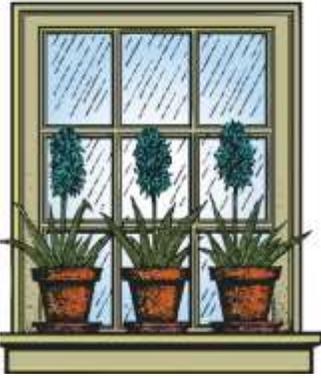


March 2, 2021
Haven Lutheran Church
Hagerstown, Maryland



HAVEN HAS ITS ANNUAL MEETING and the highest in-person attendance of the pandemic

What a great response for our 2021 Annual Meeting on Sunday, February 28! We had over 40 present in the church, including 3 guest. (One of those guests was DE-MD Synod Bishop Bill Gohl!) When we added the members who joined us on ZOOM, we exceeded our needed quorum! Thank you, Haven.

Council President Doug Wright, announced that he had signed a contract for the roof project and there would soon be a project meeting to finalized a starting date. (Right now, estimated to be the first week of April.) The paperwork with Middletown Valley Bank would be signed this coming week. It was then announced that Haven member, Jim Cannon, had graciously agreed to chair the committee that will lead us through a campaign to retire the loan.

Jim provided an enthusiastic introduction. Among his comments was the announcement that **\$6,550 had already been donated** toward the roof project. A **pledge of \$10,000 over the next 5 years** had been received. To offer some incentive, a generous **\$5,000 had been donated for a matching fund** --- Starting February 28th, any donations to the roof project fund will be matched dollar for dollar, up to \$5,000. What a great start! That is 21.55 % of the \$100,000 we need to pay back! (Sorry for all the exclamation marks, but there is a great deal of good news.) We learned that there will be several ways we can all get involved --- with periodic donations to the roof project fund AND through making a pledge to be given over the next five years. It's important to remember, any such giving toward retiring our loan needs to be above and beyond our usual giving to Haven's financial plan for ministry (aka Budget or current expenses.) Caring for the building is our witness to the importance of God's mission and ministry.

We thanked those who had completed their Council terms: John Bracken, Dick Hess, Scott Rhodes, Ned Strange, Susan Strobl, Ed Yelinek and immediate Past President, Amy Mason. We unanimously elected new Council Members June Hess, Will Seilhamer, Ken Tice and Aura Wiles for 3-year terms and Nancy Newkirk and Scott Rhodes for 1-year unexpired terms.

Our final order of business was to consider a proposal from Council to contract with Shifler Electric Associates, Inc to replace the heat pump that service the Gathering Room to cost \$5,890. The current system is over 35 years old and uses a Freon that will become illegal to produce starting this year. Though it will make our reserves tight, there was a greater concern that postponing the replacement would only become costlier and leave us with a system that could go totally kaput at any time. The motion passed unanimously.

Thanks to Seminarian Katy Moran for again masterfully managing ZOOM so members could participate from their homes. Thanks to Marge Cunningham who recorded the attendance, prepared the slips for our "door prizes" and baked a blueberry pie and Jewish Applecake for prizes. In case you missed it, the Strange's won first choice and chose the blueberry pie. Joan Schupp with second choice, selected the bucket of ACT chicken. And finally, Sue Nelson won the Jewish Applecake. I think everyone's mouths were watering as our acolyte, Austin Suchy, drew out the winning names.

Despite a pandemic, we again gathered to do our best "to honor God, to reach out with love to our members and the community, and to share the gospel of Jesus Christ."

Your pastor and partner in ministry,
Linda M. Alessandri

GRATITUDE AND GOD SIGHTINGS



God Sighting:

God Explorer Quill reading about the Woman at the Well in his Sparks Bible as his grandfather helps him with the tricky words.



We continue to watch clips from *the Chosen*, and as we did, Quill said “Hey, I just read about her in the Sparks Bible and that’s exactly what happened.” For those who want to journey to the well, I have included the clip below.

We then had great discussion about how Jesus LOVES to use water to do important things. A few they named: “He calmed the storm.” “He met them on their fishing boats.” “Didn’t one of them walk on water to Jesus”? Then one said “And then there was the story about Jonah and the Whale.” And “what’s that guy’s name that baptizes in the water?” And we always end with getting quiet. So James Paul read Psalm 23....”He leads me beside still waters and restores my soul.” James Paul then said “I feel calm when I am outside fishing, so I really get this one.”

Jamie Cannon

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=el7dzoNV3IY>)



Valerie and Grant’s newborn granddaughter, Amelia Grace, seems to like the water and looking at her mother.

Certainly not your run-of-the-mill snowman.



It seems some have felt Lent to be oppressive and disheartening, especially in a year when a pandemic has already thrown life into a whirlwind and has us questioning the world, our priorities and maybe even ourselves and our worth. Maybe this is a year to simply breathe in the presence and breath of God to steady us and ready us for going forward into new and renewed life.

“But Lent”
And so,
in this holy season....

I will do nothing
but breathe,
receiving the quiet gift
of every inhale
and every exhale,
receiving it even
when I am too busy
or distracted
to notice.
Somehow,

God is present
in the breath,
in the breathing.
And from time to time,
if I simply
stop
trying,
I may be given
the grace
of knowing it.

*Copyright Diana Carroll
February 20, 2021*



NEED YOUR HELP DELIVERING OFFERING ENVELOPES.

I just went to the post office to see about mailing offering envelopes that haven't found their owners. It would cost \$1.85 to mail each pack of monthly envelopes and \$4.85 to mail the weekly sets of envelopes. $15 \times \$1.85$ plus $11 \times \$4.85 = \81.10 . YIKES! I really think we could use those funds elsewhere in ministry.

I am going to lay out the envelopes on a table in the narthex on Sunday and ask those who attend worship to PLEASE deliver several. You don't have to know the people personally --- just live nearby or pass their house on your way to work or appointments. I will have some handled bags so you could leave them on door handles if needed.

IF you still haven't gotten your envelopes and are able to get to the parsonage, I will gladly leave them on the back porch for you to pick up. Just leave a message (301-733-5056) or send me an e-mail (l.alessandri1035@gmail.com)

National Lutheran Choir FREE Virtual Hymn Festival

On March 14 at 5 pm EST, join the NATIONAL LUTHERAN CHOIR and guest artists, the Keith Hampton Singers, for the FREE virtual program, "Hope Lives," which blends spoken reflections, songs and familiar hymns of joy and hope with new music that speaks to our present time, inviting all people of faith to sing in joy together!

This program will take place on Sunday, March 14 @ 4pm (Central Daylight Time) and can be accessed at <https://nlca.com/> . For a virtual subscription to exclusive content (\$10/month), visit NLCA.com



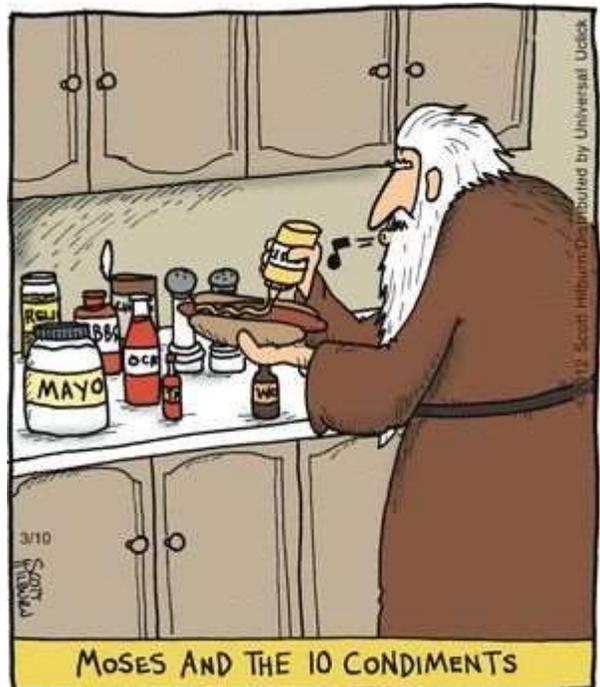
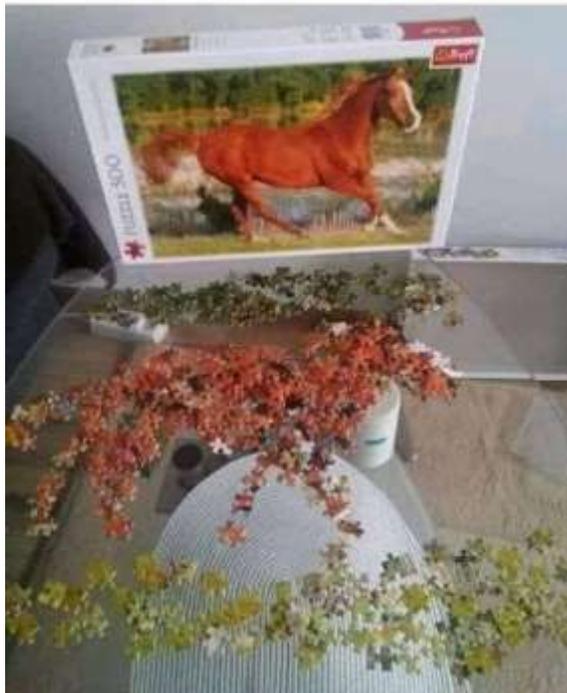
BECAUSE WE NEED TO LAUGH



If you see my mom on Facebook, please remind her I'm still in the sink.



NAILED IT!!!



A PAUSE IN GOD'S WORD

Read: Exodus 20: 1-17

¹God spoke all these words:

²I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; ³you shall have no other gods before me.

⁴You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, ⁶but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

⁷You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

⁸Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. ⁹Six days you shall labor and do all your work. ¹⁰But the seventh day is a sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work—you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your livestock, or the alien resident in your towns. ¹¹For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and consecrated it.

¹²Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

¹³You shall not murder.

¹⁴You shall not commit adultery.

¹⁵You shall not steal.

¹⁶You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

¹⁷You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or male or female slave, or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Reflection: *Today's reflections were prepared by Professor Lois Malcolm as posted on Luther Seminary's God Pause*

What guarantees our safety, health, and flourishing, even amidst diseases, disasters, and interpersonal or societal conflicts? The Ten Commandments, which Jesus concisely summarized with two great commands: Love the Lord your God with the totality of your being, and love your neighbor as you love yourself.

These commands create the conditions for trustworthy relationships; they make clear that genuine love never compromises truth or justice. They free us to rebuff all false gods incapable of generating life within and among us—including the gods of wealth, fame, and power, and any human or creaturely thing that we allow to consume our energy and suck up our attention. Moreover, by rejecting any action that would violate the sacrosanct dignity of human beings, they keep us from turning others into a means for our ends, just as they call us to resist anyone who would turn us into a means for their ends.

Prayer: O God, help us recognize the false gods in our lives so that we can respect and care for others with the same love that enables us to respect and care for ourselves. Amen.

Music:

“Keep the Commandments” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3--thiRbM_I

“Trust and Obey” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qQB_rYBz2pE

“Only A Holy God” (The Acapella Company)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uORftJ2jDnI>

“The Promise” (Michael Card) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cyX-uriW3qk>

“I Will Follow” (Chris Tomlin) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ohvhmGSfxI>

“Together (We'll Get Through This)” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N-U7X2DR2C4>