

Haven Lutheran Church



September 25, 2020

WORSHIP AT HAVEN

THIS WEEKEND we will have our final Friday 5 pm worship service and Sunday 9:30 Drive-up/Outdoor service this year. Both services have brought us together and provided important learnings. Now it's time to come together in one service.



STARTING NEXT SUNDAY, October 4th, we will return to **one worship service** in our sanctuary at 9:30 am, with music and holy communion.

We believe we can do this safely IF everyone will do their part: For everyone's safety we ask you to:

- wear masks
- mindfully practice social distancing --- six feet of separation from non-family members – as you enter and leave the church and as you come forward for communion and return to your seat.

- HUM, not sing
- speak responses quietly (After all this time when I've asked for responses with more gusto, now I have to ask you to quell the enthusiasm. COVID is definitely "not fair.")
- use hand sanitizer as you enter the building. (There will also be hand sanitizers in the pews)
- remain home if you are ill or have a temperature.
- be patient and attentive as we learn and adapt along our way.

Though it will "not be the same," it is one baby step closer. So let us rejoice in the Lord and give thanks --- quietly aloud but heartily in our hearts.

Support Our



SEMINARIAN

HAVEN HAS A NEW SEMINARIAN!

Her name is Mia Jo Hoover. She is a Washington County native and lives in Ringgold. Mia continue to work at the Herald-Mail where she has been for 33 years. Her home and sponsoring congregation is St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran, Greensburg. Those of you who attend the Drive-up/Outdoor worship service will get to

meet Mia this Sunday. Everyone else can meet her on October 4th when we worship in the sanctuary or on an upcoming taped service.

WANT TO SEE WHAT THE E.L.C.A. HAS BEEN DOING WITH THE FUNDS WE PROVIDE.

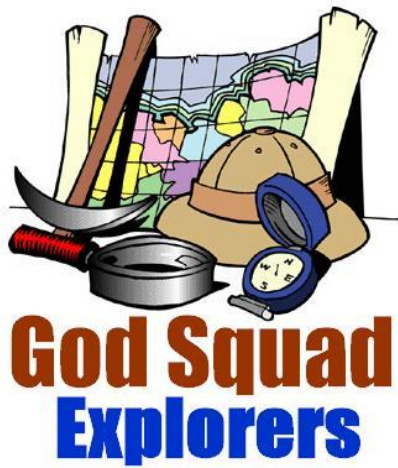
Check out the latest edition of *Stories of Faith in Action* at

<https://www.livinglutheran.org/StoriesofFaith/> . The print on line is a bit small. You can either print it OR use the icon on the bottom, lower left (magnifying glass) to enlarge the pages. You will be encouraged by seeing just a portion of the good work our church's resource support.

BECAUSE WE NEED TO LAUGH

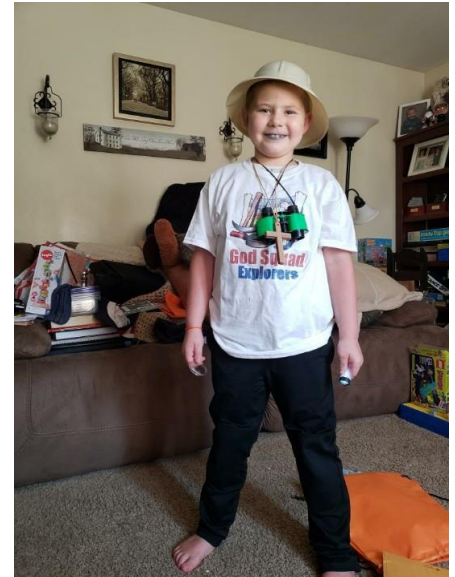
More "Masters of the Nap"





GOD SQUAD EXPLORERS

This Sunday our God Squad Explorers are joining young David as he faces the giant Goliath. What chances does a kid have against an enemy warrior that has struck King Saul and his army with paralyzing fear? If David loses, the Israelites will become the slaves of the Philistines. All David has is his slingshot, five smooth stones and a trust in the Lord who has called him to this particular time and place. Pray for our children and their families as they walk with David toward the fearsome Goliath. Join them in saying this prayer each day this week:



Explorer Ethan Rhodes

*Dear Lord, Thank you for being with David as he faced a GIANT.
We ask you to be with us as we face our fears and hurdles.
Help us to remember that, with you, we are not alone
and we can face ANYTHING! In Jesus name, AMEN*

PAUSE IN GOD'S WORD

*Last Sunday, when our own Drive-up/Outdoor worship service was cancelled, I was able to tune into the DE-MD Synod service in time to hear Bishop Gohl preach on the gospel lesson that usually causes us to cry out, "Not Fair." Matthew 20: 1-16 It's the parable about the generous vineyard owner who chooses to pay all his laborers --- those who worked all day and those who worked only a portion of a day --- the same day's wages. Though we usually offer a reflection on the gospel for the upcoming Sunday, I thought Bishop Gohl's reflections on last Sunday's gospel was insightful and challenging so I offer it as today's devotional reflection. It is good addition to seminarian Katy Moran's sermon last Sunday and a wonderful reminder of the fullness and vastness of God's grace. God IS with us,
Pastor Linda Alessandri*

Read: Matthew 20: 1-16

[Jesus said to the disciples:] ¹"The kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. ²After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. ³When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; ⁴and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. ⁵When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' ⁷They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' ⁸When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then

going to the first.’⁹ When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. ¹⁰ Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. ¹¹ And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹² saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ ¹³ But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage?’ ¹⁴ Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵ Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ ¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

Reflection *This is Bishop Gohl’s reflection as posted in his weekly on-line message.*

It is so easy to mess up the beauty of grace, to end up believing we must offer God some of our expert assistance in the process of being saved and God saving the world!

That isn’t to say that we ought not to do works of justice and mercy for the sake of God’s broken and hurting creation, no, Martin Luther encapsulates that well: God doesn’t need our works, but our neighbor does. And so we do. Our Lutheran social ministry agencies collectively touch one in every 50 Americans; Lutheran Disaster Response and Lutheran World Relief are so often the agencies that are first on the scene and stay until lives are restored and our siblings can sustain themselves; our work and support for domestic and world hunger are making tangible, measurable changes to alleviate the shame that some go hungry when so much is wasted in a world God created that provides enough for all – and yet, despite all that good, don’t we occasionally resent having to bear that load? We love these ministries, and those they serve, and well we should; but then shouldn’t our pews be full with "reinforcements," shouldn’t people flock to our churches and ministries ready to give us some relief and share the burden?

But instead, the Lutheran Church mirrors the crises that are very much a part of the rest of the culture; when we struggle under the burden of homogeneity and can’t seem to grow younger and more diverse like the populations around us; we get discouraged and retreat from the scandal of the gospel, from the pure gift of God’s grace. Often we do it to ourselves with our inability to pass on power and share authority with those who have come after us; deluding ourselves into believing that "membership" in the church, a thoroughly unbiblical concept apart from baptism, confers some sort of privilege; reinforcing that the buildings our congregations inhabit and steward are "ours" and gatekeeping who can come, meet or celebrate there. We are captive to our dislike of change, we are in bondage to our traditions – and cannot free ourselves, and so we sin against God and neighbor by not loving them both with our whole heart. And, in so doing, the gift of grace is corrupted, the beauty of God’s free gift is obstructed.

St. John Chrysostom was the archbishop of Constantinople in the fourth century. He preached a sermon that continues to be read in Eastern Orthodox churches every Easter. His sermon might surprise those among us who tend to look down our noses at folks who show up just on Christmas or Easter. You know the kind, parading their dressed-up families up the center aisle every Easter morning, capriciously sitting in *our* pew so they can smell the lilies *we* paid for and sing "Jesus Christ Is Risen Today" like *they* own the place.

The first time I heard Chrysostom’s sermon, with its olde fashioned introduction, I was sure he was

going to let *them* have it. But, listen to these words that have endured over sixteen centuries: *Let those who have toiled since the first hour, let them now receive their due reward; let any who came after the third hour be grateful to join in the feast, and those who may have come after the sixth, let them not be afraid of being too late; for the Lord is gracious and He receives the last even as the first ... He has pity on the last and He serves the first ... Come you all: enter into the joy of your Lord. You the first and you the last, receive alike your reward; you rich and you poor, dance together; you sober and you weaklings, celebrate the day.* (Chrysostom Paschal Homily)

Sounds a bit like Jesus, don't you think? The same Jesus, who I might add, without distinction, week by week, no matter what dastardly and bastardly things we've done, no matter how we've struggled to love our neighbor as ourselves, the same Jesus – having borne the burden of our sin – in Word and Sacrament, Jesus says to you, and to all of us, *all of us* who are the workers hired at the end of the day, "This is me. For You. All of you." And but for a moment, we taste, and see, and remember how amazing God's grace is, again.

Prayer (*ELW Prayer of the Day*)

Almighty and eternal God, you show perpetual lovingkindness to us your servants. Because we cannot rely on our own abilities, grant us your merciful judgment, and train us to embody the generosity of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

Music

“There’s a Wideness in God’s Mercy” ELW 588

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ygkkX9FxHg0>

“Mercies” (New Every Morning) (Matt Redman)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TYyZCCs5bJc>

“ Call it Grace” (Unspoken) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AAMU68NTVQw>

“God’s Grace” (Luther Barnes) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OFOmV2s2kHY>

“Your Grace Finds Me” (Matt Redman)