

The Parish Voice

St. Thomas Lutheran Church — Streetsboro, Ohio

September 2019



As I contemplated the First Lesson for August 25, I was especially struck by these words from Isaiah: *“If you refrain from trampling the Sabbath, from pursuing your own interests on my holy day; if you call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the LORD honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, serving your own interests, or pursuing your own affairs; then you shall take delight in the LORD, and I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth . . .”* (Isaiah 58:13-14a).

What struck me was the discrepancy between these words of promise and of hope and the many empty spaces in our sanctuary.

The prophet was voicing the promise of God’s covenant with His people, a covenant that was being restated as they returned from Exile in Babylon. God had promised, as Jeremiah expressed it, *“I will be their God, and they shall be my people”* (31:33). This raises the question as to what it means to be “God’s people.”

Before the Exile, this people of God had *“abandoned the covenant of the LORD their God, and worshiped other gods and served them”* (Jeremiah 22:9). Even in Exile, the consequence of their faithlessness, God continued to announce His love and forgiveness to them. Now, in the good news of their return from Exile, God was opening a new door of opportunity for them. He wanted them to know that this new opportunity would require their constant attention to their relationship with Him.

Notice the words of Isaiah; they snap with promise and hope: *“I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth . . .”* This is based on the understanding that the Sabbath is meant for corporate worship. Of course you can worship in the privacy of your own home; you can praise God in your car; you can have a profound sense of God as you witness His creation. God has arranged it so that the greatest blessing comes when we gather together for worship.

There is great joy to be found when God’s people come together. When we are all gathered, the volume of our praise, the sight of many fellow-redeemed, the comprehension that this is a foretaste of what heaven will be like — these all fit that promise of riding on the heights of the earth.

We too often focus on worship as an obligation, a duty, a task we must fulfil. God wants us to sense worship as a time when we meet Him, honor Him, and praise Him for His goodness and mercy to us. He also wants us to know and embrace His promise to us of real delight.

Years ago, I interviewed for a call to a church in another state. As part of the package of materials they sent me about their congregation was included this statement, “Opportunities abound for

members' involvement in many recreational activities in the community." It was their way of saying that I should not expect them to show up to worship every Sunday. Over the years, I have learned to let go of any such expectation.

I have also learned it doesn't much matter what I expect or don't expect. What matters is what God expects, how He has designed things, and what He offers to us. He commands us to honor the Sabbath. He does not leave it as a command; He adds to it a wonderful promise: we will be blessed in our connection to Him, and see His grace at work in our lives.

Our Worship This Month

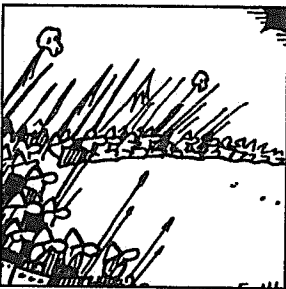


September 1 — Pentecost XII

Sermon: *"Proper Humility"*

Texts: Proverbs 25:6-7; Psalm 81:1,10-16; Hebrews 13:1-8,15-16; Luke 14:1,7-14

Jesus teaches us what it means to be humble — a lesson we need to learn over and over.

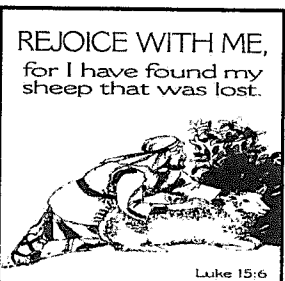


September 8 — Pentecost XIII

Sermon: *"Counting the Cost"*

Texts: Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Psalm 139; Philemon 1-21; Luke 14:25-33

Jesus teaches us to count the cost of following Him. It may scare us; but we follow Him anyhow. We just need to know the cost.



September 15 — Pentecost XIV

Sermon: *"No, You Would Not!"*

Texts: Exodus 32:7-14; Psalm 14; 1 Timothy 1:12-17; Luke 15:1-10

Saving sinners is Jesus' mission and purpose. How fortunate for us that we happen to fit into that category.



September 22 — Pentecost XV

Sermon: *"Money, Money, Money"*

Texts: Amos 8:4-7; Psalm 4; 1 Timothy 2:1-7; Luke 16:1-13

In the parable of the Unjust Steward, Jesus praises the shrewdness of one we might consider disreputable. It is Jesus teaching us the value of money and its dangers.



September 29 — Saint Michael and All Angels

Sermon: *"On Angels"*

Texts: Daniel 10:10-14; 12:1-3; Psalm 103; Revelation 12:7-12;
Luke 10:17-20

What many people think about angels is not precisely what we read in the Scriptures. Let's see if we can get it right!

OUR COLLEGE STUDENTS

Congratulations to **Corey Hautmann** on receiving a \$2,000 scholarship from the Portage County Retired Teachers Association after participating in the program "The American Dream" led by Scholarship Chairman Jim Motaquila. We are proud of you Corey! Corey is now attending Kent State and is also playing in their marching band. Come to a Kent State Football game to see him marching with his drums.

Joanna Nicely is also attending Kent State University. She is majoring in integrated math and would like to be a high school teacher. We are proud of you Joanna and expecting great things!

Abigail Ayers is attending Tiffin University with a major in criminal psychology. Good luck Abigail in your future endeavors! We are so proud of you!

Grace is returning to Allegheny College in Meadville, PA for her senior year majoring in physics with a minor in French. You're almost there Grace! We are so proud of you!

OUR OTHER SCHOOL CHILDREN

Our special students from our church family have also returned to school already. Thomas Ayers, Elizabeth Ayers, Madelyn Ayers, Nicole Johnson, Gabe Johnson, Jenna Zimmerman, Jacob Zimmerman, Troy Roman, Noah Pasket, Aaron Fuldauer and Jayden Fuldauer are heading for a great school year and an even better future. We are so proud of every one of these students!

Please keep all of our youth in your prayers for a great school experience!



WATERSHED WORKSHOP

On Tuesday, September 24 at 6:00 p.m. we will be meeting with the Tinkers Creek Watershed Partners. We will learn about sustainable lawn care, healthy lawns and healthy waterways. Everyone is invited to attend this workshop including the public. If you are having problems with your yard flooding in sections then this workshop is for you. They have given the council ideas to help with the flooding in the church yard and we would like to share them with you. Please join us on the 24th!

WORK DAY

Church has scheduled a work day to clean the inside and outside of the church. It will be held on Saturday, September 7th starting at 9:00 a.m. Please join us anytime you can during the day. Thank you in advance for your help! Any questions, please see Steve Hlava.

SPAGHETTI DINNER

Church Council is planning a spaghetti dinner for October 19th at 6:00 p.m. to say THANKS to Pastor Just during Pastor Appreciation month and to you for being part of our congregation. A fun fellowship evening is being planned. We would love to see everyone there! Council is providing the main dish of spaghetti and salad. If you would like to bring something to share we would love to sample it! Any questions, please see a council member. See you on the 19th of October!

WOMEN'S GROUP

It's been a long time since we have met as a Women's group. It's time to get it going again. Anyone interested, please see Joyce Torres. She would love to get a prayer session going and a bible study also. Please let her know a good time for you!

WEBSITE

If you haven't checked out our church website yet, please do and let Del Groff know how you like it or if there is something you would like to see added. The website is www.stthomasstreetsboro.com

Interested in a Bible Study? Let Pastor Just or Marla Manijak know and we will get something set up.

Sunday School will be starting soon. See Marla for more information.

Our July-September and October-December Portal of Prayers devotionals are available now. You can find them on the table by the door.

Council will be meeting in September on the 15th at 11:30 in the fellowship hall. All members are welcome to sit in on the meeting. New ideas are always appreciated.

Contact Person: Please call Pastor Just at 216-789-6688 or Council President Steve Hlava at 330 422-1959 for any emergencies or questions. Pastor Just is in the office on Thursdays from 8:00-4:00.

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Abigail Ayers	Madeline Ayers	Trudy Ayers	Jeanette Doerfler
Deb Earle	Cory Hautmann	Linda Hautmann	Nicole Johnson
Pastor Just	Lorene Kozar	Joe Lenno	Ken Nicely II
Kenny Nicely IV	Carol Poston	Heather Poston	Amy Rohaley
Ron Stenglein	Agnes Whinnie	Rory Wolff	Barb Alcorn
Roger Black	Michael Brooks	Franklin Conn	Scott Corban
Tom Corban	Christine Combs	Dan Crile	Chuck Defer
Billy Earle	Martin Goss	Hanna & Zane	Karen Groves
Mr. Joe	Steve Kolar	Brad Kozar	Sharon Kress
Suzanne Latham	Bob Mandau	Pastor Mark	Frank Manijak
Art Robinson	Deb Rosenlib	Mildred Slanina	Dylynn Szcaks
Tara Vargo	Jon Yenulonis	John Yurkschatt	Sam, Denise & Delilah

Mr. Steve Gerhard
The Gardens of Western Reserve
9975 Greentree Parkway
Streetsboro, OH 44241-4328

Mrs. Audrey Holland
4552 Aspen Lake Road
Apartment 102
Brunswick, OH 44212-4582

Mrs. Eunice Haschak
Avenue at Macedonia
9730 Valley View Road
Macedonia, Ohio 44056

Our College Students—Grace Rohaley, Abigail Ayers, Corey Hautmann and Joanna Nicely
Our College Graduate—Stephen Nicely

If there is anyone you would like to add or delete from this list, please let Marla Manijak know. You can reach her at 330-626-5120 or fill out one of the cards in the pew and put in offering plate.

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays

9-Gavin Hagen
9-Jenna Zimmerman
9-Jacob Zimmerman
10-Noah Pasket
10-Nick Phillips
17-Steve Hlava
19-Jillian Earle
20-Jarid Phillips
21-Patty Phillips



SEPTEMBER BAPTISM BIRTHDAYS

Baptism Birthdays

4-Gabe Johnson
16-Core Hautmann

1 + 1 + 1 giving

We, along with other English District congregations, are raising money to help our missionaries spread the good news of Jesus. 1+1+1 means \$1 per member each Sunday. There is a plastic box in the narthex under the bulletins for you to place your \$1 each Sunday. Because of the break-in we are now emptying the box each Sunday. It will be posted each Sunday in the Offering List. Thank you for your donations!

Also being collected are can tabs for Thrivent and cancelled postage stamps for an organization in Kent. Thank you for your donations!