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APRIL 2020

# This Month at COS

*“Glorifying God by making disciples of Jesus Christ in Wayne + beyond!”*



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## **Resurrection Sunday Perspective for Worshiping & Living**

Dear Church of the Saviour family,

The cross and the resurrection change everything. As followers of Jesus Christ, we have spiritual resources for worshiping our great God no matter what is happening in life. These same resources allow us to live in hope, unlike so many who struggle with only earthbound resources.

This Resurrection Sunday, April 12, we will begin by walking through that first Good Friday during our time in God's Word. We will note that it was not called "good" until after the Resurrection. Many people use the excellent terrestrial gifts of reason and experience to navigate through life. Without a doubt they [reason and experience] are helpful; but by themselves, they are inadequate for deciphering ultimate reality.

# Cont.

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Praise God for the way He has provided us with divine resources that can help us to navigate through the hardest experiences we come up against. Christians are hope-filled people, because we are faith-filled people. Take away our faith in the Resurrection and we lose our joy, purpose and hope.

I am so looking forward to celebrating the Resurrection with you, though it will be virtually. May God take us even deeper in our relationship with Him through Jesus Christ – empowered by the Holy Spirit. Let's take God's beautiful holiness public by inviting others to worship our great God and Savior—the Lord Jesus Christ this Easter. And may God's glory reach those who don't know Him, so that they can join us as we pay homage to Jesus, the crucified and resurrected Messiah, who is Lord of all! Our magnificent and majestic God deserves more people bowing before Him in gratitude, raising joyful voices, and lifting unbridled worship for who He is and all that He has done for us.

He Is Risen... He Is Risen Indeed,

*Kevin Flannery*



## Opportunity Amid Adversity

As concern about the coronavirus began to ramp up, Stephen Smith, senior director of digital products at Bible Gateway, wrote searches about the end of the world and fear were trending above normal. Bible Gateway searches for “fear not” and “spirit of fear” doubled last week. Searches for “fear not” and “Psalm 91” began to spike in the United States beginning on March 12, when sporting events first began to be cancelled.

This pandemic can be particularly frightening in a way we cannot completely understand to those who do not know Jesus; however, it presents an opportunity to introduce them to the only sure Hope. In the midst of these troubling times I want to encourage you to fix your eyes on what is eternal and share the love of Christ. Here are a few suggestions for ways you can do this:

1. Invite your colleagues, virtual friends, and neighbors to tune in for the COS livestream on Sunday mornings.
2. Follow up with those friends. Find out if they have questions. Invite them to get connected at COS.
3. Pray! Most importantly, pray – for the unprecedented opportunity the Church has, to introduce the fearful and lost to the Savior. Let us act in wisdom and love in a radical way, instead of fear.

Let's keep the Church growing and continue with a spirit of outreach, especially in these times.

**Beth DeLisle**  
Care Associate



## A NEW SEASON IN CORPORATE WORSHIP

JIM DOUGHERTY

When I was asked to write about Easter for the newsletter a month ago, I had a few great ideas swirling around in my head. Even as of this morning, I had a half-written piece about Christ's victory over the darkness, the evil remnants, and how worship is involved in the spiritual battle. I was particularly proud of my intro, which included a "stepping on Legos in the dark" analogy. However, like most of you, life has been flipped upside down with the Coronavirus pandemic. It has forced us to shift everything in such a short time and adapt. I would be remiss if I didn't adapt here as well, and address some of the ways we can all be adjusting in our worship practices.

This is typically the time of year when we are in full stride towards Easter. In light of an 8 week plus lockdown on public gatherings, the reality is that Easter will look very different for our church this year. These past few weeks have been nothing short of a series of pivots for all of us. For example, there was a large event we had been planning for over 6 months; special speaker, Saturday conference, big choir in both services. So much time and energy had gone into this event. As everything escalated, some hard decisions needed to be made, and we began to work on Plan B. Through this time of adaptation, we began to see ingenuity take hold like never before. Our tech director, Dave Rogel, mobilized his team to execute our first online streaming service, and so many others on our team worked hard over the last few weeks in response to everything. I have felt very proud to serve on a staff that is willing to knock down barriers to worship.

Now, with two weekends of "Online Church" under our belts, we are coming to terms with this new reality for the time being: corporate worship in our living rooms. We have heard from some of you from the start, that this was a unique and meaningful experience, to worship at home with your family. For others, this presented some challenges. On a regular Sunday morning, we all come in with barriers to worship. Personally, it takes me a few minutes to move past the things that my mind tends to focus on and engage with the Spirit my heart. This new virtual dynamic presents some different and new barriers. So, how do we fully engage in corporate worship (singing, giving, scripture, sermon) from home?

### **Hebrews 12:1-3**

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.*

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# A NEW SEASON IN CORPORATE WORSHIP (CONTINUED)

*by Jim Dougherty*

Let's talk about singing. In last month's newsletter, Andy wrote a great article on why we should sing, I'd encourage you to read that here. Most of us feel most comfortable singing when we are in large groups, or completely by ourselves. On Sundays there are hundreds of others singing with us, we have live music, and there is a physical and spiritual energy when we are together in the same room. When we are totally alone (shower, in the car, etc) there is no one there to hear how we sound or what we are singing. I think one of the most challenging times to sing is between those two, when you're not quite alone, but there are not enough people to get lost in the crowd. As we tune in through the live stream, we are encouraging you to do exactly that; sing with someone else or with a small group in your home. This is not a regular practice for most of us, and it may feel a little strange. You may not feel comfortable with others hearing you sing. In this circumstance, it is understandable that you might be tempted to take the form of a spectator rather than a participant during this part of the service. This is a significant barrier to worship.

A good friend of mine, let's call him "Pete", would say that by the standards of this world, he is not a good singer. His pitch and tone hover in the lower ends of the quality spectrum. We would sit together in church, and he would belt out the songs in the most off-key manor you can imagine. I would smile at first,

but then it caused me to sing louder and worry less about how my voice sounded and focus more on expressing my heart to God. He clearly didn't care what other people around him were thinking, and it inspired me to do the same. When I think about a singer that God loves to listen to, I think about "Pete".

Acts 28:30-31

For two whole years Paul stayed there in his own rented house and welcomed all who came to see him. 31 He proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ—with all boldness and without hindrance!

I think this is a great challenge for us to grow as worshippers "with all boldness and without hindrance", in singing and in other areas of worship and ministry.

Let us focus on our "audience of One," The Lord who is deserving of our praise.

Let us sing to our God and not be spectators watching a screen.

Let us not be hesitant to participate because of the smaller group we are in.

Let's choose to model this biblical act of worship to our children, to our family, to our friends.

This is a difficult season, but I believe it is a great opportunity for us. The sound that comes out our mouths might not be exactly what we were hoping for, but I promise you that God will love it if it comes from a heart of praise.

What does this mean for Easter? I believe that Easter this year has the potential to be an unforgettable and fresh experience for the family of God. It will look different, and we will do what we can to provide you with resources to worship. This is a time that you will have the freedom to build on those resources and make your Easter celebration an even more personal and unique time for you and your family. We have a few weeks to "train" together in this new exercise of praise before then. I am looking forward to what God has in store for us this Easter and beyond.

# A WORD FROM CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

**Proverbs 22:6**, "Train up a child in the way he/she should go; even when he/she is old he/she will not depart from it." (ESV)

**Deuteronomy 6:6-7**, "And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise."(ESV)

Our world has turned upside down the last few months with COVID-19. Everything has changed so quickly worldwide in how we live and interact with one another. This April we are getting ready to celebrate Easter once again; the most significant holy day celebrated by Christians each year.

Easter is a reminder of Jesus and His ultimate expression of love for us. Jesus's death and resurrection are a powerful constant, an everlasting promise, and a guarantee in a world where nothing is safe or secure. This gives all of us an opportunity more than ever to plan ways to involve each family member, regardless of age, in meaningful dialogue activity related to Jesus and the Good News of the Easter Story.

Starting with our young preschool children, it may mean telling a simple story like "Jesus and the children", speaking of Jesus' love for them (Mark 10:13-16). With older children, it may mean telling the story of Jesus' death on the cross and resurrection (Mark 15-16), in a way that instills hope and joy. Both stories help to lay the foundation for understanding Jesus' love for us. The Easter story should be told in a way that creates trust and factual understanding. These stories begin to encourage children to grow from

from their understanding of Jesus as friend, to Jesus as Savior! We want our children to become Christ followers, obedient to His commands and fruitful in their faith.

I heard a pastor say: "God wants us as His followers to leave a holy marking in this world with permanent ink". An important way we can do this is by investing in and loving our kids, each other, and the world, for their good, and for His Glory!

If you're looking for resources and ways you can continue to connect your kids and family to COS, please go to [coswayne.org/coronavirus](https://coswayne.org/coronavirus) and check out the resources section. There, you'll find virtual activities for families, as well as continued lessons from our kid's ministry staff here!

In Him,

***Kat Simbo***

Children's Ministry Director



# REMOTENESS

*by Rachel Hicks*

As the Communications Manager for Church of the Saviour, my role is encountering some unique challenges through this COVID-19 season. In a time when we cannot rely on any physical form of communication, I want to encourage all of you who may feel an underlying sense of unease when stripped of this comfort. As a millennial myself, I feel like my life has been one long training for a time like this. From chatting on AIM and Myspace with my friends in middle school, to being able to engage with my family with skype and facetime in my college years, connecting with people remotely has become second nature, and I have seen and encountered its benefits time and again. However, for those of us who aren't used to having that physical element stripped away, and are wondering what that means for personal connection, I hope I can encourage you.

Our world is becoming ever globalized, as technology continues to connect us in ways it never has before. I've often heard anecdotes regarding admonishments towards those who are 'on their phones' too much. For example, there was a man on a train who told a young woman that she should get off her phone, which she responded "In the five minutes I was on my phone on this train, I texted my Grandmother for her birthday, read an educational article, called my Dad, and answered an urgent email for work." While we can certainly 'over-do' technology and lose personal connection, let us be unafraid to use these tools we have been blessed with, to connect with one another with abandon.

Let's use the word 'remote' to describe our physical situation, not our spiritual mindset. Yes, we are remote in our work and our worship, but let us remain close to one another by using these tools to communicate with one another. Nothing will be able to replace the joy of in-person connection, otherwise known as Facetime IRL (in real life).

Technological tools are just that, tools. Knitting needles are tools that you can accidentally pierce something with, causing harm, but in the hands of a person with knowledge and good intentions, you can create something beautiful. Let's not let these tools cause us fear because of the harm they may cause, but trust ourselves to use them for good, for connection with each other.

If you feel daunted by utilizing some of these online tools, give us a call, leave a voicemail, and someone will get back to you shortly to help you through any troubleshooting issues you may have. We also have resources and tutorials on our Resources section of our COVID-19 page on the website, [coswayne.org/coronavirus](https://coswayne.org/coronavirus). Connect with us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to see the examples we are setting for personal connection with one another. While technology can never fully replace the fruit of physical and personal interaction, it can certainly help us to stay away from spiritual 'remoteness' during this season. I hope you all connect with us, and feel free to reach out if you need any help!