

The Parish Voice

September 2025



How are we saved?

The Scriptures teach us that we are saved by grace alone (God's love for us) through faith alone (trust in Christ Jesus as our Lord and Savior). Salvation from sin, death, the wrath of God, the devil, and everything else that ails this fallen creation, comes to us by the love of God as a gift. Out of love, God the Father has sent His Son into the world to become a human being and to fulfill

God's righteous will for us, to bear our sin, and to conquer death through His resurrection. Therefore, we have salvation because of God's love as a gift in Christ Jesus. Faith, which is trust in Jesus and what He has done, clings to Christ and receives everything that He has accomplished for us. And even this faith is not a work of human beings, but a gift of God the Holy Spirit who creates faith in us through the preaching of the Gospel, the promise of salvation (see 1 Corinthians 2:14 and 12:3 for faith as a gift of the Holy Spirit). This God-given faith is worked in us through the Gospel in all of its forms – let it be the Gospel as it is proclaimed in Holy Scripture, the Gospel as it is preached by the Pastor, or the Gospel proclaimed to us in the promises of Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper. "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? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the Gospel!'" (Pastor's translation of Romans 10:14-15) Hence from beginning to end we are saved by God apart from anything that we do. As St. Paul reminds us in Ephesians 2:8-9: *"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast."*

All of this should sound familiar to us Lutherans. Yet I would argue that it is easier to hear and say that we are saved by grace alone through faith alone than to actually apply this truth to our daily lives. How tempting it is when we have done something wrong to seek peace and solace through our ability to make things right and to fix the problem (or expect others to do the same when they have wronged us). Rather than finding comfort in reparations (when it is even *possible* to right past wrongs) we confess the sins that burden our consciences to God our Father as the Lord bids us to do in His prayer and find peace and solace for the fact that God has forgiven our sins on account of Christ Jesus. Or how many people search for the certainty of their salvation in the fact that they have received Christ Jesus at a specific date and time (that they have made a 'decision' to follow Jesus) or in a burning in their bosom and the strength of

their faith rather than to the fact that Jesus has died for them, that Jesus has risen from the dead for them, etc. By seeking the certainty of our salvation in ourselves (let it be the strength of our faith or a decision we made sometime in the past) we look to ourselves for our salvation instead of to Jesus. Yet as with anything having to do with human beings – who are fallible and changeable – there is no certainty when we look within ourselves for comfort. The strength of one's faith ebbs and flows with the tides of life. A past decision can always be doubted (did I *really* give myself to Jesus back then?).

Rather, when it comes to the certainty of our salvation, that our sins are in fact forgiven before God, that we have eternal life and victory over death, we must look to the one who has accomplished these things, namely, Jesus. Because the forgiveness of your sins according to Holy Scripture is as certain as the fact that Jesus has died (1 Corinthians 15:3). That is to say, the forgiveness of your sins is as certain as an immutable historical reality. That you have eternal life is solely dependent upon the fact that Jesus has power over death (as He has shown us in His own resurrection) and promises you everlasting life (Revelation 1:18; John 6:39-40). And because your salvation is solely grounded on Christ Jesus' life, death, and resurrection – and unlike you He and what He has done for you will never change – your salvation is certain. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." (Hebrews 13:8) So when your conscience is bothering you, look to Jesus who has died for the forgiveness of all your sins! When your body fails you and death draws near, look to Jesus who has promised you everlasting life! And lest you doubt that these truths apply to you, remember that the Lord has promised you these things personally in Holy Baptism where He united you to Jesus' death and resurrection (Colossians 2:12), that He has promised these things to *you* through His Word (Romans 15:4), and that He has established His Supper to give you His body and blood to eat and drink for the forgiveness of sins (Matthew 26:26-28).

How are we saved? By grace through faith. What does this mean for our lives? At all times and in all places look "to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:2).

Pastor Blake

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BIBLE STUDIES

BIBLE STUDIES are being held on Tuesdays at Christ at 10:00 a.m. on the Book of John and at St. Thomas on Thursdays at 6:00 p.m. 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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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.

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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YOUTH GROUP

Attention all youth and guardians! Beginning this September please join us at Christ every fourth 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 28th.

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CATECHISM CLASSES

Attention all Catechism students and parents! Please join Pastor for a mandatory orientation on September 14th after church services to discuss expectations, schedules, and receive your first homework assignment. Catechism classes begin October 7th and will be every Tuesday from 4 to 5 at Christ Lutheran Church.

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WORSHIP MEETING

Please join us on September 10th at 5:00 p.m. for our next congregation worship meeting as we choose hymns for the months spanning October to February (meaning it will include Reformation, All Saints, Advent, Christmas and Epiphany). For a list of the Sundays and their readings, please see the list on the Narthex bulletin board or see Marla Manijak.

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PAPER TOWEL AND SOCK DRIVE

Please join us for our paper towel and sock drive! During the month of September we're collecting paper towels and socks to donate to Shepherd's House, a local homeless shelter. There will be a collection box in the narthex. A list of other supplies needed can be found on the Narthex bulletin board. Please consider donating some of these items to help those in need. [Jesus said] "*Which of these three, do you think, proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers?*" He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' And Jesus said to him, "*You go, and do likewise.*" (Luke 19:36-37)

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SPAGHETTI DINNER

A congregational spaghetti dinner is being planned for November 8 at 6:00 pm in the fellowship hall. There will also be a white elephant game. Look for more info in next month's newsletter.

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Palagia Hlava	Robin Hoffman	Pastor Just	Kristine Just
Lorene Kozar	Stephanie Manijak	Carol Poston	Heather Poston
Aaron	Doris Adams	Andrea	Isabella Andrews
Becky	Denise Bender	Lana Carnes	Connor Whitkey family
Cameron	Courtney	Danny	Carl Dorris
Brian Eicher family	Jackie	Janice	Daniel Gump and wife
Jim	Kathy	Kenny	Kevin
Larry Kraus	Linda	Dan Meenach	Logan & McGowan family
Meg	Monica	Nancy	Amanda Nicely
Denise Nicely	Rowan Larkins	Susan	Suzanne Polkov
Tina	Bennie Wegener	Claudia York	

Our College Students—Corey Hautmann, Jacob Zimmerman

Our Military members—Ben Wolff and Carl Dorris

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

Our military veterans All Natural disaster victims

Gaza & Israel victims Ukraine refugees All Non-believers

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

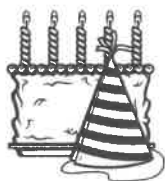
Carole Poston	Lorene Kozar
12790 Chamberlain	8460 Westport Dr. #225
Aurora, OH 44202	Mentor, Oh 44060

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SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays

5-Cathy Fairchild
 9-Gavin Hagen
 9-Jenna Zimmerman
 9-Jacob Zimmerman
 10-Noah Paskett
 10-Nick Phillips
 15-Amanda Nicely
 17-Save Hlava
 19-Jillian Earle
 20-Jarid Phillips
 21-Patty Phillips
 27-Carole Earle
 29-Anibal Torres



SEPTEMBER BAPTISM BIRTHDAYS

Baptism Birthdays

4-Gabe Manijak
 16-Corey Hautmann

Happy Anniversary to...

5-David & Lynn Kanengeiser
 6-Tom & Linda Beuck
 18-Gilbert & Trudy Ayers
 26-Bill & Sharon Crile

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod

LCMS Stewardship Ministry — lcms.org/stewardship

Newsletter Article — September 2025

Work and Keep

“The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it” (Genesis 2:15).

Genesis chapters one and two are familiar to us. We know them best as the Creation Account. Chapter one is where we hear the familiar, “let there be...and there was” directives. Chapter two gives us the account of Adam (the man) being formed from the “Adamah” (the dust) and becoming a living being when he receives the breath of life in his nostrils. Because of this, it would be quite easy to simply lump these two chapters into the category of creation accounts.

But do not be too hasty in this! While these two chapters do faithfully relate to us the account of creation, they also give us the creation of the “office” of steward. The man, created in the image of God in Genesis 1 and formed from the dust in Genesis 2, is created for a distinct purpose. He is created to be a steward of the perfect and beautiful creation that the Lord has made! In fact, this is THE reason that man was made. He — and we — were created in the image of God to be stewards of God’s creation.

This purpose is spelled out in verse 15 of Genesis 2. The steward has one job, with two purposes. It is fitting that in the month that our nation marks Labor Day, we consider the task of steward. The first purpose of the job of steward is to work. The steward is the caretaker of the Garden. Being a steward is work! Before the fall into sin, this was not an onerous task. But it was an active thing.

Imagine being a farmer in the Garden of Eden! Work would be only harvest. No plowing. No planting. No cultivating. No weeding. The perfect garden that the Lord had made would simply produce automatically to provide for man, woman, and all living beings!

But there is a second task in verse fifteen. The word “keep” is not just a synonym for work. This second task is related to defending. This garden, holy by virtue of its being called into existence by a holy God, needed to be defended. Here is where the vocation of steward becomes priestly. The steward was to defend the perfect and holy garden from that which was unholy. Later in the Old Testament, this was the task of the priests in the tabernacle and temple. They were to defend with their lives the Holy of Holies. This too is the labor of stewardship. It is a labor that calls the steward to be willing to put the garden before life!

Stewardship was always work. It only got burdensome after the original steward, Adam, failed to defend the garden from the alien word of the serpent. But this was not a failure of harvest. It was a failure to defend the garden! As a result, all work that followed that failure became burdensome.

The steward failed but was never fired. That is why we have such an issue with stewardship to this day. We continue to live out a pre-fall vocation in a fallen world as failed stewards. That is why we in the church need to be reminded of our vocational call to be stewards. We so easily forget that this world is not ours to do with as we please. Nothing is ours. We are but stewards entrusted with managing the creation for the glory of God and the benefit of the neighbor.

It is a daunting task. But it is the one to which we have been called. We cannot do it on our own. Apart from the grace of God shared with us through Jesus, we would be burdened to the point of temporal and eternal death. But the Holy Spirit calls us by the Gospel! This Gospel connects us to the fertile garden of Christ's Work on our behalf. Now we are stewards of that grace! The Holy Spirit works this in and through us today and every day.

This is the work of the church. It is also the work of the individual steward. The Lord has placed us in the "garden" with the same twofold purpose: work and keep! Enjoy your labor. For in the Lord, our labor is never in vain!

CHRIST LUTHERAN EVENTS

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 September 17 from 5:00-6:30 pm. If you would like to help out, contact Diane Lottig at 330-274-2868.

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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.

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SCOUTS SPAGHETTI DINNER

A spaghetti dinner may be held on September 13. See Pastor or Ruth to find out if it is still happening.

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HOLY BAPTISM

Hannah Owen will be baptized on September 21 and the hall will be in use afterwards for her family dinner. God's blessings be upon you Hannah!



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, September 18 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 July 2025

	Current Month:	Current YTD	Prior YTD:
TOTAL INCOME - General Fund Only	5681.00	69896.91	62772.18
TOTAL EXPENSE - General Fund Only	4380.49	46744.65	41661.14
NET GAIN (LOSS)	1300.51	23152.26	21111.04
TOTAL INCOME - Special Funds (See Below)	69.00	663.00	3977.50
TOTAL EXPENSE- Special Funds (See Below)	0.00	266.63	514.22
NET GAIN (LOSS)	69.00	396.37	3463.28
Average General Fund Income Per Week	1420.25	2329.90	2092.41
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
	1 Labor Day	2 TOPS 9:30 Bible Study at Christ 10:00	3	4 Office hours 9-3 Coffee Time 10-11 Bible Study 6:00	5	6
7 8:30 Women's Prayer Group 9:00 Worship	8	9 TOPS 9:30 Bible Study at Christ 10:00	10 5:00 Worship meeting for songs	11 Office hours 9-3 Coffee Time 10-11 Bible Study 6:00	12	13
14 8:30 Women's Prayer Group 9:00 Worship 10:00 Catechism info meeting	15	16 TOPS 9:30 Bible Study at Christ 10:00	17 Loaves & Fishes Dinner 5- 6:30 at Christ	18 Office Hours 9-3 Coffee Time 10-11 Bible Study 6:00 Council 7:00	19	20
21 8:30 Women's Prayer Group 9:00 Worship	22	23 TOPS 9:30 Bible Study at Christ 10:00	24	25 Office Hours 9-3 Coffee Time 10-11 Bible Study 6:00	26	27
28 8:30 Women's Prayer Group 9:00 Worship 6-8 Youth group at Christ	29	30 TOPS 9:30 Bible Study at Christ 10:00				



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

Change Service Requested

**Groff, Delbert
7387 Meadow Creek Rd
Saagamore Hills, OH 44067**

**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