

The Parish Voice

August 2025



Many of us know about the disciple Thomas. We know him as “doubting Thomas,” because he refused to believe that Jesus had appeared to His disciples risen from the dead without seeing and touching the risen Lord Himself. Because of his refusal, St. Thomas is a sympathetic figure. How many people claim that they would believe in God if only they saw God for themselves? Some people who refuse to believe that God exists and

trust in Him do so because they believe there to be a profound lack of evidence for His existence. Some think that God is merely a human idea used to explain the unexplainable. How did the universe come into existence? “God.” How do I know what is right and wrong? “God.” How did Aunt Susan recover from her stage 4 cancer against all odds? “God.” This “god” whom we merely use to answer the unanswerable is a “god of the gaps.” If there’s a gap in human knowledge, use “god” to fill it.

The one true God, the Triune God, is not a god of the gaps. Christians do not believe, teach, and confess the Triune God because He is the only way to explain the otherwise unexplainable. Christians do not propose that the Triune God exists as a necessary conclusion of human reason or because He’s the best explanation for the information set before us. Christians believe, teach, and confess the Triune God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit – to be the one true God because He has revealed Himself. As 2 Peter says: “For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made know to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. For when He received honor and Glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to Him by the Majestic Glory, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,” we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with Him on the holy mountain.” (2 Peter 1:16-18)

If you asked the ancient Israelites why they believed in Yahweh the God of Israel, they would have said: “Because Yahweh called our forefather Abraham out of Ur to the land of Canaan. Because Yahweh delivered us from slavery in Egypt with His mighty hand. Because Yahweh appeared in Glory on Mt. Sinai when He gave us the Law of Moses.” Similarly, if you asked the earliest Christians why they believed Jesus, His Father in heaven, and the Holy Spirit to be the one true God they would have said: “Because God has raised Jesus from the dead by

the power of the Holy Spirit. Because Jesus – He who was crucified, dead, and buried – has appeared risen bodily from the dead to many of us. Because the risen Jesus has poured out the Spirit of the Father on us with miraculous signs and wonders as He promised He would.” All this to say, God’s people believe, teach, and confess the Triune God to be the one true God because He has revealed Himself to us.

We are Christians today precisely because the Triune God continues to reveal Himself. As Martin Luther once wrote: “I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Spirit has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith.” (Small Catechism, Explanation to the Apostles’ Creed, Article 3) We have not come to believe in the Triune God “because of our reason or strength,” that is, through necessary proofs of fallen human reason, evidence that demands a verdict, or simply to explain the apparently unexplainable. Rather, we believe in the Triune God because of what God has done. The Holy Spirit has called us. He has enlightened us with His gifts – the promise of salvation in Christ Jesus given in God’s Word, Holy Baptism, and the Lord’s Supper. As St. Paul says: “How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in Him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent?” (Romans 10:14-15)

The Triune God continues to reveal Himself today, hidden in His Word, in the baptismal waters, in the bread and wine, in our neighbor, and in all creation as He continues to preserve it with His mighty arm. We might not see His Fiery Glory as the ancient Israelites once did on Mount Sinai. We might not see the risen Jesus with our eyes as the Apostles did and witness the work of the Holy Spirit in miraculous signs and wonders. He has not promised to reveal Himself to us in these ways today. And what the Lord has not promised we should not expect to see (though we might see such things even today). What the Lord has promised is to be with us and reveal Himself to us through His Word and Sacraments (Matthew 28:18-20). Jesus speaks to us through the apostolic and prophetic word of Holy Scripture (Luke 10:16). He clothes us with Himself in Holy Baptism (Galatians 3:27). And He gives us His body and blood in, with, and under the bread and wine to eat and drink in the Lord’s Supper (1 Corinthians 10:16).

Our problem today is not that the Lord does not reveal Himself. It is that the Lord does not reveal Himself in the way that we would like. We want to be like the Israelites who saw the fiery Glory of the Lord, and we will not believe until we do. We want to be like the Apostles, who heard, touched, and saw the risen Lord with their own ears, hands, and eyes, and we will not believe until we do. Our problem is not that the one true God fails to make Himself known; it is that we desire to be the one true god. We want God to be God on our terms, not His. We want Him to reveal Himself in the way that we desire, not the way He has promised. In turn, we sinful human beings refuse to let God be the Sovereign One who does things as He wills. And it is precisely His revealed will that He is with us in hiddenness that He might be grasped by all. Grasped by the ears in simple syllables, grasped by the mind in the prophetic and apostolic word, and grasped with our hands and our hearts in the promises given to us in the water of our baptisms and the bread and the wine of the Lord’s Supper.

“He comes to us as one unknown,” as the famous New Testament scholar and humanitarian Albert Schweitzer once wrote. Just as the Lord came to Abraham in the appearance of an ordinary man, so too does He come to us in the forms we are used to. Just as He came to Mary and Martha as a simple, unassuming Galilean preacher, so too does He deign to make Himself known to us in simple, unassuming ancient texts and in simple unassuming water, bread, and wine. Only with faith that trusts that the Triune God is faithful and will be where He has promised to be can we declare with Abraham when we receive the Lord’s Word and Sacrament: “O Lord, if I have found favor in your sight, do not pass by your servant... and after that you may pass on – since you have come to your servant.” (Genesis 18:3-5) It is only with faith in the Lord’s promises that we like Mary are willing to forsake everything else that demands our attention to hear and to receive the one thing needful, the teaching of the Lord. In His mercy, the Triune God has revealed Himself to you through His Word, the waters of Holy Baptism, and His Holy Supper to forgive you all of your sins that you may be His and He may be yours unto everlasting life. This one thing is necessary. Amen.

Pastor Blake

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BIBLE STUDIES

BIBLE STUDIES are on hiatus until September. Watch your bulletins and newsletter for information when we will start up again. The September Bible Study will be on the book of Galatians. You can get a head start by reading it a few times in anticipation of the bible study.

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WOMEN’S PRAYER GROUP

The Women of St. Thomas are meeting before the worship service in the second sacristy, across from Pastor Blake’s office at 8:30 a.m. to pray for people on the prayer list, God’s ministry at St. Thomas, and our brothers and sisters in Christ. This gathering is a time devoted to prayer. Please join us this Sunday.

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DEVOTION AND PRAYER

Please join Pastor Blake on Thursdays from 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. for devotions, prayer, coffee, and fellowship. Pastor will lead devotion and prayer followed by fellowship.

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YOUTH GROUP

Attention all youth and guardians! Beginning this September please join us at Christ every second Sunday of the month from 6 to 8 for Youth Group. We will have food, games and Bible study. Our first meeting will be September 14th.

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

| | | | |
|------------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| Palagia Hlava | Robin Hoffman | Pastor Just | Lorene Kozar |
| Richard | Carol Poston | Heather Poston | Aaron |
| Doris Adams | Andrea | Isabella Andrews | Becky |
| Denise Bender | Ray Bishop | Lana Carnes | Grant Clare |
| Courtney | Courtney | Danny | Carl Dorris |
| Dwight Hask | Jackie | Janice | Daniel Gump and wife |
| Jim | Virginia Just family | Kathy | Kathy |
| Kenny | Kevin | Larry Kraus | Linda |
| Logan & McGowan family | Madalyn | Dan Meenach | Meg |
| Lynn Merkel | Merkel family | Michael | Monica |
| Amanda Nicely | Denise Nicely | Noah & Rachel | Powers Family |
| Rowan Larkins | Sandi | Susan | Suzanne Polkov |
| Tina | Bennie Wegener | Trinity | Greg Werner |
| Claudia York | | | |

Our College Students—Corey Hautmann, Jacob Zimmerman

Our Military member—Ben Wolff

The world/USA—racism and lack of love outside of God's words

Our military veterans All Natural disaster victims COVID virus patients

Gaza & Israel victims Ukraine refugees All Non-believers

All those who have lost their jobs recently

The power of prayer is so miraculous that we would love to hear good news about someone on this list!
Please let the church know or call Marla at 330-472-3045. Thank you!

Our shut-ins—please send them a card

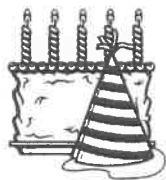
| | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| Carole Poston | Lorene Kozar |
| 12790 Chamberlain | 8460 Westport Dr. #225 |
| Aurora, OH 44202 | Mentor, Oh 44060 |

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AUGUST BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays

8-Denise Nicely
 11-Steve Manijak
 12-Lynn Kanengeiser
 21-Anastasia Martzowka
 23-Marla Manijak
 27-Lori Ludeman
 30-Marcy Harrison
 31-Tracy Fuldauer



AUGUST BAPTISM BIRTHDAYS

Baptism Birthdays

20-Ruth Martzowka
 25-Anastasia Martzowka

Happy Anniversary to
 2-Tom & Jen Jones

CHRIST LUTHERAN EVENTS

MANTUA VARIETY MARKET

The Mantua Farmers Market that is held in the lower parking lot at Christ Lutheran each summer has been renamed *Mantua Variety Market* to reflect the true nature of the market. You can sell anything-produce, bakery, jam, honey, eggs, syrup, plants, flowers, garage sale items-as long as it is legal. Sales are on Saturdays 9 AM to 1 PM. Season runs from May 17th through August 23rd (closed July 5th). Vendor fees are only \$1.00 per date. Please consider this opportunity to make some cash for only a \$1.00 fee. Call Diane Lottig to reserve your spot at 330-274-2868.

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NATIONAL YOUTH GATHERING

The Youth had a blast at NOLA. There were 20,000 people at the gathering. We had 5 kids from Christ and 11 kids from Valley Lutheran in Chagrin Falls. They had so many opportunities to listen to God's word based on topics they enjoyed. We had daily bible study each day. Ours was more sports themed which was fun. The Ohio District event was a late-night river cruise. We had food and brass band playing. The days were steamy, and walks were long but it was enjoyable to spend that time with the kids and really discuss how to endure. I believe we will be hosting a discussion on our adventures at the gathering.

The next LCMS Youth Gathering is scheduled for July 3-7, 2028 and will be held in San Antonio, Texas. If you have a child who is of age and would like to attend, please see Christine or Melisa. Thank you.

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LOAVES AND FISHES COMMUNITY MEAL

This meal will be served the 3rd Wednesday of every month in the fellowship hall downstairs. This month it will be held on August 20 from 5:00-6:30 pm. If you would like to help out, contact Diane Lottig at 330-274-2868.

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MORE THAN A MOM

Will be meeting Saturday, August 16th from 9:30-11:30 AM. Pot luck breakfast and child care provided.

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4 C's Local Food Pantry

Is in need of Tomato Soup, Chicken Noodle Soup, Jelly and Individual Mac & Cheese Cups. If you would like to help out please give your donations to Pastor or Ruth to take to the church.

OUR SERVICE PROJECTS

We remember all those who are facing a crisis in their lives. Lutheran Missions Ministry is our main organization that we donate to. Mark on your envelopes "Lutheran Mission Ministry".

Please remember the families of Streetsboro by donating to the Streetsboro Community Pantry with a monetary donation or food donation. You can do this through the church through your offering or placing food items in the basket in the Narthex.

Church Council will be meeting Thursday, August 21 at 7:00 p.m. If there is something you would like the council to work on, please let one of the council members know. They are Steve Hlava-president, Del Groff-Vice President, Joyce Torres-Secretary, Deb Wolff-Financial Secretary, Guy Jeanblanc, Gilbert Ayers and Stephanie Manijak.

Contact Person: Please call Pastor Blake Martzowka at the church on Thursdays from 9-3 at 330-626-4945 or on his cell phone 989-372-5318 for emergencies or Council President Steve Hlava at 330 422-1959 for any emergencies or questions.

Deb Wolff would like us to save white paper towel rolls and toilet rolls to be given to her daughter Becky Larkins to be used at her work for crafts. Please place them in the basket in the narthex.

Also if you would like more pickles or relish Deb needs your jars to be refilled. Thank you!

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FINANCIAL REPORT

Our new weekly budget need is \$1,306.73. Please help us meet this goal through your stewardship giving. Thank you!

TREASURERS REPORT - Month of June 2025

| | Current Month: | Current YTD | Prior YTD: |
|---|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| TOTAL INCOME - General Fund Only | 9196.00 | 64215.91 | 58511.49 |
| TOTAL EXPENSE - General Fund Only | 7910.50 | 42417.50 | 34479.47 |
| NET GAIN (LOSS) | 1285.50 | 21798.41 | 24032.02 |
| | | | |
| TOTAL INCOME - Special Funds (See Below) | 86.00 | 594.00 | 3745.25 |
| TOTAL EXPENSE- Special Funds (See Below) | 0.00 | 266.63 | 454.24 |
| NET GAIN (LOSS) | 86.00 | 327.37 | 3291.01 |
| | | | |
| Average General Fund Income Per Week | 1839.20 | 2469.84 | 2250.44 |
| Amount needed to meet expense budget - per week | <u>1281.73</u> | | |

Special Funds Include:

Special Building/Property, Pastor's Second Chance, Memorial Gifts, New Building, Lutheran Women's Group, 5th Sunday Benevolence

| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|--------|---------------------|--|---|--|---|
| | | | 2 | | 1 | 2 9-1 Mantua Variety Market at Christ |
| 3 8:30 Women's Prayer Group 9:00 Worship | 4 | 5 TOPS 9:30 | 6 | 7 Office hours 9-3 Coffee Time 10-11 | 8 | 9 9-1 Mantua Variety Market at Christ |
| 10 8:30 Women's Prayer Group 9:00 Worship | 11 | 12 TOPS 9:30 | 13 | 14 Office Hours 9-3 Coffee Time 10-11 | 15 | 16 9-1 Mantua Variety Market at Christ More than a mom 9:30- 11:30 |
| 17 8:30 Women's Prayer Group 9:00 Worship | 18 | 19 TOPS 9:30 | 20 Loaves & Fishes Dinner 5- 6:30 at Christ | 21 Office Hours 9-3 Coffee Time 10-11 | 22 Rummage Sale 9-1 at Christ | 23 9-1 Mantua Variety Market at Christ |
| 24 8:30 Women's Prayer Group 9:00 Worship | 25 | 26 TOPS 9:30 | 27 | 28 Office Hours 9-3 Coffee Time 10-11 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 8:30 Women's Prayer Group 9:00 Worship | | | | | | |



**P.O. Box 2247
9042 State Route 43
Streetsboro, OH 44241**

Change Service Requested



THE PARISH VOICE NEWSLETTER

Office: 330-626-4945

Web Site: www.stthomasstreetsboro.com

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

TRADITIONAL WORSHIP SERVICE 9:00 A.M.

PLEASE JOIN US INSIDE

LIVE ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE

OR IN CHURCH PARKING LOT ON CHANNEL 96.9 FM

BIBLE STUDY THURSDAYS 6:00 PM