

The Olive Branch



November 27, 2019

Sunday Readings

December 1, 2019
First Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 2:1-5
Psalms 122
Romans 13:11-14
Matthew 3:1-12

December 8, 2019
Second Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 11:1-10
Psalms 72:1-7, 18-19
Romans 15:4-13
Matthew 3:1-12

*Church offices will be
closed on Friday,
November 29.*

Advent Vespers
*Wednesday evenings,
Dec. 4, 11, and 18
7:00 pm*

A publication of Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Accent on Worship

Jim Bargmann

This week, Advent begins. Since I was young, I have always enjoyed Advent. The music and readings we share together in our liturgy draw us into a powerful anticipation of something to come. In the here and now, of course, the anticipation is the celebration of Christmas. In the larger picture, the anticipation is the return of Jesus and the establishment of a new heaven and a new earth as promised in Revelation. But what do we do with this Advent? What do we do in this time of anticipation? As I reflect on this season for the 44th time in my life, I find myself considering what I do when I am anticipating - looking forward to - other exciting events in my life. I very rarely sit when I am excited about something on the horizon. If I am anticipating a visit from loved ones, I am busy making preparations for that visit so our time together can simply be a time of enjoying one another. Carpets are vacuumed, dirty dishes washed, clean linens are put on the beds, food is shopped for and menus are planned. If I am looking forward to a trip, I find myself looking for the best deals on flights, hotels, and the like. I am researching and making arrangements for activities my family and I will enjoy together. I am rechecking my plans again and again. The anticipation and the excitement of these fun events lead me to work hard at bettering my world and making proper arrangements so that the time with loved ones can be as enjoyable as possible. It is not laborious work for me - I enjoy planning and cleaning and cooking - especially if these things are done in preparation for something anxiously anticipating.

So about Advent. It seems to me the same attitude applies here. We can be about the business of bettering our world in anticipation of Jesus' return. We continually pray, "your kingdom come," and Luther teaches that "God's kingdom comes on its own without our prayer, but we ask in the prayer that it may also come to us." Luther continues with an answer to the question, "How does this come about?" by stating "...through the Holy Spirit's grace we believe God's holy word and live godly lives here in time and hereafter in eternity." God's kingdom, God's reign, is not only a future reality - although it is certainly that - but also a present

(continued on page 2)

Accent on Worship, *continued from page 1*
reality. Living in God's kingdom, in God's reign, means we are working for the betterment of our world - helping all to realize the abundant life Jesus came to bring (John 10:10). Each of us will have Spirit-inspired ways of doing that work. Perhaps your way of bettering the world is working for climate justice for all. Perhaps your Spirit-inspired way of bettering the world is feeding those who struggle with knowing where their next meal will come from. Perhaps God will use you to help others see the reality of God's kingdom through caring words for someone who is mourning. Using our gifts for the betterment of the world and the lives of others, like my cleaning, shopping, and cooking, are not intended to be laborious. Working in our areas of Spirit-giftedness are to be joyful and life-giving - a part of the very abundant life Jesus desires for all. And so that is my final word to you - my encouragement - anticipate - actively - this Advent.

- Jim Bargmann

Thanksgiving Day Eucharist *Thursday, November 28, 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.

Book Discussion

On December 14, the Book Discussion Group will discuss *If Beale Street Could Talk*, by James Baldwin, for January 11, *The Fellowship of the Ring*, (the first book in "Lord of the Rings" trilogy by J. R. R. Tolkien), and for February 8, *The Invention of Nature: Alexander von Humboldt's New World*, by Andrea Wulf. All readers welcome!

Christmas Worship

Christmas Eve, December 24

4:00 pm - Holy Eucharist

9:30 pm - Choral Prelude

10:00 pm - Holy Eucharist

Christmas Day, December 25

10:00 am - Festival Eucharist

"The Word for Those Who Worry"

Thursday Evening Bible Study
Thursday evenings, 6 pm

Vicar Bristol Reading is leading a 6-week series on "The Word for Those Who Worry." This study examines familiar biblical passages from a new angle to see how they might be a spiritual resource for us in the midst of worrying times. The study runs through Dec. 19. As always, we begin with a light supper at 6pm.

Seniors Advent Luncheon to be Held Wednesday, December 4

All Mount Olive Seniors (age 65 and over) are invited to this fun and special annual event!

If you are one of our senior members and plan to come, please RSVP to the church office to let us know: phone - 612-827-5919, or email - welcome@mountolivechurch.org.

The Olive Branch

Calendar

Wednesday, November 27

10:00 am Staff meeting
No Children's Choir rehearsals
No Cantorei rehearsal

8:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous

Thursday, November 28 - Thanksgiving Day

10:00 am *Thanksgiving Eucharist*

Friday, November 29 - church offices closed

Sunday, December 1 ~~3~~ - *First Sunday of Advent*

FAIR TRADE CRAFT SALE

8:00 am *Holy Eucharist*

9:30 am Sunday Church School / Adult Forum

10:45 am *Holy Eucharist*

4:00 pm Advent Procession Service

Monday, December 2

7:00 pm Vicar Committee meeting

7:00 pm LOL Board meeting

7:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous

Tuesday, December 3

Noon Bible Study

4-6 pm Diaper Depot open

7:00 pm National Lutheran Choir rehearsal

Wednesday, December 4

10:00 am Staff meeting

5:30 pm Children's Choir supper

6:00 pm Children's Choir rehearsals

7:00 pm *Advent Vespers*

7:30 pm Cantorei rehearsal

8:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous

Nativity Sets for Godly Play

Our Godly Play leaders are looking for several nativity sets that are designed for children that can be put in the activity sets the children use each Sunday. If you have one or more nativity sets that are appropriate for children and would like to donate them to Godly Play please contact Paul Nixdorf (612-296-0055, pn@paulnixdorf.com) or the church office (612-827-5919, welcome@mountolivechurch.org) and let them know that you have a set or sets you would like to donate. Godly play would like to have these Nativity sets very soon so they can begin using them.

Adult Forum Video Now Available on YouTube

"From Biblical Narrative and Law to Halakhah and Aggadah," a 2-part series presented by Nina Samuels and Earl Schwartz. Part 1 is now available online at

<https://youtu.be/IsaRHhllxUA>.

Session 2 is at

<https://youtu.be/4qBe4zrJDGw>.

Staff Christmas Gifts

As is our tradition, this is the time of year that we gather monetary gifts for our terrific church staff. If you would like to contribute, please either use the offering envelope provided especially for this, or simply note "staff gifts" on your check and deposit it in the offering plate on Sunday morning or send it to the church office. Please have the gifts in by Sunday, December 15.

Thanks for your generosity.

Needed: Winter Accessories

Once again Mount Olive Neighborhood Ministries is collecting warm winter gear for our neighbors in need. These items will be distributed at regular winter Community Meals and also at our winter warming station. Please bring coats, jackets, hats, scarves, gloves, mittens, and warm socks to the designated box in the common area at church.

Upcoming Adult Forums

See brochures in the Chapel Lounge for detailed information about these forums.

- **December 1 and 8:** “Worshipping Bodies,” a 2-part series presented by Dwight Penas

Christianity is a matter of the body: We celebrate the Incarnation, which is the event of God’s own entering into a human body in order to be as we are; every Sunday we confess confidence in the Resurrection of the body; looking back on history, we see that most of the Ten Commandments deal with matters of the body – stealing, killing, lusting, and so on. Thus, it is “meet, right, and salutary” that we should worship with our bodies. For these two weeks, we will explore how and why we employ our bodies, and not just our voices and minds, to offer our prayer, praise, and thanksgiving to God. We will also discuss what our worship “actions” or lack of movement might mean for the life of faith.

- **Dec. 15:** Santa Lucia Brunch
- **Dec. 22:** “Season of Waiting: Advent and Christmas Poems,” presented by Susan Palo Cherwien

National Lutheran Choir Christmas Festival: Gloria!

This cherished annual event creates a holy experience for audiences and memories that last a lifetime. This year, the story of the Angel’s song “Gloria” is brought to life through an array of poetry, communal singing and exquisite choral music in the unsurpassed beauty of the Basilica of Saint Mary.

Friday, December 13, 4:30pm and 8pm

Saturday, December 14, 1:30pm (**NEW TIME!**) and 8pm
Basilica of Saint Mary, Minneapolis

Tickets: Adults and Seniors \$33 | Students and Children FREE | Discounts available for groups of 10 or more!!

For tickets and more information, please visit NLCA.com or call (612) 722-2301.

Nativity Sets Sought

It has been a tradition for the last couple years to display nativity sets that have been loaned or given to Mount Olive during the Christmas Season. If you have a special nativity set that you would be willing to lend to Mount Olive for display, please contact Paul Nixdorf and let him know what you have and when you can deliver the set to the church. The display will be put up on Sunday, December 22, and will remain on display until Sunday, January 5, 2020.

Be sure to clearly mark the boxes containing the nativity sets so we can keep track of the sets and make sure they get returned to you.

If you have a very valuable or rare nativity set and are willing to let us display your set please let me know so that we can display your set in the locked display case.

Because You Asked

Your Bethania Kids team has returned, excited to share with you what we learned and saw.

Many of you have asked about our trip. Save the date--February 9, 2020, Taste of India, Redux with new types of southern India foods, amazing photos and videos, and enthusiastic presenters. Until then, keep checking the Bethania Journey Blog. You never know what new photos and insights you might see. Visit www.bethaniajourney.blogspot.com.

Keeping Advent in the Home

The season of Advent is a bridge linking the past, present, and future. The church year ends with a looking forward to the fulfillment of all things in the reign of Christ. That future continues into Advent, when we not only remember the coming of Christ in the Child Jesus, but also the coming of Christ in the completion of creation. And there is a third coming, or advent, of Christ that we lift up in these four weeks: the coming of Christ in the Now, in scripture, in communion, in the individual heart. Building on the First Advent Sermon of Bernard of Clairvaux, Martin Luther wrote in a sermon on Psalm 102: "Christ's face is triple: firstly in His first advent when he was made incarnate who as Son of God is the face of the Father...; secondly, in the spiritual advent without which the first is good for nothing - and so one has to recognize his face through faith; thirdly, in the second and last advent when His face will be fully visible." Our task in Advent is to take the path that leads to Christ - in the manger, in the future, in the present world.

Here are a few ways to keep Advent in the home:

- Make an Advent wreath out of evergreens and four blue tapers, or by placing four glass votives in a circle on a plate of evergreen cuttings. Light one candle each Sunday in Advent as the season progresses. For short rituals to accompany the lighting of the Advent wreath, go to the website Full Homely Divinity, click on "Customs and Traditions" and go to the left sidebar, "Rediscovering Advent."
- Make a Jesse Tree, honoring the faithful ancestors that prepared the way to the birth of Christ. Put a symbol of one person on the tree each day, while reading a scripture passage related to that person. (Directions can also be found on the Full Homely Divinity site.)
- Take on a practice of daily praying the prayer offices, to prepare a place in the heart for the coming Christ. Abbreviated forms of Morning and Evening Prayer are laid out in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* for home use. An online daily prayer office can be found at <http://www.missionstclare.com/english/>.
- If you have a crèche with freestanding figures, place the empty stable in a prominent place on Advent I and place Mary and Joseph some distance away; add the animals on Advent II, moving Mary and Joseph closer each week; add the shepherds on Advent III; the manger, on Advent IV. On Christmas Eve, place Mary and Joseph at the manger, and add the Christchild and angels. On Christmas Day, set the three magi some distance away from the stable and move them closer until January 6, the Feast of the Epiphany.
- Try to save Christmas carols for the twelve days of Christmas. There are many beautiful Advent hymns and recordings.

Your End-of-the-Year Giving

As you consider your end-of-the-year contributions, besides giving to Mount Olive, don't forget that you can offer extra support to our mission partners by using your blue mission envelope or clearly marking your contribution with the mission you would like to support. We will collect those special offerings and send them on to our partners. Mission partners in special need right now include EPES in Chile where unrest and governmental support cut-backs are creating a funding crisis, Lutheran World Federation--Jerusalem where inconsistent funding is limiting medical care at Augusta Victoria Hospital, and Bethania Kids where they have seen a decrease in support from U.S.

Alternate Gift Giving

Are you looking for something different to do this year for Christmas gifts? The Missions Committee is promoting the idea of alternative gift giving this Christmas. For example, you can buy a \$25 ornament that represents a set of early reader books for a family in Guatemala through Common Hope. We have ornaments to represent gifts from Bethania Kids, Common Hope and the ELCA. We also have catalogues from different charitable organizations that you can use, or you can order from the organizations' websites. Some of these organizations are:

Lutheran World Relief:

<https://lwr.org/giving-category/gifts>

Heifer Project International: <http://www.heifer.org>

Common Hope: <http://commonhopecatalog.myshopify.com/>

Bethania Kids:

<http://bethaniakids.org/creative-giving-catalog/>

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

www.elca.org/goodgifts

Fair Trade Gift Sale

The Missions Committee is hosting a fair trade sale!

Purchase beautiful and unique fair trade items made by artisans in developing regions around the world. These items are available from SERRV, a nonprofit dedicated to fighting global poverty through fair and ethical trade.

These handcrafted items will be available for purchase after both liturgies on December 1, 8, and 15 (cash, check or credit card). We also have some items from India, brought back by our Bethania travelers. See the full page in this issue of *The Olive Branch* to view some of the items that will be for sale. Fair trade coffee, chocolate and cocoa from Equal Exchange will also be available. This is not a fund-raiser, just an opportunity to buy good products for a good cause.

Common Hope Open House

Common Hope, Mount Olive's supported mission partner in Guatemala, is holding a holiday open house. Come see Common Hope's home in the U.S. and celebrate the season with delicious treats, warm drinks, and holiday shopping with gifts from Guatemala. The open house will be Thursday, Dec. 5, 11:00 am-7:00 pm at 1400 Energy Park Drive, Suite 23, St. Paul.

www.commonhope.org/events/holiday-open-house-guatemalan-market-3/ .

From Brad (and Karin) Holt in Nigeria

We met Reginald Braggs, the director of the New Foundation Program for Chibok girls at The American University of Nigeria. He agreed to give this Mount Olive bulletin to Naomi Bitrus, for whom Mount Olive has been praying for five years.



FAIR TRADE SALE: December 1, 8 and 15

Purchase beautiful and unique fair trade items made by artisans in developing regions around the world. These items are available from SERRV, a nonprofit fair trade organization. Below are some of the items that will be for sale.



Long-term Partnerships in the West Bank

We are proud to expand our support for artisans in the West Bank, where political turmoil in the area has increased the challenges they face in creating and selling their products.

Our partners' ceramic workshops provide stable employment for artisans while preserving the traditional intricate painting styles of the region.



West Bank dipping bowls \$18



Kirikimbi lion \$16



Nepal reindeer ornament \$14



Asha orange mix scarf \$18



Moroccan motif lantern \$18



Kenyan wall cross \$14



Love buzz coffee \$6.50



Chocolate bars \$3



Items from India

DECEMBER, 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1– First Sunday of Advent FOOD COLLECTION FAIR TRADE CRAFT SALE <i>8 am – Eucharist</i> 9:30 – Church School /Adult Ed. <i>10:45 – Eucharist</i> 4 pm – Advent Procession Service	2 7 pm – Vicar Committee 7 pm – LOL Board meeting 7 pm – N.A.	3 Noon – Bible Study 4-6 pm – Diaper Depot Open	4 10 am – Staff Mtng. Noon – Seniors' Advent Lunch 5:30 – Neighborhood Min. Comm. 5:30 pm – Children's Choir meal 6:00 pm – Children's Choirs 7 pm – Advent Evening Prayer 7:35 Y2 Confirmation 7:30 pm – Cantorei 8 pm – N.A.	5 6 pm – Bible Study	6	7 11 am – Diaper Depot open Noon – Community Meal 1-3 pm – Prayer Shawl group meets at Blue Ox Coffee Co. 1 pm – Funeral Visitation <i>2 pm – Funeral Eucharist: Theodore Vrudny</i>
8 – Second Sunday of Advent FAIR TRADE CRAFT SALE <i>8 am – Eucharist</i> 9:30 – Church School /Adult Ed. <i>10:45 – Eucharist, with the Sacrament of Holy Baptism</i> 12:45 pm – Y1 Confirmation 6:45 pm – Mount Olive Serves Our Saviour's Meal	9 7 pm – Vestry Meeting 7 pm – N.A.	10 Noon – Bible Study 4-6 pm – Diaper Depot Open	11 10 am – Staff Mtng. 5:30 pm – Youth Choir meal 6:00 pm – Youth Choir rehearsal 7 pm – Advent Evening Prayer 7:35 Y2 Confirmation 7:30 pm – Cantorei 8 pm – N.A.	12 6 pm – Bible Study	13	14 10 am – Book Discussion
15– Third Sunday of Advent FAIR TRADE CRAFT SALE <i>8 am – Eucharist</i> 9:30 – Church School /Adult Ed. <i>10:45 – Eucharist</i> 12:45 – Y4 Confirmation	16 6:30 pm – Reconciling Works Committee meeting 7 pm – N.A.	17 Noon – Bible Study 4-6 pm – Diaper Depot Open	18 10 am – Staff Mtng. 5:30 pm – Youth Choir meal 6:00 pm – Youth Choir rehearsal 7 pm – Advent Evening Prayer 7:35 Y2 Confirmation 7:30 pm – Cantorei 8 pm – N.A.	19 6 pm – Bible Study	20	21 11 am – Diaper Depot open Noon – Community Meal
22 – Fourth Sunday of Advent <i>8 am – Eucharist</i> 9:30 – Church School /Adult Ed. <i>10:45 – Eucharist</i>	23 7 pm – N.A.	24 - Christmas Eve <i>4:00 pm – Holy Eucharist</i> <i>9:30 pm – Choral Prelude</i> <i>10:00 pm – Holy Eucharist</i>	25 – Christmas Day 9:30 – Carry-in Breakfast 10:00 am – Holy Eucharist	26	27	28
29 – First Sunday of Christmas 8/10:45 am – Eucharist NO Church School /Adult Ed.	30 4-6 pm – Diaper Depot Open 7 pm – N.A.	31 Noon – Bible Study				

Mount Olive Lutheran Church

3045 Chicago Avenue South
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

Fax: 612/827-4557

Web: www.mountolivechurch.org

Staff

Pastor – *Joseph Crippen*

Cantor – *David Cherwien*

Vicar – *Bristol Reading*

Coordinator of Neighborhood Ministry –
Jim Bargmann

Administrative Assistant – *Cha Posz*

Interim Sexton – *James Wilkes*

*Mount Olive is a Reconciling in Christ
congregation.*

Christmas Gifts

Neighborhood Ministry is collecting donations of Christmas gifts for two of our partner organizations, Our Saviour's Housing and ACE in the City. Our Saviour's Housing is looking for gifts for adults in their shelter and their supportive housing programs and ACE in the City is collecting gifts for children that can be selected by parents who cannot afford to buy gifts themselves.

There is a small Christmas tree in the west assembly area with ornaments listing the gifts on each organization's wish list. To donate a gift, simply choose an ornament, purchase the gift and return to Mount Olive by December 8. The ACE in the City gifts are more general in nature and are printed on ornaments with a blue outline. The Our Savior's gift wish lists are more specific and include several items. These ornaments have a red outline. If you choose one of these, you can purchase any number of the items on the list - you do not have to purchase all of them.