

The Olive Branch

December 4, 2019

Sunday Readings

December 8, 2019
Second Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 11:1-10
Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19
Romans 15:4-13
Matthew 3:1-12

December 15, 2019
Third Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 35:1-10
Psalm 146:5-10
James 5:7-10
Matthew 11:2-11

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

A publication of Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Accent on Worship

Cantor David Cherwien

Sing!

I'm always amazed when I look into the Nave and observe an assembly with fewer participants than we might normally have. There is nothing wrong with assemblies made up of any size – I always joke about “Have we surpassed the Biblical mandate yet (two or three)? Indeed, God is praised and met with any number of folks gathered.

The amazement comes when I hear that smaller group sing and it is nevertheless strong, and often still in four parts! When that happens, everything makes sense – all the plans for participation – mostly musical – are able to come to fruition and it's a good, truthful event. It takes the brave few to speak/sing without fear to get the ball rolling, so to speak. For those folks, I am grateful. God is the only listener we should concern ourselves with.

I have to admit a twinge of sadness when any gathering seems more “soft spoken” than the words being rendered call for. Not that there is anything wrong with being quiet and soft spoken, in fact, there are times when that is indeed appropriate. The sadness comes when we are speaking/singing strong words of praise that are planned assuming strong rendering, or when we're trying to encourage each other into participation and some are waiting for someone to take the lead in that – and too few do. I have experienced room-filled liturgies with very weak participation. I think we all feel bad about that when it happens. The liturgy makes less sense then, as the service planning presumes “full and conscious participation.”

One context that stands out as especially helped by those not afraid to sing/speak out, and is helped by those who know the liturgy is the funeral. Recently we hosted a funeral at which very few of the close friends and family were familiar with the liturgy. We had many people from Mount Olive, some of whom were not connected to the deceased or their family other than being of Mount Olive community. Those Mount Olive folk were able to carry the song, the spoken responses, the

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Accent on Worship, *continued from page 1*
standing/sitting – a tremendous act of both compassion and hospitality. Grieving families may not be able to sing through the lump in their throats – and need us to come and sing for them.

So for those of you who are able to attend funerals even if you didn't know the person who died, we are grateful for your help. Offering a liturgy that is profound, deep, and clearly God-centered (beyond ourselves) provides the send-off that family and friends actually need, and having folks there able to respond strongly assists in providing for a liturgy that makes sense. We hear from families and friends how meaningful it was, often with a sense of awe and amazement. As a 40-year veteran of funerals, I can say one thing my experiences have demonstrated: God-centered liturgical action, song, the Eucharist, biblical preaching – all provide something far deeper than 45 minutes of mostly spoken words. We need singers/responders/standers who do know this liturgy.

So every liturgy at which you find yourself – whether it's with two or three others, or three hundred, do your Cantor a favor – actually, do yourself and your neighbor a favor – do it for God: SING OUT!

- Cantor David Cherwien

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.

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 6:00 p.m.

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!

Calendar

Wednesday, December 4

- 10:00 am Staff meeting
Noon Seniors Advent Luncheon
5:30 pm Youth Choir supper
6:00 pm Youth Choir rehearsal
7:00 pm *Advent Vespers*
7:30 pm Cantorei rehearsal
8:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous

Thursday, December 5

- 6:00 pm Bible Study

Saturday, December 7

- 11am-1pm Diaper Depot open
Noon Community Meal
1-3 pm Prayer Shawl group meets at Blackeye Roasting
1:00 pm Funeral Visitation
2:00 pm *Funeral Eucharist: Theodore Vrudny*
Sunday, December 8 ~~3~~ – *Second 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, with the Sacrament of Holy Baptism*
6:45 pm Mount Olive serves Our Saviour's meal

Monday, December 9

- 7:00 pm Vestry meeting
7:00 pm Narcotics Anonymous

Tuesday, December 10

- Noon Bible Study
4-6 pm Diaper Depot open

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.

*Seniors Advent
Luncheon
December 4,
(today!)
11:30 am*

*All seniors invited
and welcome!*

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

Thank You

Last week, we put out a request to help one of our neighbors get settled in his new apartment. You, the Mount Olive community, responded wondrously. Not only was the entire Target wish list purchased by Wednesday evening (less than 48 hours after we sent out the request), but several of you stepped forward with offers of furniture and more to assist Michael in getting settled in his new place.

You are a wonderful example of what it looks like to put the love of Jesus in action to care for those God puts in our lives. Thank you.

- Jim Bargmann
Coordinator of Neighborhood Ministries

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.

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.

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

Twin Cities Gay Men's Chorus Holiday Concert

The Twin Cities Gay Men's Chorus works to build community through music. This year they will present their annual holiday concert "Bell Boys" on Friday, December 13, and Saturday, December 14, at 8:00 p.m., with a Sunday matinee on December 15, at 2:00 p.m. All performances are at Ted Mann Concert Hall on the University of Minnesota campus. Members of our community receive a \$5 discount when ordering tickets with the promo code FRIEND at tcgmc.org or by calling the U of M box office at 612-624-2345.

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, 4:30 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 14, 1:30 p.m. (**NEW TIME!**) and 8:00 p.m.
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.

Theological Discussion Group

The revived Theological Discussion group will discuss *The Civilization of Christianity*, by John L. McKenzie, on Sunday, January 5, after the second liturgy. We will meet in the library.

Few, if any, can equal the brilliance of McKenzie's biblical insights as he helps us develop a perspective about global and political events in light of Jesus' life and teaching.

This very readable book is most likely found online at used book sites and Amazon.com.

Questions? Call Al Bostelmann at 612 722-5957.

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/

Fair Trade Gift Sale

The Missions Committee will continue to host the 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 fair trade organization whose mission is to eradicate poverty wherever it resides by providing opportunity and support to artisans and farmers worldwide. Watch this video to learn more about SERRV and its artisans:

https://youtu.be/S4L_JkPZbCg

The handcrafted fair trade items will be available for purchase after both services on December 8 and 15. We also have some items from India, brought back by our Bethania travelers, along with fair trade coffee, chocolate and cocoa from Equal Exchange. This is not a fundraiser, just an opportunity to buy good products for a good cause.

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

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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.*

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