseph in caravan with others awaiting the Messiah--- known to them but unknown to the others---traveling over miles of terrain unto Bethlehem, a return to the manger of Christmas is a journey through the busy and the bustling, the uncomfortable and the unexpected, where pain was, and is, met with great joy! So, if your Christmas season is not as you expected or had hoped, then rejoice, because it reveals that you are in that season called Advent, where Christ, God with us, is with us all along the way. Christmas is found in *the back*, outside of, the inn, where farm animals and lowly shepherds kneel to greet Him.

A blessed Advent and Christmas seasons to you all.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Robert Carabotta

The Season of Advent

Advent soup suppers and mid-week services will be held on Wednesday, December 6th, December 13th, and December 20th.

Soup supper is at 5:15 pm and vespers begin at 6:00 pm.

Advent by Candlelight

Ladies, if you've never attended an LWML Advent by Candlelight event, this is a wonderful opportunity for us women to set aside all of those holiday preparations and focus our hearts and minds again on Jesus. It is a beautiful evening filled with Scripture readings, narration, prayer, occasional skits, songs of praise and Christian fellowship.

This year our Advent by Candlelight event will be held on Monday, December 4, beginning at 7:00 pm in Luther Hall.

If you need more information or need a ride, please contact Jacki McCurley at 526-9182.

Support us when you shop this holiday season

Buy your gifts and holiday essentials
at smile.amazon.com.
You shop. Amazon donates.

amazonsmile



Just a reminder... when you shop using “amazonsmile,” a small percentage of the amount you spend is donated to the charity of your choice. It’s easy to set it up so that Mission Lutheran Church receives the donation.

Daily Devotions from Lutheran Hour Ministries

By Pastor Ken Klaus, Speaker Emeritus of **The Lutheran Hour**

"God's Protection"

Psalm 91:11 - For He will command His angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.

As far as I can tell, there are two kinds of guardian angels.

The first kind of guardian angel is the kind spoken of in the Bible. You have the familiar verse from Psalm 91, which I just read. But, there's more than that. Jesus spoke of the children's guardian angels when He said, "See that you do not despise one of these little ones. For I tell you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 18:10).

We dare not forget Exodus 23, which says there was a guardian angel assigned to the children of Israel: "Behold, I send an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared" (Exodus 23:20). And Daniel, freshly rescued from the den of death, reports: "My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths" (Daniel 6:22a).

And the second type of guardian angel? Well, this type of GA is a special human being who shows up and, often, quite unexpectedly, does the Lord's work.

Recently, St. Louis saw the work of a guardian angel. Here's what happened: a man was being pushed by his wife in a wheelchair. They made it as far as the railroad tracks in Kirkwood, Missouri, where the man's chair got stuck on the tracks. The wife couldn't move forward or backward, which was a problem because a train was coming, and it was coming fast.

Julie and Chandler Flanders were watching from their car when a lady came out of nowhere and ran to the fellow in the chair. The woman picked up the man and his chair and moved them to safety. By the time Julie and her brother made it to the man, the train was half way through the crossing-and the woman who lifted the chair-bound man to safety? Nobody got her name, and she was gone.

The work of a guardian angel? Most definitely! Earthly or heavenly? Who can tell?

My friends, the truth is you have a Lord who loves you very much. His Son's life, suffering, death, and resurrection are proof of how much He is concerned about your eternity. But, we make a great mistake if we think the Lord's care and compassion is reserved only for the hereafter. The Triune God cares for you, and your guardian angel is just the way He shows His concern.

Continued on next page 

What, you've never seen your guardian angel? I'm not surprised. Most prefer to work anonymously.

But let me ask, have you ever *almost* been in an accident, but somehow, somehow, managed to be spared? Now it is possible you avoided that accident because of your lightning-fast reflexes and tremendous skill behind the wheel. But maybe not. Here's another: please list all the times you haven't tripped, all the illnesses you didn't catch, all the friends who didn't betray you, all the jobs from which you weren't fired. You can't do it, can you? That's because those things never happened.

Was it luck or fate? That's what some would say. Me, I know the Lord gives His holy angels charge over us to keep us in all our ways.

THE PRAYER: Dear Lord, for all Your blessings, including all the bad things of life from which I have been spared, I thank You. May I rejoice in these things, and the Savior who is with me always. In Jesus' Name I pray. Amen.

In Christ I remain His servant and yours,



Pastor Ken Klaus
Speaker Emeritus of The Lutheran Hour
Lutheran Hour Ministries



Stewardship

Christmas is coming. It is a joyous time of feasting. The Church feasts upon the Word of God in sermon, song, and sacrament.

We hear the proclamation of the message of the angels: “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord” (Luke 2:10–11).

We mingle our voices with theirs as we sing, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased” (Luke 2:14)!

We receive the proclaimed Savior, Christ the Lord, not wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in manger, but wrapped in bread and wine placed into our mouths for the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation.

We feast in great joy indeed because of this great blessing from our Lord and God.

God’s people in ancient Israel also feasted with great joy. The Lord showered His abundant blessing on His people. And He commanded them to feast upon it (Deut. 16). The people were to go to the place appointed, where the Lord would make His name dwell, and give offerings, each man as he was able, according to the blessing of the Lord that He had given them (Deut. 16:10, 15, 17).

And there the Lord would bless them with joy as they feasted upon what the Lord had provided. They ate of the choice parts of their offerings. They enjoyed the company of all the people of God as they together heard His promises of blessing, sang of His bountiful goodness, and partook of what He gave.

We feast on the Word who became flesh to dwell among us, not just during Christmas, but throughout all the year.

We feast not just on the salvation He has wrought for us in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, but we feast also on all the temporal blessings that God gives out of His fatherly divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in us.

We enjoy the rich bounty that God provides, not only in Word and Sacrament, but also in house and home, property and income, family and friends.

Let us then, as did our brothers in the faith from ancient Israel, give as we are able, according to the blessing of the Lord our God that He has given us.

Let us, like them, give generously of the first fruits of our income, which He gives, so that all may know and enjoy the salvation He gives and the joy we have in the Savior born in the city of David, who is Christ the Lord.

LCMS Free Stewardship Resources





The Lutheran Women's Missionary League (LWML) is the official women's auxiliary of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. For 75 years, the LWML has focused on affirming each woman's relationship with Christ, encouraging and equipping women to live out their Christian lives in active mission ministries

and to support global missions.

The mission of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League is to assist each woman of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in affirming her relationship with the Triune God so that she is enabled to use her gifts in ministry to the people of the world.

At Mission our LWML chapter is called WINGS - Women IN God's Service. We support the vision statement as the leading group for LCMS women where each woman is welcomed and encouraged to use her unique God-given gifts as she supports global missions and serves the Lord with gladness.

WINGS meets on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm. All women of Mission Lutheran Church are invited to join us for an evening of devotion, fellowship and planning mission projects. Our meetings typically last no more than one hour.

Our next meeting will be on December 12th in Luther Hall. In December we always have a short meeting followed by a "Cookie Walk." For the cookie walk, bring 3 dozen (preferably homemade) cookies to share. And bring a container to fill with cookies of your choice. Or, make a \$5 donation to the LWML and fill your container with cookies.

If you need a ride to any of the meetings, please contact Jacki McCurley at 526-9182.



JULIETS: The Juliet's are Just Us Ladies Into Eating Together. We meet once a month for fellowship and prayer. Join us at on Tuesday, December 12th, at 11:30. If you plan to attend, please contact either Jacki McCurley at 526-9182 or Ruth Jakcsy at 522-8637.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

December Birthdays

Hallem	Don	1
Stickles	Jerry	3
Vandiver	Donald	3
Lorenz	Doug	8
Eggebraaten	Wendy	9
Lessman	Gracie	12
Johnson	JR	13
Spicka	Jeri	14
Turquette	Phyllis	26
Lestrick	Lola	27
Provencio	Michael	28
Scaling	Robert	28
Vakselis	Paul	29
Lee	Johnny	30

December Anniversaries

		Date	# of yrs
Spicka	Chuck & Jeri	10	41
Vakselis	Paul & Sheila	20	32
Eisenbraun	John & Joanie	31	57

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

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.

**SAVE
THE DATE**

Mission Lutheran School PTO

Barnes & Noble Bookfair



12/17 and 12/18 (Sunday and Monday)

Barnes & Noble in Mall

Mission Lutheran School PTO

- Children's Story Time
- Crafts

Sunday 9:00 am to 7:00 pm

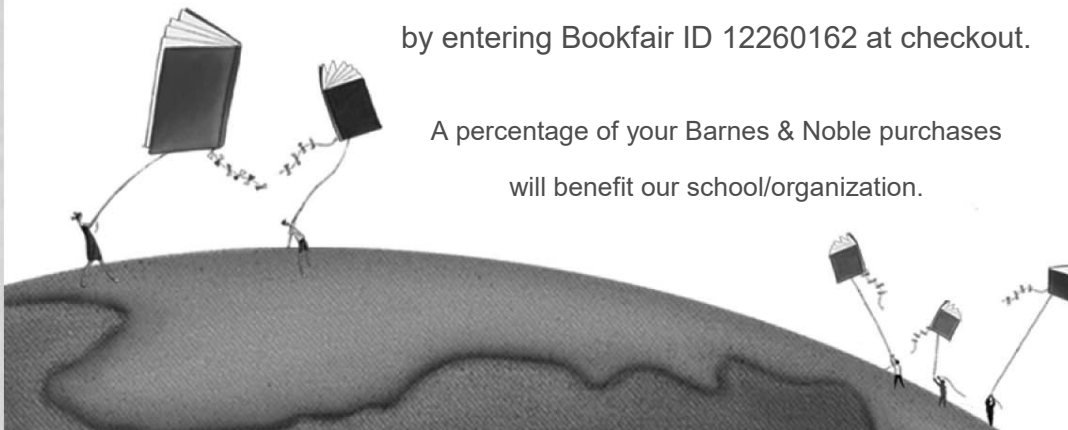
Monday 9:00 am to 7:00 pm

Can't attend our bookfair at Barnes & Noble?

Visit bn.com/bookfairs to support us online from 12/18/17 to 12/22/17

by entering Bookfair ID 12260162 at checkout.

A percentage of your Barnes & Noble purchases
will benefit our school/organization.



MISSION LUTHERAN CHURCH
Council Meeting
October 17, 2017

President Greg Fant called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Attending were Greg Fant, Pastor Carabotta, Jim Vance, John Guenther, Beth Fant, Megan Wood, Robert Scaling, Doug Lorenz, Jerry Stickles, Carol Cooper, Jan Peyton, and guest, Carol Moore. Pastor led opening devotion and prayer based on Psalm 46.

Minutes of the September meeting were approved as emailed.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Carabotta reported that two confirmands are attending the youth confirmation class, which will instruct them on how to defend their faith. The Eggebraatens, Bob Hill and Jane Murphy have been transferred to their new congregations in Minnesota and Texas.

We have reviewed materials for Advent. "Returning to the Manger" is the theme for Christmas Day. The book of Job will be reviewed during Lent. November 26 will again spotlight Lutheran Indian Ministries. School students will participate in Services the last Sunday in January.

Pastor's transition back to full-time ministry is going well. He is once again leading chapel.

Elders' Report: see attached report submitted by Doug Lorenz. Elva Zumwalt is going to Ohio to live with her son.

Vice President's Report: Jim Vance reviewed the positions up for election for 2018. We need volunteers for the Boards of Elders, Evangelism, Christian Services, and Day School.

Treasurer's Report: see attached report submitted by John Guenther.

Trustees' Report: Doug Lorenz has received four bids for the removal of the cement and tree that is encroaching on the church building foundation. After discussion, Doug asked that each member pray on this project, asking the Lord for guidance on how to proceed. The Council will address this again next meeting.

Carol Moore reported that the carpet task force has a recommendation ready to take to the Voters' Assembly. The bid is from Malooly's and the cost is approximately \$21,000. Robert Scaling moved, and Beth Fant seconded, that the Council accept this recommendation. The motion passed.

Evangelism Report: Carol Cooper reported that the Joining Jesus to pray for our neighborhoods continues. The map showing the areas that members have volunteered to include in their prayers each week is in-progress. The Board will call members in neighborhoods that are not covered in the map, asking them participate by praying for their neighborhood.

Day School Board Report: see attached report submitted by Megan Wood. On October 24, Chili's will sponsor a fund-raising effort for Mission whereby 15% of the cost of the meal will go to MLS. A bulletin insert will be provided to be presented at the restaurant when ordering.

Continued on next page →

Megan reported that most of the parents who are not following their children's example to be Christian "PeaceKeepers" are unchurched. Pastor will be scheduling visits with the unchurched families.

Doug Lorenz said that some students are not respecting our church property. The example given was kicking gravel onto the pathway. He suggested that the students could help by sweeping the gravel back into the playground.

Christian Education Report: Carol Cooper said that it is a joyful experience to have children in Sunday School and that attendance is up.

Christian Service and Missions Report: see attached report submitted by Ruth Staffeldt.

Fellowship Report: see attached report submitted by Robert Scaling. Paul Vakselis will do devotion at the November 7 FUN evening. There will be no FUN event in December because the schedule is already busy with the Advent soup suppers. Coats for Kids has raised \$1,070 so far.

Stewardship Report: no report this month.

Leadership Shield: We will pray for the unchurched families with children attending MLS. Pastor asked that we pray for him as he visits these unchurched families.

Financial Secretary Report: Beth Fant has ordered envelopes for next year, ordering fewer boxes because there have been too many leftover. Beth would like to upgrade the Shepherd's Staff software because the current version does not work well with Windows 10. Beth asked if others were using that software or wanted to use that software. Apparently, only the Financial Secretary is using it, so she and Greg will order new software.

President's Report: Our next meeting will be Tuesday, November 21. The Council agreed to schedule the next Voters' Assembly meeting for Sunday, December 3. Carol Moore noted that this is a long time to wait for approval of the new carpets. Greg Fant said that the Council could call a special Voters' Assembly meeting to vote on this one project. There was no motion to call a special meeting.

We concluded with the Lord's Prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice F. Peyton, Secretary

TREASURER'S REPORT – 4th QUARTER 2017 VOTERS MEETING

Mission Lutheran Church and School

Report Preparation Date: December 1, 2017

<u>Budget Status:</u>	<u>Month of November 2017</u>	<u>FY Thru November 30, 2017</u>
------------------------------	--------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------

	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual*</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual*</u>
<u>Income:</u>				
MLC General	\$20,420.00	\$17,835.00	\$112,310.00	\$104,667.80
MLS Total	\$21,110.00	\$19,908.69	\$92,290.00	\$97,282.84
Designated / Other	\$212.50	\$692.97	\$962.50	\$11,067.06
	\$41,742.50	\$38,436.66	\$205,562.50	\$213,017.70
<u>Expenses:</u>				
MLC Total	\$20,536.40	\$18,256.05	\$83,133.43	\$85,455.37
MLS Total	\$26,247.28	\$22,947.73	\$117,075.11	\$107,077.21
	\$46,783.68	\$41,203.78	\$200,208.54	\$192,532.58
Net Difference	-\$5,041.18	-\$2,767.12	\$5,353.96	\$20,485.12

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

Church General Fund Contributions – FY 2017/18 (Through November 26, 2017):

Average Weekly Contributions Needed:	\$5,105.00
Average Weekly Contributions Received:	\$4,757.63
General Fund Contributions Year-to-Date:	\$104,667.80
General Funds Budgeted Year-to-Date:	\$112,310.00
Surplus/Shortfall Year-to-Date:	-\$7,642.20

Assets / Liabilities (As of December 1, 2017):

Current Assets:	<u>Checking:</u>	\$27,338.76
	<u>LCEF Savings:</u>	\$109,442.38
	(- Designated)	
	Hispanic Ministry	\$40,031.06
	MLS	\$5,911.28
	Sabbatical	\$3,899.34
	Youth Activity	\$888.42
	Indian Ministries	\$203.00
	Savings Available	\$58,670.28
Liabilities:	<u>Mortgage Loan:</u>	\$55,548.69

Notes:

1. Higher designated income due to an estate donation of \$5,000 and transferred funds from savings to cover Pastor Carabotta's medical family leave period.
2. Higher MLS income due to Apple Tree donations, front-loaded Angel Program allocations encompassing the entire year, and for families paying tuition ahead for entire semesters.
3. MLS expenses lower due to not having to hire a teacher's aide and preschool assistant as originally budgeted.

Mission Lutheran Church and School
 2752 N. Roadrunner Parkway
 Las Cruces, NM 88011-8081
 Church Office: (575) 522-0465
 School: (575) 532-5489
 Emails: mlpastor@qwestoffice.net
 mlsecretary@qwestoffice.net
 mlschool@qwestoffice.net

Elder on call: Jim Bonse (575) 526-8675

We're on the web!

<http://missionlutheran.net>

<http://mlschool.net>

**Compassion is language the deaf can
 hear and the blind can see.**

~Mark Twain~

“Touching Hearts
 through God’s
 unchanging Word in
 an ever-changing
 world.”

Officers and Board Chairpersons for 2017

President	Greg Fant	Christian Education	Dianne Wensel
Vice President	Jim Vance	Sunday School Supervisor	Toni Roof
Secretary	Jan Peyton	Evangelism	Carol Cooper
Treasurer	John Guenther	Christian Service & Missions	Ruth Staffeldt
Financial Secretary	Beth Fant	Stewardship	Jerry Stickles
Elders, chairman	Doug Lorenz	Day School Education	Megan Wood
Elders, vice-chairman	Paul Vakselis	Fellowship	Robert Scaling
Trustees	Frank Brennan		