

Levenhagen

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March/April 2022

Thoughts from Aaron

“I will be with you...”

I have been thinking lately about the many times that God chose one of His people to carry out a seemingly impossible task. Take Moses for example: at the age of eighty, God breaks a four-hundred-year silence and sends him on what looks like a fool's errand. An ordinary day tending the sheep changed dramatically when God made His presence known in fire and Word, announced His special name, and sent Moses to Pharaoh to lead God's people out of bondage in Egypt. Moses responded much like many of us would: “Who am I that I should go?” (Exodus 3:11). But God was not the slightest bit fazed by Moses' fear. He told Moses *exactly* what will enable him to be successful in his mission: “I will be with you” (Exodus 3:12). God would be with Him. The call to God's service came with the promise of God's presence.

God made similar promises to many of His people. He was the God who was with Noah during the flood, the God who was with Abraham on Mt. Moriah, with Joseph in prison in Egypt, with Joshua as he led the Israelites into the promised land, with Gideon who was too afraid to lead his troops into battle, and with the prophet Isaiah—who not only received the promise himself but was told to remind the people that God would be them too. Think of our Lord Jesus Christ. Even His very name is a promise... *Immanuel*...the Hebrew word meaning *God with us*. Every time God calls His people into action in His service, He promises them His presence.

In less than a month, Lord willing, my classmates and I will file into the Chapel of St. Timothy and St. Titus to learn where we have been called to serve our vicarages. If I am honest, I am afraid. *Who am I that I should go?* If there is to be any success in ministry, the power is not in the one who goes, but in the One who sends. And so, I cling to His promises: “Do not be afraid...for I am with you...” “I am with you always...” “I will never leave you nor forsake you.”

Those promises are there for you too! He is there in the boring mundane, details of your lives. He is there in your moments of most gut-wrenching pain when you feel most alone. And wherever He has called you to go and however He has called you to serve...He is with you always. He loves you so deeply that He will not allow *anything* to separate you from His presence. Not your fears and insecurities. Not pain or illness. Not your sin. Not even death. He goes with you today and every day until He comes again to take us into His presence for eternity.

“Then I heard the voice the Lord, saying ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?’ Then I said, ‘Here am I. Send me!’”

(Isaiah 6:8, NASB)



Above: Rainy day rainbow over campus, looking east from Chapel Plaza

Prayer Requests

- Call Day – that the Lord will guide our vicarage placement and prepare us to serve Him faithfully.
- For our Holy Week observances, that each of us may come to know the Lord more and have our faith strengthened by reflection on the Passion and Resurrection.
- For God's guidance as Nathan begins to consider colleges and courses of study.

Family Update

Theater & Racing, Colleges & Call Day

Another semester is halfway done already! It is Reading Week and I have my usual stack of work to get done. But it has been a welcome change to have a few extra moments to enjoy time with family. It has been an eventful couple of months for everyone in the family.

In addition to keeping up with studies at Christ Community Lutheran School, Faith was cast as a cheerleader and featured dancer in a local youth theater production of "High School Musical." She has rehearsals three times a week, so that keeps her busy and us hopping keeping the taxi running! The show will be presented in early May, and we are super excited to see the results of her hard work. She continues to enjoy spending as much time as possible with her friends.

Nathan is working hard as usual—both at school and at his job. Now that warm weather has arrived, he is back working at the Gateway Kartplex across the river in Madison, IL. After finishing second in the local karting championship last year, he is excited to move up to the next level, the Margay Ignite Championship. He has worked hard selling sponsorships and has put in a lot of early mornings working on his fitness. The first race is a couple of weeks away and the whole family is looking forward to seeing him in action. We have

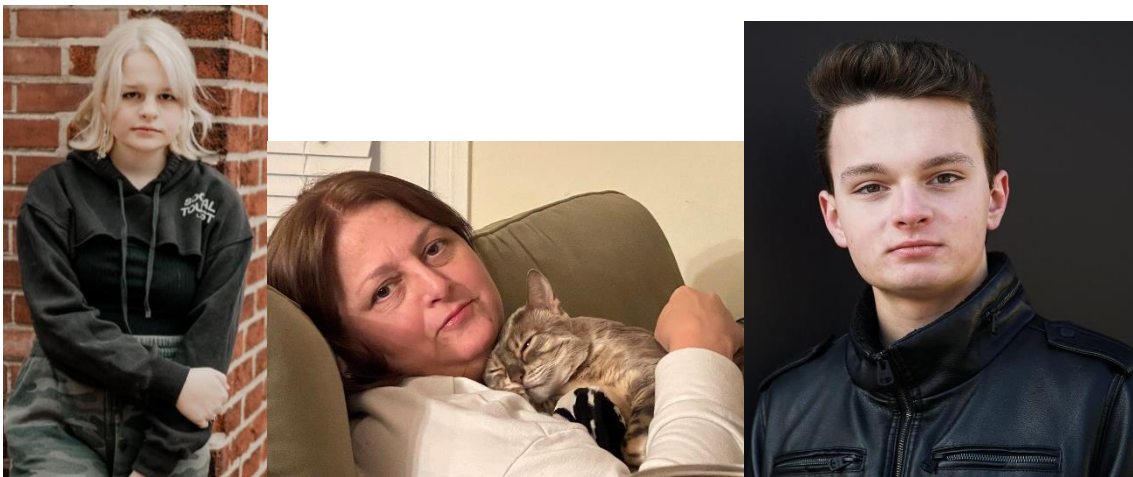
also begun the college visit process—which I am not sure his parents are 100% ready for! He is focused on automotive or motorsports engineering right now.

Jill continues her work in digital marketing and website design for the LWML headquarters. She loves her coworkers and is always trying to think of creative ways to get the word out about the work these enthusiastic women are doing in congregations across the country. She is really the glue that holds our family together and keep us all going with our busy schedules and commitments.

I (Aaron) have been as busy as ever with both coursework and fieldwork. Most Sundays, I am serving as the liturgist at Zion Lutheran Church. I will be preaching this week, which is exciting! I will admit to some nerves as Call Day draws near. It is hard to feel ready to take on the responsibility of serving as a vicar. Since next year is Nathan's senior year, we are hoping to serve a local vicarage. The Call Day service will be held on Tuesday, April 26 and will be livestreamed.

We thank God for the continued support of our family and friends, old and new!

LEFT: Faith (March 2022); CENTER: Jill and our cat, Eden; RIGHT: Nathan (March 2022)



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