

MISSION FRONTIERS

Mission Lutheran Church, Las Cruces, NM

Pastor's Pen

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Feed My lambs." He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "Tend My sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" and he said to Him, "Lord, You know everything; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep. Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you used to dress yourself and walk wherever you wanted, but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and another will dress you and carry you where you do not want to go." (This He said to show by what kind of death he was to glorify God.) And after saying this He said to him, "Follow Me." (John 21:15-19)

As I write this, our school is arriving at the end of their Spring break. By the time you read this, the children will have come back to their regularly scheduled classroom activities. Except that that's not entirely true this year. This year, Easter came early. School resumed right in time for Holy Week. So the children got about three days of regular school time before having time off for Good Friday and Easter Monday.

What this means in practical terms for the school children (and the school staff), is that we're going to have a solid two months for the final quarter of school. There will be no more long breaks, and no more long weekends to look forward to—with the exception of Memorial Day, but that's during the last week of school anyhow. Once Easter is over, it's a whole lot of "business as usual."

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Important Dates:

- April 1: Easter Monday Holiday
April Fools' Day
- April 13: LWML Spring Workshop in Luther Hall
- April 14: Church Council Retreat



In some ways, that's what it seemed like shortly after the very first Easter. Jesus rose again from the grave on the third day, and He appeared to ten of the disciples in the upper room. Thomas was not with them on that day, but one week later, Thomas was with the rest of the disciples, and Jesus appeared once again. John concludes the narrative of Jesus appearing to the eleven disciples by writing: "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:30-31). It would seem as if all that Jesus was sent to accomplish in this world has now been completed. It's the end of the story.

But it's not really the end of the story. Not long after this, the disciples tried to get back to "business as usual." They went back to Galilee, and Peter said that he was going fishing. Six other disciples fished with him, but they caught nothing all night. As dawn was breaking, a man called out to them from the shore and asked if they had caught anything. When they said that they had not, that man bid them to cast their nets on the right side of their boat. As soon as they did, the net was full of fish. Then they recognized that that man was their Lord.

After coming to the shore and eating breakfast with Him, Jesus began to ask Peter if he loved Him. He did this three times, and each time Peter confessed that he did indeed love Jesus. And each time, Jesus bid Peter to care for His sheep. This interaction between Jesus and Peter did two things. First, this was Jesus' restoration of Peter. Peter had denied that he even knew Jesus three times. Now, Peter has confessed three times that he loves Jesus. Peter is forgiven of his cowardice and betrayal, and he is restored as the foremost of the disciples.

The second thing this interaction accomplished is that it re-defined "business as usual." After following Jesus for the intense three-year time period of His earthly ministry, hearing His many teachings, witnessing His many miracles, being sent out themselves to proclaim the kingdom, seeing Him handed over into the hands of sinful men to be killed, and now raised from the dead, the disciples were about to begin a period of ministry that would not be like those three years. There would be much teaching and preaching. There would even be miracles. But they were going to be in it for the long-haul.

Their new normal, their new "business as usual," was to feed Jesus' sheep. Their task, for the rest of their lives, was to be witnesses of Jesus to the world. They were to go and tell all peoples that Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, the long-awaited Messiah, who had died for the sins of the world and had been raised to give new and eternal life to all who believe in Him.

As another Easter comes and goes for us, we see that this is also our new normal. This is our "business as usual." The season of Lent, and especially Holy Week, is a time of increased intensity, both in our public worship life together, and in our personal devotional lives. Lent is a very special time in the Church Year, but it's only six weeks long. It's not meant to last all year. It's not meant to be business as usual. The new normal for Christians is to live in that post-Easter reality, the reality in which our sins are forgiven by Christ, we have new and eternal life in Him, we have received this by faith, and so we gladly go and tell others about Him.

We are not like the apostles in every way. We were not eyewitnesses of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Not all of us are going to be sent to the far reaches of the world to preach to foreign people groups. But we do follow in the footsteps of the apostles, telling others what they testified of. In our day-to-day lives, with our families, friends, co-workers, and sometimes even strangers, we share the hope that is in us. We tell of what Christ has done. We tell of how He won for us forgiveness of sins, and how He has given us new and eternal life. This is our post-Easter reality. This is our new normal. This is our "business as usual." Amen.

Pastor Andrew Cave

Mission Lutheran Church and School Prayer Ministry

April 2024

“Built on Christ, we join together as God’s house of prayer for all nations.”



This issue in honor of our brother-in-Christ, Jim Bonse

Some of you have known Jim Bonse as your elder, others as the smiling face with a fist-bump greeting. He was a “Chef Extraordinaire” when Mission cooked at El Caldito. My favorite memory of Jim, however, is as a prayer warrior.

Jim Bonse was among the strongest prayer warriors I’ve ever known. He was there praying and cheering on the forty-some people who were part of the Mission Lutheran Church and School Prayer Ministry when it was commissioned nearly eleven years ago. He was faithful to get up early to take his turn at leading the 6:30am Praise and Prayer Hour on Thursday mornings and with his wife, Sonja to serve as an intercessor on Sunday mornings. He was not a part of the Email Prayer Chain because he didn’t own a computer or a cell phone and didn’t want one! And yet, he prayed with those who were ill or in need of other kinds of prayer. He and Sonja visited and prayed with me when I was ill. He loved to pray the Psalms! Many memories of Jim flood through my head, but I want to share a favorite with you—one I posted on Facebook in 2015. It’s a strong reminder to me that we can pray about anything. God cares and He listens. He answers.



How attached are you to your phone? A little over 24 hours ago, mine died. I realized in that moment I depend on mine--well, maybe too much. I tried everything I could to get my constant side-kick going again. It refused. Doug tried more tricks. We charged it for a while. Nothing.

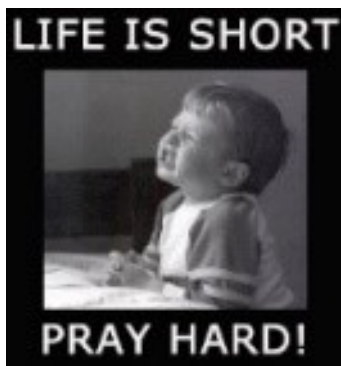
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I thought it would resurrect after a night on the charger. It didn't. My alarm went off so I had hope. But I couldn't turn off the quacking. Why did I choose the duck thing to remind me about my eye drops?? It rang but I couldn't answer it. I couldn't turn it on --or off. And the quacking continued for a full half hour and every nine minutes after that. ALL morning.

I took it with me when I went to prayer at church at 10:30 so right afterward I could take it to the Verizon store to see if my contacts and pictures could be saved. Meanwhile, the intermittent quacking continued. EVERY 9 minutes. One of the pastors tried some tricks to fix my phone. Nothing. So we continued with prayer time. Jim (who doesn't own a cell phone and doesn't want one) included my phone in his prayers.

Does God care about cell phones? You bet He does!! After I left prayer, I could NOT believe it, but my phone began working and I could finally silence the quacking. Amazing, isn't He? Sometimes we don't see prayers answered till we look back with that "wow! He did answer it" response sometime later, but I SO love it when He so immediately answers a prayer. Indeed, as scripture promises, He is our provider of more than we can ask or imagine. I could not stop laughing for hours! Thank you, God!! Yes, I'm pretty sure He hangs out on Facebook, too. 🙏

“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

Whose Is It Anyway?

If you have ever bought or sold a house, you are acquainted with the concept of a “title search.” Before you can sell your house, and before anyone else will feel comfortable putting down the money to buy it, you have to prove that you really own it. So a title company looks through the public records to ensure that you bought it from the person who really owned it, who bought it from the person who really owned it before that, all the way back to the earliest records of your state, including when your state was only a territory or colony of England.

Peak into a preschool classroom during playtime and you’ll see a simplified version of this. A child starts playing with a ball, but another child says, “That’s mine: I had it first.”

You can’t understand the Seventh Commandment without understanding this concept of ownership or title. As the Small Catechism puts it:

You shall not steal. What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not take our neighbor’s money or possessions, or get them in any dishonest way, but help him to improve and protect his possessions and income.

Your neighbor’s possessions are *his*: you don’t have a right to take them. And likewise, your possessions are yours. Ownership and property rights are foundational to any functioning society.

But there is something deeper to know about ownership, and that is the question of who has the title and ownership *to you*? Paul says, “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price” (1 Cor. 6:19-20).

If you yourself are owned by God, then of course everything that you own, you really only possess by God’s leave: all of it, at bottom, belongs to Him since *you* belong to Him. For you were bought with the blood of Christ.

This notion is the foundation of all Christian stewardship. It all belongs to God. It should all be used for things that bring honor to His name, blessings to our neighbors and the extension of His kingdom.

– LCMS Stewardship Ministry: lcms.org/stewardship





Birthdays of the Month

April Birthdays

		Date
Joyce	Dodge	1
Robert ("Quail")	White	6
Marcele	Skelton	8
Bob	Jakcsy	9
Emily	Cave	12
Tracy	Sanchez	17
Jacki	McCurley	18
Frank	Brennan	20
Ordella	Uhde	28
Debra	Echtenkamp	30

Happy Anniversary

April Anniversaries

		Date	# of years
Brad & Barb	Mueller	1	35
Larry & Debra	Tate	5	50
Bob & Ruth	Jakcsy	27	56

Happy Anniversary to all those couples married in April.

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.

JULIETs

The JULIETs will be gathering for lunch again in April. All women in the church are invited. And bring a friend!

Thursday, April 11 — La Posta
2410 Calle De San Albino, Mesilla

We meet at 11:30 am.

So that the restaurant can be prepared, please notify Debra Echtenkamp at least 2 days in advance if you plan to attend.

Call or text Debra at (901) 830-7216



WINGS/LWML

The next gathering of the Women in God's Service will be on Monday, April 8, at 6:30 PM in Luther Hall. All women are invited for fellowship and Bible study. We will also be doing last minute preparations for the LWML Workshop on Saturday, April 13.

MISSION LUTHERAN CHURCH
Voters' Assembly
December 10, 2023

President Brad Springer called the meeting to order at 11:40 a.m. There were 33 of 45 members in attendance.

Pastor Cave led us in opening prayer.

Brad Springer, Jr. thanked Pamela Kell for the food that she provided this morning.

Carol Moore moved to accept Jace Melton, Nathan Graff, Verline Vandiver and Fran Gunderson as voting members. Debra Echtenkamp seconded. Motion passed.

Debra Echtenkamp moved to accept the minutes from the September Voters' Assembly. Don Hallem seconded. The minutes were approved.

Reports were waived for this meeting.

Wade Echtenkamp presented the slate of officers. He presented each office separately for approval. The following officers were approved by the voting assembly.

President: Doug Lorenz

Vice-President: Wade Echtenkamp

Secretary: Carol Cooper

Treasurer: Brad Mueller

Financial Secretary: Carol Moore

Elders: Nathan Graff, Jace Melton, Ken Martin

Trustees: Brad Springer Sr., Don Hallem

Outreach: Brad Springer Jr., Aimee Springer

School Board: Brad Mueller and Megan Wood (chairman)

Pastor thanked Eric Gunderson for all the years he served as Elder. He also mentioned that December 31st is a 5th Sunday. We will have regular service with communion but no potluck after the service.

The installation of officers will be at the church service on January 7th.

The meeting was closed by everyone standing and citing the Lord's Prayer.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:58 am.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jacki McCurley, Secretary

MLC/MLS 2024 Council Officers

OFFICERS: (1 year term)

PRESIDENT: DOUG LORENZ
VICE PRESIDENT: WADE ECHTENKAMP
SECRETARY: CAROL COOPER
TREASURER: BRAD MUELLER
FINANCIAL SECRETARY: CAROL MOORE

BOARD MEMBERS: (2 year terms)

ELDERS:

*AUSTIN NATHANIEL NATHAN GRAFF
*RICHARD TURK JACE MELTON
*HARVEY WHITE KEN MARTIN
*MICHAEL KAISER

TRUSTEES:

BRAD SPRINGER SR.
DON HALLEM

OUTREACH:

BRAD SPRINGER JR.
AIMEE SPRINGER

SCHOOL BOARD:

*JENNIFER DIAZ BRAD MUELLER
*KAREN SPRINGER MEGAN WOOD
*JAN WHITE

*designates returning for the remainder of a multi-year term

MISSION LUTHERAN CHURCH and SCHOOL

Treasurer's Report for the Mar '24 Council/Voters Meeting

Report Preparation Date: Mar 1, 2024

<u>Budget Status:</u>	<u>Month of Feb '24</u>	<u>FY24 thru Feb '24</u>	
	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Actual</u>	<u>Budget</u>
<u>Income:</u>			
MLC General	\$19,296	\$200,690	\$201,775
MLS Total	\$27,515	\$201,851	\$216,740
Designated / Other	\$24	\$2,993	\$2,667
	\$46,835	\$405,534	\$421,182
<u>Expenses:</u>			
MLC Total	\$15,725	\$135,018	\$171,251
MLS Total	\$30,213	\$254,081	\$242,369
	\$45,938	\$389,099	\$413,620
Net Difference	\$897	\$16,435	\$7,562

MLC General Fund Contributions – FY24 (Thru Feb 29, 2024)

Average Weekly Contributions Needed:	\$5,765
Average Weekly Contributions Received (FYTD) :	<u>\$6,093</u>
Average Weekly Surplus/Shortfall:	\$328
General Fund Contributions Year-to-Date:	\$213,254
General Funds Budgeted Year-to-Date:	<u>\$201,775</u>
Fiscal Year-to-Date Surplus/Shortfall:	\$11,479

Investments & Assets / Liabilities

<u>Investments:</u>	Morgan Stanley/E*Trade (as of Feb 29, '24)	\$113,226
	Strasser Endowment (as of Dec 31, '23)	\$74,573
	Thrivent (as of Feb 29, '24)	\$440,016
	LCEF MLC Youth Development CD Account	\$12,786
	LCEF General Funds CD Account #1	\$51,142
	LCEF General Funds CD Account #2	\$50,475
	LCEF General Funds CD Account #3	\$50,000
	TOTAL	\$792,218

<u>Current Assets:</u>	BMO Checking (as of Feb 29, '24)	\$46,117
	LCEF Checking (as of Feb 29, '24)	\$48,172

		Youth Activity Fund	\$3,766
		Youth Christian Development	\$12,500
	minus	MLS Reg/Tuition Holding	\$750
		MLS Angel Prog/TA Holding	\$4,505
	Dedicated	COVID Grant	\$43,454
	Funds	Apple Tree Donations	\$918
		Emergency Tuition Assistance	\$3,013
		School Security Grant	\$8,906
		Staffeldt Scholarship Fund	\$7,425

Total Checking Available **\$9,052**

Liabilities: None

Comments:



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office@mlschool.net

Elder on Call: Jace Melton (210) 459-1023

We're on the web!

<http://missionlutheran.net>

<http://mlschool.net>

Officers and Board Chairpersons for 2024

President	Doug Lorenz	Elders, Chairman	Richard Turk
Vice President	Wade Echtenkamp	Elders, Vice-chairman	Nathan Graff
Treasurer	Brad Mueller	Trustees	Brad Springer, Sr.
Secretary	Carol Cooper	Outreach	Brad Springer
Financial Secretary	Carol Moore	Day School Education	Megan Wood