

MISSION FRONTIERS

Mission Lutheran Church, Las Cruces, NM

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Pastor's Pen

"... giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 5:20).

With the arrival of the new calendar year, and with all that God has done and all that He has provided for us, the church family of Mission Lutheran Church, it is appropriate, and I am moved to, give God thanks for you and for what He led you to do to help those in need.

For the governing leaders in our nation, for how God used them, in ways beyond our comprehension, to bring about His will for His people in Christ and for the glory of His name and the advancement of His kingdom of faith in Jesus Christ as the King of kings and Lord of lords, we give thanks to the Lord.

For the leaders of our Church body, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, for their passion to serve Christ Jesus and for their prayers, we give thanks to the Lord.

For those works which God had so empowered you to do to lift up downcast countenances, we give thanks to the Lord.

For your prayers unceasing, filled with hearts so filled with the passion of the Holy Spirit and the compassion of Christ Jesus, our Lord, we give thanks to the Lord.

Upcoming Events:

- ◇ **Jan. 6: Epiphany Party**
- ◇ **Jan. 12: LWML meeting**
- ◇ **Jan. 15: Turning Point baby bottle campaign**



For your labor in the Lord, for your care for His holy house and all rooms and meeting places at the campus where we meet and pray, we give thanks to the Lord.

For all those who served so thoughtfully and faithfully in leadership so that we, as the body of Christ, may do the will of God where He has us, we give thanks to the Lord.

For all of those who will begin and those who will continue in leadership for the same work to advance so that the gospel may reach into more hearts, we give thanks to the Lord.

For the parents of our church family, for their instruction and discipline in the Lord to their children so that their children might love and serve the Lord in steadfast faith, we give thanks to the Lord.

For our church staff, for their unity in the Gospel, for their faithful labor and for the fruit of the Spirit borne in their lives, we give thanks to the Lord.

For the servants young and older who prepare the Lord's altar, who stand with reverent attention to the things of the Lord, for the musicians, for those who greet and set in good and joyful order all things for God's service to us around His Word and Sacrament in which our Lord Jesus Christ speaks to us and feeds us and the Holy Spirit convicts, comforts, exhorts, teaches and fill us with His presence, we give thanks to the Lord.

For both the single and the married members of God's flock, who by their example encourage us in faith and holiness of life lived in joy in the Lord, we give thanks to the Lord.

For our children, for their growth in Christ's grace and in knowing Him evermore, we give thanks to the Lord.

For all that God has done among us, and for what He will further do in, through and among us to reach more souls with the gospel of Jesus and for building up His body, the Church, and this church, we give thanks to the Lord.

For these and all things, and for each other, we give thanks to the Lord.

Lourdes, Robert, Eva and I also give all of you thanks for your care, your prayers, your generosity to us and your help to us in these difficult times; we thank God, our Father, in the name of His Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ, for you all. A blessed New Year, in the Lord, to you all.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Robert Carabotta



Stewardship

Celebrating New Years is a celebration of the past and the future. We take stock of the past with thanksgiving and sometimes even relief (that it's over), and we look to the future in the hope and anticipation and perhaps even worry of what it holds.

The point is that New Year's celebrations remind us of who we are as opposed to who we would like to be; what we have done in comparison to what we want to do. It reminds us of our accomplishments, but mostly it reminds us of our failures. What we've lost. Who we've lost.

New Years is our own version of Dickens' classic *A Christmas Carol*. And we all play Scrooge. We are visited by the ghosts of our pasts, presents, and futures.

St. Paul writes: "The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must give as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. As it is written, 'He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.' He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for all your generosity, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God" (2 Cor 9:6–15).

St. Paul tells us that the Lord of all will both supply and increase what you need to give to the church for its work in and for the world. He tells us that this work that God is doing in us will enrich and bless us in every way and through this it will produce thanksgiving to God. With this in mind, here is some practical advice to help you take stock of your giving of years past, which will help you to change what needs to be changed, improved, or done away with altogether.

First, attend the Divine Service to receive God's gifts of forgiveness, life, and salvation. If you've not been faithful in attending worship to hear the preaching of God's Word, to receive forgiveness, and feast of the rich food of our Lord's body and blood for the eternal benefit of your body and soul, then repent and come to receive the gifts God freely gives. God doesn't want your money. He wants you—all of you (Matt 22:20–22).

Second, pray for the Lord's help. Your right as a Christian is to speak with your Father, the King of all creation, freely through His Son, our Lord, Jesus Christ. Go to the throne of grace and ask for strength and wisdom to follow His bidding faithfully (John 15:1–16).

Third, consider what the Church is and what the Church does. The Church is a mercy place. It inhales the mercy of the Father by the death, resurrection, and ascension of His Son through the preaching of the Gospel and the Sacraments. It exhales this mercy in love toward the neighbor. You are a member of the Church, of God's family. Thus, you are not only a recipient of God's mercy, but a bearer of that mercy for the life of the world. You spread that mercy in showing mercy through the generous giving of your income to support the work of the Church in and for the world, as the Israelites did in the Old Testament (Lev 27:1–34).

Fourth, take stock of your current giving in light of the New Testament's teaching on supporting the work of the Church. Are you giving of your first fruits, taking it out of your paycheck first, or does God get what's left over? Are you giving voluntarily and cheerfully? Are you giving proportionally and generously? The Old Testament required a tithe, ten percent. The New Testament gives freedom to be generous, to give more for the Church's work. Are you relying on God's promise to provide and increase what you need to do His work? If your answer is no to any of these, repent. If God gave you His only Son, will He not provide for you all things, even physical things? Trust Him, His Word, and heed it.

So, don't let your past define your future. Rather, commit for the year a generous proportion of your income, which is God's gift to you for this body and life.



#5 Box tops

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

Many items you purchase have a label on the box top. Simply cut it out and bring it in. The school can use the box tops to buy classroom materials.

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 January meeting we will discuss our Super Bowl "Mighty Mites" collection and our February bake sale. Hope to see you there!

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





Anniversaries and Birthdays

January Birthdays

McIlrath	Jayne	3
Wood	Emma	5
McCurley	Dan	8
Provencio	Maggie	12
Bonse	Sonja	22
Roof	Emily	23
Amati	Loretta	26
Lorenz	Alma	30

January Anniversaries

		Date	# of years
Staffeldt	Chuck & Ruth	11	53
Nobis	Ken & Nancy	19	32
Bartels	Arlyn & Jean	25	56
Vance	Jim & Chari	26	48



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

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



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LIVE A LIFE WORTHY OF LEGACY

“Blessed are those who fear the Lord, who find great delight in his commands. Their children will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed.”—Psalm 112:1-2

In the book of Genesis, God made a covenant with Abraham that included the promise of many descendants. Because of Abraham’s faithfulness, God made him the source of a great nation, and he was well-known and respected throughout the land. Abraham was a recipient of divine blessings, and through this, became an avenue of blessing to others.

Just as God promised, Abraham’s legacy continued with his children. Both his son Isaac and his grandson Jacob benefited from Abraham’s covenant with God. These blessings are still continuing through the people of God, generations later.

God’s blessings are for today and for generations to come. How can we live to be a blessing today and into the future? Consider these three things:

Assess what you value. We learn from those who came before us and we instill values in those who come after us. What values do you hold dear? What would you like carried into future generations?

Live a life of service. How can you share your talents and abilities with others? Consider taking a spiritual gifts inventory to discover more of your spiritual gifting so you can share it with others.

Bless future generations. What great needs of the world are nearest and dearest to your heart? Think of ways you can respond with action and compassion. And remember, what may be considered a small action might one day make a huge difference in the lives of others.

We all dream of and want the world to become a better place. We can make a difference in bringing more of God’s goodness into the world by leaving a legacy of a well-lived, generous and joy-filled life.

This article provided compliments of Thrivent Financial and Joann Rodriguez, FIC], 575-523-1879, joann.rodriguez@thrivent.com.

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MISSION LUTHERAN CHURCH
Council Meeting
November 15, 2016

President Greg Fant called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. Attending were Greg Fant, Jan Ryberg, John Guenther, Doug Lorenz, Jerry Stickles, Ruth Staffeldt, Frank Brennan, Carol Cooper, Dianne Wensel, Jan Peyton and guest, Carol Moore. Devotion from Psalm 1 and prayer were led by Doug Lorenz.

Minutes of the October 18, 2016, meeting were approved as submitted.

Pastor's Report: see attached report which was emailed by Pastor Carabotta just prior to the meeting.

Vice President Updates: Jan Ryberg discussed the election of officers and provided a proposed slate as of today. Several positions are still open; Jan indicated that he will be contacting potential candidates for these positions between now the Voters' Assembly meeting.

Treasurer's Report: see attached report submitted by John Guenther. Jan Ryberg asked the Council to consider asking the congregation to increase their contributions; otherwise we may have to go to savings to meet expenses. Ruth Staffeldt suggested a fundraising event for the school, including outreach to alumni. She suggested this be discussed with Rob Cooksey, our financial consultant, when he visits in January 2017.

Elder's Report: see attached report provided by Doug Lorenz.

Day School Board Report: see attached report provided by Jan Ryberg.

Jan Ryberg read a proposed change to the by-laws, adding Section 7.4.6 concerning the Treasurer. After discussion, the motion was rewritten as follows: Section 7.4.6 Serve on the Mission Lutheran Church Board of Day School Education as either an elected board member or as an advisory non-voting member if limited by term limits or not desiring to be an elected member. Jan Ryberg moved, and Ruth Staffeldt seconded, that this change be recommended at the November 20 Voters' Assembly Meeting, for approval at a subsequent meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Trustees' Report: Frank Brennan handed out three bids. The first, from Mesilla Valley Construction, is for the stucco work on both the church and Luther Hall. Frank said that the last item on each page are good to do but can be done later. The other work must be done now. The amounts including permits, but not sales tax, are for Luther Hall \$7,278 and for the Church \$3,552.

The other two bids from Sun City and Five Star Refrigeration are for new air conditioning systems.

Christian Education: Dianne Wensel reported that the first Christmas program meeting will be held this Saturday, at 2:00 p.m. The program will be performed at Christmas Eve services.

Stewardship Report: see attached report from Jerry Stickles.

Christian Service and Missions: see attached report submitted by Ruth Staffeldt. Ruth said that Sunday, November 20, is Native American Sunday. The Board will be donating \$300 to the Lutheran Indian Ministries, a free will donation request will be made this Sunday, and the first-quarter of School Chapel Offering will also be donated.

Evangelism Report: Carol Cooper said that she will be staying with the Board for a 1-year term. Jan indicated that a few folks are considering volunteering for the open 2-year term.

Three visitors have been contacted. They are busy now but would like a visit in early 2017.

President's Report: Doug Lorenz presented a proposed description of a Fellowship Board's duties. A copy of this proposal is attached and will be presented at the November 20 Voters' Assembly meeting, as the creation of a Fellowship Board was approved at the September 11 Voters' Assembly meeting. The Board of Elders has been coordinating FUN nights and Doug is looking for volunteers to help until a Board is formed. Mark Poppy suggested we consider asking the Bread Breakers groups to take turns hosting FUN nights. Mark volunteered his Bread Breakers group to work with the Elders for the December FUN night.

Greg reviewed the proposed agenda for the November 20 Voters' Assembly, which is attached. No additional items were added.

Greg indicated that if the normal schedule is followed, the next Council meeting would be held on Tuesday, December 20, 6:30 p.m. After discussion, the group decided to follow the normal schedule even though the meeting will be close to Christmas.

Jerry Stickles moved, and Jan Ryberg seconded, that the meeting be adjourned. All agreed. The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice F. Peyton, Secretary

Attachments are filed in the church office.



**TREASURER'S REPORT – DECEMBER 2016 COUNCIL MEEETING
Mission Lutheran Church and School**

Report Preparation Date: December 19, 2016

Budget Status:

Month of November 2016

FY Thru November 30, 2016

	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual*</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual*</u>
<u>Income:</u>				
MLC General	\$22,200.00	\$19,478.21	\$122,100.00	\$105,289.76
MLS Total	\$21,680.00	\$10,955.62	\$99,420.00	\$96,215.70
Designated / Other	\$476.67	\$111.62	\$2,383.34	\$967.79
	\$44,356.67	\$30,545.45	\$223,903.34	\$202,473.25
<u>Expenses:</u>				
MLC Total	\$19,862.74	\$18,101.13	\$79,992.38	\$77,834.56
MLS Total	\$29,814.84	\$28,708.74	\$137,042.14	\$125,501.73
	\$49,677.58	\$46,809.87	\$217,034.52	\$203,336.29
 Net Difference	 -\$5,320.91	 -\$16,264.42	 \$6,868.82	 -\$863.04

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

Church General Fund Contributions – FY 2016/17 (Through December 18, 2016):

Average Weekly Contributions Needed:	\$5,550.00
Average Weekly Contributions Received:	\$5,024.20
 General Fund Contributions Year-to-Date:	 \$125,605.03
General Funds Budgeted Year-to-Date:	\$138,750.00
Surplus/Shortfall Year-to-Date:	-\$13,144.97

Assets / Liabilities (As of December 19, 2016):

Current / Liquid Assets:	Checking	\$30,701.14
	LCEF Savings	\$127,474.64
	Total	\$158,175.78
 Liabilities:	 Mortgage Loan	 \$65,389.90

Notes:

1. MLC and MLS revenues are significantly behind at this point..
2. MLS actual expenses reflect having hired an aide versus a new teacher.
3. \$45,000 for A/C replacement and \$10,000 for stucco work withdrawn from LCEF accounts. Building account closed out and what remained transferred to general savings account.

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Elder on call: Robert Smits 522-5538 (home)
 646-4218 (office)

Start the New Year with Prayer!

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	Maggie Provencio	Stewardship	Jerry Stickles
Elders		Day School Education	Megan Wood
Trustees	Frank Brennan	Fellowship	