



CORO LUX



*Chorus of Light*



NEWS OF NOTE



CORO LUX IS BUILT ON THE IDEAL OF “DOING GOOD AS WE DO WELL.” WE BELIEVE THAT IN DIVERSITY THERE IS STRENGTH. WE BELIEVE THE VOICES OF THE WORLD SHOULD BE HEARD, REGARDLESS OF ETHNICITY, GENDER, RELIGION, NATIONALITY, OR SEXUAL ORIENTATION. IN THE PAST WE HAVE USED OUR CONCERTS TO CALL FOR PEACE AND TO BENEFIT CHARITABLE CAUSES, AND WE WILL REDOUBLE OUR EFFORTS GOING FORWARD. THROUGH OUR ART WE SING FOR A BETTER WORLD.



# CORO LUX

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March 2021 Volume 2 Number 3



**Kirsten Norman** leads you through our March newsletter. She previews what you'll discover in this engaging issue

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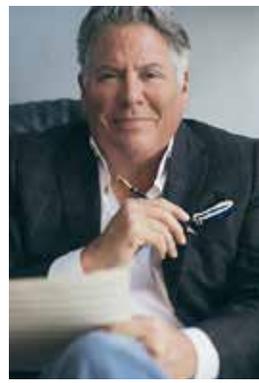
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**Doing good as we do well**

Giving the highest quality performances, we also give back to the community

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For donors, it is about leaving a legacy and insuring their gifts support the values and causes that are most important to them

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**Performances by other local music organizations**

Find out about their future concert schedules and cyber events

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## A brief introduction to the articles you'll find in our March issue

by Kirsten Norman

Welcome to the March *Coro Lux* newsletter! With COVID-19 vaccinations underway, and some easing of restrictions around the state, it feels like it could actually be spring here in New Mexico. I say it could be spring, as in most of the country it feels like someone left the freezer door open to the Arctic Circle, turning half of North America into one giant frozen popsicle. While we wait to defrost, here's a bunch of new *Coro Lux* article to keep you entertained.

This month we have a nice variety of articles for you. Ashley Jonkman has a great interview with George Arthur, our multi-talented *Coro Lux* Board President and bass. George has been with *Coro Lux* since its inception and with an extraordinary art background has been invaluable to *Coro Lux* as our graphic designer. LaVonne Yazzie has written a wonderful recap of our third annual MLK JanFest celebration, In the Time of COVID: Singing in a Strange Land. Finally, our Artistic Director Brad Ellingboe dives into the world of Igor Stravinsky, specifically his *Symphony of Psalms*. Once *Coro Lux* begins regular performances, which we hope will be soon, you can expect to see *Symphony of Psalms* as part of our upcoming repertoire. Until next time, stay warm and please stay connected in song!

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Igor Stravinsky

*The Symphony of Psalms is a three-movement choral symphony composed by Igor Stravinsky in 1930 during his neoclassical period. The symphony derives its name from the use of Psalm texts in the choral parts.*



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LaVonne Yazzie



## Highlights of 2021 MLK Janfest "In the time of covid: Singing in a strange Land

by LaVonne Yazzie

The new year started off with a bang for *Coro Lux* in the form of our 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual MLK JanFest virtual celebration presented on January 16<sup>th</sup>. This year's festival theme, "In the Time of COVID: Singing in a Strange Land," was a beautiful testimony to the strange times that we are living in at present, while detailing the musical history of the African American spiritual and black gospel music

and how these two genres influenced the civil rights movement from the 1960's that continues today.

### IN THE TIME OF COVID: SINGING IN A STRANGE LAND

The 3rd annual MLK JanFest event on January 16th, 2021, co-hosted by the United Church of Santa Fe and *Coro Lux* will be virtual this year.



Our special headliners will be award winning composer, educator and conductor, **Dr. Rollo Dilworth**. He has published more than 200 choral compositions as well as written or co-authored three books on choral technique. Also, **James Abbingdon**, currently Associate Professor of Church Music and Worship at Candler School of Theology, Emory University.

- Janfest will be co-led by the **Rev. Talitha Arnold and Bradley Ellingboe**. The program also features sessions on the voice by **Dr. Stevie Springer** and updates on covid -19 by **Dr. Joe Alcorn** discussing the prospects for live choral events in the coming year.
- The seminar will cost \$37.50. For more information and to register, go to [albqcorolux.org](http://albqcorolux.org)

Poster with Dr. Rollo Dilworth pictured

University of New Mexico. Dr. Alcorn, who provides updates on the novel coronavirus in the *Coro Lux* monthly bulletin, explains how the novel coronavirus affects the human body in a biological lecture, explaining how the virus' spike proteins are integral to the way this virus infects its host by hijacking the body's hardware to produce their own virus cells. Dr. Alcorn clarifies that the "seriousness is not due to its lethality, but its infectiousness," with the epidemic showing that some

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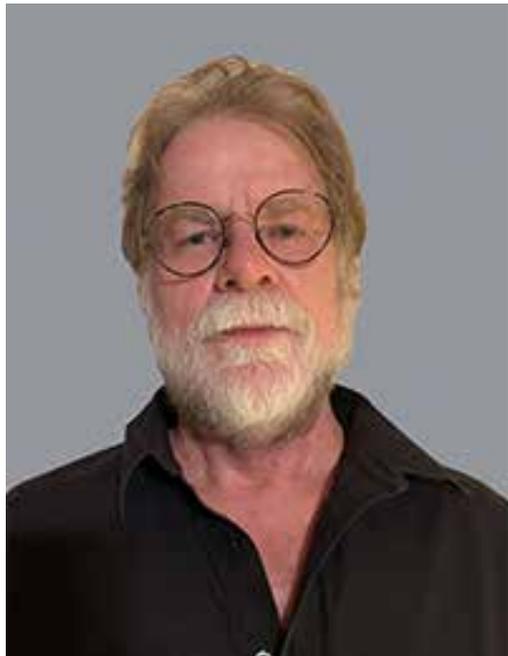


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(JanFest continued)

individuals are more at risk, specifically people of color, populations with co-existing conditions, varying levels of fitness, nutrition, immune function and behavior. As for choral singing, Dr. Alcorn explains “singing is just as effective as coughing and sneezing in spreading this virus,” encouraging COVID-prevention practices like



Dr. Joe Alcorn

wearing a mask and social distancing, ultimately closing with the reflection, “how we fare depends upon our neighbors nearly as much as ourselves.”

The virtual celebration continued with the lecture “Spirituals and Gospel Songs: Singing in a Strange Time” by Dr. James “Jimmy” Abbington, Associate Professor of Church Music and Worship at Candler School of Theology at Emory University, and a well-known teacher, compiler, and historian of church music, and the second African American hymnodist to be elected as a Hymn Society fellow. Dr. Abbington opens with Psalm 137, where the Israelite captives have been requested to sing joyful songs for their Babylonian captors, to which they respond: “How can we sing the songs of the Lord while in a foreign land?” Dr. Abbington muses, “Much like the children of Israel, we are living in a strange land and in a strange time.” Dr. Abbington details two indigenous American genres of music, the negro spiritual and black gospel music. The negro spiritual is an “outstanding branch of folklore, and as folk music, it is apart of a musical tradition that has been evolved through the process of oral transmission.” Citing Dr. Uzee Brown, the negro spiritual was a slave survival tool with four characteristics: spirituality, creative ingenuity, adaptability, and the will the persevere.

On the other hand, the development of black gospel music began at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century

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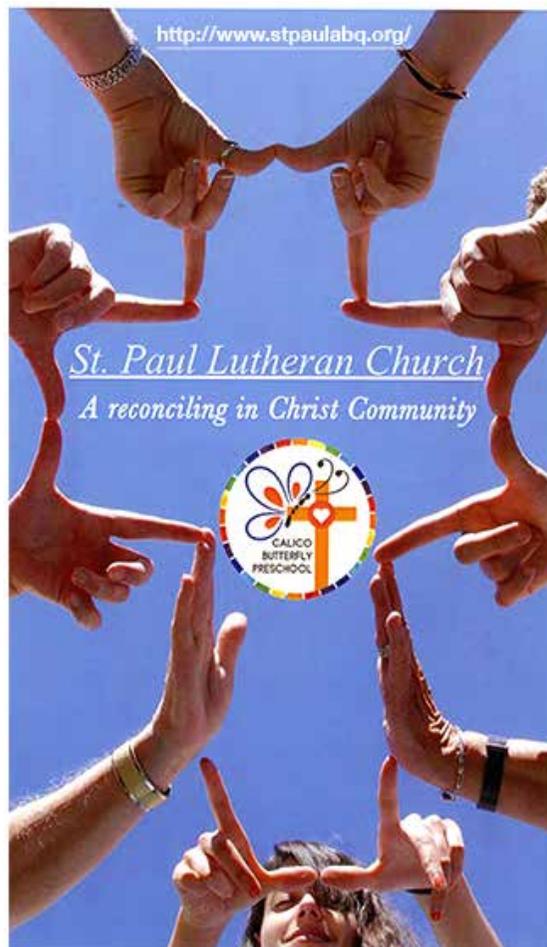
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*(JanFest continued)*

as congregational music, primarily in Pentecostal congregations before moving to urban settings in cities like Chicago and New Orleans where it was influenced by jazz and blues. Dr. Abbington shares the life of Howard Thurman, a renowned American author, philosopher,



*Dr. James Abbington*

theologian, educator and civil rights leader who was a mentor to Martin Luther King Jr. and who studied spirituals extensively. Dr. Abbington also cites Charles A. Tindley, a prolific hymn writer and progenitor of black gospel music who pastored during World War I, the 1918 Flu Epidemic, and the Great Depression.

The virtual MLK Janfest closed with the lecture "African American Music & Social Justice" by Dr. Rollo Dilworth, Professor of Choral Music Education at Temple University. Dr. Dilworth delves into the relationship between the African American spiritual and how it functions in today's climate, reflecting on "George Floyd and Breonna Taylor and so many others who have lost their lives over the past year as a result of racial discrimination and violence." The African American spiritual played an important role during the time of slavery as it was the means of communicating coded messages, and since the modern-day civil rights movement has its roots in the deep South, spirituals were perfect for "the moment to move forward social justice causes."

In closing, the 3rd annual MLK JanFest teaches that African American spirituals and black gospel music, though created during the darkest type of oppression, are examples of the ongoing fight against the evils of racism and discrimination. Though COVID-19 has affected the art of choral music in an oppressive, physiological manner, it still allows for optimistic hope for an end to the pandemic and the restoration of choral singing for all peoples. [Return to the contents page](#)

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Lauridsen interview



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# CORO LUX

## Covid-19 update: Viral mutation and human vaccination

by Dr. Joe Alcorn

The most commanding aspect of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic now is probably the interplay of viral *mutation* and human *vaccination*. Almost anything I write today about this interaction will be superseded by the time this newsletter is available. But we'll be better able to understand the evolving story if we try and clarify some of the concepts and nomenclature. Therefore I want to review the vocabulary of "mutations" in context. And though it is (mostly) SARS CoV 2 mutations that are in the News, I will start more generally because it's easy to forget what an integral part of Life's variety is attributable to mutation - they are not just the sinister plays of a menacing virus!

I'll assume a basic working knowledge of the virus which, if you have the time can be reviewed on this video:



## Medical Perspectives: Singing in the Pandemic

January 16th  
11:15am MT

Conversation with  
Dr. Joe Alcorn

Anyone interested in a deeper dive into vaccination and the immune system itself will find a lucid article in The Atlantic from last summer: <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2020/08/covid-19-immunity-is-the-pandemics-central-mystery/614956/>

### Mutant Spawn

My brothers like to refer to my sons as Mutant Spawn. And I bet any fifth grader would define a *Mutant* more or less as  
*(Article continued on following page)*

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(Covid continued)

someone with an inborn error of development that results in the ability to emit magnetic rays or fire or some kind of freezing substance - always from the extended hands, never from the elbow or ankle as near as I can tell. But what is it REALLY?

(Spoiler alert: *mutations* are alterations in genetic code that lead to altered proteins with or without significant alteration of their structure of function.... 'Genetics' is the science of heredity and the source of terms we will encounter such as 'gene', 'genome' and 'genotype'. "Proteins" are the basic structural building blocks of living things, though they may be embroidered with carbohydrates and fats. And "Enzymes" are a group of workhorse proteins that each facilitate a specific chemical reaction - the broker, you might say, that enables and speeds a reaction that synthesizes a sugar or regulates a hormone, or transfers a chemical messenger from one nerve ending to another resulting in motion, or occasionally, thought etc... )

### Cellular Operating System - Alle Menschen werden Bruder?

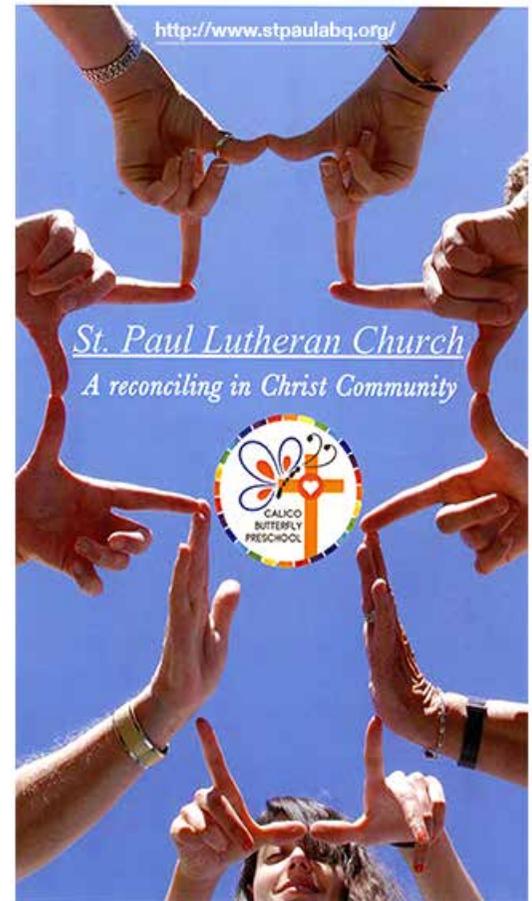
Our starting point is the simple central premise of Life's molecular biology: A plan, coded in *nucleic acids* ( DNA in the human *Genome*; RNA in SARS CoV 2) is translated into proteins by which cells do their business. The segment of our DNA that encodes a particular protein is called its '*gene*'; all the human genes together represent our human '*genome*'. These gene-governed proteins ( made of linked amino acids ) including the enzymes that promote our complex chemistry, then pretty much do all the rest for us. And for animals and plants. And for viruses - though they don't schlepp around ALL the enzymes or raw materials they need, pillaging living cells to make up for what they lack. But we are ALL creatures of protein arranged per our DNA ( or RNA) blueprints.

All humans share the same Human Genome - the same set of genes encoding the same set of proteins that act both as structure - the collagens of the skin for instance - and function - those enzymes. But..... if we are identical in our individual *genotypes*, ((the specific gene collection of each individual human) why do we not all look alike? Hold that thought....

### - Morse than meets the eye...

How do humans get from DNA and genes to proteins ( made of amino acids)? It starts with that famous double Helix of DNA (the molecular structure really more of a spiral staircase), the blueprint, containing the code for the construction of all our human proteins. The way you 'read' this DNA is in groups of three 'rungs' on this staircase. A marker identifies the start point for a given gene and after that, every three -rung

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(Covid continued)

-triad represents the code for one unique Amino Acid (of which there are about 20). So DNA represents a continuous inventory of all our proteins in a long sequence separated by some rungs of punctuation. Not really a book of protein plans - more like a scroll.

Think of this like Morse code - the DNA triad-rungs are the dots & dashes; the "letter" each triplicate defines is an Amino Acid. In Morse code "Dot Dash Dot" = the letter R. In DNA, rungs CGT = the amino acid Arginine. So if you - or one of your cells - started to decode a sequence of DNA, each triplet would call for an Amino Acid and as each new triplet was read and that AA added to the elongating chain, eventually - when you get to the rung sequence that says "The End" - you'd have a long strand of Amino Acids, and voila! Strong work! You made a protein! Just as a sequence of Morse Code generates a series of alphabetical letters that carry abstract meaning, the DNA has coded for a string of Amino Acids making a very concrete protein.

Imagine you could make a video game that rewarded for protein construction instead of Zombie destruction! You could have kids reading an un-scrolling helix of DNA as easily as they read a long line of text, putting each Amino Acid in its place like so many proteinaceous letters! They be whizzes as protein chemists!

(There IS some protein folding to finalize form and in humans there is an intermediary between the DNA and the protein construction called RNA - its as if the DNA is a Prima Donna and doesn't want to leave the cell nucleus for the vulgar cell cytoplasm where all the protein construction takes place so it sends its RNA servant - but we don't have to get into all that.)

### **Polly want a Morphism?**

So back to the question: We share the Human Genome so why don't we all look alike? The answer is (at least in part) because while every protein shared amongst humans has to perform its assigned task common to us all, the proteins might differ just a little in Amino Acid sequence person to person... and yet still function. Maybe for a given protein - say myosin, one of the proteins in active muscle - two people differ in the code at triad # 77 and therefore have different Amino Acids at place # 77 in that protein. Yet those amino acids were 'close enough' in configuration that the protein works well enough in both - or maybe it works better in one form than the other and contributes to, say, better endurance. (Note to self - review Natural Selection....) These small differences mean we **don't** all have exactly the same *genotype*, we don't have the identical final protein construction - and we don't all look act and behave in the same way. Without these minor differences in Genomic blueprint and protein construct (called polymorphisms,

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meaning 'many forms') people-watching would be a lot less interesting. While we all share the same Human Genome, we each have our own individual version of it, our own unique variant - identical twins being the exception.

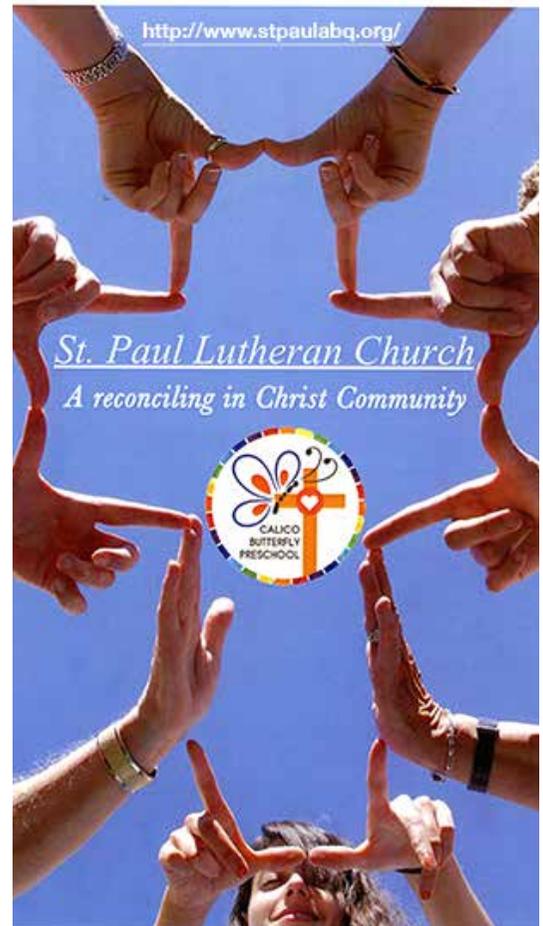
Of course most of this individuality is passed on from conception - the familial polymorphisms that we're talking about when we say a baby 'has his grandmother's eyes'. We are so used to this that if that baby's sister had her Grandfather's eyes, we wouldn't identify her as a mutant! These manifestations of individuality arise from small differences in DNA coding - some mixing, some mutations - in the DNA of conception. ( Mutations in humans can occur after birth and represent potential causes of cancer and of aging itself, not relevant here. But in any case most of them arise as errors occurring during the process of copying the DNA for cell replication. ) Humans tend to keep conception apart from all the other cellular processes of day to day life(!) But for viruses, their day to day life is ALL about replication. each viral genome is unpacked and replicated thousands or tens of thousands of times per day. So for them, mutations that alter proteins that (potentially) alter function are far more frequent than in humans.

By the way, humans have "proof reading" functions to minimize the likelihood of a mutation in our DNA. But just as medieval monks copying manuscripts made errors - a word dropped or repeated, a mis-spelling, perhaps even an entire line misplaced - errors DO creep into the system as DNA ( or RNA in Corona virus) is copied over and over. MOST monkish errors left the text still intelligible to the educated reader, but some have been the source of considerable confusion - the same is true of the protein constructed from a mutation-afflicted blueprint.

So errors in the genetic code accumulating randomly represent mutations - but since most never come to light its not surprising that the term is commonly associated with the more obvious cases with FUNCTIONAL significance. (Like emitting fire from your palm.)

So on the one hand there is a kind of normal genetic wobble that meets tolerance specs and allows function more or less as expected. But on the other hand there are the alterations in genetic material that result in something outside of expectations. Or to be more precise, any of us might have had a cell division that included a random mistake in copying one rung of the ladder - after all there are about 3 BILLION rungs in the human genome, and the best of Monkish transcriptionists would find it daunting to copy that many characters without a single error. For

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(Covid contunued)

human DNA the mistake rate is about 1 in 100,000 rungs. Mistakes DO happen - but most will have no consequence and so we won't 'notice'.

## Going Viral

The story in SARS CoV 2 is (mostly) the same. Of course this virus uses RNA instead of DNA so its genetic code is translated into proteins with fewer steps than in humans in ways we don't really need to discuss. But its proof-reading function is not very good and its numbers are great. There can be 500 BILLION SARS CoV 2 in a teaspoon of pharyngeal secretions! If all of them are replicating several times per day, a thousand or more new progeny at a time, no wonder even last fall there were already 12,000 *mutations* catalogued for this virus - though none were clearly of functional significance (<https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-02544-6>) And no doubt there were many MORE mutations that actually resulted in DECREASED replication competence or even proved 'fatal'. We're talking only about the mutations to which the replication process is indifferent - that occur randomly but provide no obvious benefit or harm to that version of the Virus.

How would we know if there was a mutation - or more likely a cluster of mutations - that actually DID have functional significance? Because that virus variant would out-compete other viral strains to become a dominant form of the infection. It could be because mutations made for more 'sticky' interactions between virus and human cell so the pharynx simply had more virus to cough sneeze or sing out. A change in just one or two Amino Acids making up the Spike protein might do this - make its fit to the ACE 2 receptor more stable and make successful cell penetration more likely ( as the British B. 1.1.7 strain seems to do and perhaps the South African B.1.351). Or perhaps mutations changing a few amino acids in the protein of the viral shell makes it a little more durable outside the human body, or changes its profile like 'stealth' technology delaying immune recognition. An easily overlooked consequence of an unchecked pandemic is the sheer number of mutations SARS CoV 2 can try out, those most advantageous being naturally selected.

Great Britain has updated its recommendations on mitigation as a result of its experience with its now dominant variant strain B.1.1.7 that seems to be more infectious than the 'original' strain(s). ([https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/948607/s0995-mitigations-to-reduce-transmission-of-the-new-variant.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/948607/s0995-mitigations-to-reduce-transmission-of-the-new-variant.pdf)) There is a cluster of 13 specific mutations, including mutations of the spike protein, that characterize this variant. Early reports DO suggest the *possibility* of higher

(Article continued on following page)

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*(Covid continued)*

viral loads and a greater chance of serious illness and death but this variant also seems to be prominent in nursing homes with more vulnerable patients so there is no certainty about lethality per case even if we don't know all the ways this set of mutations confers replication advantage. It seems likely that OUR CDC recs on mitigation will need to be tightened up as this variant among others begins to be seen in the US - 15 minutes of 6-feet or less single-masked exposure over 24 hours may not be strict enough.

On the other hand, all things being equal, a mutation that did NOT improve replication but made the virus more lethal would NOT be a good choice for SARS CoV2. The death of its host means the death of the virus - its a goner unless it can evade the masks and the distance and the air movement and get into another host. Increased deaths associated with a newly recognized viral variant is far more likely to be due to more efficient replication and more total infections than to pure "lethality" per infection. There ARE reports now of viral strains first identified in Britain, South Africa and Brazil claiming the resultant illness to be more lethal than the 'original' SARS CoV 2 first identified in China. As I write data are scanty but of course this could be true. But it will be difficult to be sure without tracking a LOT of infections with the full spectrum of outcomes while sequencing each virus ( i.e. mapping each virus genotype) in every infection. Early on its just difficult to distinguish an increase in disease severity from an increase in disease incidence, both of which could result in an increase of deaths. But because a virus with mutations that result in it being more lethal to humans is not advantageous, it seems more likely that a higher death rate from one or more recently described mutant strains reflect some advantage in infectivity or replication efficiency resulting in more viri per infected human or higher efficiency of spread between humans.

### **Mutations and Vaccines**

But "successful" enduring mutations aren't really just random. Some parts of the virus just can't be fiddled with and still preserve function. If cars were living things, and the position of the back bumper was mistakenly (mutantly) altered to be a quarter of an inch longer than specified in the plans, its not likely to be noticed. But if the inner diameter of the engine cylinders was a quarter inch longer than plans, the car probably wouldn't work at all. For the SARS CoV 2 one of the areas least likely to tolerate mutations is the Spike Protein. This is the viral site that docks with the cellular ACE 2 receptor by which the virus sneaks aboard to hijack the cell. There is a precise fit between spike and receptor and though there are portions of the protein that tolerate a little variance in Amino Acid

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**CORO LUX**

## **There's a time for applause, and a time for a helping hand**

**Although many of our activities have been curtailed by the need to quarantine, nonetheless, our expenses continue. As we do everything in our power to emerge from this pandemic as a healthy organization, we ask that you consider making a contribution. Coro Lux is a 501(c)(3) non-profit and all donations are tax-deductible as allowed by law.**

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## **We're on YouTube!**



Lauridsen interview



Rutter's "Magnificat"

**Check us out.**

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7MYTsW\\_bnjJun31GBHjwJO](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7MYTsW_bnjJun31GBHjwJO)

(Covid contunued)

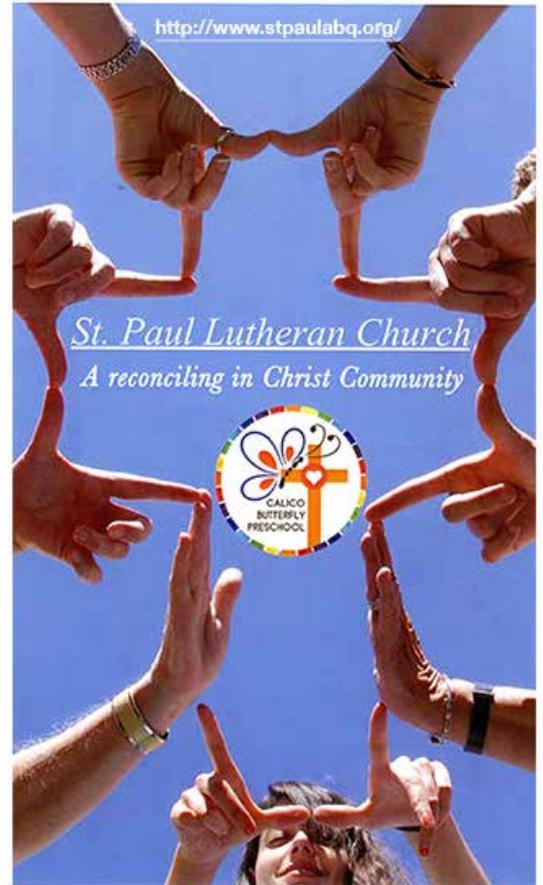
sequence, the actual Binding Domain, perfected over trillions of mutations, is unlikely to be greatly improved by any more. Unlikely but not impossible....

If you DID improve that fit by the pure luck of a few random mutations that improved the alignment even just a bit (without screwing anything else up in the process), making binding a little more efficient, you might become a dominant viral variant. And that is of great concern because it is that binding we disrupt with vaccine-induced antibodies. The concern is that mutational monkeying with that part of the Spike protein might change it such that our antibodies can no longer recognize it, no longer glom onto the spike protein, no longer interfere with cellular docking to prevent replication.

The good news, conceptually, is that the very reason vaccine-induced antibodies 'work' is because they recognize the binding domain on the spike protein and occupy that spot, ruining the chance for the Spike protein to dock with its usual target ACE 2 receptor. If the spike protein is the 'key', the Antibodies encrust the business end so it no longer fits into that receptor 'lock'. If you imagine mutations effecting the binding domain so severely that is no longer recognizable by antibodies, it is very likely that the alteration means that binding site is also too distorted to recognize and dock with ACE 2 either. So it is unlikely that mutations in SARS CoV 2 will leave a virus that utterly evades antibodies and yet remains competent to infect a cell.

Unlikely is good, but there have been reports that vaccines deployed to date show lower rates of disease prevention in British and South African viral variants. Unfortunately these trials so far are small, have looked at mild and moderate disease only, and have been reported for young patients. But it is important to note that while the elimination of INFECTION by vaccine is the ultimate goal, the elimination of severe ILLNESS is a not-so-distant second. And to date in clinical trials NO properly vaccinated patient with ANY of the vaccines available in the US has died of any strain of COVID 19. Furthermore, the post-vaccination data available to date for all vaccines in millions of vaccinated patients show subsequent serious infection or death to be a small fraction of a percent. There may be more post-vaccination patients found to be positive for variant SARS CoV 2, but so far these patients do not seem to be getting seriously ill. (<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/02/01/briefing/vaccination-myanmar-coup-rochester-police.html>) So while we may still find that variants of SARS CoV 2 with characteristic mutations are more infectious or even more dangerous, it is not possible to conclude at this time that any particular vaccine will prove inadequate for any particular viral strain.

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(Covid contunued)

## TAKE HOME POINTS AND WHAT TO WATCH FOR:

Mutations occur when mistakes creep into DNA ( or RNA) blueprints as they ARE replicated. Most are tolerable, many are lethal, but a few confer advantage in replication and over time are 'selected' as they out-compete other variants.

Some sites in an organism's genome are more tolerant of mutations than others, but in general it's unusual to "improve" a critical function.

Nevertheless mutations that facilitate viral replication or transmissibility are more likely to be sustained than any that might increase lethality.

Mutations of the viral spike protein that made vaccine-induced antibodies less able to recognize and attach to it probably make the spike protein less able to recognize and attach to the ACE 2 receptor and invade the cell. Therefore it is unlikely - though not impossible - that viral variants will become impervious to vaccination-induced immunity. Nevertheless, mutations of a minor nature might reduce vaccine efficacy in a minor way and obligate us to revising the vaccine.

(Bear in mind that once this virus is being pressured by Vaccine-induced antibodies around the world, variants that have ANY degree of greater resistance to current antibodies will become dominant.

In the next few months I will be looking for the impact of each vaccine on 1) ICU admissions and 2) death for patients with each significant variant strain - currently from Britain, South Africa and Brazil but there will be more. I'd rather see elimination of mild disease and asymptomatic disease for every strain since that would mean lower rates of transmission would follow. But we MUST see severe disease reduction for all strains. I am also watching for robust data on re-infections and on persistence of immunity - these are the factors that will ultimately determine if boosters will be needed and/or boosters adjusted to optimize antibodies to variant strains.

The arising of viral variants by mutation is no surprise - its an annual event with the influenza virus - but the dramatic reduction in cases we now see as vaccination climbs dramatically is extremely promising. Keep distanced, keep masked, and get vaccinated!

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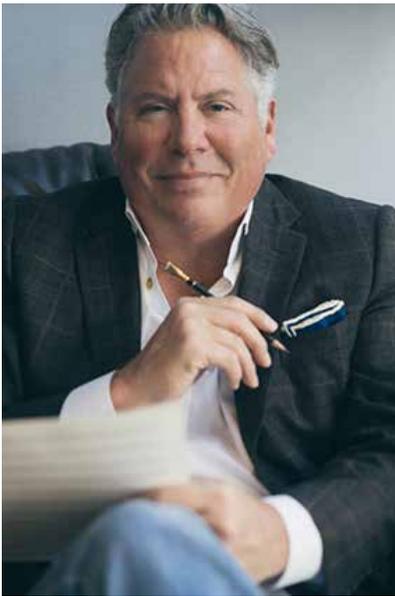
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# CORO LUX

## Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971) and his *Symphony of Psalms*

By Bradley Ellingboe

There was a time, not so very long ago, when “high culture” had a larger impact on society than it seems to nowadays. At any given point most people knew the names of at least the most famous classical musicians (e.g., Bernstein, Callas, Pavarotti) and the American State Department, in its efforts

to win the Cold War, would send Van Cliburn or the Robert Shaw Chorale on long tours abroad.

In those heady days for our musical art, Igor Stravinsky was another such giant in the field. It’s unlikely today that a classical composer would have his or her face on the cover of Time Magazine, as Stravinsky did in 1948



*Igor Stravinsky’s Time Magazine cover, July 26, 1948*

Another unlikely event nowadays would be a riot breaking out at the premiere of new orchestral music, as happened after the premiere of Stravinsky’s *Rite of Spring* in Paris in 1913. The ballet was written for Sergei Diaghilev’s “Ballets Russes” (Russian Ballet) with choreography by Nijinsky. The unsettling nature of the music and the provocative dance caused a sensation, driving the audience to literally come to blows over the merits, or deficits, of the music. (At least that’s the apocryphal story.) The success of this ballet, along with *Petrushka* and *The Firebird* made Stravinsky an international figure.

Igor Fyodorovich Stravinsky was born in Russia 1882. His father, Fyodor, was the lead bass singer in the Kiev opera.

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(Stravinsky continued)

Stravinsky died 50 years ago in 1971, in New York City. By that point he had become an American citizen and had lived in the US for over 30 years.

Stravinsky was raised in the Russian Orthodox Church but, by the time he was 14 or 15, he had abandoned the church. In 1924, at the age of 42, he suffered a crisis of faith. At that time he lived in Nice and was befriended by a Russian Orthodox priest, Father Nicholas. From that time forward, Stravinsky was once again a devout Christian.

It was not too long after this, in 1930, that Stravinsky wrote the *Symphony of Psalms*. This was upon the suggestion of Serge Koussevitzky, the conductor of the Boston Symphony, to honor the 50th anniversary of that organization. It is one of the masterpieces of the choral/orchestral literature and one I've wanted to perform my whole career, but lacked a chorus skilled enough to tackle it. Now, with *Coro Lux*, I have such an ensemble!

The *Symphony of Psalms* is in three movements and sets psalms 38, 39 and 150. It uses the Latin of the Vulgate. As Stravinsky said at its premiere, "It is not a symphony in which I have included Psalms to be sung. On the contrary, it is the singing of the Psalms I am symphonizing." The scoring is very unusual, in that the orchestra does not contain violins or violas at all. Among the strings Stravinsky only uses cellos and basses But it does include a great many wind instruments, including 5 flutes, four oboes, one English horn, and four bassoons. Amongst the brass we need four horns, 5 trumpets, three trombones and tuba.

In my days at the university this was never a good choice for a joint concert with the UNM orchestra, since it didn't use most of the string section, and thus would not be a good project for the student ensemble. Now we hire our players and we can hire whom we wish! In addition, the piece is complex for the chorus and takes an ensemble of great skill, which is what *Coro Lux* is now.

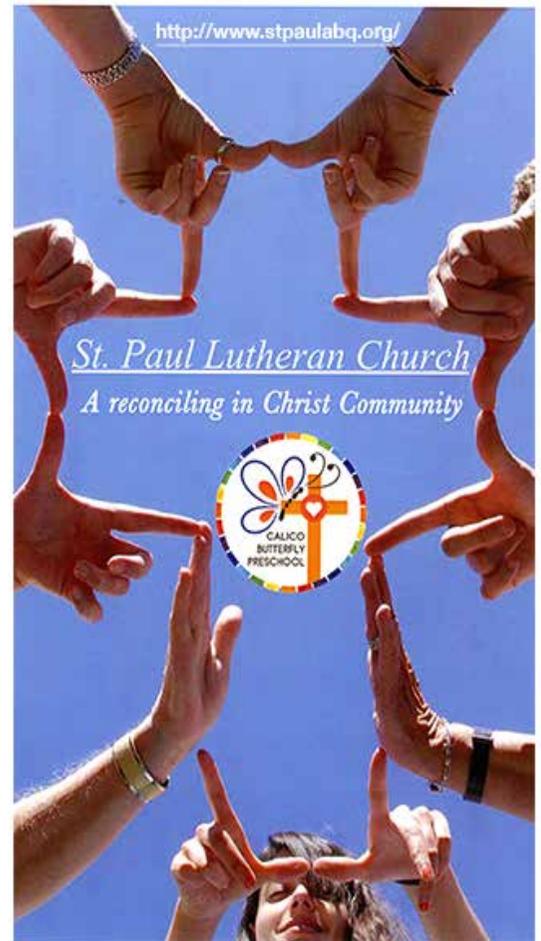
That being said, it's an expensive piece to produce, and we don't yet know when we can return to rehearsing and performing. But this hiatus gives us all a chance to reboot, to plan and to dream. With the 50th anniversary of Stravinsky's passing, I dream of finally doing his *Symphony of Psalms* and, who knows? Dreams can come true!

Here's a fun link to a Chicago Symphony performance, which includes the score:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VUSfmgPQjRM>

I realize that, for some, Stravinsky's music is an acquired taste. Yet to that I'd offer one of my favorite sayings, which is "Music is like wine. The less one knows about it, the sweeter one likes it." For me the *Symphony of Psalms* is fine wine, indeed!

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## An interview with George Arthur, Coro Lux Board President

by Ashley Jonkman

If you ask George Arthur if he’s been bored during this past—very strange—year, chances are, he couldn’t tell you the last time he’s ever uttered those words. A man of many talents, accomplishments and hobbies, George is the type of person who seems to be inspired and delighted by the beauty that surrounds in the majestic and the mundane.

George hails from New York, and while his mother played piano, his family of origin wasn’t especially musical. He sang in elementary school choirs and nurtured his love of music by being involved in all the choirs and many shows in high school. As he was charting his career path, he began studying at Queens College, which he wasn’t especially fond of. He decided to enlist in the army, and trained to become a Military Policeman. The service stationed him at Sandia Base (now Kirtland), where he attended classes at UNM during the day and worked on patrol at night. It was at UNM that George met his wife of 53 years, Sharon. Their first date was to none other than a University Chorus performance in which George was singing, of course. They became engaged one year later, and married after 3 years of long-distance engagement while Sharon finished her studies at UNM and George continued his own. Of their decades-long partnership, George beamed from ear to ear and said “It’s been a marriage made in heaven.”

After finishing 4 years at UNM, George went on to study graphic design at the School of Visual Arts in New York City. He’d always loved creating his own art, and his veteran’s benefits, entitled him to 7 more years of schooling. His life-long love of art, and hitting the books paid off, and George landed a job at none other than LIFE Magazine in Manhattan. He moved up the ladder and designed its covers and content until the magazine closed in 1973. After LIFE closed its doors, George became the design director of Consumer Reports Magazine where he worked until he retired about 7 years ago. He was in charge of the magazine design and development of the website, and was part of the executive team that grew the subscriber base from 500,000 to over 4 million.

George and Sharon lived for many years in

*(Continued on the following page)*



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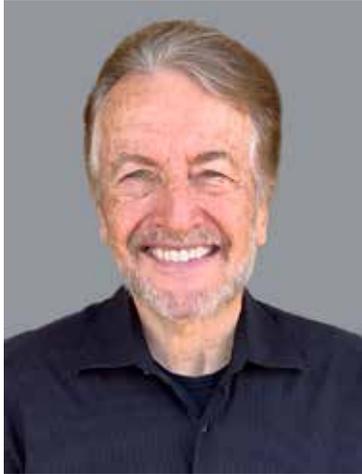
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(Arthur continued)

Connecticut and commuted to New York City, but they made countless trips back to Albuquerque, to visit relatives and enjoy the art scene here. Each time they'd visit, they'd buy a piece of pueblo pottery and promise themselves that one day they'd return—for good. About 7 years ago, they did just that, and moved their life here, to the high desert. After buying some land and building a home in Placitas, they've settled into their routine, but they haven't begun to take any of it for granted. George says "we walk around pinching ourselves that we actually get to live here. We live up high so we see the sunsets every night and just can't believe how beautiful it is here."



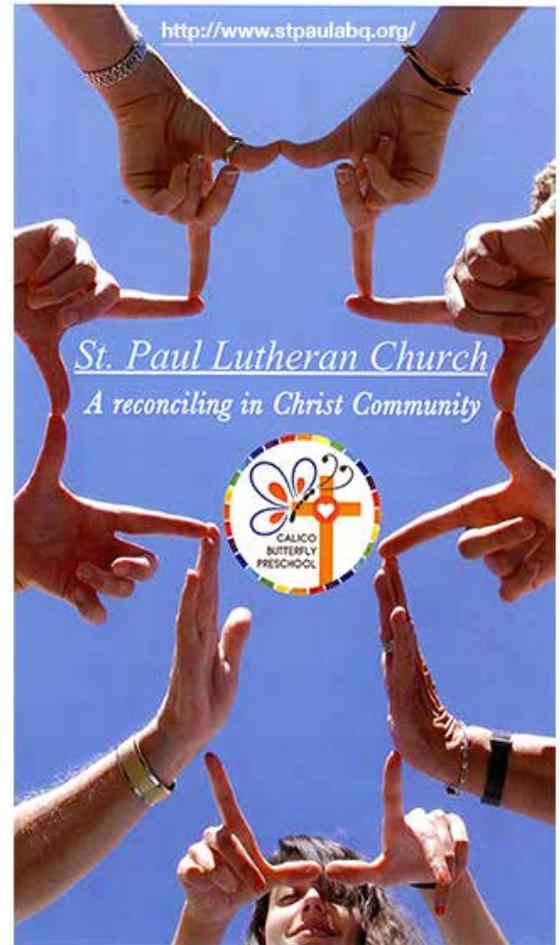
George Arthur

As Board President of Coro Lux, George focuses on marketing and lends his vast media experience to our print materials for the ensemble—an endeavor that takes much time, effort and expertise. He also is the designer for this newsletter, and works with the Board on many other projects. He was introduced to Brad Ellingboe at the very beginning of Coro Lux's inception, and was on board with the idea

immediately. Of the ensemble he says, "the people are the best, they're uniquely qualified in so many ways, aside from music. They're involved in so many things, they're so gifted and talented. Brad has polished the music to a high gloss. He's made whatever we sing incredibly valuable. He is a very special human being. He's taken music and made it available in so many ways, and gives to people on so many levels." If George had to choose just one type of music to listen to on a desert island, he said, without hesitation, "By far Beethoven. Anything by him. I don't care what it is; his music is so variable, you never get tired of it. The mood, the music, the power!"

George is involved in and deeply committed to many things, and spends his time creating and giving back to the community. His hobbies include wood sculpting, painting, and singing, as well as teaching as a docent at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center (where a 12' mural he designed is located in the museum's main exhibit "We are of this place"), and involvement in various organizations in his community of Placitas. While this year has proven challenging for all of us, George has taken it in stride, saying "Wherever I go, I'm sculpting, I'm singing, I'm an artist. I do work, I sit and sculpt wood. If I don't have any place to go, I have something to do. I've never been happier in my life."

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Supporting your community is important to you — and to us. That's why we're committed to helping you make a difference.



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# Great ways to financially support Coro Lux

***If you are currently required to take minimum distributions from your IRA, you might consider a charitable contribution instead***

*For donors, it is about leaving a legacy and insuring their gifts support the values and causes that are most important to them*

## Who qualifies?

- You must be 70 1/2 at the time of the distribution.
- You may distribute any amount up to \$100,000 per tax year.
- You and your spouse may make combined distributions up to \$200,000.
- You may distribute from your traditional IRA and IRRA.
- Charitable distributions from 403(b) plans, 401(k) plans, pension plans or other retirement plans are ineligible.

## How do you apply this strategy?

- The distribution proceeds must be paid directly to Coro Lux.
- Charities must receive distributions no later than December 31 of the respective tax year to be considered as a donation to the charity for the year.
- You cannot receive any goods or services in return for the IRA charitable distribution.

## Can you use the charitable distribution to meet any required minimum distributions for the year?

- Yes, you can use up to the entire \$100,000 per person each year to satisfy any required minimum distributions you may have for the year, please consult your tax advisor for the detailed rules. The amount distributed as a charitable IRA distribution is included in the owner's required minimum distribution for the year, if any.

**Your financial advisor should work with you and your tax advisor as you evaluate this strategy to determine whether it makes sense in your overall estate plan. [Return to contents page](#)**



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\* Average annual household savings based on 2016 national survey of new policyholders who reported savings by switching to State Farm.

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## News from other organizations



### SANTA FE WOMEN'S ENSEMBLE

We have greatly missed seeing you and singing for you during this difficult time. Because the joy of music is such an essential part of healing and keeping us grounded, we offer virtual concerts:

#### STILL SINGING SERIES

October 2020: Special 40<sup>th</sup> Retrospective

December 2020: Flickers of Warmth for December

March 2021: Seasons and Cycles of Life

Our videos include beautiful music from past performances, new virtual collaborations and heart-warming reflections from Ensemble members.

Visit our website [SFWE.org](http://SFWE.org) and click on the STILL SINGING link.

Please know how much we appreciate your continued support. Thank you and stay well.



#### February:

Many members of Santa Fe's **Sangre de Cristo Chorale** met through music. To help you celebrate Valentine's Day, some of them share their stories in the February 10 video posted on the Chorale's website (<https://sdcchorale.org/>). The February 24 video, "Where Are They Now?" provides updates on some of the apprentices who have sung with the group over its forty-plus years. And we've posted a video of an art song recital presented in January by Music Director Fred Graham and Accompanist Debbie Wagner in conjunction with the Southwest Arts/St. John's United Methodist Concert Series.

#### March:

To welcome spring, Santa Fe's **Sangre de Cristo Chorale** shared a virtual performance in its March 10 video. You can watch this video and all the others from the group's virtual season on the Chorale's website (<https://sdcchorale.org/>), where you can sign up for the email list that will deliver links to future videos. [Return to the contents page](#)



**BRUNI-KARR**  
Rental & Management Agency

#### About Bruni Karr

Albuquerque Professional Property Management Bruni Karr Agency Mission Statement: The mission of BKA is to provide quality service to single-family property owners and residents in Albuquerque, New Mexico, demonstrating integrity and professionalism. Bruni Karr Agency, Karr Agency, is operating in Bernalillo County, New Mexico, specializing in full service, single-family residential property management. The company has been operating since 1979. The Bruni Karr Agency, a leader in the Albuquerque single-family residential property field, which manages approximately 400 single-family residential properties and is a member of the National Association of Residential Property Managers ® (NARPM)

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