

MISSION FRONTIERS

Mission Lutheran Church, Las Cruces, NM

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Pastor's Pen

Pastor's Pen will not be published this month. Stay tuned.

Upcoming Events:

- ◇ **Feb. 5: Super Bowl
Mighty Mites
collection**
- ◇ **Feb. 26: Voters'
Assembly**



Stewardship

We've all heard that stewardship is giving to the church of our time, talents, and treasure. This alliterative trinity helps us see that giving is not just about money, but about our whole lives. For God has given us everything we have and enjoy as we confess in the meaning to the First Article of the Apostle's Creed. And what we confess first among those is that God gives us "our body and soul, our eyes, ears, and all our members, our reason and all our senses." Only then do we confess that he gives us material things. Thus the time, talents, and treasure trinity places before our eyes the fact that we are to give something of all of these things toward the mission of the church in thanksgiving for what God has provided. For everything we have and indeed everything we are comes from God's fatherly divine goodness and mercy.

The problem with this alliterative trinity comes when we replace one little word with another little word—when we replace the word *and* with the word *or*. It is always written with the *and*, but when we read it, we read it with the *or*. Thus this quite helpful trinity, which extolled that everything that we have and are is a gift from God and which is to be pressed into the service of God in His church, turns into a trinity that we can pick and choose which of the trinity we use into the service of God. The giving of our time, talents, *and* treasure turns into the giving of our time, talents, *or* treasure.

Then the question arises: Can we give of our time and talents instead of our treasures? Or perhaps it is the other way round: Can we give our treasure and not of our time and our talents? But these are the wrong questions. The right question is, can we give of our time and our talents in addition to our treasure? Yes, indeed, we are called to give of all three. The things that God gives us are not to be pitted against one another. They are given to us and we are to press them all into God's service for benefit of His church and our neighbors in need.

Thus we give all three. We give our treasure in the form of a generous, first-fruits, proportion of our income. We give of our time in generosity for the benefit of Christ's holy church. We give of our talents in the same manner. Since God gave us all these things, we are called to give generously of all these things in faith toward Him and in fervent love to our neighbors.

For God has provided all these things to us. Out of His fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, He gives us each time, talents, *AND* treasures as a means to bless those around us. We serve our neighbors with these things, blessing them with the blessings in which God has blessed us. We give of our time, talents, and treasures to our families, our society, and to our church, our local congregations. And we do this because we know that we are not our own. Rather, we belong to God. We have been bought with a price—with the holy precious blood and innocent suffering and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. He gave everything—His time, His talents, and His treasure,—to have us as His own and to live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence and blessedness. We have these things as gifts and blessings from God. Let us then press them all into service for the sake of His love—time, talents, and treasures together.

LCMS Free Stewardship Resources





DASH for MLS

Daily Activities to Support & Help Mission Lutheran School

#6 GoodShop

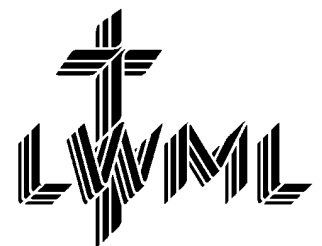
Did you know there are things that you do everyday that can help support Mission Lutheran School? Praying, shopping, searching the internet, etc.

Do you shop online? Before checking out stop by GoodShop.com first. Click the merchant from GoodShop and the school earns money! Don't forget to set up Mission Lutheran School as your charity before you get started.

LWML

The WINGS (Women IN God's Service) chapter of the LWML (Lutheran Women in Mission) meet the second Thursday of each month (September through May) at 7:00 pm in Luther Hall. All women who are communicant members of an LCMS congregation are automatically members of the LWML. We keep our meetings brief but meaningful, and we have many activities planned throughout the year. At our February meeting we will discuss Lenten soup suppers, the ladies' spring tea, and the spring zone rally. Hope to see you there!

Questions? See Carol Moore in the church office, or call Jacki McCurley at 526-9182.





Anniversaries and Birthdays

February Anniversaries

		Date	# of years
Roof	Walt & Toni	13	35

February Birthdays

Maestas	DeAngelo	1
Swedberg	Kay	8
Coughlin	Betty	10
Monica	Rachel	11
Ryberg	Jan	18
Bartels	Jean	20
Bloom	Rusty	24
Turquette	James	24
Buls	Dolores	25
Lujan	Alise	25
Wensel	Dianne	26
Roof	Walt	29



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

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

Daily Devotions from Lutheran Hour Ministries

By Rev. Dr. Gregory Seltz, Speaker of **The Lutheran Hour**

"For Justice that Lasts, Put Your Faith in Jesus"

(The LORD said) "Here is My Servant, whom I uphold, My Chosen One in whom I delight; I will put My Spirit on Him, and He will bring justice to the nations.." - Isaiah 42:1

Let me say it straightforwardly today: **The Lutheran Hour** and Lutheran Hour Ministries is not a political program. That doesn't mean there aren't important issues to be prayed about and voted on. That doesn't mean there aren't moral and ethical perspectives in the Bible that are God's commands and should inform our votes and public service. That statement merely speaks a clear biblical perspective that nothing in the world, outside of Jesus, will solve the big, important issues that need solving. Jesus is the only One who can speak clearly to all of us today and say, "Repent of your sin." And Jesus is the only One who can forgive your sin and mine because He paid the price of justice for our sinful rebellion against God. Even when the public ministry of Jesus, you know -- those pastors -- forgive people, or even when private Christians share Christ's forgiveness, we are all merely mouthpieces of God's grace, sharing His forgiveness in His stead and by His command.

So, today, with an election behind us in the United States, with a New Year celebration in the rearview mirror, the message for this moment -- for justice and peace that lasts -- is to put your faith in Jesus Christ alone. There is a cosmic dimension to the peace, justice and joy that Jesus brings that no leader, no country, no corporation or government can ever bring. In fact, our efforts always pale in comparison.

I saw this especially way back when on 9/11 in New York City. We had Bible studies Tuesdays on Wall Street and, ironically, 9/11 happened on a Tuesday. So, the message for many in NYC just a week earlier was that all was wonderful, blessed, and full of promise and peace. And yet, for many of those same people, the very next week was full of terror, destruction and the end of their way of life. I point this out merely to contrast that with the message we shared every Tuesday on the seventh floor of 9 Broad Street in downtown New York. It was a message about Christ, about His work, His justice, His grace. That was the same the week before 9/11 as it was the week after 9/11. For justice and peace and mercy that lasts, it cannot be a result of our works, our efforts, of merely our hopes and dreams. That kind of peace and justice and hope that lasts -- it only comes from God's work in this world.

Listen. As you venture out into the new year, yes, you have your hopes and dreams. Reach for the stars in all that you do, but most of all, seek to honor Jesus Christ in all you are and do. Strive for excellence in His Name, and whatever comes your way in the new year, it will be something you can handle, something you can rejoice in, something you can struggle through, all because you are Christ's person by faith. That makes all the difference. That's a way to live a week before 9/11, as well as a week after 9/11, as well as living today and beyond.

THE PRAYER: Dear Jesus, give me wisdom to root my hopes and dreams -- even my desires for justice and peace -- in Your Word, Your work, Your Law, Your grace. Help me also to be a person of faith in You, in a world that never seems to get things right, even when we're doing our best. Amen!



In Christ,

Rev. Dr. Gregory Seltz
Speaker of The Lutheran Hour
Lutheran Hour Ministries

MISSION LUTHERAN CHURCH
Council Meeting
December 20, 2016

President Greg Fant called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. Attending were Greg Fant, Jan Ryberg, John Guenther, Doug Lorenz, Frank Brennan, Carol Cooper, Dianne Wensel, Jan Peyton and guest, Carol Moore. Devotion and prayer were led by Doug Lorenz.

Minutes of the November 15, 2016, meeting were approved as submitted.

Pastor's Report: No report this month.

Vice President Report: Nothing new to report this month.

Treasurer's Report: see attached report submitted by John Guenther. General contributions continue to be less than budget. As usual, contributions in December are better, but we must wait to see the trend for the rest of the year. School revenues appear higher than they actually are, because some parents have paid in advance. We actually have fewer students than included in the budget, so John anticipates actual revenue will underrun budget.

John has transferred the balance in the building account to the savings account, so from here forward, all dollars will be reported in either the checking or savings account.

Elder's Report: see attached report submitted by Doug Lorenz. The revised Breadbreakers group assignments will probably begin in February.

Day School Board Report: Jan Ryberg reported that the three newly elected members, Megan Wood, Karen Jensen and Kathy Mailander, attended the December meeting. In 2017, Megan Wood will serve as Board Chairman and Robert Smits will serve as Secretary.

Jan said that the questionnaire to assess how well the Board performed this year have been given to the Board members. The results will be available in January.

The School's Christmas program was performed on December 18.

Jan Peyton reported that our financial consultant, Rob Cooksey, has asked for a revised meeting schedule due to the availability of flights between Omaha and El Paso. Jan has checked with those who have already agreed to attend these meetings, and the revised schedule is acceptable. On Friday, January 27, 4-6 p.m., Rob will hold a school funding conversation. Rob's wife, Dawn, will be discussing Enrollment Coordinator duties with Amie Springer. On Saturday, January 28, Rob will hold a session on strategic planning from 8:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. That day, Dawn will meet with Kathy Mailander to discuss School Fundraising.

Trustees' Report: Frank Brennan will continue as Board Chairman in 2017. A lot of work has been scheduled during Christmas vacation. Frank said that the air conditioning replacement will begin on December 26. On December 27, the crane will be there to remove the swamp coolers.

The stucco work will begin around December 27. 75% of the cost has been paid, with the remaining 25% due upon completion. Frank noted that this cost could be more depending on what they find on the inside of the Luther Hall entry pillars.

The timers and sensors for the parking lot lights are being replaced or reset to operate correctly.

Frank said that someone from the church must be onsite the entire time the air conditioning and stucco work is being done. Preparation work for the painting of the bathrooms, main gathering room and hallways in Luther Hall will begin on December 27.

Christian Education: Dianne Wensel reported that the practice sessions for the Christmas program have gone well. The final practice will be Thursday, December 22. After practice, they will go caroling in the neighborhood. Shilo Smith is working on a video to be shown on Christmas eve. Jacky Ryberg has made a pillow case for each child participating in the Christmas program.

Carol Cooper and Ruth Staffeldt are developing a proposal to hold Parent-Teacher meetings to encourage parents to continue bringing their children to Sunday School.

Stewardship Report: see attached report submitted by Jerry Stickles.

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

Evangelism Report: Carol Cooper indicated she will continue as Board Chairman in 2017. She plans to have a Board put together by January.

President's Report: Greg Fant reminded us that two additions to the Bylaws were presented at the November 20 Voters' Assembly meeting. These changes expand the duties of the Council Treasurer and incorporate the Fellowship Board approved by the Voters. Greg apologized, as he felt he had not prepared enough for that discussion, resulting in some confusion as to the process to be followed. Greg reviewed the applicable sections of the Bylaws, and after some discussion, the group agreed that the two changes had been read and submitted at the November meeting. To complete the process, these changes will be published in a Church Bulletin prior to the next Voters' meeting, and then a vote can be held at that meeting.

There was discussion about consolidating some of the Boards. Greg asked each member to pray about this organizational issue in preparation for further discussion in the upcoming year.

Greg then gave a quick status of the Work Priorities developed by Council at the beginning of 2016.

- a. Mission Statement Working Group: Pastor Patten will be facilitating a series of meetings to complete this work. A schedule has not been set.
- b. Work toward more school and church integration: Students are singing at Sunday Services once or twice each school year. One church member is attending Chapel weekly. Financial aid to families with need continues. An enrollment coordinator/recruiter has been hired. Having church members as tutors has been inhibited by state requirements and fees.
- c. Connect with unchurched school families: This has not yet been implemented.
- d. Continue sign improvement: Some improvements have been made, but more needs to be done.
- e. Obtain Youth Ministry leadership: Karen Jensen has accepted this role.
- f. Rey de Reyes: The Hispanic ministry is currently suspended for a year.
- g. Day time computer support: Ed Mitchell has done a fine job.
- h. Roof, Parking lot, support pillars, A/C, shed repair: The Board of Trustees has done a fine job with all of these projects.
- i. Increase congregation involvement: More needs to be done.

Greg thanked all Council members for their support and work in 2016, with special thanks to Jan Ryberg, who is leaving Council after this meeting, for his role as Vice President. Jan did a masterful job identifying officers and Board members to serve in 2017.

The next Council meeting will be held January 17, 2017, beginning at 6:30 p.m.

We closed with the Lord's Prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice F. Peyton, Secretary

**TREASURER'S REPORT – JANUARY 2017 COUNCIL MEETING
Mission Lutheran Church and School**

Report Preparation Date: January 16, 2017

Budget Status:	<u>Month of December 2016</u>		<u>FY Thru December 31, 2016</u>	
	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual*</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual*</u>
<u>Income:</u>				
MLC General	\$22,200.00	\$24,918.27	\$144,300.00	\$130,208.03
MLS Total	\$15,880.00	\$16,188.21	\$115,300.00	\$115,291.91
Designated / Other	\$476.66	\$56,347.53	\$2,860.00	\$57,315.32
	<u>\$38,556.66</u>	<u>\$97,454.01</u>	<u>\$262,460.00</u>	<u>\$302,815.26</u>
<u>Expenses:</u>				
MLC Total	\$19,053.86	\$73,724.89	\$99,046.24	\$151,559.45
MLS Total	\$25,619.99	\$21,835.14	\$162,662.13	\$147,336.87
	<u>\$44,673.85</u>	<u>\$95,560.03</u>	<u>\$261,708.37</u>	<u>\$298,896.32</u>
Net Difference	-\$6,117.19	\$1,893.98	\$751.63	\$3,918.94

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

Church General Fund Contributions – FY 2016/17 (Through January 15, 2017):

Average Weekly Contributions Needed:	\$5,550.00
Average Weekly Contributions Received:	\$5,045.24
General Fund Contributions Year-to-Date:	\$146,311.88
General Funds Budgeted Year-to-Date:	<u>\$160,950.00</u>
Surplus/Shortfall Year-to-Date:	-\$14,638.12

Assets / Liabilities (As of January 16, 2017):

Current Assets: Checking	\$24,927.37
LCEF Savings	\$122,669.69
(- Calls)	
Rey de Reyes	\$40,031.06
MLS	\$10,143.51
Sabbatical Acct.	\$11,500.00
Other	\$942.81
Total LCEF Savings Available	<u>\$60,010.31</u>
Liabilities: Mortgage Loan	\$64,490.05

Notes:

- Actual figures now reflect the two capital funded projects – A/C / heating system and stucco work. They are funded from savings account against actual expense and ultimately have a neutral effect on overall budget.
- End of December actual income over expenses reflects that funds have been drawn from savings account for capital projects income but not yet fully billed against for project expenses.
- MLS expenses less than budgeted due to hiring a classroom assistant versus hiring a new full-time teacher as originally budgeted.

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Elder on call: Robert Smits 522-5538 (home)
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We're on the web!

<http://missionlutheran.net>

<http://mlschool.net>

“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		