



# The Olive Branch

February 13, 2019

## Accent on Worship

*Pastor Joseph Crippen*

### *Apart, yet together*

I'll be taking three vacation Sundays starting this Sunday, Feb. 17. Mary and I are traveling to Ireland for ten days (with a little stop in

England), then the weekend of March 3, I'm on tour with the National Lutheran Choir. I should come back well-rested for the marathon of Lenten worship and preaching and all the other pastoral things that need doing.

But I will miss you all, especially on Sunday morning. I hear this from so many of you as well, that when you're not at Mount Olive, worship just doesn't feel the same, and it's joy to come home. That doesn't denigrate worship elsewhere; it's more that as Christ's community in this place our worship of God is deepened and blessed by doing it together, with people we've loved and disagreed with and argued with and prayed with. So, as I find places to worship those three weeks, I will carry you all with me.

But I will also be joining other communities at worship who share the same joy being together that we do here. As you all know well, it can seem awkward to be the "outsider," the one coming in. But even then, it's good to look around and see people who recognize each other, are glad to sing together, pray together, listen to God together. For this, I am deeply grateful that you, the people of Mount Olive, are so hospitable and welcoming to our guests and sojourners. Knowing the value of being in this community, you still open your arms to

those whom we haven't met, and welcome them in, welcome them to prayer, to song, to Christ's table.

And finally there is this truth: Jesus said where two or three are gathered, there he will be in our midst. (Matthew 18). So where I am on these Sundays, Jesus will be. And Jesus most certainly will be here. And that means that, even though on any given Sunday not all of us are together at 3045 Chicago Ave. S., wherever we gather with other Christians we are still with those who are worshipping at Mount Olive. In the broad arms of the Triune God, through the presence of the Son and the grace of the Spirit, we are never apart. Even if it looks like it.

So peace be with you all. Because we are all together in Christ, no matter where we actually are.

In the name of Jesus,

## Sunday Readings

**February 17, 2019**

**6<sup>th</sup> Sunday after  
Epiphany**

Jeremiah 17:5-10

Psalm 1

1 Corinthians 15:12-20

Luke 6:17-26

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## Implicit Bias Learning at Mount Olive

In the aftermath of Matta Ghaly's departure as our vicar last October, the congregation and the Vestry, in meetings on Oct. 14 and 8 respectively, committed to finding ways for Mount Olive to learn more about implicit bias and how we learn to see our blind spots and learn new ways of listening and speaking with others. While there were many factors to Matta's leaving, it was clear to many of us that we as a people of God had things we could learn in this area.

There is a three-pronged approach that the Vestry, along with Neighborhood Ministry committee and the Adult Forum planning team, has decided to do.

First, there will be an **Adult Forum on the topic of implicit bias on Sunday, March 10**, between liturgies. Anne Phibbs, PhD, will be presenter. Dr. Phibbs is Founder and President of Strategic Diversity Initiatives and brings over 25 years' experience helping organizations advance their equity, diversity, and inclusion goals. She will speak on the following premise: "in order to address the myriad ways that certain people are marginalized based on social identities such as race, gender, disability, religion, class, sexual orientation, etc., every one of us needs to understand our own identities, how we all demonstrate bias that is often unconscious, and how we are all capable of moving toward equity."

Second, Restorative Justice Community Action (a group that many Mount Olive people have worked with, and who uses our building for a number of their needs) will lead a **workshop called "Community Conversations," on Saturday, March 30, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.** All members of the congregation are invited to attend; it will also be advertised through RJCA, so there will likely be some of our neighbors attending as well. Here's a brief summary of what it will contain: "With the continued tensions and protests around racial inequity in our society reinforced by system designs, it is important to increase the civic dialogue and empower citizens to enact positive change. However, race and implicit bias are often difficult topics to discuss with honesty in our civic spaces. Fight, flight, or freeze emotions such as shame, anger, denial, distrust, and fear often create barriers for real dialogue. When these take over, it impedes our ability to construct equitable solutions together. "Community Conversations" utilizes a restorative justice circle process to explore race and implicit bias in a way that diminishes these responses and opens one up to the opportunity to reflect on the root causes of impulsive reactions."

Third, three members of Mount Olive, Cynthia Prosek, Samantha Pipkorn, and Irene Campbell, recently went through a four-day training in this "circle process" that we will experience in the workshop. They will be looking for and creating opportunities for continuing this conversation at Mount Olive in the months and years to come.

I hope that all members of Mount Olive will consider attending both the forum and the workshop. We always can benefit from deeper learning and listening, and God works through that to bring us to new ways of being Christ together and in the world.

Blessings,  
*Pr. Crippen*



## Sunday Adult Forums

*Sunday, February 17:* "The Book of Isaiah," part 2 of a 2-part series presented by Earl Schwartz, Assistant Professor of Religion, Hamline University.

*Sunday, February 24:* Taste of Nigeria

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### Pastoral absence

As you know from this week's "Accent," (p. 1), I will be gone for a good part of the second half of February. Normally our vicar is the lead on pastoral care and emergencies when I'm gone, and often preaches. Since we don't have a vicar this year, I wanted to share what the plans are for my absence.

First, former vicar Kelly Sandin has agreed to be on call for pastoral care needs during the time I'm gone. She's doing pastoral work at House of Prayer Lutheran Church in Richfield while she awaits a call. (She is in a process right now so we're praying for a good answer!) Rather than put her phone number in this *Olive Branch*, I will leave it with Cha Posz, our administrative assistant, and it will be on my voicemail.

Second, I've invited three people to preach who are gifted at it and who are not yet ordained, but close. Jonathan Holtmeier, a member of Mount Olive along with his family, will preach Feb. 17. He's finished his M.Div. and is approved for ordination, and currently is primary caregiver for his and Holly's children. Jonathan has preached here once before. Emily Stelling will preach Feb. 24. She is in her last year of seminary, having done her internship in Slovakia, and is very interested in liturgical worship such as we do at Mount Olive. She and I have had several conversations about her future ministry, and I'm glad to invite her to preach among you all. Finally, Kelly Sandin, vicar here from 2016-2017, will preach on Transfiguration Sunday, Mar. 3. I'm glad Mount Olive will get another chance to hear Kelly preach God's Word in our midst!

Last, writing this gives me an opportunity to thank our faithful siblings Rob Ruff, Beth Gaede, and Art Halbardier, who will preside at Eucharist those three Sundays, and who always, always are willing to fill in when I'm gone. It's such a joy to know that they will each lead with grace and skill, and such a gift to me that their willingness is at hand whenever needed. I always can leave without any need to be anxious that all will be well led and cared for by them. Many thanks to these three, and the others who will be helping!

- Pr. Crippen

### Book Discussion

The Book Discussion Group meets on the second Saturday of each month at 10 am in the West Assembly Area. All readers welcome!

For the March 9 meeting, they will read, *Germinal*, by Emile Zola. For the April 12 meeting, *Spirit Car*, by Diane Wilson.

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### It's Time.

If you have palm branches from last year's Eucharist on Palm/Passion Sunday, please bring them to church and place them in the designated basket in the narthex.

These branches will be burned on Shrove Tuesday and the ashes from the burning will be used at Ash Wednesday Eucharists on March 6.

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## Calendar

### Wednesday, February 13

- 10:00 am Staff Meeting
- 5:30 pm Children's Choir supper
- 6:00 pm Children's Choir rehearsals
- 7:00 pm Cantorei rehearsal
- 8:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous

### Saturday, February 16

- 11:00 am Diaper Depot open
- Noon Community Meal

### Sunday, February 17 - Sixth Sunday after Epiphany

- 8:00 am *Holy Eucharist*, followed by coffee & conversation
- 9:30 am Sunday Church School
- 10:45 am *Holy Eucharist*, followed by coffee & conversation

### Monday, February 18

- 6:30 pm ReconcilingWorks committee meeting
- 7:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous

### Tuesday, February 19

- Noon Bible Study
- 4-6 pm Diaper Depot open
- 7:00 pm National Lutheran Choir rehearsal

### Wednesday, February 20

- 10:00 am Staff Meeting
- 5:30 pm Children's Choir supper
- 6:00 pm Children's Choir rehearsals
- 7:00 pm Cantorei rehearsal
- 8:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous



## Update on Neighborhood Ministry Search

As Anna and Josh Scott prepare for the arrival of child number two, and Anna's time as our Coordinator of Neighborhood Ministry nears an end, here is an update on the process.

23 resumes were received, and the search team held five interviews last week. Three have been invited back for second interviews the week of Feb. 25. We hope to have someone hired and able to begin mid-March. Anna is planning on finishing at the end of February. Please pray for our candidates and this process.

**Farewell to Anna:** On **Sunday, March 10**, after second liturgy, we'll have a traditional Lutheran potluck (Anna's choice!) to say thank you to Anna for her service. Details to come!

## Taste of Nigeria – Next Sunday

On February 24 we will celebrate our growing partnership with the Lutheran Church of Christ in Nigeria. Mount Olive is developing a relationship with the LCCN's seminary, Bronnum Seminary in Yola, Nigeria.

On Sunday the 24<sup>th</sup> we will have a chance to learn more about the LCCN and Bronnum, and since Mount Olive member Brad Holt will be in Yola at the time, we hope to share a live video exchange with Brad, Ibrahim Bitrus, and other members of the community. Also, of course, we will feast Nigerian style at our Taste of Nigeria dinner following our second liturgy.

Plan on a day of celebrating this amazing Lutheran church, one of the largest and fastest growing Lutheran church in the world.



## Test Your Climate Knowledge

The Missions Committee would like to challenge you on your understanding and knowledge of our beautiful Earth. NASA Global Climate Change web site offers quizzes to help us learn about vital signs of the planet. One quiz each week will be offered here until Earth Day to assist you in growing your stewardship of the Earth and all living things. Click the following link to take the quiz: Frozen Poles: How much do you know about the frozen poles of our planet?

<https://climate.nasa.gov/quizzes/frozen-poles/>

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## The Concordia Choir in Concert With The Singers

Hear one of the nation's finest college choirs perform alongside The Singers – Minnesota Choral Artists Sunday, March 3, 2019 at 4 pm in the Ordway Center for the Performing Arts. Rene' Clausen conducts the 73-voice a cappella choir in several spirituals and hymns plus a stunning set entitled "Our Home – The Earth."

Visit [www.TheConcordiaChoir.org](http://www.TheConcordiaChoir.org) today for complete concert information.

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## Save the Date!

*Minneapolis Area Synod Tool Kit and Conference Assemblies*

*Saturday, Feb. 23, beginning at 9 a.m.*

*St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, Bloomington, MN*

A morning of engaging workshops, fellowship, time with Bishop Ann Svennungsen, and conference meetings.

The hour-long Tool Kit workshops are:

- New Strategies for Organizing Mission & Ministry: Effective Church Council Leadership
- Who Lives in My Neighborhood? An Introduction to MissionInSite
- A Small Church Can Make a Big Difference
- Church Safety and Emergency Preparedness
- Ready to Talk About Culture and Race?
- How to Run a Meeting
- Financial Best Practices for Churches
- Five Marks of a Vital Congregation and Two Questions Not to Ask
- Using Story to Invite People into your Congregation
- Better Council Effectiveness Through Relationships
- Good Stewardship: Maximizing the Value of Your Real Estate
- Digital Media 101: Social Media and Websites
- Navigating the Church Human Resources Jungle
- The Skill of Connecting with your Community Through One-to-One Conversations

Both experienced and new church leaders are strongly encouraged to attend!

## Mount Olive Lutheran Church

3045 Chicago Avenue  
Minneapolis, MN 55407

*A congregation of the Evangelical  
Lutheran Church in America*

**Sunday Eucharist:  
8:00 and 10:45 a.m.**

### **Contact Us**

Phone: 612-827-5919

On the Web: [mountolivechurch.org](http://mountolivechurch.org)

### **Staff**

Pastor – *Joseph Crippen*

Cantor – *David Cherwien*

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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