

# The Parish Voice

St. Thomas Lutheran Church — Streetsboro, Ohio

May 2020

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We are in the Easter season. It used to be called the “post-Easter” season, but, instead of referring to the Fourth Sunday *after* Easter, we refer to the Fourth Sunday *OF* Easter. The change of prepositions reflects a change in perspective.

This season recalls the forty days after Jesus resurrection when He made repeated appearances to His followers. Please note that I did not use the word “disciples” in that sentence. St. Paul told the church at Corinth that the Risen Christ *“appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles. Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.”* (1 Corinthians 15:5-8) it was not just to the Twelve that Jesus showed Himself alive.

Those appearances demonstrate to us (as they did to the earliest followers) the reality of the resurrection. In instance after instance, Jesus showed His hands and side, ate food, was touched — all to show that He was not the figment of someone’s imagination, nor an apparition, nor the result of wishful thinking — He was alive! He IS alive!

In His resurrection appearances, Jesus did something of which we should take particular notice; more than once “he opened their minds to understand the scriptures.” (Luke 24:45). Our Lord did not reveal His victory over death just to “show off.” He wanted His followers to understand why He had come, why He had died, and why He had risen.

He wants that for us, as well.

Which is why this Easter Season is called the Easter Season. We now become the followers to whom Jesus shows Himself alive. We witness Him in the Word, we experience Him present in His Body and Blood given us in bread and wine. In our fellowship with one another, we become aware of how close he is to each of us as we experience Him in all of us.

He wants also to open the Scriptures to us so that we might understand who He is and what He is doing. Some of us might be inclined to think that we already know enough, and need no more. Not so. Perhaps now, even more than ever before, we need to learn and experience more about Jesus and His purposes.

The disciples spent three years experiencing daily teaching and modeling; their training was far more extensive than anything we might have gone through. Yet He needed to open their minds and give them understanding. I can only speak for me; I suspect that I am just as thick-headed as they (maybe more).

So this Easter season becomes a time not just of slowing down the pace and taking it easy. Easter is not “over for another year.” Easter continues. Just as the earliest followers of Jesus experienced the joy of seeing Him, walking with Him, eating with Him, learning from Him, we also rejoice to be in His presence and come to a deeper and greater understanding of Him and His mission.

The weeks that follow Easter are not just “after” — they are “of.” We are not on the backside of an event now over. We are in the middle of an event without ending. The celebration continues; the joy does not abate. Christ IS truly risen! He is risen, indeed! Alleluia!

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## Our Worship This Month

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### May 3 — Easter IV

Sermon: “*Bah, Bah, \*\*\*\*\* Sheep*”

Texts: Acts 2:42-47; Psalm 23; 1 Peter 2:19-25; John 10:1-10

Jesus calls Himself the “Good Shepherd.” What does it take to become known as “good sheep”?

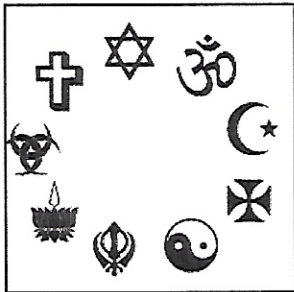


### May 10 — Easter V

Sermon: “*Asking in the Name of Jesus*”

Texts: Acts 7:55-60; Psalm 31; 1 Peter 2:2-10; John 14:1-14

Jesus teaches the disciples about prayer in His name. We have often confused what that means. We discover the power of praying through Jesus.



### May 17 — Easter VI

Sermon: “*Very Religious?*”

Texts: Acts 17:22-31; Psalm 66; 1 Peter 3:13-22; John 14:15-21

St. Paul sees the people of Athens as “very religious.” He goes to explain why that doesn’t help them — or us.



While we do not schedule a special worship service, we should make note of the fact that May 21 is **The Feast of the Ascension**, the day that celebrates Christ’s return to heaven. Sometimes referred to as “the forgotten feast day,” this is an important event in the life of our Lord and of His Church. Jesus Himself said it: “... *it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you.*” Give thanks to God that Jesus has ascended to the right hand of God and that the gift of the

Holy Spirit is at work among us. Pastor Just has included a sermon on the Ascension on our website.

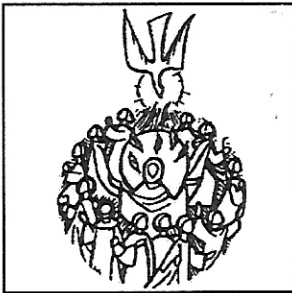


## May 24 — Easter VII

Sermon: “*In Between Time*”

Texts: Acts 1:6-14; Psalm 68; 1 Peter 4:12-14; 5:6-11; John 17:1-11

We live in that time between Jesus’ Ascension and His return. What do we do with that time?

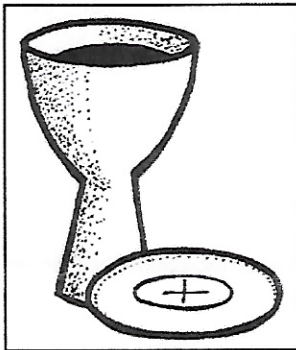


## May 31 — The Day of Pentecost

Sermon: “*No Holy Spirit?*”

Texts: Numbers 11:24-30; Psalm 104; Acts 2:1-21; John 7:37-39

We celebrate that the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Church. What if that had not happened?



We learned of any idea for distributing communion as we gather in the parking lot for worship (thanks to Pastor Robert Weldon at Grace Lutheran in Elyria for the idea). We’re calling them “communion packets.” A small cup with a lid containing wine is placed into a somewhat larger cup with a communion wafer on top of the smaller cup; both cup and wafer are then sealed with a second lid. These will be handed out along with the bulletins when you arrive at worship. Instructions will be placed in the bulletin on when and how to make use of the contents. We pray this will be of spiritual benefit to all.

**Thank  
YOU,  
(very much)**

I want to express thanks to a number of people whose contribution to our congregation’s life has been especially significant these past weeks.

To our Church Council [Steve Hlava, Jim Doerfler, Diane Lee, Deb Wolff, Joyce Torres, Marla Manijak, Del Groff] who had difficult decisions to make, and made them with caring deliberation for the welfare of our members.

To Rory Wolff, assisted by Del Groff, for doing yeoman’s work in setting up our PA system for “parking lot” worship and setting up our feed to Facebook.

To Deb Wolff and Marla Manijak for arranging and maintaining the “Lily Cross” and “Alleluia” banner for our Easter worship.

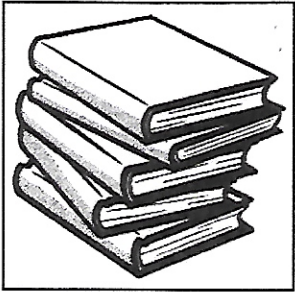
We are grateful also for the support — verbal, financial, attendance — of so many who have responded to our improvisations for worship and fellowship.

Pastor Just



I announced in February that it was my intention to retire at the end of June. The interruption of the problems with the CoVid19 virus so consumed our leadership that there scant time to begin the work on succession planning. Therefore, I have decided to put off the plans to retire until the end of the year, giving time to arrange for an orderly and God-pleasing transition.

Pastor Just



You are invited to take a look inside Pastor's office to see the newly installed countertop and cabinets. Much thanks goes to Steve Hlava and Jim Doerfler for hours spent finishing the countertop with several coats of polyurethane; and to Steve, Del Groff, (Pastor's son) Levi Just, and (Pastor's son-in-law) John Vaughn for installing it in place. The cabinets were put in place some months ago by Del Groff, Steve Hlava, and Joe Leno. Now Pastor needs to set up his computer and peripherals, arrange many CD's, clear off his desk, and settle in.

## HOW ARE WE DOING?

We would love to know how everyone feels about the things we are doing during this Covid 19 virus and the social distancing recommendation. We have 3 methods we have used to stay connected to our church family...

- 1) Written sermons from Pastor Just on our webpage
- 2) Facebook Streaming live services
- 3) Parking lot services (we are adding communion to this service)

Does anyone need help with the Facebook or website options? We would love to know which method is serving the congregation the best. Or if maybe you have another idea we could use. We would love to hear from you! Call the church at 330-626-4945 and leave a comment on the answering machine or call one of the council members with ideas.

Thank you for your patience and understanding during this time of separation. Stay safe everyone!

## 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](http://www.stthomasstreetsboro.com)

## OPENING YOUR HEART TO GOD

Prayer is an unnatural activity to us because it flies in the face of our self-reliance, our autonomy and beliefs about self-sufficiency. It is alien to our independent human nature.

Prayer is one of life's greatest phenomenons, in that it cannot be explained in natural terms because it is a supernatural event in our lives.

Whether we are just beginning to learn about prayer, or have prayed a long time, as we grow in prayer we discover that God:

- 1) actually wants to be in relationship with us;
- 2) convinces us that He has been waiting for us all along;
- 3) will listen to us as long as we want to talk;
- 4) we matter to Him and He cares deeply about us;
- 5) assures us that His power is available to us;
- 6) His presence is with us in any situation we face;
- 7) He is always only a breath away.

When we pray we always feel closer to God, secure in His love, a little less fearful, and more confident.

True prayer has a way of releasing the life of God in your Spirit, and of activating and liberating the ministry of the Holy Spirit in your life. It will make a qualitative difference in your relationship with God as you learn to talk with God through personal prayer.

Read Philippians 4:6-7

Stay safe and keep praying!

### 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!

## DIRECTORY

A new directory is in the works thanks to Diane Pencin. We are hoping to have it in your hands soon. If you have not filled out an information form please do so immediately. We need names, addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, birthdays, baptism birthday and anniversary dates.

See Diane Lee to make sure she has your information or call the church and leave your information.

**Our April-June** Portal of Prayers devotionals are available now. You can find them on the table by the door.

**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	Trudy Ayers	Bill Crile	Deb Earle
Cory Hautmann	Linda Hautmann	Palagia Hlava	Pastor Just
Lorene Kozar	Joe Lenno	Joanna Nicely	Ken Nicely II
Kenny Nicely IV	Carol Poston	Heather Poston	Amy Rohaley
Ron Stenglein	Rory Wolff	Barb Alcorn	Alice Artman
Roger Black	Michael Brooks	Peggy Campano	Jeremy Campbell
Carl	Joyce Cavanaugh	Franklin Conn	Scott Corban
Tom Corban	Toni Corban	Christine Combs	Dan Crile
Sue Ellinwood	Kathy Gault	Bridget Gehri	Karen Groves
Mr. Joe	Rocky Kinder	Steve Kolar	Vince Koza
Brad Kozar	Sharon Kress	Suzanne Latham	Dave Lauver
Frank Manijak	Martino family	Nadine Nicely	John Retherford
John Riddle	Samantha Nicely	Nana Popisch	Art Robinson
Diane Seman	Barbara Schreiber	Mary Small	Stephanie
Tanner	Lynn Tettlemore	Tim Tolodzieski	Marilyn Trivisonno
Tara Vargo	Greg Zaebst	COVID-19 patients	

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

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.

### MAY BIRTHDAYS

#### Birthdays

6-Lorene Kozar  
14-Mike Phillips  
16-Ron Stenglein  
24-Deb Earle



### MAY BAPTISM BIRTHDAYS

#### Baptism Birthdays

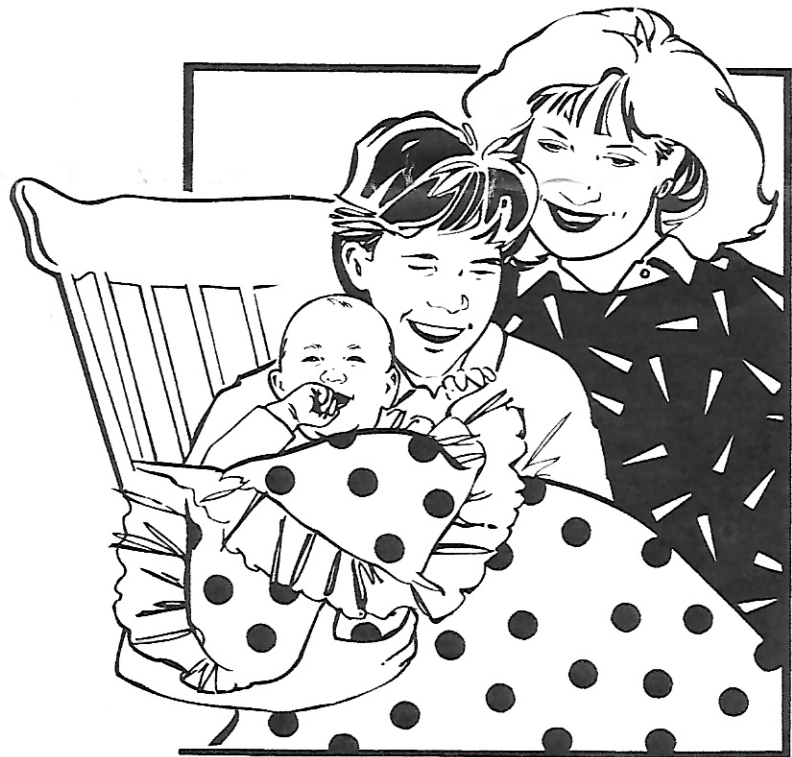
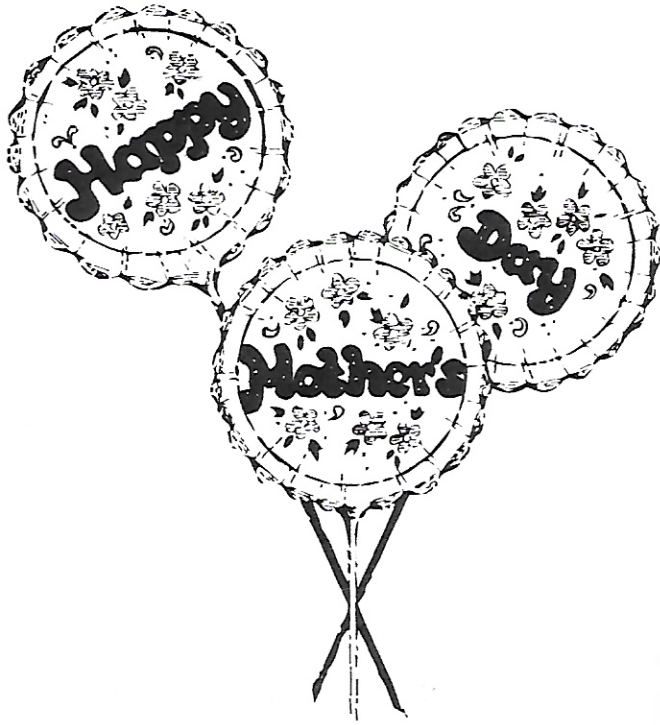
1-Deb Wolff  
13-Nicole Johnson  
14-Ian Phillips  
19-Tim Nicely  
23-Jen Jones

### WE CARE!

In this time of quarantine your church family is here for you. If anyone needs groceries, etc. or just someone to talk to please call us. We are here for you! Marla can be reached at 330-472-3045 anytime. If you need the number of other members please call me and I will find it for you.

Stay safe everyone! You are all in our prayers!

*"To the world, you are a mother, but to your family, you are the world." —Unknown*



*"Grandmas hold our tiny hands for just a little while...but our hearts forever." —Unknown*

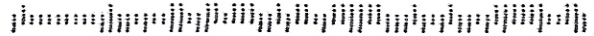
St. Thomas Evangelical Lutheran Church  
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**THE PARISH VOICE NEWSLETTER**

**Office: 330-626-4945**

**Pastor Just office hours—Thursdays 8:00-4:00**

**Cell Phone (216) 789-6688    Email: [doctorjust@gmail.com](mailto:doctorjust@gmail.com)**

**Web Site: [www.stthomasstreetsboro.com](http://www.stthomasstreetsboro.com)**

**SUNDAY SCHEDULE**

**TRADITIONAL WORSHIP SERVICE 10:00 A.M.**

**HELD IN THE CHURCH PARKING LOT**