

The Olive Branch

September 20, 2017



Accent on Worship

Vicar Jessica Christy

God's mercy is scandalous. It breaks all of our rules about what is fair.

In this week's story from the book of Jonah, Jonah reveals why he tried to run away from God: he knew that, given the least chance, God would forgive the people of Nineveh. But Jonah didn't want God to be "gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love," at least not to the people he was sent to save. Nineveh was the capital city of Assyria, the evil empire of Jonah's day. These were the people who wiped Israel off the map, and destroyed and enslaved much of Judah. Archeologists have uncovered a mass grave of 1500 bodies that the Assyrians left in a city near Jerusalem. An image of the survivors being dragged away in chains hung in the royal palace.

The last thing in the world that Jonah wants is bring God's merciful love to the Ninevites. He wants them to suffer. But God has other plans. Jonah is so furious at the injustice of God's mercy that he announces he's ready to give up on life.

It's easy for us to laugh at Jonah's temper tantrum, but there are times I've felt like Jonah. I've delighted in watching wrongdoers get their comeuppance, and I've raged at unpunished evils. I want God to have mercy for me, but the thought of God's mercy for those I consider more wicked than me is unsettling. There's a part of me that's scandalized God doesn't make sure people get their just desserts. I suspect we all have the same instinct, that we all, on some level, want to draw limits around grace. It's the instinct of the laborers who worked in the vineyard since morning, then confronted the landowner for the same wages to latecomers.

But God's mercy isn't up to us. Our decision is how we're going to respond. Are we going to try to run away from the shocking truth of God's limitless grace, or are we going to joyfully accept our call to be messengers to a world in desperate need of God's healing love?

- *Vicar Jessica Christy*

Sunday Readings

September 24, 2017

16th Sunday after Pentecost (25 A)

Jonah 3:10 – 4:11

Psalm 145:1-8

Philippians 1:21-30

Matthew 20:1-16

Matthew 18:21-35

October 1, 2017

17th Sunday after Pentecost (26 A)

Ezekiel 18:1-4, 25-32

Psalm 25:1-9

Philippians 2:1-13

Matthew 21:23-32

Sunday's Adult Forum

Next Sunday, September 24: "The Minneapolis-Leipzig Connection," presented by The Rev. Morris Wee.

What's going on in the church of Luther 500 years after the Reformation? What can we learn from our German partners? Morris Wee is co-chair of the Minneapolis Area Synod's Leipzig Partnership Team, and he participated in the first clergy exchange program, serving at the Sophia Parish of Leipzig from September 2015 to July 2016.

Next Sunday, October 1: "Writing the Pentecost Icon," presented by Nicholas Markell.

Nicholas Markell has written three of the icons at Mount Olive: the Ascension (columbarium), the Incarnation, and now, the Pentecost icon, commissioned by Adam Krueger and Thomas Fenner with Adam's family to the Glory of God in memory of Adam's father, Alfred E. Krueger (1922-2015). We thank Adam and Thomas for sponsoring the writing of the icon and this forum.

A master iconographer in the Byzantine and Romanesque traditions, Nicholas Markell earned a Master of Arts degree in Theology and a Master of Divinity from Washington Theological Union. Nicholas was the primary graphic artist for Evangelical Lutheran Worship and its companion books, and in 2012 and 2017 has won the Trout Stamp competition sponsored by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. <http://www.markellstudios.com/>

Mount Olive's New Social Group

The first outing of the new Mount Olive Social Group will be a trip to Sponsel's Apple Orchard in Jordan, MN, **this Friday, Sept. 22**. We will meet at Mount Olive at 10:00 a.m. and carpool to the orchard, pick apples, drink cider, and have lunch. All are welcome!

Book Discussion

For the October 14 meeting, the Book Discussion Group will read *The Snow Child*, by Eowyn Ivey.

The Book Discussion Group meets on the second Saturday of each month at 10:00 a.m. in the West Assembly area. All readers welcome!

From Conflict to Communion

2017 is the first ever joint Lutheran/Catholic commemoration of the Reformation. In preparation for this singular event, the Roman Catholic / Lutheran Joint Commission published the document, "From Conflict to Communion."

On Sundays, October 8, 15, and 22, following the second liturgy, Don Luther will lead a discussion group focused on this document. To register, email Don at luther5708@usfamily.net, or call him at 612-861-4777. In preparation for the gathering, "From Conflict to Communion" can be downloaded for free here: <https://www.lutheranworld.org/content/resource-conflict-communion-basis-lutheran-catholic-commemoration-reformation-2017>.

Calendar

Wednesday, September 20

- 9:00 am Staff Meeting
5:30 pm Children's Choir supper
6:00 pm Children's Choir rehearsal
7:00 pm Cantorei rehearsals resume
8:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous

Thursday, September 21

- 6:00 pm Bible Study

Friday, September 22

- 10:00 am Social Group meets for trip to apple orchard

Saturday, September 23

- 9:30 am Confirmation

Sunday, September 24 - 16th Sunday after Pentecost

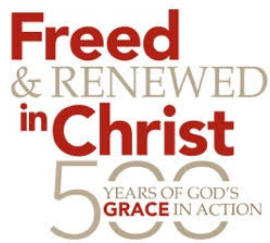
- 8:00 am *Holy Eucharist*, followed by coffee and fellowship
9:30 am Sunday Church School / Adult Forum
10:45 am *Holy Eucharist*, followed by coffee and fellowship

Monday, September 25

- 7:00 pm Worship Committee meeting

Tuesday, September 26

- Noon Bible Study
1-3 pm CoAM Advisory Committee meeting
4:00 pm Diaper Depot open
7:00 pm National Lutheran Choir rehearsal



As part of our Reformation 500 observance at Mount Olive, there will be a special book sale offered after both liturgies on Sundays, October 1 and October 8.

Get discounts on several books from Augsburg and Sparkhouse Publishing. Books for both adults and children will be

available. This is not a fundraiser, but we will earn books for our church library.

If anyone would like to volunteer to help set up, sell and take down books, you would be welcome! Contact Lora Dundek with questions.

All You Need Is Love?

Thursday Bible Study Begins Sept. 21 (tomorrow!)

The first Thursday Bible study series of this year begins on Thursday, Sept. 21, skips a week, then continues from Oct. 5 to Nov. 2.

Meeting in the Chapel Lounge from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Pr. Crippen will be leading a study on the First Letter of John, titled "All You Need Is Love?"

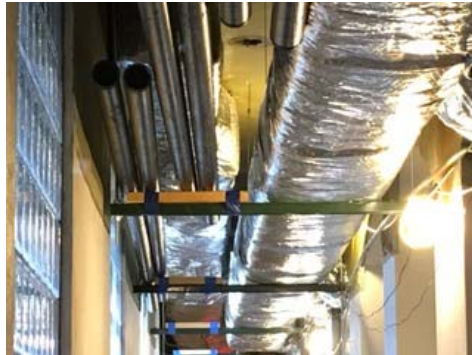
This treasured epistle is a deep, joyful exploration of the power of God's sacrificial love to reconcile all things, and the desire of God that we share in that love for the sake of the world.

As usual, there will be a light supper when we begin. All are welcome to this study opportunity!

Summer of '17: Construction Update



Heat pumps arrived last week.
This is one of 12, or 13...? Lots!



Speaking of lots, lots and lots of lovely new ductwork downstairs.



Overheard conversation: Does anyone know where the brown wire goes?



Electricity as art?



These huge pipes carry the geothermal liquid to all those heat pumps.



All the wells were finished last week. Packing up and moving on.

That's all 'till next time!

Music and Fine Arts 2017-2018 Series

By now everyone should have received the brochure for this exciting series!

In addition to the regular Advent and Lent Procession Services and Bach Tage, the series includes a hymn festival with hymns of Martin Luther, Tricia Van Ee, Mezzo Soprano, and Chandler Molbert, Baritone, and pianist Jill Dowe on the newly acquired Steinway piano will delight us with a voice and piano concert in January. In April, the renowned bell choir from Duluth, "Strikepoint," will fill the space with ringing!

This series is offered to the community free of charge, supported through donations received from the people of Mount Olive.

There will be a Music and Fine Arts representative in the Narthex following both liturgies for one more Sunday, September 24.

A Message from the Treasurer

- General giving year-to-date is slightly ahead of last year at this time. This is impressive, especially considering the special gifts that many have been making to support the Bold Step Forward Capital Appeal, recent hurricane relief support, as well as other dedicated gifts that support specific missions and ministries of the congregation.
- We have a sizable operational gap. Year-to-date as of August 31, operating expenses have exceeded income by \$94,803. A sizable deficit at this point of the year is not uncommon due to seasonal giving trends; we usually see a significant uptick in giving in the last few months of the year. However, this is a larger gap than we usually see, meaning there will be a larger gap to close in the last four months of 2017.

2017 Income/Expense		
	August	2017 YTD
Income	\$46,900	\$422,263
Expense	\$67,898	\$517,067
% Expenses Funded	69%	82%

Concert This Saturday

Holly Near and John McCutcheon will be together for a concert this Saturday, September 23, at 7:00 PM, at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, 9185 Lexington Avenue North, in Circle Pines.

The concert is a benefit for the health work we support in Chile through ELCA missionary Karen Anderson and Educación Popular en Salud (EPES)/ Action for Health in the Americas (AHA).

EPES is celebrating 35 years of working for justice and dignity in health, working with women in Chilean shanty towns. Tickets are \$25 in advance and \$30 at the door and can be purchased online at www.epes35brownpapertickets.com.

From the Church Library

An American Library Association initiative entitled “Libraries Transform Lives” reminds us that September is National Library Card Sign-up Month, and this is an important incentive to urge parents of school-aged children (if not earlier) to provide that library card as a first step towards academic achievement and lifelong learning. Though most school-aged children are now back in the school routine, it is hoped that in the back-to-school shopping season now past, you didn’t forget to add another school supply item – a valid library card, and also that your child knows how marvelous and gratifying it can be to make use of that special privilege.

It is a well-known fact that our public, county, and school libraries offer exciting programs for adults all year long as well – there’s something there for every taste and interest. Perchance there is an adult reading this, who somehow has never had in their possession a library card, now is the perfect time to remedy that – during National Library Card Sign-up Month – September!

While I feel it is important for me to bring you this kind of information, then let me remind you also that your own church library right here at Mount Olive is open to everyone who wishes to peruse our wide collections of books, CDs, DVDs, and periodicals – all without having to own and use any kind of library card! Just to remind you again, our open hours are always in between the two liturgies on our regular Sunday schedule.

Children and friends of all ages – stop by in our church library soon to find a new resident high above the children’s area, who admonishes us with the old idiom to “Be Wise as an Owl – READ!”

Closing this article with a quotation found in a Chinese Proverb – “A book is like a garden carried in the pocket.”

- Leanna Kloempken



- **The Stewardship Committee** is seeking offering Counters on Sundays. Contact Kat Campbell Johnson or Brian Jacobs with questions or to volunteer.
- **The Evangelism Committee** is looking for volunteers to help with the Reformation 500 Book Fair on Sundays, October 1 and 8, following each morning liturgy. Help set up books, take orders and money, take-down set-up. Contact Lora Dundek, lhdundek@usfamily.net or 651/645-6636.
- **Neighborhood Ministries Committee** is looking for volunteers to help serve monthly meals at Our Saviour’s Shelter (2nd Sunday of each month at 6:45 pm). Contact Rod & Connie Olson at olsonrr@gmail.com, or Elaine Halbardier at elaineandart2@comcast.net.

Semi-Annual Meeting Oct. 15: Budget and Bylaws

The Vestry has set Sunday, Oct. 15 as the date of the October semi-annual meeting of the congregation. The meeting will start at 12:15 p.m. On the agenda is the 2018 general budget of the congregation, and recommendations from the Vestry for several bylaw changes.

As usual, there will be a preview meeting a week earlier, Sunday, Oct. 8, after second liturgy, to give people a chance to talk about the budget and these bylaw changes.

Following are the recommended bylaw changes. They are intended to better reflect current congregational practice, and to give more directed guidance to the ministry with youth and their families. If the bylaws are approved Oct. 15, they take effect immediately.

In B4.03 **The Director of Congregational Life**

Replace:

- f. ~~Make every effort to induce members who have been negligent in their attendance at services, in the use of the Sacraments and the financial support of the Congregation to fulfill their responsibilities as members.~~

With:

- f. Make every effort to connect with members who have become or are becoming less active or are worshipping less frequently, to pray for them, and to engage with them in listening for how the Congregation might be of Christly service to them.

In B4.11 **The Director of Youth and Family Ministry** (*add underlined to title*)

The Director of Youth and Family Ministry shall:

Replace:

- a. ~~Promote, project and facilitate the ministry of the Congregation to and by the youth of the Congregation.~~
- b. ~~Design and promote programs of education, fellowship and service for junior high and high school age members of the Congregation.~~

With:

- a. In conjunction with the Pastor, assist and help lead the Congregation in its ministry with the children and youth of the Congregation and their families.
- b. Support, encourage, and assist families of this Congregation in carrying out their role of teaching the faith to their children.
- c. Encourage spiritual growth of the youth and children of the Congregation through Bible study, prayer, music, and Christian service, and assist and encourage families to participate in these activities at home.
- d. Collaborate with the Pastor, the Cantor, and the Director of Education on educational offerings to the children and youth of the Congregation, as well as classes in Christian parenting, faith in the family, and other similar issues; and assist in planning and recruiting leadership of the same.
- e. Collaborate with other Vestry directors to plan and encourage involvement of the youth and children of the Congregation in all aspects of the congregation's ministry.
- f. Plan and coordinate activities for youth with other youth groups outside this Congregation.

Mount Olive Lutheran Church

3045 Chicago Avenue
Minneapolis, MN 55407

*A congregation of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America*

Sunday Eucharist: 8:00 & 10:45 am

Contact Us

Phone: 612/827-5919

On the Web: mountolivechurch.org

Staff

Pastor – *Joseph Crippen*

Cantor – *David Cherwien*

Vicar – *Jessica Christy*

Coordinator of Neighborhood Outreach
and Ministry – *Anna Scott*

Administrative Assistant – *Cha Posz*

Sexton – *James Wilkes*

*Mount Olive is a Reconciling in Christ
congregation.*

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