

The Parish Voice

St. Thomas Lutheran Church — Streetsboro, Ohio

October 2022

Each year in October, either on the last Sunday or on the 31st, Lutherans celebrate Reformation Day. Historically, that day marks the date for Luther's posting of his 95 Theses — academic propositions on which he desired some debate. These were reprinted and published all over Germany, indeed throughout the Holy Roman Empire. They set off a firestorm of discussion and calls for change in the Church. From that simple act of posting a notice began what would be known as The Reformation.

Many people have made the observation that the Church is in need of constant reformation. As an institution, I tend to agree — at least we ought to pay very close attention to what we do, say, and believe and adjust whatever does not match God's Word. This was the reform Luther sought; it is what those who follow his teaching ought to demand.

Such reformation does not work so well in individuals. For us, the need is not so much reformation as it is formation and transformation.

Spiritual formation can be defined as “the process of forming the inner human world so that it takes on the character of the inner being of Christ himself.” [*Dallas Willard in The Great Omission.*] This involves such spiritual disciplines as fasting, prayer, meditation, service, chanting, and many others. Such formation is work — effort we undertake with the empowering of the Holy Spirit. We are invited in the scriptures to “be conformed to Christ.” When we commit to do this, we begin the work of spiritual formation.

It is truly a life's work. Such disciplines cannot be dabbled in; we must commit ourselves to life-long task of being formed into the likeness of Christ. We commit to the work; the Holy Spirit does the forming. The Christian community is of great help in this process, especially if we gather a close circle of friends to work with and encourage one another. But spiritual formation cannot really begin until spiritual transformation has taken place. Transformation is not incremental change; it is wholesale renovation. We are transformed when Christ fills us with His healing and empowering presence.

Many of us (perhaps even most of us) “grew up in the faith.” By this we mean that we cannot identify a time when we realized that Christ was not part of our lives. Baptized as infants, raised in Christian homes, nurtured in Sunday School and Confirmation Class (maybe even parochial school), we would say that we have “always” been Christians. This is true: our Baptisms did great things in our lives, including joining us to Christ [see Romans 6].

Yet, something seems to be missing for many of us — some energy, some direction, some excitement. What we need is the transforming power to become more concrete. We have it; it is the gift of our Baptism — but many of us have buried it under layers of performance, hurts, doubts, and grief. Jesus bids us come to Him, yet we try to keep Him at arm's length. We have faith; but our faith-life seems hollow, or shallow, and maybe even dead. Now we hear His call once again; we are invited to lean into Him and find the true joy of letting go and releasing ourselves into His love.

Institutions can be reformed, and we give thanks for God raising up such people as Martin Luther to reform His Church. We, in turn, must be spiritually formed into the image of Christ (Himself the perfect image of God) and spiritually transformed by the healing power and presence of Christ in us. In this season of The Reformation, let us pray for one another that we might each experience such formation and transformation.

Our Worship This Month

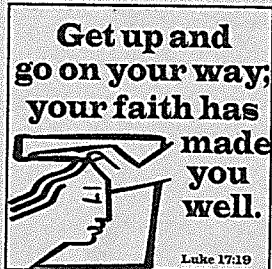


October 2 — Pentecost XVII

Sermon: *"Here and Hereafter"*

Texts: Amos 6: 1a, 4-7; Psalm 1; Timothy 6:6-19; Luke 16: 19-31

Jesus' parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus seems to be about caring for the poor. There's much more to it than that.



October 9 — Pentecost XVIII

Sermon: *"Clean and Well"*

Texts: 2 Kings 5:1-3,7-15; Psalm 111; 2 Timothy 2:8-15; Luke 17:11-19

Jesus heals ten lepers, made them clean. He tells the one who came back that faith made him well. See the difference?

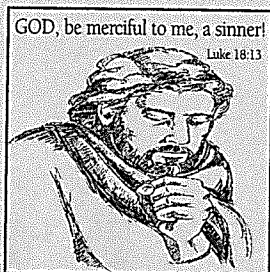


October 16 — Pentecost XIX

Sermon: *"Persistence"*

Texts: Genesis 32:22-31; Psalm 121; 2 Timothy 3:14-4:5; Luke 18:1-8

All three lessons carry a common theme: We are to "keep at it" in seeking God, in following Christ, in doing God's will, and in prayer.



October 23 — Pentecost XX

Sermon: *"Humble Truth"*

Texts: Jeremiah 14:7-10,19-22; Psalm 90; 2 Timothy 4:6-8,16-19; Luke 18:9-14

In the familiar parable of the Pharisee and the Publican we discover the real value of humility.



October 30 — Reformation Sunday

Sermon: *"Freeing Truth"*

Texts: Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 46; Romans 3:19-28; John 8:31-36

Jesus proclaims that the truth shall set us free. What truth? Free to do what?

Synod's Constitution calls for a three-year cycle of governance: Year One is when each District meets in convention; Year Three is when the Synodical Convention is held. Year Two calls for each Circuit to meet for a Circuit Forum, which is intended to be a time for learning, planning possible missions, and for electing Pastoral and Lay Delegates (plus alternates) to the Synodical Convention. Our Circuit's Forum will be held on Saturday, October 1 at Ascension Lutheran Church in North Olmsted, from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM. The Guest Speaker for the event will be Kate Makra, Executive Director for Cleveland Right to Life. Pastor Just and our Lay Delegate to the District Convention, Robin Hoffman, will attend; if you would like to take part, let Pastor Just know of your interest and we will arrange for transportation.



PASTORAL
SEARCH COMMITTEE

On September 4, we held a Special Congregation Meeting to discuss and vote on extending a Call for a new Pastor. A quorum was in place, the name of Rev. Steven Latzke was presented with the recommendation of the Call Search Committee, and a positive vote taken to extend that Call. Since this is to be a joint Call with Christ Lutheran in Mantua, we awaited their holding a Voters Assembly on September 13 for the same purpose. That meeting brought the same result. At the time of this newsletter edition, meetings were still being planned to work with our Circuit Visitor, Rev. Jonathan McCall to get through the paperwork involved in this process. Since it is not just the two congregations, but also two Districts involved (English and Ohio), it gets a bit more convoluted. Pastor Latzke has been advised of the results of the two Call meetings, and has said that he will give it "prayerful consideration." It would be well if we all did the same.



We held a planning session on August 21 to conduct what is called a SWOT Analysis. SWOT stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats. The process for the session was to invite participants to write a response (or more than one) on a post-it sheet for each of those categories and place those on four separate poster boards. This followed by discussion and refining of what had been written. Those poster boards remain in the Church Office; we encourage you to take a look to see the results. The idea behind this brief exercise was to identify some areas we can build on, some where we might need to change course, some that may open up possibilities, and some that we need to give attention because they may bring a negative impact. This was done in the expectation that, when St. Thomas does welcome a new Pastor, we can share some sense of looking to the future together.

WHAT WAS LUTHER WORKING TO REFORM ANYWAY?



WWW.AGNUSDAY.ORG

THE CHURCH! IT HAD LOST SIGHT OF THE GOSPEL.



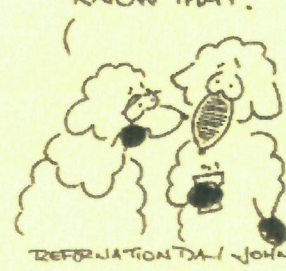
WOW! THAT STILL HAPPENS



OH YEAH. THE NEED FOR REFORM IS CONSTANT.



PSST!... DO THE LUTHERANS KNOW THAT?



REFORMATION DAY / JOHN B

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REMEMBER IN PRAYER

| | | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Aggie Blankenship | Palagia Hlava | Lorene Kozar | Becky Larkins & foster children |
| Ayers Family | Steffen Nicely | Carol Poston | Heather Poston |
| Rory Wolff | Patty Abramovich | Alexa | Ally |
| Diane Altier | Paul Bowers | Russ & Lana Carnes | Leona Corban |
| Carlton Dorris | Dennis Fuldauer | Gidget | Mary Hardesty |
| Lance | Mike Latham | Sue Lubato | Steve Mamber |
| Frank Manijak | Joe Manijak | Amanda Nicely | Kathy Peters |
| Larry & Sally Powell | Leslie Slanina | Angela Smith | John Szabo |
| Deacon Robert Szalai | Tyler | Linda Valetta | Victoria |
| Bennie Wegener | Darcy Wood | Donny Wood | |
| Ukraine refugees | COVID-19 patients | All Natural disaster victims | |

We would love to have updates on our prayer list. If you have 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

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

Carole Poston
3096 E Pioneer
Aurora, OH 44202

Lorene Kozar
8460 Westport Dr. #225
Mentor, Oh 44060

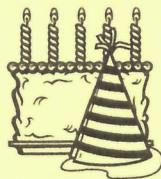
Our College Students—Grace Rohaley, Abigail Ayers, Corey Hautmann, Thomas Ayers, Jenna Zimmerman, Jacob Zimmerman

Our Military member—Troy Roman

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays

3-Kim Kinder
3-Kathy Brashear
7-Joe Earle
9-Jim Doerfler
15-Stephanie Johnson
17- Abigail Ayers
20-Madelyn Ayers
24-Linda Beuck
27-Linda Hautmann
31-Brianne Wolff



OCTOBER BAPTISM BIRTHDAYS

Baptism Birthdays

9-Trudy Ayers
13-Joanna Nicely
13-Gilbert Ayers
13-Thomas Ayers
20-Nick Phillips
Steve Hlava

Happy Anniversary to...
4-Keith & Becky Larkins

If anyone has been left off this list or any other list, please let Marla Manijak know so she can add you. I would love birthdays and anniversaries and baptism birthdays if you know when it is. Thanks!

WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY

The Women's Group will be meeting sometime in October. Please see Joyce or Marla for an exact date as one has not been set up yet. We are still studying the book "Grace" by Max Lucado and will be reading Chapter 5 and discussing the questions at the end of the book when we meet again. Any questions please see Joyce Torres or Marla Manijak.



sleep in your car



annual fundraiser

*November is recognized nationally
as homeless awareness month.*

For Homelessness Awareness Month, we are asking Portage County churches to join us on November 4th in bringing awareness and raise the crucial funding needed to help those people experiencing homelessness in our community. Each church will be the host of this event and will have their participants acquire pledges to sleep in their car.

100% of the pledges to benefit The Haven of Portage County.



Creating personal
awareness of the
hardships of
homelessness

Materials &
guidelines will be
provided

For more information contact:
Cathy 330- 297-5032 or Jan 330-931-8087

SERVICE PROJECTS

The first is to help those in Haiti with all their needs after the earthquakes, for the refugees from Ukraine and all those affected by the recent hurricanes. Monetary donations are being accepted with checks made out to the church. They will be given to the Lutheran Missions Ministry. Thank you for your support!

The second one is our Streetsboro Community Pantry. They are always in need of food and monetary donations. Please bring your items to the church any Sunday. Thank you for your generous giving heart!

Church Council will be meeting October 16th after the worship service. If there is anything you would like the Council to discuss please let one of these members know... Steve Hlava, Jim Doerfler, Deb Wolff, Joyce Torres, Diane Lee, Del Groff, Marla Manijak or Pastor Just.

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. Please call ahead to make sure he is there.

CHURCH FINANCES

Please continue to remember your church each month. Our expenses are still here and we could use your help in keeping up with these expenses. Thank you! You can send your offering to P.O. Box 2247.

TREASURERS REPORT - MONTH OF JULY 2022

| | Current Month: | Current YTD | Prior YTD: |
|---|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| TOTAL INCOME - General Fund Only | 4729.38 | 35236.46 | 30704.92 |
| TOTAL EXPENSE - General Fund Only | 3899.03 | 32794.10 | 33777.55 |
| NET GAIN (LOSS) | 830.35 | 2442.36 | (3072.63) |
| | | | |
| TOTAL INCOME - Special Funds (See Below) | 113.00 | 585.84 | 5950.00 |
| TOTAL EXPENSE- Special Funds (See Below) | 47.29 | 464.92 | 306.73 |
| NET GAIN (LOSS) | 65.71 | 120.92 | 5643.27 |
| | | | |
| Average General Fund Income Per Week | 945.88 | 1136.66 | 990.48 |
| Amount needed to meet expense budget - per week | <u>1229.52</u> | | |

Special Funds Include:

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

TREASURERS REPORT - Month of August 2022

| | Current Month: | Current YTD | Prior YTD: |
|---|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| TOTAL INCOME - General Fund Only | 3890.38 | 39126.84 | 35263.60 |
| TOTAL EXPENSE - General Fund Only | 3834.74 | 36628.84 | 38023.67 |
| NET GAIN (LOSS) | 55.64 | 2498.00 | (2760.07) |
| | | | |
| TOTAL INCOME - Special Funds (See Below) | 78.00 | 663.84 | 6054.00 |
| TOTAL EXPENSE- Special Funds (See Below) | 38.90 | 503.82 | 352.31 |
| NET GAIN (LOSS) | 39.10 | 160.02 | 5701.69 |
| | | | |
| Average General Fund Income Per Week | 972.60 | 1117.91 | 1007.53 |
| Amount needed to meet expense budget - per week | <u>1229.52</u> | | |

St. Thomas Evangelical Lutheran Church
P.O. Box 2247
9042 State Route 43
Streetsboro, OH 44241

Change Service Requested

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

Web Site: www.stthomasstreetsboro.com

SUNDAY SCHEDULE

TRADITIONAL WORSHIP SERVICE 10:00 A.M.

IN CHURCH PARKING LOT ON CHANNEL 96.9 FM

LIVE ON OUR FACEBOOK PAGE

OR PLEASE JOIN US INSIDE (Mask is optional)