



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.



# CONTENTS

July 2021 Volume 2 Number 7



**Kristen Norman**

sums up the contents of this newest, *Coro Lux* newsletter issue

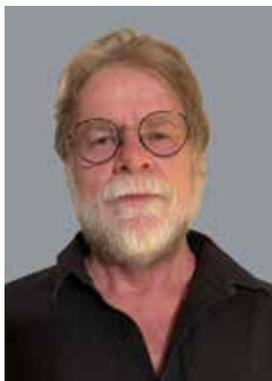
[Go to the article](#)



**LaVonne Yazzie**

reports: *Coro Lux* resumes in-person practices followed by a North Valley neighborhood concert

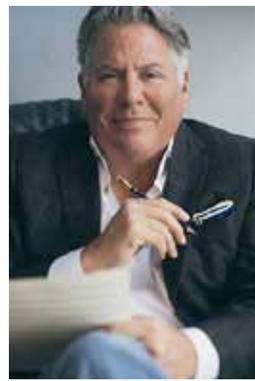
[Go to the article](#)



**Dr. Joe Alcorn's**

message this month: even with the recent good news, we are not through with COVID-19

[Go to the article](#)



**Bradley Ellingboe**

writes some little-known information about James Taylor and his song: "The secret o'life"

[Go to the article](#)



**Ashley Jonkman**

interviews *Coro Lux's* newest Board member, Mike Hart

[Go to the article](#)



**Doing good as we do well**

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

[Go to the article](#)



**Great ways to financial-ly help *Coro Lux***

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

[Go to the article](#)



**Performances by other local music organizations**

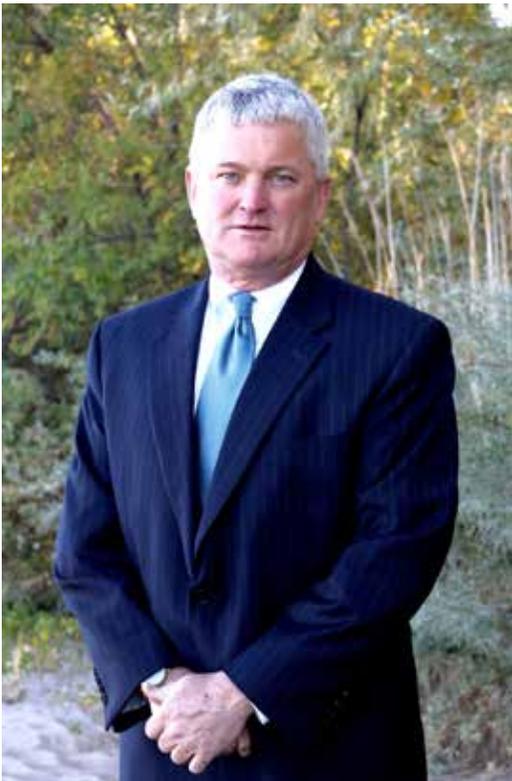
Find out about their future concert schedules and cyber events

[Go to the article](#)



**Kristen Norman reviews the articles you'll find in the July issue**

Welcome to the July edition of the *Coro Lux* newsletter! As we head into a calmer summer season, I hope everyone is getting the chance to emerge a bit from COVID hibernation, even if it is just down to your local grocery store for bags of ice because how did it get hot so fast? It seems like just yesterday it was still spring (or wind season here in New Mexico). So remember to pace yourself, cool off, take a break, and maybe kick back with this month's newsletter and your favorite beverage on ice.



*Mike Hart*

This month we have a nice variety of articles to peruse. Ashley Jonkman, our interviewer extraordinaire, has written an insightful piece on the newest *Coro Lux* Board Member, Mike Hart. LaVonne Yazzie writes about *Coro Lux's* final spring rehearsal and informal neighborhood concert at Krista (soprano) and Olsi Vrap's house in the North Valley, a beautiful "census designated place" adjacent to Albuquerque.

The monthly COVID-19 update by Dr. Joe Alcorn has helpful information on where we are now and what to expect going forward as restrictions lift. Finally, our Artistic Director, Brad Ellingboe, has some excellent musical musings on James Taylor, with specific focus on his song *The secret o' Life*.

I hope you enjoy this month's newsletter offerings. Until next time, stay cool, and don't forget the ice!

[Return to the contents page](#)



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## Coro Lux resumes in-person practices followed by a North Valley neighborhood concert

By LaVonne Yazzie

The first in-person *Coro Lux* practice of the year was held on Tuesday, May 11th, at St. Paul Lutheran Church outside in the beautiful labyrinth and garden. Choir members were instructed to bring folding chairs and their sheet music in order to participate in this long-awaited event, and the manner in which the choir members turned out in droves to sing after a year of pandemic restrictions was indicative of the optimism that has come after a year of quarantining.

Artistic Director, Bradley Ellingboe, conducted the choir using a microphone while Mary Ann Ybarra, accompanied the choir on an electric piano. Though the practice was not as fine-tuned as it normally is, due to the wind carrying away the sound and the choir hurrying to finish practice before the sun set, the camaraderie of singing together resulted in a palpable excitement and joy.

Friends and peers welcomed one another enthusiastically before engaging in a socially distanced warm up, much like the practices held indoors before COVID-19 hit in the Spring of 2020. Before beginning these practice sessions Brad reiterated the fact that this season's music was purely for fun, and that the important purpose of this season was to slowly acclimate the choir to sing together again and to find simple, beautiful music with messages of unity to sing and share with others.

The second in-person *Coro Lux* practice was held on Tuesday, May 18th, at St. Paul Lutheran Church only, this time, it was held inside the church sanctuary. After a survey (taken a few weeks before choir rehearsals began) confirmed that almost all of the *Coro Lux* choral singers were fully vaccinated against COVID-19, the plan to return to indoor practice was put in motion after the governor confirmed that Bernalillo County had turned turquoise.

The choir members who participated in this indoor practice wore masks and socially distanced themselves from each other as an added precaution, in addition to being vaccinated. At this practice Brad shared the exciting news that there was to be a neighborhood concert in the North Valley, followed by a small potluck party hosted by *Coro Lux* soprano, Krista Vrapi, in her newly completed elegant home.

(Continued on the following page)



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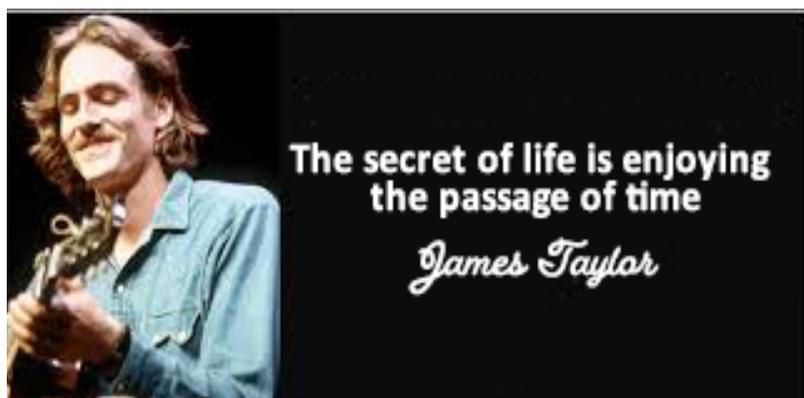
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(Practices Continued)

The online Zoom practice sessions and in-person choir practices culminated in the final performance of the Spring 2021 season, in the form of an informal neighborhood concert in front of the beautiful and spacious North Valley. The beautiful blue New Mexico sky speckled with shady gray clouds provided the perfect backdrop to the music that *Coro Lux* had prepared for this special occasion. Many neighbors gathered in the cul-de-sac in front of Krista's house in folding chairs, excited for the choral performance to begin.

The outdoor concert began with "I Dream a World" by Rollo Dilworth, a musical interpretation of the famous poem written by Langston Hughes during the Harlem Renaissance, which was followed by "He Is Watching Over Israel" from Elijah by Felix Mendelssohn. The third piece selected for the outdoor concert was "The secret o'Life" by James Taylor in a special

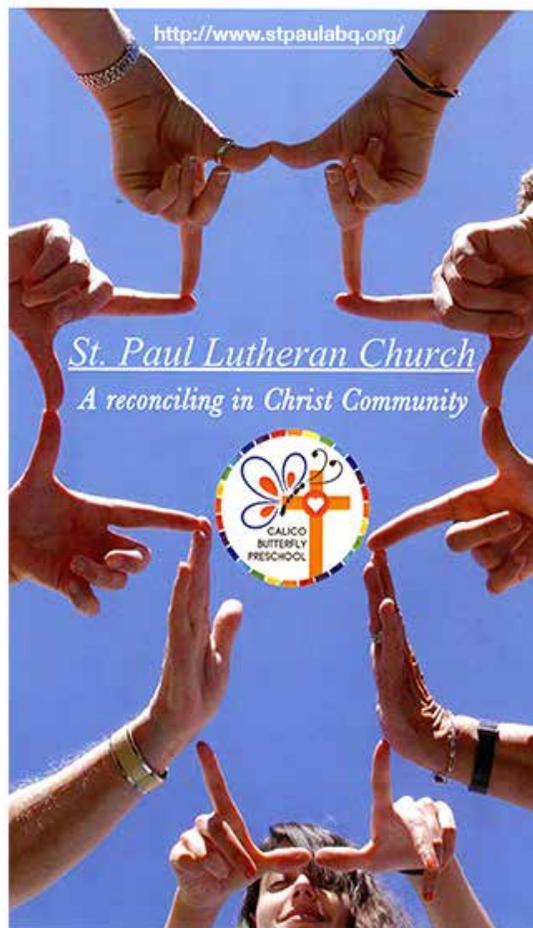


arrangement by Brad Ellingboe, followed by the final piece of the evening, which was the tango-themed "Oblivion" by Astor Piazzolla from Argentina.

The harmonies and melodies of these various pieces washed over the crowd in the cool afternoon sun, and though the concert was outside without any acoustic support, the many voices of the choir carried over the concrete and wind to delight the audience members.

After the concert was over and *Coro Lux* had received a hearty round of applause, the potluck began and the choral members were given the opportunity to chat with fellow choir members, tour Krista's beautiful home, and get to know significant others, spouses and friends of other *Coro Lux* members. Antoinette Utsinger, *Coro Lux* soprano and fantastic food and event planner, shared her talents in the form of an Argentinian-themed party with cheese boards, appetizers, and slow-roasted meats for hungry appetites.

The potluck celebration ended another fantastic season for *Coro Lux*, with the choir proving itself to be resilient, bouncing back after a hard year full of personal hardships and familial losses due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With the state approaching 60% of the population as having been fully vaccinated, the 2021 fall season has never looked more bright or promising for *Coro Lux*. [Return to the contents page](#)



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## Even with the recent good news, we are not through with COVID-19

By Dr. Joe Alcorn

The 'latest' on COVID-19 in the US is mostly good news. Vaccination rates have fallen - predictably as those most eager and accessible and easy to reach have been addressed - but more than half of eligible Americans have now had at least one jab, and more than 80% of those above 75. We appear unlikely to reach 70% of **all** Americans by July 4th (though we will by then have had more than 600,000 American deaths from the disease) but we are already beyond that goal in New Mexico where the process of vaccination has been among the most effective in the nation. World-wide we are, as I write, approaching 900 million vaccinations and the protection - and safety - of these interventions is well established. If there is doubt about this now it begins to sound less like healthy skepticism than an unhealthy appetite for the mis- and disinformation machines. There is worldwide recognition of the threats still posed by viral variants several of which appear to be more readily transmitted than the strains of virus we (mostly) encountered in 2020. To date it is not clear if these variants also generate more severe disease but vaccine-induced immunity does appear to protect from these as well. The value of masks and distancing is well established - how could they NOT be useful for a pathogen that **MUST** get from the respiratory tract of an infected person to another person's respiratory tract if it is to continue to replicate? That being said, as immunity rates rise, the value of these other means of mitigation declines - if you are **really** immune then neither masks nor distance should improve your status.... Nevertheless there remain those with compromised immune systems and the rare vaccine-failure who remain vulnerable in spite of vaccine that still present a challenge.

Even with all this good news, we are not through with SARS CoV 2. We continue to have 2,500 American deaths weekly. Needless to say this is almost exclusively in the unvaccinated, and since the vaccination priority was the most vulnerable populations, especially the elderly, most of those dying now are of younger age. (After all if you take a Population Pie and then shrink the "Age 75 and Above" piece to a mere sliver, the percentage of the total pie for each of the other pieces - 60-75, 45-50, 30-45 and so on - increase.) And overwhelming incidence elsewhere in the world - India and Brazil especially - continues to kill and allows the virus the time

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(Good news continued)

and space to evolve more dangerous variants.

But overall, with so much good news here in the USA (setting aside for the moment that still significant minority of people who for a variety of reasons decline vaccination and remain vulnerable to illness and its spread) what IS there to talk about? We know what to do - now its all about doing it.

Perhaps the impact of a plague year on non-Covid 19 illness warrants discussion at some point given the marked reduction in 2020 ER visits, in other respiratory illnesses, in medical resource use in general, but also the increase in mortality from chronic disease we are seeing suggesting the possibility of pernicious impact from deferred care.

Or perhaps it would be useful to review what we do and do not know about the origin of this virus. The initial belief that this was yet another viral disease originating in animals and making the leap into humans has been questioned - perhaps most deeply for the general audience by Nicholson Baker (<https://nymag.com/intelligencer/article/coronavirus-lab-escape-theory.html>) who posits a lapse in laboratory safety in Wuhan with viral escape. However this story is complicated and requires a bit of wonkishness to appreciate such concepts as “gain of function research” and the ‘tracks’ that might be left by human manipulation of a viral genome. To cut to the chase, I personally think it is an important question (because of the implications for lab procedures, safety, and the perpetual question of benefit/risk ratios), but a question for which we are unlikely to have a definitive ‘smoking gun’ answer, and likely a question that has been itself so politicized that an “answer” ultimately based on probabilities will likely prove unsatisfactory for many. Nevertheless, there is information to counter some of Baker’s concerns - for instance see <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-01529-3>.

Yet another question we could examine is our overall response to this pandemic - a huge question to be sure and one that has already had deep treatment of some elements (like the CDC in Michael Lewis’s book The Premonition) but one for which some broad areas of approach might be adduced.

Frankly I don’t think there is a lot more to be said to Choral Groups at this time. The major ‘unknown’ is whether the risk of vaccine failure in the Choral Singing Cohort is high enough that for this high-risk endeavor, any additional lab-based assurance of immunity is worth routinely using - and we await data on this subject.

I propose to use today’s column as a stealthy means of establishing whether there IS a readership by asking for an emailed preference for next month’s topic - something from the list above or perhaps something else. The viral spread of mis-and dis-information for instance represents a huge problem going forward and not just in COVID 19 terms (listen to this podcast for a sense of the danger: <https://revealnews.org/podcast/viral-lies/>) Give me the feedback and I’ll address it for the August issue.

[Return to the contents page](#)



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# CORO LUX

## Some little-known information about James Taylor and his song: *The secret o'life*

By Bradley Ellingboe

Though our spring repertoire is over, this month I'm writing about a particular favorite of mine: James Taylor, and his song "The secret o' Life," a song we sang this spring. James Taylor has had a long and storied career, and although I've been a fan for decades, I was amazed at all I didn't know about him!

He was born on March 12, 1948. His father was a physician from a wealthy family, who ultimately became Dean of the Medical School at the University of North Carolina. His mother had early aspirations to become an opera singer. James grew up in Chapel Hill and the family spent their summers at Martha's Vineyard.

He has struggled with depression since his teen years. When he was 17 he checked himself into a psychiatric hospital, where he spent 9 months. He was not drafted for Vietnam due to a psychiatric waiver. Taylor considers his mental health struggles as innate, saying: "It's an inseparable part of my personality that I have these feelings."

After graduating from high school, James moved to New York City in 1966 to begin his career, although it was not a promising start. As he once said, "I learned a lot about music and too much about drugs." In 1967, after a late-night call of desperation to his father, who came and took him home, Taylor gave up on New York City and spent another 6 months in a psychiatric facility, recovering from depression and drug abuse.

In 1967 he received a small inheritance and moved to London, where he met Peter Asher, who was setting up Apple Records for the Beatles. Asher brought him to the Beatles' attention, and soon became Taylor's manager. Paul McCartney remembers his first impression: "I just heard (a recording of) his voice and his guitar and I thought he was great ... and he came and played live, so it was just like, 'Wow, he IS great.'"

In Taylor's first recording for Apple Records, McCartney and an uncredited George Harrison guested on "Carolina in My Mind," whose lyric "with a holy host of others standing 'round me" referred to the Beatles. His first album was well-received but, during the recording process, Taylor relapsed into heroin addiction and sales of the album suffered, because he was unable to tour and promote it, being once again hospitalized.

In 1970 Taylor moved to California and signed with Warner Brothers Records. There he recorded "Fire and Rain,"

*(Continued on the following page)*



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(Taylor continued )

which was a response to his addiction and recovery. From that point to the present day his career has been one of international prominence. His collaborations, honors and impact are nearly matchless. For example:

- Appearing on the cover of Time magazine (“The face of new rock”).
- Collaborating with Paul McCartney, George Harrison, Carole King, Joni Mitchell, Carly Simon (his wife from 1972-1983), Paul Simon, The Dixie Chicks, Sam Cooke, Mark Knopfler, John Legend, Alison Krauss and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.
- Winning multiple Grammys, an Emmy, honorary doctorates, the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and the Kennedy Center Honors
- Taylor Swift is named for him.
- He’s the only artist to have a top 10 album in each of the last six decades.

On December 7, 1980, Taylor had an encounter with Mark David Chapman, who would assassinate John Lennon just one day later. Taylor told the BBC in 2010: “The guy had sort of pinned me to the wall and was glistening with maniacal sweat and talking some freak speak about what he was going to do and his stuff with how John was interested.... And it was surreal to actually have contact with the guy 24 hours before he shot John.” The next night, Taylor, who lived in a building next-door to Lennon, heard the assassination occur.

The piece *Coro Lux* recently sang is called “The secret o’ Life,” which Taylor first recorded in 1977. While never released as a single, critics have declared it an indispensable song in Taylor’s canon. Taylor regards it as a spiritual song. He has said that he used the title “secret o’ Life” rather than “Secret of Life” because the latter seemed too presumptuous. He felt that the “o” would make it seem a little more irreverent. I’ve always enjoyed these wise and witty words, and will close by quoting the master:

*The secret o’life is enjoying the passage of time. Any fool can do it. There ain’t nothin’ to it. Nobody knows how they got to the top of the hill, but since we’re on the way down, we might as well enjoy the ride.*

*The secret of love is opening up your heart. It’s OK to feel afraid, but don’t let that stand in your way. Everyone knows that love is the only road. And since we’re only here for awhile, we might as well show some style. Give us a smile.*

*Isn’t it a lovely ride? Shining down. Gliding down. Try not to try too hard. It’s just a lovely ride.*

*The thing about time is that time isn’t really real. It’s just your point of view. How does it feel to you? Einstein said he could never understand it all. Planets spinning through space. A smile upon your face. Welcome to the human race.*

*Isn’t it a lovely ride? Shining down. Gliding down. Try not to try too hard. It’s just a lovely ride.*

[Return to the contents page](#)



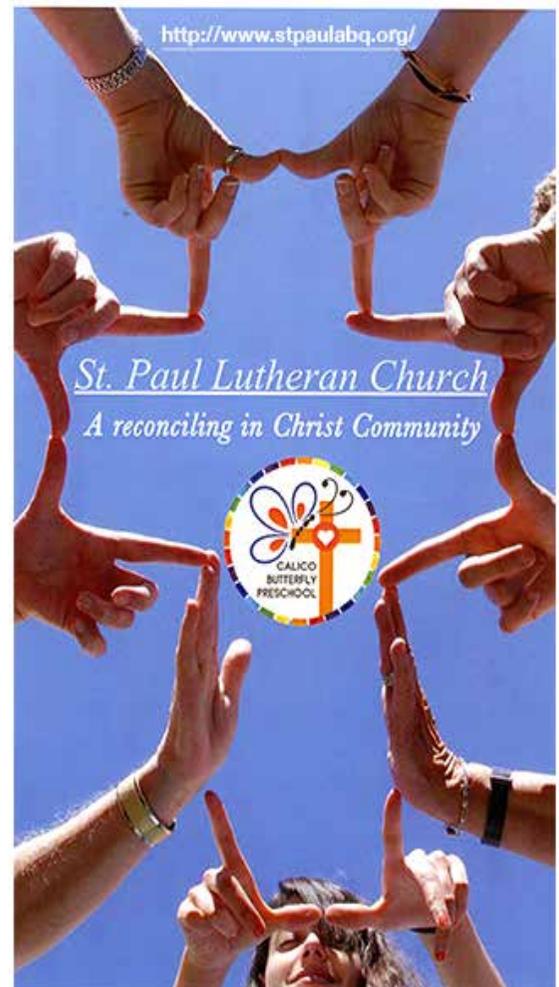
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Albuquerque Professional Property Management Bruni Karr Agency Mission Statement: The mission of BKA is to provide quality service to single-family property owners and residents in Albuquerque, New Mexico, demonstrating integrity and professionalism. 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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Ashley Jonkman



### Ashley Jonkman interviews *Coro Lux's* new Board member Mike Hart

With the closing of a very strange season, there comes many new beginnings for *Coro Lux*, and one in the form of brand new board member, Michael Hart. Michael, *Coro Lux's* second board member who's not a member of the chorus, describes himself as definitely "not a musician," though he's proven himself a friend and patron of the arts, especially music.

An attorney who's been practicing law here in Albuquerque since 1988, Michael is an advocate for people who have been oppressed, injured or abused. His work focuses on bringing justice to mainly children and others who've suffered injustices. He speaks about his work with passion and positivity, and says the best part about it is that it allows him the ability to connect with many different people. "People don't come to us unless they are confronted with a problem they can't solve on their own. Usually they're feeling pretty low and we are able to help them get through a difficult time—it's a powerful feeling." While the job is not without its



(Staff photo by Buddy Mays)

**MERRY NOTE:** It's a family affair when Michael Hart, 9, escorts his sisters, Margaret — who likes to be called Maggie — and Christiane (right) to an Albuquerque Symphony Orchestra concert. The children of Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Hart, they enjoy good music.

challenges, one being that "No matter how hard you work, there's a feeling that there's so much injustice in our society, and there are people in our community that do not have the privilege of sharing in a just society. But, overall it's a pretty great job. Never once have I heard the alarm clock and not wanted to get up."

Michael grew up in an extremely musical family. One of 8 children—who were all required by their mother to play a

(Continued on the following page)



## When the world changes, we're here to help

### We applaud *Coro Lux*.

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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(Mike Hart continued )

stringed instrument—Michael took many years of piano lessons, and played in multiple audition-only orchestras throughout middle and high school on violin, as well as string bass. Each year, all 8 Hart siblings performed in a family Christmas concert for their parents, and music, Michael told me, “has always been a part of the Hart family culture.”

With parents who held season tickets to the New Mexico Symphony Orchestra and encouraged excellence in music education for their children, Michael was bound to become a music-lover, and his passion for music is evident. He spoke about his own journey as an artist (he studied visual arts in college), comparing fine music to an exceptional piece of sculpture or painting saying, “when a piece of music is played, it changes the people who are listening to it, even if they don’t particularly like it. Music is dynamic, it’s happening, it’s unrolling and unraveling to you. It’s a different experience than visual arts—when it’s over, you’re just a tiny bit different, and there’s a reason we go back to it. We’re looking for that feeling, this creation that we get to experience. Orchestral music and choral music is dynamic because it takes all these people to do it together, and afterwards we carry it with us in our heart.”

Michael first met Bradley Ellingboe through friends and family, and their relationship was social in nature, but as Brad shared more about *Coro Lux* as an organization, Michael—who has served on many boards including NM Parent Child Resources, ARC of NM, Parents Reaching Out and more—realized he could potentially be of service to *Coro Lux*. He’s excited about “being of service to the board. I want to focus on trying to articulate goals that we have for the chorus, and having a strategic approach. I want to answer questions such as ‘Where do we want to be? How are we going to measure whether we’re doing the job right? Are we being faithful to what Brad has created?’ Being on a board is hard work. It’s not necessarily for fun—it’s rewarding. You decide to give this chunk of time and talent. My goal is to support the president, and support Brad. I’m not coming in with any ideas of what’s good for *Coro Lux*; tell me what you want done and give me some of the tools and I’ll do it.”

Michael, who’s every bit as much a classic rock fan as he is patron of classical music, enjoys listening to blues guitarists, classic country and the great Rock n’ Rollers like ZZ Top, Rolling Stones, George Thoroughgood and more. He and his wife, Alisa Hart, enjoy gardening, playing sports, and spending time with their children Sarah, 30, Michael, 26, Nyah, 18 and Misha, 16; especially if it’s at their home in Crested Butte, Colorado.

About his upcoming time on the board, Michael is looking forward to it, “I’m really honored that I was asked to be on it. It’s a completely different endeavor for me. I’m used to working with a community that is marginalized and now this is an organization that brings happiness and joy just because they exist. That’s gonna be exciting!”

[Return to the contents page](#)



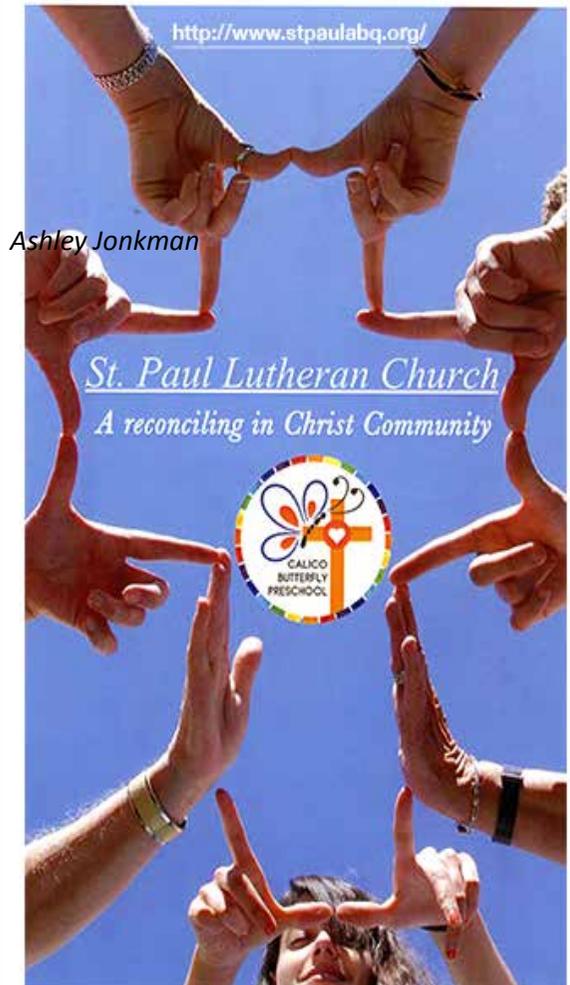
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Ashley Jonkman

# 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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## 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:

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.



Recent videos by Santa Fe's **Sangre de Cristo Chorale** include a look back on this unusual season, which included virtual performances, virtual training and musical enrichment sessions for singers, outreach to local schools, and an exciting new commissioned piece. The Chorale closed out the season with a virtual performance of "America the Beautiful," which it shared in its June 2 email. Links to these videos and more are on the Chorale's website (<https://sdccchorale.org/>).



For the latest performance schedule go to: <https://nmphil.org/>

[Return to contents page](#)



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