

Easter and beyond in a time of Sheltering in Place

There are many practices that we have all come to rely on that are no longer allowed in this time of COVID 19, but few as emotionally charged as the regular celebration of community worship. This is especially true for the Christian celebration of Easter as well as the Jewish celebration of Passover and the Muslim celebration of Ramadan, all of which come in April this year. In each of these, the coming together and sharing in person of these customs is filled with tradition and identity. So it should come as no surprise that at a minimum, the seven larger Christian communities here in Asylum Hill had little time to prepare for this new reality. It's very revealing and somewhat comforting to see how each rose to the challenge.

The largest of these is the Cathedral of Saint Joseph, and they are likely the best positioned to make the transition to worship via broadcast. They have been airing daily and Sunday masses through their Office of Radio & Television for many years.

Asylum Hill Congregational Church likewise has offered participation to members who could not attend by placing cameras to broadcast a view of the sanctuary and feel as though they were almost there. In this case though, the service itself had to be changed since only a very few could be present during the recording of the event. While the choir couldn't be present, several of the soloist were brought in, and social distancing was maintained.

Immanuel Congregational Church, Grace Lutheran and Riverfront Family Church all used Zoom, and all recorded from home, while Trinity and Glory Chapel opted for a you tube presence and recorded from their sanctuaries.

All in all, each community made a valiant effort to provide what they could of a religious experience. In the end, I think this will leave most members with a deeper appreciation of

what they had a few months ago, and some sense of what it feels like to be a shut-in. Many of the Easter services have been saved and are available on their You Tube Channels that can be found from their respective websites.

