

# Covenant News



July 2020

## *Pastor's Spin*



Well, all I can say is...it's coming along. I hadn't been part in leading a full-scale outdoor worship since my internship in Dallas, Texas, when we celebrated the Easter Vigil at some horrendously early morning hour on Easter Sunday. Of course, we didn't have to worry about spacing out or anything. I had lined up a bunch of chairs in however many rows, prepared for people who didn't have to wear masks.

Still, that new setting for me presented its own complications. What we're doing now has its fair share of complications for all of us, but we're learning together. We're still worshipping God in spite of whatever complications may arise.

It reminds me of an image that is often brought up to think about worship: that it's almost like a play (or a musical, when we could, actually, sing safely indoors). If we were to consider such a metaphor, we would envision us as the actors on stage, performing this scripted-out pre-planned production with some dialoguing, monologuing, story-telling, etc., all while God sits in the audience (or maybe we'd go along with this more if we say God's up in the heavenly-level balcony seats). And with our Lutheran liturgical background in worship, we're almost convinced worship has to be done in a certain way. Otherwise, that God audience-member, will turn into a most intense theater critic to rival the beloved Siskel and Ebert, giving us two thumbs...way, way down into the deathly abyss.

Now, the standard comeback to this image is that God is, actually, the divine actor on stage with us as the audience, as we witness God's stories brought to life in readings from Scripture, witness God's in-flesh mercy through Communion, witness God's empowerment in Baptism, witness God's grace from the engaging Confession & Forgiveness, and on and on. But is it possible that God encourages us to get on the stage right along with the Divine playwright/actor/producer? That God envisions we have a role to play on the world's stage, too?

And, better yet, no matter how many lines we mess up, no matter how many times we forget to move the divine prop of compassion and mercy stage-left, no matter how much the whole worship production may feel it collapses even below the orchestra pit level: God is never going to leave the earthly stage. God is never going to leave us! God is never going to stop appreciating seeing us do our part. Worship isn't so much about us speaking precisely or standing up perfectly. It's about recognizing the One who setup the world stage to begin with, who gave us all we need to do our parts well, who gave us some rather great children of God to work with, too.

So, no matter how worship appears the next few weeks, months, who knows how long...rest assured, God's love is not going to stop as we fuddle through our lines or mess up our steps. The already-produced Gospel is going to remain the same no matter where we worship, how we worship, including whether we sing or not. Worship will feel different for us, and yes, God appreciates those moments when worship can inspire us to be even better disciples of Christ for the sake of the world. However, maybe this rather new part of the stage will make us dig even deeper into the purpose of worship, into looking beyond the usual script, into seeing the whole stage, not to mention always keeping in mind the One who insists on not being a distant audience member, but right on the very level that was special enough to die and rise for, for whole world to enjoy. Thanks be to God, indeed!

In Christ,  
Pastor Brad

## WORSHIP

For the time being, we intend to continue worshiping from our back parking lot. We understand this is not ideal, but we recognize this as the safest means to worship together as a large group, while also continuing to sing, a treasure many of us cherish. Bulletins for each worship will continue to be e-mailed in advance for those who prefer to print their own copy, but they will, also, be printed at the church and made available by the side office doors. You may pick them up along the driveway from Libby Road without needing to get out of your car. Starting July 12, we hope to start celebrating Communion: the elements will be placed by the bulletins. Both the wafer and the wine/grape juice will be in small enclosed containers, which you will, also, need to pick up as you come in. This is, again, for everyone's benefit in keeping our recommended distance from each other, as to not to have a line coming up for Communion.

When you are parked in the parking lot, you may remain in your car, if you wish; or, you can bring your own chairs and setup anywhere (including, under the shaded trees) while making sure to keep your distance from those not of your respective household. We, also, ask, if you leave your vehicle, to wear a mask. An offering basket will be place up-front by the worship leaders, if you wish to make a contribution that week (you may, also, mail them in or do so electronically). If it rains, we intend to still worship outside, as we believe the speakers can be made loud enough to hear from inside your vehicles. If anything changes, we will be sure to e-mail, update our Facebook page and website, as well as initiate a phone

chain through the Covenant groups that were setup at the beginning of this pandemic. Again, we know this is not ideal, but we hope this will best allow us to worship safely, and still, beautifully!



7/2 Christopher & Jennifer Constant Happy 9<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!

7/12 Jeff & Nicole Garvin Happy 12<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!



7/1 Chuck Dickey

7/1 Joyce Mihalich

7/3 Rosa Garnett

7/9 Bob Buettner

7/9 Linda Allende

7/9 Emily Knerem

7/10 Keary Knerem Jr.

7/25 Mark Gabor

7/31 Kristine Sandor

# Covenant News

The Lutheran Church of the Covenant  
 19000 Libby Road, Maple Heights, Ohio 44137

## The Lutheran Church of the Covenant July 2020

Server Schedule	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3	4 3:00 Women's AA Meeting in Parking lot
AG: Werner, Copeland, Hohenstein	5 9:00 Worship in Parking Lot	6	7	8	9	10	11 3:00 Women's AA Meeting in Parking Lot
AG: Werner, Copeland, Hohenstein	12 9:00 Eucharist in Parking Lot	13	14 7:00 Council Meeting in Parlor	15	16	17	18 3:00 Women's AA Meeting in Parking Lot
AG: Ptak, Cibella, Lanese	19 9:00 Eucharist in Parking Lot	20	21	22	23	24	25 3:00 Women's AA Meeting in Parking Lot
AG: Ptak, Cibella, Lanese	26 9:00 Eucharist in Parking Lot	27	28	29	30	31	August 1 3:00 Women's AA Meeting in Parking Lot

\*"Triune" = Triune Lutheran Church 4810 W. Mill Road, Broadview Hts. \*