

The Olive Branch

November 8, 2017

Accent on Worship

Anna Scott

I am a collector of words. Even at a very young age I would create poems and write down quotes in special notebooks. My mother still has some of these scribbled treasures in stacks of papers, and the old notebooks line the shelves of my childhood home. Inside are volumes of wisdom, one or two sentences at a time. Proverbs, parables, and motivational speeches of famous coaches all share the lined pages.

Today I still collect words, although they filter through my ears and heart and rarely make it to pages anymore. What I'm hearing from those wiser and more lived than me seem to be repeating the same message from many different voices I tune in to. "Slow down" they are saying. "Pay attention to the present moment and what it holds." Or as I heard in a podcast from guest Brother David Steindl-Rast, "don't just stop and look at the roses. Let them impress you." This idea keeps coming across, and, wanting to be wise, I make attempts to embrace it. I meditate, breathe deeply, bring my attention back when talking to someone or doing something, try not to multitask (which is hard for me!). But as I've been examining all of these efforts, I came to a stunting realization: in the present moment, I more often am finding more fear than joy. If I pause too long and linger on what is going on around me, it is easy to become overwhelmed, fearful, disheartened, crabby, and apathetic. Even with the recent church shooting in Texas, as I saw the headline, I hesitated to even acknowledge it. One more bad thing. One more thing to weigh on my spirit. It's just easier to keep moving, keep finding something new and shallow and safe to distract me.

But that isn't working either. Rather than finding entertainment, I find emptiness. This worry I'm feeling is real, and to deny it and salve over it with busyness and selfishness only makes it throb more intensely. The wise know what the foolish fight to learn. Slow down. Pay attention to the present moment not for what is happening around me, but for the breath in my lungs, the heart that beats in my chest, the oil that burns in my lamp and the knowledge that God is at work. God is at work and so shall I be. I'll be at work at Mount Olive, at work in my home with my family, at work in my community. Slowly, patiently, collecting wisdom and joy to share, letting God's good work impress me far more than any bad news can press upon me.



Sunday Readings

November 12, 2017

**23rd Sunday after
Pentecost**

Micah 3:5-12

Psalm 43

1 Thessalonians 2:9-13

Matthew 23:1-12

November 19, 2017

**24th Sunday after
Pentecost**

Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18

Psalm 90:1-8 [9-11] 12

1 Thessalonians 5:1-11

Matthew 25:14-30

Sunday's Adult Forum

Sundays, November 12, 19, 26: "Where Our Heart Is," a 3-part series presented by Pastor Crippen.

This series is an exploration of capitalism, the Market as god, and life in Christ, with Jesus' admonition in mind: "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matthew 6:21)

Solar House Party, November 14, 7-8:30pm

Our church has installed solar panels on the roof to collect the energy of the sun to make electricity for our building. We rely less on fossil fuels because of this. You can do the same for your home. Learn how you can change out of using fossil fuel for your home's energy supply to making use of the sun or wind to get your energy!

The Congregational Life Committee is sponsoring this event. The agenda includes brief informational talks from experts about rooftop solar for homeowners & or subscribing to a Community Solar Garden where a group of people share the solar panels at a location other than your home and connect to the main grid supply for their energy needs. From the first month's electric bill you will save money and help the environment! Come and learn more.

TIME: 7 to 8:30 p.m. Nov. 14

LOCATION: The home of Mount Olive member Connie Marty, 2478 Lydia Ave. W. in Roseville

Drinks and light appetizers will be served. Registration required because of limited space. This event also is sponsored by Minnesota Interfaith Power & Light, a nonprofit organization that works with faith communities to build the climate-justice movement, with assistance from solar businesses. To register, visit www.TinyURL.com/MountOliveSolar.

Music & Fine Arts' Advent Procession Service

Sunday, December 3, 2017 - 4:00 pm

Mark the season with a solemn procession and a series of lessons and carols for Advent. Candles, incense, and beautiful music help draw all into this season of hope in the darkest time of the year. All are welcome.

Book Discussion

For the November 11 meeting, The Book Discussion Group will read *Anna Karenina*, by Leo Tolstoy. For the December 9 meeting, they will read *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, by Zora Neale Hurston.

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!

Thanksgiving Day Eucharist

Thursday, Nov. 23, 10:00 a.m.

Bring non-perishable food items to help re-stock local food shelves. Monetary donations are especially welcome (for every \$1 donated, food shelf personnel are able to buy about \$9 worth of food!)

As has been our custom for a number of years, the entire offering received at the Eucharist on Thanksgiving Day will be divided between Sabbathani Community Center and Community Emergency Services food shelves.

Calendar

Wednesday, November 8

- 10:00 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

Saturday, November 11

- 9:00 am Chancel Cleaning (all invited to help!)
9:30 am Confirmation
10:00 am Book Discussion group

Sunday, November 12 - 24th 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
Noon Reformation Potluck
6:45 pm Mount Olive serves Our Saviour's meal

Monday, November 13

- 7:00 pm Vestry meeting

Tuesday, November 14

- Noon Bible Study
4:00 pm Diaper Depot open
7:00 pm National Lutheran Choir rehearsal

Advent Luncheon for Seniors to be Held Wednesday, December 6

Attention Seniors (65 and over)! Be on the lookout for your invitation to the annual Advent Luncheon for Seniors. The invitations for this fun annual event will soon be in the mail!

If you are age 65 or over and have not received your invitation, it's likely because we do not have your birthdate (or correct birthdate) on file. If that's the case, please call the church office and let us know so that we can update your membership information. All members of the Mount Olive Community age 65 and over are cordially invited!

Step Up! Host Coffee Hour

If you attend first liturgy and have enjoyed a nice fresh, hot cup of coffee after church, why not take a turn hosting coffee hour after the first liturgy yourself? If this task seems a daunting thing to do alone, find a friend to serve with you!

Taking a turn will help to keep this from becoming a burden on someone else.

Storytelling for Survivors: Exile, Empire, and the Shape of Scripture

The second Thursday Bible study series of this year begins on Nov. 16, and will meet in the Chapel Lounge from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Vicar Christy will lead this exploration of texts related to the Babylonian Exile (597-539 B.C.E.), with an emphasis on understanding the writers as survivors making sense of crises.

How did the experience of conquest and displacement shape how the ancient faith community told its story, and how do the questions they asked about God still live with us today? Over the five weeks, we will read selections from Kings, various prophets, the Psalms, Ezra-Nehemiah, and Esther.

We begin at 6 pm with a light supper. Please contact Vicar Christy if you are willing to provide a light supper for our first session.

Chancel Dusting and Polishing Day, Nov. 11: All Hands on Deck!

The Altar Guild is hosting a chancel cleaning event this Saturday, November 11, beginning at 9:00 a.m.

During our construction project, our sexton, James Wilkes, has worked hard to manage the dust, but we have some catching up to do. Please join our crew – for an hour, for the morning. The more hands, the faster we'll finish!

Bring your favorite duster and polishing rags, and help spiff up our worship space for the Advent and Christmas seasons.

Questions? Contact Beth Gaede--bethgaede [at] comcast [dot] com.

Reformation Potluck – This Sunday!

Reformation 500 Congregational Potluck Meal

Plan now to join your Mount Olive friends and family for a meal to commemorate the 500th Anniversary of Martin Luther's 95 Theses.

We'll gather for a potluck meal after 2nd liturgy **this Sunday, November 12**. Brats and sauerkraut will be provided – bring a dish to pass!

National Lutheran Choir Christmas Festival: “No Room?”

This cherished annual event creates a holy experience for audiences in the awe-inspiring Basilica of Saint Mary in Minneapolis. In 2017, the birth of Christ as a refugee story is more poignant and relevant than ever. In this time of unwelcome, discord, and deepening division, is there room for Christ to be born today?

Friday, December 8, 4:30 & 8:00pm

Saturday, December 9, 8:00pm

Basilica of Saint Mary, Minneapolis

Tickets are available by calling Brown Paper Tickets 1-800-838-3006, or order online at NLCA.com.

New Member Welcome

Mount Olive will welcome new members (or associate members) into membership on **Sunday, December 10, at the 10:45 liturgy**. A welcome brunch for the whole congregation will follow the service at 12:15 pm.

If you would like to be included in this new member group, or if you know someone who would like an invitation to join, please contact Cha at the church office (welcome@mountolivechurch.org or 612/827-5919) or speak with Pastor Crippen. Thanks!

News from the Neighborhood

Anna Scott, Coordinator of Neighborhood Ministries & Outreach

Give Thanks. Give Food. Give Care. Give.

As we approach Thanksgiving and the winter season, it is time to collect food and goods for our neighbors in need. Here is what would be helpful for our partners at Sabathani, CES, and our own use here:

- Non-perishable food items such as; canned fruit, canned meats, pasta, rice, oil, flour, sugar, fruit juice, stew, peanut butter & jelly.
 - Prepackaged, single serve soups and meals like ramen, boxed meals, and stews which can go to folks on the street and can be warmed in microwaves.
 - Hygiene supplies such as; socks, razors, feminine products, toilet paper, shampoo, deodorant, toothbrushes/toothpaste, dish and laundry soap.
- Cash goes the farthest for food shelves! Donations can be marked "Thanksgiving" on blue envelopes. All donations will be brought forward at the service on Thanksgiving Day and brought to our partners the following week. Thank you for your care for our neighbors!

Cold Weather Gear

Stay warm and keep others cozy! Neighborhood Ministries is collecting coats, hats, scarves, and mittens to be given away during Community Meals this winter. Please drop new or gently used donations in the box by the coat area. Thank you!



Summer of '17: Almost There!

This is one exciting photo!

Really? Two guys (one is out of sight in the big hole) and a very large truck?

Yes indeed. They are doing the final purging of the geothermal wells, and filling them with the ionized water/glycol mix.

Seeing these men on the job means **heat in the church is close on the horizon.**

Should everything happen in perfect sequence, it could mean heat by next Sunday. But don't pack the sweaters away quite yet. In construction, things rarely happen in perfect sequence....

Thank you for your patience and good humor!

Did You Know?

As of the second of November, our rooftop solar panels completed their first month of power generation and we produced a total of 1,294 kWh of electricity (kWh = kiloWatt hour). Our billing cycle with Xcel uses different dates, so we can't give you financial specifics yet, but to put the amount of power in perspective:

- Our solar cells produced about half of the electricity we consumed at Mount Olive; and
- We produced enough to supply all the electricity for about two typical Minnesota homes.

That's a good start despite October's not being particularly sunny - we saw the sun on fewer than half the days last month. Our best day was a sunny Monday the 16th on which we produced 89.841 kWh, almost 7% of our total October output. Our worst day was a dark and rainy Saturday the 21st, but in spite of a full day of dark clouds and rain, we still managed to put out 7.686 kWh.

With our solar generation, it means that in October we prevented a hair over 2,000 lb, or one ton of CO₂ from going into the atmosphere. Looked at another way, that's the equivalent of planting 50 trees.

Lutheran Worship in Nigeria

I started my teaching and listening mission in Nigeria on Friday, Nov. 3, in the Lutheran cathedral in Abuja, Nigeria's capitol. A gathering of pastors and other church leaders spent 2.5 hours discussing Lutheran worship. Some people were unhappy about the long services, noting that what extended them was announcements and special group singing. Others said that these groups helped young people feel part of the congregation. The general tendency of the worship is toward praise songs and bands (does this sound familiar to Minnesota Lutherans?).

I experienced this myself at the night prayer service that evening. People both fast and spend the night in prayer from 10 pm to 5 am. Then I experienced it again in the city of Jos at the Dogon Karfe Lutheran Church. This church and parsonage were almost destroyed in 2010 when Muslim radicals burned it down twice. Now they are rebuilding in a new location, in a building that has no windows yet (open air) and a temporary roof. The congregation is gradually recovering, and now there are about 300 at worship. It was a Thanksgiving/Harvest Festival, so everyone processed to the big offering box with their envelopes, the children first, then women, and finally, the men. There was a lot of joyful singing and dancing. Pastor Amson and I left after 3 hours, having given our offerings after dancing up to the offering box.

I am writing from Jos, the most temperate place in Nigeria, with highs in the 70s. When you read this I will be in Numan, the church headquarters, where the forecast all the coming week is for highs about 100 degrees.

I am having a great time and am thankful to God for this opportunity. It is part of my personal vocation.

Thank you for your prayers on my behalf!

- Brad Holt

Mount Olive Lutheran Church

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*A congregation of the Evangelical
Lutheran Church in America*

Sunday Eucharist: 8:00 & 10:45 am

Contact Us

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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.*

Sharing Chibok Diaries

As we continue to pray for Naomi Bitrus' classmates still in captivity in Nigeria, another of her classmates who was released earlier (and another Naomi as well) is sharing a diary of her experiences. It makes for powerful reading. We encourage you to check it out at

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-41570252> .

Also keep Brad Holt in your prayers as he journeys in Nigeria to visit and share with pastors from the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria. We are one body in Christ.