

The Elim Waterfall

January – February – March 2026

From the Pastor:

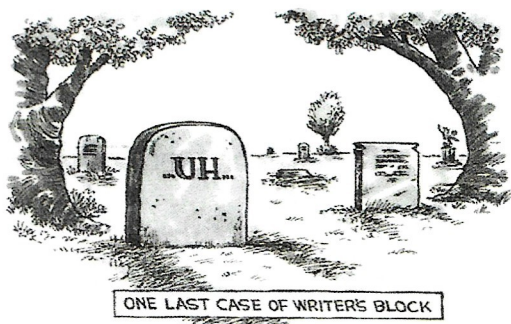
Writer's block. It's a condition I seem to come down with exactly four times a year, January, April, July, and October. Those are newsletter months in case you're wondering! Time for me to write another Pulitzer Prize winning article! But why does my muse always choose that time to retire rather than inspire?

So, you might want to picture me sitting in a chair, computer on my lap, waiting patiently for an idea to develop. And I wait, and I wait, and I wait. Nothing. Maybe I'm trying too hard. Maybe a game of solitaire will help. It doesn't. Maybe a few more games of solitaire will help. It doesn't. Maybe it's time to go old school. Grab a pencil and a pad of paper. But my pencil stages a rebellion and starts doodling instead. But I find encouragement in the fact that, at least I'm being creative. I look down at my pencil. It needs sharpening now, so I make my way to the kitchen. Oddly enough, I can't find a pencil sharpener in my fridge, but I do find a Pepsi! Maybe the caffeine will jar loose an idea. IT DOESN'T!

They say the mind is a terrible thing to waste, but I find myself doing it anyway. Every January, April, July, and October. In some ways, it's ironic. If you asked me to write a sermon on a given passage of scripture, I'd be all over it. Study the passage, do my research, pray over it, and my fingers will hit that keyboard running. Ask me to write a letter for a specific purpose, and I'm on it. Give me an idea. Give me a theme, and I'll take it from there. But having to come up with an idea? Hello Writer's Block!!! It's kind of like driving my little red Focus in two inches of deep snow. The wheels spin and I just sit there going nowhere.

You ever feel that way about life in general? Like you want to be creative. You want to be productive. But you've got some kind of block that's preventing you from doing it. You're in my little red Focus stuck in life, wheels spinning but going nowhere.

I call it writer's block, but I'm guessing it has some other elements attached to it, as well. Complacency, lethargy, procrastination, rationalization...I think they're all mixed up in it. But whatever we call it, let's do our best to call it quits. It's a new year, and God still desires us to be faithful, obedient, and productive, both as individuals and as a church. So, let's say good-bye to doodling and say hello to doooing! Let's say good-bye to Solitaire and say hello to our community! We're not ready to give up as a church. So, let's seek to grow...spiritually, numerically, and relationally with those around us. God is the only muse we need so let's ask Him for inspiration and direction. Don't let the cartoon below define our lives. We still have plenty to say in praise and service to our Lord!



DAVE COVERLY

Have I told you lately how much I love and appreciate you? Well, I do! It's a joy to serve you!

Pastor Marv

MAKING LENT PRETZELS: What Pretzels Remind Us during Lent by Grace Ruiters

<https://www.faithward.org/lent-pretzels-recipe-and-pretzel-prayer/>

Pretzels are a popular snack year-round today, but they first became popular as a Lenten food for Christians in the seventh century. The word *Pretzel* is derived from a German word that means “little arms.” The twisted shape of pretzels is meant to resemble two arms crossed in prayer. Making Lent pretzels is a way to remember that Lent is a season of prayer.

Baking Lent pretzels is also an opportunity to share the true meaning behind a pretzel’s twist with children. Then every time they eat a pretzel, they can be reminded of the importance of prayer.

How pretzels became a Lent tradition

Some traditions say that the earliest pretzels were rewards monks gave to their students for reciting their prayers correctly. But they ultimately became popular because of their simple ingredient list. The first pretzels were made with just flour, salt, and water.

Christians in the seventh century followed strict rules about what they could eat during the season of Lent. Meat, dairy, fats, and eggs were all off-limits from Ash Wednesday through Easter. Pretzels could be made with inexpensive ingredients that followed the Lent fasting practices of the time. This made them popular.

It was customary to give pretzels to townspeople who were poor on certain days of Lent.

Making Lent pretzels at home as a reminder to pray

Consider making pretzels with your family or friends during Lent. As you make the pretzels, talk about what the shape of the pretzel symbolizes: that Lent is a time of prayer. Think together about how you can honor the practice of prayer. Before you eat your pretzels, say a prayer. Thank God for the food on your table and request God’s care for those who are hurting or hungry.

Just as Christians did in the Middle Ages, you might consider giving some of the pretzels away as gifts.

Lent pretzel prayer

Dear God, we ask you to bless these pretzels which we are about to eat. Each time we eat them may we be reminded that this is the season of Lent, a time of prayer. Help us to remember to pray for those who need our prayers each day. Keep your loving arms around us, O God, to protect us. In Jesus’s name, Amen.

Baked Soft Pretzel Recipe

Sources: This recipe is adapted from homemade pretzel recipes by [Alton Brown](#) and [Tasty](#).

Ingredients

- 1 ½ cups hot water
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1 package active dry yeast
- 4 tablespoons (½ stick) unsalted butter, melted
- 4 ½ cups flour (22 ounces)
- 10 cups water
- ¾ cup baking soda
- 1 egg, beaten and mixed with 1 tablespoon of water



Instructions

1. Mix the water, sugar, salt, and yeast together in a large bowl. Let the mixture sit for five minutes, until the yeast starts to bloom (it should look like a layer of foam on the surface of the water).
2. Add in the butter and flour, and mix until the dough is smooth like satin.
3. Cover the bowl and let it sit until the dough is doubled in size, about 1 hour.
4. Preheat your oven to 450 degrees F and spray baking sheets with oil.
5. Boil water with baking soda in a large saucepan.
6. Divide the dough into eight pieces. Shape each piece of dough into a 24-inch rope and then twist it into pretzel shape.
7. Dip each pretzel in boiling water for 30 seconds on each side before placing it on the sheet pan.
8. Brush the pretzels with egg wash and sprinkle them with salt.
9. Bake for 12-14 minutes.

dates to Remember

January

- 1 - NEW YEAR'S DAY
- 5 - Installation of new Consistory members during worship service
- 11 - Communion Sunday & Benevolent Fund Offering taken
- 19 - MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY

February

- 14 - VALENTINE'S DAY
- 16 - PRESIDENTS' DAY
- 18 - ASH WEDNESDAY
- 22 - Lenten Sunday (1)

March

- 1 - Lenten Sunday (2)
- 8 - Lenten Sunday (3)
- 15 - Lenten Sunday (4)
- 17 - ST. PATRICK'S DAY
- 22 - Lenten Sunday (5)
- 25 - Newsletter Deadline
- 29 - Lenten Sunday (6)
Palm Sunday



Birthdays & Anniversaries (A)

JANUARY

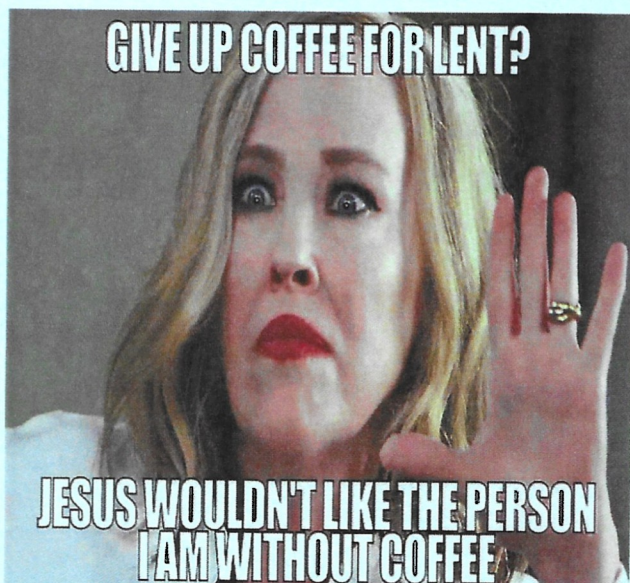
- 6 - DeWayne Adams
- 11 - Carol Hayenga
- 23 - Luanne Hall
- 28 - Blanche Houston
 - Bill Nesemeier
 - Aaliyah Ashlin

FEBRUARY

- 8 - Gary Rozeboom
- 9 - Wayne Hayenga
- 12 - Brad Engelkes
- 28 - Dawn Somers

MARCH

- 6 - Rodney & Cyndy Hayenga (A)
- 7 - Julie Mann
- 8 - Roger Hayenga
- 9 - Dan & Leslie Mann (A)
- 16 - Roger & Carol Hayenga (A)
- 17 - Henry Haner
- 24 - Bev Kearns
- 26 - Deb Maas & Gary Nefstead (A)
- 28 - Marla Rozeboom
- 29 - Chuck Kearns
- 31 - Charles "Butch" Hepfer



GOD CREATED THE SEASONS AS
PART OF HIS SOVEREIGN PLAN...

As long as the earth endures,
seedtime and harvest,
cold and heat,
summer and winter,
day and night will never cease.

Genesis 8:22