

The Parish Voice

St. Thomas Lutheran Church — Streetsboro, Ohio

June 2021



Mary, Mary, quite contrary,
How does your garden grow?
With silver bells and cockle shells
And pretty maids all in a row.

Most people will tell you that this rhyme comes from Mother Goose (others will question that). As such, it seems a fairly mild example of children's doggerel. But the true investigator of the Mother Goose corpus knows that this little ditty is all about the troubles in the English monarchy in the eighteenth century.

Most of us couldn't care less if this little verse held a deeper historical significance. We like it just as a children's rhyme. And I have no intention of trying to explore it as commentary on the English court. I just want to point out that a question has been asked that is not answered. The question is not: "*What grows in your garden?*" That is the answer provided, however. The question is "*How does your garden grow?*" We never hear the reply to that.

How does a garden grow? It has to have three essential ingredients: good soil, proper nutrients, water. I could also argue that a good gardener is important to provide those essentials and then to tend to the seedlings, nurture them, remove weeds and other obstacles to growth. How does a garden grow? Through very careful attention and care.

In this month of June we are entering a season that has several designations. It is called the Pentecost season; all of the Sundays from now until November are designated as a "Sunday after Pentecost." It is called "Ordinary Time," which is a way of distinguishing this period of the Church Year from the so-called "Festival Season." There are no major holy days or feast days in Ordinary Time. It is sometimes referred to as "the green season," since throughout this time the paraments on the altar are green. That "green" designation also signals to us that this is a time for growth, so I will refer to this period as "the growing season."

If the answer to how gardens grow deals with proper soil, nutrients, and water, then we need to answer the question, "How do God's people grow?" This requires similar ingredients.

The first essential is God's Word. We grow in faith, understanding, commitment, relationship, and gifts only to the extent that we immerse ourselves in the Word. Without the Word of God, we cannot grow. The Word instructs, guides, and feeds us; in the Gospel it also enlivens us and empowers us to live for God and no longer just for self (which is our sinful inclination). The Word is the essential tool for any growth as a Christian.

But unless that Word comes to us under the power of the Holy Spirit, nothing can happen. We cannot begin to understand, engage, or be equipped by the Word of God if the Holy Spirit is not at work in us. It is the Holy Spirit who "guides you into all the truth" [John 16:13]. The Holy Spirit takes what Jesus has to offer and gives it to us [John 16:14]. We confess that the Holy Spirit "has

called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith . . .” and that the Spirit does this because “I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him . . .” [Luther’s Small Catechism]. The Spirit is an essential ingredient for growth.

We grow also because of the Christian community. Growth on one’s own is possible, but it hardly takes place with the same vigor and intentionality that occurs when people of faith come together to study and share the Word. Worship is a time when such gathering takes place to feed and nurture our faith; but the central focus of worship time needs to be on God, not on ourselves. We need additional times to focus and press into the Word of God.

Gardens grow because of three essential factors; Christians grow because of three essential factors. Remove any of those three and, not only will growth be inhibited, the very survival of things becomes an open question.

This “growing season” (Season of Pentecost, Ordinary Time, the “green season”) offers us the opportunity to grow in faith, to deepen our relationship with God, to bind ourselves closer in fellowship as God’s people, to strengthen our utilization of the Spirit’s gifts to us, and thus to become better equipped for the work of ministry.

This is our calling to be the Church of Jesus Christ: to become equipped to respond to Christ’s Great Commission to us and all who name Him “Lord”: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you” [Matthew 28:19-20].

Church Council, at its May 16 meeting, discussed what changes, if any, we need to make with regard to what is happening in Ohio in response to the Covid-19 pandemic. Essentially, we will not make major changes until we have a better picture of what is best for our worshipping community.

As the signs on our front doors have stated for months, the wearing masks is not something we are forced to do ... we do it out of love and concern for one another. If you are comfortable without a mask, you are free to do without; we do ask you to be concerned about someone who may be vulnerable to infection as you make that decision. We will no longer be taking your temperature as you arrive.

We will be taking down the tape and signs on the pews, opening our the sanctuary to seating anywhere you choose.

We will continue to broadcast our worship services via the limited radio signal on 96.9 FM (to tune in from the parking lot) and via Facebook (to participate from home). We are hoping that more people will choose to gather together in worship in the sanctuary.

Our communion distribution will continue with the small containers made available at the start of the service. We will refrain from the exchange of peace for now.

All of this will be revisited at the next Council meeting on June 27.

Our Worship This Month



June 6 — Pentecost II

Sermon: *"In Adam's Fall We Fell All"*

Texts: Genesis 3:8-15; Psalm 130; 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1; Mark 3:2-35

What if God had reacted differently to Adam and Eve's disobedience? What does it mean for us that He did what He did?

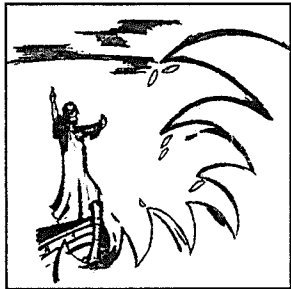


June 13 — Pentecost III

Sermon: *"Seeds and Plants"*

Texts: Ezekiel 17:22-24; Psalm 92; 2 Corinthians 5:6-17; Mark 4:26-34

Two images reveal how God works in our world; both have implications for how we work in our world (Hint: It's about dying and rising).



June 20 — Pentecost IV / Fathers Day

Sermon: *"Lots of Questions"*

Texts: Job 38:1-1; Psalm 124; 2 Corinthians 6:-13; Mark 4:35-41

In this day's lessons, God asks questions, Paul asks questions, the disciples ask questions. Jesus has answers.



June 27 — Pentecost V

Sermon: *"Our Real Need"*

Texts: Lamentations 3:22-23; Psalm 30; 2 Corinthians 8:7-15; Mark 5:21-43

Often we think we know what we need; other times not. How do we know our real need? How is it met?

We remind you of the upcoming English District Virtual Gala — "Thy Strong Word" — on June 13, beginning at 7:30 PM. There will be inspiring speakers, award presentations, opportunities to donate, an online auction, a celebration of our missions, and beautiful music.

From: The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod Stewardship Ministry

St. Paul teaches us: “Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches” (Gal.6:6). And again, he says: “Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings? In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel” (1 Cor. 9:13–14). In other words, ministers of the Gospel are supported by the offerings of those who are served by them.

And this is how the church lives even now. It is standard practice. But this deserves closer examination. For it instructs us not just that we are to give but also what we are to give. And it does so with four little words: “In the same way ...”

St. Paul is building his case for supporting the preachers of the Gospel with the sacrificial giving of individual members on the example of the Old Testament people who supported the Levites with their offerings and sacrifices. We’re to support the Gospel ministry “in the same way.” But how did the Old Testament people support the Levites?

Moses records this: “You shall tithe all the yield of your seed that comes from the field year by year. And before the Lord your God, in the place that he will choose, to make his name dwell there, you shall eat the tithe of your grain, of your wine, and of your oil, and the firstborn of your herd and flock, that you may learn to fear the Lord your God always” (Deut. 14:22–23). The Levites were supported by the tithe, 10 percent of all the yearly yield of that which was harvested.

Does that seem like a lot? Does it surprise you that St. Paul instructs us that we are to support the New Testament Gospel ministry “in the same way?” If it does, ask yourself: Is the church’s job in the New Testament bigger or smaller than the Levites’ job in the Old Testament? Back then, there was one Temple, and the ministry was almost exclusively located in one nation among the descendants of Abraham. In Matthew 28, Jesus calls us to teach and baptize all nations, and there are churches and ministries all around the world! How could we support this new Gospel ministry with anything less than the Israelites supported the Old Testament ministry?

Of course, we are free to give more, for we have received more than those in the Old Testament. We have received the fullness of God’s revelation, the fullness of His salvation, and the fulfillment of everything that God promised to do. For we have received Christ, God’s own Son, in the flesh, who took upon himself our sins and in exchange gave us his righteousness. The Father claimed us as his own in Holy Baptism. He gathers us together in the place where his name dwells to feast on the first fruits of the resurrection, the risen and living body and blood of His Son – our Lord Jesus. He reminds us that we are His, that all things are ours because we belong to Him. He blesses us here in time with physical and spiritual gifts.

In the same way – and in response to His fatherly divine goodness and mercy – we gladly give to those who proclaim to us “the excellencies of him who called us out of darkness and into his marvelous light.” For once we were not a people, but now we are God’s people; once we had not received mercy, but now we have indeed received mercy”(1 Peter 2:9–10).

OUR GRADUATES

Congratulations to our 2021 graduates **THOMAS AYERS AND JOYCE TORRES!!**

Thomas graduated from Nordonia High School May 26 at the Rocket Mortgage Field House in Cleveland. Thomas was on the school's baseball team and finished his year with a 4.33 GPA. Thomas will be attending Kent State in the fall to major in Aerospace Engineering. We are very proud of you Thomas! Good luck in the future!

Joyce graduated from Kent State University at Trumbull with an Associate of Science degree. Congratulations Joyce! We are so very proud of you also!

There will be a celebration party for both of them on Saturday, July 17th at 1:00 at Trudy and Gilbert's, 8163 Valley View, Macedonia. All are invited for this special occasion.

OUR STUDENTS

Congratulations to Abby Ayers for making the Dean's List!

Congratulations to all our students for making it through another school year! We know it was a challenge through this pandemic. We wish you a very relaxing summer as you rest your brains and prepare for the next year. We are very proud of all of you and wish you a great summer!

SCHOOLS OUT! For Summer!

REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Bill & Sharon Crile	Jim Doerfler	Carol Earle	Deb Earle
Cory Hautmann	Linda Hautmann	Palagia Hlava	Lorene Kozar
Joanna Nicely	Ken Nicely II	Kenny Nicely III	Kenny Nicely IV
Stephen Nicely	Carol Poston	Heather Poston	Diane Seman
Becky Larkins & Holly	Alice Artman	Rick Artman	Roger Black
Barbara's Daughter	Patty Bowman	John Butterbaugh	Carl
Chuck	Anna Cooper	Leona Corban	Scott Corban
Tom Corban	Deb Defer	Jamie Dunn	Bill Earle
Billy Earle Jr.	Earle family	Sue Ellinwood	George Foerster
Christine Frank	Bridget Gehri	Ken Granville	Anita Hlava
Debbie Hovanetz	Janice	John	Sherry Johnson
Kathi	Brad Kozar	Suzanne Latham	Lauren
Kristina Lonardo	Tyler Lutz	Dave Lauver	Lori
Anne Mack	Frank Manijak	Mary	Nadine Nicely family
Samantha Nicely	Sandy & Ron Platten	Karen Power	Peter Power
Valonte Ragland	Latesha Ragland	Jessica Reker	John Rutherford
Leslie Slanina	Tim Tolodzieski	Kenneth Udovic	Denny Wood
Carol	Zack	COVID-19 patients	

Our shut-ins—please send them a card

New Address

Mrs. Audrey Holland
Willowwood Care Room 1001
1186 Hancock Rd.
Brunswick, OH 44212-4582

Carole & Heather Poston
3096 E. Pioneer
Aurora, OH 44202

Recently had surgery
Lorene Kozar
681 Sweetnut Ct
Streetsboro, OH 44241

Our College Students—Grace Rohaley, Abigail Ayers, Corey Hautmann and Joanna Nicely
Our Military member—Troy Roman

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays

17-Elizabeth Ayers
19-Stephen Nicely
25-Del Groff
27-Gilbert Ayers
29-Corey Hautmann
30-Diane Lee



JUNE BAPTISM BIRTHDAYS

Baptism Birthdays

10-Deb Earle
18-Jim Doerfler
24-Logan Hagen
24-Gavin Hagen
24-Samantha Weber
24-Vickie Weber
24-Jillian Earle

Happy Anniversary to...

8-Tina & Russ Hagen
21-Rocky & Kim Kinder
29-Steve & Palagia Hlava

MAY'S SERVICE PROJECT

Thank you to all who donated items for the Akron Pregnancy Center. The basket was full of items for the new mothers and babies. Robin will drop off the items at the beginning of June. Again thank you for your generosity.

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

New Offering Envelopes are available on the table in the Narthex.

Our April-June Portal of Prayers devotionals are available now. You can find them on the table by the door or ask Steve for one and he will bring it to your car.

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.

TREASURERS REPORT - Month of Apr. 2021

	CurrentMonth:	Current YTD	Prior YTD:
TOTAL INCOME - General Fund Only	4162.18	19529.22	18607.32
TOTAL EXPENSE - General Fund Only	8098.60	21662.67	21363.35
NET GAIN (LOSS)	(3936.42)	(2133.45)	(2756.03)
TOTAL INCOME - Special Funds (See Below)	62.00	5722.00	2043.00
TOTAL EXPENSE- Special Funds (See Below)	41.62	195.28	227.87
NET GAIN (LOSS)	20.38	5526.72	1815.13
Average General Fund Income Per Week	1040.55	1148.78	1094.55
Amount needed to meet expense budget - per week	<u>1201.83</u>		

Special Funds Include:

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

OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL HOLIDAYS FOR JUNE!

1-Say Something Nice Day	14-Children's Day and
5-Donut Day and	Flag Day
World Environment Day	17-Eat Your Vegetables Day
6-D-Day	20-First Day of Summer and
7-Cancer Survivors Day and	FATHER'S DAY
Chocolate Ice Cream Day	23-Pink Flamingo Day
8-Best Friends Day	27-Sunglasses Day
12-Flip Flop Day	

St. Thomas Evangelical Lutheran Church
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Change Service Requested

THE PARISH VOICE NEWSLETTER

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

Cell Phone (216) 789-6688 Email: doctorjust@gmail.com

Web Site: www.stthomasstreetsboro.com

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

TRADITIONAL WORSHIP SERVICE 10:00 A.M.

IN THE CHURCH PARKING LOT ON CHANNEL 96.9 FM

LIVE ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE

OR PLEASE JOIN US INSIDE