



# The Ambassador

## From the Pastor

### A Place Apart

Long ago my parents would sometimes take us to the “Center of Science and Industry” in Columbus. I don’t know how many times we visited this museum, but I do remember my favorite exhibit. It was a recreated turn of the century street that occupied most of one floor. You could go inside a real silent movie theater, look into store windows at the products and technology of the time, sit in a Model T Ford, walk on cobblestones. I believe it’s a popular exhibit now, better marketing I suppose, but I remember it being not so crowded, peaceful even, and also a quite magical. One time I remember walking those streets all by myself. I loved it. I could instantly leave the modern world behind.



In some ways our sanctuary at church can be compared to this old timey street exhibit. Step into it and you are in another world. The traditional music is something you’re not likely to hear anywhere else, certainly not in a store or restaurant. The furniture, the colored windows, the high ceiling, a few oddly dressed people – it all contributes to a sense that this is a place where you are free to think and feel differently.

Jesus repeatedly asked his followers to envision a kingdom that was unlike the world into which they’d been born. It would be a place of beauty and peace and harmony. God would be especially present. Holding on to this vision would allow them to experience it even in this life, to know it as real. Even so, they had to have the eyes to see it: “The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed; nor will they say, ‘Look, here it is!’ or ‘There it is!’ For, in fact, the kingdom of God is already among you.” Luke 17:21.

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Sanctuaries were designed to invite those within its walls to suspend ordinary ideas of reality so they could experience something transcendent. Such places are certainly not the only avenue to genuine religious understanding, but over the centuries they've helped many people take a deep breath, let go of immediate concerns, and listen for some other voice.

When it seems appropriate health-wise, I hope you will consider inviting a friend or relative to visit us here at church sometime. Tell them to expect peculiar sights and sounds, and a departure from business as usual. I believe a lot of people are looking for something just like that.

Peace,  
*John Wagner*

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## Music and Worship Notes

*By Mary Ellen Clinard*

It's so nice to have many of our congregation back in the sanctuary on Sunday mornings! I have been thinking back to the beginning of the pandemic and how I began to excitedly plan our anticipated return to the sanctuary. In my naïvete, I imagined what our first Sunday would be like—Governor Dewine (after just a few weeks of the pandemic) would make an announcement that the “coast was clear” and we could flip the switch back to “on”! I envisioned performing a boisterous and flashy organ postlude I had been working on, Bach's Prelude and Fugue in A minor (BWV 543), a special choir anthem, and the great hymns of the church with soaring descants and thrilling modulations—(Holy, Holy, Holy, and O For A Thousand Tongues to Sing). Maybe the choir would process and the joy and excitement in the air would surpass Easter.

But instead of planning a “Big Return Sunday”, we found ourselves spending our time trying to figure out new ways to worship and ways to stay connected. We learned to make videos and recordings by using our computers and phones, we networked with people who could help us understand the process of live streaming. The choir learned sign language and our congregation learned Zoom! Creat-



ing worship in an empty sanctuary became the norm as the months wore on.

Now that we have been living in this “new world” for over a year, I realize that we won't have that “Big Day” when everything is going to be back the way it was. Our return is gradual -- since Easter,

more and more people are feeling comfortable returning to worship in person, we have added acolytes, the Doxology, and “live” singing of our benediction back into our worship services. The choir has not yet returned, but people are masked and singing. Office hours have resumed and some of our children and youth are meeting. Someday, I hope, we can return to the fun of potlucks and other fellowship activities.

What this gradual return has taught me is that God is ultimately in charge. I believe our safe and incremental return to worship is God's way of allowing us to appreciate each part of our lives together. We have the chance to be grateful for what God has given us each step of the way. We have grown and have discovered new ways to worship that are more inclusive to our members who can't leave their homes, who are temporarily ill, or have moved away. I am

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# Mission Moment

An update from Dr. Les and Debbie Dornon, missionaries to Nepal working in the Tansen Hospital

## Reba, Nepali Treasure

Reba didi (older sister in photo at the right) is one of my favorite ladies in our church. She was working in the hospital as a health assistant in the Pediatrics Department at the hospital when we arrived in Tansen back in 1990. She was already a member of the church at that time, along with one of her daughters and her daughter-in-law. Her granddaughters were in the Sunday school classes with our children as they were growing up.

Reba's husband was an alcoholic. He would do occasional work, but then would spend the money on more drink. She worked at the hospital full time, and also took care of her 4 children (3 girls and a boy). Her husband only came to church every once in a while. He died almost 20 years ago.

Reba worked hard at the hospital - and because her government ID card had her birthday listed incorrectly, she worked several years past normal retirement age, and eventually had to ask to resign! She was very missed at the hospital.

During our 10 years in the U.S., she lost her son (who also had an alcohol problem.) She now lives with her daughter-in-law who works as part of the hospital social services department. Her grandchildren are spread around the world, with only one remaining currently in Tansen. Several are continuing to follow the Christian faith.

Reba has twice had toxic epidermolysis. She was near death both times, but miraculously recovered. She is quite hard of hearing now, but still (at age 84) walks to church and is active in the women's group. One of my friends and I went to visit her recently and enjoyed



sitting with her and chatting. (We took our masks off for the photo.) She really is an inspiration to me as she has had so much difficulty and suffering in her life, but remains so positive and thankful to the Lord for all his blessings. She showed us her bible and devotional books which are by her bed, and she said she starts each day by reading them. She still loves to sing, and remembers many of the old hymns that were first translated by the missionaries into Nepali. I have been enjoying teaching some of those hymns to the ladies in our fellowship group as they are not sung so much anymore in church. Amazing Grace, Blessed Assurance, and It is Well are three that we sing together often.

Reba can remember the start of Christianity in Nepal. She is a treasure, and I am thankful to have had her in my life.

Love, देबी (Debbie) and लेस (Les)

Want more stories and photos? Check out our blog at [dornonnepalmission.wordpress.com](http://dornonnepalmission.wordpress.com).

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not sure that we would have been so quick to embrace this technology had things NOT so drastically changed in our world. We have been reminded of the importance of a touch, hug, or familiar face. We have learned not to take each other, and the time we spend together for granted. In this time of great loss and change, God remains faithful to his church and will carry us through. We will be blessed because of what we have learned and strengthened by His guiding hand in the days ahead.

*Christ Our Life — Service Our Lifestyle*



# May Birthdays

1 John Regensburg

4 Becky Rogers

6 Ron Davis, Shirley Fields

7 Judy Thorn

11 Luke Dornon

12 Lily Crowe

13 Bill Pratt

14 Peggy Kramer, Rebecah Symon

15 Davis Kramer

17 Isabella Ortega-Folgosio, Tom Piper

19 Brenda Byrd, Jim Gayhart, Mark Mills

20 Mary Nichols

21 Andrew Clinard

22 Vickie Frazer

23 Pam Fugett

24 Linda Yeakle

25 Dee Young

26 Tammy White

28 Mabel Borders, Becky Douthett, J.J. Peil

30 Tucker Smarzinski

*Happy Birthday!*

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