

Pastor's Column

I'm working the polls on the May 4th election. I worked for the first-time last November. A sense of civic responsibility drove me to sign up. I had no idea what an adrenalin rush it would be. There is a bunch of people, but we are working as One. We each have an assignment. There is a specific sequence of actions. When it gets busy, we look out for and help the other worker. The day's results have impact. We're together more than 12-hours. There's comradery in the quiet moments. Polls close, ballots are gathered in big flue bags, ballots are dropped off.

Working the polls felt sort of the same way as being on stage. At the arts center, I was privileged to play a few minor, supporting cast roles. The adrenalin rush is what is so addictive. It's not the lights and applause. The adrenalin hits the second before you step on stage. In that moment you become the role you are assigned. You speak and sing assuming the other guys and gals will speak and sing their lines in the right way in the right time. You keep in mind where you need to be next. All that awareness and immersion in the present moment brings on that heady adrenalin rush. You feel so fully alive when you have to be so fully present – be it working the polls or being on stage. There are a million other ways you find yourselves fully present, fully alive.

I wonder if that is what our cavemen ancestors felt? In their case the stakes were really high. They had to fend off a saber-toothed tiger. They had to wrestle in a really big fish or catch an elusive bird so the folk back at the cave could survive. That all required awareness, instinct, timing, agility, endurance, speed. That must have been a really good feeling when they felt adrenalin rushing thru their systems.

We don't talk about adrenalin and excitement in the "spiritual" life. Apophatic spirituality is healthy and necessary. We do need to let go of images and imaginations and thoughts ("monkey mind"). Our life depends upon being still and just being in God. The desert monks warned against "passions." Enslaving feelings of attachment and dependency were enemies of the spiritual life. We tend value words like self-control, composure, discipline, etc.

But St. Paul must have been on an adrenalin rush after his conversion experience. He was so passionate about life and theology and knowing God in Christ. No doubt that passion appealed to others and contributed to his effectiveness. Luther must have been an engaging extrovert. His prayer life was not apophatic silence. He paced and pleaded with God out loud. In one prayer he was so angry at the devil he threw an ink well against the wall.

Passion fuels life. Passion fuels excellence and accomplishment. Sure, passion can get misdirected, spin out of control, and get really ugly. But that feeling we get when we are totally present, in the moment, working with others, devoted to a task, finding the solution, bringing to fruition – that is all summed up in a favorite word of St. Paul: JOY. Be joy-full these remaining days of Easter season. We have every right to be because joy is a gift from God for creation. What good work speaks to your heart? What noble place feels like home? What role in community fuels your soul? Enjoy that work, that place, those people. God will meet us there and teach us as God meets and teaches in struggle and uncertainty.

Pastor M



Church Mouse Heard:

Pastor's son said to his mother "I've decided that I want to be a preacher so that I can clean up the mess the world is in." "That's just wonderful, said his mother. "You can go upstairs and start with your room."



Altar Flowers

Nancy Krajec	March 21
	April 25
Ruth Hlinovsky	May 2

Vigil Candle

Ed & Renee Spencer	April
Ruth Jepson	May

Letters & Emails

Dear Messiah Lutheran Church,

On behalf of all of us at the Samaritan House, thank you very much for your generous donation of \$250.00, check number 10664, and date on check March 31, 2021. We are extremely grateful for your generosity.

The Samaritan House began as an idea with a group of area ministers in 1987. They met to discuss the issue of homelessness in the Ashtabula area. The ministers had noticed people coming to their churches asking for help with a place to stay because they were homeless. In response, the Samaritan House was opened in November of 1989.

Twenty five years later, we have served about 5,000 different residents. Housing up to fourteen people at a time, the shelter serves approximately 200 different people a year. While we have served people from all over the world, most of our residents are from right here in Ashtabula county.

It may have been a house fire, a job loss, the release from a rehabilitation center or one of the many other reasons people become homeless. By contributing to the Samaritan House, you help us provide a place to stay for someone who is facing a night sleeping outside.

I hope you remain involved with the Samaritan House and that you continue to be a partner in our work on behalf of the homeless. You have my deepest thanks for helping us bring help and hope to so many.

With sincere appreciation,
Steve Sargent
Executive Director

**June Messenger Copy
Deadline, 12:00 Noon
May 25**

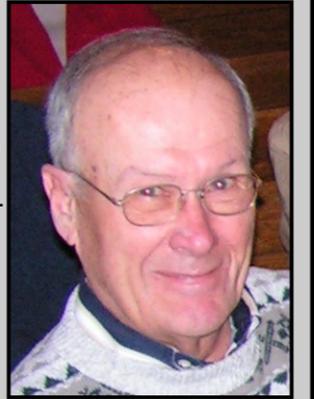
June Messenger Text Only

The June newsletter will be text only put together by Pastor and Beckey. This regular newsletter with pictures, etc. will return in July.

Stewardship Corner

By: Russ Jepson, Stewardship Chairperson

We as members of Messiah Lutheran Church, as members of any organization, religious, social or community, have a responsibility as members to support it physically and financially as able so it can carry out its mission.



I am happy to report that members of Messiah continue to commit faithfully financially and physically when opportunity allows to its mission. Thank you!

When we can finally say adios to this Covid 19 virus and any other mutated viruses, we can lend our physical presence to our mission, to serve.

Thanks again Messiah members.

Messiah Service Is "On The Air"

By: Pastor Meranda

Drive to Messiah. Park your car. Stay in your car. Tune your FM radio to 92.1. The service from inside the building will be broadcast to you outside in the parking lot.

The broadcast antenna is in the sound booth closet room east of the sanctuary. The broadcast range is 300 feet. When we tested it on a Friday it worked well. But this is modern technology. So no guarantees.

The Church service inside continues as usual at 10:00am every Sunday. The FM 92.1 broadcast option is for the folk who drive to the parking lot and wish to remain in your cars. The FM broadcast is not intended to replace normal Church inside, only supplement normal Church inside.

We'll figure out how to bring holy communion out to you in your cars--sort of like the old drive in days, but you won't have to attach a tray to your window (nor tip the waiter).

Our thanks are to Russ Jepson and the tech guy from Saybrook United Methodist Church who figured out how to do this.

Finance Committee Works On Thru The Pandemic!



Messiah Lutheran Church
615 West Prospect Road
Ashtabula, OH 44004

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Clockwise from the top left, Becky Young collecting the offering after Sunday morning worship. A member of the committee secures the offering and deposits it in a safe place. Church Treasurer Candy Rodgers counts the offering and readies the bank deposit. And finally our volunteer accounts payable clerk, Ed Spencer, pays bills as shown in this file photo.

Church Treasurer Comments

By: Candy Rodgers



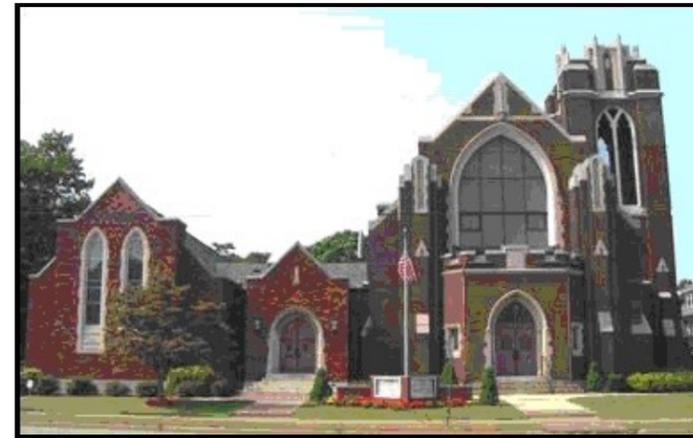
I just wanted to report to our congregation some information from the first quarter of 2021. The Lend a Hand Food Pantry gifts for

the first quarter were \$1,301. These funds are received through the offering envelopes and paid from the church directly to our food pantry on a monthly basis. So if you want to contribute to the food pantry just write it on one of the blank lines on your offering envelope with the amount you wish to contribute.

We have the Pastor's Discretionary account that people give to periodically. That account received \$120 in the first quarter. This account is to be used at Pastor's discretion and has helped many individuals over the years. It has paid people's utilities and last year it helped pay for a washer and dryer for someone in need. Most recently \$250 of that was dispersed to The Samaritan House, which is the homeless shelter next door. Again, if you wish to contribute to that just write Pastor's Discretionary on one of the blank lines on your offering envelope with the amount you want to give.

All of the funds that are generated from the benevolence line of the offering envelopes go directly to the Northeastern Ohio Synod. The first quarter of 2021 generated \$4,192 for our Synod. It was reported to me from a 2020 assembly participant that out of 151 congregations in the Synod we rank in the top 18% in giving. That is extraordinary considering the size of our congregation.

Every month after the council meeting I put any extra financial reports out in the hallway for anyone that is interested. If you ever have any questions regarding your account or the church's finances please feel free to contact me.



Messiah Messenger

May 2021

Worship:

Saturday 9:30 am
 Sunday 10:00 am

Sunday School:

Will Resume Later

Adult Forum:

Will Resume Later

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**Welcome
 Home To
 Messiah**

