

Columbia, Missouri
The Worship of God • October 30, 2022



THE SCRIPTURE
Romans 12: 9-21 (*The Message*)

Love from the center of who you are; don't fake it. Run for dear life from evil; hold on for dear life to good. Be good friends who love deeply; practice playing second fiddle. Don't burn out; keep yourselves fueled and aflame. Be alert servants of the Master, cheerfully expectant. Don't quit in hard times; pray all the harder. Help needy Christians; be inventive in hospitality. Bless your enemies; no cursing under your breath. Laugh with your happy friends when they're happy; share tears when they're down. Get along with each other; don't be stuck-up. Make friends with nobodies; don't be the great somebody. Don't hit back; discover beauty in everyone. If you've got it in you, get along with everybody. Don't insist on getting even; that's not for you to do. "I'll do the judging," says God. "I'll take care of it." Our Scriptures tell us that if you see your enemy hungry, go buy that person lunch, or if he's thirsty, get him a drink. Your generosity will surprise him with goodness. Don't let evil get the best of you; get the best of evil by doing good.

THE MESSAGE
"You Need to Get Out More: Emergence"
Mark Briley

Do you feel like you're in sync with your community? That may seem to be a big or loaded question. I guess I'm just wondering how you move about the world. We're talking about getting out more in this current season after all. And when you're out, you make choices about how you're moving... how you're engaging others... how you get through life day to day. Are you leaning into others? Have you pulled away? It really is

a dance after all. The soundtrack to the world is playing all the time, and we enter the dance in one way or another.

I'm not sure we always hear the same song when we step out into the world. What's your walk out song? I have some friends that like to joke about their walk-up song – you know that song that gets played when you make your way to the batter's box or out onto the stage before you make a presentation. If you were being announced in some way, what would your walk-out song be? It's usually a pump-up song to get you motivated, confident, ready to bring your best. One friend leans into James Brown's "The Boss." "I paid the cost to be the boss." Another likes "Unstoppable" by Sia. "I'm unstoppable. I win every single game!" It's that song that when you hear it, you feel like you can do anything, be anything, conquer anything.



Edwin Diaz started a trend with his walk-up song that is being heard everywhere these days. The song is called *Narco* by Blasterjaxx featuring Timmy Trumpet. Diaz, the closer for the New York Mets would enter late in the game when things were getting tense, close... lots on the line. And he would run in from the bullpen to that song. It became so popular – given the critical timing of the game, partnered with that song, that it's gone viral. And Timmy Trumpet himself was invited to a Mets game not

long ago to play the song live as Edwin Diaz ran from the bullpen to the mound. Timmy Trumpet was so excited. "It's my first baseball game ever!" he said. He was exhilarated – something this classically trained trumpeter never imagined; Diaz was extra pumped because here is his walk-up song being performed live at a key moment in the game. And the fans? Well... they go wild, and everyone is playing an air trumpet along with Timmy.¹



So what, right? *Narco*. You're thinking, "Never heard of it." If you've been to any MU Tiger football game or watched the Chiefs play, or nearly any football game of your choice, you've heard that song and you didn't even know. Typically, when 3rd down comes up as the Tigers are trying to make a defensive stop, here comes Timmy Trumpet.

My son, Dane, first turned our family on to it. It is certainly his walk-up song right now. When I need to wake him up or get a little more energy out of him, I crank up *Narco*

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8BYSp2pzP0Y> Timmy Trumpet plays live as Edwin Diaz takes the field.

and he's ready to rock. It came on at the first and only Chiefs game we've ever attended a few weeks ago. Here's just a little clip so you hear the song, feel the excitement, and watch Dane play a six fingered trumpet. Click [HERE](#) to view the video, or view it on the Broadway Christian Church YouTube channel.)

As we continue our series today, "*You Need to Get Out More*,²" we're talking about emergence. How do we get out, find a synchronicity with our neighbors and community, and emerge stronger for it? We're walking in this season now and maybe we need a walk-out song to help us get out more.

While we're mostly in the "*post*" of the post-pandemic world, many are touting this time as the most-challenging part of the pandemic so far. "*What do you mean, pastor? The hardest part was when people were sick without good treatment and dying.*" Yes, of course. This sentiment, however, is that during the crisis, we just managed the crisis. We did the best we could in most every aspect of our lives. And while people were tense and in disagreement on any number of things about how it was handled, there was a sense of acceptance that this was temporary. We just need to get through the best we can and then we'll figure out how to navigate a new world when the crisis ends.

After a year of shaking out the cobwebs and re-entering life as best we could, the extra government funds for society in crisis management are running out, we've had a year to see who would come back to work, to church, to this and that, what priorities would drive individuals and organizations forward and now we mostly know. More companies and organizations are going through major reorgs now than during the pandemic or as it was first shifting to "post" status. Now is when we're seeing how everyone will emerge from what was to a whole new world?

Emergence is a natural order. These sorts of things have been studied far and wide. One study of emergence in organizations notes the steps in this way. A disturbance of the status quo occurs – COVID, for the example – but the organization tries to deny it or ignore it and just maintain things as they were. A common phrase coming out of the disturbance is, "*Let's just bring back something that feels familiar to people, so they will calm down.*"

But... there's a dissonance. While things are familiar, it's not the same. People start to notice things are different, and they wonder why. The status quo becomes unbalanced, and structures and processes are not as effective as they used to be. Thus begins a liminal season where the previous way of things doesn't hold, but the organization or

² Grounded in the book "*You Need to Get Out More*" by Rev. Mark Feldmier. 2012. Published by Mark Feldmeir, Carlsbad, California.

church or business isn't sure what to do next. The organization embraces the need for innovation.

Something fresh emerges – a higher order pattern, a decision, a new structure, or a change in direction, new and different yet still holding to identity, strength, and values. And then... this is the emergent moment... people find coherence and learn how to integrate the new into the spirit of what is already known. It's tough – but it is the way forward through any major disruption that changes society. And what happens to the resilient ones who embrace the reality? Group learning occurs, new structures and behaviors more suitable for a new chapter emerge, and they grow forward together.

As we're getting out more and more these days – intentionally longing to be part of the emergence post-pandemic with our community, we're aligning the new songs to which we're trying to dance together.

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Christians in Rome about their own walk-out songs. "*Get together and get in sync,*" is the sentiment. "*Align yourselves and fly.*" He's just written about how the Body of Christ... the Church... is to work and move together if they want to be an effective presence in the world. Everybody has their part. Paul says, "*Live your life as an offering to God. You're waking and sleeping; you're working and playing. Make it all witness to the love of Christ.*" And then dance together. Do your part in the emergent process. If you're a pray-er, pray. If you're a teacher, teach. If you're an encourager, encourage. Whatever it is, join in. This isn't the time to sit out. Tune your ears to the new song and move in sync together. Paul says, "*It will take everyone to emerge well in the new world.*"

My daughter, Morgan, is in *City Lights*, the show choir at Rock Bridge High School – go Bruins! They've recently had two full weekends learning the dances and flow to their whole show. They call them "*Choreo Weekends.*" Their choreographers come in from out of state, and they work into the night on Friday, all day Saturday, and another five hours or so on Sunday afternoon. A couple of Choreo Weekends and what was once chaos... just songs and 30-plus high schoolers standing near each other turns into coordinated movements to achieve their goals. If any one of them skips the practice or doesn't put in the effort or just decides they liked the songs from last year better, so they're not going to dance now, the whole group suffers. But when they get together, remember their love for this discipline, recognize that each part forms and shapes the whole... then they get in sync, and the outcome is something beautiful. Paul is saying – "*This is your calling, Church.*" The Body of Christ needs all its parts so it can work, move, dance, and... transform the world.

The verses from Romans we heard this morning give guidance for entering the dance well. It's basically a list of dance moves for each of us to learn. Here's just a few: "*Love*

from the center of who you are... and don't fake it." "Don't burn out." "Stay fueled." "Be cheerfully expectant." "Don't quit." "Help where you can." "Don't be stuck up." "Laugh with your happy friends and share tears when they're down."

He goes on and on and I won't name them all. But there are good words about what it will take when you're trying to emerge from the disruptive depths into a new season of life. *"Discover beauty in everyone."* he continues. *"Make friends with nobodies; don't be the great somebody."* What about this dance step: *"If you've got it in you, get along with everybody."* Is it in you? *"If you're enemy is hungry, buy them lunch."* Maybe my favorite word in a season of emergence: *"Be **inventive** in your hospitality."*

How are we living and moving in such a way that those we meet as we're getting out more and more in the community will want to dance with us? There was a time, you know, when it was like, *"I'm not sure about things. I don't know where this church stuff is going. How do I invite others into this uncertain mix?"*

But you know what I've found? Many people like to be part of the emergence; not just joining the dance after the Choreo Weekend – after everybody else already knows all the moves. No. *"Invite me to join you now... and we can learn some new dance steps together."*

If anything, people's genuineness radar is up and on high alert right now. People aren't looking for fake or for anyone who has memorized all the moves. They want to learn with others who are still learning. They want to be part of shaping something with some new dance partners.

So... your dance move book is Romans 12 – especially these verses today from the Message translation. If you would take one of those phrases each day this week and try to live that out? Others will start to take notice and want to join you in the effort. You bless your enemy? People will notice. You work at being a good friend who loves deeply? – that friend will be ready to go the next mile with you. If we all practice this well, the phenomenon of murmuration will emerge. Do you know what I'm talking about?³ It's a practice of the black birds – the dance of the starlings as it is sometimes called. It is nothing short of awe-inspiring choreography.

Late October – right about now – is a good time to witness the starlings dance; often near sunset. Something about the setting sun triggers this dance. Without fanfare, the individual birds transform into a fluid swarm, rising into the air, folding inside and out, shifting shape and form, but always maintaining the integrity of the flock. A collective wisdom seems to birth the rising. There is no apparent or obvious leader. But there is

³ The concept of murmuration and relation to Emergence is indebted to Chapter 7 of Susan Beaumont's *"How to Lead When You Don't Know Where You're Going: Leading in a Liminal Season."* Rowman & Littlefield publishing. 2019.

an elegant synchronicity that is beautiful. Why do they do this? Scientists hypothesize that starlings use their choreographed dance to deter larger predators like hawks or falcons from attacking the group. Moving as one not only confuses the predator but also decreases the individual risk each bird faces. Another hypothesis centers on body heat. A murmuration can attract other starlings in the area to one central roosting site. In colder months, more starlings congregated together creates a warmer roosting spot. The groups sometimes reach 100,000 or more. Some scientists say that starlings assemble to share information about their environment for feeding purposes. This hypothesis rests on an evolutionary idea that when food is difficult to find, a species must rely on a free sharing of information to survive. The murmuration is the hum of grace that signifies they are in this effort together – the literal sound that the bird’s wings make when tens of thousands of them are fluttering together. They dance for some 20 minutes, and then they settle in for the night. If you’ve never seen it, then you must. -- Go to this link to watch the video:

file:///I:/Documents/Broadway%20Christian%20Church/Graphics%20File/You%20Need%20to%20Get%20Out%20More%20Series/Sermon%20Graphics%20-%20Mark/Blackbirds.html

Isn’t that beautiful? I don’t know if Timmy Trumpet plays their walk-up song before they launch into the dance. I’m guessing it’s more likely the Beatles, “*Blackbird singing in the dusk of night... take these broken wings and learn to fly. All your life... you were only waiting for this moment to arise. Blackbird fly...blackbird fly... into the light of a dark black night.*”

That’s a song of emergence... from the pain of what was... from the uncertainty of what was... from the loss, the hopelessness, or simply the end of a season once beautiful but served its purpose and ready to arise, emerge to something new.

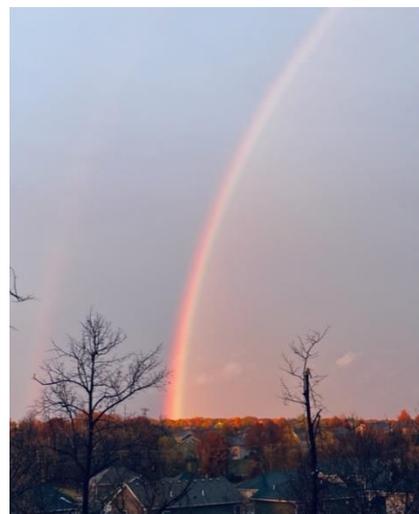
How do the starlings do this so elegantly, and what can we learn from them? Scientists that study the phenomenon say there are only three rules: Don’t overcrowd your neighbor – there is a right balance that must be honored – but you must stay close to them. If you allow too much space, you disengage, and the flow gets thrown off. Beyond that balance, you also must align yourself toward the average heading of your six closest neighbors. You can’t watch everybody or care for everybody, but you get yourself right – you pray, study, and engage, dancing well with your neighbor as you get to know them, care for them and then become mindful of the closest six... like the support from your small group... and somehow the murmuration does its thing.

I was fascinated with what emerges when we get aligned with one another in this way. We’re certainly working on this alignment as a church family. It was beautiful last weekend to gather on Homecoming Sunday, to hear Rev. Bill Ryan... once a toddler running these hallways, step into the pulpit, share the names and stories of those who

emerged in the early days to get in sync with the Spirit and each other... to begin to dance the moves of Romans 12. The murmuration for 64 years has been strong... rising again and again in the midst of an ever-changing society to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly in faith. Bill ended his message with the invitation to our church to get out more... to invite people... any who need a place to emerge, to get engaged, to share in the dance to... "*Come and see.*" We're praying into this emergence in deep ways. Come and see, friends. Come be part of what is emerging.

Our Elders are the 27 spiritual leaders of the congregation elected by you to listen to the Spirit, keep us focused on our mission, and respond faithfully to the ever-changing society we're maneuvering right now. They serve three-year terms, and they are an amazing team of faith-filled, wise, and courageous leaders who have been called to lead in seasons just like this. As we met this week, there was time for prayer, for silence, for consideration of what is and what could be. There was time to listen and time to speak. There were more questions than answers, but such is the reality in emergent seasons. There were hard truths and hopeful ones. There is much to discern yet. But these are big times, with big questions, and wonderings about how *BroadwayNext* faithfully emerges. It was an introduction to some big ideas about how we create an alignment, even a murmuration, going forward. Pray for these leaders. They are so often lifting your names in prayer. Pray for them as they discern the emergence.

The meeting was a lot to consume, digest, and engage with one another in 75 minutes of time. As we neared the close, I checked my phone to see how much time we had remaining before we dismissed into the board meeting that followed. I noticed more than 30 notifications on my phone since the meeting began; most of which were from my 11-year-old son, Hayes. That was unlike him. He's on the run so much that I knew something had captured his attention for him to stop and send that many messages. I could tell most of them were pictures along with a single message that said, "*It's so pretty, Dad!*" After raining all day long and even into the start of our Elder's Circle Meeting, the rain had apparently stopped, and the sky turned every kind of marvelous color, and a rainbow spanned the whole city. The timing could not have been more appropriate as we closed a deep and discerning meeting. I passed the picture around the Elder's Circle as we closed. This rainbow over our city; long a symbol of God's covenant and promise to be with us always. Later, on Face Book, I discovered many of you from Broadway posted your own rainbow pictures during that same meeting; ongoing affirmation that God is with us in this emergent season.



I love you, Broadway. You've always been faithful... up for the challenge of the times.
Let's sync up our spirits, get out there... dance partners in this faith walk forward... and
maybe like the blackbirds discover... *we were only waiting for this moment to arise.*

May it be so.

BROAD HEARTS BROAD MINDS BROAD REACH