

An Anabaptist Sunday Morning

Worship at Home in the time of Covid-19

Two of the important aspects of Anabaptist beliefs and practices are not available to us during the time of social distancing and pandemic. Joining voices in a group in singing and meeting as a community cannot take place safely. We sing our theology and liturgy as a group in Anabaptist congregations. We practice community when we join together for worship. We cannot do these important aspects of worship in the usual way during the pandemic.

The time of Covid-19 has made many changes in our lives. On a usual Sunday when I'm not traveling I find *Mostly Mennonite*, *Mostly Acapella* on my phone and use Bluetooth to transfer the signal to a portable speaker so I can listen to John Horst's playlist as I move around the house, have breakfast and drink coffee, and get ready to go to church.

During the pandemic my routine has changed. I use multiple devices as I change from streaming an FM signal on my phone, to streaming on a church website on my computer, back to the FM signal, and then to a Zoom session on my computer. It's not the usual routine, but I find the experience enjoyable in a different way. There are ways I feel connected during this time even though I cannot meet physically with my church. Life would be much different living safely through this time if we didn't have our electronic devices and the internet. We can be joyful for our opportunities to worship even in the time of Covid-19.

7:00 – 8:00 AM ~ *Sing for Joy*

On line streaming from radio station WEMC.

Sing For Joy explores the weekly themes of Christian worship by providing the best in sacred choral music and thoughtful commentary. A defining trait of *Sing For Joy* is basing each week's music on the scriptural lessons specified in the Revised Common Lectionary. (from the Sing For Joy website) The first half hour on WEMC radio is a repeat of the program from the previous week.

<https://www.wmra.org/schedule/wemc#stream/1>

WEMC radio is on the same website as WAMU radio.

8:00 – 9:30 AM ~ *Mostly Mennonite, Mostly Acapella*

On line streaming from radio station WEMC.

John Horst from Harrisonburg, VA plays music from his extensive music collection on radio station WEMC. The title describes a typical play list—mostly music from a wide variety of Mennonite sources. The program also includes some music that doesn't fit into the Mennonite and acapella genre.

<https://www.wmra.org/schedule/wemc#stream/1>

9:30 – 10:15 AM ~ Park View Mennonite Church Service

On line streaming from the church website.

The worship service from Park View Mennonite Church in Harrisonburg, VA is streamed live in video format on the church website. The worship can be watched later also. The participants are at safe distances in the church auditorium with prerecorded segments as well. An order of worship including hymns, scriptures, and readings is available on the church website.



<http://www.pvmchurch.org/>

10:15 – 10:30 AM ~ *Mostly Mennonite, Mostly Acapella* (repeat)

Music from the earlier program by John Horst is played from the end of the Park View Church service until 10:30 AM on WEMC.

10:30 – 11:00 AM ~ *Sing for Joy*

A repeat of the program from the 7:30 to 8:00 AM time period on WEMC.

11:00 AM – 12:00 Noon ~ Arlington Church of the Brethren Zoom Worship

On line streaming in the Zoom app from a link on the church website.



The Arlington Church of the Brethren in Arlington, VA has a live worship service on Zoom. The format allows the participants to see the other worshipers, and by unmuting worshipers can speak to the group and make contributions to the event or make announcements and comments.

The pastor, Matt Rittle, or other participants plan for worship experiences in the Zoom format. Following are some examples of worship segments from Zoom Sunday Morning Worship:

1. Videos that people in the congregation made or from worship resources.
2. Live skits with worshipers participating from home.
3. Children's worship and storytelling.
4. Scripture reading by worshipers.
5. Music – worshipers sing on mute while an organ or piano is played, prerecorded group choral collaborations with singers in their homes, worshipers playing instruments live at home, videos of music and singing.
6. Sermon – live or recorded.
7. Readings and meditations – live or recorded.
8. Sharing time, joys and concerns prayer requests, and announcements by unmuting and speaking live on Zoom.

For people who want to connect by telephone that option is available too.

During the pandemic Arlington Church of the Brethren hosts other media events weekly besides the worship service. Sunday School on Zoom and a weekly "dance party" exercise class were added on Zoom. The Church continues with Dunker Punk podcasts which are hosted by the Church, and Brethren Voices, a half hour program, is supported by the Church on a local access cable channel. These media events are part of the Church's mission.

<https://arlingtoncob.org/event/sunday-morning-worship-2/>

--Gary Smucker

--September 2020