

MISSION FRONTIERS

Mission Lutheran Church, Las Cruces, NM

In this issue:

- Pastor's Pen
- Prayer Ministry newsletter
- School news
- Birthdays and anniversaries
- Council meeting minutes
- Treasurer's Report

Upcoming Events:

- ◇ **May 2: FUN Night**
- ◇ **May 4: National Day of Prayer**
- ◇ **May 6: MLS Rummage Sale**
- ◇ **May 9: LWML meeting**
- ◇ **May 14: Mothers' Day**
- ◇ **May 29: Memorial Day**

Pastor's Pen

See the next page for an article by Pastor Glenn Weber.

Time and Talent

While it seems the year has just begun, it isn't too soon to begin thinking about ways in which each of us can share our time and talents with Mission Lutheran Church, not only now but for next year.

Sometime in the Fall we will be electing new officers and board members. Jim Vance, as Vice President of the Congregation, has already begun looking to fill the many positions available.

There is a document available in the church office that describes the various elected positions, including the different Boards.

In addition to the elected positions, there is a need for people to sign up as greeters and ushers. We also are in urgent need of someone to schedule acolytes and crucifers. And there is a great need for someone to volunteer to lead the Altar Guild. Ruth Staffeldt and Ruth Jakcsy have led the altar guild for many, many years and both have health issues that prevent them from carrying on those tasks.

As you can see, there are many, many ways in which you can contribute to the health and well-being of our church. Please prayerfully consider how best to use your time and talents. And yes, we all have talents that are important to our congregation.

If you have any questions, please contact Jim Vance, your elder, or the church office.



Stewardship

“It is more blessed to give than to receive,” said St. Paul, quoting our Lord (Acts 20:35). How can this be?

Jesus and His disciples withdrew to a mountain by the shore of the Sea of Galilee. The crowds followed them, for the Lord had just showered upon them the gift of His teaching, the gift of His Word. But the day was waning; the sun was setting, and it was getting late. Looking upon the crowds, Jesus had compassion on them and asked, “Where are we to buy bread, so that these people may eat” (John 6:5)? Philip said that two hundred denarii (a day’s wages for two hundred men) could not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little.

But Andrew, Peter’s brother, brought a young boy forward, who had five barley loaves and two small fish. “But,” Andrew asked, “what are they for so many” (John 6:9). Jesus replied, “Have the people sit down” (John 6:10).

Then Jesus, the Son of God, gave them a second gift, a gift from what only He could give—a gift from above. He took the bread and the fish, gave thanks, blessed them, and distributed them to the crowd. Then came the miracle. As these five loaves and two fish were given out, they multiplied. He fed the hungry crowd until they were all full. And twelve baskets full were left over.

But Jesus was not the only one who gave that day. There is one person who also gave from what he had. It was the boy with the five loaves and the two fish. All the others, including the boy, received the gift of a miraculous feast. And they would look back on it with wonder. But the boy, when he would look back on it, would look back and remember not just what he received. He would look back with wonder and delight when the Son of God made his gift into something miraculous. For it is more blessed to give than to receive.

This our Lord does for each of us. He presses our gifts, no matter how big or how small, into His service and works wonders with them. He provides through what we give: water for baptism, bread and wine for the Lord’s Supper, a man called and sent for the preaching of the Gospel and Absolution. He provides a building in which we can gather as His children, lights so that we might not gather in darkness. He provides funds for the care of the poor and struggling, for missionaries who preach and teach beyond our borders. He makes Christians, disciples of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ in our midst by bringing them to faith and nurturing them in that faith. He takes our gifts and turns them into something miraculous.

Indeed, it is more blessed to give than to receive. Thus we give. We give of what we have. And the Lord works His wonders.

LCMS Free Stewardship Resources



LWML

The WINGS (Women IN God's Service) chapter of the LWML (Lutheran Women in Mission) meets 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. Our May meeting has been moved to Tuesday, May 9, at 6:00 pm at Kay Swedberg's home. We will elect officers for next year after enjoying a salad supper. Hope to see you there!

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



Fellowship
Unity 
Knowledge

*Tuesday,
May 2nd
6pm-8pm*

**Chef Kay's
surprise!**

Fellowship:

Join your Mission family for fun conversation and amazing food!

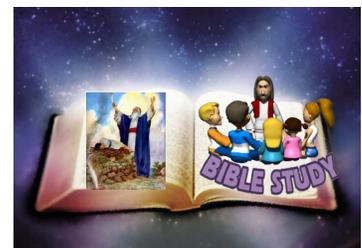
Unity:



Join your Mission family as we unite our hearts and voices as we sing praises to our Lord!

Knowledge:

Join your Mission family as we share knowledge of our Lord and His Word!
(All ages!!)





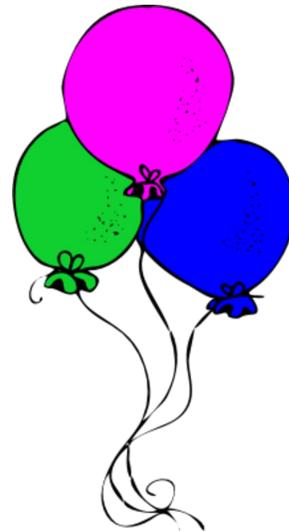
Anniversaries and Birthdays

May Birthdays

Radke	Irma	10
Lyons	Alexander	11
Dunivan	Paul	12
Lenahan	Joanne	12
Bork	Fred	19
Lusk	Janet	19
Wood	Megan	27
Mailander	Kathy	29

May Anniversaries

		<u>Date</u>	<u># of yrs</u>
Hills	Robert & Jane Murphy	6	8
Bonse	Jim & Sonja	22	46
Fant	Greg & Beth	22	35
Wood	Ben & Megan	24	14
Gunderson	Eric & Fran	29	47



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

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.

Daily Devotions from Lutheran Hour Ministries

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

"Overwhelming Love Breeds a Living Hope for Life"

1 John 3:16 - This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.

In a recent sermon we talked about a living hope that comes from knowing the Savior who died and rose again for you. I don't think you can fully appreciate how that knowledge changes your life, until you realize just how loved you are in Jesus.

I got a glimpse of that when I read about the aftermath of a forest fire in Yellowstone National Park. The rangers made their way up the side of a mountain to assess the inferno's damage. One ranger found a bird literally petrified in ashes, perched statuesquely on the ground at the base of a tree. Somewhat sickened by the eerie sight, he knocked over the bird with a stick.

When he gently struck it, three tiny chicks scurried from under their dead mother's wings. The loving mother, keenly aware of impending disaster, had carried her offspring to the base of the tree and gathered them under her wings, instinctively knowing the toxic smoke would rise. She could have flown to safety but refused to abandon her babies. Then the blaze arrived and the heat scorched her small body. Through this, the mother remained steadfast; she had been willing to die so those under the cover of her wings would live.

All I could think about when I read about this little bird and her saved babies was Psalm 91:4, where the Bible reminds us: *"God will cover you with His feathers and under His wings you will find refuge."* The wings of God were the gift of His Son, the power of His cross, and the glory of His resurrection.

All of us are caught up in the conflagration of sin, death, and the power of the devil. Our death is imminent if we are left to our own power to try to escape these destructive powers. It is for this reason that God so loved each of us that He sent His own Son to gather us under His protective wings. On Calvary that conflagration of all evil and all our sins struck our Savior. He died with us gathered under His wings so that we might live. The apostle Paul says it this way in 2 Corinthians 5:21: *"For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God."*

The dead body of Christ was not a pillar of ash that was knocked aside and forgotten -- as it was with the mother bird's body, leaving no hope for the future. Rather, on the third day, He arose from the dead giving us the living hope and assurance that He will live with us, and we will live with Him now and into eternity.

The apostle John is reminding us that there is no greater definition of love than one who is willing to lay down his or her life for someone else. How grateful we are for soldiers on the battlefield who have given their lives so we might live in freedom. How thankful we can be for those who have sacrificed their lives -- in any way -- that someone else might live. These acts of love continue to remind us that the greatest act of love is found in Jesus Christ.

Thanks be to God who gives us victory in our Lord Jesus Christ.

THE PRAYER: Dear Lord Jesus, overwhelm us with Your love so that we can love others the way You love us. Amen. In Christ,



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

*Vacation Bible School will be held Monday,
June 12, through Friday, June 16,
from 9:00 am to 11:30 am.*

Senior version of Jesus Loves Me

While watching a little TV on Sunday instead of going to church, I watched a church in Atlanta honoring one of its senior pastors who had been retired many years. He was 92 at that time and I wondered why the church even bothered to ask the old gentleman to preach at that age. After a warm welcome, introduction of this speaker, and as the applause quieted down, he rose from his high back chair and walked slowly, with great effort and a sliding gait to the podium.

Without a note or written paper of any kind he placed both hands on the pulpit to steady himself and then quietly and slowly he began to speak....

"When I was asked to come here today and talk to you, your pastor asked me to tell you what was the greatest lesson ever learned in my 50-odd years of preaching. I thought about it for a few days and boiled it down to just one thing that made the most difference in my life and sustained me through all my trials. The one thing that I could always rely on when tears and heartbreak and pain and fear and sorrow paralyzed me. The only thing that would comfort was this verse.

"Jesus loves me this I know.
For the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to Him belong,
They are weak but He is strong.....
Yes, Jesus loves me, yes Jesus loves me, yes Jesus loves me,
The Bible tells me so."

The old pastor stated, "I always noticed that it was the adults who chose the children's hymn 'Jesus Loves Me' (for the children of course) during a hymn sing, and it was the adults who sang the loudest because I could see they knew it the best."

Here, for you now, is a Senior version of "Jesus Loves Me."

Jesus Loves Me

Jesus loves me, this I know,
Though my hair is white as snow
Though my sight is growing dim,
Still He bids me trust in Him.

(Chorus)

Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me.
Yes, Jesus loves me, the Bible tells me so.

Though my steps are oh, so slow,
With my hand in His I'll go
On through life, let come what may,
He'll be there to lead the way
(Chorus)

When the nights are dark and long,
In my heart He puts a song...
Telling me in words so clear,
'Have no fear, for I am near'.
(Chorus)

When my work on earth is done,
And life's victories have been won.
He will take me home above,
Then I'll understand His love..
(Chorus)

I love Jesus, does He know?
Have I ever told Him so?
Jesus loves to hear me say,
That I love Him every day.
(Chorus)



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4 STEPS TO IMPROVING FINANCIAL FITNESS

In order to stay physically fit, we know we need to maintain a healthy diet and exercise regimen. When it comes to our personal finances, being well-versed on how credit works is a vital part of having a healthy financial life. In today's credit-based economy, many of us could benefit from wise counsel on how our credit score works.

Here are four ways to maintain and increase your creditworthiness:

Exercise regularly. **Romans 13:8** is a gentle reminder: "Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another." Do your best to pay off balances at the end of each month or, at the very least, pay more than the minimum payment. Your statements indicate how long it will take to pay off your balance making only minimum payments. You'll end up paying the debt many times over.

Use healthy portions. Since 30% of your credit score is influenced by how close you are to the card limit, it's wise not to overspend. A good rule of thumb is to not use more than 35% of your card's available credit; going over this percentage can lower your credit score.

Get regular checkups. Don't be afraid to check your credit score! Proverbs 27:23 says, "Be diligent to know the state of your flocks, and attend to your herds." All three bureaus (Experian, Equifax and TransUnion) allow you one free credit report each year. Viewing your report allows you to make sure you're in good shape, or to check your progress if you're recovering from past credit issues. And, if there are errors, you can get them corrected as soon as possible.

Pace yourself. Experts report that consumers spend 23% more money with credit cards than when they pay with cash. Do you really need that item or do you just *want* it? Next time you are shopping, consider waiting 24 hours to see if you still really must have that new item.

Everyone's financial situation is different, but understanding and maintaining – or increasing – your credit score is a big step toward being financially fit.

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

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MISSION LUTHERAN CHURCH
Council Meeting
March 21, 2017

President Greg Fant called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. Attending were Greg Fant, Jim Vance, John Guenther, Frank Brennan, Megan Wood, Carol Cooper, Robert Scaling, Dianne Wensel, Jan Peyton and guest, Carol Moore. Greg Fant led devotion and prayer.

Minutes of the February 21, 2017, meeting were approved as submitted.

President's Report: Greg circulated the latest attendance and general contribution graphs for review. There is a decline in both categories.

Jim Vance asked when the last Time and Talent Survey was completed. The survey form was revised in 2015 and congregational members resubmitted their information then. New members receive a copy, though it was noted that not all return them.

Treasurer's Report: see attached report submitted by John Guenther. John noted that the decline in general contributions is a significant impact in the budget tracking, but this decline is countered by less school expense. Compensation for Pastor Weber and Pastor Buttke will be finalized next week. Their compensation will be funded through the sabbatical account.

Day School Board Report: see attached report submitted by Megan Wood. Megan indicated that the major challenge for the school is increasing enrollment in our preschool program.

Elders' Report: see attached report submitted by Doug Lorenz. The schedule and coverage assignments for the four months Pastor Carabotta is on leave will be settled next week.

Christian Education Report: Dianne Wensel reported that Toni Roof, Shilo Smith and Mary Martin have received materials for VBS, scheduled the week of June 12.

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

Trustees' Report: Frank Brennan reported that the yard cleanup done March 20 was accomplished by the same, few, elderly volunteers that always show up. Frank emphasized that we desperately need some young people to help with the yard cleanup and other maintenance activities, as the work is tiring and becoming difficult for these elderly volunteers. It was suggested that the school-teachers, and perhaps the building cleaning crew, could do more to keep the walls and windows clean in Luther Hall.

Next week El Paso Electric Co. will review our exterior lighting plans to ensure that they meet their criteria.

Stewardship Report: see attached report submitted by Jerry Stickles.

Evangelism Report: see attached report submitted by Carol Cooper. The Board will follow-up with Vicar Andy Perry and Karen Jensen regarding the middle and high school youth activities program.

Robert Scaling reminded us that it is our job to reach out to people we know are not attending church service anywhere. Megan Wood noted that we need to reach out to the unchurched families with children at MLS.

Fellowship Report: see attached report submitted by Robert Scaling. The Board will be serving breakfast on Easter Sunday. Council agreed that the breakfast should begin at 8:00 a.m. so that Bible Study could follow the normal 9:15 a.m. start time. The group agreed to invite the unchurched school families to Easter breakfast and services.

Leadership Shield: The Staff/Leadership Prayer Shield prays for church staff and leaders. Council discussed those areas where special prayer attention should be directed this month. Jan Peyton will include these in the prayer targets.

The next meeting is April 25 at 6:30 p.m.

Agenda items 3b and 3c were noted for future discussion. The bylaws state, for most Boards, that there will be two elected members. It has been suggested that the bylaw wording should be "two or more elected members."

Greg noted that the education of church members as to the duties of officers and board members has not been ongoing for a few years. The question is how to go about this education process to encourage volunteers for these roles. Jim Vance suggested that we could create videos showing activities of a Board and thanking them for their work, to be shown at Sunday services, similar to those for the school. Members felt this would be worthwhile. Greg and Jim will select a board and create the first video.

We closed with the Lord's Prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Janice F. Peyton, Secretary

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

Report Preparation Date: April 24, 2017

<u>Budget Status:</u>	<u>Month of March 2017</u>		<u>FY Thru March 31, 2017</u>	
	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual*</u>	<u>Budgeted</u>	<u>Actual*</u>
<u>Income:</u>				
MLC General	\$22,200.00	\$18,860.93	\$216,450.00	\$190,711.64
MLS Total	\$18,480.00	\$10,497.27	\$175,240.00	\$160,880.53
Designated / Other	\$476.66	\$3,635.00	\$4,290.00	\$65,485.23
	<u>\$41,156.66</u>	<u>\$32,993.20</u>	<u>\$395,980.00</u>	<u>\$417,077.40</u>
<u>Expenses:</u>				
MLC Total	\$17,414.49	\$16,389.23	\$144,585.40	\$202,673.78
MLS Total	\$33,266.53	\$29,841.77	\$248,201.63	\$221,240.03
	<u>\$50,681.02</u>	<u>\$46,231.00</u>	<u>\$392,787.03</u>	<u>\$423,913.81</u>
Net Difference	-\$9,524.36	-\$13,237.80	\$3,192.97	-\$6,836.41

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

Church General Fund Contributions – FY 2016/17 (Through April 23, 2017):

Average Weekly Contributions Needed:	\$5,550.00
Average Weekly Contributions Received:	\$5,000.32
General Fund Contributions Year-to-Date:	\$215,013.64
General Funds Budgeted Year-to-Date:	<u>\$238,650.00</u>
Surplus/Shortfall Year-to-Date:	-\$23,636.36

Assets / Liabilities (As of April 24, 2017):

Current Assets:	<u>Checking:</u>	\$34,712.92
	<u>LCEF Savings:</u>	\$116,027.71
	(- Calls) Rey de Reyes	\$40,031.06
	MLS	\$14,554.27
	Sabbatical Acct.	\$9,656.42
	Other	\$977.81
	Savings Available	<u>\$50,766.15</u>
Liabilities:	<u>Mortgage Loan:</u>	\$61,858.40

Notes:

- Actual figures reflect \$60,876.31 for designated revenues (from LCEF savings) and non-budgeted expenses for the two capital funded projects. Overall impact on approved annual operational budget is zero.
- 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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 School: (575) 532-5489
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 mlsecretary@qwestoffice.net
 mlschool@qwestoffice.net

Elder on call: Doug Lorenz (505) 402-3389



We're on the web!

<http://missionlutheran.net>

<http://mlschool.net>

Many folks want to
 serve God, but only as
 advisers.

“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		