

# *Covenant News*



**June 2021**

## *Pastor's Spin*

Siblings in Christ of Covenant,

On June 24, the wider church celebrates John the Baptist. It's not that historical scholars figured out that the camel-hair-wearing and locust-eating...rather interesting character, to say the least, was born on June 24. Instead, John the Baptist's feast day is strategically placed six months before another big birthday celebration of sorts (yes, a six-month reminder to get all your Christmas shopping in order). Some of us

may think John the Baptist gets more than enough attention for those few weeks of Advent with his rather abrasive wrath-fearing personality and all. We might even reach the conclusion that he would serve as a perfect talking head on whatever current "news" show with his seemingly in-your-face relentless attitude, almost making us wonder if he would ever dare consider other ideas on how to do ministry for the spiritual welfare of those "brood of vipers." And yet, Jesus claimed him as the greatest (Matthew 11:11, Luke 7:28).(?)

We have a relatively decent amount of Scripture material to work with about John the Baptist in comparison to many other important faith figures of the time, who receive little to no ink whatsoever. However, we don't know much about his ministry beyond the fire-and-brimstone-esque preaching. Who knows what he was like in the overlooked one-on-one side conversations? Perhaps, he had a softer side the Scripture-shapers weren't so interested in passing along for the generations to come. Regardless, his prophecy of "every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire" (Matthew 3:10 NRSV), and the like, continue to grab our attention every December, making us spiritually squirm in the process, and deep-down thank God that J-Bap stays in the colder days of the year.



I have heard about the preachers who delivered their fair share of John the Baptist style sermons, which made those in the pews wonder if they dared not do what he (pretty much all *he's*, then, of course) in the pulpit said, “thrown into the fire” they would go. And yet, as much as I recognize I do not have it within my personal/spiritual framework to go off with “brood of vipers,” or other ear-catching wording, I also want to be careful to not rail against John the Baptist too much, because I think pulling a complete 180° turn from the prophet’s style is not helpful, either.

Granted, I’m sure we have learned getting in people’s faces and unleashing guilt and shame, including fear against an almighty and all-powerful and vengeful God, is not the way to go about doing ministry. However, apathy is also not the way. We should have passion about God, our church family, the wider body of Christ, the Creation, all of God’s children; that we may do our part in bringing a holy dose of heaven to earth’s floor. John the Baptist may be portrayed as somewhat arrogant in the Scriptures, but he also had this most amazing humility as he was called to prepare the way for the Messiah, the One who was about to bring heaven’s arsenal of love and joy and peace for the whole world to enjoy. That’s something/someOne to get significantly passionate about, after all.

Not all of us have the personality to pull off such fiery prophetic acclamations, but I like to think the Holy Spirit constantly churns within us (through all the years of our life), shaping us to be passionate about something related to the care of others. We all have different ways of exuding that passion. We all have our unique interests and ways of serving. Regardless, hopefully, we can all find our needed form of being like John the Baptist, as his own father prophesied about him: “to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace” (Luke 1:79). So, as the church celebrates John the Baptist several months before he makes us spiritually squirm, yet again, may we be thankful for his relentless passion for Christ, and may we never cease from joining in. Amen (so let it be)!

In Christ,  
Pastor Brad

Image: *ThePreachersWord*

# FREE *Community* DINNER

In working with other surrounding congregations, we continue to offer a FREE meal for anyone and everyone in the community and beyond on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of every month. For the near future, the meals will be provided in a drive-thru format, as opposed to being served in the building. So, simply come in through our parking lot by the back of the church, and you will be provided a FREE meal (or however many you want for your family and friends as well). If you are interested in helping, please contact Mary Kaye Bernardo. Otherwise, come on by for a FREE dinner Thursday, June 24 (4:30-6pm), or help spread the word to others!

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

6/1 Mike Garvín  
6/16 Michelle Pekar  
6/23 Paula Hohenstein  
6/29 Ken Frajter  
6/29 Samuel Reddig



6/11 Kelly (Constant) & Vimal Bahatnagar

Happy 16<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!

6/13 Claudia & Steve Senderak

Happy 57<sup>th</sup> Anniversary!

6/20 Joan & Mike Garvín

Happy 51<sup>st</sup> Anniversary!



*Our worships for Saturday's continue on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday's of each month (5pm) going forward.*



Starting June 6, for Sunday mornings (still at 9am) going forward through August, we will be worshipping outside from our back parking lot. Similar to what we did last year, you are encouraged to come in through our side driveway to pick up a bulletin and Communion. Then, feel free to find a spot as worship leaders setup at the back of the church building. You can bring a lawn chair or stay in your vehicle, if you wish. It is also up to you if you wish to wear a mask or not. We know we brought in many new people last summer, so we envision this as a way to reach out to include as many people as possible into our worship community. We also believe this is the safest way for us to sing together. If the weather does not cooperate that particular Sunday, we will move back into the sanctuary for that morning.

For those who prefer to worship in the sanctuary more regularly, we will continue to hold our Saturday worships (1st and 3rd Saturdays of every month at 5pm) in the sanctuary. As always, we continue to appreciate your collective patience and understanding and commitment to best care for each other and our family and friends. Continue to be well, dear church!

Also, during the summer months, our own Toni Ridgell will be providing exercise classes for adults (similar to Silver Sneakers programs) on Saturday afternoons here at the church. If you are interested in participating (classes would be for one hour), please contact the church office.



## *Summer Worship*

In a fit of honesty,  
summer unsettles me,  
its worship a liminal moment,  
between the wind and fire of yesterday  
and the seeming importance of all those tomorrows yet to come,  
the calendar looking back daring us  
to stake a claim otherwise.  
Perhaps I am the exception, but  
summer worship strikes me hard  
like Lent,  
I take slow, deep breaths;  
everything being green with  
a lot of time for thinking  
about the enormity of God,  
the demands of the baptized life,  
the responsibilities of being ambassadors  
for a gospel thus entrusted to beggars and fools,  
with all we must unlearn to embrace our titles  
in their fullness.  
In their honesty.  
The humility of believing who we really are.

In the summer,  
shortfalls often pile up like  
mud-caked shoes at the door,  
our voices quieter,  
resounding echoes filling empty pews.  
We stare perplexed,  
we stare through stained glass askew  
at gardens rich in blooming passion vine  
and butterflies,  
gardens white like snow with countless milkweed silk  
kissed by the wind, aloft,  
longing to teach us the deep mysteries of God  
that we claim to know, have always known,  
rote memory, but do not.  
Not in truth, not in faith.

Summer untethers some part of the mind,  
introspection the rule of the day,  
and all laid bare before us,  
we turn, and turn,  
a confession wrapped within  
a lazy morning's coffee  
and warm afternoon thunder showers,  
and the lightning bugs of early evening that bring smiles to the dusk.

We turn.  
We bear in the late sunset  
the curse and blessing of unstructured time,  
until finally we admit the things we claim to know, unknown,  
and the things we trust, uncertain.  
This is no liturgical doubt, but a longing,  
a summer sighing,  
a turning from and turning to.  
In the slower drumbeat of warmer days,  
we may find the cross we left behind, before us, beckoning still.

*This was originally published July 9, 2013 via LivingLutheran.org. Please visit their website for more resources for the journey of faith.*

- *The Rev. Dr. Keith Spencer (Trinity Lutheran Church, Pembroke Pines, FL)*
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### **Well Done, Once Again**

Our newly adopted system of sending orders for our annual flower sale via email to all former participants has worked pretty well. To those for whom we had no email address, orders were sent via U.S. mail or delivered in person. The drive-thru pick-up system has proven safe and very efficient for dispersing the flowers.

Many thanks to my hard working volunteer crew of: Donna Franz, Paula Hohenstein, Barb Gaglione, Vince Besednjak, Jen Lasher-Dobush and newcomers Karen and Ray Zack. They spent a very long and tiring day unloading the flower delivery truck from the nursery and then filling all of our orders, readying them for pick-up the next day. A mere thank you does not begin to express my gratitude to all of them for their help. This sale could not happen without them!

Here's the really good news. Due to your generosity and co-operation we realized a VERY nice profit of about \$763.00! Well done, Covenant! I hope you all enjoy successful gardens this summer. See you next Spring, same time, same station. Thanks again, Arlene Lasher

*The Lutheran Church of the Covenant*

# June 2021

Server Schedule	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
AG: Joan Garvin, Marie Zahn, Jen Garberich			1 Worship & Music Meeting 6:30 Women's AA Meeting in Hall	2	3	4	5 5:00pm Worship in sanctuary 3:00 pm Women's AA Meeting in Hall
AG: Joan Garvin, Marie Zahn, Jen Garberich	6 Second Sunday after Pentecost 9:00am Eucharist in Parking Lot	7	8 7:00pm Council Meeting 6:30pm Women's AA Meeting in Parish Hall	9	10	11	12 3:00 pm Women's AA Meeting in Hall
AG: Claudia Senderak, Jean Rusher, Gwen Susaneck	13 Third Sunday After Pentecost 9:00am Eucharist in Parking Lot	14 9:00am-3:00 pm Life Skills camp (Sharon Steward) in hall	15 9-3 Life Skills camp in hall 6:30 pm Women's AA Meeting in Parish Hall	16 9-3 Life Skills camp in hall	17 9-3 Life Skills camp in hall	18 Life Skills camp in hall	19 5:00 pm Worship in sanctuary 3:00 pm Women's AA Meeting in Hall
AG: Claudia Senderak, Jean Rusher, Gwen Susnaek	20 <i>Father's Day!</i> Fourth Sunday after Pentecost 9:00am Eucharist in Parking Lot	21 9-3 Life Skills camp in hall	22 9-3 Life Skills camp in hall 6:30 pm Women's AA Meeting in Hall	23 Life Skills camp in hall	24 9-3 Life Skills camp in hall 4:30-6:00pm Community Meal Drive-Thru in Parking Lot	25 9-3 Life Skills camp in hall	26 3:00 pm Women's AA Meeting in Hall
AG: Sheila Werner, Annie Copeland, Paula Hohenstein	27 Fifth Sunday after Pentecost 9:00am Eucharist in Parking Lot	28	29 6:30 pm Women's AA Meeting in Hall	30	July 1	July 2	July 3 5:00 pm Worship at Cov. 3:00 pm Women's AA Meeting in Hall

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