



# *In the Spirit*

A newsletter for the Libertyville Covenant church community about local happenings and Christian issues.

**December 2022**  
**Volume 29 Issue 11**

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"Wait for the Lord. Be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord." –

Ps. 27:14

Waiting is a funny thing. It can strengthen us, or test us. It can be a welcomed friend or an obstacle to overcome. As we enter Advent together, we wait together. We wait for Jesus' return, promised again and again in scripture. Impatient, frustrated and lamenting, or excited, anticipating and preparing – we all wait differently, but we all wait. Together.

Our Sabbatical Team suggested using these articles to share my Sabbatical experiences, and this summer, my trip to Scotland taught me a lot about waiting. My first flight of the trip was delayed by 3 hours, and so I waited.

The delay caused me to miss my next flight and the next was not for 7 hours, so I waited. 14 days later my flight home was delayed by a week due to an unfortunate COVID diagnosis, so I waited. When the week passed and I finally could fly home, my flight was canceled and another needed to be booked, so I waited. When it was finally booked, it only took me to Philadelphia, not Chicago, so I had to book my own ticket for the final leg, and on the phone, I waited. My flight from London to Philly was delayed, and so I waited. And in Philly I met Customs, a 2 hour wait when I only had 1 ½ hours before my final flight. Thankfully, thunderstorms in Chicago delayed my flight so I made it after all, but not-so-thankfully, said thunderstorm delayed that flight for another 3 hours, and so I waited yet again.

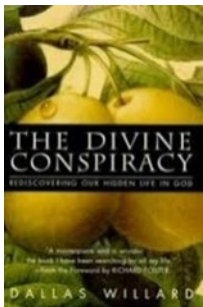
Waiting can strengthen us, or test us, or sometimes both. And these tests can be dangerous. As I waited for my flight in London, I found myself giving in to the temptation to curse the airline that was making me late for my opening dinner. "Lord, You gave me this trip and this first meal together will make or break this trip, and now this cursed airline has ruined my Sabbatical!" See the escalating size of this inconvenience (for "inconvenience" was all that it truly was)? Waiting can cause us to act selfishly, think dishonestly, and forget our Christlikeness.

As I watched the line of my COVID test appear next to the T, the Mark showing a result ironically called "positive", and I knew my waiting had just begun. And as I waited, I found my tendency to take control in stressful situations rearing up. Trying to control is often a lack of faith, a lack of trust that God is the One truly in control. And waiting can pull that sin to the surface, as it did for me.

And as the extra week of Scotland time passed, I found myself with three new friends in a very comfortable AirBnB just outside Edinburgh. As the quarantine passed and we had days to bus into the city for amazing food, concerts, and sightseeing, another danger reared up: comfort. As much as I wanted to get home, I found myself enjoying this extended stay, and even had flashes where I didn't want it to end. In those moments, I had grown too comfortable and lost sight of what I was waiting for.

As we wait together this Advent, we pray that God will grow us through the tests that waiting brings. May we not lose our ethical compass nor our Christlikeness. May we not forget to let God be in control, even though He waits longer to return than we would wish. May we not lose faith and forget to trust God in all of our circumstances. And may we not rest in our comfort and find ourselves enjoying the wait more than what we are waiting for.

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## **ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL ADVENT OFFERING**

"Welcome to a 4-week Advent Series in Adult Sunday School, facilitated by Pastor Paul and members of our Senior High Youth Group! We will spend these weeks of Advent Preparation in God's Word while also reflecting on passages from Dallas Willard's *Divine Conspiracy* -- exploring themes of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. Welcome to all. Materials will be provided each week, and will begin on November 27th." Questions should be directed to Paul Hawkinson or Paul Couleur

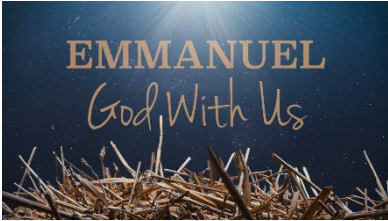
## **Christmas Smorgasbord, Dec 2<sup>nd</sup> There's still time to sign up!!**

It's Christmas Smorgasbord time! Please join us on Friday, December 2 at 11:30 am. around the narthex fireplace. We will enjoy our favorite Swedish Christmas foods, carols, and warm fellowship as we begin the season together. Please let us know you will join us now by signing up at this [link](#) or letting Debbie, in the office, know. A sign-up list for the food needed was sent out earlier in the week. If you have questions or would like a meal delivered to you, please contact Kris Nikkel (847-543-8861) or [kjnikkel@aol.com](mailto:kjnikkel@aol.com). See you there!



# December Worship

## Advent Series



Though it only shows up twice in the whole of scripture, the title “Immanuel” has become one of the most beloved titles for Jesus, especially during Advent. It means, “God with us” and in these days of global loneliness, it is more important than ever to remember that Jesus is indeed “God with us”. So this Advent, we will focus on just what this means. Join us for worship every Sunday at 10:30am in the sanctuary or on our [YouTube channel](#).

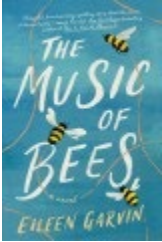
Nov. 27	Immanuel: God With Us in His Time	Matt. 24:36-44
Dec. 4	Immanuel: God With Us in Spirit	Matt. 3:1-12
Dec. 11	Immanuel: God With Us to Heal	Matt. 11:2-22
Dec. 18	Immanuel: God With Us in Spite of Ourselves	Matt. 1:18-25
Dec. 24	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service	
Dec. 25	Christmas Day Worship	John 1:1-14



Our Columbarium is finished! On Nov. 6 we dedicated this ministry to the Lord during our All Saint's Sunday service. And moving forward, we have a place where we can sit and remember our loved ones, thank God for our gift of eternal life, and remember that we are a community across space and throughout time, a community called the Kingdom of God.



## COLUMBARIUM DEDICATION



Our next book club read will be The Music of Bees by Eileen Garvin.

Following three lonely strangers in a rural Oregon town, each working through grief and life's curveballs, who are brought together by happenstance on a local honeybee farm where they find surprising friendship, healing--and maybe even a second chance--just when they least expect it.

Please join us for a fun evening together discussing our book and anything else that comes up! Friday, January 13, 2023 at 7:00 at church. Questions? Contact Caren Vollrath [carenvollrath@gmail.com](mailto:carenvollrath@gmail.com) 224-637-4422.

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The annual Progressive Dinner will be held Saturday, December 10. The evening will begin at 6:00 p.m. with appetizers all together held at one home, followed by dinner and dessert at 7:30 held at several host homes. Please join together for a very enjoyable evening! Sign up can be done by clicking [HERE](#) or on the insert in the bulletin and left in the church office from now until December 7<sup>th</sup>.

IMMERSE: The Bible Reading Experience™



## IMMERSE Yourself in God's Word Again

One of our chief ways of knowing God is through the bible, and so every Spring we take part in the Immerse Bible Study together.

From Feb. – May, our whole congregation gathers in groups to

read, ask questions about, and discuss one particular section of the bible together. Two years ago, we began in "The Beginning", reading Genesis through Deuteronomy. Last year, we read the Story of Jesus together, from Matthew through Revelation. This year, we will look at the Kingdom of Israel by reading Joshua – 2 Kings together.

Our hope and goal is to have 70% of our adult congregation involved in an Immerse Bible Study Group. This means we need 125 of us taking part in a group. Our youth will, and many of our existing small groups will. Our Sunday school class will. But many of us aren't part of any of these groups. So we want to invite and encourage every one of you to be a part of an Immerse Small Group whether online or in person. The agreement is to read about 10 minutes each day (less time than we spend flipping through social media each day!), and then to gather each week with your Immerse Group to discuss what you've read and deepen each other's understanding of it. Our reading begins on Jan. 30, and signup for our groups begin with the new year. Join us on this journey, beginning Jan. 31, and see if your life doesn't change noticeably this year.



# Children's Ministries

## Past, Present and Future Events

### Past



At the end of October, Children's Ministries hosted a Feed My Starving Children during our Wednesday Night Together. Following a meal at Culver's, our children along with their parents and other members of the congregation packed meals for starving children around the world while dancing to some great tunes!!



Top: Rachel Couleur,  
Heather and Isaac Larson,  
Titus Couleur

Left: Sophia Pas and Trevor  
James

Right: Terri Collins, Sarah  
Swanson, Leanna Collins,  
Max Anderson, and Mike  
Collins

### Present

**Sunday school and Children's church will be focusing on Advent.** Fun, different perspective videos and crafts will be highlighted. We want to thank all the teachers and assistants for their help and support.

### Future



**February 17-19<sup>th</sup> Covenant Harbor is offering a Winter Camp for grades 3-6<sup>th</sup>.** This camp gives elementary students the opportunity to have a fun and engaging weekend designed for younger students specifically. Just like our Jr. and Sr. High Winter Camps, this weekend includes all the details of activities, food, lodging and the Christian speaker and worship leaders. Our goal is for students and leaders to leave the weekend knowing more about Jesus and feeling more connected to each other in community. The registration deadline is Sunday, January

15<sup>th</sup>. If you are interested in sending your child or volunteer as a leader, please contact, Pastor Paul, Angela Kocinski or Jim Gillette



## **Advent night at LCC!**

Wednesday, November 30<sup>th</sup>, 5:45 – 7:45 p.m.

This is an activity for the WHOLE CHURCH to prepare ourselves for advent! Several Children's Ministry families will be meeting Maggie Johnson at PADS (Frist Presbyterian Church of Libertyville) at 4:45 p.m. to set up the bedding for the guests before coming to the church for dinner. We hope the rest of the congregation will arrive at 5:45 for a catered meal in the fellowship hall. Following are meal, we will participate in advent songs, story and craft.

## Youth Ministries



### **HALO: A 4-WEEK STUDY FROM THE GOSPELS ON CHRISTMAS**

**SERIES OVERVIEW:** There are certain things that make Christmas really *feel* like Christmas, right?

Christmas trees, holly, candy canes, nativity sets, that one Christmas album your family can't get enough of . . . oh! And angels. If you pay attention, you'll find them everywhere this Christmas season. They're on Christmas trees, ornaments, and greeting cards. They're in Christmas carols, movies, and nativity sets. And they're all over the pages of Scripture, too. That's because angels played an important role in the very first Christmas. In this four-week series from the Gospels, we'll pay close attention to the announcements the angels made surrounding Jesus' birth. Together, we'll see why the messages the angels shared back then still matter today — like the message that **God's timing is always right**, that **Jesus is always good news**, that **we can always share God's story**, and that **God is always ready to rescue**.



## **Junior High December Programming**

**Sunday School Dates and Times:** 12/4, 12/11, 12/18 from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m. **Wednesday**

**Youth Group Dates:** 12/7, 12/14 from 6:00 to 7:15 p.m.



### **Winter Retreat Registration is now open!! January 27<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup>**

The Junior High Youth Group will be returning to Covenant Harbor for their Winter Retreat at the end of January. We hope that you can join us. The cost for the retreat is \$181. Scholarships and the \$50 rebate are available, just contact Pastor Paul. Covenant Harbor has implemented on-line registration directly through them by clicking [HERE](#). Payment can either be by check or on-line to LCC. If you have any questions, please call or email the church office.



### **Middle School Progressive Dinner Christmas Party!!**

**Who:** Middle School Students from Libertyville Covenant Church. Please RSVP to [paul@libcov.org](mailto:paul@libcov.org) by November 30<sup>th</sup> to reserve a spot in the van for some fun.

**What/Where:** During a progressive dinner, the Collin's host appetizers at their home at (2565 S. Jensen, Libertyville), and then the group transitions to the Hawkinson's house for the main course. The night will finish with dessert at the Palmberg's (1522 Lexington, Green Oaks).

**When:** Saturday December 3rd from 12:00p.m.-4:00p.m.

**Why:** Because it's time to throw a Birthday Party for JESUS!!

**How:** Dress yourself up as if you were a gift you would give to Jesus!! Let's have some fun with this, toss on as much Christmas cheer as you could possibly find, kind of like Buddy the Elf! Bring a silly, funny, and or goofy white elephant gift to share in the gift exchange. Feel free to make them at home or find something cheap online or in the store.

**Drop off and Pick Up:** We ask that all students are dropped off at the Collin's (2565 S. Jensen, Libertyville) Oaks) at 12:00p.m. and you would be able to pick up your student at the Palmberg's home (1522 Lexington in Green Oaks). at 4:00p.m



## **Senior High Fall Programming**

**Sunday School Dates and Times: 12/4, 12/11, 12/18 from 9:00 to 10:00 a.m.**

**Youth Group Dates and Times: 12/4 (12:00 to 4:00 p.m.), 12/11, 12/18 (5:00 to 7:00 p.m.)**



### **Senior High Progressive Dinner Christmas Party!!**

**December 4<sup>th</sup>, 12:00-4:00 p.m.**

**Who:** Senior High Students from Libertyville Covenant Church. Please RSVP to [paul@libcov.org](mailto:paul@libcov.org) by November 30th to reserve a spot in the van for some fun.

**What/Where:** During a progressive dinner, the Collin's host appetizers at their home at (2565 S. Jensen, Libertyville), and then the group transitions to the Anderson's house for the main course. The night will finish with dessert, at the Couleur's house, (920 Knollwood, Deerfield).

**When:** Sunday December 4th from 12:00p.m.-4:00p.m.

**Why:** Because it's time to throw a Birthday Party for JESUS!!

**How:** Dress yourself up as if you were a gift you would give to Jesus!! Let's have some fun with this, toss on as much Christmas cheer as you could possibly find, kind of like Buddy the Elf! Bring a silly, funny, and or goofy white elephant gift to share in the gift exchange. Feel free to make them at home or find something cheap online or in the store.

**Drop off and Pick Up:** We ask that all students are dropped off at the Collin's (2565 S. Jensen, Libertyville) at 12:00p.m. and you would be able to pick up your student at the Couleur's home (920 Knollwood, Deerfield). at 4:00p.m.



Senior High Youth group sharing a meal and fellowship.

Top: Luke and Max Anderson, Grace James

Bottom: Max Anderson, Clara Cederberg and Ryan Tanzer



## Village Retreat Recap

In this fast-paced world, we focus this year's theme for the retreat to be about rest. Students name for me often the challenges they face regarding finding rest from their studies, sports, bands, social commitments, and the like. With hopes of listening and responding to this need we put together a weekend where we could learn to rest and experience it as well. Students were invited to recline with God, reach out to God, and simply be with God this weekend. We see in the scriptures Jesus modeling rest often when he would retreat for a while to a solitary place to simply be with God and find rest. Students were brought to a coffee shop to play board games, share some light conversations, and to simply enjoy a cozy place to sit for a while. They also walked leisurely about town finding some chocolate, ice cream, some tasty beef jerky to share, and enjoyed simply being unhurried and enjoying rest. Students enjoyed restful offerings such as a nap, journaling, doodling, and simply listening to the rain.

Psalms 23 was a text we shared with all that gathered as a text that brings great comfort to those seeking assurance and rest. The Good Shepherd watching over the sheep, guiding to green pastures, led beside still waters, anointed and blessed, and a fresh reminder that God's goodness and love will follow them all the days of their lives. All that gathered were changed to not only meditate and experience these wonderful words this weekend but were also invited to bring them home and live with them daily.

Our prayer for these students and charge:

O God, who is greater than most powerful forces in this world, enable us to be still and know you are God.  
O, Lord who answers out of the whirlwind of everyday life, breathe in your Holy Spirit to strengthen, comfort, and guide us in the midst of the storm.

O still, small voice, speak to us this hour that we might be makers of your peace in our homes, in our communities and in our world. We pray all these things in the name of the one who calmed the raging seas.  
Amen



## Financial Summary thru October 2022

### EXPENSES VS. BUDGET

Budgeted Expenses YTD	\$437,412
Actual Expenses YTD	\$402,431
Cost Savings / (Overrun)	\$34,981

### GIVING VS. BUDGET

Giving YTD (Including spec)	\$380,425
Budgeted Giving YTD	\$437,412
Giving Surplus / (Deficit)	(\$56,987)

### INCOME VS. EXPENSES

Income YTD	\$380,425
Expenses YTD	\$402,431
Operating Surplus / (Deficit)	\$(22,006)

The Leadership Team thanks you all for your continued generous support of the ministries of LCC. We thank God for you and His good work that can be accomplished through your faithfulness. If you have any questions or concerns regarding our finances, please contact our Treasurer, "Kansas" Dave Anderson at 847-910-1696 or [danderson@proactiongroup.com](mailto:danderson@proactiongroup.com).

**Thanks, Dave for your work on our behalf!**

## LCC LEADERSHIP

Please pray for the church

**LEADERSHIP TEAM, COUNCIL & STAFF,**

Contact them if you have questions, ideas or would like to get involved in a particular ministry.

### STAFF:

**Pastor:** Steve Larson (815/508-4450)

**Associate Pastor to Youth:**

Paul Couleur (847/331-3640)

**Pastor to Senior Adults:**

Bruce Thorson (847/421-2732)

**Office Administrator:** Debbie Tometz

**Choir Director:** Kris Nikkel

**Worship Leader:** Jeanette Mottl

### LEADERSHIP TEAM

**Church Council Chair:**

Paul Lundstedt

**Church Council Vice Chair:**

Trevor James

**Church Council Secretary:**

Karen Lundstedt

**Treasurer:**

Dave L. Anderson

**LT Members at Large:**

Julie Dahlberg

Kirk Johnson

**Financial Secretary:**

John Bethancourt

**Christian Education and Discipleship (CED)**

Angela Kocinski

**Deacon Team:**

Wes Lindahl

**Evangelism & Service Team:**

Teresa Anderson

**Worship Ministry Team:**

Michelle Pas

**Finance & Properties Team:**

Kerry Monson



# December Volunteer Schedule

Date	Coffee Hour	Lay Reader	Greeters	Ushers
12/4	Tim and Chris Albers	Trevor James	Paul and Karin Lundstedt	Bob Hartnett and Al Nielson
12/11	Bill and Chris Anderson	Jackie Splinter	John and Nancy McLinden	Same
12/18	STAFF	Jim Pas	Kerry and Brenda Monson	Same
12/25		Vicki Herrick	John and Suzy Nelson	Same

Date	Sunday School	Children's Church	Sunday School Nursery	Worship Nursery
12/4	Kansas Dave and Scott Anderson, Angela Kocinski, Merileen Thorson	Jim Gillette	Rachel and Joshua Hickok	Caren Vollrath and Jenna Glader
12/11	Same as above	Jim Gillette	Rachel and Joshua Hickok	Christy and Grace James
12/18	Paul and Karin Lundstedt, Angela Kocinski, Merileen Thorson	Jim Gillette		Kat Tranel and Nancy Borkman

12/25 **Merry Christmas**



December Birthdays		December Anniversaries
12/2 Maggie Johnson	12/20 Carson Hawkinson, Earleen Johnson	12/9/1995 David and Karen Hinz
12/6 Anja Beckstrom	12/22 Lee Vollrath	12/11/2004 Nate and Melissa Schau
12/8 Griffin Johnson	12/27 Leija Dalton	12/31/2000 Ben and Sarah Palmberg
12/9 Wylie Douglass	12/28 Carol Dieball, Vern Johnson	
12/12 Joshua Larson	12/30 Ken Werner	
12/15 Mark Cederberg, Carl Zienty	12/31 Gracie Greenfield, Jim Pas	
12/18 Axel Couleur, Kajsa Hawkinson		

# December

## Recurring Weekly Events

**Sunday:** 9:15 a.m. Sunday School  
10:30 a.m. Worship  
12:00 Choir Rehearsal  
5:00 p.m. Sr. High Youth Group  
**Monday:** 7:00 p.m. Monday Night Small Group  
**Tuesday:** 7:00 p.m. 2<sup>nd</sup> WMT Mtg.  
6:30 p.m. 3<sup>rd</sup> Leadership Mtg.  
7:00 p.m. 4<sup>th</sup> Deacon Mtg.  
**Wednesday:** 5:30 p.m. Wednesday Night Together  
6:30 p.m. Middle School Youth Group  
**Thursday:** 9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study  
1<sup>st</sup> /3<sup>rd</sup> 7:00 Men's Ping Pong  
**Friday:** 7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Study  
**Saturday:** 1<sup>st</sup> Sat 8am Furniture Ministry  
2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> 9:30 Women's Group

## December Special Events

**12/2** Christmas Smorgasbord, 11:30 a.m. Narthex  
**12/3** Middle School Christmas Party, 12:00 to 4:00 p.m.  
**12/4** Senior High Christmas Party, 12:00 to 4:00 p.m.  
**12/10** All Church Progressive Dinner, 6:00 p.m.  
**12/24** Christmas Eve Service, 4:00 p.m.



# December

# 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 9:30 Women's bible Study 6:30 Threshold Choir 7:00 Ping Pong	2 7:00 Mens Bible Study 11:30 Smorgasbord	3 8:00 Furniture Ministry 12:00 MS Xmas Party
4 9:00 Sunday Sch 10:30 Worship 12:00 Choir 12:00 SH Xmas Party	5 7:00 NA 7:00 Small Group	6	7 6:00 MS YG	8 9:30 Women's Bible Study	9 7:00 Mens Bible Study	10 9:45 Lisa SG  Progressive Dinner
11 9:00 Sunday Sch 10:30 Worship 12:00 Choir 5:00 SH YG	12 7:00 NA 7:00 Small Group	13 7:00 WMT mtg	14 9:00 PEO 6:00 MS YG	15 9:30 Women's bible Study 6:30 Threshold Choir 7:00 Ping Pong	16 7:00 Mens Bible Study	17
18 9:00 Sunday Sch 10:30 Worship 12:00 Choir 5:00 SH YG	19 7:00 NA 7:00 Small Group	20 6:30 Leadership Mtg	21	22	23 7:00 Mens Bible Study	24 4:00 Xmas Eve Service
25 10:30 Worship	26 7:00 NA 7:00 Small Group	27 7:00 Deacon Mtg	28	29 7:00 Ping Pong	30 7:00 Mens Bible Study	31

# GIVING

**LCC ONLINE GIVING PORTAL:** To give online, simply to go the LCC website ([www.libcov.org](http://www.libcov.org)) and click the “give” on the menu. Thank you for your ongoing support.

**[LINK to online giving](#)**

Checks mailed to the church will also be received and processed on a regular basis. If you have questions, contact John Bethancourt, [jbcovenant@gmail.com](mailto:jbcovenant@gmail.com) or 847/837-1690

**AMAZON SMILE PROGRAM**

An easy way to support LCC financially is through Amazon’s Smile program, where they donate a portion of your purchase total to our church. While the % we receive is fairly small (0.5%), it adds up - since the inception of this program, LCC has received over \$750! You just have to set up LCC as your designated charity of choice, and then use the <https://smile.amazon.com/> website (versus <https://www.amazon.com>) – when making all of your purchases. Bookmark the [www.smile.amazon.com](http://www.smile.amazon.com) site so you remember! Here are the easy steps to designate Libertyville Covenant Church:

1. Go to <https://smile.amazon.com/> and log into your account
2. Under “Account and Lists” choose “Account”
3. Towards the bottom right of the next page will be a box titled “Other programs” – click on Change your AmazonSmile charity
4. On the next page, there will be a section that says “Or pick your own charitable organization” – type in Libertyville Covenant Church and hit “Search”
5. Libertyville Covenant Church, Libertyville IL should pop up – hit the “select” button to the right
6. That’s it! Just remember to always go to <https://smile.amazon.com/> when making purchases as only those purchases will earn the donation. Bookmarking it is a good way to remember.

Thanks for your help, and especially remember this option during the holiday season if you do any Christmas shopping at Amazon! Thank you!



## **Libertyville Covenant Church**

### **Our Mission is...**

to grow disciples, grow the church, and grow the Kingdom of God

### **Our Vision is...**

We grow disciples as we praise and learn together

We grow the church as we love and give together

We grow the Kingdom of God as we serve and share together

### **Our Core Values are...**

Community: everyone is welcome to join us on the journey

Authenticity: being real people with real issues before our real God

Relationships: with God, each other, and the world around us

Engagement: all are gifted, all are called, all have a place in the ministry

### **Libertyville Covenant Church**

250 S. St. Mary's Road, Libertyville, Illinois 60048

(Corner of Route 176 and St. Mary's Road)

Pastor: Steve Larson Church phone: 847/362-3308 [www.libcov.org](http://www.libcov.org)

**NOTES:**