



The Scroll



Volume 71, Issue 3 • March 202

LOOKING FOR GOD

Message from Pastor Linda

LAST WEEK I WENT ON A WILD HUNT. It was

the type of pursuit most, if not all of us, have experienced – the hunt for that irreplaceable, misplaced belonging. As I set off to run errands, I mindlessly shoved my reading glasses and case in my coat pocket. Not giving them a second thought, I bounced from one store to another in New Milford.

When I returned to my study, I sat back down at my computer and reached for my reading glasses. To my dismay, they were not in my jacket. Mind you, losing my reading glasses is on the same scale of losing a wallet or a cell phone. Without them, I am lost; without them I cannot read or write - two activities essential in my day-to-day work. Thus began my mad quest to find them.

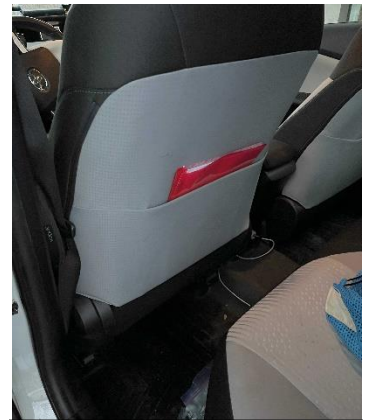
They were nowhere in the study or church office. Not in the Sanctuary. Not in my car. Groaning inside, I called each of the shops I'd visited: "*Has anyone found a pair of reading glasses?*" Each time, the answer was '*no, I'm sorry.*' It was obvious I needed to return to New Milford and scour the parking lots and retrace my path in the stores. Back to the car I trudged, muttering at myself with frustration. An hour later I returned home – empty-handed.

Because of a meeting, my search was suspended for the time being. After the meeting, I got home, sick with the knowledge that I was going to have shell out a ridiculous amount of money for a new pair. Too, it would likely take two weeks before they'd come, making work much more challenging. I simply knew no other place to search. Argh.

It was then I did my 'hail mary' and asked our son, Daniel, if he wouldn't mind looking in the car one

more time since he seemed far more hopeful. (He had prayed while I had fretted.) He hopped up to look. A few minutes later, he asked me to come out to the garage. He had the back car door open and told me to look. I did and saw the usual stuff in the back.

"What?" I asked. He said, "Look again." I followed his instruction, and again, 'What? I don't see anything.' A third time, he pointed his finger straight at a particular spot, and said, "Look!" There jammed tightly in between the seat back and the seat belt were my glasses, well camouflaged in black. Relief flooded me. Thank God! (Anyone who has searched high and low for something important and found it, knows the feeling.)



The missing case/glasses
Do you see them?

A little while later, I was struck by the fact that all the while I was on this crazy, frustration-inducing search, **they were with me all along – RIGHT NEXT TO ME!**

This got me to thinking how often we miss seeing God in so many different situations we find ourselves in. We wonder 'where is He,' 'why doesn't He show Himself,' 'why isn't He doing something.' *when all along, He's been RIGHT NEXT TO US*, every step of the way.

We were looking in all the wrong places – expending time and energy, getting all worked up,

Continued next page

annoyed or upset – never trusting or acknowledging He is always with us. Sometimes we are simply expecting to see Him turn up or show Himself on our terms. Sometimes it's because we overlook him. And sometimes, like myself, we just need someone else to help us/me see Him.

May this silly story perhaps be a gentle reminder that even when we can't see the Lord's presence in our midst, the One who promises 'I will be with you' is WITH YOU ALWAYS.



ANNUAL MEETING HIGHLIGHTS, By Julie Fredlund

- To support the Council's recommendation to approve the 2023 proposed Budget of \$224,325.00, which projects an \$18K deficit, passed unanimously.
- To approve the Council's recommendation to elect the following members for Church Council: Christine Chase for Vice Chair, Donna Alex for CFO, and Spencer Guptill for a renewed term by Elliott Fisher, seconded by Starr Evans, passed unanimously.
- To approve the Council's recommendation to welcome into Church Membership Diann Buro, Carol Maxwell, and Daniel Williams, passed unanimously.

With the support of the Council and PRC, Pastor Linda shared in our meeting, that this year, in July, she will be taking a four-week, unpaid Leave of Absence. In doing so, the church will direct her usual salary into a fund for a future (way in the future!) Pastoral Search which are often quite costly. Not only will her LOA build a fund for the future, it will also enhance Pastor Linda's resiliency for ministry and allow her to enjoy time with Michel in his retirement. This LOA differs from a Sabbatical in that, Pastor Linda will be accessible in the event of a crisis or emergency. Pastor Marlon Simpkins and Pastor Tamara Ravelo will be preaching in her absence all the month of July except July 2.



Welcome and blessings to our new members: (Left to Right) Elliott Fisher, Daniel Williams, Carol Maxwell and Diann Buro

HANGOUT HAVEN/SOUL TALK & SUPPER, By Jane Light

I am so happy that Pastor Linda has started two great programs for youth, Hangout Haven and Soul Talk and Supper. Hangout Haven is an after-school hangout at the church on Mondays, where we can play games, do homework, have a snack, or do an activity of our choice. It is a safe, welcoming space where we can have fun with friends and church family, and it is a much better alternative than going home to an empty house. I always have so much fun and Hangout Haven has made Mondays something I look forward to!



Soul Talk and Supper is a dinner at the church on Saturdays where we eat, play games, and then discuss a certain event from the Bible. It is always so fun to eat a delicious meal made by church family and play with friends, and then learn about the Bible and how God wants us to live.

I think that Hangout Haven is a good way for kids to invite their friends into our church, and it's non-religious so they can just hang out, have fun, and be familiarized with our church. Then, if they are more comfortable, kids can invite them to Soul Talk and Supper, and maybe be introduced to the Bible and God.

I think that a lot of kids today don't know God, and maybe they are in a bad situation. Sometimes it's difficult for them to start following Him, because they might never have had previous church experience or might not have someone to tell them about Him. Hangout Haven and Soul Talk + Supper can help them to be eased into knowing God and living by His word, and I think that they can help a lot of kids and create a more comfortable environment and support system for them, too. I love these programs and I hope to see more kids coming to join us.



Youth enjoying dinner at Saturday Soul Talk & Supper.



READY TO RESPOND!

Although we are followers of Jesus, we know we are not immune to bad things happening in our lives. There are accidents, storms, violence and health crises that can happen at the blink of an eye. At Salem, we know we can't necessarily stop any from happening, but we can be prepared to respond rather than react in these challenging situations. This is why we have been intentional about seeking training and practice so that if and when that moment happens here we know what to do.

Our AED is located in the Narthex to the left of the Sanctuary doors.

In the past months, we have had our annual Fire Drill, and received A.L.I.C.E. training for Active Shooters (Run, Hide, Fight). Our church has a policy of doing Background Checks for adult volunteers who work with children and youth. In partnership with the town of Washington, we now

have the ability to serve as a Temporary Evacuation Point for people during major power outages. Even now, we are in process of upgrading our kitchen to commercial standards in order to prepare and serve meals.

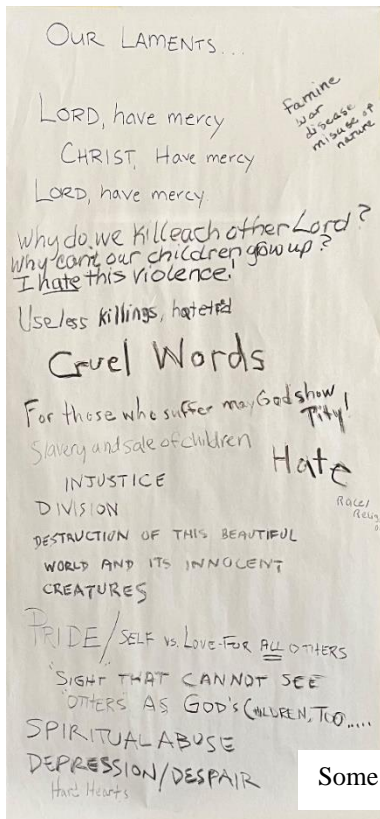
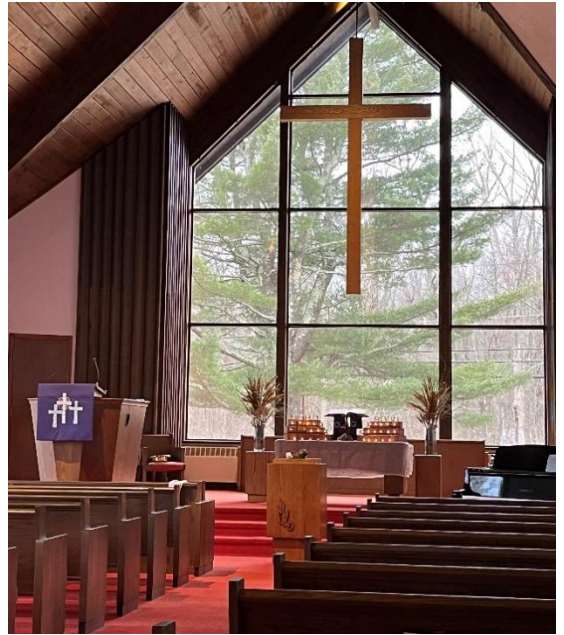
This past month, Mo Von Moffeart, a certified CPR instructor, taught a class in CPR/AED. We had four individuals participate. God forbid, if there is ever a cardiac arrest at our church, we have numerous people who know how to begin CPR and use the AED (located in our church Narthex).



REFLECTIONS ON ASH WEDNESDAY, By Steve and Carol Allison

As newcomers to Salem, we had never before participated in an Ash Wednesday observance in any way. We were curious, wondering how ashes could inspire worship.

Although we entered the building with questions, we left with deeper understanding of ourselves and God's working in quiet spaces. At the first of the six stations we were instructed to take a cold piece of clay and mold it, noticing its gradual warming to the touch, a symbol of how the Lord molds us, His fingerprints all over His Creation!



Another station asked us to consider our mortality in light of God's overall plan for our lives.

And another station allowed us to discover the way ashes smudge and smear (symbolic of the mess and pain of sin), but then the way a cross can appear in the midst by erasing ash from the middle of the smear. This was symbolic of how Christ breaks through the broken and sinful parts of our lives, bringing light and hope.

At each station, we read scriptures and offered prayers. Towards the end, we contemplated common woes of this life on earth, and then on small private notes, wrote to God a Lenten promise appropriate for us.

Finally, in the candlelit sanctuary, we quietly approached the altar, receiving prayer and anointing on our foreheads with ashes. Our hearts were filled as we drove away, marked by the sign of the cross, both on the inside and the outside!

Some expressions of our lament for our world.



SALEM KITCHEN PROJECT, By Michel Williams Background

While there may not seem to be a lot of construction activity in the kitchen, there has been a lot of work in the background in preparation for this important renovation. The project is a combination of two important needs that came together in a surprising way. Of course, God was in the works bringing together these needs with a surprising outcome.

Sometime before November 2021, a conversation between the Town and Pastor Linda occurred that developed into a vision for the church to become a warming shelter/ emergency shelter for the Town. The seasonal power

outages that were occurring combined with the discovery that during Covid, there was no appropriate place in the area that could be called upon for an emergency shelter. After many conversations at the Town level, Emergency Management Team, Red Cross and in the church council, a proposal was developed to be presented to the church to use our facility for the Town's Emergency Shelter. As you know, this proposal was met with support from our congregation and we moved forward.

The first step was to install a full building generator. A bid went out from the Town and Tower Generator was selected to install the equipment that is now fully operational. During a recent power outage, our church was utilized by several people for a warming and phone charging station.

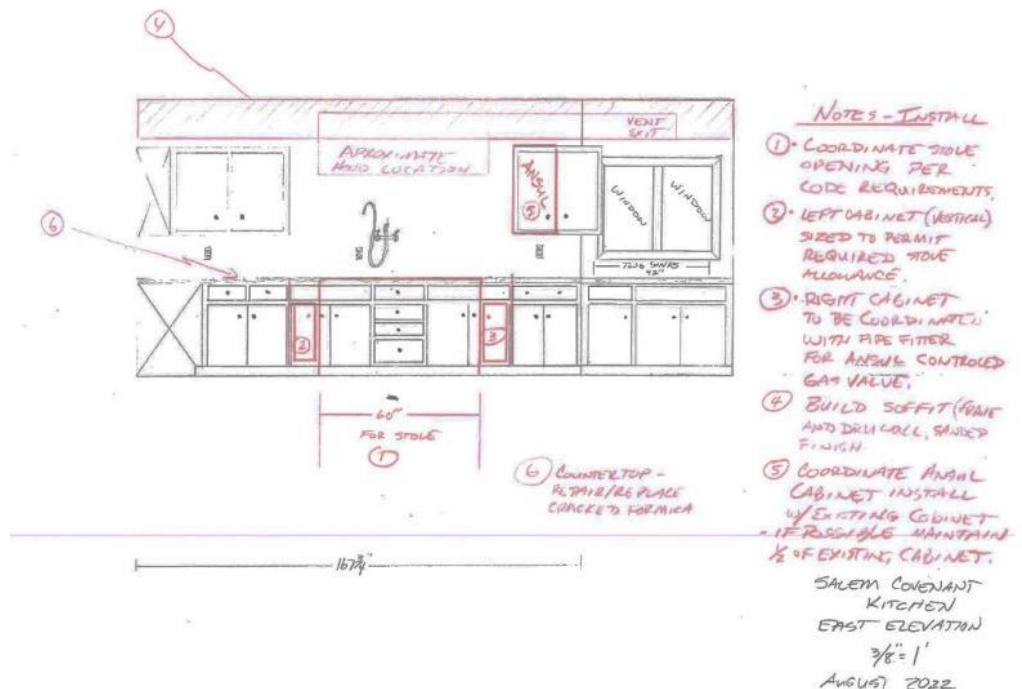
Next Steps

Drawings have been made of the work that will occur in the coming months. A few images can be found below for those interested.

1. We will begin the process by modifying the cabinets over the existing refrigerator so that a commercial refrigerator can be installed.
2. The existing stove tops and the cabinets below them will be removed to create an opening in preparation for a commercial stove; they will be relocated under the counter where rolling carts are currently being stored.
3. Countertops along the stove wall to the sink area will be updated.
4. A hood and vent system will be installed over the stove providing the required ventilation for the stove.
5. Propane will be piped into the kitchen and a small residential oven/stove will be installed until the summer when the commercial oven will arrive.
6. During the summer, the existing dishwasher and stainless counters along with the two wall mounted ovens and surrounding cabinets will be removed to make space for a new commercial dishwasher and a state-required sink system.

Confirming an exact schedule is not possible at this time due to busy contractor schedules. It is our hope that the refrigerator and stove work (#1 and #2 above) will be completed by March with the remainder of the work done in July when funding becomes available for the remaining work.

One of the drawings showing remodeling and configurations.



LETTERS FROM OUR COVENANT KIDS CONGO
(Currently, Salem financially supports ten children)

Hi Salem,

I'm very happy to write you this letter. I thank you for the will and love you have toward me and my family. I thank you for sending me \$150. I used [some] money for me and my family and [some] money for the community.

With that money I have bought these things below:

- a plastic chair,
- 2 cans of palm oil
- shoes
- some used clothes

It helped me so much and my family.

May God bless you and keep you. give you long life.



Thank you, Macembe

Good morning,

It is with great joy that I'm writing you this letter to thank you for the sum of money I received from you through World Vision. In fact, I received the sum of \$100 of which \$37 went to my community and I used \$113 dollars which help me buy the following articles.

May the Lord bless you and his church. With all of my heart. thank you.

This amount of money allowed me to buy:

- 1 trousers for my brother
- 3 trousers for me,
- 4 T-shirts
- 1 pair of shoes in order to look good in church
- 1 can of 2.5 liters of oil
- 1 bag of flour for our small business

I and my family are thankful. We pray for you every day for the protection of God to be upon you. (I was assisted by my brother John.)

With all my love for you, your sponsor child,
Mwendeka Patient

Dear Salem,

Good morning! I am so happy to write this letter for the love you expressed toward me and my family. I'm really happy for \$150 you sent to me; \$37.50 is used for other community needs and \$112.50 helped us to purchase the things as follows:

a suitcase

- a pair of shoes
- a luxury cloth
- a can of palm oil for income generating activities
- a pair of sandals and some trippers [?] to wear.

May God bless you and give you so much money by keeping you healthy for helping for helping me.

Thanks a lot! Obuko Nzoni Salem





ORDER YOUR EASTER FLOWERS, By Diane Swanson

Happy Spring! Ok! Not yet but spring is fast approaching which means Easter (April 9) is fast approaching too, and that means flowers. Yes, folks it is time to sign up for Easter Flowers.

Sign up sheets are in the Narthex. You have until March 19 to sign up to pay. Please make sure you you sign up correctly for *In Honor of* or *In Memory of* and choose color type of hyacinths and azaleas. Please note on daffodils sign up sheets lower section there is space to sign up mini daffodils. Any questions, you can contact: Diane Swanson, 860.868.7801 (H), 860.898.0434 (C), or swanson12151959@gmail.com. So please sign up and let's make Salem beautiful this Easter. In God's love, Diane



UPDATE



NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY AVAILABLE!

Deborah Griesbach, our Office Administrator, has been hard at work updating our Church Directory. You should receive a copy of it in your email. However, if you would like a hard copy, please let Deborah know and she will have one printed for you.



PROPERTY UPDATE

Air Conditioning

It won't be long until the warmer months arrive and we will have to start running our fans or Air Conditioning. Many have asked about the current status of installing Air Conditioning in the Sanctuary. Watch for upcoming details for a congregational meeting to discuss our options.

Window Shades

Some may have noticed that we have new window shades in the Church office and Pastor's Study. After years of trying to work around the glare on the computer monitors, the decision was made to install these attractive and effective window dressings. Thank you to Scott and Patty Parker for their help in this process!

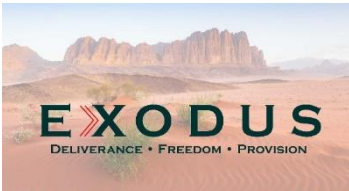
The new window shades in the Church Office.



MARCH – WOMEN'S' HISTORY MONTH

It was May 19, 1919 that women in our country were given the right to vote. It was only in 1976 that our Covenant denomination allowed and affirmed women to be ordained as Covenant Pastors! Continuing with our theme of celebrating the rich diversity in God's Church, this month we will focus on Women, celebrating and recognizing the many ways in which women have enriched the life of the Church throughout the generations and today.

Pastor Linda and Music Minister, Susan Anthony Klein will be working together to weave anthems and other music composed by women, prayers, and thoughts of women theologians into our worship services.



Our IN-DEPTH STUDY/DISCUSSION ON THE BOOK OF EXODUS Continues
Monday Evenings, 7:00 pm via Zoom with Pastor Linda leading.
Email Pastor Linda for more information.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Women's
Integrative Health
Seminar

With Karen Wunderlich, RNC, MSN, WHCNP
Saturday, March 4 - 10:00 am - Noon
Free - Light Lunch provided

alternative medicine
balance
movement
meditation
nutrition
relationships
rest
vitamins/supplements

The Best of Baroque

Music for piano, flute, and strings
Bach, Handel and Vivaldi

Saturday, March 18, 4 pm, Pawling
Christ Church on Quaker Hill

Saturday, March 18, 7:30 pm, Washington
Salem Covenant Church, 92 Baldwin Hill

Sunday, March 19, 4 pm, Kent
St. Andrew's Church, 1 North Main St.

MARCH CALENDAR

March – Women's History Month

March 4 – Women's Integrative Health Seminar, 10- Noon

March 5 – Worship and Communion

- Family and Fellowship

March 6/13/20/27 – Hangout Haven, 2:45 pm

- **Exodus Bible Study, 7:00 pm via zoom**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88102791118?pwd=eXhjZytsNi9TcWh1ODBjdTk2WGdsdz09>

March 8 - Council meeting, 6:00 pm

March 11/25 –Saturday Soul Talk & Supper, Youth (Grades 6-12)

March 18 – Sherman Chamber Ensemble, 7:30 pm

March 22 – Evening Prayer, 7:00 pm

March 24 – Lenten Simple Supper, 6:00

APRIL 2-9 – Holy Week and Easter – Watch for Details of Dates and Times of Special Services

Happy Birthday! MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Erik Quist	1
Michael Ravelo	2
Leo White	2
Michel Williams	4
Amy Hoeniger	7
Matt Light	8
Diane Hansen	10
Addyson Cannavaro	13
Starr Evans	13
Roger Cannavaro	18
Elysse Lessa	23
Julie Fredlund	31

IN REMEMBRANCE...

- March 3, 2022, Josefa Ravelo (Michael Ravelo's grandmother)
- March 4, 2018 - Robin Williams (Lori, Melissa, and Ellen's mom)
- March 15, 2018 - Virginia Gustafson (Ginny & Elaine's mother)
- March 15, 2021 - Arne Pearson (Inger Pearson's husband)
- March 20, 2012 - Vincent Quist (Margit and Gunnar's father)
- March 20, 2016 - Bobby Lundberg (Mary Ann's Son)
- March 22, 2022 - Richard Gauthey (Joan's brother)

Church Staff

Senior Pastor – Reverend Linda Williams
Music Minister – Susan Anthony-Klein
Office Administrator – Deborah Griesbach
Nursery Care Provider – Stephanie Shaw
Housekeeper – Anna Bialack

Church Council

Chair – Elliott Fisher
Vice-Chair – Christine Chase
CFO – Donna Alex (Holly Camp – interim)
Secretary – Julie Fredlund
Trustee – Spencer Guptill
Spiritual Formation – Deb Andrews
Outreach & Missions – Kiersten Marich
Fellowship – Robin McHan
Diaconate – Susan Swanson
Ex-Officio – Pastor Linda Williams

Financial Secretary

Starr Evans

Pastoral Relations Committee

Elliott Fisher
Spencer Guptill
Peter Becker
Sallie Stevens
Carol Walzer