

The Virtually Led Children's Christmas Service 2020: An Idea List

By

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The Covid 19 pandemic has made it necessary for us to rethink many of the school activities we normally take for granted. For churches and their schools, the virus has made it difficult to plan, execute, and deliver weekly worship services and face-to-face classroom instruction. Numerous parishes are, for the first time, using video technology to deliver the Gospel message on Sunday mornings. Many churches have made outstanding progress in delivering virtual video worship to their members through recorded and/or live broadcasts via the internet, while teachers have done great work teaching their students online. Well done, thou good and faithful servants!

At present, most video presentations of services rely on a small number of personnel to produce the Sunday service, such as pastor(s), video technician(s), musicians, guest readers, and the like. However, things are going to get more complicated when the Christmas season is upon us. Parishes with Lutheran schools have traditionally presented a service led by the entire school in which the school choirs, handbell ensembles, bands, student readers, soloists, and other musicians, etc., are the proclaimers of the Christmas story. These services are often purchased through Christian publishers such as Concordia Publishing House or by secular publishers. Often, a member of the school's faculty will write them. In 2020, these cherished traditional children's Christmas services may be challenging for many schools because a virtual Children's service format is something relatively new to many schools.

The following list is a starting point for thinking about how your Lutheran school might go about designing its virtual Children's Christmas service. I hope these suggestions give you some practical ideas that can facilitate the planning and execution of your school's student led Christmas worship service.

Some Assumptions

Before we get to the list, here are some assumptions regarding your school's technological capabilities, personnel, time constraints, and production values:

- 1) You will need to be cognizant of **social distancing, masking, and other health protocols** when rehearsing and recording the virtual service.
- 2) You have the **video recording technology to broadcast an online service**. Digital video cameras these days are very good. Nevertheless, you need to make sure you have a sturdy tripod and good microphone for the best result.¹

¹ Even cell phones and iPads can capture good images, to say nothing of high quality digital cameras and other digital recording equipment. Nothing is worse for a virtual broadcast than poor sound quality and "glitchy" camera work. A bit of camera glitch can be forgiven; however, poor audio will cause people to tune out. If the microphone that comes with your camera is insufficient, purchase, rent, or borrow a high quality microphone(s). Good quality microphones can be purchased for around \$100.00 to \$150.00. Consult an audio expert to find out what might be right for your situation and budget constraints.

- 3) You have the **requisite number of technologically proficient people to record and edit** a virtual broadcast.² At one time, video recording and editing equipment was provided through community cable networks. There are some who still do, but they are getting much harder to find. Libraries sometimes would lend out equipment, but few do now. What's more, because of the Covid-19 pandemic, libraries who have editing capabilities may not be offering the service at this time.³
- 4) Outside of your choirs and other instrumental ensembles or soloist, let's assume that **most of the service will be led by individual classrooms in Kindergarten through 8th grade, or in the case of middle schools, K-5 and a combination of 6-8th grades.** Situations will vary, but you know how to divide and assign your students for the best results because, as they say, this is not your first rodeo.
- 5) **You have the commitment of your teachers, staff, and other volunteers** to produce, direct, and, if necessary, write a virtual service to be rehearsed, performed, and edited into a final product for broadcast by Christmas Eve 2020.
- 6) As I write this list (today is 10/7/20), you have about 53 school days until Christmas Eve. **If you have already started preparations for the Christmas service, you are in good shape; if not, you need to start your preparations immediately!** This is said not to scold or discourage you, but to emphasize that the time you have left is growing short, and a virtual service is something with which you may have little or no experience creating. *If you are already well on your way to creating the service, ignore this assumption.*⁴
- 7) **Your virtual broadcast is *not* a theatrical event! It is a worship service led by children.** While we want the service to be reverent, exciting, aesthetically pleasing, and filled with enthusiastic readings, mini-dramas, poetry, and great Christmas hymns and music, we are not to be worried about whether or not something looks like it was created by Paramount Pictures. This is a worship service where children have an opportunity to tell the Good News to each other and to everyone who participates in their virtual gift of proclamation. The Holy Spirit will bless this service powerfully even if it isn't perfect by some kind of professional video standard.

A Reminder from the Angels

²For ideas on doing virtual church services, see:; <https://get.tithe.ly/blog/virtual-church-live-streaming> ; <https://buildfaith.org/zoom-drama-tips/> or simply Google: Doing a virtual church service. There are many online resources for you to explore, but don't forget about seeking out expertise from local agencies and stores that specialize in video/audio equipment. Also call on your local high school or college video departments. Students often need to do projects for classwork in video programming. They might serve as video production directors and/or editors. What's more, they might do it for free!

³ Over the last couple of weeks, I have tried a number of local libraries in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area and none have video equipment to lend. They sometimes have editing capabilities but, even when they do, the service is limited. Your best bet is to use what is available in your congregation or its members.

⁴ I would have written this sometime earlier this summer, but I just received the LEA's request to create something on a virtual Christmas video. The Covid pandemic has made for interesting times, has it not? (Insert a wry smiley face emoji here if you wish.) **PS: For more ideas on writing a Children's Christmas service, see my LEA Webinar on "Writing, Directing, and Producing Your Children's Christmas Service."**

Every year many Lutheran schools present a service based on the Christmas stories⁵ in which children of all ages have assigned parts, memorize hymns and spiritual songs, rehearse parts, wear costumes, and so forth. Often individual classrooms or combinations thereof, have assigned readings, songs, and stories to present. Some students often take on narration responsibilities, solos, and other responsibilities that younger children would find difficult, and rehearsal times for the entire school are scheduled. Usually there is a final “dress” rehearsal with everyone in attendance. Sometimes the rehearsal goes well - sometimes it does not. When the service begins, teachers sometime hold their breath as their students speak and sing their parts, hoping that everything will work out without any serious “glitches.” We have all been there.

In a virtual service, every song, reading, poetic recitation, solo and choral presentation is recorded. If mistakes are made, you can re-record to fix any egregious errors! That’s a bonus. Also, there is no need to rehearse with the entire school present. That’s a time saver, and, in these Covid times, this reduces pressure on both students and teachers in regard to social distancing. I think you would agree that extra pressure is something we can do without in 2020.

Additionally, I believe that your students will enjoy the process of doing a virtual service. Many of them probably have made video recording of their own, and some may even be technologically equipped to serve as videographers, photographers, computer gurus, and video editors for the service. A virtual Christmas service provides teachers and students with a new occasion to use their talents, expertise, imagination, and creativity to proclaim the Good News.

Will this be a challenge for your school? Probably it will. Nevertheless, as you go about preparations for Christmas Eve 2020, remember the words the angels spoke to Mary and the shepherds: **“Fear not!”** The Spirit will lead you and give you the confidence to make your virtual service a blessing to your students, parents, and all those who need to hear the words of Good News that the children will speak.

An Important Word about Copyright, Works in Public Domain, and Fair Use

Many schools use commercially produced Christmas services written by Christian or secular publishers. I know that you will use your theological discernment regarding the doctrinal content of these publications, but there is what might be called a “copyright caveat” to consider when doing an online broadcast. **You must have permission, in writing, from whatever publisher or copyright holder you use when broadcasting their worship service materials.**⁶ Additionally, **music that is not in the public domain may be subject to copyright restrictions for broadcast.** Copyright laws are very specific and, if you break them knowingly or unknowingly, you are in violation of the law. As you examine publications with copyright protection, make sure you call the publisher’s copyright office immediately to find out what restrictions and/or copyright royalties need to be acquired before you broadcast.

When using a hymn from the hymnal that is in the “public domain” such as “Joy to the World,” you are safe. However, if you are in doubt, call the publisher! On the bottom of the page in the *Lutheran*

⁵ Such as: The Old Testament prophecies; the annunciation; the story of Mary and Elizabeth; the birth of Jesus; the annunciation to the shepherds, the journey of the wise men, Joseph’s Dream; the flight to Egypt, etc.

⁶ The following web site is a good summary of the topics of copyright, public domain, and fair use from Stanford University Libraries web site at: <https://fairuse.stanford.edu/overview/public-domain/>. Use the <<Previous Page & Next Page>> tabs to see more information on: Fair Use; Copyright; Public Domain; Disagreements Over Fair Use: When Are you Likely to Get Sued?; When to Use a Release, and so forth.

Service Book, for example, you will find a public domain notification. It's in small print and will say things like:

Text and music: Public domain.
Tune: Public domain.
Text: © 1985 John Doe. All rights reserved.
Tune: © 1975 Concordia Publishing House
Text and music: © 2000 Oxford Press

Sometimes copyright information is located in an index at the back of the hymnal along with the publisher addresses and phone numbers. In any case, you need to take care to investigate what is, and is not allowed under copyright restrictions.

Additionally, broadcast copyright can be a real deal breaker for a virtual broadcast. Your church may have various licenses that give you permission to broadcast hymns, spiritual songs, contemporary hymns and other music. In any case, you need to check with the church office to make sure that what you are doing is appropriate. Publishers sometimes have a small royalty fee for use of copyright materials, but sometimes the fees can be prohibitive for congregations with limited budgets. Whatever the case, you must address the copyright issues before you use anything that is under copyright.⁷

Writing Your Own Christmas Service Script

One way to mitigate the problem of hymn copyright is to use all public domain hymns and spiritual songs. There are more Christmas hymns in public domain than you will ever be able to use. They are the "old standards" that everyone wants to sing such as "Joy to the World," "O Come, All Ye Faithful," "Hark! and The Herald Angels Sing." Few problems there, but writing the script is another thing.

Many people feel they simply do not have the creativity, time, and expertise to design, write, or direct a Christmas service. It has been my experience that there's always someone on the faculty, staff, or layperson in the congregation, who has the skills to take on the service if given the time, and assistance from the pastor(s), teachers, office staff, and other volunteers. In the **Idea List** below, you will find a number of suggestions that, I hope, will help you to design and write your own service for broadcast.

Idea List for the Virtual Children's Christmas Service

- 1) **If you have not started to plan for the service, start your planning NOW!** You can modify whatever you have to fit the virtual format later. Think of what each grade will be responsible for and assign parts, select students for solos, get volunteers or find students or faculty members who can run the digital cameras and/or other technology. If necessary, hire a professional or find a high school or college student who can volunteer their time to help with the video and audio production. In any case, **DO IT NOW!** Class rehearsals should begin **NO LATER THAN** the first week of November. Even if you don't have a script, you can choose some of the hymns you need to rehearse, and possibly memorize, right away.
- 2) **Set up a rehearsal schedule for every classroom's student recitation, dramatic presentation, solo, etc.** The rehearsal schedule is necessary because if things aren't on a calendar, they simply won't

⁷ A template on how you might structure your service is found in #9 of this "Idea List" on page 12 of this paper.

happen. Start with the date or dates on which you intend to record each part of the virtual service and work backwards on the calendar from there. Knowing when you are going to record will make it easier for you to plan how much preparation and rehearsal time you will need to get ready for the recordings, and by what time each segment, scene, individual/group reading, solo, choir anthem, etc. will occur. The calendar is your friend – don't leave home without it!

- 3) **Have children create artwork that tells part of the Christmas Story.** For the last six years, I've written and directed an "Epiphany Fest" for my church's Lutheran school.⁸ Each year children in the middle grades create artwork based on one of the Epiphany stories.⁹ Below is a screen shot of part of last year's PowerPoint presentation containing the artwork that each student created. Every student was assigned verses of the story to illustrate. Three 8th grade students narrated the story that was illustrated by the 4th and 5th graders.¹⁰



In slide 56 (bottom row - 3rd from left) you will note that the student created a digital illustration. I've given similar assignments over the years and the artwork has always been delightful. I scanned the artwork and copied the digitized pictures into the PowerPoint presentations. It takes a little time, but the results are great. A close-up digital video recording of the artwork, with voice-over narration, will work just as well in a virtual service and will eliminate the scanning and copy/paste time needed in PowerPoint presentations. Please note that all artwork must be done in the horizontal format so that it will fit properly on the TV screen.¹¹ Keep all the pictures the same size so that cropping the image in the camera is kept to a minimum. Test out the drawing paper size with your camera before you assign its dimensions to the students.

- 4) **Take digital photos of children acting out the story.** Below is a screen shot of a PowerPoint

⁸ King of Kings Lutheran School, Roseville, MN.

⁹ The four Manifestations of Epiphany are: the Manifestation to the Shepherds, the Wise Men, the baptism of Jesus, and the Story of the Wedding at Cana.

¹⁰ The 4th and 5th graders also had speaking and singing parts in other parts of the Epiphany Fest.

¹¹ The pictures were on 11" x 17" paper in the horizontal format. We left some space on the borders in case pictures need to be cropped.

presentation illustrating the story of the Manifestation to the Shepherds from last year's Epiphany Fest.¹²



We had a great time doing it and once I had all the pictures edited with the text next to each photo, I created a color picture book for the children as an Epiphany present. Parents, most of whom could not attend the festival because it was held at 1:00 pm on the Friday after Epiphany, were delighted to see their children in the photos.¹³ Remember, you should have a **permission waiver** for parents to sign that allows their children to appear on camera in the virtual service. Your principal probably has such a waiver in her/his files.

5) **Record a puppet show of one of the Christmas stories.** For example, the story of the Annunciation to Mary and her subsequent visit with her cousin, Elizabeth, would provide an excellent opportunity for children to act, narrate, and sing the story. The entire script can be taken straight from the Bible. Here's a script starter to give you an idea of how it might be done:

Please note that all lines in the script below are numbered. Numbering the lines of the script makes it easy for directors or students to refer to lines in the script. It eliminates confusion when you can simply

¹² Costumes were from our church's Christmas costume collection. Kindergarten children were the sheep, 1st graders were angels, and 2nd and 3rd graders were the shepherds and villagers. The teachers organized everything from assignment of parts, costuming, the manger set, and helped me "herd" the children as I took the photographs. Seven 7th grade students did the narration.

¹³ Epiphany is January 6 and school is not back in session after the Christmas holiday break until the Monday after Epiphany. We rehearse during the months of October through December in small groups, and with narrators, and vocal/instrumental soloists during the school day. The Festival is open to the public and each year we have a luncheon prior to the service. We invite our region's churches to attend and many grandparents, retired church workers in the MN South district, and other members of the community attend.

say, “Go to line 5, page 1” or “Everyone turn to page 2, line 17...” Much time is lost in rehearsal when lines aren’t numbered for easy reference. I highly recommend this practice to you. I have numbered only the lines on the script below as an example.

(Luke the Evangelist sits at a desk and introduces the story.

He is in period costume and writes on a scroll as he reads the following from Luke 1:1-4).

1. Luke: Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. With this in mind, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, I too decided to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.

(Fade out on camera and then fade in as several narrators recite the poetry found in the Arch Book, “The Man Who Couldn’t Speak.”)¹⁴

The paraphrased puppet script could continue as follows.

Such a script could, of course, be presented with “live” actors instead of puppets.

Narrator 1 speaks as the puppets appear “on stage” and react to what the narrators say:

2. Narrator 1: When Herod was King of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah and his wife Elizabeth. Both were godly people and righteous in God’s sight. However, they couldn’t have children because Elizabeth wasn’t able to conceive, and Elizabeth and Zechariah were both very, very old.
3. Narrator 2: Once, while on duty in the temple, Zechariah was all by himself burning incense...*(An altar appears on the puppet stage as Elizabeth exits.)*
4. Narrator 3: All of a sudden, an angel of the Lord stood before him at the altar of incense and Zechariah was gripped with fear. *(Zechariah puppet is surprised and shakes with fear. NOTE: If you wish a student dressed as an angel can appear and tower over Zechariah. You can mix a “living actor” with the puppets if you wish. It’s always up to you.)*
5. Narrator 4: But the angel said...
6. Gabriel: Do not be afraid, Zechariah! God has heard your prayers. Your wife Elizabeth will have a baby and you will name him John. He will make you both very happy and everyone will rejoice because of his birth. He will be great in God’s sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit even before he’s born. And what’s more, he will bring many of the people of Israel back to God.
7. Zechariah *(puzzled and shaking his head)*: How can I know this will happen, for I’m an old man and my wife is also well along in years.

¹⁴ *The Man Who Couldn’t Speak*, by Jeffrey E. Burkart. Copyright © 1999 by Concordia Publishing House (CPH). You will have to call the copyright department at CPH to get permission to use the text of this Arch Book. **You can call CPH toll free at: 1-800-325-3040.** Ask the operator for the copyright and permissions office. I have always found the people in the copyright office to be most gracious and helpful. Better yet, write your own poem of the story or create a paraphrased script based on the scriptural accounts. ¹⁴ While the tune to “In Thee Is Gladness” is in public domain, the text is not. The copyright is administered by Concordia Publishing House. See footnote 9 on page 5 for the CPH toll free number.

8. Gabriel: I am Gabriel and I stand in the presence of God! I have been sent to tell you this good news. Now, because did not believe my words, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day this happens...
9. Luke: When Elizabeth was six months pregnant, God sent Gabriel to the town of Nazareth to a virgin named Mary who was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph. *(Mary enters the puppet theater with Joseph. They puppets hug each other and Joseph exits as Mary waves goodbye.)* Gabriel went to Mary and said:
(The angel Gabriel appears and when Mary turns around as Gabriel appears – Mary is stunned!)
10. Gabriel: Greetings, Mary! You are highly favored and the Lord is with you!” *(Mary quakes with fear.)*
11. Luke: Mary was greatly troubled at Gabriel’s word and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But Gabriel said:
12. Gabriel: “Don’t be afraid, Mary. You have found favor with God and will conceive and give birth to a son. And you are to call him Jesus!

Mary’s story continues with her visit to Elizabeth. At the end of the Mary/Elizabeth story Mary can sing a version of the Magnificat found in the hymnal. See, for example, hymn 933 in The Lutheran Service Book, “My Soul Rejoices,” sung to the tune of IN DER IST FREUDA - “In Thee is Gladness” (LSB #818).¹⁵

I hope this gives you a start on creating a puppet show. You can look for commercially made puppets online. My favorite, and somewhat expensive, puppets are made by Folkmanis® Puppets. You can look at them at the Folkmanis web site at: <https://www.folkmanis.com/146/home.htm>.¹⁶ You can also make puppets yourself if you have the skills, materials, and time. The internet has many suggestions for puppet making. Just type in “puppet making” into your search engine and *voilà!* You’ll find plenty of templates, video tutorials, and techniques for making puppets. This might be a great class project or something parents might volunteer to do.

- 6) **Preface each part of the Christmas story with scripture reading.** For example, prior to presenting the Story of the Wise Men (Matthew 2:1-12), have several narrators (and remember that narrators can come from any grade level) read, or even better, recite the following Old Testament passage from Isaiah 60:1-4:
 Narrator 1: Arise!
 Narrator 2: Shine!
 Narrator 3: For your light has come.
All Narrators in unison: And the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.
 Narrator 4: For behold, darkness shall cover the earth,

¹⁵ While the tune to “In Thee Is Gladness” is in public domain, the text is not. The copyright is administered by Concordia Publishing House. See footnote 9 on page 5 for the CPH toll free number.

¹⁶ About 15 years ago, I purchased 12 Folkmanis puppets for performances with my traveling Christian drama troupe, The Good News Players. The large Folkmanis puppets wear two-toddler sized clothes and our costume shop at Concordia University, St. Paul, MN, designed biblical costumes for each puppet. We have also used them in Children’s Christmas services at my home church. While it takes time to master puppetry, children love to do it. If you don’t have the budget to afford puppets, make your own. You’ll be glad you have them. Search the internet for “How to make a puppet” and you’ll find lots of resources. If someone in the congregation likes to sew, they might be a perfect volunteer for making puppets. Also, ask around in local churches to see if they have some puppets you might borrow. A simple puppet theater can be made with just a dark, solid blanket draped over a clothes pole for the puppeteers to hide behind.

Narrator 5: And thick darkness the peoples;
Narrator 6: But the Lord will arise upon you,
Narrator 1: And nations shall come to your light,
Narrator 2: And kings to the brightness of your rising!
All Narrators in unison: This is the word of the Lord:
People watching the recording are prompted to say, with the narrators:
All People: THANKS BE TO GOD!

Which brings me to my next point...

7) Audience Participation

In all likelihood, the service will be viewed at home with family members sitting together with their children. **This may be the first time parents will be sitting with their children for the entire school's Christmas service.** That's a marvelous thing for a family to do.

To encourage home participation, all words to the hymns should be on the screen during the broadcast. In addition, **a service bulletin should be sent home with the children or emailed to each household before the service.** Audience participation in the broadcast should be a total family affair that will probably be shared with relatives and friends many times. This is a great mission outreach and something that will be cherished by families for years to come.

The service should be as interactive as possible. Selected scripture readings can be read aloud at home under the leadership of student narrators on the video. During the service there could be times set aside for parents to read a Bible passage to their children. This is especially important for families with young children. For them to hear mom, dad, grandma or grandpa reading the scriptures will be a positive faith formation experience for everyone.

Prayer time with the family can also be included during the broadcast. Responses to prayers (e.g. "Lord in your mercy..." - Hear our prayer.") can follow petitions spoken by students of all grade levels. Silent time can be included in the service for personal, at home prayers as well.

8) **An Echo Pantomime presentation could be part of the broadcast** so that parents and their children can stand up and do actions and words along with the student storyteller. Here's a short example:

L = Leader C = Congregation

The leader tells the story in short phrases accompanied by simple actions/gestures or movements. The audience repeats the words and actions/gestures.

The Story of Zechariah

(The story leader introduces the echo pantomime. Back-up actors can repeat the words and actions to help the audience participate.)

Student Leader (SL): The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you...

SL: Tonight I'd like to tell you the story of Zechariah and Elizabeth. To do this I'd like you all to join me in an echo pantomime. I'll tell the story in short phrases and do actions that accompanies the story. You'll say what I say and do what I do - that's where the echo comes in. First let's stand up. *(Allow a few seconds for the congregation and folks at home stand.)* Now, first do what I do as if you were looking at me in a mirror. If I lean this way *(lean right)* you imitate me as if you were looking in a mirror *(audience leans left*

in mirror image, then lean left as the audience leans right). We do a mirror image so that you don't bump into each other by going your own way. Okay, let's try words and actions together.

If I say to you: "Good evening!" (Waves to audience with right hand while saying "Good evening.")

Note: Sometimes I will ask for a volunteer from the congregation to demonstrate the process with me. You can have someone ready to demonstrate that you've rehearsed with beforehand. The congregation will pick this up quickly.)

C: Good evening! (waves left hand) The audience echoes, "Good evening" and mirrors the hand wave, etc.

SL: Would you like to hear a story?! (Cup right hand behind right ear.)

C: Would you like to hear a story?! (Audience echoes words and gesture)

SL: Yes! (Two thumbs up gesture)

C: Yes! (Echo)

SL: One day! (index finger points to sky)

C: One day! (Echo)

SL: An angel of the Lord, (Flaps arms like angel's wings)

C: An angel of the Lord. (Echo)

SL: Came to Zechariah, (Points index finger toward audience)

C: Came to Zechariah (Echo)

The script continue with the storyteller part only:

SL: Zechariah was afraid! (Fear gesture - hand in front of face)

SL: But the angel said...(Both hands extend forward palms up)

SL: DON'T BE AFRAID! (Cup hand in front of mouth megaphone style)

SL: I've got good news to tell! (Arms extend up and out.)

SL: You and Elizabeth (Right hand extends - left hand extends.)

SL: Are blessed by God! (Both hands shower blessings by wiggling fingers above head.)

SL: You are going to have a BABY boy! (Rocking baby gesture with both hands.)

SL: Zechariah said (Point to audience with index finger)

SL: Ha, ha, ha! (Hold stomach and bounce as you laugh.)

SL: How can this be? (Scratch head with fingers.)

SL: We're too old (Slump down with age and shake a little.)

SL: To have a baby! (Rocking baby gesture with both hands.)

Note that the echo pantomime doesn't have to tell every detail of the story and sometimes contains a bit of poetic license ("Ha, ha, ha!" in the example above). You don't have to tell the entire story in this way; just one scene may be enough to get the story started and then the rest can be presented in a different way. An echo pantomime shouldn't be too long - a few minutes will do. If I were to end the story with Zechariah not being able to speak, it could end as follows:

L: So Zechariah couldn't speak! (Hands in front of mouth.)

L: But, don't be afraid! (Shake head side to side in "no" gesture.)

L: There's more to come! (Both hands extend out in "more" gesture).

Here's my generic with which I end all of my biblical echo pantomimes:

L: All praise to the Father. (Index finger points to the sky.)

(Note: The Leader actually making the sign of the cross with these gestures.)

L: All praise to the Son. (Index finger points down to the ground.)

(Jesus comes down to earth and dwells among us...)

L: All praise to the Spirit. (Index finger points from left to right - *this gesture completes the sign of the cross.*)

L: Three! (Hold up 3 fingers.)

L: In ONE! (Hold up index finger only.)

L: Amen! (Both hand fling up to the sky.)

L: Amen! (Both hand fling up to the sky again.)

L: Amen! (Both hand fling up to the sky again - then lower hands while bowing to the congregation.)

Remember to keep your phrases short and use simple gestures.

If some gestures are repeated, that's okay.

9) To help the echo pantomimist (EP) deliver her/his lines, you can use a screen to project the words of the script so the EP doesn't have to worry about skipping lines. A PowerPoint rendition of the script that is projected behind the camera will act as a teleprompter. This teleprompter technique will help students say their lines and lessen anxiety when the pressure is on. Use it as needed!

10) Some ways that you can facilitate, design, and write a Christmas service:

a) **Choose a person to lead the writing and directing of the service.**

It goes without saying that this is an "all hands on deck" school commitment. Now that I've actually said that, it is up to you to select, cajole, order, or nudge by consensus, someone to spearhead the writing and directing of the service. Often this responsibility falls to the choral director, organist, or someone who is dramatically inclined on your faculty or staff. However, that is not always the case and one should not assume that just because someone has done it in the past that he or she will be willing to do it this year. In any event, there should be one person who makes the final decisions as to what will be created. Ideally, the person in charge should be given at least some release time during the school day to weave all the service threads into a pleasing garment. It is also assumed that the person in charge will be calling (pleading, cajoling and nudging) upon everyone else to help them in the process. ***To Principals:** If at all possible, the person in charge of writing/directing the service should be given some release time during the school day to do what has to be done. I know this might be difficult, but try your best to make it happen.*

b) **The service of readings and hymns/carols.** This is a common way to prepare a Children's Christmas service. Here are some suggested steps:

- i) **Choose a title for the service.** Perhaps the title will be as simple as: "O Come, All Ye Faithful" - "Joyful and Triumphant" - "Prepare His Way" - "Come to the Manger" - "The People Who in Darkness Sat" - "This Joyful Christmastide." (*I think I might try my hand at writing a hymn on this last suggestion. Maybe you could as well!*) Sometimes a title will give you direction in planning the service. Having a title or a theme for the service is always a good starting point for creativity.
- ii) **Pick out the Bible passages from the Old and New Testaments that foretell and tell the major events in the Nativity stories,** select appropriate music, hymns, dramatic readings, chancel dramas, poems, etc., and which children will read, sing, act, and otherwise present the service.

Remember, the children present *everything* in the service. Here's an outline of such a service. I'll also include some script examples to stimulate your imagination.

Title of Service: Begotten of the Father's Love

Pre-service Music (*As much as possible, student instrumentalists should be featured.*)

Welcome and Invocation (*Usually these are given by the pastor, but children could do the welcome and invocation as well.*)¹⁷

Processional Hymn (*There may, or may not be an actual procession in your virtual service. It depends on your situation. In any case, start with a hymn that is familiar to most people.*)

Of the Father's Love Begotten – LSB 384 – St. 1-5

(*Note: All Hymns in this sample service are in public domain.*)

St. 1 – All

St. 2 – Children

St. 3 – All

St. 4 – Children

Δ St. 5 – All stand and sing in honor of the Trinity (*During the last stanza, narrators come forward to the microphones.*)

The Ancient Prophets Speak

Narrator 1: In ancient days, the prophet, Micah, wrote:¹⁸

Narrator 2: “I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,” says the LORD of hosts. (*Micah 3:1*)

Narrator 1: And, the prophet Isaiah wrote:

Narrator 3: A voice cries: “In the wilderness prepare the way of the LORD; make straight in the desert a highway for our God. ⁴ Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. ⁵ And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken” (*Isaiah 40:3-11*).

Hymn: Prepare the Royal Highway – LSB 343 – St. 1 - (*Actors come forward to the microphones.*)

The Story of Zechariah & Elizabeth – Luke 1:1-24

(*New narrators speak the following lines...*)

Narrator 1: Here is the story of Zechariah and Elizabeth.

Narrator 2: Before the Angel Gabriel came to Mary, he first visited a priest named Zechariah. The angel told him something that he couldn't believe.

Narrator 3: It is recorded in the first chapter of the Book of Luke and here is what occurred as presented by our 7th and 8th graders. (*Or 4th and 5th grades – or 5th and 6th grades – your choice. The story continues...*)

¹⁷ Your church's tradition or prevailing piety may not allow children to do some things in the service. Discuss this with your pastor because an informed pastor is a happy pastor.

¹⁸ Scripture passages are taken from the English Standard Version (ESV).

The Birth of Jesus is Foretold – Luke 1:26-38

(Luke is one actor who appears often as he introduces the various stories from Luke 2. He is dressed in period costume and writes upon a scroll. The scroll can contain his lines so that he can easily read them without the need of memorization. However, he should know the lines so well that he is to say the lines nearly by heart, and be able to look up from the scroll to address the audience by looking directly into the camera. He should appear to be thinking as he writes and occasionally stating his lines before he writes them.)

Luke: In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth,²⁷ to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. And the virgin's name was Mary.²⁸ And he came to her and said...

(The story continues here as an echo pantomime, drama, reading, narration accompanied by children's artwork, etc.)

The Story of Mary and Elizabeth – Luke 1:39-56

(At the end of the story, Mary can sing "My Soul Rejoices" LSB 933, or "My Soul Now Magnifies the Lord" LSB 934. Check on copyright with CPH.)

The Birth of John & Zechariah's Prophecy – Luke 1:57

(The rest of the Zechariah/Elizabeth story continues here. At the end of the story, Zechariah, can sing the Song of Zechariah (Benedictus) as found on pages 238ff in the Lutheran Service Book. All children can sing the doxology at the end of the song on page 240 of the LSB.¹⁹)

Hymn: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel – LSB 357 – All Stanzas

(During this hymn selected soloists or small groups could sing the stanzas while a person who knows sign language could sign the text as children sing. Another way to do it is to have selected students learn to sign each stanza or pantomime each phrase of the text in such a way as to act out the meaning of each stanza. All children and people join on the refrain. Seek out someone in your congregation or community who could teach the children how to sign.

This person could record the sign language translation as a means of teaching the children. By the time you're finished, perhaps the entire school will know how to sign "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel." This will be visually, verbally, kinesthetically, and aesthetically engaging for everyone.)

The Birth of Jesus - Luke 2:1-7

Luke: In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to their own town to register...

c) **Poster board enlargements of drawings:** The story continues in any way you wish; however, here's one idea you might try. As Luke continues the narration, have small groups of children assemble some enlarged pictures on four pieces of poster board to accompany each verse of the story. They could be simple line drawings as follows:²⁰

¹⁹ You will need to check with the CPH copyright department regarding the broadcast of the *Benedictus*. It is better to ask permission than to seek forgiveness. See footnote 9 for the CPH toll free number. It is best to gather all your CPH copyright questions together before you call CPH. That will save you a lot of time.



¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town.



⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child.



⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son...



...and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

Hymn: Angels We Have Hear On High – LSB 368

The Angels and the Shepherds – Luke 2:8-20

Luke: And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear.

The following is a cantata based on the Annunciation to the Shepherds that I wrote for our school's 6th annual children's Epiphany service this year. It can be sung or spoken as a poem.

At Our Lord's Epiphany/Nativity: A Cantata for Children based on Luke 2:8-20

Text and music: Copyright © 2019 by Jeffrey E. Burkart. All rights reserved.²¹

The dialogue below shows how the cantata was performed. Several trios, a soloist, and an "angel chorus" of about 15 students presented it accompanied by piano and two 8th grade violinists.

See footnote 21 at the bottom of this page to find how to obtain the rights to use this cantata/hymn.

²⁰ Many of you may have done this kind of artwork before, but if you haven't, here's how you do it: 1) Create pictures such as the one above and use your digital camera or cell phone to photograph them. These illustrations could, of course, be drawn by school children; 2) Tape or pin the four white pieces of poster board on a wall or bulletin board; 3) Copy your pictures, and use a digital projector to enlarge the image on four large pieces of white poster board. Use a black marker for the line drawings, or colored markers as the case may be; 4) Remove the poster boards and turn them over to project the next picture on the back side of the poster boards. This will make transitions in displaying the pictures very efficient; 5) Rehearse the dialogue or song and presentation of each enlarged picture with the students. *PS: Please excuse my somewhat crude illustrations. Someone in your school or congregation can and will do better, I'm sure.*

²¹ Rights to use cantata/poem, in **any form** including print or electronic means, must first be obtained by emailing Jeffrey E. Burkart at: jburkart@csp.edu. There is a small royalty fee for the use of the cantata/hymn that will go to the Dr. Jeffrey E. & Mrs. Martha L. Burkart Family endowed scholarship for church work students at Concordia University, St. Paul, MN. You can also write for permission at: Jeffrey Burkart – 433 Irene Court, Roseville, MN 55113. I will be happy to email the text and music of the cantata to you. You can present it in the way suggested on the next page (p. 15), or in other ways as your situation dictates. It could be presented as a dramatic recitation, puppet play, chancel drama, or pantomime, etc.

Trio 1: At our Lord's nativity,²² Shepherds bowed on bended knee. Sent by angels to a stall, Meeting Him who'd die for all.

Trio 2: Shepherds, keeping watch one night Saw an angel glowing bright In the sky near Bethlehem, Shining like a precious gem.

Trio 3: They all trembled at this sight Of an angel dressed in light, But, the angel said,
SOLOIST: "Don't fear! Here is news all hearts to cheer." "Your Messiah has been born Who will save this world forlorn! Bethlehem is where you'll find Christ, who'll save all humankind." "By this sign you'll know the child Who, upon the earth, has smiled: Swaddled snugly, He will be In a manger, as you'll see."

Trio 4: Then an angel army came Praising God, they did proclaim:

ANGEL CHOIR: "Glory be to God on high! Peace on earth!"

TRIO 4: Each one did cry!

SOLOIST: Angels left; they did not stay. Shepherds said, (Shepherd 1) "Let us away! (SHEPHERD 2) Find this child the Lord has sent (SHEPHERD 3) Who'll fulfill His covenant."

ALL cast members sing: Into Bethlehem they strode. As the angel had foretold,
In a manger, oh, so small, They saw Jesus, Lord of all!

All people sing stanzas 9 & 10 with the children:

A lead sheet (text & melody only) should be included in the service bulletin so that everyone at home can sing along.

9) Shepherds told what had occurred! People marveled when they heard
Of the Christ, true God and man, Who'd complete salvation's plan.

10) On this blessed Epiphany, Let us too, on bended knee,
Praise the Lord with hearts aflame, Then, like shepherds, Christ proclaim!

4:00/10:15 ²³

Hymn: Where Shepherds Lately Knelt - LSB 369²⁴

This hymn is an option for you to consider for your service. The music is found in the LSB Hymn Accompaniment book. It is a beautiful text by the late Jaroslav J. Vijda coupled with music by Carl F. Schalk (b. 1929). At age 91, Carl is still writing exquisite worship music. "Where Shepherds Lately Knelt" is a wondrous marriage of text and tune that posits a scene wherein

²² The text can be used for either Christmas or Epiphany. In this version of the text, I used *nativity* instead of *epiphany*. Both words work because "Nativity" and "Epiphany" both have the same number of syllables – a happy coincidence!

²³ 4:00/10:15 is a "running time" reference. I always time my scripts with a stopwatch when writing a worship service of any kind. I read, sing, and play the music in the script at a pace that I believe is appropriate for every section of the service. This includes the preservice music, hymns, all dialogue, and time for transitions between scenes. Try to have transitions take place during the hymns to keep things moving along without interruption. The **4:00/10:15 notation** helps keep me conscious about how long the service will be. The 4:00/10:15 notations means that in last year's service, the scene shown above was 4:00 minutes long and with a total running time to that point of the service at 10 minutes and 15 seconds. BTW: The entire service timed out at 53:30. The actual time of the service turned out to be 55 minutes. Pretty close - yes?

²⁴ The copyright is held by CPH, the tune by GIA. **Call CPH (1-800-325-3040) to find out how to go about getting the rights for use in your church.** In any case, it is something that should be shared with your students during the Christmas season. If you have the *LSB*, sing it, illustrate it, study it, learn it by heart. The hymn is that good!

we find ourselves following in the footsteps of the shepherds on the night of Jesus' birth. I urge you to teach it to your students so that they may know that there is indeed "room and welcome" for all people through the saving work of the Prince of Peace. The hymn becomes our personal testimony of Jesus' love to all humankind. I draw your particular attention to the final stanza, in which Jesus comes into our hearts "unmasked, unforced, unearned." We did not ask Christ to come to us, yet He comes to us gently, even though we have no merit or worthiness in us.²⁵

HYMN: We Three Kings of Orient Are - Text & music by John H. Hopkins, Jr. 1820 -1891.²⁶

Text and music: Public domain. This hymn is not in the LSB. The text is provided below for your copy/paste convenience should you need it.

We three kings of Orient are; Bearing gifts we traverse afar,
Field and fountain, moor and mountain, Following yonder star.

Refrain:

*O star of wonder, star of light, Star with royal beauty bright,
Westward leading, still proceeding, Guide us to thy perfect light.*

Born a king on Bethlehem's plain Gold I bring to crown Him again,
King forever, ceasing never, Over us all to reign. **Refrain:**

Frankincense to offer have I; Incense owns a deity nigh;
Prayer and praising, voices raising, Worshipping God on high. **Refrain:**

Myrrh is mine, its bitter perfume Breathes a life of gathering gloom;
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, Sealed in the stone cold tomb. **Refrain:**

Glorious now behold Him arise; King and God and sacrifice;
Alleluia, Alleluia, Sounds through the earth and skies. **Refrain:**

The Adoration of the Magi – Matthew 2:1-12

(I think, at this point, you've got enough ideas about writing a script.)²⁷

Hymn: As with Gladness Men of Old – LSB 397

Prayers

Benediction - *Following the benediction, these words may be spoken:*

L: Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

²⁵ "Where Shepherds Lately Knelt" could be sung, read as a poem by one or more students, done as a pantomime as the text is read, etc. It affords you another opportunity to make your virtual service visually interesting. If you have students who are taking dance lessons, this would be an avenue for a sacred dance that amplifies the text through movement. If you have a dance teacher in your congregation, ask for their assistance with choreography. BTW: Chancel dance can be done to any hymn or poem as can sign language.

²⁶To explore the story behind this hymn, go to https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/We_Three_Kings. You and your students might find it interesting.

²⁷ If you don't have an idea for a script, I have written several plays and hymns that tell the story of the Magi. One play with a concluding hymn is entitled: "Follow that Star" – a gospel drama/hymn done entirely in rhyme based on Matthew 2:1-12. Please contact me if you would like to preview it or other plays and hymns I've written at: jburkart@csp.edu. Please include your phone number in your email so I can contact you "face-to-face" on the phone.

Ask your music teacher for suggestions on vocal exercises or go to: <https://virtualspeech.com/blog/exercises-warm-up-voice-before-speech> and other sites on the web. You can also type “vocal exercises for speaking” into your search engine and you’ll find more exercises than you probably need. The same goes for warm-up exercises for singing.

- **Lackadaisical facial expressions:** Solutions: Have students do some “mirror image” facial expressions with you. You make a funny, serious, happy face and have the students mirror what you are doing. Have them pair up and try mirroring one another. You’ll have lots of laughs and the children will loosen up so they can be taught how to convey appropriate emotions through facial expressions. Assign one student to do facial expressions for about 15 seconds and then reverse and have the other student make his/her partner imitate what they do. You can also do mirror images of full body actions as well. That will really loosen them up.
- **Lazy vocal inflection, lethargic pronunciation, apathetic delivery.** Tell your students: “Slow down when you speak – don’t rush.” Some children have “stage fright.” They are afraid to speak in front of people and are terrified of how they will look and sound. This will often cause them to mumble their lines quickly just to be done with them. This is a common problem, so be patient, kind, gentle, and understanding. Just saying, “DO IT!” isn’t going to help. Purposeful practice in small doses is the key. Work one-on-one with the children who show the greatest fear of speaking. Have them work with a classroom buddy who you know will be patient in helping them with pronunciation, and vocal inflection. Sometimes older students are great at working with younger children on these kinds of problems.³⁰
- **Weak eye contact with the camera:** Have them practice eye contact with the camera by using a cardboard tube to represent a camera lens. Have children follow the “lens” as you watch them through the “lens” as you move it slowly back and forth, up and down. They need to get used to the idea that they are “always on” when the camera is present. Every child needs to understand that someone is **always watching them** even when they are not speaking or singing.
- **Fidgeting of any kind:**³¹ Nothing is more annoying than seeing someone fidget when in a “live” or “on camera” recording. The problem with the camera is that it will amplify all fidgets. Solutions: Make sure students get used to simply standing straight up, with their hands at their sides. No hands in pockets, no swaying back and forth or to and fro, no scratching, touching one’s face, gazing into the sky, etc. I know this can be done because every year I have the same problem with students in every grade. It is often said that perfect practice makes for perfect performance!³² Demonstrate how

³⁰ With more complex speech problems, your school or school district’s speech therapist could be of great help.

³¹ Fidget defined: To make small movements, especially of the hands and feet, through nervousness or impatience. Fidget is an interesting word, yes?

³² Perfection will never be achieved this side of glory. However, with persistent practice, I have found that most egregious fidgeting is eliminated – even with younger children. If we insist upon it, children will improve their ability to *not* draw attention to themselves by doing the fidgety things that annoy and detract from the message they are trying to deliver. Do not throw in the towel on any of these kinds of challenges. Children can do amazing things with practice, even if they are only partially amazing. Don’t become discouraged about these things. When the camera rolls, you can always go back and do it again to make it a little better.

not to do something and then show them how to do it correctly. Insist upon doing things well every time you rehearse. High expectations will breed high performance. Be gentle, but firm in your rehearsals. The children will thank you for insisting on excellence, I promise.

- **Sing-song recitation or reading of poetry:** Demonstrate an exaggerated recitation of the sing-song style to the children as follows:

Jack be **nim**-ble, **Jack** be **quick**! **Jack** jumped **O**-ver the **can**-dle **stick**!

Now note the following classic example of the sing-song delivery Luke 2:1-3 from the King James Version. which, I'm fairly sure, you have heard before:

And it **came** to **pass** in **those** days, that there **went** out a **decree** from **Caesar** Au-**gus**-tus that **aaaall** the **wooorld** should be **taxed**!

This sort of syllabic overstressing is unpleasant to the ear and draws attention away from any message that's trying to be conveyed. Demonstrate a smoother delivery of lines to the children so they understand how to deliver their lines with ease, articulation, and style.

- **The quick pick up of lines!** At the first read-through of the script, have your 3rd through 8th grade students do the following:
 - 1) Sit in a circle around a table(s) with their scripts (number every line in the script for ease of rehearsal). Provide pencils with good erasers – *not pens*, light yellow highlighters (dark ones make thing impossible to read) for every student.
 - 2) Tell them to put their name on each page of the script, be neat when they highlight their lines, and check their lines for any words they can't pronounce or do not understand.
 - 3) Have them carefully underline or highlight their parts and remind them that the scripts should be treated with great care.³³
 - 4) Have them partner up with a neighbor and read their lines to each other *twice*. Encourage them to speak softly and try to pronounce every word correctly. Spend just a few minutes doing this and call them back to order.
 - 5) Ask them: "Are there any words that you don't understand or are difficult to pronounce?" Tell them that you are going to start with the first line and that you may interrupt them to give them directions on how to interpret their lines.
 - 6) Insist on projection and proper voice characterization. (Herod should not sound pleasant and Luke shouldn't deliver his lines as if he had something better to do.)
 - 7) Lines should be rehearsed so that one line leads seamlessly to another. There should be no pausing between lines unless there is a dramatic reason to do so. Pausing, even slightly, can throw

³³ Scripts are all too often abused, scribbled upon carelessly, or lost. This is poor stewardship and should be "nipped in the bud" by explaining from the start that mistreating a script is just as bad as defacing books or writing on bathroom walls. I want to encourage you to help children be good stewards of the things that they are given and possess. Someone took the time to write the script and we respect that person's work by treating the scripts - and all things we are given - with respect and gratitude. As you can imagine, this is a pet peeve of mine. So, please do what you can for my "Save the Script" campaign. Thanks! BTW: When 8th graders get to high school, they may be given a script to a musical like "Godspell" or "Joseph and His Amazing Technicolored Dream Coat." If they damage or lose their script, they (or more likely their parents) will be charged an outrageous sum of money by copyright holders of the script. So, it's best for them to learn these lessons now so that they won't have problems in the future. *Just sayin'*.

off the rhythm of the drama and have a domino effect on the cast. The cast should know their lines so well that they are able to anticipate when they are to speak. Whether lines are memorized or read from a script, the quick pick up of lines is essential.

- **Help one another!** I've always taught that the best dramatic presentations are those in which the entire cast know everyone else's lines. When children participate in dramatic activities they are in cooperative enterprise in which everyone supports the efforts of *all others*. If someone misses a cue, another cast member should have the confidence to help their fellow cast member out of his/her dilemma in any way they can. A virtual service is no different from any other type of service in that the acting community comes together to support, encourage, and take on one another's burdens. Criticism of someone is forbidden; it's the teacher/director's responsibility to give helpful and gentle critiques. The rehearsal is a place wherein all students should encourage each other in every way to do their best. In that way, the presentation of the Gospel message will be memorable, not something children want to forget.

Post Script

I hope these suggestions will be of use to you as you go about preparations for your school's Children's Christmas service. These days of the Covid-19 pandemic have been challenging in so many ways, but we remain steadfast in the confident hope that "for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose." (*Romans 8:28*)

Lutheran schools, and those who administer, teach, and otherwise serve in them, are called according to God's purpose as are the children who we are privileged to teach. For Lutheran school teachers, every day holds new opportunities to proclaim the Good News in new ways. The virtual Children's Christmas service is one of those opportunities. Doing something new is challenging, but the rewards associated with doing a "new thing" are often greater than we could ask or imagine.

Therefore, I leave you with the prayer of the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Ephesians:

*"For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. **Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,** to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen."* *Ephesians 3:14-21 – NIV (Emphasis mine.)*

Yours in the name of the Christ Child, our Savior, and Lord,

Jeffrey E. Burkart, Ph.D.
Emeritus Professor of Education – Artist in Residence
Concordia University, St. Paul, MN
10/7/20

The text of this paper is written in Goudy Old Style typeface using 13 point type in the body and 11 point type in the footnotes for ease of reading.