

The Olive Branch

February 14, 2018

Accent on Worship

Vicar Jessica Christy

The sacred and secular calendars are in quite the conversation this year. Easter will land on April Fool's Day, and this Ash Wednesday, of course, falls on Valentine's Day. Some people might find this ashy Valentine's Day amusing, or perhaps inconvenient – but these two days have some interesting things to say to each other.

On one hand is the contrast. Hearts and lace and glitter versus burnt palms. A frilly celebration of romance versus a hard, honest look at our mortality. Happy couples clinking wine glasses while congregations kneel and pray words of repentance. The difference between the secular and the sacred could hardly be more stark.

But on the other hand is the resonance between the two days. To be sure, Valentine's Day has largely become a silly, consumerist affair, but at its best, Valentine's Day is a celebration of the goodness of our relationships. Through whatever kind of love you choose to celebrate, we are drawn out of ourselves and into a connection with someone else. We discover that beneath whatever separates us is something that we hold in common and long to share. We learn that we find our best selves when we give ourselves away to others. So, too, with Ash Wednesday. We are invited out of our individuality and into the recognition that we are all the same earthy matter. We are built of the same star-forged carbon atoms, fed by the same soil, and will return to the same dust. These mortal bodies don't just demarcate us from one another; they also unite us. But we don't wipe ashes on ourselves in a humanistic reminder of our mortality – we draw them in the shape of a cross. We proclaim that we hold in common our human fallenness, and so are united in the saving love that emanates from the same Christ. Our sin and our salvation bind us together more profoundly than we know.

Every Ash Wednesday, I love strangers so dearly. Seeing people walk around in open recognition of their mortality and need for salvation is enough to move me to tears. I never feel so close to others, so much like we're seeing each other as we truly are. We're such brief, fragile creatures, but we hold such eternity within us. We're all on this journey together. Let's love each other along the way.

Sunday Readings

February 18, 2018

First Sunday in Lent

Genesis 9:8-17

Psalm 25:1-10

I Peter 3:18-22

Mark 1:9-15

February 25, 2018

Second Sunday in Lent

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16

Psalm 22:23-31

Romans 4:13-25

Mark 8:31-38

Sunday Adult Forum

This Sunday, February 18: "The Church's Song: Always in Reform," presented by Cantor David Cherwien

What are the characteristics of sacred music we call "Lutheran?" This forum will be a look at the church's song from the perspective of a Reformation church - a look at song that is in a constant state of re-forming.

Next Sunday, February 25: "What Can a Table Tell Us About Jesus's World?," - presented by Professor Earl Schwartz

In these two sessions we explore nine references in the Synoptic Gospels to Jesus being hungry or participating in a meal, references which draw us both in around tables, and out into the larger social, cultural, political and physical environment in which Jesus lived.

Earl Schwartz is Assistant Professor of Social Justice, Religion, and Middle Eastern Studies at Hamline University, St. Paul, and has directed the College of Liberal Arts interdisciplinary program in social justice since its inception in 1999.

A Journey Through Judges

Thursday Bible Study

This year's third Thursday Bible study series concludes tomorrow evening, Feb. 15. The study is focusing on the exciting, colorful, and violent leaders in the book of Judges, exploring the question of where we see God in their stories.

The 90-minute sessions begin at 6:00 p.m. with a light supper. All are welcome.

Lent Procession Service

This Sunday, February 18, 4:00 pm

All are invited to this contemplative service of lessons and carols for Lent. Lent Procession is offered as an opportunity to withdraw from the busyness of life to pray, sing, listen, smell - to fully enter into the season of Lent, a time to renew of our lives as baptized children of God.

Lenten Devotional Booklet Available

The Grain of Wheat: A Lenten Journey for 2018, the Year of Mark, by Susan Palo Cherwien, is a Lenten devotional guide which is available for use this Lenten season. Hard copies of the booklet are available at church, near the coat room. It is also available as a daily blog online at www.grainofwheat2018.blogspot.com.

Book Discussion

For their March 10 meeting, the Discussion Group will read *Tender at the Bone*, by Ruth Reichl. On April 14, two books: *The Stranger* by Albert Camus and *The Meursault Investigation* by Kamel Daoud.

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!

Calendar

Wednesday, February 14 – Ash Wednesday

9:00 am Staff Meeting

Noon *Ash Wednesday Eucharist*

No choirs this evening

7:00 pm *Ash Wednesday Eucharist*

8:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous

Thursday, February 15

6:00 pm Bible Study (final for this session)

Saturday, February 17

9:30 am Confirmation

10:00 am Music & Fine Arts Committee meeting

11:00 am Diaper Depot open

Noon Community Meal

Sunday, February 18 – First Sunday in Lent

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

4:00 pm *MFA Event: Lent Procession*

Monday, February 19

6:30 pm ReconcilingWorks committee meeting

7:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous

Tuesday, February 20

Noon Bible Study

4:00 pm Diaper Depot open

5:30 pm National Lutheran Choir reception

7:00 pm National Lutheran Choir rehearsal

The National Lutheran Choir to Present “Call to Prayer”

The National Lutheran Choir presents an evening of song from three sacred prayer traditions together with the Augsburg Choir, Hazzan Joanna Dulkan, and New York guest artist Zafer Tawil. Concluding a landmark season dedicated to the art and legacy of the Protestant Reformation, “Call to Prayer” will feature a new commission by Maryland composer Joshua Fishbein entitled “Allahu Echad: God is One.”

Saturday, March 3, 7:30 pm - Hoversten Chapel, Augsburg University

Sunday, March 4, 4:00 pm - Adath Jeshurun Congregation Synagogue, Minnetonka, MN

For tickets, call Brown Paper Tickets 1-800-838-3006 or order online at NLCA.com.

HELP WANTED!



- Congregational Life NEEDS volunteers to sign up to host coffee hour! The sign up sheet is practically empty! To volunteer, sign up on the sheet posted in the East Assembly Room, where coffee is served on Sundays. Take a turn!

Lent Begins Today.

*Ash Wednesday,
February 14*

**Holy Eucharist at
Noon and 7:00 pm**

Wednesdays in Lent

- ✦ **Holy Eucharist at
Noon, followed by
soup luncheon**
- ✦ **Evening Prayer at 7
pm, preceded by soup
supper at 6 pm.**



Thanks and Invite

Thank you to over 50 Mount Olive members who helped to make our Taste of India a success. We learned much, ate wonderful food, and visited with dear friends. If you did not get your food container, please check the east assembly room counter.

Now you are invited to consider two things. Would you like to learn more about a partnership team to visit Bethania Kids in 2019? If so, please fill out a yellow interest form on the Bethania display table and return it to the church office by Easter. Would you like to support Bethania beyond our mission budget? If so, you may contribute through your blue Missions envelope or sponsor a child. Sponsorship forms are also on the display table.

From Philip Knutson in South Africa

Dear friends,

The New York Times recently picked up on an issue which is now in the news in South Africa every day: "Day Zero for Cape Town."

The city of Cape Town with four million residents is experiencing the worst drought in over a century. Dams are dangerously low and if the rains do not come soon the city may have to switch off the taps in April. Residents will then have to queue to collect their ration of water at 200 distribution points which will have major logistical, health and security issues. Already the price of bottled water has spiked. South Africa, along with many other rain-scarce countries in Africa, is vulnerable to the effects of climate change and faces a long-term challenge with providing enough water for its people, agriculture and industry. This crisis highlights the fact that policies and practices by governments, businesses and ordinary people regarding water usage will have to change not only in Cape Town but around the world."

If Not Now, When?

The famous Jewish religious leader, Rabbi Hillel, once asked, "If I am not for myself, then who will be for me? And if I am only for myself, what am I? If not now, when?" At JRLC's Day on the Hill 2018, hundreds of people of faith will gather to ask themselves, their communities, and their representatives: If we do not work towards social justice now, when?

Join faithful advocates from across the state on March 13, 2018, to reflect on why we make our voices heard, to plan for continues actions in our home communities, and to speak with representatives at the State Capitol.

For more information and to register visit www.jrlc.org or pick up a brochure on the kiosk in the west assembly.

Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) - Free Tour – "Stories of the Faithful," led by Bill Wilson, Mia Docent

Please join us for the tour "Stories of the Faithful" at the Minneapolis Institute of Art on Saturday, March 24, at 10:30 am. The 60-minute tour includes works centered on the lives of Jesus and John the Baptist. We need a minimum of 8 people to arrange the tour, and the maximum number is 15. The group will lunch at Christos following the tour to continue conversation on the works viewed. The tour and admission to the museum are free, although Mia always welcomes donations. If you wish to attend, please contact Susan Cherwien at susan.cherwien@gmail.com by February 24 to reserve a place. Please include a contact phone number in your email, and whether you are also interested in lunch. If more than 15 people are interested, Bill has expressed a willingness to schedule a second tour.



THE CONCORDIA CHOIR
René Clausen, Conductor

CONCERT

Saturday, Feb. 24
7:30 p.m.

Lord of Life Lutheran Church
7401 County Road 101
Maple Grove, Minn.

Tickets available at
ConcordiaTickets.com,
800-838-3006 or at the door

RENÉ CLAUSEN
Conductor

STAGERIGHT
The Concordia Choir performs on StageRight Choral Risers.

CONCORDIA COLLEGE
Moorhead, Minnesota
TheConcordiaChoir.org

921681/2,000/0118

Free Safety Check For Seniors

The HOME Program is providing a no-cost home assessment for seniors 60+ in suburban Hennepin County and Minneapolis. Check for tripping hazards, grab-bars, handrails, smoke detectors, lighting and other safety components. For information call 952-746-4046 or email: home@seniorcommunity.org

HOME also provides housecleaning, minor home repair, and mowing/snow removal services.

Hope for Creation

This Saturday, February 17, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church, Dr. Timothy Eberhart will lead a series of workshop sessions that explore how Christians are called to share in the healing of creation. Participants will reflect on the spiritual implications of environmental degradation, examine the relevance of Christian beliefs to an ecological perspective, and explore practical ways people of faith are engaged in mission and justice for the good of the earth. Music performed by singer-songwriter Leslie Ball will ground and uplift our reflections throughout the day.

The registration fee for the workshop is \$15 per person and lunch is included for those who RSVP by February 14, 2018. Registration at the door is possible, with limited lunch availability. Free childcare is available for children age 10 and younger. To learn more and to register, go to: garrett.edu/hopeforcreation. The church is located at 511 Groveland Ave., Minneapolis, 55403.

Date Set for Healthcare Directives Refresher Course

The Mount Olive Congregational Care Committee invites you to save next Saturday, February 24, 9:00 – 12:00 AM, at Mount Olive, to either take another look at your HealthCare Directive, learn about creating one, or guiding your loved ones toward putting this in place for themselves and their families. The Honoring Choices option as well as the POLST form (a document completed by patient and physician at a point where end of life is close) are topics to be covered.

Other agenda items can and will be added, depending upon requests submitted prior to the workshop. There has been interest in topics such as –

- planning funerals;
- what we as people of faith can take into consideration as we examine the dilemma of MAID (Medical Aid in Dying);
- how to engage hesitant family members in conversation about end of life concerns;
- how we as a community of faith care for and respond to those among us who are facing illness and major life changes.

While not necessary to pre-register, it will be helpful to know if you, your family, or friends plan to participate. Please also share your specific interests by contacting Marilyn Gebauer at: 612-306-8872 or gebauvm@bitstream.net.

- *The Mount Olive Congregational Care Committee*

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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