

Covenant News



July & August 2021

Pastor's Spin



Siblings in Christ of Covenant,

In a few weeks, the Games of the XXXII Olympiad will finally commence in Japan. Of course, the Olympics, along with many events all over the world, had to change course last year amidst a global pandemic. Nevertheless, come July 23, tens of thousands of athletes from hundreds of countries will come together to show some of the most impressive physical strength, agility, coordination, and more.

Now, just before the Olympics started back in 2004 in Athens, Greece, I was in a part of the world that I, quite honestly, had no desire to check out at all. And yet, shortly after I joined the college handbell choir my freshman year, it was announced that we and a vocal choir on campus would be going to Japan. Because of a grant to bolster the university's East Asian Studies program, an effort was made to provide numerous opportunities for students to experience the people, culture, and lands on the other side of the Pacific. Talk about a culture shock: no way I could understand the language, no chance for me to be able to read most anything.

However, there was still so much beauty to transcend language. For starters, Japan was, and still is, considered one of the safest countries in the world. The Japanese were incredibly hospitable and kind to us American college students, and I'm sure we had our share of selfish and narrow-minded moments regarding their "different" culture in comparison to what we were used to by our late-teens/early-twenties. The temples (of a variety of religions) and natural scenery were breath-taking, to say the least.

Quite honestly, that's what gets me watching the Olympics, to begin with: I want to be part of the worldwide audience that gets to see a beauty of humanity and the Creation that may not get broadcasted otherwise. And, perhaps, our ultimate fascination during these Games of the XXXII Olympiad shouldn't be over the mind-boggling runners or swimmers or weightlifters, but the fact that all these different people in terms of homeland, religion, education, etc., can be in one location (granted, there will be significantly less people at these game in terms of fans), and a war doesn't ensue.

As crazy it may seem, is it possible the Olympics are one of the closest things we have for envisioning what God desires for the eternal landscape? I'm not sure about all the athletic events, necessarily, but people from all tribes and lands and nationalities being together in peace? Isn't this what God really wants not just in some far-off down-the-road heaven, but on this earth right now? Didn't Jesus desire to bring a bit of heaven to earth, and hoped for us to follow his lead in offering up mercy and compassion and love?

Yes, we have plenty of our selfish and narrow-minded moments of thinking we know what's best not only for ourselves, but for the whole world as well. Regardless, not every four years, not even every Sabbath, but every day, God broadcasts the Gospel into the depths of our soul in the form of the Holy Spirit flowing with a flaming desire to unleash Christ-like love, a holy flame that would put the Olympic torch to shame. We certainly have a choice of what to do with that relentless flame, but no matter how many times we may mess up along the way, the Holy Spirit will absolutely refuse to go out within us. Evidently, still, God believes in us too much to stop. God loves us too much to ever consider giving up on us, and the whole world. May we fall in love with that hope all over again not just every four years, but every day throughout this life. Amen (so let it be)!

In Christ,
Pastor Brad

Image: Tokyo skyline from RackSolutions.com (2018)

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 4th 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, July 22, and August 26 (4:30-6pm), or help spread the word to others!

Happy Birthday

7/1 Chuck Dickey
7/1 Joyce Mihalek
7 3 Rosa Garnett
7/9 Bob Buettner
7/9 Linda Allende
7/9 Emily Knerem
7/10 Keary Knerem Sr.
7/10 Amber Kyle
7/21 Kristine Sandor
7/25 Mark Gabor

8/8 Carolyn Frajter
8/11 Ann Droste
8/13 Nealie Gage
8/16 Marie Zahn
8/17 Arlene Stoltz
8/17 Chris Constant
8/19 Douglas Pekar
8/21 Jane Skowronski
8/28 Jeff Garvin
8/31 Alex Hohenstein



7/2 Jennifer & Chris Constant - Happy 10th Anniversary!

7/12 Nicole & Jeff Garvin - Happy 13th Anniversary!

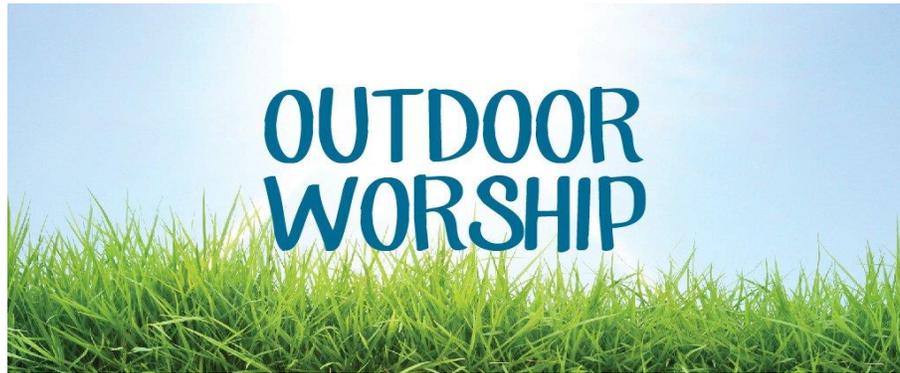
8/11 Jane & Jim Grader - Happy 65th Anniversary!

8/12 Barb & Chuck Gaglione - Happy 49th Anniversary!

8/14 Deena Gaglione-Hernandez & Ben Hernandez -
Happy 11th Anniversary!

8/20 Paula & Alex Hohenstein - Happy 60th Anniversary!

8/20 Arlene & Jim Stoltz - Happy 27th Anniversary!



Our worships on Sunday mornings (still at 9am) going forward through Labor Day weekend will be 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!



During Pastor Brad's parental leave, Pastor Harry Werner will serve for any pastoral care emergency coverage. We greatly appreciate his ministry!





In place of the daily emailed Scripture and prayers based off *The Daily Texts* or *Christ In Our Home*, you are, instead, invited to subscribe to *God Pause*, which is a daily devotion written by alumni of Luther Seminary (St. Paul, MN). You can manually access the devotion at any time by going to their website: <https://www.luthersem.edu/godpause/> You can also subscribe to the devotion, so that you receive it automatically through your email on a daily basis.

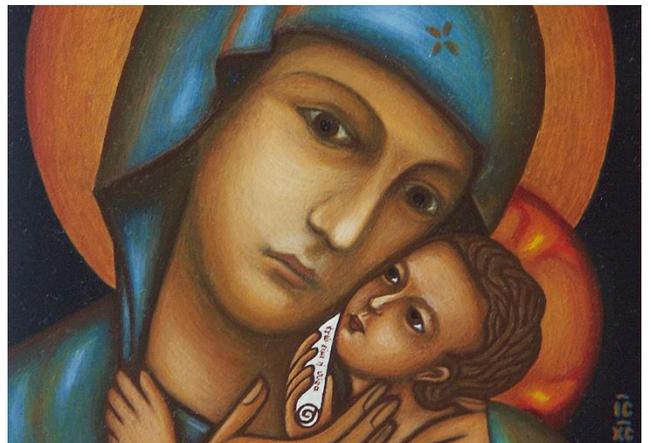


For the Wednesday's Words running for the next several weeks, Pastor Brad will be going through some of his favorite hymns in our *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* hymnal, which we often select our songs from for our worships on Sunday mornings. We are tentatively planning for our worship on Sunday, September 26, to include singing through some of our Covenant family's favorite hymns. This will serve as an opportunity for you to further consider your own favorite hymns (whether they be from our ELW hymnal or not). For a full list of the hymns from the ELW, at least, please visit:

http://eman.obroskyds.org/hymnal/elw/elw_snum.htm

We ask you let Jen or Robin know your favorite hymns by Sunday, September 12, so that, as we hope circumstances continue to improve with COVID-19, we may more boldly sing the very hymns we have longed to sing together with joy.

On August 15, the wider church celebrates Mary, Mother of Our Lord, and so we will join in that Sunday in recognizing the essential ministry Mary fulfilled in raising the Christ child, and the precious example she lived for the rest of us to treasure.



The Lutheran Church of the Covenant

July 2021

Server Schedule	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2	3 3:00 Women's AA Meeting in Parish Hall 5:00 Worship in sanctuary
AG: Sheila Werner, Annie Copeland, Paula Hohenstein	4 Sixth Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 Eucharist in Parking Lot	5	6 6:30 pm Women's AA meeting in Parish Hall	7	8	9 6:30-8:00 pm GOD AA meeting in Parish Hall	10 3:00 Women's AA Meeting in Parish Hall
AG: Sheila Werner, Annie Copeland, Paula Hohenstein	11 Seventh Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 Eucharist in Parking Lot	12	13 6:30 pm Women's AA meeting in Parish Hall	14	15	16 6:30-8:00 pm GOD AA meeting in Parish Hall	17 3:00 Women's AA Meeting in Parish Hall 5:00 pm Worship in sanctuary
AG:- Joan Garvin, Marie Zahn, Jen Garberich	18 Eighth Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 Eucharist in Parking Lot	19	20 6:30 pm Women's AA meeting in Parish Hall	21	22 4:30-6:00 Community Meal Drive Thru in Parking Lot	23 6:30-8:00 pm GOD AA meeting in Parish Hall	24 3:00 Women's AA Meeting in Parking Lot
AG: Joan Garvin, Marie Zahn, Jen Garberich	25 Ninth Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 Eucharist in Parking Lot	26	27 6:30 pm Women's AA meeting in Parish Hall	28	29	30 6:30-8:00 pm GOD AA meeting in Parish Hall	31 3:00 Women's AA Meeting in Parking Lot

The Lutheran Church of the Covenant

August 2021

Server Schedule	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
AG: Claudia Senderak, Jean Rusher, Gwen Susanek	1 Tenth Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 Eucharist in Parking Lot	2	3 6:30 Women's AA meeting in Parish hall	4	5	6 6:30-8:00 pm GOD AA meeting in Parish Hall	7 3:00 pm Women's AA meeting in Hall 5:00 Worship in sanctuary
AG: Claudia Senderak, Jean Rusher, Gwen Susanek	8 Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 Eucharist in Parking Lot	9	10 7:00pm Council Meeting in Parlor 6:30pm Women's AA meeting in Hall	11	12	13 6:30-8:00 pm GOD AA meeting in Parish Hall	14 3:00 pm Women's AA meeting in Parish Hall
AG: Sheila Werner, Annie Copeland, Paula Hohenstein	15 Mary, Mother of Our Lord 9:00 Eucharist in Parking Lot	16	17 6:30 pm Women's AA meeting in Parish Hall	18	19	20 6:30 8:00 pm GOD AA meeting in Parish Hall	21 3:00 pm Women's AA meeting in Hall 5:00 Worship in sanctuary
AG: Sheila Werner, Annie Copeland, Paula Hohenstein	22 Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 Eucharist in Parking Lot	23	24 6:30 pm Women's AA meeting in Parish Hall	25	26 4:30-6:00pm Community Meal Drive Thru in Parking Lot	27 6:30-8:00 pm GOD AA meeting in Parish Hall	28 3:00 pm Women's AA meeting in Parish Hall
AG: Joan Garvin, Marie Zahn, Jen Garberich	29 Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost 9:00 Eucharist in Parking Lot	30	31 6:30 pm Women's AA meeting in Parish Hall				

Covenant News

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

Blossom Concert

Join us for a pleasant evening of good music, under the stars, on the Sunday of Labor Day weekend, Sept 5, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. for a Salute to John Williams at Blossom Music Festival. The Orchestra, conducted by Richard Kaufman, will present a program of the works of John Williams, acknowledged master of movie scores which transform images to powerful stories and emotions. Included in the program are blockbuster favorites of Williams such as Superman, Harry Potter, Star Wars, ET and many more.

We hope to be seated in the usual location adjacent to the tram station. There will be fireworks after the concert, weather permitting. Cost of the tickets are \$28.50 each at the Senior discount rate. Please notify Arlene Lasher as soon as possible, but no later than July 18, 2021 if you would like to attend. Checks should be made out to:

Arlene Lasher
12411 Oak Park Blvd
Garfield Hts. OH 44125