

Pastor's Column

I was looking thru the index in the "Occasional Services" book, searching for prayers for healing. I came across the section Holiness of Life. "Holiness" appears throughout the Lutheran Confessions. But we do not commonly use that word. I probably should have, but never did, encourage anyone to "be holy today." We tend to let so-called holiness groups, such as the Pentecostals, use the "holy" word.

So, when I saw my trusty pastor's companion book had indexed Holiness of Life prayers, I was intrigued. Typically Lutheran, the prayer for holiness in life and conduct is more about God than about us. Prayer 71 is in the section relating to Bitterness & Turmoil. Prayer 71 asks that the spirit of Jesus may dwell and reign in our hearts. It asks that we may know God's peace and the power of the Holy Spirit. The prayer finally gets to us when it references the "witness of our lives." But it asks that our lives will witness to the fact we are God's children.

Our holiness does not begin with what we intend, resolve, or accomplish. Our holiness begins with the One with whom we are in relationship. God, outside of us, calls and gathers us to God's loving self. God's Holy Spirit is poured upon us then stirred up from within us. God's Holy Spirit joins us to Christ. Holiness is not self-generated. It comes as we are proximate to God who is holy.

The essence of holiness is being set aside for specific purpose. God is set aside in that only God can be God. God is wholly other, the creator of all that exists. God's holiness is God is above and ground of all that exists. By the same token, our holiness is in our being set aside for specific purpose. That means being what we are called to be and doing what we are called to do. Our holiness is expressed when we act with competence, compassion, and a concern for community. Holiness is exercised in different ways in different life stages. A young woman beginning her career capably is holy one way as a young dad learning how to parent is holy in another way. Two partners in love, forming a household, are holy in their way. A middle-aged couple extends holiness when sharing resources and wisdom. A retiree uses time plan-fully and positively and so fills the day with holy thoughts, attitudes, and activity.

Prayer 71 asks that our lives will bear witness we are God's children. That witness of our lives will change shape and focus in different times and places. Baptism promises we are never alone in bearing witness. We are in relationship to most holy God who creates and redeems us. In the context of the community of the church, God makes us holy. Be holy this good day.

Faithfully your pastor,
Michael Meranda



Lenten Soup Dinner

At the right is a picture taken several years ago of "Soup Dinner" prior to the Lenten Service on a Wednesday evening.

Will we have Lenten Services and soup dinners in 2022? Time will tell. But, we sure hope so!

This Pandemic has upset a lot of apple carts, and many of those carts were at our Church. It is time to get back to normal and again start enjoying the spiritual gifts we have come to know and love.



Outreach Committee Action

By: Renee Spencer, For The Committee

A few months ago, the Outreach Committee met to discuss non-profit organizations and areas of need in Ashtabula County. We unanimously decided that feminine hygiene products for underserved women is an issue that is not often discussed and we would try to help. These products are a basic need that maintains dignity as well as health.



We received a \$250 grant from Thrivent to set things into motion. Displays are set up around the Church to bring attention to this cause and for product drop off. The collection kicked off the first week of July. The Food Pantry made a generous donation that will help to buy product for distribution. Products will be distributed by Ashtabula Catholic Charities and the Women's Justice Center in Geneva. Messiah will distribute as the need arises. There is not an end date for this project. We are taking donations of pads, tampons, and liners. Monetary donations are gladly accepted.

For more information, please contact the committee ; Joanna Pretz-Anderson, Dawn Grimm, Russ Jepson, Nancy Krajec, Shyanna Lindberg, Pastor or me.

Thank you for supporting this much needed mission.

Church Mouse Heard:

The minister's wife was a wonder at conserving food and rarely had to throw away a bit of it. At one meal she served her pastor husband nothing but leftovers that the parson viewed with great disdain. He began to pick at the food, causing his wife to say, "Dear, you forgot the blessing". "Listen, sweetheart, if you can show me one item that hasn't been blessed at least two times, I can't see what another prayer can do for it".



**September Messenger
Copy Deadline Noon
Tuesday, August 31**

Bus Trippin With Barb

By: Barb Lewis

Update on trips:

Lion King - Saturday, October 2, 1:30 matinee, 5 seats left (3 floor at \$121, 2 mezzanine at \$111.

Volant Saturday evening
September 25, Witches
Night Out. \$18.00

Wicked Saturday, December 11, 1:30 matinee, 4 seats, all floor seats, \$131.50.

Wicked Wednesday, December 29, 1:30 matinee, 14 seats \$131.50, all floor.

Call me for more details at 440-228-0872.



Treasurer's Report

By: Candy Rodgers, Church Treasurer

Here are some numbers for giving received in the second quarter of 2021.

Current Fund \$41,797 (Which includes the Easter giving of \$1,610 and the Lent Challenge of \$390)

Benevolence to the Northeastern Ohio Synod \$3,344.00

Lend A Hand Food Pantry \$2,545.00
Pastor's Discretionary Fund \$190.00
Outreach Project \$50

The first half of the year statements have been sent out by regular mail. Please review and report to me anything that may have been recorded incorrectly. If you haven't received yours let me know and I can email it to you instead.

As always, thank you for your generosity and support of our church and ministry. If you ever have any questions regarding your account or the church's finances please feel free to contact me.



Welcome Home to Messiah -- 2021

July 25 thru August 1

For the first time in a long time, we got out of town for a few days. We drove out of state to see our daughter. Generally speaking, I thought people were fairly respectful of the pandemic. Most put on masks as we got out of our cars to go into the rest stop. We distanced going in and out of doors. On the one hand, it was good to get out and travel again. On the other hand, there is that looming specter of wondering what the D Variant is going to do to our health and economy.

I have a high respect for my daughter's generation in what they have survived. They went to high school under the aegis of Nine Eleven. They did their high school careers with images of the Twin Towers collapsing. They finished high school aware of our military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. When they were young adults they had to navigate the economic collapse of 2008. They grew up as Americans in a time when America is extremely polarized in politics and religion. Just when they were adjusting to all that, they were quarantined by the worst pandemic in a century. Yet they got advanced degrees, continued to work, started families, established households. True, they never had to land on a D-Day beachhead; but given what they have survived, they may be becoming the next "greatest generation."

Horrendous Humidity advanced the last few days. Yet summer is winding down. Wine Walleye Festival had diminished but spirited crowds. It's always fun to walk a cordoned off Bridge Street. It's especially nice to greet people you have not seen for a while because of the orders to shelter at home.

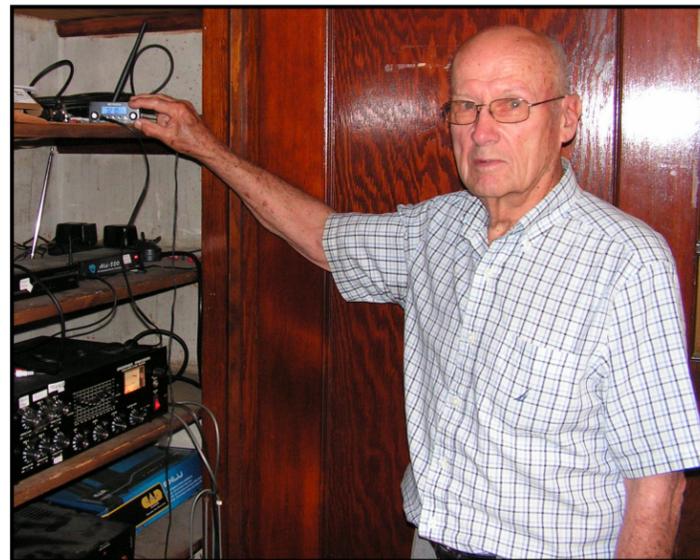
We're looking forward to a baptism July 31st. We need to consider logistics for a possible church picnic on August 22nd. Tuesday I will zoom a Downtown Development Meeting; this is the only group I am in that is still zooming. The inventors of Zoom should win a presidential freedom award or something. When the pandemic kept us separated, Zoom brought us together. Though it was electronic, on zoom we were at least face to face and voice to voice. Stay smart and safe, everyone.

Pastor M



Pastor and Mary at their daughter Emily and her partner Dan's home in Virginia.

Messiah on 92.1 FM



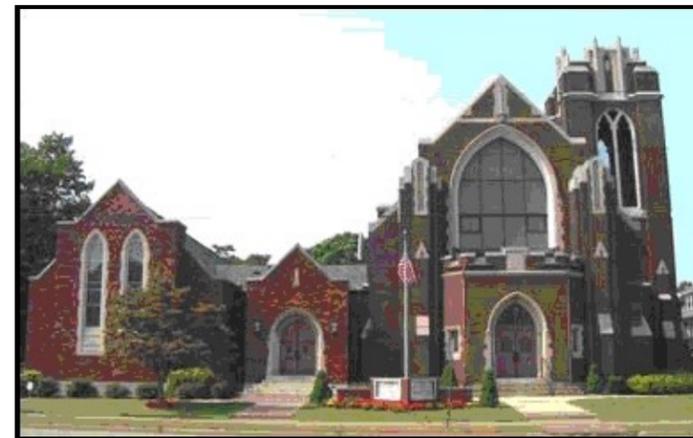
Russ Jepson is shown here at the audio closet at Church pointing out our new FM transmitter. This short range transmitter was purchased by the Property Committee upon the recommendation of the Saybrook United Methodist church.

Pastor reports that we have generally one or two cars in the parking lot listening to the broadcast. The most we have had is three cars.

Russ Jepson and the IT guy from Saybrook UMC installed it and tested it. They did a good job and so far, the system is working perfectly.

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Ashtabula, OH 44004

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Ashtabula, Ohio 44004
Permit No. 313



Welcome Home To Messiah



Messiah Messenger

August 2021

Worship:

Saturday 9:30 am
Sunday 10:00 am

Sunday School:

Will Resume Later

Adult Forum:

Will Resume Later

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