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PASTORAL PONDERINGS

by Rev. Tom Harris

Dear Friends,

Golden Ragwort. I'm in love with Golden Ragwort (aka *packera aurea*). It didn't happen all at once. It wasn't love at first sight. It is a love that has grown over the years as the ragwort has spread around the flowerbeds in my front yard. I first bought some from Herring Run Nursery many years ago hoping to find something that would grow well in a bed against the east facing porch of our home; lots of shade with just a few hours of morning sun. Well it grew beautifully and immediately sent up those tall, straight



stalked, brilliant simple yellow flowers; like the flowers a child draws when they want to draw a flower.

As the season went on, I saw the

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WELCOME TO MARIE HERRINGTON, GOVANS' NEW SECOND SERVICE MUSIC DIRECTOR



The Govans Session is delighted to announce the hiring of Ms. Marie Herrington as the new Second Service Music Director. Ms. Herrington has a Bachelor's degree in vocal and organ music from the Peabody Conservatory, has served as choir director at Our Savior Lutheran Church and Epiphany Lutheran Church in Baltimore since 2016, and has experience as a guest organist and cantor at numerous churches of various denominations in the area. She is a member of the American Guild of Organists and is an accomplished composer, arranger, and performer of music in diverse styles including jazz, gospel, classical, rock, baroque, and modern. She has experience conducting a

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April Calendar

2 - The Little Prince and the Fourth Gospel, 2:00 pm
3 - In-Person and Online Worship, 10:00 am
3 - Adult Options, 11:10 am
3 - Soul Kitchen 3:30-5:00 pm
5 - Memorial Service for Lyndell Smith, 2:00 pm
5 - Lenten Book Study, 7:00 am
6 - Bible Study with Knox, 12:00 pm
6 - Personnel Committee, 6:00 pm
9 - The Little Prince and the Fourth Gospel, 2:00 pm
10 - In-Person/Online Worship, 9:00 and 11:00 am
10 - Adult Options and Sunday School, 10:10 am
10 - Soul Kitchen, 4:30-6:00 pm (new time)
11 - Finance Committee, 7:00 pm
13 - Bible Study with Knox, 12:00 pm
14 - Maundy Thursday Service, 7:00 pm
15 - Good Friday Service, 7:00 pm
16 - The Little Prince & the Fourth Gospel, 2:00 pm
17 - Easter Sunrise Service, 6:30 am
17 - In-Person/Online Worship, 9:00 and 11:00 am
17 - Soul Kitchen, 4:30-6:00 pm
18 - Facilities Committee, 7:00 pm
19 - Session Meeting, 6:30 pm
20 - Bible Study with Knox, 12:00 pm
24 - In-Person/Online Worship, 9:00 and 11:00 am
24 - Adult Options and Sunday School, 10:10 am
24 - Soul Kitchen, 4:30-6:00 pm
27 - Bible Study with Knox, 12:00 pm

April Birthdays

2 - Helen Finney
2 - Anne Stone
2 - Mark Wong
3 - John Deprine
5 - Zoe Green
9 - Claire Storey
11 - Carol McAfee
13 - Peter Conrad
13 - Donna O'Laughlen
17 - Quentin Morris
20 - Kellen Herfel
22 - Eric Johnson
23 - Nick Mills
23 - JoAnn Tinkler
27 - Ethan Akpati
30 - Bobbie Cook



MUSIC NOTES FROM DEBBY LEWIS:

The Govans Chancel Choir and the Handbell Choir are planning some very special music for **Palm Sunday, April 10 at 11:00 am**. We will meet outside the sanctuary to hear the processional gospel, after which the bells will lead us into the church with joyous ringing and singing.

The mid-week services of Holy Week will be combined services with band and choir together at 7:00 pm. Maundy Thursday will center on the first Communion meal and Jesus' new commandment to "love one another." The Good Friday service will recount the brutal story of Jesus' betrayal, trial, and crucifixion in both scripture and song. Myra Brosius will add her beautiful flute playing to the service, and we will conclude with the sung "Solemn Reproaches" as the altar is stripped. The evening ends in silence and shadows.

On April 17, the Festival of the Resurrection will resound with shouts of "Alleluia! He is Risen indeed!" The choir with trumpet will joyously sing the good news! I would encourage each of you to follow the journey from the garden to the cross and the empty tomb. The messages of these services form the core center of our faith.

****Easter will conclude my Interim music ministry at Govans Presbyterian. I have immensely enjoyed this "extra chapter" in my professional life. I would like to thank the choirs, pastors, and staff for the support which has been extended to me. I am blessed and uplifted by this congregation!****

LETTER FROM PASTOR BILLY

Hello, Govans,

Each year, I cherish the communal commemoration of Jesus' death and resurrection during Holy Week. I love gathering not just to tell Jesus' story, but to reenact the story in our own bodies and look for our place among the characters and circumstances. In each annual retelling, I find a new perspective and appreciation for the ways that we continue to crucify God's messengers and children today, as well as God's continual offering of new life to us all through resurrection and rebirth. I am especially excited for our community Easter Egg Hunt at 10:10 am on Easter Sunday morning (April 17)!



This season, I am also preparing for another course as part of my Doctor of Ministry program at Wesley Theological Seminary. My class this summer explores Biblical models and images of leadership, from the early judges and kings of Israel to Jesus' ministry and the example of his earliest disciples.

One of the books that we are reading is *Grounded in the Living Word: The Old*

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Youth and Young Families Activities:

- Saturday, April 2 - Community Kickball for Young Families at Alhambra Park - 10:30 am to noon
- Sunday, April 3 - Intergenerational Sunday school - 11:10 am in the choir room (underneath the sanctuary)
- Monday, April 4 - Community Children's Choir at Govans Elementary - 4:30 pm to 5:30 pm
- Tuesday, April 5 - Breakfast to go for preschool families - 7:30 am to 9:30 am
- Sunday, April 10 - Kids sing special Palm Sunday song in the 11:00 am service with Ms. Debby - Gather at 10:30 am, service at 11:00 am
- Sunday, April 10 - Youth Servant Leader Council Meeting - 3:00 pm on Zoom
- Sunday, April 17 at 10:10 am - Easter egg hunt between worship services on the church lawn
- April 19 to May 3 - Pastor Billy on vacation

Contact Pastor Billy (billy@govanspres.org) for more information and to sign-up up for weekly Youth and Young Families Updates.

Church Staff

Rev. Tom Harris, Senior Pastor

Rev. Billy Kluttz, Associate Pastor

Lea Gilmore,

Minister for Racial Justice &
Music Director, 1st Service

Marie Herrington

Music Director, 2nd Service

Pam Wallace, Finance
Administrator

Andy Wilson, Office Manager

Sylvia Usher, Sexton

Pam Ferguson,

Director of Preschool

Gwen Lloyd, Program Director,
Senior Network

Govans Presbyterian Church

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Maryland 21212

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www.govanspres.org



**THE HERALD &
BELLRINGER**

The deadline for
submissions for the May
2022 newsletter is April
15, 2022. Please send to
Andy Wilson
(wilson@govanspres.org)
or call the church office.



What's Going On At Govans?

Poem Sunday

Sunday, April 10

9:00 am Worship Service

Join us for Poem Sunday! You are invited to bring a poem to share during the service. Both children and adults are encouraged to share a poem. Poems may be shared live in-person or live or pre-recorded via Zoom. They can be on any topic and do not have to be specifically religious. Songs are also welcome. Learn more at www.govanspres.org



Easter Egg Hunt

Sunday, April 17

10:10 am on the Church lawn

Kids of all ages are invited to hunt for Easter eggs on the lawn of Govans Presbyterian Church on Easter Sunday (April 17) between 9:00 am and 11:00 am worship services. The Easter bunny will stop by and we'll retell the story of the first Easter together, as well. Email Pastor Billy at billy@govanspres.org for more information.



Online Bible Study

with Knox and Govans Presbyterian Churches

Wednesdays at 12:00 noon on Zoom

Everyone is welcome!

ZOOM LINK WILL BE IN THE WEEKLY EMAIL - SUBSCRIBE AT WWW.GOVANSPRES.ORG



Intergenerational Sunday School

FOR PARENTS AND KIDS
10:10 AM IN THE GALLERY
(11:10 AM ON FIRST SUNDAYS)

Email Pastor Billy
(billy@govanspres.org) for more information.



COMMUNITY KICKBALL RETURNS!



Community kickball and outdoor games have returned to Alhambra Park. The first Saturday of each month, Govans Presbyterian Church and other local Presbyterian congregations gather for games and refreshments with our neighbors at Alhambra Park (5200 Alhambra Avenue) from 10:30 am to noon. The next gatherings will be on March 5 and April 2. Email billy@govanspres.org to learn more. Pictured here, Tanya Morrell and Pastor Billy weather the cold for smores in the park in February.

Govans Book Club

10:00 am on the second Friday of the month

Live on Zoom

Next Meeting is April 8 at 10:00 am

The book selection Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer

Email Bobbie Cook
(cookbobbie347@gmail.com) for the more information and the Zoom link



WORSHIP @GOVANS

Sundays at 9:00 and 11:00 am
*10:00 am on the first Sunday of the month

In-Person and Online
Details at www.govanspres.org



HOLY WEEK

2022

Palm Sunday | April 10

9:00 | Poem Sunday

11:00 am | Special Music

Maundy Thursday | April 14

7:00 pm | Online and In-Person Worship

Good Friday | April 15

7:00 pm | Online and In-Person Worship

Easter | April 17

6:30 am | Outdoor Sunrise Service

9:00 am | Online and In-Person Worship

10:10 am | Easter Egg Hunt and Petting Zoo

with Animals from Woodberry Crossing

11:00 am | Online and In Person Worship



WWW.GOVANSPRES.ORG

THANK YOU TO DEBBY LEWIS!



From the Chancel Choir:

Dear Debby,

On behalf of the Chancel Choir, let me express our gratitude for your coming back to lead us when we needed you. Your gracious, creative and enthusiastic leadership challenged us and brought out the best in us, yet again, helping us express the meaning of the words and the emotion of the arrangements as we worship God through music. We appreciate your ability to find just the right music to match the spirit of the season and the lectionary, as well as adapt with good humor to COVID restrictions and new technological demands. You nurture our friendships

and our care for each other as members of one church family. And you have brought new voices to the choir in both the short and longer term. Your energy and commitment not just with the choir, but with the handbells and children's music, as well, has kept the music at Govans exciting, inspiring, and strong.

Many blessings to you and Gus in your retirement (for real, this time!). We hope you will come back to hear us and worship with us from time to time.

*Love and the peace of Christ with you always,
Doug—for the Chancel Choir*

P.S. A few other people wanted to express their gratitude personally:

-Thank you Debby, for returning to work with us in our time of need. Your musical and spiritual leadership is truly a gift and we are all the better for having been directed by you. Wishing you joy and lots of good music. *Linda Bluth*

-Dear Debby, It was so delightful to have you back for a time. I appreciate that we could spend our "between directors" time picking up where we left off with your skill and dedication, but mostly with the warmth of an old friend. It could have been very different without you and I dare say not nearly so enjoyable or rewarding. I wish you all the best.

Love, Myra

-Here's hoping we'll meet now and then. Love to you and Gus, *Mimi Cooper*

From the Handbell Choir:

Dear Debby,

On behalf of the whole handbell choir, we extend our heartfelt thanks for your "second tour of duty." We so appreciate the time, effort and attention that you have given us, particularly helping us polish our skills to become the choir that we are today. It can't have been easy managing a handbell choir with an ever-changing



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cast of characters (particularly during these Covid times!), but not only did you keep us afloat, you found new ringers to fill in the gaps. We are proud of what we have achieved under your leadership, and hope that you will remember your time with us fondly.

Now that places are opening back up, go forth into the world with our love and blessings. We wish you and Gus all the best as you enjoy your retirement, but hope you will stop by worship sometimes to hear us carry on your legacy.

With much love and appreciation,
The Handbell Choir



From Pastor Tom:

On behalf of the Govans Presbyterian Church Session and Congregation, I want to express thanks to Debby Lewis. Debby is a rare combination of a skilled organist, pianist, and conductor, who has program-building organizational skill, and a winning personality. She also has a wonderful understanding of church music and which songs would fit with a particular season, passage, or message. She loves introducing new hymns and does so in a way that does not raise objections among those who love the "old standards." Her willingness to come back during our interim has been such a gift to the church. She hasn't just "kept the seat warm," but continued to build and grow the program she started shortly after the merger between Brown and Govans. Personally, I enjoy working with Debby. Her communication is clear and direct without being demanding. She has a wonderful way of explaining her vision and goals, making her case and then being willingly to compromise if needed. I will miss her as I know everyone will. Thank you Debby for your service!

Peace, Tom

Pastoral Ponderings...continued from cover page

plant spreading around the bed little by little. Each year, there would be a few more a little further from the mother plant. Also they are basically evergreen which is as much a wonder as the flowers. How do those tender looking leaves endure freezing temperatures with just a mild wilt before coming back strong?

Last year, one plant self seeded and popped up across the yard in a sunnier spot. I was worried about it. It seemed to struggle without the shade of the house, but I decided to let nature take its course. This year, despite whatever struggle it seemed to have, it has decided to spread there too. The final part of this ode to rawort involves how easy it is to divide. In the fall, I pulled as many as 30 little shoots and spread them around another bed under the Red bud trees. Lots of shade there. This spring those little babies are growing and sending up their stalks for a showy display in just a month or so.

I suppose I should bring this around to some Easter metaphor. Or some metaphor about resilience or growth. But, perhaps you can make those connections for yourselves. That's one of the amazing things about spring. We can't walk out our door without having the metaphors of life and love and beauty wash over us and course through us. So maybe the message is just this: Fall in love with the wonder of nature. With specific plants. With special places. With all of creation. Based on the joy creation stirs within us, it certainly seems it has chosen to be in love with us.

Peace,
Tom

PRESBYTERIANS PREPARE FOR A HYBRID GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Presbyterians from across the United States are preparing to gather online and in-person in Louisville, Kentucky for the 225th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) this summer. The General Assembly meets every two years to make decisions regarding the ministry and mission of our national denomination. The Assembly is the highest “council” in our Presbyterian form of governance; the other councils of our church (in descending order) are synods, presbyteries, and sessions.

Govans’ Associate Pastor, Rev. Billy Kluttz, will attend the assembly as a voting commissioner and member of the Environmental Justice Committee, representing the Presbytery of Baltimore. In total, the Presbytery of Baltimore will send five ruling elder and teaching elder delegates: Keith Reagan, Audrey Trapp, Barbara Renton, Gayelle Sama, and Pastor Billy. The General Assembly will meet from June 18 to July 9, 2022. Pastor Billy will be in Louisville only during the Environmental Justice Committee meetings (June 22-26) and will participate remotely for the rest of the gathering. This year, the environmental justice committee will consider issues such as divesting Presbyterian funds from companies causing climate change, establishing a denominational tree fund, and reviewing our denomination’s lobbying efforts on behalf of environmental concerns.

You can learn more about the General Assembly’s work and watch many of the proceedings online at oga.pcusa.org/section/ga/. We will have additional updates in this newsletter as we near the event.

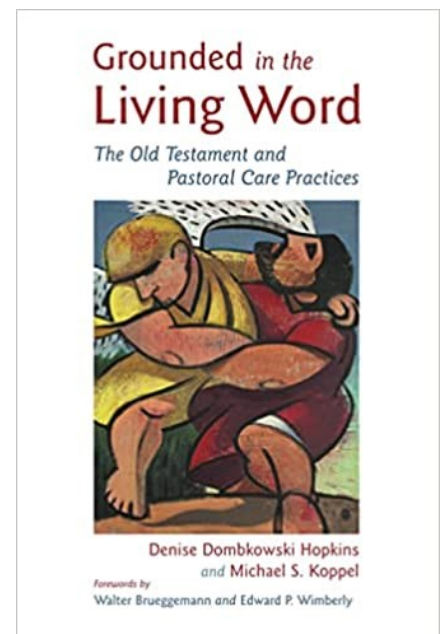


Letter from Pastor Billy (continued from page 3)

Testament and Pastoral Care Practices by the incredible scholar duo Denise Dombkowski Hopkins and Michael Koppel. This book explores how pastoral caregivers (and that means all Christians seeking to care for one another) can use stories and images from the Bible to better listen to one another and help make meaning from our individual and shared experiences. In the book, they argue that the tension between the larger patterns of the Biblical story (God’s hope, grace, and justice) and the haunting questions of human pain and suffering “[characterize] Israelite faith, and [are] echoed by the Good Friday/Easter dialectic of Christian tradition.” However, rather than alleviate that tension or explain away the twin sorrow and hope of Good Friday and Easter, they encourage readers to lean into the dual reality of life and loss, writing: “Some desperately want the sense that Sunday resolves Friday, but ‘liturgically, both claims linger’” (p.25).

In this moment of global suffering, war, and pandemic transitions, I hope that you will give yourself the space and permission to feel both “claims” and realities in your life—however they may be presenting themselves. May Holy Week and Eastertide be an invitation both to explore the grief you are carrying and the joy that makes its home amid the grief. And may both of those experiences bring you love and new life to share.

Peace,
Pastor Billy



Welcome to Marie Herrington, continued from page one...

variety of musical ensembles, including youth and women's choirs and symphony orchestra, as well as handbells. She has been an Ear Training Tutor at Peabody and maintains a private music studio where she teaches voice, piano, and composition across a variety of musical styles.

Marie also is actively committed to pursuing social and racial justice and in recent years, has organized several benefit concerts with local churches for social causes, most recently in support of Ukraine, where she has family.

You may see Marie around Govans in the next few weeks, but her official start date will be Monday, April 18. Please welcome her to the Govans family.

Many, many thanks to the Search Committee for their dedicated service. Thank you to our Co-chairs, Doug Storey and Maria Wong and committee members Jocelyn Taylor, Karl Starks, Laura Kittel, Ashley Short, Anita Hendrix, and Pastor Tom.

Welcome

CONTRIBUTIONS OF STOCK OR APPRECIATED SECURITIES TO THE GOVANS ENDOWMENT FUND

Besides Qualified Charitable Contributions, donations of stock or appreciated securities can be an excellent tax strategy for charitable giving, especially if you have not reached 70½ and qualify for the IRA Charitable Rollover program. While you should always consult with your tax or investment advisor before making any gift of stock, you can usually get a tax deduction for the full market value of the shares you give, while generally avoiding any capital gains tax. If you need additional information about our IRS-qualified Endowment Fund (a 501(c)3 organization under IRS Group Ruling No. 1617), email me at fgaede@comcast.net.

-Thanks! Fred Gaede, Finance Committee



MARINERS NEWS:

The Mariners will be gathering on April 16 at Corky and Rick Shaw's home in Lutherville. We have been meeting in person for several months and each time it's been a lot of fun. The host prepares a main dish and the guests bring a side dish like salad, appetizer, or dessert. We love the variety of food and the good fellowship. We would love to have all of you to join us, it's nothing fancy, just fun.

You can contact Corky to let her know you will be coming at: 410-823-8522 or 410-375-1327 or corkshaw@aol.com.

Hope to see you there,
Kit



BELIEVE IN BALTIMORE PODCAST:

The Caroline Center:

Jessica Robey and Kisha Barnes of The Caroline Center discussed the importance of career training for local women with Pastors Tom and Billy on the latest episode of Govan's community podcast, Believe in Baltimore. The podcast features local leaders and changemakers, interviewing them about their work in our city and discussing a relevant Bible story alongside Govans pastors and staff.



Pictured above, Jessica Robey (lower left) and Aki-sha Barnes (lower right)

The Caroline Center provides free career education for women in Baltimore City. Learn more about their work on their website: <https://caroline-center.org>. Jessica Robey works as the Communications and Marketing Manager at The Caroline Center. Akisha Barnes is an alumnus of the Caroline Center from the class of 2014. Since graduating, she took up a position as a GNA with Genesis from 2014-2015 and worked as a Childcare Provider from 2015-2020. She is presently an employee of the City of Baltimore as well as the proud business owner of a mobile CPR/First Aid company called "Voices Hearts and Hands LLC" through which she teaches courses on CPR/First Aid, BLS, and disaster preparedness.



Baltimore Safe Haven:

Janae Tyler, the Program Director of Baltimore Safe Haven, shares the work and mission of Baltimore Safe Haven with Pastors Tom and Billy on Believe in Baltimore this month. Baltimore Safe Haven supports local transgender neighbors with transitional housing, hot meals, mobile outreach, and more. Pictured here: Janae Tyler, Program Director, Baltimore Safe Haven.

Listen to these episodes and all of the podcast episodes on Govans website, govanspres.org/podcasts. If you have ideas for future podcast episode themes or guests, please email billy@govanspres.org.



COMMUNITY AFTER-SCHOOL CHOIR CONTINUES REHEARSING

Our congregation's community after-school choir continued rehearsing this month at Govans Elementary School. Local elementary school students have been learning songs, basic piano, and music theory with Pastor Billy and Minister Lea Gilmore. This month, we've continued learning Wade in the Water and This Little Light of Mine. We have also begun learning two new

songs, America The Beautiful (O Beautiful For Spacious Skies) and Lift Every Voice and Sing. Keep an eye out for an upcoming performance in the community. If you would like to learn more about this community outreach effort, or other initiatives to better connect with our neighbors, reach out to Pastor Billy. There is a place for you to be involved in our community engagement work.

Pictured here, Govans Elementary School students rehearse "Wade in the Water" during the month of March as part of the after school choir program.

APRIL MISSION OFFERING - CEDEPCA: The Protestant Center for Pastoral Studies in Central America (CEDEPCA). CEDEPCA is an educational institution in Guatemala that provides training and accompaniment by offering spaces for reflection to women and men from diverse Christian traditions, communities and contexts. It also supports disaster recovery efforts.



CEDEPCA focuses its work on four areas:



For more information, email Tanya Morrel at tmorrel@gmail.com or go to www.cedepca.org.

*****All donations marked "Mission Offering" during April will go to CEDEPCA*****



The Session met for our regular monthly meeting on Monday, March 14. Here are some highlights of our meeting:

- We approved Marie Herrington as our new Second Service Music Director. Marie will start on the Monday after Easter, April 18. (see cover page for more info about Marie.)
- We approved a brief congregational survey that will ask each member to share their thoughts about whether we should have combined services throughout the summer

months or continue with our current schedule of two services with a combined service on the first Sundays. Please stay tuned for the link to that survey.

- We reviewed the process for the Pastors' evaluations which take place every two years in the spring. Please be on the lookout for links that will allow you to affirm the ways you appreciate Rev. Harris and Rev. Klutz and the ways you would like to see them grow in their ministries.
- We discussed the concerns and questions that were raised in the congregational meeting about reducing the size of the Session. We look forward to more discernment around the issue as we seek the best way to structure our church leadership.
- Finally, we had an in depth discussion about our COVID policy in light of new CDC recommendations and the lifting of the mask mandate in Baltimore City. After much discussion we voted to remove mask mandates for church activities. However, given that many different organizations use our building including the Preschool and the Senior Center, we allowed that any organization or group could keep masks mandates or other restrictions in place for their organization or group. This includes the music teams or any committee or group who may decide as a group to continue to wear masks for their meetings. In addition, all worship services and meetings will continue to be accessible on Zoom. You can read about other details of the new policy in the weekly email. We encourage everyone to respect and support each person's decisions about wearing masks and to carry a mask with you in case a situation arises when wearing a mask would make others more comfortable.

If you have any questions about this policy or anything that was decided by the Session, please speak with me, Pastor Tom, Pastor Billy, or any other member of the Session.

"Govans Presbyterian Church is a theologically progressive community empowering people to make the world better."

HOLY WEEK

2022

Palm Sunday | April 10

9:00 | Poem Sunday

11:00 am | Special Music

Maundy Thursday | April 14

7:00 pm | Online and In-Person Worship

Good Friday | April 15

7:00 pm | Online and In-Person Worship

Easter | April 17

6:30 am | Outdoor Sunrise Service

9:00 am | Online and In-Person Worship

10:10 am | Easter Egg Hunt and Petting Zoo
with Animals from Woodberry Crossing

11:00 am | Online and In Person Worship